



Celebrity endorsements: Influence of a product-endorser match on Millennials attitudes and purchase intentions



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ABSTRACT

The buying power of millennial consumers is ever growing. They are social consumers, sharing all aspects of their experiences on social media. One advertising technique that may sway millennial consumers is using a celebrity endorser. The purpose of this study was to investigate if the presence of a congruent product-endorser match helped influence purchase intent of millennial consumers and aide in favourable attitudes toward the advertisement. Millennials evaluated an unfamiliar celebrity endorsement where they indicated they had little intent to purchase the product endorsed by the unfamiliar celebrity, but the unfamiliar celebrity did lead to favourable evaluations of the advertisement.

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1. Introduction

Today, consumers are constantly inundated with images of celebrities; not only are celebrities endorsing a multitude of consumer products but they are also found gracing the covers of gossip and fashion magazines. These mass media images can aide in the familiarisation with a celebrity. Celebrities have a unique position in the advertising landscape due to their respective careers, as well as from the constant media attention many receive. A celebrity endorser is someone who enjoys public recognition and who uses that recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement (McCracken, 1989). When celebrities are hired to endorse brands, they are able to draw more attention to the advertisements, break through the clutter of competing brands and can exert greater influence on consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions. Celebrities have the ability to make people take notice of what they are endorsing and create an immediate identity or persona for a product (Cooper, 1984). It has been stated that the celebrity is more effective when he/she is easy to recognise, likeable and friendly (Miciak and Shanklin, 1994). Therefore, advertising effectiveness can depend on the familiarity of the endorser.

The advertising literature provides ample indication that celebrities have had positive effects on both consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Many suggest that celebrity endorsers bring credibility to the advertising message, thus making these messages more effective. However, credibility alone cannot explain the positive effects of celebrity endorsers. Researchers have

also proposed that one's acceptance of a message relies on the similarity, familiarity and liking of an endorser (McGuire, 1985; Miciak and Shanklin, 1994) and argue that the physical attractiveness of an endorser can also influence the effectiveness of the advertising message (Kamins, 1990; Ohanian, 1991). Past studies have shown that using attractive celebrity endorsers help generate higher purchase intentions (Kahle and Homer, 1985; Till and Busler, 2000; Ohanian, 1991) as well as create positive attitudes toward the advertisement (Kahle and Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1990).

Despite the evidence that celebrity endorsers are viewed as more credible and more attractive than non-celebrity endorsers, advertisers generally accept that the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements in advertising can be enhanced by matching the unique qualities of an endorser with that of a product (Lynch and Schuler, 1994). The "match-up" hypothesis contends that the higher the perceived fit between the celebrity's image and the endorsed brand, the more persuasive the celebrity and the advertisement will be (Kahle and Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1990; Till and Busler, 1998). However, while the "match-up" hypothesis has been widely studied and accepted in both industry and academia, the reasons found for a product-endorser match are inconsistent. While some have concluded credibility impacts a significant match, others have stated the physical appearance of the endorser influences a positive match. Therefore, this study only examined the fit between the celebrity endorser and the product in the advertisement, eliminating the measurement of attractiveness and credibility. Examining the congruency between the celebrity and the product is pivotal for the endorsement process.

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2. Purpose and research questions

The purpose of this study was to use the match-up hypothesis to measure the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements. Specifically, does the fit between the celebrity and product generate a positive impact on the attitudes and purchases intentions of millennial consumers? Previous studies have used fictitious celebrities; therefore it is thought that utilising real celebrity endorsements can generate more authentic responses from these consumers. Millennials are more concerned about brand ethos and their experience and relationship with brands (White, 2014). These consumers have been raised in a time that just about every product available to buy is branded, and therefore, they are more comfortable with brands than previous generations (Merrill, 1999), so examining the attitudes of these consumers can be very beneficial to marketers and retailers who target these consumers. In addition, millennials utilise brands as an extension as themselves which is unlike previous generations (Novak et al., 2006), so there is a need to understand how they respond to specific marketing tactics, such as celebrity endorsements.

