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PRIMARY RESEARCH

Development of conceptual framework for Nigerian generation Y-ers' purchase intention and response towards indigenous celebrity-endorsed products: A PLS-SEM Study on Selected Mobile Service Providers in Nigeria.

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Index Terms

Purchase intention CB-endorser CB-ambassador CB-endorsement Generation Y-ers

Received: 25 October 2016 Accepted: 4 January 2016 Published: 27 February 2017 **Abstract**. Numerous brands in Nigeria, particularly those within the telecommunication sector, are aggressively associating with creative minds and personalities in movie, music, and sports industries, in other to explore and solicit the assistance of these personalities who have a large fanbase to make their brands more appealing and captivating to their target audiences. The study aims to investigate the effects of Celebrity Brand-Endorsement on attitude as well as the purchase intention of generation Y-ers in Nigeria. A modified model of Ohanian (1991) would be adapted and modified to investigate these effects in Mobile service providers' commercials utilising celebrities as brand ambassadors. The researcher's original contribution would be, to modify her model, by introducing a moderator variable 'Matchup congruence' as well as a mediator 'Attitude'. The study's key predictors or independent variables are Trustworthiness, Expertise, and Attractiveness of a celebrity brand endorser. These three variables, taken collectively, are hypothesized to influence the attitude of Generation Y consumers, which then influence their Purchase Intention. The mediator (Attitude) has an impact and direct effect on purchase intention as well as an indirect effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The moderator 'Matchup Congruence' moderates the relationship between the Attractiveness, Trustworthiness, Expertise and purchase intention construct. The study aims to offer practical contribution to managers by providing suggestions and solutions that would aid them in selecting the proper endorser that can grab the attention of the Generation Y-ers and glue them to the brand.

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INTRODUCTION

Certainly, there is an increasing stream of study relating to the telecommunication industries/businesses in Nigeria. Accordingly, growing number of studies investigated the ways in which advertising managers of different companies use celebrities in endorsing the industry's activities to offer useful information for effective decision-making. Nevertheless, regardless of the increase in the studies on celebrity promoted marketing strategies, only a few of the studies have explored the general qualities that identify the usefulness of celebrity-endorsed advertisement from the perspective of the buyers. In this research, the researcher proposes from the findings, an efficient method for evaluating celebrities and identifying essential characteristics

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that are important in selecting celebrities based on their proficiencies. The Nigerian government determination not to meddle with the telecommunication business by deregulation in early 2000 has recently yielded meaningful results via a virtually mere proliferation of telecommunication companies. As part of telecom industry contribution, the sector is committed to a significant position of aiding the government in realising its full financial potentials. Accordingly, in this industry, aggressiveness in the advertisement is typically rampant among business players. Celebrities have turned into an imperative window for attracting and encouraging added patronage from prospective customers. Thus, the industry is dealing with a more aggressive market that implies the necessity of exceptional composure in promotional activities.

In this particular research, CB-Endorsement refers to a strategy specialising in improved market efficiency and consequently improving the effectiveness and profitability of the company and its business. This, therefore, recommends that to achieve significant gains from signing a celebrity, a pressing desire to evaluate how efficient they are in marketing the organisation's products or services is a major concern, which needs to be investigated. Nowadays it is fundamental for organisations to utilise celebrities as part of advertisement strategy, to build and increase the organisation's market share and brand image. Fans worship celebrities as demigods in Nigeria; hence, marketers try their best to tap on to this emotional connection of the people with the celebrity.

Most celebrities in Nigeria endorsed the mainstream brands, from either entertainment industry or the sports industry. Because of the competition among different companies from distinctive fragments, ordinary buyers are exposed to many voices and pictures in magazines, daily papers, announcements, on websites, radios, and the Televisions. The challenge of the promoter is to find a hook to their clients' attention. In serving to accomplish this, utilisation of CB-Ambassadors is an extensively used marketing technique.

