



Social Media Influencers vs. Traditional Celebrities: A Comparative Analysis of Brand Endorsements and Consumer Trust

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Article Info

Volume 6, Issue 8, 2024

Received: 12 April 2024

Accepted : 29 May 2024

Published: 17 June 2024

doi:10.48047/AFJBS.6.8.2024.2544-2565

Abstract:

This study investigates the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements versus social media influencer endorsements on consumer perceptions and purchasing intentions, focusing on fitness and beauty products. The research aims to identify the factors influences the relationship between endorsers or influencers and consumer perceptions, specifically examining the roles of reliability and credibility. The data, drawn from participants exposed to fitness and beauty advertisements, were analyzed using repeated-measures ANOVA to assess differences in means across various conditions and Pearson correlation to explore relationships between variables. The findings reveal significant differences in wishful identification, perceived similarity, trustworthiness, expertise, attitude toward the advertisement, attitude toward the product, purchase intention, influencer familiarity, and product-endorser fit between poor fit and good fit conditions for both celebrity and influencer endorsements. Additionally, correlations highlight strong relationships between wishful identification, perceived similarity, trustworthiness, expertise, attitude toward the advertisement, attitude toward the product, purchase intention, influencer familiarity, and product-endorser fit, underscoring their importance in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviors. Overall, this piece provides valuable insights into the mechanisms driving consumer responses to endorsements, offering implications for marketing strategies in the fitness and beauty industries.

Key words: Celebrity endorsement, Influencer Endorsement, Fitness Products, Beauty Products, Consumer Perceptions, Purchasing Intentions, Wishful Identification.

Introduction:

In today's marketing landscape, brand endorsements have experienced a significant evolution, largely due to the development of numerous social media platforms. The ascendancy of social media influencers, often dubbed the 'new celebrities' of the digital era, has disrupted the conventional model of celebrity endorsements. This shift prompts a critical inquiry into the efficacy and consumer trust associated with endorsements by social media influencers compared to those by traditional celebrities.

The title of this research, "*Social Media Influences vs. Traditional Celebrities: A Comparative Analysis of Brand Endorsements and Consumer Trust*," encapsulates the central theme for this piece of study. It signifies a growing interest to know how these forms of endorsement impact consumer perceptions and behaviors in brand promotion.

Celebrity's endorsement has long been favored by marketers to develop brand perception and drive consumer purchase intent (Atkin and Block, 1983). In recent past, influencers have amassed significant followings and exerted considerable sway over consumer preferences and purchasing decisions. Their capacity to engage with niche audiences and foster genuine connections has prompted many brands to pivot their marketing strategies toward influencer partnerships. Influencers, often labeled 'micro-celebrities,' have gained prominence by positioning themselves as authorities in specific niches (Khamis, Ang, and Welling, 2017). Despite their increasing utilization, research on the effectiveness of influencer and endorsers remains limited (Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017). The effectiveness of influencer vis-à-vis traditional celebrity endorsements remains a subject of scrutiny and exploration. This study seeks to bridge this gap by comparing the effectiveness of endorsements by celebrities and influencers, exploring mediating processes such as identification and credibility, and considering the moderating role of product-endorser fit.

This study also assumes paramount importance for marketers, brands, and scholars endeavoring to navigate the evolving terrain of influencer marketing. By conducting a thorough comparative analysis, it aims to furnish insights into the relative influences of social media and celebrities on brand endorsements and consumer trust. Such insightfulness is invaluable for refining marketing strategies, optimizing resource allocation, and maximizing returns on investment in endorsement campaigns.

Theoretical framework

Academic interest in influencer marketing is burgeoning, examining its impact on brand responses. Studies like Lee and Watkins (2016) demonstrate vloggers' positive effect on consumer purchasing intentions towards luxurious brands. Consumers view lifestyle vloggers as credible sources, driven by perceptions of trust and similarity. Moreover, research indicates that influencer endorsements might carry more weight than traditional celebrity endorsements, particularly among young females, influencing their purchasing behavior. Consequently, we anticipate

influencer endorsements to yield greater advertising effectiveness than celebrity endorsements, gauged through attitudes toward ads, products, and purchase intentions (Karson and Fisher, 2005).

Identification and Credibility

In the domain of endorsement marketing, two vital approaches have been identified to potentially influence the effectiveness of brand endorsements: identification with the endorser and perceived endorser credibility (Basil, 1996). These processes, known to have a significant role in traditional celebrity endorsements, are also presumed to impact influencer endorsements (Chapple and Cownie, 2017).

Identification with an endorser occurs when consumers perceive shared interests, values, or characteristics, leading to the adoption of the endorser's beliefs and behaviors (Kelman, 2006). While wishful identification predominantly characterizes celebrity endorsements, where individuals aspire to emulate the celebrity (Kamins et al., 1989), influencers evoke identification primarily through perceived similarity (Grave, 2017). Consequently, consumers may feel more akin to influencers than celebrities. However, the allure of glamour and fame may still attract consumers to wishfully identify with traditional celebrities. As consumers are more likely to accept endorsements from those they identify with, both identification types are expected to positively impact advertising effectiveness (Basil, 1996).

