

Celebrity Endorsements and Customer Brand Preference in Sports Betting Industry in Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT: In a bid to ensure patronage of bettors in the stiff competitive betting industry which operates in a similar modus operandi, firms have seemingly resorted to the use of celebrity endorsement. This research work undertook an in-depth study on the use of celebrity endorsement for effective celebrity brand advertisement. The main objective of this study is to determine the effect of celebrity endorsement on brand preference. Research questions and hypotheses were formulated in line with the research objectives. Since the population of the study is infinite, the researcher used Cochran formula for unknown population to arrive at sample size of 246. Structured questionnaire was used on the selected sample size and stratified random sampling was used. A descriptive research design was employed. Data was processed using SPSS version 23 and analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficient. The reliability test was measured using Cronbach Alpha coefficient method. The finding of the investigation found that there is a significant relationship between attractiveness and preference the results of this study reveals that the attractiveness of a celebrity endorser influences consumer brand preference. There is a significant relationship between expertise and consumer brand preference. The trustworthiness of a celebrity endorser influences brand preference, there is a nexus between celebrity congruence and brand preference. This study adds to the existing literature in celebrity endorsement because the effect of celebrity endorsement on brand preference with particular reference to sport betting industry has not been studied in Nigeria.

Keyword; celebrity endorsements, attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise congruence Brand Preference, Sport Betting,

The contemporary society is characterized with advancement in business operation and competition which has altered the way business is carried out and the way consumers perceive goods and services. Consumers are now exposed to alternative relative product brands to select from. Nwosu. (2016), posited that contemporary society is characterized with great quality of not just products, but brands of uncountable number, not just from domestic market but also from globalizing market of the world. All these occur in a world with dwindling disposable income, rise in affluence and scaled up global consumption. New and more aggressive competitors are emerging with greater frequency. Prior to the advancement of this contemporary stiff competition, consumer buy goods which are available to them and can satisfy their present need without the possible consideration of the brand name and aesthetic quality. More so, consumers were interested in readily availability of those goods at appropriate places and time. However, in recent times, consumers are exposed to thousands of images and voices on television, radio, magazine, newspapers, website and bill board and every brand attempt to steal at least, a person's unsuspecting time to inform him of the amazing attribute of their brands in the face of all these, consumers are becoming more discerning than ever because they are more informed etc which has prompted organization to top up in their game. Furthermore, firm not only communicate to the target market but do it in a most persuasive manner to achieve the desired goal, which is a positive change in both attitude and behavior of the target audience towards their brand.

In this era of globalization, many industries are getting advanced in terms of coming up with innovate idea to grab the attention of viewer and their target market towards the purchase and repurchase of their product. Celebrity

I. INTRODUCTION

endorsement is one of those techniques individuals are trying to follow the lifestyle of their most loved celebrity which makes an awesome effect on their purchase behaviour towards the endorsed brand. McCracken (1989) posited that a celebrity endorser is any individual who enjoy public recognition on behaviour of a consumer goods by appearing with it in an advertisement. Studies show that consumer show greater recall of product that have been endorsed by celebrities the way it recognizes people we actually know. Celebrity advertising is a powerful communication tool of business to most firms and organizations for them to be able to reach their target market across the globe (Belch & Belch, 2001; Bovee and Thrill, 2003; Jobber & Jefkin, 1998), argued that the average person is exposed to hundred of celebrity advert messages between the time he opens his eyes in the morning and clicks off the light at night. In other words, it is brand communication tool whose sole aim is to promote advertised brands or services in the society. With celebrities vouching for or promoting their products, brands could supposedly increases, awareness, trust and familiarity, which are important variable in the purchase decision making process. Consumers feel more attracted towards a brand if their products are promoted by a celebrity they admire, which allows them emulate the celebrity's desired trait or attract similar trait which the celebrity possess.

In the ever competitive betting industry, all the firms are consistently doing everything ethically possible to keep up with competitors and as well offer attractive/superior services to the customer. Advertisement has always being a way of informing actual and prospective customers of the offerings of every firm.

Admittedly, customers are surrounded by brands of various products/services which are aggressively trying to make this product most preferred by the concerned consumers. With that in mind, they are pushing to various forms of advertisement of which celebrity endorsement is ostensibly one of them. In spite of all these preference favorably towards their products, clearly elucidating what prompts and makes up consumer preference has been unable to be fully understood.

Empirically (Muhammad, A. A 2017; Vadivelu, T. 2018; Muneeba, K & Danish A.S 2018; Roshan P. Sudath, W. Ravindra, D. & Manoji, J. 2017; Kolhalgoda, K. C & Dissanayake, D. M. R. 2017; Hockman, M. H 2016; Nwokah, N. G & Nwulu, S. C. 2015 & Chaudhay, U & Ankita, A. 2015) have gorged literatures on the relationship between celebrity endorsement and customer brand preference in various countries and industries.

However, there is a scarcity of such extant literatures in betting industry in developing countries of sub-Sahara Africa which Nigeria is not exempted. Furthermore, this study aims to use the attributes of celebrity endorsement which are attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise and celebrity/product congruence. Using this as a point of departure, this study aims to study the effect of celebrity endorsement on consumer preference in betting industry in Nigeria.