Celebrity Endorsement In Telecommunication Industries in Nigeria

According to data made available by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), despite the current economic crisis (recession), the telecom industry seems to be doing wonders. It contributed (9.8%) percent or (N1.580) Trillion to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) within the second quarter. According to Yakubu (2016), the figures repre-

sents a growth of (1%) percent points as compared to the preceding quarter. Yakubu further added that "It's thus gratifying that the telecom sector is showing this resilience despite the recession, when the NBS posted the contribution of the telecom industry to the GDP for the first quarter of the year." This development indicates a five (5%) percent progression from the first quarter, according to a government report (Elebeke 2016). Elebeke further added, since its inception in early 2000, the Nigerian Mobile Industry had recorded a massive growth as cell phones become more affordable over the past decade, and more Mobile Phone manufacturers are exploiting the huge Nigerian market.

Records obtained from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed that in December 2015, Nigeria had one hundred and fifty-one (151) million subscribers. A statistic quite impressive, considering the fact that a decade ago in 2005, the figure stood at a meagre nineteen million, five hundred thousand (19.5). Cameron, the Head of ICT analysts at BMI Research Centre in London had this to say, "With the oil sector having crashed over the last months, telecoms should be outperforming the other sectors." In May 2013, the telecommunications companies increased their aggressive pursuit of more celebrity endorsers by obtaining the signatures of more prominent Nigerian music artists in several deals involving billions of Naira (Teefah 2014).

Problem Statement

The researcher aims to investigate the purchase intention and behaviour of Generation Y-ers in Nigeria since the cohorts are exposed to so many advertisements via different platforms such as social media, billboards, newspapers, etcetera. A considerable amount of literature and scientific research have been published on the subject of CB-Endorsement for instance (Erdogan, 1999; McCracken, 1989; Ohanian, 1991; Ohanian, 1990). In contrast, several of the studies have revealed some disagreements on the exact role CB-Endorsement has on the Attitude and brand.

Some papers found a weak relationship between the CB-Endorsement and the Consumers' Attitude and brand (Caballero, Lumpkin & Madden, 1989) while some, for instance, (Kahle & Homer, 1985) indicate a strong correlation between the two variables. Looking at gaps, on the other hand, there are so many studies on CB-Endorsement for e.g. (Erdogan, 1999; McCracken, 1989; Ohanian, 1991; Ohanian, 1990). However, the majority of these studies were conducted in advanced economies and their environs. Interestingly, in Nigeria, there is no research in regards to



this effect. Therefore, the researcher seeks to bridge this gap.

Research Questions

The research question of the study is synonymous to the objectives as the researcher tends to project questions whose answer could provide solutions to managers when making important managerial decisions. Without getting into specifics, the generic research question for the study aims to answer whether or not the Generation Y-ers' are influenced by celebrity endorsed advertisement popularly used by the Mobile Service Providers. Specifically, the researcher aims to answer further questions generated from the previous literature on source credibility model, attitude, and matchup hypothesis. The answers to the questions shall provide managers with insight on selecting the appropriate advertisement strategy.

Research Objectives

The objective of this study is to develop a framework that can help managers in decision making regarding choice of a proper celebrity endorser. Furthermore, the study aims at examining the source credibility dimensions to determine which construct has the highest impact on Nigeria's Generation Y Students regarding purchase intention. The study also aims to analyse the mediating and moderating effects of attitude and Match-up congruence respectively on the source credibility dimensions.

Underpinning Theories

In order to have a strong conceptual framework, the model needs to have a sound theoretical backing and for that purpose, the researcher would adopt the following four protuberant theories, specifically: the "meaning transfer", "Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)", "Theory of Reasoned Action," and the "Source Credibility Model or theory."

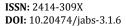
LITERAT URE REVIEW

This research studies and examines celebrity endorsement as a tool for communication. This is mainly because, it had been discovered by previous researchers that CB-Ambassadors make positive contributions, which increase product's visibility, greater consideration, favourable attitudinal mindset towards the advertisement/brand, and positive intention to purchase (Atkin & Block, 1983; Friedman & Friedman, 1979; Freiden 1984; Kamins, Brand, Hoeke & Moe, 1989; Friedman, Termini & Washington, 1976) than endorsers who are not celebrities. Numerous

studies exist which have examined whether celebrities are acceptable endorsers for products or services and in which circumstance, for instance, (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1995; Atkin & Block, 1983; Freiden, 1984; Kamins *et al.*, 1989; Ohanian, 1991; Tripp, Jensen & Carlson, 1994). Findings from these studies indicated that suitable use of celebrity endorsers could be extremely efficient in brand promotions (Atkin & Block, 1983); (Misra & Beatty, 1990), since public figures entail distinctive images, which could be transmitted to the brand or product, associated with that celebrity (Kahle & Homer, 1985; Walker, Langmeyer & Langmeyer, 1992; McCracken, 1989; Ruth & Simonin, 2003).