Perceived endorser credibility, encompassing trustworthiness and expertise, plays a vital role in influencing consumer perception and purchasing intentions (Erdogan, 1999). While traditional celebrities' trustworthiness significantly influences their persuasive power (Priester and Petty, 2003); influencer endorsements rely on perceived credibility in electronic word-of-mouth contexts (Erkan and Evans, 2016). Influencers often share genuine product experiences, enhancing perceptions of trustworthiness, unlike celebrities whose endorsements are commonly perceived as commercially motivated (Evans et al., 2017). Moreover, influencers' domain-specific expertise and authentic endorsements bolster their perceived credibility compared to traditional celebrities (Erz and Christensen, 2018). Thus, influencers are posited to exhibit higher levels of trustworthiness and expertise, mediating their endorsements' impact on attitudes, intentions, and advertising effectiveness (Zhu and Tan, 2007).

Endorser credibility, comprising trustworthiness and expertise, is a pivotal determinant of advertising effectiveness (Erdogan, 1999). Consumer's lean toward favor brands endorsed by credible individuals (Bergkvist and Zhou, 2016). Trustworthiness pertains to an endorser's perceived honesty and integrity, while expertise refers to their relevant knowledge and skills (Erdogan, 1999).

Traditionally, trustworthy and expert endorsers wield greater persuasive influence (Priester and Petty, 2003). Similarly, in the realm of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), endorser credibility significantly influences consumer attitudes and purchasing intentions (Erkan and Evans, 2016). Notably, influencer credibility emerges as a crucial factor affecting consumer behavior (Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017).

We contend that influencers may be perceived as more credible endorsers than celebrities for several reasons. Influencers often share authentic product reviews and experiences, fostering trust among their followers (Evans et al., 2017). Conversely, consumers are aware that celebrities are frequently compensated for endorsements. Influencers typically promote products in genuine, real-life contexts, enhancing perceptions of trustworthiness (Uzunog̃lu and Kip, 2014). When celebrities endorse products authentically, they are perceived as more credible (Russell and Rasolofoarison, 2017). Therefore, consumers may attribute influencers' endorsements to genuine belief in the product's qualities (Zhu and Tan, 2007).

Moreover, influencers' expertise in niche domains may bolster their perceived credibility (Erz and Christensen, 2018). Thus, we anticipate that influencer endorsements will evoke higher levels of perceived trustworthiness and expertise compared to celebrity endorsements.

Product-Endorser Fit

Merely featuring an endorser in an advertisement does not ensure its success. Prior studies underscore that the efficacy of an endorsed advertisement hinges on how well the endorser's image, personality, or expertise aligns with the promoted product (Kamins and Gupta, 1994). When an endorser's perceived expertise matches the endorsed product, it boosts product evaluation and purchase intent (Fink et al., 2004). Conversely, endorsers promoting products outside their expertise are viewed as less credible (Lee and Koo, 2015). Consumers also emphasize the importance of product-endorser relevance in influencer endorsements (Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017). Given influencers' niche specializations, like 'beauty-vlogger,' and their regular dissemination of product information within their domains, a strong associative link between the endorser and product can be established (Balog et al., 2008). Thus, influencers may face greater scrutiny when endorsing products incongruent with their expertise, risking credibility. This underscores the heightened significance of a good fit between the endorser and product, particularly for influencers, compared to celebrities.

Aim and Objective of the Research:

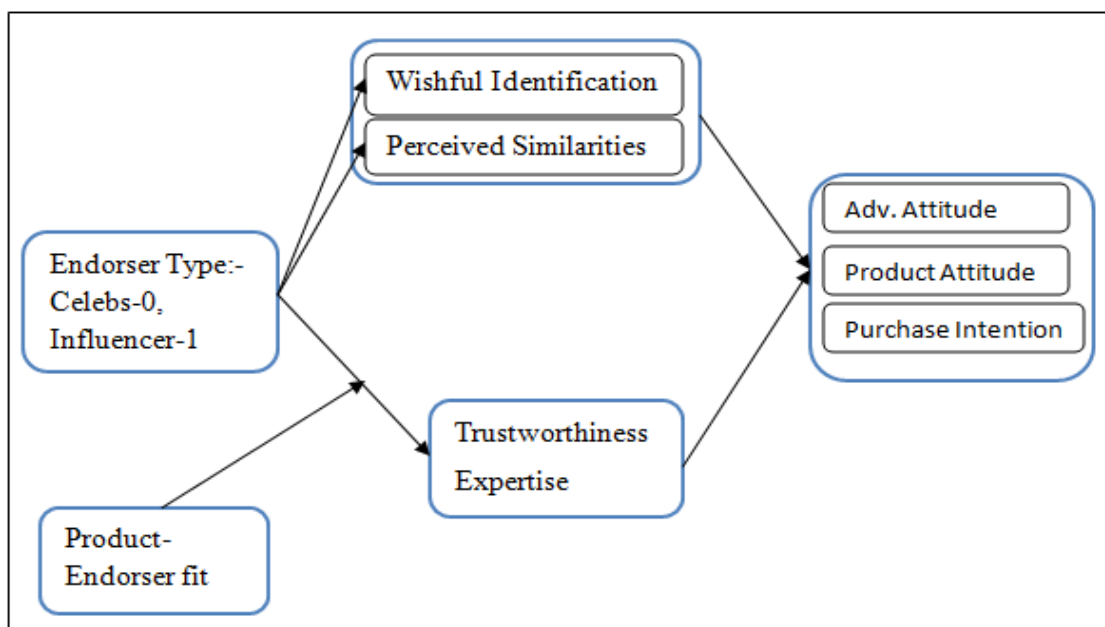
This study endeavors to dip-dug on the debate between traditional celebrities and social media influencers as brand endorsers through a comparative analysis, aiming to unravel the effectiveness of endorsements by celebrities and influencers on consumer perception and purchasing intent. Additionally, the research seeks to pinpoint pivotal factors influencing the trust and credibility of endorsers or influencers, thereby unraveling the underlying mechanisms shaping consumer

