

The Effect of Celebrity Endorsements on Students' Brand Awareness and Purchase Intention to Dine at Selected Fast-Food Restaurants

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.9010266>

Received: 14 January 2025; Accepted: 18 January 2025; Published: 17 February 2025

ABSTRACT

Many organizations use celebrity endorsements as one of the most well-liked marketing tools in different advertising platforms to purchase goods or services, and the accuracy of endorser selection is an intrinsic attribute to develop brand awareness for the customer on the products it supports and affects their buying intention. Thus, the study aims to determine the effect of celebrity endorsements, such as credibility, trustworthiness, and likeability, on students' brand awareness and purchase intention to dine at selected fast-food restaurants. Celebrity endorsement-based investigations in the fast-food sector have been scarce in the literature, particularly from a Southeast Asian context. The study findings reveal that celebrity endorsement factors strongly influence brand awareness and purchase intention, with the research model explaining 59.9 percent of the variance in brand awareness and 53.6 percent in purchase intention. The study further reveals that likability was the main factor in choosing a celebrity endorser, followed by credibility and trustworthiness. Surprisingly, the purchase intention factor was not just the reason for customers to dine in a fast-food restaurant but was likewise influenced by the quality of the meal, the service, and the cost. The study attempts to develop a restaurant marketing framework as an output of the study. This research adds an empirically supported strategic marketing idea for promoting fast food restaurants through celebrity endorsements from a non-western context.

Keywords: brand awareness, celebrity endorsement, marketing framework, purchase intention

INTRODUCTION

Celebrity endorsements become one of the most popular marketing techniques across all advertising channels. According to Arcega et al. (2022), celebrity endorsement has grown into a massive industry worth millions of dollars. This effort has become one of the strategies marketers and advertisers use to introduce their products to their target market, greatly improving their sales and influencing customer perceptions of the brand (Ahmed et al., 2015). Choosing celebrities carefully for endorsement roles is crucial to match a celebrity's traits with a specific brand or product. According to Wijyaningrum (2018), celebrity endorsements are more successful than non-celebrity endorsements, highlighting the stark difference between the two. The benefit to the firm of using a celebrity endorsement as a form of advertising is significant, mainly if the company uses a celebrity who is at the height of his fame and has a sizable market.

Krishan et al. (2019), celebrity endorsers are hired and paid to serve in this capacity to represent, promote, and talk favorably about a business and its products to its followers or fan base to reach a larger audience. This is supported by Gauns et al. (2018), who found that consumers' purchase intentions were most influenced by a celebrity's likability, including allocation, product cohesiveness, familiarity, and trust. The expertise and credibility of celebrities are considerably less critical in influencing consumers' purchase decisions. Similarly, the study of Khan & Lodhi (2016) found that celebrity-endorsed ads are utilized to build brand awareness and recognition for the business and establish a connection with the target market. The statement was corroborated by Anjum, Dhanda, and Nagra (2012), who asserts that celebrity endorsement positively affects the firm, the

brand, and the customers. They also improve the product's image and increase brand awareness, recall, and credibility. While Sathiya (2014) claims that using celebrities in advertising is a double-edged sword, she also notes that depending on the fame, the product, the message, the execution, and the media, it may not always be successful.

Celebrity endorsements of high-profile persons are a tried-and-true method of selling a product in the Philippines (ExportGov, 2019). Lagarico et al. (2019) cited many people treat celebrities as role models today. People are willing to do many things to whatever extent to be like their favorite celebrities. Given this marketing campaign, it can be said that celebrity endorsements can create a massive impact on consumer buying behavior (Khatri, 2006). In this study, it is pleasant to probe if the money spent using celebrity endorsers translates to brand awareness and purchase intention. Numerous studies have focused on consumer buying behavior, particularly purchase decisions in buying a product or brand with celebrity endorsement factors, but none yet in fast-food restaurants in Southeast Asian countries, including the Philippines. In addition, the inclusion of the brand awareness dimension contributed to this study's novel position in the Philippine fast-food context, thus filling the research gap. This research about celebrities appearing in any advertisement in the Philippines has never been done before. This strategy is particularly influential among the younger population, including students, who often look up to celebrities as role models or influencers.

Hence, the researchers investigated the effect of celebrity endorsement on brand awareness and purchase intention among selected fast-food restaurants in Pasay City, with students of San Juan De Dios Educational Foundation Inc.- College as the study's respondents. The study developed a research marketing framework.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Celebrity Endorsement in Food Industry / Restaurants.

Using a celebrity endorsement strategy to set a company apart and get a competitive edge is quite advantageous. According to Nelson and Deborah (2017), celebrity endorsement is a persuasive tactic in which consumers relate to the person depicted in an advertisement. The use of celebrity endorsement by businesses, including in the food services sector, is most successful when the personality of the endorser matches that of the brand or product. This marketing tactic has enabled companies to connect their brand with a well-known individual, such as a celebrity (Kheder, 2018). As the Internet and social media have increased in popularity, celebrity endorsement has become an increasingly crucial communication channel for customer engagement (Schouten et al., 2020). Celebrity endorsement research has mainly been undertaken to examine the trustworthiness of the endorsed celebrity (Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016; Halder et al., 2021), familiarity with the promoted brand or firm, and campaign success (Schouten et al., 2020). Celebrities can draw attention to advertising but divert attention from the offered items (Erfgen, 2015). Advertisements, usually a significant component of promotions, are intended to teach clients about items or services and urge them to act, most commonly a purchase (Honka et al., 2017). Celebrity endorsement has become one of the most extensively used strategies to cut through the clutter in commercials, with buyers being exposed to increasing advertisements daily (Paul & Bhakar, 2018; Um & Lee, 2015). Renowned celebrities create awareness and interest in products, companies, and organizations (Balasubramanian et al., 2016) by associating the product or brand with celebrity appeal (McCormick, 2016; Lee & Shin, 2014). The use of celebrity endorsements to promote products is a popular theme or style of advertisements (Choi & Lewis, 2017; Knoll & Matthes, 2017; Pan et al., 2017), including tourism destinations (Jolly, 2016; Yen & Croy, 2016), restaurants (Kim et al., 2013), hospitality (Fath et al., 2017), fashion (Rehman et al., 2017), credit cards (Boschetti et al. 2017). Such endorsements transfer the celebrity's value and reputation to a product or brand (Erdogan & Baker, 2000). Previous research has demonstrated that commercials using celebrity endorsements of items are more effective than those that do not (Knoll & Matthes, 2017), resulting in increased sales and profits (Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016).