Due to the unique views millennials have toward brands and celebrities, it is believed that examining the link that may be formed between a real celebrity and a real product from a current endorsement will capture millennials attitudes toward celebrity endorsements and aide in understanding the degree of influence a celebrity endorser has over them. This study has the potential to advance our understanding of endorsement research by examining the impact of unfamiliar celebrity endorsers and their ability to influence the powerful millennial market. Further, examination of a link between an unfamiliar celebrity and a real product has had little to no attention. Does a celebrity endorser who is unfamiliar to millennials impact their attitude towards the advertised brand or their attitude toward the advertisement? While branding is not a novel concept, the way the millennial consumer is responding to brands are not well established (Phau and Cheong, 2009; Bakewell and Mitchell, 2003). Therefore, their responses should be examined. Effective celebrity endorsements aide in not only the formation of favourable attitudes toward the brand and advertisement but also can assist in the consumption of the advertised product. Therefore the following research questions were posed:

- 1) Will the presence of an unfamiliar product-endorser match elicit higher purchase intentions of the advertised product?
- 2) Will the presence of an unfamiliar product-endorser match influence millennial consumers to form positive attitudes toward the celebrity endorsement advertisement?
- 3) Will the presence of an unfamiliar product-endorser match influence millennial consumers to form positive attitudes toward the advertised brand?

3. Review of literature

3.1. Match-up hypothesis

The “match-up” hypothesis suggests that the visual imagery contained in the advertisement conveys information over and above the information contained in explicit verbal arguments (Rossiter and Percy, 1980). Empirically, the idea that the effectiveness of the celebrity endorsement occurs through the match-up hypothesis the more likely the qualities the celebrities’ possess will be passed onto the endorsed product. In practical terms the choice of the celebrity should fit with the associations the brand currently has (Thwaites et al., 2012). When the associations of the celebrity fit the desired associations or images of the brand, the celebrity then serves to create and reinforce existing associations

for that brand (Till, 1998). Due to the popularity of many celebrities, consumers will inevitably have pre-existing knowledge and attitudes toward a celebrity endorser well before they take on the role of a spokesperson. Ultimately, consumers’ acceptance of the endorsement starts before the celebrity is even selected, and the acceptance of the endorsement might only occur when the consumer perceives the images of the celebrity to be favourable. Therefore, it is crucial for the consumer to have both positive attitudes towards the celebrity as a person and as an endorser.

Previous studies that used the match-up hypothesis to measure endorser effectiveness indicated that celebrity attractiveness predicted positive advertisement evaluations (Kahle and Homer, 1985); that an incongruent product-endorser match reduces endorser believability and advertising effectiveness (Kamins and Gupta, 1994); and that the use of an attractive celebrity in an advertisement was more effective for attractiveness-related products (Kamins, 1990). Other studies found that the congruence between consumer self-image and celebrity image was an important role in the endorsement process, indicating that celebrity/product congruence had a direct, positive effect on attitude toward the ad (Choi and Rifon, 2012); or that the congruence between brand personality and celebrity personality had a significant influence on brand attitude and purchase intent (Pradhan et al., 2015). While these studies established the need for congruency between a celebrity and a product, the use of an identifiable celebrity is essential to help foster a long-standing bond between the brand and consumer.

3.2. Advertising culture's impact on millennials

In recent years 14–19% of advertisements that aired in the United States featured celebrity endorsements of consumer brands, and this number was over twice as high in certain foreign markets (Creswell, 2008). The current advertising culture is not just limited to advertising mediums like print and broadcasting; today advertisements can be found across social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Consumers can “like” a product on Facebook, follow a celebrity on Twitter or Instagram and watch podcasts or videos on YouTube and many of these platforms have turned to advertisements for monetary support. Today, celebrities tweet about products they use or places they go, post pictures of themselves in their daily lives and interact with fans by retweeting a post or link that was sent to them. Social media platforms allow celebrities to connect and interact with their fans faster than ever. Many celebrities also use social media as a way to control their images in the media. Millennial celebrities are quick to post photos to their Instagram accounts, showing their fans images of themselves before they appear in the tabloids.

