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Assessing the Impact of Celebrity Endorsements on Consumers' Choices in Southwest Nigeria's Food and Beverage Sector

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Abstract

This research investigates the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements in influencing consumer's Choices in Southwest Nigeria's Food and Beverage Sector. This research employs a quantitative survey methodology to analyse data from a sample of 300 Nigerian consumers, selected through random sampling within the South West subregion. Leveraging existing literature, the study explores key factors contributing to successful celebrity endorsements, including perceived authenticity, expertise, and brand-celebrity congruence. The analysis further examines the impact of consumer demographics and cultural influences on endorsement effectiveness. Findings indicate that celebrity endorsements have a minor influence on consumer perceptions of food and beverages in Southwest Nigeria. Nevertheless, while celebrity endorsements can play a minor role in influencing brand perceptions, their impact on long-term brand loyalty is not statistically significant in the Nigerian market. The research highlights the need for a nuanced approach to celebrity endorsements, emphasizing the importance of authenticity, brand fit, and integration within a broader marketing strategy.

Introduction

In today's consumer market, many factors influence buying decisions, and one of the most notable is celebrity endorsements. In the Nigerian context, the intersection of food and beverage goods and celebrity influence unfolds as a fascinating area of exploration. This introduction sets the stage for a comprehensive investigation into "The Impact of Celebrity Endorsement on Household Goods in South Western Nigeria," delving into the intricate dynamics that shape consumer behaviour, brand perceptions, and market dynamics. Celebrity endorsement is a pervasive marketing strategy used by companies across the globe to influence consumer behaviour and increase sales. This tactic involves recognizable figures lending their fame and credibility to promote a product or service (Spry, Pappu, & Cornwell, 2011). In Nigeria,

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celebrity endorsements have become a mainstay in the advertising of consumer goods, particularly food and beverage goods. As consumerism and media access rise in the region, it's crucial to investigate the impact of this marketing strategy on purchase decisions in Nigeria; with its diverse cultural tapestry and burgeoning consumer market, providing a compelling backdrop for understanding the nuanced relationship between celebrities and food and beverage goods.

As the Nigerian economy continues to evolve, the role of celebrities in endorsing household products becomes increasingly significant. The allure of a well-known figure associating themselves with a brand has the potential to sway consumer decisions, making this study timely and relevant. Celebrity endorsement has long been recognized as a powerful marketing tool that influences consumer behaviour across various industries (Erdogan, 1999). In recent years, this marketing strategy has gained significant traction in the Nigerian context, here celebrities wield considerable influence over consumer preferences (Adeyanju & Olaleye, 2019). Understanding the impact of celebrity endorsement on food and beverage goods within this specific geographical area is essential for marketers seeking to capitalize on the region's unique consumer dynamics. Extant studies have explored the influence of celebrity endorsements on consumer behavior across various sectors, highlighting increased brand awareness, improved product perception, and enhanced consumer trust. Research in global contexts and some African regions has shown that celebrities can significantly sway purchasing decisions, particularly in the food and beverage sector. However, few studies have specifically addressed the unique consumer dynamics in Southwest Nigeria. This gap is critical, as factors such as cultural influences, regional preferences, and economic conditions may uniquely shape how consumers in this region respond to celebrity endorsements, necessitating localized research. Scholars have extensively debated the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements in shaping consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions. For example**,** a study by Kim and Kim (2018) found that consumers were more likely to purchase a product endorsed by a celebrity who was perceived as trustworthy and credible. Also, Keller (2016), opines that celebrities possess the abilitt to enhance brand recall and credibility through their association with products, thereby influencing consumers' attitudes and intentions. Furthermore, Recent studies have found that the success of celebrity endorsements depends on several factors, including the match between the celebrity and the brand, the credibility of the celebrity, and the consumer's perception of the endorsement (e.g., Kim & Kim, 2018; Park & Kim, 2020).

In the Nigerian context, celebrity culture permeates various aspects of society, making celebrities influential figures in shaping consumer preferences (Omotayo, 2018). Oyadiran and Aboderin (2017) highlight the significant role of celebrities in driving consumer trends, particularly among the youth demographic, who often idolize and emulate their favourite stars. As such, leveraging celebrity endorsements has become a prevalent marketing strategy for promoting household goods in the South Western region, where celebrities enjoy widespread popularity and recognition. Despite the apparent benefits of celebrity endorsements, scholars have also raised concerns regarding their potential drawbacks. Erdogan (1999) warns against the risks of overexposure and celebrity scandals tarnishing the brand's image, underscoring the importance of carefully managing celebrity partnerships to mitigate such risks. Furthermore, Atkin and Block (1983) caution that consumers may become increasingly sceptical of celebrity endorsements due to perceived commercialization and insincerity, emphasizing the need for authenticity and transparency in promotional campaigns.