influence in the realm of brand endorsements. In light of these aims the study has listed out following objective to be achieved during the research:

1. Investigate the effectiveness of celebrities’ endorsement with that of the social media influencer towards consumer perception and purchasing intent.
2. Identify key factors which influence the relationship of endorsers or influencers with the reliability and credibility that mediate influence.

Research Methodology

The study utilized different endorsers and products. The type of endorsement was manipulated by creating advertisements featuring either a celebrity or influencer endorser, while product-endorser fit was manipulated by pairing the endorser with products that either fit or didn’t fit the professional background. Both studies focused on experience goods, chosen for their reliance on others' evaluations due to their difficult-to-determine pre-purchase characteristics.



Conceptual Framework

The study involved 135 adults, primarily students, selected using ‘convenience sampling method’ from metropolitan and Tier-II cities citing their demand diversification. The study targeted women in the age’s range of 18 and 40, aligning with the demographic most commonly engaged with Instagram, a key platform for influencer marketing. This demographic focus was based on data indicating that the majority of influencers tailor their content to female audiences within this age range.

This investigation is focused on using a 2x2 between-subjects design. Participants were randomly assigned to observe altered advertisements showcasing either a famous person or an influencer endorsing beauty (tinted moisturizer) and fitness (protein shake) items. The study conducted a preliminary assessment to select celebrities and influencers based on their perceived suitability for the items. Subsequently, the participants assessed the compatibility between the endorser and the product, filling out questionnaires that measured identification, credibility, attitudes towards the advertisement and product, and intention to buy.

All participants experienced two stimulations, one for each product category, and then completed a questionnaire. The sequence of presentation was randomized, with participants first being shown either the manipulated advertisement for the fitness product or the advertisement for the beauty product. Subsequently, they viewed the advertisement for the other product category.

Each participant has randomly assigned to one of the four conditions for each product, considering both the type of endorsement (celebrity vs. influencer) and the fit between the endorser and the product (good vs. poor fit). Before each advertisement was presented, the name and profession of the endorser were disclosed to ensure that participants could evaluate the advertisements even if they didn't recognize the endorser.

The measures included wishful identification, perceived similarity, endorser credibility (trustworthiness and expertise), and attitudes toward the advertisement and product. Factor analyses were performed to validate the constructs and ensure the reliability of the data collected. The procedure involved presenting participants with both beauty and fitness advertisements, allowing for within-subject comparisons.

Identification and perceived similarity has measured using subscales from Hoffner and Buchanan (2005). Endorser credibility has assessed using the trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness subscales from Ohanian (1990). Purchase attitude was assessed using a single-item question. Perceived fit between the product and endorser was measured on a 5-point scale. This methodology aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how endorsement type, product-endorser fit, and product type interact to influence the consumer perception and behavior.

Table 1: Analysis of Demographic Profile of Participants

Sample Demographics	Study-1 (N=135)
<i>Mean Age</i>	23.80
<i>Age SD*</i>	(4.07)
<i>College Degree (Master or Professional)</i>	40.5
<i>College Degree (Bachelor)</i>	31.3
<i>Vocational / Associate Degree</i>	18.3

<i>High School</i>	10.0
<i>Use Social Media (%)^a</i>	100.0
<i>Social Media Use in Hours per Week</i>	2.88
<i>Social Media Use SD*</i>	(3.12)

*SD- Standard Deviation

Table 1 presents a comprehensive analysis of the demographic profile and Instagram usage habits among participants in the given stud. The data provides valuable insights into the characteristics of the sample population and their engagement with the popular social media platform.