The ages of Millennial generation varies; some have reported that this generational cohort was born between 1980 and 1995, while others say these consumers were born between 1982 and 2004. According to the Pew Research Center, Millennials are anyone born after 1980 and are around 80 million strong. Millennials want to share their experiences, their purchases, and their meals through social media because it is gratifying to them. Currently, 37% of younger Millennials have stated that they are “missing something” if they are not on Facebook or Twitter everyday (Barton et al., 2014). Millennials account for 21–26% of the population, but 33–35% of retail spending, which is estimated at \$1.3 trillion, in a market worth \$250 billion (White, 2014). These consumers are heavy users of technology and are able to stay connected with brands wherever they go. In fact 67% of Millennials reported that they use smartphones to access the Internet, while 47% use their tablet (Barton et al., 2014). These consumers also engage with brands more thoroughly via social networks, by “liking” a product or post product reviews, while others follow brands on Twitter or

share links about products on LinkedIn.

Millennials are not easy to sway, but if they follow celebrities on social media who endorse products, they are more likely to pay attention. They are twice as likely than Gen X to be influenced by celebrities and four times more likely than Baby Boomers (Barton et al., 2014). This influence has increased especially when it comes to apparel, lifestyle and luxury categories and brands (Barton et al., 2014). The influence that celebrities can have over social media is especially powerful, and retailers have started to realise the need to be involved on social media as well. Nordstrom, for example, has begun pinning footwear in its shoe departments with pins that indicate the shoe's popularity on Pinterest (White, 2014). Barney's New York has recently combined shopping and Instagram, where if you follow their official Instagram feed, the consumer can simply click the link in their profile to shop it. Celebrities and retailers are not alone in their usage of social media; many Fortune 500 companies are embracing social media tactics as part of their business and marketing strategies as well (Barnes and Lescault, 2011).

Many millennials look up to celebrities and according to several researchers the idolisation of celebrities is a normal part of identity development. Young consumers can be found borrowing aspects related to their identity development from celebrities they admire (Boon and Lomore, 2001). When celebrities dye their bright pink or start clothing trends, many consumers will follow in their footsteps. This process of self-construction has the ability to make a celebrity exemplary and inspirational to those consumers who admire them (Peter and Olson, 1996). Many may also find these celebrities actions personally relevant to them and use them in constructing a self-satisfying self-concept (McCracken, 1989). The power celebrities have lies in their ability to influence consumers.

Kelman's (1956) social influence theory explains the ways a celebrity can influence consumers: compliance, identification, and internalisation (for a complete review see Kelman 62–66). *Compliance* can occur when an individual accepts influence from another person or from a group because he/she hopes to achieve a favourable reaction from them. The individual may be interested in attaining specific rewards or avoiding specific punishments that the influencing agent controls. *Identification* can occur when an individual adopts behaviour derived from another person or group because this behaviour is associated with a satisfying self-defining relationship to this person or group. The individual actually attempts to be like the other person; the consumer thinks that if he/she buys that specific product he/she will either look like or become like the celebrity. *Internalisation* can occur when an individual accepts influence because the induced behaviour is congruent with his/her value system. The consumer will look to the celebrity for expertise, and if he feels that the celebrity is knowledgeable enough he will buy the endorsed product. Within this view, the influence a celebrity has will vary based on how the consumer responds to the celebrity in the advertisement.

3.3. Celebrity's influence on Millennials consumption

Celebrities are used as endorsers to make the advertisements more believable, and make the communication of the advertisement more effective (Biswas et al., 2006). Since the millennial generation is inundated constantly with celebrity's images, determining which celebrity this generation can identify with is essential to the consumption of the advertised product. Dotson and Hyatt (2005) found that a celebrity endorsement makes a product more socially prominent and therefore, this helps millennials make a statement about themselves through consumption of that product.

This generation has been socialized to believe they live in a materialistic society (Bakewell and Mitchell, 2003) which

increases their consumption patterns more than previous generations. According to Belk (1985) in American society, material possessions are seen as an expression of how important a person is. When certain products are consumed, symbolic cues are created to aide in the development of the self and self-identity (Wattanasuwan, 2005). Millennial consumers are so concerned about what others think of them that they are more involved with their purchases than previous generations because of the social consequences associated with making the wrong purchase (Fernandez, 2009; Darley, 1999). The social image of these consumers is of the utmost importance and their brand consumption reinforces this need.

Millennials actively seek out products that reflect their self-perceptions (Lippe, 2001), and therefore, they are more likely to be persuaded to buy if the endorser that appears in those advertisements matches their self-image. Sukhdial et al. (2002) found that in order for celebrity endorsers to effectively reach the audience, they must connect with their audience. Brands that employ a celebrity endorser that has the ability to connect with the millennial audience can influence the consumption needs of this generation.

