Impact of Celebrity Endorsement through Social Media on Consumer Purchasing Intentions in Sri Lankan Fashion Industry

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Abstract

Celebrity endorsement through social media has wide ranging implications on businesses particularly because celebrities have the power to influence consumer behavior. In the fashion industry, celebrity endorsement has had a huge impact on consumer purchase intentions and firms are using this approach to leverage market share. Social media platforms are being increasingly used by celebrities to market fashion brands in Sri Lanka and this has become a new trend. This paper seeks to identify the influence of celebrity endorsement through social media on consumer purchasing intentions in the Sri Lankan fashion industry. Although, there is considerable research on celebrity endorsement through social media, there is limited research of such practices in the fashion industry in Sri Lanka. The research methodology is a deductive, cross sectional study that uses quantitative research methods. The sample size of 300 customers was selected through convenience sampling and the research instrument was developed through prior research instruments by products. The main findings revealed that expertise, trustworthiness, fame, personality, and attractiveness of a celebrity positively influenced perceived consumer purchase intentions. The main limitations of the study are that it does not identify the specific social media platforms which are more influential.

Keywords
Celebrity Endorsement, Social Media Influencing, Fashion Retail Industry, Customer Purchasing Intention, Influencer Marketing

1. Introduction
Social media usage has increased due to the growth of Web 2.0 which creates opportunities for businesses to maximize market share and profitability through customer acquisition (Soegoto, and Utomo, 2019). Using social media platforms and websites to promote a product or service is called social media marketing (Shareef et al., 2019). Businesses and brands have recently turned to an online 'celebrity' known as a social media influencer (SMI) to disseminate information and influence consumer product perception. This has become a common tactic in communication and marketing efforts, especially with the fashion and beauty industry (Liyanage, 2019). "Influencing" is now an important source of revenue for celebrities, and celebrities use their fame, publicity, or social status to market a product, brand, or service, or to increase information awareness about a problem (Chung, and Cho 2017). In the fashion industry, brands are now hiring celebrities to influence people to buy their fashion items (Carrillat, O'Rourke, and Plourde, 2019).

1.1 Research Gap
The impact of celebrity endorsement in social media and in TV commercials on customer purchasing intentions in perfumes, telecommunication, beauty, and skin care products (Liyanage, 2019; Munasinghe et al., 2020; Guruge, 2018; Zipporah, and Mberia, 2014; Priyankara et al., 2017; Ertugan, and Mupindu, 2019) has received considerable attention. Globally considerable attention has been paid to celebrity endorsement through social media on consumer purchasing intentions in the fashion industry (Eli-Zafoe, 2013; Spry, Pappu, and Bettina, 2011; Khalid, Siddiqui, and

Ahmed, 2018; Gilal et al., 2021: Jamil, and Hassan, 2014; Ahmad, Idris, Mason, and Chow, 2019). However, limited research exists on the impact of celebrity endorsement in social media on consumer purchasing intentions in Sri Lankan fashion industry (Hennayake, 2017; Weerasiri, and Herath, 2017; Dissanayake, Herath, and Nanayakkara, 2020). Therefore, this study seeks to contribute to fill the research void in this area since there is a lack of research in this domain in the context of the fashion industry in Sri Lanka.

Based on the research gap, the following research question and research objectives were formulated.

1.2 Research Question
What is the impact of celebrity endorsement through social media channels on perceived consumer purchase intentions in Sri Lankan fashion industry?

1.3 Research Objectives
To understand the impact of celebrity endorsement through social media channels on perceived consumer purchase intentions in Sri Lankan fashion industry

Based on the above main research objective, the following sub objectives have been identified.
- To understand the impact of **Expertise** of a Celebrity on perceived consumer purchase intentions
- To identify the impact of **Trustworthiness** of a Celebrity on perceived consumer purchase intentions
- To assess the impact of **Fame** of a Celebrity on perceived consumer purchase intentions
- To evaluate the impact of **Personality** of a Celebrity on perceived consumer purchase intentions
- To understand the impact of **Attractiveness** of a Celebrity on perceived consumer purchase intentions

2. Literature Review
The following models can be used to explain celebrity endorsement and its impact on perceived consumer purchase intentions.