The findings of these studies indicated that when there is a collaboration between the brand and the celebrity, the chances that the consumer will purchase the product increases as the meanings attached to the celebrity are transferred positively and overwhelmingly to the brand (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999). Hence, the consistent utilisation of celebrities as endorsers, their financial worth (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1995), and their observed productivity and proficiency in promoting, advertising and marketing all types of services and products. Kamins & Gupta (1994); Till & Busler (1998) emphasize the necessity to assess celebrities as efficient ambassadors for mobile advertisements. According to Belch & Belch (2013) celebrity endorsement is so rampant that in a recent survey, over (10%) of magazines in the United States of America feature advertisements with celebrities. Corporations part away with a huge chunk of cash to acquire services of the world's famous and reputable celebrities from different backgrounds. A magnificent example of this enormous investment is Nike's deal in 2013, with several celebrities which was worth over (800 USD) million (NIKE, 2012).

Studies of (Kahle & Homer, 1985), have also investigated some determinant factors that focused on overall traits of a celebrity, such as their likability and physical attractiveness. Rossiter & Smidts (2012); Lee & Thorson (2008) on the other hand researched on, endorsement predictors that unconditionally or apparently centered on the role of the celebrity as an endorser for a specific brand, such as expertise and celebrity congruency with the product. Celebrities are capable of offering wide varieties of meanings, which a non-celebrity cannot provide. The meanings from these celebrities might be obtained from their various backgrounds (McCracken, 1989; Stout & Moon, 1990). More studies for instance, Agrawal & Kamakura (1995); Atkin & Block (1983); Erdogan (1999); Friedman & Friedman (1979); Kamins *et al.* (1989); Mathur, Mathur & Rangan





(1997); Ohanian (1991); O'Mahony & Meenaghan (1997) have shown that, celebrity brand endorsers offer more than merely maintaining and creation of awareness and attention. More often than not, they transmit and deliver the appropriate and required results within a short period and space while attaining excessive rates of recall, for advertising and marketing messages in present day's extremely congested and muddled environment. The researcher adopts McCracken (1989:310) definition of celebrity endorser, which is the most widely used definition in endorsement studies. He defined an endorser as "any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement."

Celebrity Endorsement and Endorser

This part studies the numerous varieties of CB-Endorsers and explains reasons for choosing a particular CB-Endorser type. Exhibiting products or services with a distinctive feature (for instance, a CB-Ambassador), might enhance and maximise the significance of the brand and allows for decision dispensation by that particular element (Areni, Duhan & Kiecker, 1999). "Endorsement can be defined as making a statement indicating approval of the product, service, idea, or another subject of the advertisement. This can be made by an individual or by an organisation speaking on behalf of the advertiser, the individual, or spokesperson, a celebrity, an expert, or a typical consumer.

As opposed to a testimonial where the statement is based on experience, an endorsement may or may not be based on actual use of the product" (Govoni, 2003; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004). When perceived as opinion leaders, advertising endorsers, entice audiences' consideration and affection, thus revitalising intentions to purchase (Mowen, 1988, Mowen & Brown, 1981). Recently, it has been observed that commercials with endorsers are omnipresent characteristics of contemporary advertising and marketing (McCracken, 1989) and an efficient way of the compelling strategy of communication (Hsu & Mcdonald 2002). Endorsers provide testimonies concerning the use of a brand or service, both to stimulate and revitalise the brand, and easily be bonded with the brand (Swerdlow, 1984).