Factors of Celebrity Endorsement as a Marketing Tool

Osei-Fimpong et al. (2019) asserted that using celebrities to advertise a service or product is a marketing strategy. Companies must select the appropriate celebrity endorser with credibility, appeal, and a match-up with the business's image (Schimmelpfennig & Hunt, 2020) to suit the target market and company objectives. Celebrities

have impressive reputations, great public attention, and numerous media impacts (Tanjung & Hudrasyah, 2016). Many characteristics are influenced by celebrity endorsement, including brand identification, brand memory, advertising efficacy, purchasing intentions, and purchase. Some researchers say celebrity endorsement results in a good attitude toward the endorsed brand (Spry et al., 2011) and customer purchasing behavior (Anisa & Widjatmoko, 2021). As stressed by Nguyen (2021), companies can use their reputation to promote a product in an advertisement to attract customers, and companies must seek an adequate solution to select a suitable endorser for branding execution. According to Yang (2018), celebrities' power stems from their ability to sway public opinion. For example, researchers discovered that celebrity endorsement is a factor in India's success (McCormick, 2016). Most millennials in India are motivated by renowned persons, particularly actors and athletes. They place a more significant priority on idolizing and imitating celebrities because they believe in them. As a result, they pay special attention to them in advertising and feel that everything endorsed by a celebrity must be legitimate and superior. Cuomo et al. (2019) stated that selecting the proper celebrity from the target audience's perspective is critical to increasing attention to an advertisement's message and attaining the desired effect. Furthermore, Schouten et al. (2020) noted that utilizing celebrities in advertising to support products and services has become a popular marketing approach. In this study, there are three factors in celebrity endorsement: Credibility, Trustworthiness, and Likability.

Credibility. A celebrity with more credibility creates more convincing advertisements. Additionally, this feature will attract customers' attention and boost consumer confidence in the items. According to Hoegel et al. (2015), the credibility of celebrity endorsements reflects the celebrity's integrity, moral character, and public trust. As a result, advertisers must be aware of the complex networks that support celebrity endorsements. While these concepts can assist in determining whether and when celebrity advertising investments are effective, future research efforts must create a comprehensive, trustworthy, and user-friendly platform. To increase the strategic nature of celebrity sponsorship while avoiding impulsive judgments. The celebrity's expertise and credibility significantly influence the message in a certain advertisement (Kumar & Tripathi, 2019).

Trustworthiness. Trustworthiness measures how much consumers believe the endorser's claims to be valid. To boost the advertisement, it is essential to choose endorsers with high trust, honesty, and affinity (Nabil et al., 2022). Celebrities are perceived as having more excellent expertise and reliability than regular individuals. As Kamel (2020) found, trustworthiness is defined as a celebrity's degree of dependability, believability, honesty, and faith in the endorser (Jolly, 2016). Some studies have several correlates of trustworthiness and concluded that liked celebrities will also be trusted. In addition, trustworthiness was highly correlated with a respondent's perceived similarity to the source, the level of the source's expertise, and the source's attractiveness. Celebrity trustworthiness is essential in research on persuasion and behavior change (Friedman, 1978). Tantawi and Sadek (2019) revealed a favorable correlation between celebrity trustworthiness and consumers' propensity to make purchases concerning cause-related marketing. Considering the studies mentioned above, it was expected that customer views regarding products were closely correlated with celebrities' levels of trust. Hence, accurate measurement of this construct requires several measures rather than the customary single item typically used to measure the variable as a trustworthy-untrustworthy dichotomy. When consumers trust a product spokesperson, the celebrity would be influenced to change their product acceptance (Hoegel et al., 2015). In contrast, a study (Tanjung & Hudrasyah, 2016) revealed that a celebrity's attractiveness and trustworthiness do not affect the purchase.

Likability. Likeability is somehow associated with attractiveness, which pertains to physical appearance. The buying intention is more likely to be influenced by perceived attractive endorsers. A desirable celebrity endorsement would significantly impact consumer perceptions of the company and its products more than advertising with an unpleasant topic (Nguyen, 2021). Customers will find endorsers appealing if they feel a sense of affinity with them. Celebrity brand ambassadors also seem to assist products in differentiating themselves from the competition, make advertising more memorable, and increase brand recognition. This demonstrates that choosing the correct celebrity endorser requires careful consideration of the audience's propensity to favor the celebs. Their appearance also influences the effectiveness of the celebrity's endorsement. It has been demonstrated that more beautiful celebrities are more persuasive in their recommendations of goods or services than less attractive celebrities. According to Olaosebikan (2020), likeability includes a celebrity's intelligence, personality attributes, way of life, and physical attractiveness.

Brand Awareness. Brand awareness is a crucial component of brand equity and describes how well-known a company's name or product is in the minds of consumers, according to Sharma (2017). The branding visuals and traits of various brands vary. Brand awareness, which influences consumer brand awareness and equity, refers to this distinct brand positioning in customers' thoughts. Celebrity attraction is an essential factor influencing consumers' attitudes toward green cosmetics (Sharma & Foropon, 2019). Brand awareness has developed into a crucial component that affects what customers expect from a business. It's movable. That impacts a consumer's perception of a brand and its options (Karam & Saydam, 2015). Hutter et al. (2013) state that it is significant since it suggests that a customer knows the brand. The aspects of commercials that capture attention include awareness, which plays a crucial role in mediating the impacts of advertising on attribute significance perceptions—and possibly even brand perceptions. According to the findings of Biswas et al. (2009 cited by Osei-Frimpong et al. 2019), marketers pay a considerable amount of money to align their products with celebrities with a solid assumption that such celebrities will draw attention to the endorsed brand and affect customers positively. However, it has proven a challenge for certain companies to determine the meaning consumers associate with these celebrity endorsers and how these affect their attitudes.