2.1 Theoretical Background and Models
2.1.1 Source-Credibility Model (Hovland & Weiss, 1951)
The source-credibility Model originally belongs to a communicator 's positive attributes that influence the receiver 's acceptance of an information (Kumar, 2010; Byrne et al., 2003).

2.1.2 Source Attractiveness Model (Erdogen, 1999),
According to Erdogen (1999), endorsers, who are physically attractive, form positive perception. The trait of attraction does not essentially involve a physically attractive appearance, but it involves the lifestyle and personality dimension of the influencer.

2.1.3 Meaning Transfer Model (McCracken, 1989)
McCracken (1989) stated the meaning transfer model to demonstrate that celebrities control novel sets of meanings that can be transferable to the goods endorsed by them (Eli-Zafoe, 2013).

2.1.4 The Associative Network Memory Model (Till, and Shimp, 1998)
The associative network memory model is regularly used to illustrate the structure of individual mind and thus consumers' brand affiliations (Spry, Pappu, and Bettina, 2011).

3. Conceptual Framework
3.1 Independent Variables
Expertise
The expertise of celebrity endorsement is being defined as "the extent to which an endorser is perceived to be a source of valid assertions" (Priyankara, Weerasiri, Dissanayaka, and Jinadasa, 2017). Adam and Hussain (2017) stated that it is not necessary that the celebrity is an expert in a particular field. It is significant that customers imagine and assume a celebrity is an expertise (Priyankara, Weerasiri, Dissanayaka, and Jinadasa, 2017; Guruge, 2018; Jamil, and Hassan, 2014; Ahmad, Idris, Mason, and Chow, 2019)

Trustworthiness
Trustworthiness is the unbiasedness of the celebrity (Shrivastava, Jain, Kamble, and Belhadi, 2021). People believe that the endorser has the ability of convey truth and is sincere to his/her fans. (Wang, Kao, and Ngamsiriudom, 2017; Osei-Frimpong, Donkor, and Owusu-Frimpong, 2019; Ahmad, Idris, Mason, and Chow, 2019).

Fame
Fame is known as the status maintaining by the celebrity over the years in the industry. Pleasing, Affection, Veracity, Believable are the key indicators related to trustworthiness (Priyankara, Weerasiri, Dissanayaka, and Jinadasa, 2017; Guruge 2018; Osei-Frimpong, Donkor, and Owusu-Frimpong, 2019; Munasinghe et al., 2020)
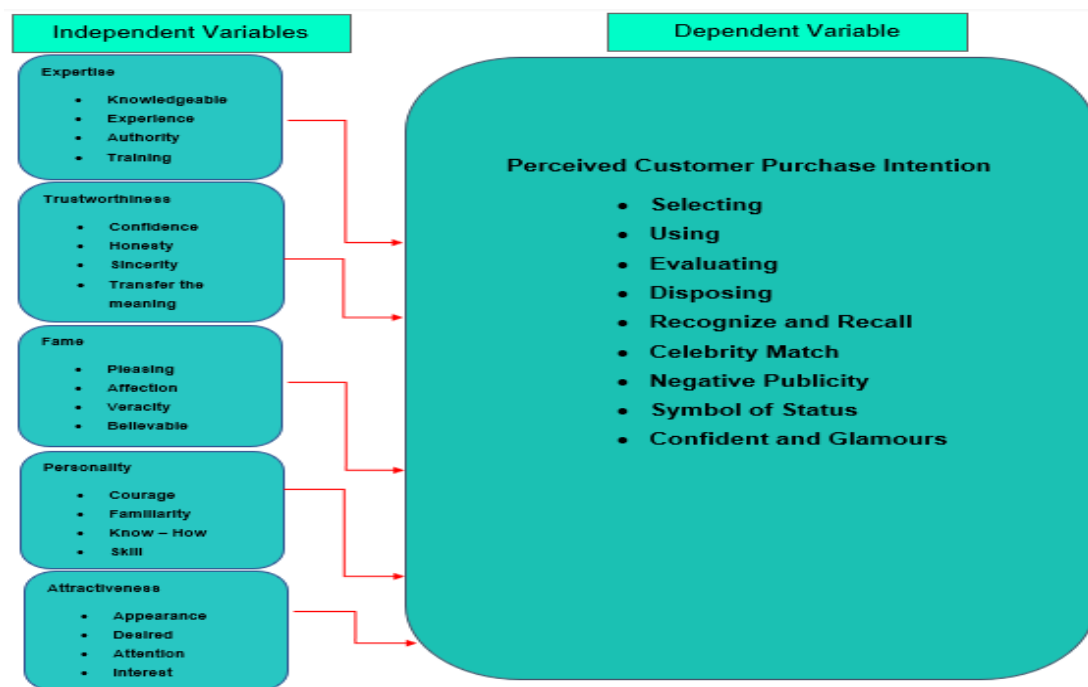