Specifically the study seeks;

1. To determine the influence of celebrity attractiveness on consumer's brand preference among sport bettors Enugu
2. To ascertain the effect of celebrity trustworthiness on consumers brand preference among sport bettors Enugu
3. To determine if the expertise of the endorsed celebrity influences consumers brand preference among sport bettors Enugu
4. To ascertain the nexus between celebrity congruence and consumers brand preference among sport bettors Enugu.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review Celebrity

There are a lot of definitions of celebrity. According to Young and Pinsky (2006, p. 464) individuals who have achieved a significant level of fame that makes them well known in society". The celebrity has rose to become a powerful force in the 21st century and hold an important role in the contemporary culture (Koerning & Boyd 2009; Lord & Putrevu, 2009). A celebrity is a person whose name can attract public attention, ignite public interest and create individual values from the public (Kotler, Keller & Jha, 2007). However, perhaps the most impressive and widely referenced definition is Daniel Boorstin's (1982, p. 49), in which he defined as "the celebrity is a person who is known for his well-knownness".

Celebrity Endorsements

Early definition of celebrity endorsement is mentioned by Freiden (1984). According to him, celebrity endorsement means celebrity in direct connection to an advertised product. According to McCracken (1989, p. 310); "An individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a customer good by appearing with it in an advertisement". According to Kotler et al. (2007), celebrity endorsement is one of communication channels that are used by celebrity as a means of expressing their words to promote the brand on basis of their fame and

personalities. In Nigeria, it was reported that 20% of television commercials and bill boards feature famous persons and spend about 10% of naira on advertisements.

Thus, celebrity endorsement has become a prevalent form of advertising in Nigeria and elsewhere. Today, the use of celebrity advertising for companies has become a trend and perceived winning formula for corporate image building and product marketing. This phenomenon is reflected by the recent marketing research findings, that eight out of ten TV commercials scoring the highest recalls are those with celebrities' appearances. Celebrities are people who enjoy special recognition by large number of certain group of people. They have some characteristics attribute like, attractiveness, extra-ordinary life-style or special skills that are commonly observed. Thus, it can be said that within a society, celebrities generally differ from the common people and enjoy a high degree of public awareness. According to Uduji (2012), celebrity advertising is the use of a public figure likeness for the purpose of selling a product. In Friedman and Friedman (1979), a celebrity endorser is an individual who is known by the public for his or her achievements in areas other than that of the product class endorsed. Compare to other endorser types, famous people always attract a greater degree of attention, recall and loyalty. Using celebrity can increase consumers' awareness of advert, capture their attention, and make advert more memorable.

In this age of intense competition where capturing a position in the consumers' mind-space is extremely tough, celebrity endorsement goes an edge to the companies for holding the viewer's attention, it can catalyze brand acceptance and provide the enormous momentum that brands require, by endorsing the intense vale to the brand. The sports betting endorsers come from sports related activities such as football, field and track events etc, they include, Kanu Nwankwo for Sportybet, Victor Ikpeba for Bet9ja, J. J Okocha for BetKing. Again, celebrities act as spokes people in advertising, to promote products and services which is referred to as celebrity endorsement (Kambitesis et al: 2002).

Literature reveals that a celebrity interacts with the type of brand being advertised, and several research studies have examined the congruency between celebrity endorsers and brands, to explain the effectiveness of using popping up awareness and trust levels to communicate a certain message about the company and value for money in positioning their brands distinctively.

Components of Celebrity Endorsement Attractiveness

The concept of attractiveness does not only entail the physical attractiveness, attractive also entails concepts such as intellectual skills, personality properties, way of living, athletic performances and skills of endorsers (Endrogan, 1999) Celebrities can be attractive because they established for example great sport performances and people have great respect for their achievement and therefore they are attracted to them. Physical attractiveness suggests that a celebrity determines the effectiveness of persuasion as a result of that consumers want to be like the endorser and want to identify themselves with that endorser (Cohen & Golden, 1972). In addition, there are examples of celebrities who are considered less attractive, but do represent the image the company wants to create and have. When the match-up between brand and celebrity is present, attractiveness becomes less important and therefore the company might choose a less attractive celebrity. There are huge numbers of physical attractive celebrities who endorse a product. An example is David Beckham for the Armani brand. The majority of people are attracted by David Beckham. Men want to be associated with the soccer player and fashion man David Beckham, while woman are physically attracted by his appearance because David Beckham always looks fashionable and has great athletic performances. He is extremely credible and attractive and has a high degree of similarity; people want to be like him. It is expected that celebrity attractiveness will have significant relationship with consumer brand preference. We hypothesize that;

1. **H₁** there is a positive significant relationship between celebrity attractiveness and consumer brand preference among sport bettor Enugu

Expertise

Expertise of celebrity endorsement is being defined as "the extent to which an endorser is perceived to be a source of valid assertions". (Edrogan, 1999, p. 298). With regard to expertise, it is not important that the celebrity is really an expert in the field. It is important that consumers think and believe a celebrity has expertise (Ohaninan, 1991).