4. Method

4.1. Pre-test

A pre-test was conducted to pick the celebrity endorsements to use for this study. Previous researchers have used various methods when selecting celebrity endorsers; therefore this study employed a previously used method. First, an exhaustive search was done to find previous celebrity endorsements of consumer products. Then these endorsements were shown to several undergraduate classes where students rated familiarity and likeability of celebrities endorsing various consumer products on a seven point semantic differential scale, a method used previously (Choi and Rifon, 2007). This method will help determine if the use of an unfamiliar celebrity can still influence the millennial consumer. Celebrities with mean scores less than 6 were considered for use in this study because according to Choi and Rifon (2007) this score indicated that the respondents were not very familiar with those particular celebrities. The two celebrities that had the lowest mean scores were Demi Moore endorsing Versace (mean=1.53) and Sarah Jessica Parker endorsing the GAP (mean=1.65). Therefore, these celebrity endorsements were chosen for this study. A manipulation check was then run to determine the degree of familiarity these respondents had with celebrity endorsements shown to them. The question "How familiar are you with the celebrity that appeared in the ad?" was asked where the respondents answered on a range from "Extremely unfamiliar (1) to Extremely familiar (7)". The *t*-test indicated that both Demi Moore (67.774) and Sarah Jessica Parker (79.564) were in fact the least familiar celebrities. The celebrity the respondents were most familiar with was Paris Hilton (165.309).

4.2. Sample

Students, who make up the generational cohort of millennials and are in the age range of 20–29, were used as the sample for this study. This age range represents the millennial generational cohort, while students who are under 20 now represent generation Z (those who are born between 1995 and 2010) (Williams, 2015). This generation has been exposed to rapid advances in technology, especially with social media sites. The use of social media platforms has also contributed to millennials increased interaction with celebrities. According to Saxton (2007) millennials have

shown an increased obsession with celebrities and their actions. In addition they are quite focused on what celebrities wear and which products they use (Noble et al., 2009). According to Anderson (2011), millennials have been found to look up to celebrities who they grew up watching. These celebrities convey a more congruent image to millennials that help them meet their identification needs (Lazarevic, 2012). Several researchers have stated that using a celebrity endorser that millennials look up to and want to emulate can lead to increased congruency between the values of the this generations and the brand (Shuart, 2007; Brooks and Harris, 1998), and improve the relationship between this generation and the brand (Lazarevic, 2012). Choosing to ignore this powerful generation could be risky for companies considering that they are the future dominating segment of the marketplace (Neuborn and Kerwin, 1999). Therefore, using a student sample is not only consistent with previous studies exploring the effects of the “match-up” hypothesis (Kamins and Gupta, 1990; Kamins, 1990; Kahle and Homer, 1985; Till and Busler, 1998, 2000) but also necessary to explore how this generation responds to celebrities they are unfamiliar with.

4.3. Questionnaire development and administration

The students were asked to view the two advertisements and then answer questions specifically pertaining to the congruence of the celebrity and the product, their attitude toward the advertisement, their attitude toward the brand and their intent to purchase the advertised product. The congruency questions included asking how congruent (how well they fit together) is the image of the celebrity with that of the brand advertised, along with questions that asked how believable that celebrity is. These questions have been used in previous research (Kamins and Gupta, 1994; Kamins, 1990) and therefore deemed appropriate for this study. To measure attitude toward the ad and attitude toward the brand, scales were taken from Osgood et al. (1957), which include both affective and evaluative content, and were selected based on a review of existing studies (Kamins and Gupta, 1994; Kamins, 1990; Kahle and Homer, 1985; Till and Busler, 1998). To measure purchase intentions, three questions using a five-point scale assessing the likelihood that the respondent would purchase the product, the likelihood that the respondent would try the product on if seen in a store, and the likelihood the respondent would actively seek out the product in a store were used. These questions have also been used in previous studies and therefore appropriate to use in this study (Kamins and Gupta, 1994; Ohanian, 1991; Kamins, 1990; Till and Busler, 1998, 2000; Kahle and Homer, 1985). The questionnaire was sent out online to 300 male and female students in graduate and undergraduate classes and 295 were returned.