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Personality
The celebrity-persona identification scale (CPI) is created to estimate how media users produce identification with celebrities or famous characters. Identification is described as a persuasion process that happens when a person adopts the behavior or attitudes of another person based on a self-defining relationship (Osei-Frimpong, Donkor, and Owusu-Frimpong, 2019; Priyankara, Weerasiri, Dissanayaka, and Jinadasa, 2017; Wang, Kao, and Ngamsiriudom, 2017)

Attractiveness
The concept of attractiveness is not just about physical attraction. Attractiveness includes concepts such as intellectual skills, personality traits, lifestyle, athletics, and endorsement skills (Munasinghe et al., 2020).

3.2 Dependent Variable
Perceived Customer Purchase Intention
Customer Purchasing Intention is the study of finding what influence customers to purchase product or service (Liyanage, 2019). Customer purchase will vary according to the celebrity's selecting, using, the way of evaluating, and moment of disposing. Customers thinks that if they use celebrity endorsed product that shows their social status, and they look more glamorous and confidence (Osei-Frimpong, Donkor, and Owusu-Frimpong, 2019; Ahmad, Idris, Mason, and Chow, 2019; Ertugan, and Mupindu, 2019)

Based on the conceptual framework, the following hypotheses have been formulated.

3.3 Hypothesis Development
- H1 –There is a relationship between expertise of the celebrity and perceived consumer purchase intentions.
- H2 - There is a relationship between trustworthiness of the celebrity and perceived consumer purchase intentions.
- H3 - There is a relationship between fame of the celebrity and perceived consumer purchase intentions.
- H4 - There is a relationship between personality of the celebrity and perceived consumer purchase intentions.
- H5 - There is a relationship between attractiveness of the celebrity and perceived consumer purchase intentions.

4. Research Methodology
A positivistic research paradigm guides this research study since it seeks to identify causal relationships between observable variables. A quantitative research method has been employed to identify the nature of the relationships between the key variables and to test the key hypotheses. This study is cross sectional and uses the deductive approach to draw conclusions from the sample.

4.1 Sampling Strategy
Data was collected through a questionnaire from a sample of 300 respondents drawn from a sample frame of 648,034 residents of Colombo District (Worldometer, 2021). The sample size was calculated based on Anderson's Table and Convenience sampling was used since it has been used in many research studies (Liyanage, 2019; Munasinghe et al., 2020; Guruge, 2018; Zipporah, and Mberia, 2014; Priyankara et al., 2017) in a similar domain . Respondents were people who carried out shopping in several leading fashion stores in the capital Colombo and between the age of 15-45. Colombo is the capital, and its residents tend to be more fashion conscious and eager to mimic the actions of celebrities than other cities in the country, and hence the respondents were mainly drawn from Colombo (Weerasiri, and Herath, 2017). 15-45 age range chosen because they are in the generation of millennials and generation Z that are more conscious into fashion and technology (Jamil, and Hassan, 2014). A pilot test (n = 30) was carried out to identify limitations in the research instrument. Research instrument was developed based on the previous empirical studies (Liyanage, 2019; Munasinghe et al., 2020; Priyankara, Weerasiri, Dissanayaka, and Jinadasa, 2017; Eli-Zafoe, 2013).

