



Effect of Celebrity Endorsements on Consumers Purchase Decision in Nigeria



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Abstract

The use of celebrities is one of the very many marketing strategies employed by marketers in today's business environment. The Nigerian economy has witnessed the increased launching of consumer products. No doubt, intense competition in the business environment among various products and services has led to organizations endorsing deals/ambassadors. Nowadays, we hear the term "brand ambassadors" more often than usual. Celebrity endorsement is one of the very many features of modern marketing. This study attempts to determine the effect of celebrity endorsement on consumer purchase of a product. 200 young adults were conveniently selected as respondents for the study. Regression was used to test for the significance of the hypotheses generated.

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1. Introduction

In today's world of advertising, globalization has helped to move goods and services closer to the consumer. Ifeanyichukwu (2016) opined that globalization is at its peak and has continued to drive the rapid growth of international trade, global corporation, and e-commerce, thus, the advent of the internet has changed how businesses and customers do things which has led to the drive /urge by firms to want to outperform the other in product advertising by daring to be different in pursuing strategies designed to attract attention to their communication and differentiating their product from that of competitors while influencing purchase decision. Celebrity endorsement also called celebrity marketing is a new phenomenon in the world of marketing communication/advertising.

In recent times, companies are spending billions of naira per year in endorsing celebrities and repositioning their products in the minds of consumers by creating positive and good awareness of the products and brands. Firms are undergoing re-orientation in their belief, thus, they now believe that the power of a brand lies in the minds of the consumers. According to Sivesan (2014), celebrity endorsement is a type of marketing communication through which a celebrity acts as the brand spokesman and certifies the brand's claim and position by extending their personality, popularity and status in the society to the brand.

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The practice of using celebrities in advertisements to promote products dates back to more than a hundred years globally but its practice in Nigeria can be traced to the early 90's. [Shimp \(2000\)](#) opined that more than 25 percent of the total advertisements aired use celebrities. This scenario is not different in Nigeria. Thus, we see famous Nollywood stars, football stars, basketball stars, athletes etc signing up with a particular brand by featuring in their advertisements on televisions, newspapers, and billboards. For instance, Veteran actress Genevieve Nnaji was a Lux soap ambassador (Lux is a homecare product by the UNILEVER), Actress Chika Ike is also an ambassador for an energy drink, Actress Funke Akindele popularly known as Jenifa is the face of Jobberman etc. Services industry are not left out as we see telecommunication networks in Nigeria signing up celebrities (actors, actresses, athletes, musicians) as their brand ambassadors. These ambassadors feature in the firm's advertisements whether in the print media or electronic media. Nigeria has four major and dominant telecommunications networks and they are MTN, GLO, Etisalat, and Airtel. MTN endorsed the likes of popular musician Davido, Tiwa Savage, Don Jazzy, Iyanya among others. Etisalat ambassadors include controversial musicians like Seyi Shay, Olamide, Omawumi. MI, Flavour, Actor Francis Odega and actress Eniola Badamus. Airtel ambassadors include top musician 2face Idibia, Phyno, Patoranking, Waje, rising comedian Akpororo and Big Brother Africa (BBA) host Ik Osakioduwa amongst others. GLO endorsed artistes like Veteran actress Patience Ozokwor (popularly called mama G), Funke Akindele, Ini Edo, Comedian AY, Helen Paul, Basket Mouth, Bovi, Actors like John Okafor (Mr. Ibu), O.C Ukeje, Peter and Paul Okoye (P square) and others.

It is also worthy to note that a top celebrity (whether an athlete, movie star or musician) can be signed up to 20 different brands. That is to say, becoming a brand ambassador for different brands at the same time. For instance, we see the pop duo Peter and Paul Okoye was popularly known as Psquare as dominant GLO ambassadors. Peter Okoye is also the face of Olympic milk at the same time. Veteran Musician Olamide can be seen to be an ambassador for Etisalat, Vodka, Guinness, and Ciroc. Dbanj is an ambassador for GLO, Apple/Beats by Dre. Young musician Wizkid is an ambassador for GLO and Pepsi. Singer Iyanya is an MTN ambassador, Zinox computers ambassador, and Solo mobile ambassador (a phone manufacturing company). The Music Lord Don Jazzy is an ambassador for MTN, Loya milk, and Samsung. Female Singer Omawumi is endorsed by GLO, konga.com, Mortein and malta guinness. Popular musician Flavour is an ambassador with Etisalat and Life beer. Davido is an ambassador for MTN and Guinness Nigeria. Firms/Products who do not have brand ambassadors have in one way or the other featured celebrities in their television commercials and other communication materials, for example, Diamond bank, Kanekalon hair fibre, Vitafoam, Klin etc.