To illustrate, in a selling context, an expert salesperson caused a significantly higher of customers to purchase a product than the non-expert salesperson did (Woodside & Davenport, 1974). Export sources also influence perceptions of the product's quality. The source or celebrity that is a specialist has been found to be more

persuasive (Aaker, 1997) and generates more purchase intentions (Ohanian, 1991). Furthermore, Speck, Schumann, and Thompson (1988) stated that celebrities, who are seen as an expert in a specific area, engender higher brand recognition than celebrities who are seen as non experts. The level of celebrity expertise will determine its effectiveness (Amos et al, 2008). The more expertise a celebrity has the more effective it will be. The expertise of a celebrity will not be changed by negative publicity, but the believability and credibility will be negatively influenced. It is anticipated that celebrity expertise will have significant relationship with consumer brand preference. We, therefore, hypothesis that

2. **H₁** there is a positive significant relationship between celebrity expertise and consumer brand preference among sport bettors Enugu

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness refers to the “honesty, integrity and believability of an endorser” (Erdogan, 2001). Consumer has generally a consideration that celebrities are trustworthy source of communicating information (Goldsmith et al., 2000). It is general principle a person you trust upon is a source to easily convince you to believe in unseen thing, that person is more believable than any other in community. In addition if such person is also an expert in the field for which he or she is advocating is more persuasive. It is supported to “the extent to which the recipient sees the source as having relevant knowledge, skills, or experience and the source to give unbiased, objective information” (Belch and Belch, 1994). In similar measures a celebrity in message of advertisement become really effective if it is judged that who is the speaker, who is saying; how much is that person believable? Celebrity in an advertisement with expertise is more trustworthy or believable (Hung et al., 2011). Erdogan (1999) argued that celebrity endorser’s credibility is not a single source but a valuable source having cognitive and positive effects on intent to purchase. It is trustworthiness upon celebrity that also reduces the effects of rumors or bad. An interesting factor for increasing trust on celebrity is confirmed by Desphande and Stayman (1994) ethnic status because level of confidence on people similar to them is significantly high than that of endorser from any other ethnic group. It means that the celebrity belongs to similar region, having same life-style with targeted group is considered to be more credible. Not only does the character of a communicator play an important role, Ohanian (1990) regarding the persuasiveness of a message,

but the finding of McGinnis and ward (1980) suggest that an expert source that viewed as trustworthiness can induce opinion of change. Hence we hypothesize that

3. **H₁** there is a positive significant relationship between celebrity trustworthiness and consumer brand preference among sport bettors Enugu

Celebrity Congruence

Most advertisers insist that the correct selection of the right celebrity is very important for the success of the advertisement because consumers typically believe the celebrity should have high positive affect and recognition, and the image of the celebrity must match with that of the product (Choi and Rifon 2012). For example, sporting goods are endorsed by famous sportsmen: Michael Jordan and Tiger Woods endorse Nike and David Beckham endorses Adidas, etc., while the choice of a movie star is not effective to endorse sports products. An important factor in determining the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement is celebrity-brand/product congruence (Choi and Rifon 2007).

A good match-up between a celebrity and a product is more effective for generating positive advertisement evaluations that enhance endorser believability and advertising effectiveness than a bad fit between the two (Davies and Slater 2015). A congruent product- endorser match is more likely to persuade consumers to buy the endorsed brand by transferring cultural meanings residing in their brand image to the product. Moreover, many studies show that a celebrity has a greater impact on consumers in terms of attitude and purchase intention than a non-celebrity spokesperson (McCormick 2016). Previous literature identifies family and friends as being perceived to be more trustworthy than salespeople and many consumers think of celebrities as friends although they might not actually know them (Erdogan 1999; Choi and Rifon 2007; Escalas and Bettman 2017).

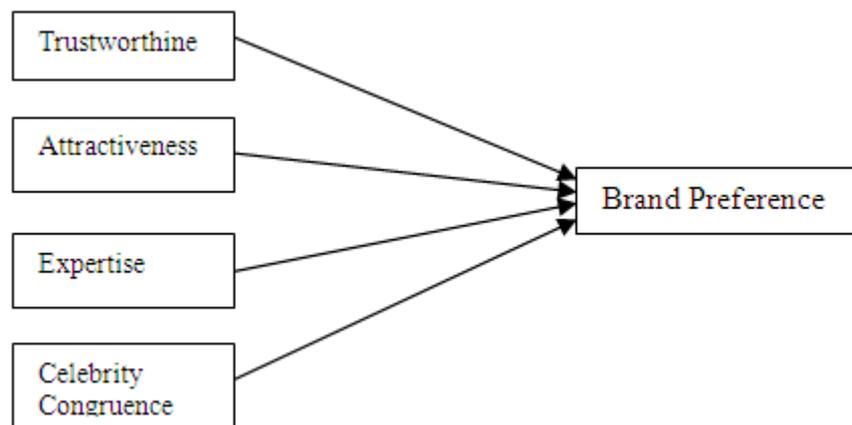
At first glance, it may seem logical that congruence between the celebrity and brand endorsed should have a positive impact on the brand image and that, the stronger the link, the more impact the association should have on the brand. Furthermore, the better the celebrity is suited to the brand or product, more relevant or congruent the celebrity/ brand pair is perceived to be, then the greater the positive response to advertising in terms of attitude and purchasing intent will be (Till and Busler 2000; Batra and Homer 2004). However, it is possible to imagine a more complex relationship and examine an

alternative hypothesis (e.g., that a certain level of incongruence may have a positive impact on response to advertising, particularly in terms of the brand image). Indeed, a moderate level of incongruence between an expectation and an object may be beneficial, as it can be perceived to be interesting and positive (Lee and Thorson 2008). A relatively poor fit between brand and celebrity may be stimulating and encourage individuals to process the information more intensively and elaborate more (Lee 2000).