Purchase Intention. Purchase intention describes consumers' desire to purchase something or service because they think they need it. In other words, purchase intention is the possibility that a customer would repurchase a good or service after considering whether it is worthwhile to spend more money to repurchase it (Madahi & Sukati, 2012). Celebrity endorsement influences advertising performance, brand identification, brand recall, buy intention, and even the purchase behavior of customers (Schimmelpfennig & Hollense, 2016; Spry et al., 2011). This shows that consumers easily link themselves with products or service advertisements with celebrities, and so helps them remember the information being given, which impacts their buying intention in the short or long run (Osei-Frimpong., 2019). In addition, Arcega et al. (2019) cited in their study that marketers employ celebrity endorsers to influence consumers' purchase choices to improve their sales and extend their market shares (Kumar, 2010). In today 's dynamic and competitive environment, customers are continuously exposed to various brands through different marketing strategies. Consumer behavior is an important and complex area for marketers, as other people have different needs. Purchase intention is the term used to describe a consumer's desire to purchase a product or even take activities associated with doing so, as measured by the likelihood of the consumer doing so (Rowlan, 2016). purchasing inclination influences purchasing intention. When a purchase action takes place, it may be predicted using purchase intention (Kao, 2017).

Hypotheses Development. Customers are drawn to a well-known public figure, which can be transferred to products and brands via various promotional messages and channels combined with credibility and values. Previous research has demonstrated that commercials using celebrity endorsements of items are more effective than those that do not (Knoll and Matthes, 2017), resulting in increased sales and profits (Bergkvist and Zhou, 2016). Magbanua's (2021) study cited several studies that indicate that promotional initiatives might result in brand recognition and equity. Still, the specifics of these initiatives have not yet been decided concerning the kind that could draw in new customers, like important drivers for purchases (Ali & Cheng, 2012). Marketers increasingly use celebrities to capture consumers' attention and help them remember their brand. Multinational organizations use celebrity endorsement in advertisements because they believe celebrities significantly impact consumer buying behavior and purchase intention (Khan & Lodhi, 2016). Not only this, but marketers expect their brands to benefit in many more ways by linking them to celebrities (Gupta et al., 2015). Based on the theory of planned behavior, they also discovered that some survey variables were chosen to study the relationships between them. They divided the findings section into two parts, regression and correlation and found a strong link between the likeability of celebrities who support and endorse (Wu et al., 2012). Findings of Rossiter's (2014) favorable correlation between celebrity appeal and purchasing behavior were proven by the study. Brand awareness could help consumers remember a particular brand. Hence, the researchers proposed null hypotheses of this study that:

Ho1: Celebrity endorsement factors do not have a significant and positive impact on brand awareness.

Ho2: Celebrity endorsement factors do not have a significant and positive impact on purchase intention.

Ho3: Brand awareness has no significant impact on purchase intention.

Conceptual Model

The study is anchored on the theory of planned behavior (TPB), developed by Ajzen (2019), which attempts to predict human behavior and determine intents and influencing behaviors. Depending on the degree to which a behavior is controlled by the individual and the degree to which perceived behavioral control is an accurate measure of actual behavioral control. External factors may also directly force or prevent behaviors, regardless of the intention. However, using the TPB model as a primary theory is relative to the behavioral intention leading to purchase decisions. Furthermore, the researchers expanded the TPB theory to include the Kokil and Kamile Classic Marketing Theories (cited in the study of Adam & Hussein, 2017), which explain that celebrity endorsement, according to marketers, has several benefits, including boosting a brand’s legitimacy, encouraging customer trust, and grabbing consumers’ attention. McGuire (2000) states that using any communication depends on similarity, familiarity, and likeability. The framework depicted the interrelationships of study variables with factors in the usage of celebrity endorsement. Figure 1 depicts the interrelationships of study variables under investigation.

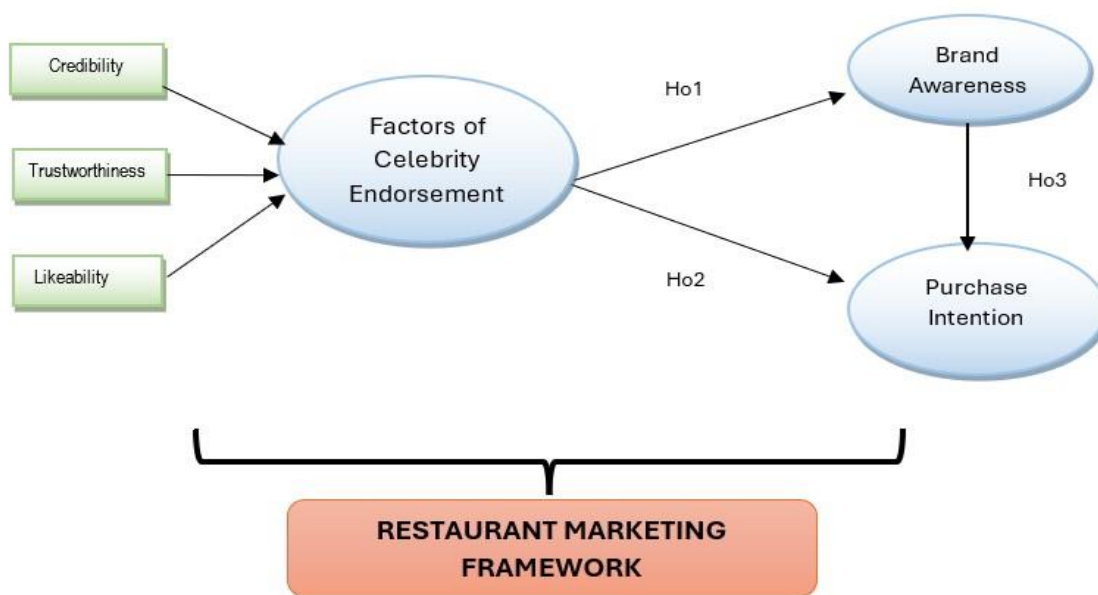


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design as a significant tool in gathering data. Descriptive research design determines and describes the characteristics of a population’s phenomenon or sample group, while quantitative research collects and analyzes numerical data (Dudovsky, 2018). It can find patterns and averages, make predictions, test relationships, and generalize results to broader populations. The correlation method was used to see whether a significant relationship exists between the factors of using celebrity endorsement, brand awareness, and purchase intention.