4.2 Data Analysis
SPSS was used to perform inferential as well as descriptive statistical analysis.

4.3 Operationalization of Variables
Table 1: Operationalization table (Author developed)

Variable	Indicator	Theoretical Framework	Measurement	Source	Question Type
Expertise	Knowledgeable	Source Credibility Model Adam, and Hussain (2017), Eli-Zafoe (2013), The Associative Network Memory	Consumer Attitude on whether the celebrity has practical knowledge of his or her area.	Priyankara, Weerasiri, Dissanayaka, and Jinadasa (2017),	5 Point Likert scale

	Experience	Model Johansson, and Bozan (2017) **Source Attractiveness Model** Erdogen (1999), Debence and Kernan (1984)	Whether the celebrity has sufficient experience in his or her field or area.	Guruge (2018)	
	Authority		Consumer attitudes as to whether a celebrity has the power to influence action or behavior.	Jamil, and Hassan (2014),	
	Training		Attitude of the customer whether the celebrity has received his or her practical training related to the field.	Ahmad, Idris, Mason, and Chow (2019)	
Trustworthiness	Confidence	Source Credibility Model Adam, and Hussain (2017), Eli-Zafoe (2013), The Associative Network Memory Model. Johansson, and Bozan (2017) **Meaning Transfer model** Johansson, and Bozan (2017) **Source Attractiveness Model** Erdogen (1999), Debence and Kernan (1984)	Consumer attitudes about the trust of celebrities.	Shrivastava, Jain, Kamble, and Belhadi (2021),	5 Point Likert scale
	Honesty		Consumer attitudes about whether a celebrity is honest.	Wang, Kao, and Ngamsiriudom (2017)	
	Sincerity		The consumer attitude towards the Sincerity of the celebrity.	Osei-Frimpong, Donkor, and Owusu-Frimpong (2019)	
	Transfer the meaning.		The consumers attitude towards the celebrity's ability to transfer the meaning of the fashion products	Ahmad, Idris, Mason, and Chow (2019).	
Fame	Pleasing	Source Credibility Model Adam, and Hussain (2017), Eli-Zafoe (2013), The Source Attractiveness Model Johansson, and Bozan (2017)	Consumer attitudes about whether the celebrity has the power of satisfaction.	Osei-Frimpong, Donkor, and Owusu-Frimpong (2019).	5 Point Likert scale
	Affection		Consumer attitudes about whether the celebrity has the power of strong feelings / emotions	Munasinghe et al., (2020)	
	Veracity		Consumer attitudes about whether a celebrity has the power to tell the truth.	Priyankara, Weerasiri, Dissanayaka, and Jinadasa (2017)	
	Believable		Consumer attitudes about whether a celebrity can be trusted.	Guruge (2018)	