Again, every celebrity has a personality of his or her own and through the endorsement deal, a part of his celebrity is supposed to rub off onto the brand. This concept is termed Transfer meaning model propounded by [McCracken \(1989\)](#). Not very many studies have been done in this area especially within the Nigerian context. Thus, this current study seeks to determine its effect on consumers purchase decision. Specifically, this study seeks to:

- a) To determine the effect of trustworthiness on consumer purchase decision.
- b) To ascertain the effect of expertise on consumers purchase decision.
- c) To determine if there's a significant relationship between the attractiveness of a celebrity and purchase decision.
- d) To determine if there's any significant relationship between the respect accorded a celebrity and purchase decision.

Celebrity: [Shimp \(2003\)](#) defined a celebrity as a well-known personality (actor, entertainer or athlete) who is known to the public for his/her accomplishments in areas other than the product class endorsed. [Swordlow \(2003\)](#) added that celebrities are dynamic individuals with likable and attractive qualities. These group of people enjoys public recognition. According to [Silvera and Austad \(2004\)](#), Celebrities are people who enjoy public recognition among a large group of people and possess distinctive qualities like attractiveness and trustworthiness.

Daniel J Boorstin opined "*A sign of a celebrity is that his name is often worth more than his services*".

An endorsement is an action that shows that you support/approve of something or someone. A product/brand endorsement involves appearing in the advertisement and showing support for the product. [McCracken \(1989\)](#) defined celebrity endorser as any individual who enjoys public recognition and uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing in their advertisements.

Some related works of some authors were reviewed and different models that relate to celebrity endorsements were also reviewed. These models include:

- a. Source

Credibility Model: This model was developed by [Hovland \(1950\)](#). This entails communicator-message-receiver relationship, that is, the impact of communicator/source in making the message credible and effects of

the communicator in attitude change of the receiver. Source credibility as defined by McCroskey and Young (1981) is the attitude towards a source of communication held at a given time by a receiver. The various dimensions of source credibility are Trust, Expertise, and Attractiveness. They are briefly explained below:

- 1) Trust- [Griffin \(1967\)](#) defined trust as reliance upon the communication behavior of another person to achieve desired but uncertain objective in a risky situation. Thus, the more trustworthy the source is perceived to be, the more impact the message communicated by him/her will have on the recipient.
- 2) Expertise – [Hovland, Janis, and Kelly \(1953\)](#) defined expertise as the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions.
- 3) Source Attractiveness – [McGuire \(1969\)](#) postulated three components of source attractiveness to include Similarity, Familiarity, and Liking where similarity is the supposed resemblance between the source and the receiver of the message; Familiarity is the awareness about the source which comes from exposure and likeability is the acceptance of the source by virtue of its attractiveness and appearance. [Atkin and Block \(1983\)](#) and [Kamins \(1989\)](#) found trust to be the most important dimension of source credibility while [Ohanian \(1991\)](#) and [Swartz \(1984\)](#) found expertise to be the most important dimension of source credibility. Also, [Silveria and Austad \(2004\)](#) found source attractiveness to be the most important.

b. Meaning Transfer Model

This model was proposed by [McCracken \(1989\)](#). This model postulates that celebrities stand for a set of meanings to the consumer by offering a range of personality traits and lifestyles, thus, it tries to transfer the meaning from the celebrity to the product. This model emphasizes the personality of the brand (brand personality). [Aaker \(1997\)](#) proposed five brand personality dimensions. They are sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness.

c. TEARS Model

This was propounded by [Shimp \(2003\)](#). TEARS is an acronym which stands for Trustworthiness, Expertise, Attractiveness, Respect, and Similarity.

Trustworthiness refers to the honesty, integrity, and believability of the source.

Expertise refers to the knowledge, experience or skills possessed by an endorser.

Attractiveness refers to the number of virtuous characteristics that consumers may perceive in an endorser.