Respondents of the Study and Sampling Technique.

The respondents of this study were students from the Higher Education Department of San Juan De Dios Educational Foundation Incorporated-College comprised of the College of Medical Technology, College of Nursing, College of Physical Therapy and College of Business and Management with Hospitality Management, Office Administration and Entrepreneurship Programs were included. The researchers used a purposive sampling method by introducing the criteria for selecting students. Students’ respondents are aged 18 years and studied from 1st year to 4th year during the AY 2022-2023 and 1st semester 2023-2024. The perception that students are

customers is essential since “how the consumer of the service is defined determines their view and perception of any product or service provided by the fast-food restaurants. The total population of the students of SJDEFI was determined through the official list of enrolled students from the SJDEFI Registrar’s Office. Given the sampling process used in the study, 317 students are enrolled in the Higher Education Department. In getting the actual sample, the researchers utilized the Raosoft Statistical Sample Calculator with a 95% confidence interval, a 5% margin of error, and a 50% response rate. Thus, the sample size required for the study is 174 students. Table 1 presents the distribution of the student-respondents per course program.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents

Courses at SJDEFI	Population	Respondents (F)	Percentage
BSN	154	88	51
BSMT	77	25	14
BSPT	21	10	6
BSHM	30	30	17
BSOA	20	11	6
BSE	15	10	6
Total	317	174	100%

Source: Registrar’s Office as of September 2023 (2023-2024)

The BSN got the most responses from the students, with 88 or equivalent to 51%, followed by BSHM with 30 or 17%. Despite the BSMT being the 2nd highest enrolment, it only generated 25 or 14%, together with BSPT with 10 or 6%. Due to ethical considerations, respondents cannot be forced to answer the survey if they refuse to participate. However, the researchers banked on the interested students from the BSN to complete the required 174 target sample. Notably, the size of the College of Nursing accounts for the overwhelming presence of its students, whereas the Entrepreneurship Program has the lowest participation rate in the study. Another interesting finding is that respondents from the Hospitality Management Program outperform those from the College of Medical Technology.

Research Instrumentation

The primary instrument in this research was a structured survey questionnaire. The researcher developed a survey instrument using relevant research on the study’s significant constructs and then customized it to fit the study’s context.

Factors of celebrity endorsements comprised of credibility, trustworthiness, and likeability were anchored from Calvo-Portal (2021), Naeem et al. (2020), and Adam (2017) studies. Indicators of brand awareness and purchase behavior intention were adapted from Cuomo (2019), Magbanua (2021) and Kusumasondjaja & Tjiptono (2019) research with modifications. However, the researchers formulated additional indicators and deleted some items from previous studies to localize the survey, fit in the study setting, and consider the expert’s face and content validation. A five-point Likert Scale was applied in the design and structure of the questions in the survey questionnaire using the level of agreement as the measurement scale. This process ensured that theoretical agreements directly relevant to the study’s main concepts were adequately established through expert consultation (Almeida et al. 2016). Based on computation, the reliability measurement’s outcome was high, at 0.943. The reliability analysis was valid and credible. Data was tabulated, tallied and analyzed using SPSS as the statistical software to determine the frequency and percentage, weighted mean and Pearson’s R to analyze the relationship between celebrity endorsement, brand awareness, and purchase intention.

The researchers exhausted the means to consider the ethical aspects of the research. A set of norms and concepts was upheld in all human participants. The ethical considerations ensure that no one acts in a harmful way to society or an individual and adheres to all ethical standards when collecting data. Informed consent and permits

were obtained and provided to all parties before implementation. Confidentiality was fully granted in conformity with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 and the Republic Act of 10173 in the Philippines.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Profile of Respondents.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Age	Frequency (N-174)	Percentage
18 – 24-year-old	111	64
25 – 34-year-old	61	35
35 – 44-year-old	2	1
Gender		
Male	49	28
Female	124	71
Others (LGBTQ)	1	1
Civil Status		
Single	172	99
Married	2	1
Course		
BSE	10	6
BSOA	11	6
BSHM	30	17
BSPT	10	6
BSMT	25	14
BSN	88	51

Age. Table 2 provides valuable information on the demographic profile according to age, with 64% of the sample, or equivalent to 111 students, falling within the age bracket of 18 to 24 years, followed by the age group spanning 25 to 34 years with 35% of the respondent population, constituting 61 individuals. These two age ranges are within the bulk of the student millennial generation. Those within the most minor demographic representation come from the age group of 35 to 44 years, with 2% of the population, or a mere two students. This is attributed to the program from office administration and entrepreneurship with students who are working full-time and want to finish a four-year degree program.

Gender. The gender distribution among the respondents reveals that a significant majority, equivalent to 71% of the total sample, comprises 124 female respondents. In contrast, male respondents constitute 28% of the total, with a numerical representation of 48 individuals, and a modest 1% identifies as part of the LGBTQ+ community. This finding implies that females dominated males in responding to the survey questionnaire.

Civil Status. Regarding the respondents' marital status, an overwhelming 99% of the sample population—172 students—is unmarried or single. One responder, who makes up the remaining 1%, is married and lives alone. These findings highlight the respondents' varied media consumption and the power of celebrity endorsements, in addition to revealing the complex demographics of the study's sample.