A number of studies conducted by Cooper (1984) Andxs Forkan (1980) indicate that celebrity congruence with the product has a significant play. When a product is advertised by a celebrity with suitable image that is highly relevant to the product, the confidence will be higher on the advertisement and the celebrity compared to a product image promoted by a less famous, less relevant person (Kotler, 1997). We hypothesis that

4. **H₁** there is positive significant relationship between celebrity congruence and consumer brand preference among sport bettors Enugu

Proposed Research Model



Source: Researcher’s conceptualization

For the purpose of this research, celebrity congruence Kamins (2009) was added as one of the constructs that underpin this study. Celebrity congruence states that celebrities should be matched up with the product they endorse for high social accepting and strengthening the credibility product and celebrity association is the most important factor for generating positive feedback because people take it as evidence that the product is in reality used or consumed by the celebrity.

Theoretical Review

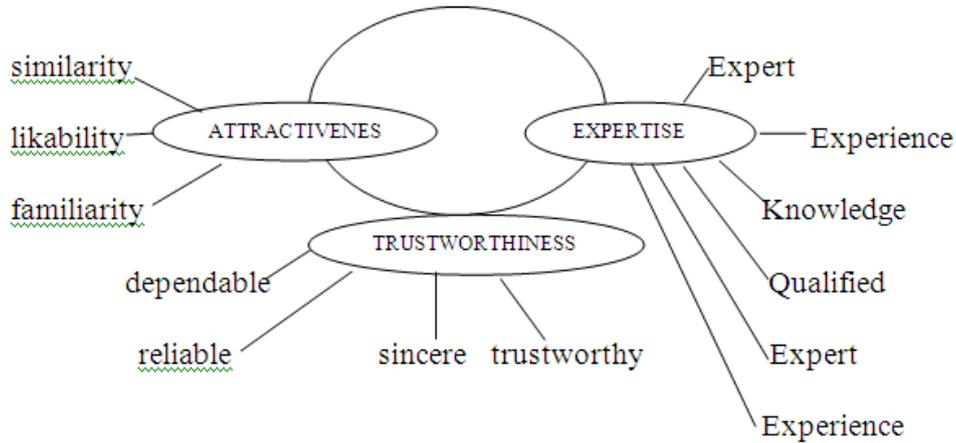
Source Credibility Model

The theory of source credibility is propounded by Hovlan, Janis and Kelly (2000). The model argues that the expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness of an endorser are dependent for the effectiveness of the message. As ascertained by Hovland et al (2000). A credible source can have influence on consumer’s opinions, beliefs attitude and in the end preference Ohanian (1991). Further, Hunter (2010) state that source credibility argued to improve consumer confidence,

improve consumers reaction towards the brand, alter negative predisposition, and that a credible source is more effective, trustworthiness and attractiveness expertise is whether or not the target audience perceives that the endorser is a valid source of assertion, that he or she has experience and knowledge in the area of the product category. This is of importance since an expert is argued to generate more preference for a specific brand, thus to be more persuasive thus, trustworthiness is also about the target audience perception, that is how honest, dependable and believable the endorser is perceived to be untrustworthy endorses are argued to be questionable source of message physical attractiveness is a quality which celebrities must possess. This principle states that an attractive endorser will have a positive impact on the endorsement. The endorser should be attractive to the target audience in certain aspects like physical appearance, intellectual capabilities, athletic competence and lifestyle; it has been proven that an endorser that appears attractive as defined above

has a greater chance of enhancing the memory of the brand he or she endorses.
 The relevance of this model; source credibility model proposed that trustworthiness, attractiveness

and expertise have effect on consumer purchase behaviour this work is trying to find out if attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise have any effect on brand preference.



Source: Credibility Model

Empirical Review

| AUTHOR | TOPIC | VARIABLES | OUTCOME |
|---|---|---|------------|
| Adam & Hussan (2017) | Impact of celebrity endorsement on consumer buying behaviour | Credibility, Attractiveness, Product match Meaning transfer | Positive + |
| Dissanyaka & Weerasiri (2017) | Impact of perceived effectiveness or celebrity endorsement on perceived brand preference | Trustworthiness similarity respect attractiveness expertise | Positive + |
| Nwukah & Nwulu (2018) | The influence of celebrity advertising on consumer brand preference | Attractiveness, trustworthiness, product fit | Positive + |
| Alltayo & Tejumaire (2016) | Influence of celebrity in television advertisement | Trustworthiness, Appearance, expertise | Positive + |
| Priyankara, Weerasiri & Dissanyaka (2017) | Celebrity endorsement and consumer buying intention | Trustworthiness, Appearance, Expertise | Positive + |
| Minh ha & Hung Lam (2016) | The effect of Celebrity endorsement on consumer attitude towards brand and purchase intention | Trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, similarity | Positive + |
| Khalia & Siddqui | Impact of celebrity endorsement on consumer buying | Trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness | Positive + |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|------------|
| | behaviour | | |
| Hoeman | Impact of celebrity attitude towards the brand | Liking, match-up congruence, familiarity, trustworthiness | Positive + |
| Wongweeranonchai & McClelland (2016) | Influence of celebrity endorser credibility advertising on purchase retention | Likeability, expertise, attractiveness, trustworthiness | Negative + |