Friedman & Friedman (1979) noted that as promoters anticipate every endorser to persuade potential buyers through various facets, every endorser has a different way of inflicting attitudinal change. As a result, some endorsers agree to deal with reputable brands whereas others who want to "feel among" could be a poor choice for prospec-

tive endorsement deals. Freiden (1984) analysed four (4) varieties of endorsers (celebrities, CEOs, experts or professional and archetypal consumers). He found out in contrast with different endorsers' varieties, the 'celebrity endorser' obtained high scores on measurement dimensions such as likeability, believability, and trustworthiness. Experts recommended that celebrity brand endorsers influence positively, the attitudes of consumers towards advertising and purchase intention, than endorsers who are not celebrities (Atkin & Block, 1983; Friedman & Friedman, 1979; Ohanian, 1990; Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983, Madiawati & Pradana, 2016). Hence, for the purpose of this research, the researcher would focus on 'celebrities' as brand endorsers, since as earlier mentioned, previous studies signify that celebrities are more efficient as opposed to other kinds of endorsers in influencing potential customers' interest, recognition and intention to purchase (Hsu & Mcdonald, 2002).

Purchase Intention

Intention and attitude are often used interchangeably in relation to brands. However, the two are distinct. Bagozzi (1981), Ostrom (1969) and Kuo & Chen (2015) stated that purchase intentions are personal tendencies and actions relating to a product while according to Spears & Singh (2004:56), "purchase intentions are an individuals conscious plan to make an effort to buy a brand". On the other hand "attitudes are summary evaluations," intentions represent "the person's motivation in the sense of his or her conscious plan to exert effort to carry out a behaviour" (Eagly & Chaiken 1993:168). Fishbein (1975) submitted that attitudes impact response via behavioural intentions. Previous studies revealed mixed finding regarding attitude and purchase intention; some researchers found attitude to have a direct influence on the intention for instance (Bagozzi, 1992; Bagozzi & Yi 2012); while others found insignificant relationships (Bagozzi, 2012).

Background of Attitude

Attitude is "an individual's internal evaluation of an object such as a branded product, and has been an important concept in marketing research since the 1960s" (Wahid & Ahmed, 2011). However, Wayne, Deborah & Rik (2001) explain attitude as a "relatively global and enduring evaluation of an object, issue, person, or action," thus researchers consider attitude as a major determinant of the consumers' behaviours vis-à-vis a brand, service or product (Schultz & Oskamp, 1996). Many prominent researchers provided



the theoretical basis for the use of attitude construct in advertising and marketing research, for example, (Fishbein, 1975). The attitude construct has many dimensions, which include, attitude towards the brand and advertisement, e.g., MacKenzie & Lutz (1989), towards endorsement, e.g., Wahid & Ahmed (2011), towards mobile advertising, e.g., Javadi, Amirosadat, Balochiyan & Liravi (2012) and towards celebrity for e.g., (Dom, Binti Ramli, Chin & Fern, 2016). This study tends to focus on the attitude construct as a whole; however, the interpretation of what constitutes the attitude is based on the four dimensions of attitude as earlier mentioned. Justification for including the attitude construct comes from suggestions by Pornpitakpan (2004:70) stressing the need that, "future research should investigate the relative impact of the three credibility dimensions (attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise) and likability on persuasion variables (for example, attitude toward the advertisement and the brand, and purchase intention)."

DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Having thoroughly gone through past literature with sound theoretical backing, the researcher provides justifications for the development of the proposed conceptual framework. Hence, the relationships are as thus:

Celebrity's Physical attractiveness and Purchase Intention

XI. Studies have found out that buyers are inclined to generate a favourable perception about attractive personalities, with findings suggesting that attractive endorsers are more prosperous in altering the buyers' intention to purchase than endorsers who are not attractive (Baker & Churchill Jr, 1977; Friedman *et al.*, 1976; Kahle & Homer, 1985). McGuire (1986) later affirmed this in source attractiveness theory in assessing the attractiveness of a source. Similarly, Chao, Wührer & Werani (2005) reiterated that the Attractiveness of the source is a key determining factor of why celebrities performed significantly better than their non-celebrity counterparts in producing extreme communication effectiveness.