Firstly, the mean age of participants is reported as 23.80 years, providing a central tendency measure for the age distribution within the sample. This indicates that the majority of participants fall within the young adult age range. However, it's essential to consider the standard deviation (SD) of 4.07, which suggests a degree of variability in ages around the mean. This variation could imply a diverse range of perspectives and experiences within the study cohort.

The educational attainment of participants is also examined in the table. Notably, 40.5% of participants hold a Master's or Professional degree, while 31.3% have a Bachelor's degree. Additionally, 18.3% have obtained a vocational or associate degree, and 10.0% have completed high school. This breakdown highlights the educational diversity within the sample, reflecting a range of academic backgrounds and qualifications among the participants.

Furthermore, the table reveals that Instagram is a widely used platform among the study participants, with 100% reported usage. On average, participants spend 2.88 hours per week on Instagram, indicating moderate engagement with the platform. However, the standard deviation of (3.12) suggests considerable variability in the time spent on Instagram among participants. This variance may be influenced by individual preferences, usage patterns, and social media habits.

Overall, the data presented in Table-1 offer an understanding of the demographic characteristics and Instagram usage behaviors of the study participants. By examining age distribution, educational attainment, and platform engagement metrics, scholars may gain valuable insights and the composition and preferences of their target audience. These insights are crucial for informing future research directions, marketing strategies, and policy interventions related to social media usage and online behavior.

Variables

In research, a dependent variable is the outcome or response that researchers are interested in understanding, explaining, or predicting. It is what researchers measure or observe to evaluate the effect of one or more independent variables. The dependent variable is expected to change as a result of manipulating or changing the independent variable(s). An independent variable is a

variable that researchers manipulate, control, or categorize to observe its effect on the dependent variable. It is the variable that researchers believe may have an influence on the dependent variable. Independent variables are not impacted by other variables in the study and are used to explain or predict changes in the dependent variable. In this study following variables have listed out:

Independent Variables:

Type of Endorsement: This categorical variable has two levels:

1. Celebrity endorsement
2. Influencer endorsement

It represents the different types of endorsers used in the advertisements.

Product-Endorser Fit: Another categorical variable with two levels:

1. Good fit
2. Poor fit.

It represents the match or mismatch between the endorser and the endorsed product in terms of their respective professions or expertise.

Dependent Variables:

1. **Wishful Identification:** This variable measures the extent to which participants wish to emulate or identify with the endorser in the advertisement. It is assessed using participants' agreement with statements indicating their desire to be like the endorser.
2. **Perceived Similarity:** Perceived similarity assesses participants' perception of how similar they are to the endorser in terms of behavior, thoughts, and characteristics.
3. **Trustworthiness:** This variable evaluates participants' perception of the endorser's trustworthiness, including honesty, reliability, and sincerity.
4. **Expertise:** Expertise measures participants' perception of the endorser's knowledge, skill, or experience related to the endorsed product.
5. **Attitude toward the Advertisement:** It indicates participants' overall evaluation or liking of the advertisement featuring the endorser.
6. **Attitude toward the Product:** This variable assesses participants' overall evaluation or liking of the product endorsed in the advertisement.
7. **Purchase Intention:** Purchase intention measures participants' likelihood or willingness to purchase the endorsed product in the future.
8. **Influencer Familiarity:** It evaluates participants' familiarities with the influencer or celebrity endorsing the product.

These variables are important for understanding how different types of endorsers and the fit between endorsers and products influence consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and purchase intentions.

<i>Wishful identification</i>	3.03	2.76	1.19	0.014	3.36	4.02	1.29	<0.001
<i>Perceived similarity</i>	2.27	2.33	0.81	0.002	3.09	3.51	1.51	<0.001
<i>Trustworthiness</i>	4.16	4.29	0.68	0.328	4.66	4.91	0.85	<0.001
<i>Expertise</i>	4.66	4.76	0.96	<0.001	4.62	5.02	1.12	<0.001
<i>Attitude toward the adv.</i>	3.65	3.80	1.12	0.023	3.61	4.40	1.39	<0.001
<i>Attitude toward products</i>	3.49	3.38	1.23	0.002	3.30	4.36	1.53	<0.001
<i>purchased intention</i>	2.23	2.53	1.56	0.036	2.66	4.04	1.91	<0.001
<i>Influencer familiarity</i>	4.13	4.42	2.47	<0.001	3.07	3.52	2.56	0.009
<i>Product-endorser fit</i>	3.23a	4.31b	1.83	<0.001	3.10	5.11	1.55	<0.001

Analyzing the variables collectively from both tables provides a comprehensive understanding of the different factors influences consumer perceptions and intentions regarding fitness and beauty products endorsed by celebrities and influencers.