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts the descriptive research design method Asomah (2012) is an empirical study that uses questionnaire or interviews to discover descriptive characteristic of a phenomenon. It is a research that takes sample in order to understand and make descriptive assertions about a large population. According Asomah et al, (2012), a population is described as all the number of any well defined class of people, events or subject. The population of the study was all the bettors in Enugu state. Where population is infinite, the formula that estimates the representativeness of sample on certain critical parameters at an acceptance level of probability will be used.

The formula is given as:
$$N = \frac{z^2(P)(Q)}{e^2}$$

Where n = sample size

Z = standard deviation

P = the estimated proportion of incidence of cases in the population or assumed success rate with the instrument

Q = (1-P) or assumed failure rate

e = proportion of sampling error or error margin in given situation

We estimated the study sample and came up with the following values

n = sample size (be determined)

Z = at 95% confidence level is 1.96 (read from a standard normal distribution table)

P = 80% (0.80) is assumed

Q = 1-0.8 = 0.20

e = 0.05 since we have chosen 96% as our confidence limit

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2(0.08)(0.20)}{0.05^2}$$

$$n = 245.86$$

Data were generated through primary and secondary data. In primary data collection, the researcher made use of structured questionnaire and personal interview, in the secondary data collection; it was obtained from relevant material from the library, textbooks and journals.

To accomplish this work, the researcher made use of questionnaire. A questionnaire is a set of questions designed to investigate a given subject matter. Questionnaire helps to yield rich source of data from peoples experience and knowledge in evaluating a particular problem. Copies of questionnaire were used to elicit accurate responses from respondents. Validity refers to the accuracy or truthfulness of a measurement. In order to validate the instrument in relation to the objective and research question of this study, the researcher generated some questions and gave it to the supervisor based on this input; final draft of the questionnaire was processed. A structured questionnaire was adapted for this study. The questionnaire was based on five likert scale rating from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The study is reliable because it reflects consistency and ability to be replicated. The instrument was also reliable because the researcher made use of pilot study on the questionnaire as the questions were in the required result.

Primary data collection was used. A self structured questionnaire was used to collect the data for the research. This was used because it is a very simple way of collecting data. The questionnaire consist of both closed and open ended questions and some questions options was based on the five pointer likert scale from (strongly agree to strongly disagree) likert scale is a psychometric scale commonly involved in research that employs questionnaires. It is the most widely used approach to scaling response in survey research.

Stratified random sampling was used in questionnaire administration. Stratified random sampling procedure is a method of sampling used where the larger population is heterogeneous. The first task here is to divide the population in homogeneous subset, called strata and then use either simple or systemic sampling procedure to select item from each stratum.

Data analysis is the arrangement, organization and presentation of the data in the manner that will provide answers to the research problems or issues. Correlation analysis was used in data analysis. Correlation analysis studies the

relationship between independent and dependent variables.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

The sample size for this study was 246 online bettors drawn from the study area. This means that a total of 246 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the bettors in the

study area, 236 representing approximately 95.9% response rate were returned as duly filed and usable. This high response rate was informed by the fact that the researcher took time to go round the cities and distribute the questionnaire himself. Four demographic variables were used in the study and are presented in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Gender: Male | Female | 220 | 93 | 93 | 93 |
| | Female | 16 | 7 | 7 | |
| | Total | 236 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Marital Status: | Single | 236 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| | Married | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Separated/Divorced | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 236 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Age bracket: years | below 30 | 118 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | 31-40 years | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 41-50 years | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 236 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Education: | O'level | 115 | 48.7 | 48.7 | 37.7 |
| | HND/BSc | 89 | 37.7 | 37.7 | 86.4 |
| | Postgraduate | 32 | 13.6 | 13.6 | |
| | Total | 236 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

On gender, 158(66.9%) of the respondents are male while the remaining 78(33.1%) are female. On marital status, 149(63.1%) are singles, 40(16.9%) are married, while 47(19.0%) are either divorced or separated. On age bracket, 118(50.0%) are below 30 years, 73(30.0%) are within 31-40 years, while 45(19.1%) are within the age bracket of 41-50 years. The implication of this is that majority of our respondents are very young people

who are more prone to innovation than old people. On education, 89(37.7%) have O'levels only, 115(48.7%) have HND/BS.c while 32(13.6%) have post graduate qualifications. The implication of this is that majority of the respondents 147(62.3%) have tertiary education and are therefore disposed to give valid and usable information needed for the study.