One of the most viable, and observable traits of an individual is their physical attractiveness (Caballero *et al.*, 1989; Dion, 1972; Patzer, 1983). Therefore, consumers might build up a proper mindset as a result of this attractiveness. Substantial number of literature found that physical attractiveness has a large effect on behaviour and judgment (Dion, 1972; Berscheid & Walster, 1974; Solnick &

Schweitzer, 1999). In another major study Patzer (2012) found that physical attractiveness is a necessary construct of the source credibility model. In general, there appears to be substantiation to denote according to preceding research studies, (Baker & Churchill Jr, 1977; Caballero *et al.*, 1989; Kahle & Homer, 1985; Kamins 1990), that an attractive CB-Endorser would positively influence Generation Y-ers' attitude, hence, boosting their intention to purchase. Based on the evidence presented from previous literature, the researcher outlines the first hypothesis of this study.

H1: There is a positive relationship between Attractiveness of a CB-Endorser and purchase intention.

Celebrity's Trustworthiness and Purchase Intention

Trustworthiness is known as "the degree of confidence in the communicators' intent to communicate the assertions he/she considers most valid" (Hovland & Weiss, 1953:21). Several studies have confirmed the effectiveness of trustworthiness construct. This is because the studies found a trustworthy endorser to garner tremendous acceptance than endorser(s) whom consumers perceived as untrustworthy. In the same vein, a seminal study by Hovland & Weiss (1953) shared results from many types of research that evaluated the impact of the trustworthiness dimension of source credibility on attitude. Collectively, these studies defined credibility as the mixture of a source's experience "the source has information on the topic," and trustworthiness "the source can be trusted to provide accurate information about the topic." Ohanian (1991) argued that "trustworthiness of a celebrity endorser has no relationship with the purchase intentions of the related brand by the consumer.

However, Hoekman (2013:10) had a different view, submitting that, "the trustworthiness is of great significance for effective endorsers. If the consumers believe what the endorser is advocating, and they trust him or her, the believability of the ad is higher, and attitude of the consumers will increase. When a celebrity comes negatively into the news, this can affect the believability and the trustworthiness of the endorser. Also, it will negatively influence the brand image and sales of the related product." Based on the evidence presented from previous literature, the researcher outlines the second hypothesis of the study.

H2: Trustworthiness of a celebrity influences purchase intention.

Celebrity's Expertise and Purchase Intention

Hovland & Weiss (1953:21) defined the Expertise of a

celebrity as "the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions." Certainly, there is a consensus amongst social scientists on which dimension has the effect that is more significant. Researchers such as Daneshvary & Schwer (2000); Erdogan (1999); Friedman & Friedman (1979); Goldsmith, Lafferty & Newell (2000); Till & Busler (1998); Ohanian (1990) agree that the Expertise dimension is the most crucial in influencing buyers' attitude and purchase intention. A great deal of past studies on the effectiveness of a credible expert source found that sources' with credibility possess more power to alter consumer's attitude than those without credibility (Hovland & Weiss, 1953).

Hutchinson & Moore (1984) echoed the previous assertion when they suggested that experts source are highly credible as it is believed that they are effective seekers of information who are able to distinguish between valid and invalid information. Ohanian (1991) on the other hand argues that the expertise of the source is not relevant when the prospective consumers have negative feelings about the source, thus suggesting that, what is relevant is how the consumers positively perceive the source.

H3: Expertise of a celebrity positively influences purchase intention of Generation Y- ers.

Mediating Effect Attitude on Purchase Intention

Customarily, attitude and its dimensions "towards the advertisement," "toward the brand," and purchase intention in the field of advertising, management, and marketing research have been measured to assess the efficiency in advertising. More so, these dimensions have been identified as vital constructs mediating advertising effect of intention to purchase. Furthermore, many past studies, for instance, MacKenzie, Lutz & Belch (1986); Shimp (1981); La Ferle & Choi (2005); Goldsmith *et al.* (2000); Mackenzie & Lutz (1989); Homer (1990), have considerably tested the mediating effect of attitude and its dimensions on purchase intention.