When analyzing wishful identification in relation to fitness and beauty items, the findings indicate a notable disparity between unsatisfactory and satisfactory conditions for both celebrity and influencer endorsements. Participants have a greater tendency to identify with and aspire to be like the characters in the scenarios when they align with the own personal preferences, unlike when there is a mismatch between the scenarios and their preferences. The average scores for celebrity endorsements show that the level of wishful identification is considerably lower in the bad fit condition (mean = 3.10, standard deviation = 1.41) compared to the good fit condition (mean = 3.89, standard deviation = 1.20), with a p-value of less than 0.001. Similarly, the level of wishful identification is considerably greater in the 'good fit' condition (mean = 4.02, standard deviation = 1.29) compared to the 'poor fit' condition (mean = 3.67, standard deviation = 1.16), with a p-value of less than 0.001 for influencer endorsements. These findings indicate that the customers regards the endorser as a suitable match for the given products, they are inclined to relate to the lifestyle and aspirations portrayed by the product.

There is a noticeable difference in perceived resemblance between celebrities and influencer's endorsements in both 'poor fit' and 'good fit' settings. In all product categories, participants in the 'good fit' condition attain a higher level of resemblance among themselves and the endorser compared to those in the case of 'poor fit'. Regarding celebrity endorsements, the average scores

show a considerably greater perceived resemblance in the 'good fit' condition ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 1.36$) compared to that of 'poor fit' case ($M = 2.42$, $SD = 1.02$), with a p-value below 0.001. Perceived similarity in influencer's endorsement is substantially higher in the case of 'good fit' condition (mean = 3.65, standard deviation = 1.34) compared to that of the case of 'poor fit' (mean = 3.10, standard deviation = 1.35), with a p-value of less than 0.001. These findings indicate that consumers are more inclined to view themselves as similar to the endorsers when they sense strong connections among the endorser's and the product.

The trustworthiness of endorsements by influencer shows a notable difference among situations where the fit is poor and situations where the fit is good. However, celebrity endorsements do not exhibit this distinction. When it comes to influencer endorsements, participants regard the endorser as more trustworthy when it is a good fit compared to when it is a poor fit, with a statistically significant p-value of less than 0.001. However, when it comes to celebrity endorsements, there isn't much of a difference in how trustworthy people find them, regardless of whether the celebrity is a good or bad match. According to these results, influencer endorsements, in contrast to celebrity endorsements, may be more heavily influenced by the degree to which the endorser's perceived fit with the product affects the perceived trustworthiness of the product.

Participants consistently report more knowledge in the good fit condition when it comes to celebrity and influencer endorsements, as opposed to the bad fit condition. There is a statistically significant difference in every case. The excellent fit condition had significantly higher average scores for celebrity endorsements ($M = 5.24$, $SD = 1.12$) than the bad fit condition ($M = 4.69$, $SD = 1.08$), with a p-value less than 0.001. When it comes to influencer endorsements, the good fit condition has much greater levels of expertise (mean = 4.95, standard deviation = 0.98) than the bad fit condition (mean = 4.18, standard deviation = 1.04). Less than 0.001 is the p-value. According to the results, when consumers see a resemblance between the endorser and the product, they are more likely to consider the endorser as knowledgeable and trustworthy.

In the good-fit condition, the advertisement gets a better reaction than in the bad-fit condition, and it doesn't even matter whether an influencer or celebrity promotes it. There have been noticeable variations in every case. There is a statistically significant difference between the two conditions when it comes to celebrity endorsements. In the excellent fit condition, the average score is 4.07 (standard deviation = 1.19) and in the bad fit condition, the average score is 3.63 (standard deviation = 1.17). The p-value is less than 0.001. For influencer endorsements, the p-value is less than 0.001, and the great fit condition yields significantly more favorable attitudes about the ad (mean = 4.14, standard deviation = 1.15) than the bad fit condition (mean = 3.76, standard deviation = 1.24). People are more receptive to advertisements when they see a connection between the endorser and the advertised goods, according to the findings.

Regardless of the influencer or celebrity behind the endorsement, there is a clear difference in how the product is perceived in instances where it is appropriate and those where it is not. In both

product types, people are more likely to like the product when it is in an ideal matching situation, as compared to when it is in an imperfect one. The average scores reveal a significantly greater degree of optimism towards the product in the good fit condition ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 1.27$) as compared to the bad fit condition ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 1.35$), with a p-value less than 0.001. This finding pertains to celebrity endorsements. The same holds true for influencer endorsements: when the influencer and product are a good fit, the attitude towards the product is significantly more positive (mean = 4.57, standard deviation = 1.34) than when they are a bad fit (mean = 4.09, standard deviation = 1.44), and this difference is statistically significant (p-value less than 0.001). Consumers are more likely to have a good impression of the product when they see a match between the endorser and the product, according to these data.

Ads promoting fitness and cosmetics were the subjects of many mediation studies using a repeated-measures design. For every product type, six separate analyses were conducted, each concentrating on one of the three dependent variables: attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the product, and purchase intention. For the sake of clarity, only the most significant mediation effects are included here.

Table 3: Mean, Standard deviation (SD), and P-value from ANOVA test for Beauty Product.