Table 4.2: Responses on Trustworthiness

| | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Undecided | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|--|----------------|------|-------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|-------------------|-----|
| | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % |
| I believe that celebrities can build trust in a product | 58 | 24.6 | 124 | 52.5 | 23 | 9.7 | 31 | 13.1 | - | - |
| Celebrity that is trustworthy can influence by preference | 65 | 27.5 | 121 | | 51.3 | 12.3 | 9 | 3.8 | 12 | 5.1 |
| I patronize betting site with reliable celebrities | 67 | 28.4 | 113 | | 47.9 | 17.8 | 4 | 1.7 | 10 | 4.2 |
| I believe celebrity endorsement can build trust in a brand | 28 | 11.9 | 107 | | 45.3 | 22.5 | 42 | 17.8 | 6 | 2.5 |

The trustworthiness construct was measured with four items and as shown in table 4.2. 58(24.6%) strongly agree with the first item, 124(52.5%) agree, 23(9.7%) are undecided, while 31(13.1%) disagree. For the second item, 65(27.5%) strongly agree, 121(51.3%) agree, 29(12.3%) are undecided, 9(3.8%) disagree while

12(5.1%) strongly disagree. For the third item, 67(28.4%) strongly agree, 113(47.9%) agree, 42(17.8%) are undecided, 4(1.7%) disagree while 10(4.2%) strongly disagree. For the fourth item, 28(11.9%) strongly agree, 107(45.3%) agree, 53(22.5%) are undecided, 42(17.8%) disagree while 6(2.5%) strongly disagree.

Table 4.3: Responses on celebrity congruence

| | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Undecided | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|--|----------------|------|-------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|-------------------|-----|
| | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % |
| Right and appropriate celebrity influences my preference for a brand | 34 | 14.4 | 108 | 45.8 | 50 | 21.2 | 38 | 16.1 | 6 | 2.5 |
| Betting industry uses suitable celebrity to promote their brand | 26 | 11.0 | 109 | 46.2 | 61 | 25.8 | 27 | 11.4 | 13 | 5.5 |
| Betting site uses celebrity that matches their product | 23 | 9.7 | 74 | 31.4 | 60 | 25.4 | 66 | 28.0 | 13 | 5.5 |

Celebrity congruence construct was measured with three items and as shown in Table 4.3, 34(14.4%) strongly agree with the first item, 108(45.8%) agree, 50(21.2%) are undecided, while 38(16.1%) disagree, while 6(2.5%) strongly disagree. For the second item, 26(11.0%) strongly

agree, (109(46.2%) agree, 61(25.8%) are undecided, 27(11.0%) disagree while 13(5.5%) strongly disagree. For third the item, 23(9.7%) strongly agree, 74(31.4%) agree, 60(25.4%) are undecided, 66(28.0%) disagree while 13(5.5%) strongly disagree.

Table 4.4 Response on Expertise

| | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Undecided | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|--|----------------|------|-------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|-------------------|-----|
| | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % |
| Use of experience to promote brand | 19 | 8.1 | 93 | 39.4 | 66 | 28.0 | 52 | 22.0 | 6 | 2.5 |
| Use of experience celebrity influences my choice of betting site | 35 | 14.8 | 146 | 61.9 | 36 | 15.3 | 16 | 6.8 | 3 | 1.3 |
| I prefer when an experience celebrity in a particular field endorses a brand | 37 | 15.7 | 130 | 55.1 | 25 | 10.6 | 34 | 14.4 | 10 | 4.2 |

The expertise construct was measured with three items and as shown in Table 4.4, 19(8.1%) strongly agree with the first item, 93(39.4%) agree, 66(28.0%) are undecided, while 52(22.0%) disagree, while 6(2.5%) strongly

disagree. For the second item, 35(14.8%) strongly agree, 130(55.1%) agree, 25 (10.6%) are undecided, 34(14.4%) disagree while 10(4.2%) strongly disagree.

Table 4.5: Responses on Attractiveness items

| | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Undecided | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|---|----------------|------|-------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|-------------------|------|
| | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % |
| Betting site uses attractive celebrity to | 44 | 18.6 | 63 | 26.7 | 40 | 16.9 | 60 | 25.4 | 29 | 12.3 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|
| promote their brand | | | | | | | | | | |
| I do get attracted by the product endorsed by a celebrity | 17 | 7.2 | 24 | 10.2 | 76 | 32.2 | 72 | 30.5 | 47 | 19.9 |
| Presence of a celebrity helps in recognizing a brand | 97 | 41.1 | 79 | 33.5 | 27 | 11.4 | 20 | 8.5 | 13 | 5.5 |
| I find product endorsed by a celebrity interesting | 27 | 11.4 | 83 | 35.2 | 73 | 30.9 | 44 | 18.6 | 9 | 3.8 |

The attractiveness construct was measured with four items and as shown in Table 4.5, 44(18.6%) strongly agree with the first item, 63(26.7%) agree, 40(16.9%) are undecided, 60(25.4%) disagree, while 29(12.3%) strongly disagree. For the second item, 17(7.2%) strongly agree, 24(10.2%) agree, 76(32.2%) are undecided, 72(30.5%) disagree while 47(19.9%) strongly

disagree. For the third item 97(41.1%) strongly agree, 79(33.5%) agree, 27(11.4%) are undecided, 20(8.5%) disagree while 13(5.5%) strongly disagree. For the fourth item, 27(11.4%) strongly agree, 83(35.2%) agree, 73(30.9%) are undecided, 44(18.6%) disagree while 9(3.8%) strongly disagree.