Respect refers to the quality of being admired due to one's personal qualities and accomplishments.

Similarity refers to the degree to which an endorser matches an audience in terms of characteristics pertinent to the endorsement relationship.

Consumer Purchase Decision

Some purchase decisions are more important than others, have higher cost or certain higher risks than others too. Therefore the amount of effort differs. Purchase decision produces an image of a consumer evaluating the attributes of a product and selecting the one that solves their identified needs for the least cost ([Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010](#)). Purchase decision and consumption behavior differ in various products types and consumers are driven by emotional or situational needs.

Basically, there are three types of consumer purchase decision as postulated by [Hawkins and Mothersbaugh \(2010\)](#). These are:

- a) **Nominal decision-making:** This is also known as habitual decision making ([Solomon, 2010](#)). This is a process of making purchase decisions without effort or with little conscious effort. Nominal decisions are broken into two categories: brand loyal purchases and repeat purchase decision.
In brand loyal purchases, consumers form an emotional attachment to the brand. It is very difficult for a competitor to gain consumers patronage. However, consumers make repeat purchase when they have low involvement in considering different brands. They are repeat purchasers because they are satisfied with the past decision and decide without effort in the next purchase.
- b) **Limited decision-making:** This involves recognizing a problem with several possible solutions. Consumers make little effort and involvement in considering different solutions ([Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010](#)).
- c) **Extended decision making:** This is likened to the traditional decision-making process. Consumers initiate the process when the purchase decision is complex and the consequence is risky.

Consumer Decision-making process

This is a five-step consideration that arises when a consumer faces a new and complex purchase situation. This involves:

- a. Problem Recognition:** This is the first stage in the consumer decision-making process. Without recognition of a problem, there is no need for a decision. Problem recognition occurs when consumers face an imbalance between desired and actual states. An actual state is ones perceived feelings and situations at the present time. A desired (ideal) state is the way one wants to feel or be at the present time (Solomon, 2010).

Consumers problem can be either active or inactive. An active problem is one the consumer is aware of while an inactive problem is one that the consumer is not aware of marketers often need to trigger problem recognition for the consumer with active problems, marketers should convince consumers that the brand is the superior solution while inactive problems require marketers to show consumers that they have a problem and the marketers brand is the superior solution.

- b. Information search:** After recognizing a need or problem, consumers search for information about various alternatives available to fulfill it. An information search can occur internally, externally or both. In an internal information search, relevant information from long-term memory is recalled to determine characteristics and satisfaction of potential or previous solutions and ways to compare solutions. If consumers cannot come to a final resolution, then the external information search is initiated. There are several types of external information:
- 1) Personal sources (family, friends, neighbors).
 - 2) Commercial sources (advertising, salespeople, websites, packaging, displays).
 - 3) Independent sources (mass media, consumer rating organizations, and internet searches).
 - 4) Experiential sources (handling, examining, using the product).

Consumers receive most information from commercial sources which are controlled by the marketers. Many consumers, however, are suspicious of the information from these sources, believing that most campaigns stress the product's attributes and ignore the faults. A survey found that 78 percent of consumers found recommendations from others to be the most credible sources for making a purchase decision (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). This explains the rising number of online ratings and reviews such as on Amazon, eBay and Trip advisor.

- c. Evaluation of alternatives:** As more information is obtained, the consumer's awareness and knowledge of available brands increase. The information search should yield a few groups of alternatives. These alternatives are called awareness set, and sorted into three subcategories:

- 1) The **inert set** is composed of those brands consumers are aware and have a neutral opinion. Consumers are open for positive information but inactive in seeking it.
- 2) The **inept set** contains those brands consumers are aware of and view negatively.
- 3) The **evoked set** (also called the consideration set) includes brands or product consumer will evaluate for the solution of a particular problem. These are the consumer's most preferred alternatives (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010).

After gathering information and creating an evoked set of alternatives, the consumer engages in the next stage, evaluation of alternatives. The obtained information will be used to develop a set of attributes to compare the brands. These attributes are called evaluative criteria. Evaluative criteria as defined by Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2010) as various dimensions, features or benefits a consumer looks for in solution for a problem.