Course. The table thoroughly overviews the approach of the 174 research participants. With 88 students (51%) from the College of Nursing, it has the biggest group in the study, followed by 30 students (17%) from the Hospitality Management degree. Physical Therapy had ten responders (6%), whereas the College of Medical

Technology had 25 (14%). The Entrepreneurship Program and Office Administration drew 11 and 10 replies, respectively. Due to its vast student base, the College of Nursing was overwhelmingly represented, whereas the Entrepreneurship program had the least number of participants. Notably, there were more replies from the Hospitality Management Program than from the College of Medical Technology, which is an intriguing finding due to the large population of BSMT compared to BSHM. This is attributed to the fact that some students refused to participate in the survey for unknown reasons.

Impact of Celebrity Endorsements. Respondents are swayed by their preferred celebrity endorsers, with 159 to 91% saying yes and 15 to 9% saying no.

Factors of Celebrity Endorsement Assessment, Brand Awareness and Purchase Intention.

Table 3 presents the result of the assessment of respondents on the factors of using celebrity endorsement along the dimensions of Credibility, Trustworthiness, and Likability, including brand awareness and purchase intention.

Table 3. Mean scores of Factors of Celebrity Endorsement, Brand Awareness and Purchase Intention

Factors	WM	SD	INT
1. Credibility	3.61	0.9805	A
2. Trustworthiness	3.49	1.0177	A
3. Likeability	3.92	0.9299	A
4. Brand Awareness	3.68	1.0118	A
5. Purchase Intention	3.16	1.0876	SWA

- Legend:** WM – Weighted Mean SA – Strongly Agree
 SD – Standard Deviation A - Agree
 INT – Interpretation SWA – Somewhat Agree
 DA – Disagree SDA – Strongly Disagree

Customers’ sense of connection to their favorite celebrity is called credibility, and it was rated with 3.61 and interpreted as “Agree.” The overall finding suggests that credibility is social proof and is the primary factor in consumers’ belief in celebrity endorsements. This means that people are social creatures who frequently seek others for direction and affirmation, especially those they like or regard as influential. A celebrity endorsing a business or product acts as social proof, indicating that the item is reliable and appealing. In addition, the findings reveal that people are more sensitive to their recommendations due to their emotional connection and want to mimic their lifestyle or qualities. Customers think that by consuming culinary items or companies that have the endorsement of famous people, they might emulate those people’s glamorous lifestyles or develop comparable traits. The finding corroborates the study by Erdogan & Baker (2000), which found that endorsements by celebrities who are experts in a specific area, such as a professional athlete endorsing sports equipment, can enhance consumer trust and influence their purchase decisions positively. This is true with the source credibility model, which is concerned with the source’s reliability and expertise and was introduced by Olaosebikan (2020). According to their research on the impact of source credibility on audience communication retention, information is considered more reliable when it comes from a source with a high level of credibility and less credible when it comes from a source with a low level of credibility. In other words, people will think favorably of the message if the source is viewed as being of the highest caliber. The previous study by Seiler & Kucza (2017) and Djafarova & Rushworth (2017), which used the concept of source credibility, proved that celebrity endorsers can make an advertisement more effective than a non-celebrity endorser because they tend to be

perceived as credible inducing a significantly higher number of customers to purchase. Additionally, it was demonstrated that a celebrity endorser's credibility and dependability have a significant impact on purchase intention in fast-food restaurants, which was consistent with Khan et al. (2019) and Wang & Scheinbaum (2017).

On the other hand, trustworthiness reveals a 3.49 mean score and is interpreted as "Agree." The findings imply that the effectiveness of the endorsement depends heavily on the celebrity's ability and moral character. While expertise in this sense refers to the celebrity's level of knowledge and experience, trustworthiness in this situation relates to the celebrity's degree of honesty and integrity, in which respondents do not know the true motives of the endorsers. However, the rest of the indicators were rated within the "agree" rating range. This means that trustworthiness measures how much consumers believe the endorser's claims to be valid. Therefore, choosing endorsers with high trust, honesty, and affinity is essential to boost the advertisement. Numerous studies have demonstrated that the trustworthiness of celebrity endorsers plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer perceptions and purchase decisions. For instance, research conducted by Erdogan and Baker (2000) found that when consumers perceive celebrity endorsers as credible and trustworthy figures, it positively impacts their attitudes toward the endorsed product or service. As stressed in previous research, celebrity endorsement, according to marketers, attracts attention, boosts brand trust, and establishes credibility, all of which led to better sales (Sheu, 2010). Several advertising appeals are utilized to pique a consumer's attention and encourage a buying intention (Ling et al., 2010). Suppose target consumers believe the celebrity is trustworthy and honest enough to persuade and gain their trust. In that case, they will become more attentive and avoid investigating and purchasing the endorsed brand's products (Nguyen, 2021).

Moreover, in likeability, overall, the mean score is 3.92 and interpreted as "Agree." This factor is rated the highest factor among respondents. This depicts that the striking perception of the popularity and physical attractiveness of the celebrity endorser gives a unanimous consensus and signifies a profound and compelling affirmation of the likability of the celebrity endorsers among respondents. This means that the likeability of customers in any celebrity endorsers is synonymously associated with the celebrities' attractiveness on TV and print, especially those on social media, which is often utilized to support brands with a strong desire to influence customers to pick that brand.

This study demonstrates that beauty is a quality that encompasses more than just physical attraction; it also refers to achievement, lifestyle, and athletic ability. There is a strong correlation between appearance and customer sentiments about advertising. These consensus replies support the endorsers' natural appeal and favorability, highlighting their ability to connect well with the audience—phenomena of utmost relevance in marketing and advertising. This result is supported by Agam (2017), who states that well-known endorsers affect consumers' attitudes toward consumer product advertisements more than non-popular endorsers. Johansson and Bozan (2017) said that having a successful endorser gives a brand a high-quality image. Past studies investigating the impact of celebrity endorsers repeatedly confirm the significant influence of endorser likability on customer perceptions and actions. According to research by Till and Busler from 2000, the likeability of endorsers has a substantial impact on how effective marketing efforts are. Celebrity endorsers the public likes are more likely to create a deep emotional bond with them, making them sympathetic personalities. This likability-based relatability cultivates a positive attitude in customers and motivates them to interact with the promoted goods and services. As a result, a key element in raising the resonance of advertising efforts is the likeability of celebrity endorsers.