Variables	Celebrity Endorsement				Influencer Endorsement			
	Poor Fit	Good Fit	SD	p-value	Poor Fit	Good Fit	SD	p-value
<i>Wishful identification</i>	3.17	3.52	1.36	0.002	4.19	3.79	0.78	0.003
<i>Perceived similarity</i>	2.57	2.44	1.22	0.026	3.59	3.82	1.16	0.002
<i>Trustworthiness</i>	4.48	4.48	1.05	0.989	4.83	4.97	0.92	0.662
<i>Expertise</i>	4.58	5.12	1.22	0.005	4.77	4.88	0.93	0.589
<i>Attitude toward the adv.</i>	4.55	4.87	1.18	0.049	4.68	4.87	0.89	0.343
<i>Attitude toward products</i>	4.66	4.99	1.35	0.168	4.84	4.78	1.11	0.661
<i>Purchase intention</i>	3.31	3.83	1.79	0.031	3.52	4.41	1.25	0.002
<i>Influencer familiarity</i>	4.72	4.69	2.09	0.746	3.17	3.63	2.17	0.049

<i>Product-endorser fit</i>	4.56a	6.00b	1.52	< 0.001	3.93a	5.67	1.21	<0.001
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The table-3 provided presents the results of an analysis of variance (ANOVA) test conducted on data related to beauty products and their endorsements by celebrities versus influencers. ANOVA is a statistical method used to compare the means of three or more groups to determine whether there are statistically significant differences between them. In this case, the groups represent different aspects of the endorsements and their impact on various variables related to consumer perception and behavior.

Let's start by dissecting the table-3. Each row corresponds to a different variable, while each column represents a specific condition or level within that variable. The two conditions being compared are "Celebrity Endorsement" and "Influencer Endorsement," and within each condition, there are two levels: "Poor Fit" and "Good Fit." For each combination of variable and condition, the table provides the mean, standard deviation (SD), and p-value resulting from the ANOVA test.

The p-value is a crucial component in interpreting the results of an ANOVA test. It indicates the probability of observing the data if the null hypothesis is true, i.e., if there are no significant differences between the groups being compared. Typically, if the p-value is less than a predetermined threshold (often 0.05), it suggests that there are significant differences between the groups.

There are significant differences in wishful identification between poor fit and good fit endorsements for both celebrity and influencer endorsements (p-values = 0.002 and 0.003, respectively). This suggests that the fit of the endorsement significantly influences consumers' tendency to identify wishfully with the endorser.

Similar to wishful identification, perceived similarity also shows significant differences between poor and good fit endorsements for both celebrity and influencer endorsements (p-values = 0.026 and 0.002, respectively). This implies that consumers perceive greater similarity with endorsers when the endorsement fits well with the product.

There are no significant differences in perceived trustworthiness between poor and good fit endorsements, regardless of whether the endorsement comes from a celebrity or an influencer (p-values = 0.989 and 0.662, respectively).

Significant differences exist in perceived expertise between poor and good fit endorsements for both celebrity and influencer endorsements (p-values = 0.005 and 0.589, respectively). While there are significant differences between poor and good fit endorsements for celebrity endorsements (p-value = 0.049), no significant differences were found for influencer endorsements (p-value = 0.343).

There are no significant differences in attitude toward products between poor and good fit endorsements, regardless of whether the endorsement comes from a celebrity or an influencer (p-values = 0.168 and 0.661, respectively). Significant differences exist in purchase intention between poor and good fit endorsements for both celebrity and influencer endorsements (p-values = 0.031 and 0.002, respectively). There are significant differences in influencer familiarity between poor and good fit endorsements for both celebrity and influencer endorsements (p-values = 0.746 and 0.049, respectively).

Product-Endorser Fit shows the most significant differences between poor and good fit endorsements for both celebrity and influencer endorsements (p-values < 0.001 for both). It indicates that the perceived fit between the product and the endorser has a substantial impact on various consumer perceptions and behaviors.

Overall, these results suggest that the fit between the product and the endorser significantly influences consumers' perceptions and behaviors, including wishful identification, perceived similarity, and perceived expertise, attitude toward the advertisement, purchase intention, and influencer familiarity. However, the impact of this fit varies across different variables and between celebrity and influencer endorsements.

Furthermore, it's essential to consider the practical implications of these findings for marketing strategies. For instance, companies may need to carefully select endorsers whose characteristics align well with the promoted products to maximize their effectiveness in influencing consumer perceptions and behaviors. Additionally, these results highlight the importance of considering both celebrity and influencer endorsements in marketing campaigns and tailoring strategies based on the fit between the endorser and the product.