Consumers associate evaluated criteria with benefits. Marketers often choose communicative brand benefits rather than evaluative criteria since it is more specific and persuasive. Evaluative criteria can differ in type, number, and importance. The type of criteria consumers use in evaluating alternatives varies from tangible (cost, functions) to intangible factors (style, taste, feelings and brand image). Evaluative criteria and their assigned importance have great influences on consumer's decision (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010). Marketers aim to understand which consumers use to evaluate their brands so they can develop and communicate the brand benefits to the target consumers.

- d) Purchase decision:** In this stage, the consumers do not simply decide to purchase or not. There are three types of the decision process that consumers might undertake.

Affective choice: The evaluation of products is primarily based on the immediate emotional response to the product or service. Consumers imagine or picture using the product or service and evaluate the feeling that this use will produce. The affective choice is likely to activate when the motive is consummatory rather than instrumental. Consummatory motives trigger behaviors that are pleasing to the individual involved. Instrumental motives activate behaviors designed to achieve a second goal (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010).

Marketers need to continuously study affect-based decisions because they require different strategies than the cognitive decisions. For decisions that are likely to be triggered by consummatory motives, marketers should design products and services that help consumers visualize how they feel during the product experience.

Attitude-based choice: Attitude-based choice involves the use of general attitudes, impressions, intuitions, and no attribute comparisons are made at the time of decision. The lower the motivation to make an ideal decision, the more likely an attitude-based choice will occur. This scenario can be related to in nominal and limited decision making. When information is difficult to find, consumers face time pressures, they have a tendency to make attitude-base choices.

Attribute-based choice:

Attribute-based choice requires the knowledge of specific attributes at the time of purchase and it involves attribute evaluations and comparisons. This process is much more effortful and time-consuming than effective and attitude based choice. The decision also tends to close to the ideal choice. Consumers with high purchase involvement and motivation are more likely to make an attribute-based choice (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010).

- e) **Post-purchase behavior:** post-purchase behavior is the stage in which consumers take further action after purchase, based on their satisfaction or dissatisfaction. When buying products, consumers expect certain outcomes from the purchase. How well these expectations are met defines the satisfaction level of the consumer. When they recognize inconsistency between their expectations and performance, they tend to feed a tension called cognitive dissonance.

It is considered an important object for marketers to reduce any dissonance, doubts, or anxiety and make consumers believe that their decision was optimal. Post-purchase letters sent by manufacturers and dissonance-reducing statements in instruction booklets may help consumers feel at ease with their purchase. Advertising that displays the product's superiority over competing brands or guarantees can help relieve the dissonance of consumers who already purchased the product (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2010).

Empirical Evidence

Khan and Lodhi (2016) conducted a study and findings revealed celebrity endorsed advertisements to create brand awareness and recognition and also help capture target audience.

In a similar study conducted by Friedman and Friedman (1979), findings revealed the use of celebrities to lead to greater believability, favorable evaluation of a product and a more positive purchase intention.

Oyeniya (2014) in his study on celebrity endorsement and product performance revealed that the trust level of expertise has a positive impact on product performance. However, the attractiveness of the celebrity and similarity between the celebrity and the receiver has little effect on product performance.

Based on the literature reviewed above, the following hypotheses were formulated below;

- H₁:** There is a positive relationship between the trustworthiness of the celebrity and consumer purchase decision.
- H₂:** There is a positive relationship between the expertise of the celebrity and consumer purchase decision.
- H₃:** There is a positive relationship between the Attractiveness of the celebrity and consumer purchase decision.
- H₄:** There is a positive relationship between the respect that consumers have for the celebrity and purchase decision.