Personality	Courage	The Source Attractiveness Model Johansson, and Bozan (2017)	Consumer attitudes as to whether a celebrity has moral courage.	Priyankara, Weerasiri, Dissanayaka, and Jinadasa (2017)	5 Point Likert scale
	Familiarity	Source Credibility Model Adam, and Hussain (2017), Eli-Zafoe (2013),	Consumer's attitudes as to whether the celebrity is familiar to everyone	Osei-Frimpong, Donkor, and Owusu-Frimpong (2019)	
	Know – How.		Consumer attitudes about whether a celebrity is technically good.	Priyankara, Weerasiri, Dissanayaka, and Jinadasa (2017)	
	Skill		Consumer attitudes about whether a celebrity can use his or her knowledge effectively and in their special field.	Wang, Kao, and Ngamsiriudom (2017)	
Attractiveness	Appearance	The Source Attractiveness Model Johansson, and Bozan (2017) The Associative Network Memory Model Johansson, and Bozan (2017)	Consumer attitudes about the appearance of a celebrity	Munasinghe et al., (2020)	5 Point Likert scale
	Desired		Consumer attitudes about whether he or she likes the celebrity.	Guruge (2018)	
	Attention		Consumer attitudes about the ability to retain the attention of celebrities.	Munasinghe et al., (2020)	
	Interest		Attitude of the customer whether he is interested in the celebrity character.	Osei-Frimpong, Donkor, and Owusu-Frimpong (2019)	
Customer Purchase Intention	Selecting	The Associative Network Memory Model Johansson, and Bozan (2017) The Elaboration Likelihood Model Johansson, and Bozan (2017) Emotional Involvement Model Khalid, Siddiqui, and Ahmed (2018).	Consumer attitudes about whether a celebrity can help him or her make a fashion product or service choice.	Osei-Frimpong, Donkor, and Owusu-Frimpong (2019).	5 Point Likert scale
	Using		Consumer attitudes about whether a reputable person influenced him or her to use fashion brands.	Ahmad, Idris, Mason, and Chow (2019).	
	Evaluating		Consumer attitudes about whether a celebrity can help him or her evaluate fashion brands.	Ertugan, and Mupindu (2019).	
	Disposing		Whether the consumer has discarded the	Priyankara, Weerasiri, Dissanayaka,	

			product in the opinion of celebrities.	and Jinadasa (2017)	
	Recognize and Recall.		Whether the consumer can recall and recognize fashion brand easily	Munasinghe et al., (2020)	
	Celebrity Match		Consumer attitudes about celebrity match	Adam, and Hussain (2017)	
	Negative Publicity		Consumer's attitudes about wrong and negative publicity of celebrities	Osei-Frimpong, Donkor, and Owusu-Frimpong (2019).	
	Symbol of Status		Consumer's consideration of using fashion brands endorsed by celebrities is a symbol of maintaining good status	Osei-Frimpong, Donkor, and Owusu-Frimpong (2019).	
	Confident and Glamours		Consumer's attitude of being confident and glamours by using celebrity endorsed fashion brands	Wang, Kao, and Ngamsiriudom (2017)	

5.Data Analysis and Representation

The data was prepared by firstly checking for missing values. Data screening test has been done and the missing values have been deleted from the data.

5.1 Normality of Data

The data distribution was analyzed using tests of normality such as KS tests and Shapiro-Wilks tests, Skewness and Kurtosis values and multicollinearity. These tests revealed that the data distribution was normal.

5.1.1 Skewness and Kurtosis

Normality test is conducting for check the data is normally distributed. Skewness and Kurtosis are the main aspects of a normality test. The symmetry of a data set measured by Skewness. The data collection is considered normal when Skewness is between -1 and +1. Hence the data distribution was normal (Cain, Zhang, and Yuan, 2017).

5.1.2 Kolmogorov – Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test

The P value (Significant value) should be greater than 0.05 to the data to be normal (Geert, 2021). In the output of SPSS all the p values of the variables are greater than 0.05 which means that the data distribution is normal.

5.1.3 Multicollinearity Testing

As per the inter- correlation matrix, if the Pearson correlation coefficient value between any two independent variables is higher than 0.9 there is a high risk of multicollinearity. But according to the analysis data collection was not having any multicollinearity issues and therefore the data distribution is normal.