Brand Awareness. The table indicates the respondents' strong level of awareness and recalls about the influence of celebrity endorsement in fast-food restaurants, with indicator 3 posting the highest mean score of 3.86, more so the overall mean score posited a 3.68 and interpreted as "agree." The finding represents that the unanimous opinion among the respondents regarding the significant influence that celebrities have on brand awareness is highlighted by the unanimity of the scores. Such broad agreement highlights the enormous importance of celebrity impact in influencing students' opinions and brand awareness, offering a crucial element in consumer behavior and marketing tactics. Moreover, the result denotes that customers with a favorable perception of a brand are more likely to repurchase it, making it easier for marketers to become used to the endorsement. Consumers are primarily responsible for celebrity endorsements; their emotional attachment to a celebrity influences their buying decision rather than the endorser's qualifications and reliability.

According to Till and Shimp (1998), employing celebrities in advertising attracts the target market’s attention and improves brand memory. Celebrities are viewed as attention-getting tools, and their connection to a business frequently increases brand recall and awareness. Celebrity endorsements are an effective marketing and brand management technique due to the increased brand awareness that plays a significant role in developing consumer perceptions and the basis for brand preferences. Jiang (2006) discovered that the brand image’s consumer perception would influence their consumption decision-making and purchasing behavior inclinations. Jin’s (2020) research results show that company and product brand awareness and image positively affect consumer attitudes and buying preferences. Celebrity endorsement creates instant brand awareness, supports brand establishment, and increases brand recall (Morwitz, 2014).

Purchase Intention. The statistics for the variable about the impact of celebrities on students’ buying intentions are shown in Table 8. The fact that respondents regularly and identically express their opinions with “somewhat agree” for each item in the table highlights an obvious pattern. The respondents’ tendency to reply “somewhat agree” reflects a sophisticated and fair understanding of how celebrities influence consumers’ purchasing decisions. It shows that even acknowledging the impact of famous people on brand perception, students would continue to revisit and make purchases. One celebrity’s endorsement won’t change people’s decision on which restaurants to visit because advertisements only have a little effect. People will instead be influenced by the quality of the meal, the service, and the cost. Mainly because even without their backing, fast food companies will continue advertising, and people will still eat fast food. However, most companies still value partnerships with the trendiest celebrities, ideal for fast-food restaurants to attract new consumers, especially younger generations. These celebrity collaborations—whether a commercial or a dish made in their honor—have been around for a while and may result in enormous success for the company.

Perhaps the result was attributed to the single class or nature of respondents instead of the generic class. Though a majority of research depicted the contribution of celebrity endorsement on purchase intention, it is evident that it depends on the classification and nature of the products and the anticipated affinity between fans and celebrities in terms of interests and lifestyle. For instance, Rachbini (2018) supported such an implication on the influence of celebrity endorsements on purchase intention in smartphones. It was found that expertise and trustworthiness influence purchase intention in smartphones. Baniya (2017) measured celebrity endorsement affecting the brand loyalty of Nepalese consumers. The study confirmed source expertise and matching positively influence purchase intention.

RESULTS OF HYPOTHESIS.

Table 4 reveals the results of the hypothesis that determine the influence of celebrity endorsement on brand awareness and purchase intention.

Table 4. Relationship between the factors of celebrity endorsement, brand awareness and purchase intention

		Factors of CE	Brand Awareness	Purchase Intention	Remarks
Factors of CE	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.599**	.536**	Significant
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	
	N	174	174	174	
Brand Awareness	Pearson Correlation	.599**	1.000		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000			
	N	174	174		
Purchase Intention	Pearson Correlation	.536**		1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000			
	N	174		174	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Dependent Variable – Brand Awareness and Purchase Intention

The data was examined using Pearson's Correlation Analysis, a method for determining the relationship between two quantitative and continuous variables, according to Ahlgren et al. (2003). In this study, the aim is to assess the effect of the factors of celebrity endorsement (credibility, trustworthiness, and likeability) on brand awareness and purchase intention. The study likewise attempted to determine if brand awareness is significantly associated with purchase intention.

From the results of Pearson's Correlation Analysis, the celebrity endorsement factors significantly influence brand awareness, with a correlation coefficient of 0.599*, as shown in Table 4. Besides this, the relevance constructs of credibility, trustworthiness, and likeability likewise show a significant influence on brand awareness with correlation coefficient values of 0.509**, 0.506**, and 0.608**, respectively, with p-values of 0.000 (2-tailed). Thus, null hypotheses were rejected. The absolute value of the Pearson coefficient registered a 0.50 to 0.70 range, denoting a strong positive correlation. According to Stephanie (2015), the r value should be used to assess the significance of Pearson's correlation coefficients. When the r value is more than zero, there is a greater tendency toward a positive association; nevertheless, when the r value is less than zero, there is a greater tendency toward a negative relationship. Siegle (2009) claims that the Sig. Two variables have a statistically significant connection when the two-tailed value is less than or equal to 0.05.