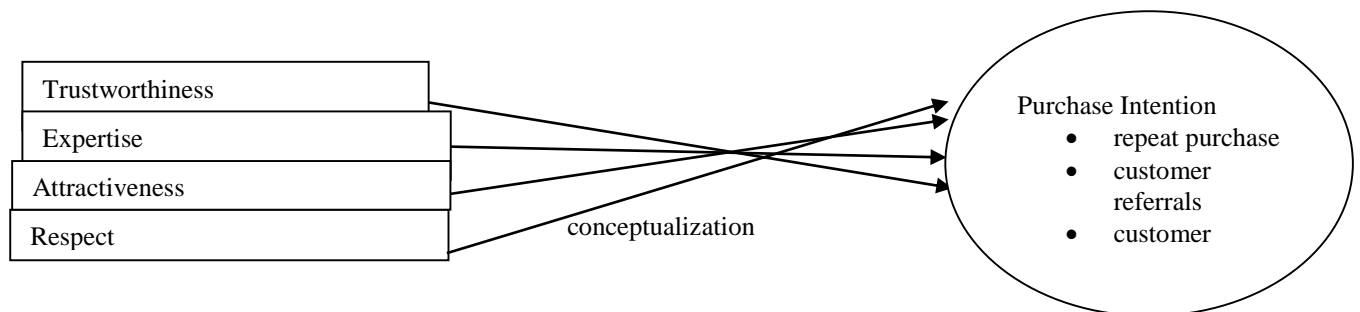


Figure 1. Proposed Research Model

2. Research Methods

200 young adults/ students from a university in Anambra State were conveniently selected and thus formed the sample size for the study. This is a non-probability sampling technique that allows the researcher choose respondents that are easiest to obtain data from for the purpose of the study since the population is unknown. The justification for the use of young adults/students stems from the fact that they are exposed to the media and embrace new technology more than elderly people (Ifeanyichukwu, 2016). Moreover, at their age, the celebrities become more like an idol/ role model to them and most times shape/influence their life/habit in one way or the other. The responses were analyzed and the hypothesis tested using regression with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.

3. Results and Analysis

Table 1 below showed the demography of the respondents. The males and females respondents were well represented. The age also showed that majority of the respondents are young people.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of the respondents

Variable	Description	Frequency	Valid Percentage
Gender	Male	103	51.5
	Female	97	48.5
	Total	200	100
Age	Below 18 years	68	34
	18 - 40 years	132	66
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary data, 2016

The four hypothesis generated for the study were tested using multiple regression. Table 2 below shows the summary of the regression model using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20.

Table 2
Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
1 (constant)	.776	.501		1.549	.123
Trustworthiness	.075	.041	.101	1.857	.064
Expertise	.338	.140	.149	2.414	.016
Attractiveness	.396	.086	.286	4.619	.000
Respect	.354	.096	.255	1.445	.000

Source: SPSS version 20

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision

As can be interpreted from the results, celebrity endorsement has a reasonable impact on customers as per their purchase intention. From table 2 above, Trustworthiness ($t=1.857, P=0.064>0.05$), Expertise ($t=2.414, P=0.016<0.05$), Attractiveness ($t=4.619, P=0.000<0.05$), Respect ($t=1.445, P=0.000<0.05$) all showed a positive relationship between celebrity endorsement and purchase decision. However, three hypotheses (Expertise, attractiveness, and Respect) out of the four hypotheses postulated showed a positive and significant relationship while one hypothesis (trustworthiness) was not significant. Therefore, we accept the three hypotheses and conclude that there exists a significant relationship between Expertise, Attractiveness, Respect and consumer purchase decision in Nigeria. These findings are in consonance with the works of previous researchers as can be seen from the literature reviewed above.

Ifeanyichukwu, C. D. (2016). *Effect of celebrity endorsements on consumers purchase decision in Nigeria*. *International Research Journal of Management, IT and Social Sciences*, 3(9), 120-128.
<https://sloap.org/journals/index.php/irjmis/article/view/420>

4. Conclusion

The effect of celebrity endorsement cannot be overemphasized as it is evident from the empirical study that the use of celebrities influences young adult in their purchase decisions. A positive and significant relationship between expertise, attractiveness, and respect accorded to the celebrity vis-a-vis purchase decision of consumers show that consumers make the celebrities their role model. [Erdogan \(1999\)](#) conclude that the celebrity endorsement strategy can be an effective competitive weapon in mature and saturated markets in order to differentiate products from competitors, as long as the right celebrity is found. It is clear that the consumer recognizes the role and power of a celebrity in advertising. An assessment of consumers has indicated that celebrity endorsement as an advertising strategy if rightly blended in terms of marrying the strengths of the brands with the celebrity will go a long way in positioning a brand in the minds of the consumers. Also, firms should associate celebrities with high levels of attractiveness and popularity as any dent on the image of the celebrity affects the brand as well.

Conflict of interest statement and funding sources

The author(s) declared that (s)he/they have no competing interest. The study was financed by personal funding.

Statement of authorship

The author(s) have a responsibility for the conception and design of the study. The author(s) have approved the final article.


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