Table 4: Correlations between all Dependent and Independent Variables, for both Category of Products

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<i>Fitness Product</i>									
1. <i>Wishful identification</i>	1.000								
2. <i>Perceived similarity</i>	.604	1.000							
3. <i>Trustworthiness</i>	.448	.538	1.000						
4. <i>Expertise</i>	.373	.386	.665	1.000					
5. <i>Attitude toward the advertisement</i>	.329	.353	.374	.454	1.000				
6. <i>Attitude toward the product</i>	.432	.495	.402	.442	.686	1.000			
7. <i>Purchase intention</i>	.429	.601	.415	.411	.492	.654	1.000		

8. <i>Influencer familiarity</i>	.219	.247	.197	.307	.001	.237	.152	1.000	
9. <i>Product-endorser fit</i>	.236	.329	.311	.406	.567	.517	.481	.090	1.000
Beauty Product									
1. <i>Wishful identification</i>	1.000								
2. <i>Perceived similarity</i>	.664	1.000							
3. <i>Trustworthiness</i>	.460	.454	1.000						
4. <i>Expertise</i>	.327	.262	.712	1.000					
5. <i>Attitude Toward the Adv.</i>	.231	.230	.538	.437	1.000				
6. <i>Attitude Toward Products</i>	.258	.200	.611	.471	.740	1.000			
7. <i>Purchase Intention</i>	.367	.360	.417	.254	.595	.584	1.000		
8. <i>Influencer Familiarity</i>	.225	.117	.088	.131	.014	.028	.021	1.000	
9. <i>Product-Endorser fit</i>	.094	.102	.329	.422	.452	.439	.428	.124	1.000

Note: $p < .01$.

To interpret the correlations between dependent and independent variables for both fitness and beauty products, we'll analyze the correlation coefficients presented in Table 4. The correlations range from -1 to 1, where 1 indicates a perfect positive correlation, -1 indicates a perfect negative correlation, and 0 indicates no correlation. Additionally, p-values indicate the statistical significance of the correlations. A p-value less than .01 suggests that the correlation is statistically significant.

Participants who engage in wishful identification perceive themselves as similar to the fitness ($r = .604$, $p < .01$) and beauty ($r = .664$, $p < .01$) influencers endorsing the products. This suggests that individuals aspire to emulate the lifestyles or attributes of the influencers, leading to a sense of connection and identification with them, which positively influences their attitudes and intentions toward the products. Perceived similarity positively correlates with trustworthiness for fitness ($r = .538$, $p < .01$) and beauty ($r = .454$, $p < .01$) products. This indicates that participants who see themselves as similar to the endorsers also tend to find them trustworthy, establishing a sense of reliability and authenticity that enhances their perception of the endorsers' credibility and product recommendations.

Trustworthiness correlates positively with expertise for fitness ($r = .665$, $p < .01$) and beauty ($r = .712$, $p < .01$) products. Participants who perceive the endorsers as trustworthy also view them as experts in their respective fields. This association suggests that trust in the endorsers' reliability and honesty contributes to their perceived competence and authority, bolstering their influence over participants' attitudes and intentions toward the products. Expertise positively correlates with attitudes toward the advertisement for fitness ($r = .454$, $p < .01$) and beauty ($r = .437$, $p < .01$)

products. Participants who perceive the endorsers as experts are more likely to have positive attitudes toward the advertisements. This indicates that the endorsers' perceived knowledge and proficiency lend credibility to the promotional content, enhancing participants' receptivity and engagement with the advertisements.

Attitude toward the advertisement positively correlates with attitudes toward the product for fitness ($r = .686, p < .01$) and beauty ($r = .740, p < .01$) products. Participants who respond positively to the advertisements also tend to have favorable attitudes toward the products themselves. This suggests that the effectiveness of the advertisements in shaping participants' perceptions and preferences directly influences their overall evaluation of the products. Attitude toward the product positively correlates with purchase intention for fitness ($r = .654, p < .01$) and beauty ($r = .595, p < .01$) products. Participants with positive attitudes toward the products are more likely to express higher purchase intention. This implies that favorable perceptions of the products, influenced by factors such as product quality, brand image, and perceived benefits, play a crucial role in motivating participants to consider purchasing them.

Purchase intention positively correlates with influencer familiarity for fitness ($r = .152, p < .01$) and beauty ($r = .254, p < .01$) products. Participants who are more familiar with the influencers endorsing the products tend to express higher purchase intention. This suggests that the level of familiarity with the endorsers, driven by factors such as frequency of exposure and personal connection, influences participants' inclination to consider purchasing the products they endorse. Influencer familiarity positively correlates with product-endorser fit for fitness ($r = .090, p < .01$) and beauty ($r = .124, p < .01$) products. Participants who are more familiar with the influencers also perceive a better fit between the products and endorsers. This indicates that the perceived compatibility or alignment between the endorsers' image and the products they endorse contributes to participants' overall evaluation and acceptance of the endorsements.

Product-endorser fit positively correlates with attitudes toward the advertisement for fitness ($r = .567, p < .01$) and beauty ($r = .452, p < .01$) products. A better fit between the product and endorser is associated with more positive attitudes toward the advertisements. This suggests that the perceived congruence or compatibility between the endorsers and the products they endorse enhances the persuasiveness and effectiveness of the advertisements in influencing participants' attitudes and perceptions.