Table 4.6: Response on brand preference items

| | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Undecided | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|---|----------------|------|-------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|-------------------|-----|
| | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % | Freq | % |
| I will go out of my way to patronize a betting site that uses my favorite celebrity | 28 | 11.9 | 97 | 41.1 | 45 | 19.1 | 57 | 24.2 | 9 | 3.8 |
| I prefer brands endorsed by a celebrity | 75 | 31.8 | 31.8 | 44.9 | 24 | 10.2 | 19 | 8.1 | 12 | 5.1 |
| I will always perceive product endorsed by a celebrity as high quality | 46 | 19.5 | 19.5 | 45.8 | 48 | 20.3 | 22 | 9.3 | 12 | 5.1 |

The brand preference construct which is the dependent variable was measured with three items and as shown in Table 4.6, 28(11.9%) strongly agree with the first item, 97(41.1%) agree, 45(19.1%) are undecided, 57(24.2%) disagree, while 9(3.8%) strongly disagree. For the second item, 75(31.8%) strongly agree, 106(44.9%) agree, 24(10.2%) are undecided, 19(8.1%) disagree while 12(5.1%) strongly disagree. For the third item, 46(19.5%) strongly agree, 108(45.8%) agree,

48(20.3%) are undecided, 22(9.3%) disagree while 12(5.1%) strongly disagree. The implication of this is that the respondents are in agreement with the dimension of our research model. The next is descriptive analysis.

Descriptive Statistics Analysis

Descriptive statistics tools were used to explore the data before further analysis and the results are shown in Table 4.7

Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|-----|---------|---------|------|----------------|
| I believe that celebrities can build trust in a product | 236 | 1 | 4 | 2.11 | .927 |
| Celebrities with good character influence my preference for a particular betting site | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.08 | 1.003 |
| I patronize betting sites that uses reliable celebrities to advertise their brand | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.06 | .955 |
| I prefer patronizing betting sites that uses | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.54 | .999 |

| | | | | | |
|---|-----|---|---|------|-------|
| celebrity with good character | | | | | |
| The right and appropriate celebrity influence my preference for a brand | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.47 | 1.008 |
| Betting industry uses suitable celebrities to promote their brand | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.54 | 1.016 |
| | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.88 | 1.093 |
| The use of unsuitable celebrity affect my choice of brand | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.72 | .981 |
| Betting sites employs skilled and experienced celebrities to promote their brand | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.18 | .811 |
| | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.36 | 1.045 |
| Use of experience celebrity influence my choice of a betting site | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.54 | .955 |
| Betting sites uses attractive celebrities to promote their brand | 236 | 1 | 5 | 3.46 | 1.135 |
| Do you get attracted to buy a product endorsed by a celebrity | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.04 | 1.168 |
| | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.68 | 1.026 |
| Do you think the presence of celebrity help you recognize a brand? | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.86 | 1.321 |
| Are you able to identify a betting site because a celebrity is associated with it | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.67 | 1.084 |
| | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.10 | 1.093 |
| I find product endorsed by celebrities interesting | 236 | 1 | 5 | 2.35 | 1.055 |
| Betting sites uses attractive celebrities to promote their brand | | | | | |
| I would go out of my way to patronize a betting site that uses my favourite celebrity | | | | | |
| I prefer brands endorsed by a celebrity | | | | | |
| I will always consider products endorsed by a celebrity to be of high quality | | | | | |
| Valid N (listwise) | | | | | |

The four constructs used in this study were measured with a total of 18 items as shown in Table 4.7 on descriptive statistics. The first column after the items is N which is 236. This shows that the captive sample used in the study is 236 respondents and there is no missing item. The minimum and maximum column shows that the constructs were measured with five point likert scale. All the items have mean above 2 which is acceptable while many of the standard deviations

are above one showing respondents diverse views on the constructs. The next is reliability analysis.

Reliability Analysis

Cronbach alpha was used to check for the reliability and specifically to check for internal consistency unidimensionality of the scale. The scale is reliable because all the variables loaded above 0.60 acceptable thresholds.

| Items | Cronbach alpha |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Trustworthiness 1 | 0.726 |
| Trustworthiness 2 | 0.623 |
| Trustworthiness 3 | 0.753 |
| Trustworthiness 4 | 0.842 |
| Expertise 1 | 0.959 |
| Expertise 2 | 0.860 |
| Expertise 3 | 0.807 |
| Attractiveness 1 | 0.637 |
| Attractiveness 2 | 0.723 |
| Attractiveness 3 | 0.950 |
| Celebrity Congruence 1 | 0.860 |
| Celebrity Congruence 2 | 0.843 |

| | |
|------------------------|-------|
| Celebrity Congruence 3 | 0.755 |
| Brand Preference 1 | 0.930 |
| Brand Preference 2 | 0.856 |
| Brand Preference3 | 0.798 |

Testing of Hypotheses

Pearson Product Moment correlation was used to test the hypotheses earlier formulated to guide the study. Summated scale was used to bring the items into their respective constructs before the hypotheses testing proper.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between trustworthiness and brand preference Correlations

| | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| | | Trustworthiness | Brand preference |
| Trustworthiness | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .263** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 236 | 236 |
| Brand preference | Pearson Correlation | .263** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 236 | 236 |

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

The result of the Pearson product moment correlation for hypothesis one shows a correlation coefficient of .262 with a p-value of .000 which well below the .05 margin of error. Based on this, Hypothesis One which states that: there is a

significant relationship between Trustworthiness and brand preference with sporting betting firm is fully validated and accepted.