5.14 Outliers

The standard minimum and maximum residual values should be never exceeding -3.29 or +3.29 (IBM, 2021). According to the residual test analysis both the minimum and maximum residual values never exceeded either -3.29 or +3.29. Hence there are no outliers (Aljandali, 2017)

5.2 Reliability Analysis

According to the SPSS results in a reliability test (Figure 2), the Cronbach's Alpha values were greater than 0.7 (Sekaran, and Bougie, 2016). Hence the instrument is reliable (Sekaran, and Bougie, 2016).

Figure 2: SPSS output of reliability study fir the entire scale (Author Developed)

5.3 Validity

5.3.1 Sample Adequacy

KMO test is used to determine the Sample Adequacy. KMO value should be greater than 0.5 (Sekaran, and Bougie, 2016). All the variables are proven that they are beyond the expected value of 0.5 (Table 2). P value of the Bartlett's test should not be greater than 0.05 (Sekaran, and Bougie, 2016). All the results of the Bartlett's test are 0.000 (Table 2) which is lower than 0.05 (Gilal, Paul, Gilal, and Gilal (2020).

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test Results (Author Developed)

Variable	KMO (>0.5)	Bartlett's Test (Sig < 0.05)
Expertise	0.756	0.000
Trustworthiness	0.805	0.000
Fame	0.846	0.000
Personality	0.761	0.000
Attractiveness	0.847	0.000
Customer Purchasing Intentions	0.895	0.000

5.3.2 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is usually done by showing a correlation between the two measurements, but it is rare for any two measurements to converge perfectly. The rule is that this correlation should be between 0.3 - 0.7 (Sekaran, and Bougie, 2016). According to analysis convergent variables are correlated between 0.3-0.7. which indicated that the scale has good statistically significant convergent validity.

5.3.4 Discriminant Validity

The output of the discriminant validity test revealed that the constructs were divergent from each other. The Wilks Lambda test showed that it has a significant relationship with the dependent variable. Which means that there is a discriminant validity between the variables.

5.3.5 Construct Validity

A pilot study was carried out and the sample of 30 respondents. Double barreled and duplicate questions have been removed before the questionnaire was sent to the sample of respondents. The study demonstrated that the Cronbach Alpha value was 0.84 which was above the required threshold and hence the questionnaire has been approved because of having the construct validity.

5.4 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is the measure of connection between independent variables with the dependent variable. According to the analysis all the independent variables were highly correlated with dependent variable close to 0.7. It can conclude that all the celebrity attributes are supporting to the customer purchasing intentions (Huang, Yao, and Liu, 2018)

Table 3: Correlation Analysis (Author Developed)

Relationship	Pearsons Correlation coefficient (r)	Status
Expertise & Perceived Consumer Purchase Intentions (PCPI)	0.681	Moderate Positive Relationship
Personality & PCPI	0.741	Strong Positive Relationship
Trustworthiness & PCPI	0.751	Strong Positive Relationship
Fame & PCPI	0.776	Strong Positive Relationship
Attractiveness & PCPI	0.764	Strong Positive Relationship

5.5 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression is used to identify the cumulative impact on independent variables to the dependent variable. In this research the R value is 0.837 which is higher than expected substantial R value (0.750). R square is used to explain the relationship between dependent and independent variables (Refer Table 4). This concludes that 70.1% of consumer purchasing intention is explained through variances in celebrity attributes of social media fashion brand endorsement (ZorBari-Nwitambu, and Kalu, 2017).

Table 4: Multiple regression Analysis (Author Developed)

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.837^a	.701	.696	.32577	.701	138.981	5	297	.000	1.928

a. Predictors: (Constant), Attractiveness, Experties, Trustworthiness, Personality, Fame
b. Dependent Variable: Purchasing_Intentions

Table 5: Coefficient Analysis Outputs (Author Developed)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.969	.122		7.967	.000
	Expertise	.091	.042	.109	2.161	.031
	Trustworthiness	.143	.047	.184	3.056	.002
	Fame	.175	.048	.237	3.643	.000
	Personality	.084	.047	.109	1.779	.028
	Attractiveness	.210	.040	.292	5.262	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchasing_Intentions