5. Results

5.1. Demographic analyses

Almost all of the respondents (94%) surveyed were female and 6% were male. Three-fourths (75%) of students surveyed were White, 11.3% were African-American, 9.3% were Hispanic, 3% were Asian, and 1.3% checked the “other” category. An overwhelming majority (98.3%) of the students were single, while 1.3% were married. Forty-one percent of the students had a bachelor's degree, 37.7% had an associate's degree, and 4.3% of the students had a graduate degree. See Table 1.

Table 1
Frequency distribution of demographics.

Variable	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Male	18	6.0	6.0	6.0
Female	282	94.0	94.0	100.0
White	225	75.0	75.0	75.0
Black	34	11.3	11.3	86.3
Hispanic	28	9.3	9.3	95.7
Asian	9	3.0	3.0	98.7
Other	4	1.3	1.3	100.0
Single	295	98.3	98.3	98.3
Married	4	1.3	1.3	99.7
AA	113	37.7	37.7	54.7
Bachelor	123	41.0	41.0	95.7
Graduate	13	4.3	4.3	100.0

5.2. Initial statistical procedures

Several reliability and consistency analyses were conducted first. To calculate factor scores for the celebrity/brand congruency, purchase intentions, and attitude towards the advertisement, and attitude towards the brand, exploratory factor analysis with promax was conducted. Specifically the congruency questions, “how familiar are you with the celebrity who appeared in the ad,” “how congruent is the celebrity with the brand they are endorsing,” “do you think this brand is a good fit for this celebrity to endorse,” “how believable is this celebrity endorsing this brand,” and “do you believe this celebrity would wear this product” were analysed. Factors were reduced if the eigenvalue was less than 1.0 (Kaiser, 1960), if the factor loading was less than 0.40 or if it was double loading (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996). It was determined that the question asking “how familiar are you with the celebrity who appeared in the ad” needed to be removed due to the factor score double loading and being below 0.40. Once this question was removed the factors scores for the remaining congruency questions greatly improved. No questions were removed from the questionnaire that measured purchase intent, attitude toward the ad or attitude towards the brand.

Second, Cronbach's Alpha was run for each ad's set of modified congruency questions for a measure of internal consistency. The reliability coefficient for the Demi Moore/Versace advertisement was 0.852 and 0.868 for the Sarah Jessica Parker advertisement, which are good consistency values. Next one-way ANOVA was run to determine if there were any significant differences between the means of the congruency questions for the two advertisements. Results revealed that scores of the congruency questions were statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$). See Table 2. Linear regression was then run to analyse the relationships between the unfamiliar celebrity endorser/product and the respondents' attitudes and purchase intentions.

5.3. Purchase intent

The millennial respondents indicated that the fit between Demi Moore and Versace did not influence them to purchase the advertised product. The presence of an unfamiliar celebrity did not have a significant effect on purchase intentions ($T(899)=1.555$, $p=0.121$). Similar results were shown toward the fit between

Table 2
One-Way ANOVA of celebrity/brand congruency.

Main effects	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Advertisements	7608.629	2	3804.314	104.404	0.000
Total	40293.932	899			

Table 3
Product-endorser fit Impact on purchase intent.

Unfamiliar celebrity	<i>T</i>	Sig
Demi Moore	1.555	0.121
Sarah Jessica Parker	0.499	0.616

Sarah Jessica Parker and GAP, where this unfamiliar celebrity/product combination did not influence Millennials intent to purchase this advertised product either ($T(899) = 0.499$, $p = 0.616$). These Linear regression results show that the presence of an unfamiliar celebrity-endorser match did not influence millennials purchase intentions, thus research question one is not supported. See Table 3.

5.4. Attitude toward the advertisement

Favourable attitudes were found toward the Demi Moore/Versace advertisement. Linear regression illustrated that this product-endorser combination favourably influenced Millennials attitude toward this advertisement ($T(899) = 4.091$, $p < 0.01$). These respondents also indicated favourable attitudes toward the Sarah Jessica Parker/GAP advertisement. This unfamiliar celebrity/brand combination favourably influenced their attitude toward that advertisement ($T(899) = 4.809$, $p < 0.01$). These finding indicate that an unfamiliar celebrity endorser can aide in positive attitude formation, thus research question two is supported. See Table 4.