H₂: There is a significant relationship between celebrity congruence and brand preference.

Correlations

| | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| | | Celebrity Congruence | Brand preference |
| Celebrity Congruence | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .368** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 236 | 236 |
| Brand preference | Pearson Correlation | .368** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 236 | 236 |

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

The result of the Pearson product moment correlation for hypothesis two showed a correlation coefficient of .368 with a p-value of .000 which well below the .05 margin of error. Based on this, hypothesis two which states that: there is a significant relationship between celebrity

congruence and brand preference fully validated and accepted.

H₃: There is a significant relationship between expertise and brand preference

Correlations

| | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------|------------------|
| | | Expertise | Brand preference |
| Celebrity Congruence | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .575** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 236 | 236 |
| Brand preference | Pearson Correlation | .575** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |

| | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| N | 236 | 236 |
|---|-----|-----|

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

The result of the Pearson product moment correlation for hypothesis three showed a correlation coefficient of .575 with a p-value of .000 which well below the 0.5 margin of error.

Based on this, hypothesis three which states that; there is a significant relationship between expertise and brand preference among betting firm is fully validated and accepted.

H₄: There is a significant relationship between attractiveness and brand preference with banks.

Correlations

| | | Attractiveness | Brand preference |
|------------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Attractiveness | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .909** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 236 | .000 |
| | N | | 236 |
| Brand preference | Pearson Correlation | .909** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 236 | 236 |

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

The result of the Pearson product moment correlation for hypothesis four shows a correlation coefficient of .909 with a p-value of .000 which well below the .05 margin of error. Based on this, Hypothesis four which states that there is a significant relationship between attractiveness and brand preference in betting industry is fully validated and accepted.

consumers brand preference. It is concluded that celebrity endorsement definitely create an impact in the brand preference attitude of consumers. In spite of the economic advantage of using relatively unknown personalities as endorsers in advertising campaigns, the choice of celebrities to perform that role has become a universal practice for brands competing in today's cluttered media environment. As can be interpreted from the results, celebrity endorsement has reasonable impact on customers as per their attitude and purchase intention. Celebrity endorsement has come out as not only an influential factor but rather a casual factor in the results of this paper. Physical attractiveness, credibility and coordination of celebrity with reference to the endorsed advertisement all have impact on the consumer's perception about the advertised product. The tests have by and large bore favourable significant results in the light of variables used.

V. CONCLUSION

The study has determined effect of celebrity endorsement on brand preference in sport betting industry. The objective of the research work has been achieved which is to find the effect of celebrity endorsement on brand preference.

It was found that celebrity endorsement on brand preference is an effective strategy and a tool of persuasion in selling, the use of celebrities to endorse a marketing offer are perceived to enhance the awareness, responsiveness and brand image of products and creates a connection which forces a consumer to patronize a product. It has been proved from the discussion that celebrity endorsements are a powerful and useful tool that magnifies. Companies should ensure that the celebrity fits into the endorsement or match up with the project he is endorsing in order to influence consumers through celebrity endorsement, firms should ensure their products are of good quality, to gain consumers trust, monitor celebrities' activities and also feature celebrities that match their endorsed brands.

The topic, influence of celebrity endorsement on consumers' brand preference of sport betting industry gives an insight on the various influences celebrity endorsement has on

Thus, celebrity endorsements contribute to consumer's preference for the product. Hence, the up and about trend being observed these days. Another implication of this paper is that it goes out to show the extent to which today's customer is aware and influenced by media. Celebrities are worshipped as icons now. If the customer perceives the physical attractiveness, credibility and the match between celebrity and the product to be favourable, he is inertly being influenced to like that product which leads to the preference and purchase of that product. Features of the product itself take secondary importance. Because of their high profile, celebrities may help advertisements stand out from the surrounding clutter, thus

improving their communicative ability. Celebrity endorsement if used effectively, makes the brand stand out, galvanize brand recall and facilitates immediate awareness. To achieve this, the marketer needs to be really disciplined in choice of a celebrity.

Firms using celebrities as endorsers should always endeavour to produce quality products that will foster trust and believability to both the fans of these celebrities and their customers. Credibility of a source creates believability, and it is only trust that generates good image and subsequent growth, which will result in large turnover and profit. Consumers are becoming more discerning than ever and firms with wrong quality products or services lose their customers to their competitors, despise the use of the best and most expensive celebrities. Celebrities are image representatives of their firms and there should be adequate monitoring to ensure that cooperate image they represent are boasted. Celebrities should be made to use the products they endorse; otherwise they should not enter into the contract at all. When a celebrity endorses a product and uses another, it obviously shows that the product's quality is bad and this presents a wrong image signal of the company. When using celebrities for product endorsement, the 'match' between the proposed celebrity and the product brand must be well considered. Any mismatch between the two can make the consumers to brand-switch, if peradventure the competitors use better celebrities for their products.

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