To consider a variable as an independent variable the significant level should be less than 0.05. All the variables are fulfilling this requirement. Standardized beta value of 0.292 shows that Attractiveness makes the biggest impact on the dependent variable, perceived customer purchase intentions. In accordance with the above coefficient analysis, this research proposed a model for customer buying intentions due to celebrity attributes as follows:

$$\text{Customer Purchasing Intention} = 0.969 + 0.091 \text{ (mean of Expertise)} + 0.143 \text{ (mean of Trustworthiness)} + 0.175 \text{(mean of Fame)} + 0.84 \text{ (mean of Personality)} + 0.210 \text{ (mean oof Attractiveness)}$$

5.6 Hypothesis Test
Table 6 shows the details of the hypothesis testing.

Table 6: Hypothesis Testing Results (Author Developed)

Hypothesis	Correlation	Significance	Regression (P value)	Conclusion
H1-There is a relationship between expertise of the celebrity and perceived consumer purchase intentions.	0.681	0.000	0.000	H1 Accepted
H2 - There is a relationship between trustworthiness of the celebrity and perceived consumer purchase intentions.	0.751	0.000	0.000	H2 Accepted
H3 - There is a relationship between fame of the celebrity and perceived consumer purchase intentions	0.776	0.000	0.000	H3 Accepted
H4 - There is a relationship between personality of the celebrity and perceived consumer purchase intentions.	0.741	0.000	0.000	H4 Accepted
H5 - There is a relationship between attractiveness of the celebrity and perceived consumer purchase intentions.	0.764	0.000	0.000	H5 Accepted

7. Discussion
Expertise of the celebrity has a positive impact on perceived customer purchase intentions. Knowledge, Experience, Authority and Training are key indicators used to determine the expertise (Eli-Zafoe, 2013; Wang, Kao, and Ngamsiriudom, 2017; Jamil, and Hassan, 2014). Trustworthiness of a celebrity has a positive impact on perceived customer purchase intentions. Previous empirical findings by Munasinghe et al., 2020; Ahmad, Idris, Mason, and Chow,2019 support these findings. Fame of a celebrity has a positive impact on perceived customer purchase intentions. Previous empirical findings by Priyankara, Weerasiri, Dissanayaka, and Jinadasa, 2017; Guruge 2018 support these findings. Personality of a celebrity has a positive impact on perceived customer purchase intentions. Prior empirical research findings by Guruge, (2018) support this claim. Attractiveness of a celebrity has a positive impact on perceived customer purchase intentions. Prior research studies by Ahmad, Idris, Mason, and Chow, 2019; Guruge, 2018 support these findings.

8. Conclusion
The main motive of this research is to identify whether the celebrity attributes have a perceived impact on consumer purchasing intentions through social media in Sri Lankan fashion retail industry. Expertise, trustworthiness, fame, personality, and attractiveness were identified as the main components that affect to the perceived purchasing intentions from the previous studies and theoretical framework. This research also aimed those variables and according to the analysis a model was developed to determine the customer purchase intentions gained by identified independent variables as follows,

$$\text{Customer Purchasing Intention} = 0.969 + 0.091 \text{ (mean of Expertise)} + 0.143 \text{ (mean of Trustworthiness)} + 0.175 \text{(mean of Fame)} + 0.84 \text{ (mean of Personality)} + 0.210 \text{ (mean oof Attractiveness)}$$

The fashion retailers may use this model and implement recommendations provided in the study to sustain their business online and increase their online market share.

8.1 Recommendations

Since celebrity endorsement on social media has a positive impact on perceived consumer purchase intentions, firms can use celebrities who have a large number of followers and who are able attract fans to endorse fashion brands since this improves customer acquisition. Future research studies could identify whether gender of the celebrity has an impact on perceived customer purchase intentions and whether different categories of celebrities have more impact than others on consumer purchase intentions.

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