5.5. Attitude toward the brand

The celebrity/brand of Demi Moore and Versace elicited favourable attitudes toward the advertised brand, where the millennial respondents indicated they had favourable attitudes toward Versace ($T(899) = 3.552$, $p < 0.01$). The millennial respondents also indicated that they had favourable attitudes toward the brand GAP. The celebrity/brand combination of Sarah Jessica Parker and the GAP influenced millennials to form favourable attitudes toward this advertised brand ($T(899) = 3.552$, $p < 0.01$). These results demonstrate that use of an unfamiliar celebrity endorser can influence Millennials attitudes toward brands, thus research question three is supported. See Table 5.

5.6. Post-hoc test

To see if any differences existed between the use of a familiar celebrity endorser and an unfamiliar celebrity endorser, a post-hoc test was needed. During the pre-test, it was found that Paris Hilton endorsing the brand Guess, was the celebrity the respondents were most familiar with (mean = 6.93). Linear regression was run to again to analyse the relationships between familiar celebrity endorser/product and the respondents' attitudes and purchase intentions. The millennial respondents indicated that the fit between Paris Hilton and Guess would influence them to purchase the advertised product. Purchase intentions did have a significant effect on a product-endorser match ($T(899) = 2.819$, $p = 0.005$). However, the respondents did not form favourable attitudes toward the advertisement ($T(899) = 0.876$, $p = 0.382$) or the

Table 4
Product-endorser fit impact on attitude toward the advertisement.

Unfamiliar Celebrity	<i>T</i>	Sig
Demi Moore	4.091	0.000
Sarah Jessica Parker	4.809	0.000

Table 5
Product-endorser fit impact on brand attitude.

Unfamiliar celebrity	<i>T</i>	Sig
Demi Moore	3.552	0.000
Sarah Jessica Parker	5.738	0.000

Table 6
Familiar celebrity endorser results.

Variable	<i>T</i>	Sig
Purchase Intent	2.819	0.005
Attitude toward the Ad	0.876	0.382
Attitude toward the Brand	−0.062	0.951

advertised brand ($T(899) = -0.062$, $p = 0.951$). See Table 6.

6. Discussion

While the “match-up” hypothesis has been previously studied, little attention has been given to measuring the influence of an unfamiliar celebrity. The advertising and celebrity culture continues to change, however the idea of aligning the image of a celebrity with a product to create an effective advertisement has not. This study found that the “match-up” hypothesis aided in the formation of positive attitudes toward the advertisement and brand. Specifically, it determined that when the millennial consumer views the image of the unfamiliar celebrity and the image of the product as congruent the attitudes toward the advertisement and brand were positive. Thus, this demonstrates that a realistic relationship between the unfamiliar celebrity endorser and the brand can lead to an effective celebrity endorsement; in turn that advertisement is viewed as more believable in the eyes of millennial consumers.

However, this study also established that when millennials do not feel there is a proper fit between the unfamiliar celebrity endorser and the product, they are less likely to be influenced to purchase the advertised product, regardless of their attitudes. While there are many reasons one may or may not purchase something, inevitably ones attitude toward the advertisement or brand can impact consumption. Theoretically, this study concluded that an unfamiliar celebrity endorser has the ability to influence millennials as both unfamiliar celebrity-product combinations generated significant results. However, not all product-endorser combinations will elicit such influence. Instead, each celebrity endorsement relationship will produce varying degrees of influence and should be evaluated separately, understanding that consumers will view celebrities as a representation of a variety of images from the history of their careers (Choi and Rifon, 2007) as well as their interaction or connection with them on social media. The current advertising industry should take into consideration all ages of the target market who may view the advertisement. Different ages within a target market (generation Z, millennials, generation X) will not only be influenced in varying ways, but will also have different opinions on what the right product-endorser match could be. Without this “match-up,” the effectiveness of the endorsement can become compromised and deemed unbelievable by the very consumers who are being targeted to buy these endorsed products.