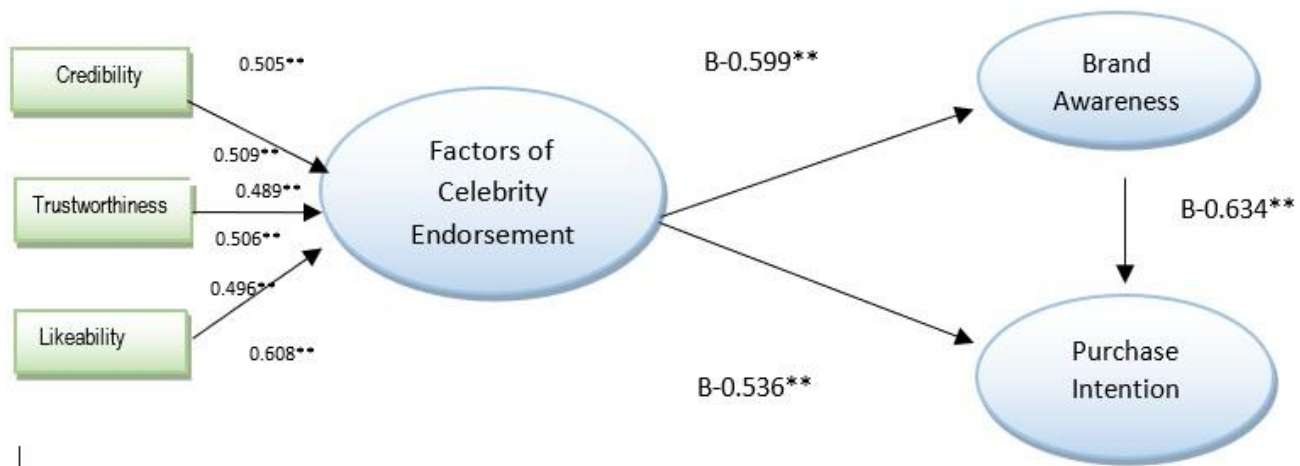
The strong effects of celebrity endorsement on brand awareness in patronizing fast-food restaurants reveal that celebrity endorsement is one strategy for promoting brands and goods in a cutthroat marketing climate since it increases message persuasion and influences message recall, attitudes toward advertising, and the brand. Advertising's efficacy is boosted by consumer willingness and brand awareness (Park, 2016; Agnihotri, 2016), which boosts sales through celebrity endorsement. In addition, the results reveal that the famous endorser's trustworthiness and physical attractiveness (likeability) bring more credibility to the brand and give quality to the brand image. Compared to non-celebrities, celebrity endorsers attracted more attention in advertising. Hiring celebrity endorsers at fast food restaurants improves customers' probability of buying or promoting a product. However, advertising the brand negatively impacts the long-term outcomes. Logically, the marketing style and celebrity impact regarding brand awareness rely on the link between respondents' reactions and the type of endorser affecting them. Customers prefer to pick brands or goods with values and connotations that align with their own and will strive to avoid buying goods if they conflict with their ideas and values or are otherwise different from them. This is true in brand image research. Jacoby's research pointed out that awareness of brand image strongly influences quality perception and found that the more positive the brand image is, the more significant the impact is. (Jacoby, 1971, cited by Chen et al., 2021). The study suggests that for a business to be credible and well-known, it must engage with customers properly, regularly update its online presence, and use celebrities as brand ambassadors. As the literature proposes, management theories state that businesses should interact with customers in their comments and correspondence, respond to their inquiries, and be informed about significant events and emerging trends crucial to achieving their objectives. (Loureiro, Guerreiro, Serra, 2019). It is argued that an established and powerful influencer of customers' buying intentions is celebrity endorsement. Consumers are likelier to believe celebrities and buy what they endorse because of their celebrity and public image (Ayeh, 2015). Analogously, commercials featuring celebrities are linked to faster information processing times, better product assessments, and stronger buy intentions than those without such endorsements (Rs and Alawadhi, 2020). Moreover, according to Ratten et al. (2010), celebrity endorsement increases brand awareness and influences brand image, which aligns with TPB and marketing theories. The findings of the current study have a perfect correlation with earlier research. According to the results of the present study, celebrity endorsement has a significant and vital effect in raising brand awareness and brand image, which in turn influences consumer purchasing intentions.

Furthermore, the table shows significant positive effects between celebrity endorsement and purchase intention factors, with a 0.536** coefficient. Additionally, with the specific constructs of credibility, trustworthiness, and likeability, the correlation coefficient values of 0.505**, 0.489**, and 0.496** with a two-tailed p-value of 0.000, respectively, signify likewise significant relationships; thus, null hypotheses were rejected. It is surprising to note that despite the "somewhat agree" rating in the purchase intention from the students-respondents, there is a significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Overall, the strength of correlation results shows a strong positive influence between the predictor and outcome variables. However, only credibility has a solid positive correlation when revealing the specific factors. The trustworthiness and likeability depict moderate positive correlations. However, it still affects the purchase intention as a dependent variable. The

finding infers that credibility, trustworthiness, and likeability positively influenced purchase intention, arguing that many consumers considered celebrities their role models. Companies continue to use celebrities as endorsers in many branded products in restaurants and other products. As an illustration, Nike’s yearly certification expenses rose to \$1 billion by May 2015 (Isidore, 2015). It is evident that customers’ perceptions of the promoted goods are influenced by celebrities’ beautiful looks credible with the product, which was proven by Roshan et al. (2017) in Sri Lanka in endorsing a perfume brand that substantially impacts consumers’ purchase intentions. Similarly, Ahmed et al. (2015) discovered that celebrity endorsement of items favorably moved customers’ attitudes about brand acceptance and purchasing behavior.

Regarding determining the influence between brand awareness and purchase intention, a correlation coefficient value of 0.634** was computed and revealed a strong positive influence between the variables; thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The results of this analysis show a strong positive influence between the predictor and outcome variables using the strength of correlation with 0.50 to 0.70, indicating a strong positive correlation. The finding implies that brand awareness is found to have a strong positive influence on brand purchase intention and a good antecedent to purchase intention. It suggests that managers must pay attention to sustain brand promotional efforts and consider other factors influencing consumers to make purchases. This finding is consistent with Foroudi et al. (2018), Kim, Choe, and Petrick (2018), and Coelho, Rita, and Santos (2018). The finding indicates that the celebrities are well known in respondents’ minds. Brand awareness is consumer awareness of the brand’s existence (Spry et al., 2011). The higher consumer satisfaction with products and services as advertised by the endorser, the higher their desire to make repurchases and influence other people to make a similar purchase.