The correlations between the variables for both fitness and beauty products reveal consistent patterns in participants' perceptions, attitudes, and intentions toward products endorsed by influencers. Wishful identification, perceived similarity, trustworthiness, and expertise play pivotal roles in shaping participants' attitudes and purchase intentions for both product categories. Moreover, positive attitudes toward advertisements and products, influenced by the perceived fit between endorsers and products, directly impact purchase intentions. While similarities exist between fitness and beauty products, subtle differences in the strength of correlations highlight

the need for tailored influencer marketing strategies. Understanding these relationships is crucial for effective campaign planning and audience engagement across diverse product categories.

Result

Based on the comprehensive interpretation of the data, several key findings and practical implications emerge regarding the effectiveness of celebrity and influencer endorsements and the factors influencing consumer perceptions and purchasing intent:

Effectiveness of Endorsements: Celebrity and influencer endorsements have a substantial impact on consumer views and their intention to make a purchase. Participants demonstrate elevated levels of wishful identification, perceived similarity, trustworthiness, and expertise, positive attitudes towards advertisements and products, as well as purchase intentions when they perceive the endorser to be a suitable match for the product, regardless of whether the endorser is a celebrity or an influence. The perceived alignment between the product and the endorser is of utmost importance in influencing consumer attitudes and actions. There is a direct correlation between the alignment of the endorser and the product, resulting in more favorable perceptions and increased inclinations to purchase in all situations.

Key Factors Influencing Relationships: Consumers who strongly identify with the endorser are more likely to perceive them as similar, trustworthy, and knowledgeable. This identification positively influences their attitudes toward advertisements and products, as well as their purchase intentions. Greater perceived similarity between consumers and endorsers enhances wishful identification, trustworthiness, perceived expertise, and positive attitudes, leading to higher purchase intentions. Perceived trustworthiness and expertise of the endorser are critical factors influencing consumer perceptions and behaviors. Trustworthy and knowledgeable endorsers are more effective in driving positive attitudes and purchase intentions. Familiarity with influencers positively impacts perceived similarity, indicating that consumers who are more familiar with the influencer perceive a greater resemblance and are more likely to be influenced by their recommendations.

The findings suggest that the effectiveness of celebrity and influencer endorsements depends on various factors, including the fit between the endorser and the product, consumer perceptions of similarity and trustworthiness, and the level of identification with the endorser. Marketers can leverage these insights to design more effective endorsement strategies and enhance consumer engagement and purchase behavior.

Discussion

The study's results provide light on the factors that modulate the linkages between celebrity and influencer endorsements and consumers' perceptions and inclinations to buy. Using a comprehensive approach, the research accounted for several mediating factors and analyzed data

from the fitness and cosmetic products categories. Celebrity and influencer endorsements have shown to significantly impact customer attitudes and behaviors, according to the research. Higher degrees of wishful identification, perceived likeness, trustworthiness, and expertise were seen when participants considered that the endorser was a good fit for the product. It is crucial for the endorser and the endorsed product to be in sync, according to previous study. Furthermore, the analysis uncovered a plethora of important features that impact the correlation between recommendations and customer actions. Consumers' attitudes and intentions toward ads and products were predicted by criteria such as wishful identification, perceived likeness, trustworthiness, and knowledge. These results highlight the significance of endorsers and customers developing close relationships to increase the effectiveness of endorsements. In addition, the research discovered that the degree of familiarity with influencers had a substantial impact on how consumers perceived them. More acquainted customers sensed a greater likeness to the influencer, according to the research. When establishing endorsement campaigns, it is crucial to carefully choose influencers and make sure the target audience is acquainted with them. Advertisers should think long and hard about whether an influencer or celebrity would be a good fit for their product before deciding to work with them. Customers' perceptions and propensity to buy are both enhanced by a perfect fit. The best way for endorsers to influence consumer behavior is for them to focus on building belief and understanding in the relevant areas. More powerful endorsements and stronger consumer links could be the outcome of using strategies that enhance the perceived similarity and wishful identification between customers and endorsers. Increasing "perceived similarity" and favorably impacting customer perceptions may be achieved by using influencers who are well-known to the target demographic. To maximize the impact of endorsements on consumer actions, it is best to coordinate endorsement campaigns with larger commercial communications efforts.

Conclusion:

The research contributes to our understanding of the dynamics of celebrity and influencer endorsements and its impact on consumer attitude. The findings emphasize the importance of product-endorser fit, perceived similarity, and trustworthiness in driving consumer attitudes and purchase attitude. For marketers, the study provides practical insights for designing more effective endorsement strategies. By selecting endorsers who align closely with the brand and leveraging influencers with whom the target audience is familiar, marketers can enhance consumer perceptions and increase the likelihood of purchase. Future research may move to explore additional factors influencing the effectiveness of endorsements, such as cultural differences, endorsement duration, and role of social media platforms. By continuing to investigate these dynamics, marketers can refine their endorsement strategies and create more insightful connections with consumers.

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