Interestingly, the post-hoc test revealed that using a familiar celebrity endorser elicited an intent to purchase the advertised product, but did not aide in a positive attitude formation toward the brand or advertisement. While, these millennial respondents certainly are familiar with Paris Hilton, they did not seem to have

positive attitudes toward the brand Guess or the ad itself. Many of these respondents may be biased toward or have pre-existing attitudes toward her or this particular brand. Ultimately, having a well-like and familiar celebrity is as important as liking or being familiar with the advertised brand. It seems that being familiar with or liking both the celebrity and the brand contributes to the formation of positive attitudes and consumption.

7. Limitations and future research

Several theoretical and methodological limitations merit discussion. First, only female celebrities were used. Researching male celebrity endorsements should be explored, as there are many male millennial consumers who could be influenced by celebrities as well. Second, this sample was only made up of millennials. Exploring other ages or generational cohorts would be beneficial, as there are wide age ranges of both male and female celebrities that can be found endorsing a multitude of products today. In addition, sampling generation Z should be explored. Due to the varying views of what ages make up the millennial consumer, this study could be expanded to a wider range of millennial consumers or even other generational cohorts, like generation Z. Third, this study was limited to two celebrities/brand relationships; other celebrities and brands could generate different results. In addition, the products advertised were both fashion-related. Other product categories may also generate different results. Fourth, this study only sampled American students, sampling millennial students in other countries may generate different results. In addition, continuing to examine how celebrity's in popular culture today impact consumers' purchase decisions is warranted, especially in different cultures. Are celebrities influence as strong in other countries? Are millennial consumers in other countries just as obsessed with celebrities as American millennials? Therefore, this study should be expanded to include a measurement across different cultures.

Future exploration on this topic should include measuring celebrities endorsing their own brands. For example, Jessica Simpson appears in her own brand's advertisements, while Sarah Jessica Parker and Fergie both have their own shoe lines but do not appear in the advertisements. How do consumers view this type of endorsement? Are these brands bought because of who is known for creating them or because the celebrity appears in the ad? In addition, measuring celebrity endorsements in other categories, such as beauty, water, or hardline goods like cell phones is needed. How do millennial consumers relate to celebrity endorsements in these product categories? Are the celebrities able to influence them into buying the advertised product?

Understanding where or how a consumer sees an advertisement is needed, especially in today's changing advertising landscape. Are celebrities more influential in advertisements or on social media platforms? Further, the way a consumer consumes a product should be analysed. Millennials are social consumers and studies have shown that they like to buy online instead of in the store; therefore measuring purchase intent should now take into consideration the way the item is purchased, not just if the item is purchased.

8. Conclusion

The conclusions of this study provide insight into the importance of picking the right celebrity to endorse apparel. Picking the right celebrity endorser is crucial to the success of the advertisement in today's culture because consumers live in a media-saturated and product-cluttered environment. Celebrities are able to attract more attention to the advertisement they appear in

when the products they are endorsing are aligned with their own images. While advertising aides in familiarising the celebrity with consumers, Cooper (1984), indicates that the key to using a celebrity in an advertisement is to ensure that the celebrity is well-known enough to get attention, but also will not upstage the product; the product and not the personality has to be the star. While one celebrity may be considered appropriate for one brand, he/she may be completely wrong for another based on the public's perception of his/her distinctive image (McCracken, 1989). Determining the right celebrity-product combination is vital to product consumption.

Overall, it can be concluded that even unfamiliar celebrities have influence over consumers and that the match-up hypothesis does contribute to attitude formation. Understanding the product's target market and which celebrity's represent that core audience can help ensure a favourable relationship between those celebrities and products as well as create a long-lasting effective advertising campaign. Social media platforms are changing the advertising landscape and shaping consumer's outlook of celebrities. Due to the frequency millennials visit these sites, this advertising medium would be more effective for advertisements that are targeted for millennial consumers. This placement may also contribute to an increase in sales volume and product profitability, which continue to be important goals for retailers and ultimately the only way for companies to survive.

In today's society, consumers have so many choices when choosing a brand that the end-use may not be as important as the name of the brand or who else is wearing it. Therefore, continuing exploring the relationships between celebrities and consumers of all ages is important, as the range in age of celebrity endorsers is as wide as the consumers who purchase these endorsed products. As discussed by Thomson (2006), celebrities are human brands that must be professionally managed, just as advertising manages socially desirable images of brands, and when these two images connect in the minds of consumer's a successful meaning transfer can occur and a match is created, thus producing a lucrative endorsement for all involved.

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