The findings may be summed up by saying that all the constructs used in this study were significant when compared to the connection suggested by the proposed model. The outcome showed that aspects like celebrity endorsement, brand awareness, and purchase intention had significant associations, opting to reject the null hypothesis. Figure 2 explains the recommended model based on Pearson’s Correlations Analysis.



** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 2. Pearson’s Correlations Analysis Path

Proposed Marketing Framework for Fast-food Restaurants

According to the latest trends, on average, 40% of Gen Zers said they’d be more likely to go to a fast-food establishment if a celebrity endorsed it. Consumers have short memories for endorsements: only about 16 percent, on average, were able to match celebrities with brands they have worked with (Meyers, 2021). Thus, despite celebrity-endorsed products, customers tend to patronize the brand even due to its awareness and image. Figure 3 shows the proposed marketing framework in celebrity-endorsed fast-food restaurants.



Figure 3. Marketing Framework in Celebrity Endorsed Fast-food Restaurant.

The figure reflects various dimensionalities of factors that affect customer awareness of the brand through a celebrity endorsement from any mode of advertisement or endorsement. The study findings positively identify credibility, trustworthiness, and likability as primary sources of motivation for customers' decisions to dine in a restaurant. However, the study reveals that additional factors, such as publicity, can add value to celebrity endorsement. This will be realized by implementing the most advanced technology platforms for fast-food restaurants. Restaurants should not only focus on the traditional mode of promotion but incorporate new trends in building the brand through other promotional mixes such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, integrating interesting content using celebrities. TikTok hopes to create a significant new revenue stream for its younger user base. To compete with Twitter and Threads, the social media app—well-known for its short-form videos—will soon let users publish just text posts. Additional factors, such as publicity, media exposure, and celebrity controversy, may be variables in celebrity endorsement that affect purchase intention in future studies, as supported by Min et al. (2019). Publicity and public relations can enhance the fast-food restaurant's brand awareness and image, resulting in frequent purchase intention and building long-term customer relationships. Future studies can explore these additional variables to understand better the factors influencing celebrity endorsement and purchase intent.

This framework can be used to kickstart fast-food restaurant marketing initiatives. Whether for a new concept or to reinvigorate an existing restaurant, they can use this framework to take the next step in marketing the restaurant. Nevertheless, fast food should move forward with customer-focused marketing strategies and some customer service improvements, precisely convenience. Even after all of these marketing strategies have been created and implemented, fast-food establishments will still want direction on how to blend them to implement a marketing mix at precisely the right point in the phases of the business lifecycle. Fast-food businesses should run more marketing campaigns across various channels that enhance and complement one another to achieve their goals while leveraging celebrity as a tactic. Additionally, fast food companies must diversify their marketing efforts and integrate online and offline marketing into their campaigns due to the rise of many online marketing platforms, including social media, email, messaging services, and the Internet.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The study aims to determine the effect of celebrity endorsements, such as credibility, trustworthiness and likeability, on students' brand awareness and purchase intentions to dine at selected fast-food restaurants. The

results of the factors of the celebrity endorsement, such as likeability, credibility, and trustworthiness in descending order, were good determinants in analyzing the effect of these elements on brand awareness and purchase intention. Credibility shows a high positive association with purchase intention when disclosing particular factors. The trustworthiness and likeability show a somewhat favorable association. However, it continues to have an impact on purchase intention. Because many customers look up to celebrities, credibility, trustworthiness, and likeability significantly increase purchase intention. Thus, null hypotheses were rejected. Using celebrity endorsers helped fast-food chains succeed in the current economic climate by relying on celebrity endorsement's credibility, trustworthiness, and likeability. Moreover, brand awareness is a vital celebrity endorsement component when customers are more inclined to repurchase it, and it is a reliable brand image that helps customers make pleasant purchasing decisions. However, in contrast, customers' decision to purchase is influenced by the quality of the meal, the service, and the cost instead of the celebrity endorsers because even without their backing, fast food companies will continue to advertise, and people will still eat fast food.

This research will contribute to the existing literature on celebrity endorsement and its effect on consumer behavior, specifically among students in the context of fast-food restaurants. The findings will provide valuable insights for marketers and advertisers, helping them understand the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements in attracting the target audience and driving consumer behavior. The conclusions that would be derived will help understand the brand awareness level and purchase intention in the literature.

Implications to Theory Building. The study contributes to theory building based on the study results. The study may serve as a guide for fast-food restaurants when selecting endorsers to improve the marketing impacts of their brand. However, the selection of an endorser cannot be generalized per fast-food brand since the functions and usage of products vary. This forced the chains to operate effectively and efficiently by building the right brand for the right market rather than relying solely on favorable market conditions to increase profit margins.

Implications to Practice and Future Research. Fast-food restaurants must use celebrities or brand ambassadors to promote their brands through celebrity advertising. The study recommends adopting the proposed marketing framework for their marketing efforts. The personality traits that make a celebrity an effective spokesperson for a product or service are also essential components of celebrity advertising. This will increase brand awareness and persuade consumers to buy the approved brands. The use of fast-food brands in the present research was a deliberate choice intended to significantly get the response from the factors of using celebrity endorsement as a mode of advertisement before brand awareness and purchase intention. Additional work is needed to replicate the current findings by considering other brands and classifications of restaurants. The findings and implications of this study are constrained by some limitations, which provide an opportunity for future research since the data was only collected cross-sectionally over a brief period. It is suggested that future researchers acquire and analyze data longitudinally over more extended periods so there is more data variability. In addition, this research is limited to students of a higher education institution, mainly aged 18-24. Therefore, further research is recommended to expand the scope of study in terms of geographical and target respondents within a wider area and with broader criteria because a different research area could also uncover further findings. Future research may use other sources, such as publicity media exposure, and potentially be used as variables in celebrity endorsement that affect purchase intention.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researchers would like to thank San Juan Educational Foundation, Inc. – College for approving the study. Likewise, the researchers would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their useful feedback and intelligent ideas for improving our study.

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