Among the most crucial elements of attitudes is its perceived effect on corresponding behaviours, which is regarded as a vital technique in modifying people's behaviours, responses or habits (Bagozzi, Gurhan-Canli & Priester, 2002). One of the most crucial goals of every promotional manager is to sway and impress the prospective consumers to influence and to encourage an attitudinal change in the direction of what their organisation offers (Fishbein, 1980). A large growing body of literature, for example, Fishbein (1980); Fazio (1995); Fishbein (1975);

Petty et al. (1983) have conceptualised attitude as a crucial mediator of behaviour. Similarly, Liao et al. (1999); Fesenmaier (1988); Mohsin (2005); Pike (2006); Um & Crompton (1991) featured Attitude as a mediator in tourism related studies. However, Ohanian's research (1991) and many other like-minded studies such as, (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Woodside, Frey & Daly, 1989) have focused solely on the direct correlation between source credibility dimensions and purchase intentions.

H4a: Attitude mediates the direct relationship between Attractiveness and purchase intention.

H4b: Attitude mediates the relationship between Trustworthiness of a celebrity and purchase intention.

H4c: Attitude mediates direct relationship of Expertise of celebrity endorser to purchase intention.

Moderating Effect of Match-Up Congruence on Purchase Intention

Numerous studies on CB-congruence for instance Kamins (1990); Kamins & Gupta (1994); Mittelstaedt, Riesz, Burns, & William (2000) were conducted since early 90's. According to Roy & Moorthi, (2009), the studies on "congruence" which is prevalently known as "Matchup-Hypothesis" focused on analysing the similarities that exist between the product and the CB-Endorser The matchup hypothesis states that for any promotional commercial which includes a celebrity to be efficient, there ought to be fit or "matchup" between the celebrity and the promoted product. The root of this hypothesis dates back to the 20th-century psychological belief (Osgood & Tannenbaum, 1955). On this note, the two (2) most embryonic researches on CB-Endorsement by Friedman et al. (1976), Friedman & Friedman (1979), nonetheless, analysed some facets of fit between the CB-Endorser.

Desarbo & Harshman, (1985) on the other hand, introduced methodology referred to as "Parallel Factor Analysis" (PARAF AC) to establish dimensions of CB-Congruence. Speck, Schumann & Thompson. (1988) on the other hand discovered relatively fascinating differing findings in their study, which is Surprising considering celebrity-product fit usually tends to lead to better advertising efficiency. They found that a brand - celebrity incongruity or misfit has an identical influence on advertisement recall with that of congruent CB-Endorser. Furthermore, they discovered that the expertise of a CB-Endorser does not essentially have an effect on product or brand recall as opposed to Ohanian's (1991) findings suggesting the expertise as the significant predictor of purchase intention using the source credibil-

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ity dimension. A very similar contradictory finding was reported in the study of Jones & Schumann (2000) that "female oriented" products were endorsed by twelve male athletes, which are entirely not related to athletes' sport. Researchers have utilised numerous theories in their studies in different contexts such as associative network theory (Misra & Beatty, 1990), elaboration likelihood model (Kirmani & Shiv, 1998) and theory of correspondent inferences (Cronley, Kardes, Goddard & Houghton, 1999; Silvera & Austad, 2004). Therefore, this construct might moderate the direct relationship between Ohanian's model and purchase intention of generation Y-ers as opposed to many studies only testing attractiveness and expertise as the basis of congruence. Hence, based on the evidence presented from various literature, the researcher proposed the following for this construct.

H5a: Matchup congruence moderates the relationship between Attractiveness and purchase intention.

H5b: Matchup congruence moderates the relationship between Trustworthiness and purchase intention.

H5c: Matchup congruence moderates direct relationship of Expertise of a celebrity endorser to purchase intention.

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Based on the above conceptualization from past studies,

the researcher proposes the model of this study as shown in fig 1.

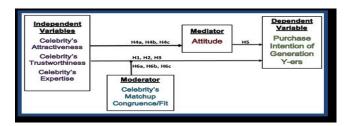


FIGURE 1. Proposed research framework, (2013)

CONCLUSION

The study would be quantitative in nature employing a probability sampling method (stratified random sample). The sample frame for the study would be Generation Y students studying in Northwestern region of Nigeria. Sample size would be determined using G-Power and Smart-PLS would be the primary analysis tool, although other software such as SPSS could serve as supporting analysis tool. For practical contributions, the proposed framework would help managers in efficiently determining the best qualities to look for in an endorser before they engage them. The Framework would also serve as guideline or a selection tool for managers to achieve the desired result in advertisements, which involves celebrities.

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— This article does not have any appendix. —