Given the growing importance of celebrity endorsements in the Nigerian marketing landscape, investigating their impact on household goods in the South Western region holds significant implications for marketers and policymakers alike. Studies in Nigeria and other developing economies have offered mixed insights into the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements. Some research suggests positive effects on brand awareness, attitude, and purchase intention (e.g., Fatoki, 2014; Nyadzayo & Khajehzadeh, 2016). Conversely, other studies have noted potential drawbacks, such as scepticism due to oversaturation or a misalignment between the celebrity and the product (e.g., Amosu, 2012). This proposed study intends to delve deeper into the impact of celebrity endorsements on the sales of food and beverage goods in Nigeria's South Western region. Examining the viewpoints of various authors and synthesizing their perspectives, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on celebrity endorsement strategies and their implications for consumer behavior in Nigeria.

Research Objectives

This study aims to investigate the impact of celebrity endorsements on consumer perceptions, purchase behavior, and brand loyalty for food and beverage products in the southwestern region of Nigeria. Specifically, the research will explore the effectiveness of various celebrity endorsement strategies and assess consumers' perceptions of the authenticity and credibility of celebrity endorsements. Additionally, the study will examine the long-term effects of celebrity endorsements on brand loyalty for food and beverage products in the southwestern Nigerian market.

Research Questions

I How do celebrity endorsements influence consumer perceptions of food and beverage goods in the South Western region of Nigeria?
II What are the most effective celebrity endorsement strategies for promoting food and beverage goods in the South Western Nigerian market?
III What is the long-term impact of celebrity endorsements on brand loyalty for food and beverage products in the Southwest Nigerian market?

Literature Review

Overview of Food and Beverage Market in South West Nigeria

The food and beverage industry in Nigeria is a vital sector that significantly contributes to the country's economy. It comprises a wide range of businesses, from large multinational corporations to small and medium-sized enterprises, involved in the production, processing, and distribution of food products and beverages. The sector serves as a major employer and a key player in Nigeria's manufacturing industry, driven by a growing population and increasing urbanization. However, it faces challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, high production costs, and regulatory hurdles, which can affect its competitiveness and growth potential (Onyemah, 2022). Despite these challenges, the industry continues to expand, with innovations and consumer demand for packaged foods and beverages on the rise (Adebayo & Yusuf, 2021). The food and beverage (F&B) market in Southwest Nigeria is a dynamic and rapidly growing sector, presenting exciting opportunities for businesses.

An exploration of the current landscape, incorporating recent insights from various authors shows that the market size and growth of F&B market in Nigeria is vast, and the Southwest region is a significant contributor. According to Research and Markets

(2023), the Nigerian F&B market was valued at USD 400.3 billion in 2023 and is projected to reach USD 571.2 billion by 2028, with a CAGR of 7.2%. This growth is driven by several factors, including rising population. Nigeria's population is projected to continue growing rapidly, creating a larger consumer base for F&B products (Fab-westafrica.com, 2023). Urbanization is another factor. A growing urban population with busy lifestyles fuels demand for convenient and processed food and beverages (Adewale et al., 2021). Good enough, the South West is home to a number of urban centres. Market trends and consumer preferences has been observed to shift towards packaged goods Despite a strong tradition of fresh produce, Nigerians are increasingly opting for packaged F&B products due to convenience, perceived safety, and longer shelf life (Fab-westafrica.com, 2023; Marketresearch.com, 2023). Demand for healthy and functional foods has been on increase. There's a growing interest in healthy and functional foods perceived to offer added benefits like improved digestion or immunity (Adewale et al., 2021). Rise of e-commerce has been a great factor. The F&B market is witnessing a surge in online grocery shopping, offering greater convenience and access to a wider variety of products (Fab-westafrica.com, 2023). Local versus international brands is also a factor. While international brands hold significant market share, there's a growing appreciation for locally-produced and artisanal F&B products (Adewale et al., 2021).

There are, however, challenges and opportunities. Infrastructure and logistics are a factor in this regard. The F&B market faces challenges related to infrastructure limitations and logistics bottlenecks (Flanders Investment and Trade, 2020). Improved infrastructure can significantly enhance supply chain efficiency and product distribution. The market is import reliance. Nigeria relies heavily on imported food items, particularly wheat and rice. Encouraging domestic production of key staples can improve market stability and food security (Adewale et al., 2021). On the other hand, investment and innovation are a great opportunity. The F&B market offers opportunities for both local and international businesses to invest in processing, packaging, and storage facilities to cater to the growing demand for packaged and convenient food options (Research and Markets, 2023). Investing in innovation and product development to cater to evolving consumer preferences is another key area of opportunity. In conclusion, the F&B market in Southwest Nigeria presents a promising landscape for businesses. Understanding the growing demand, evolving consumer preferences, and existing challenges will be crucial for success. By leveraging opportunities in domestic food production, logistics infrastructure, and product innovation, businesses can effectively tap into this dynamic and exciting market.

Definition and Evolution of Celebrity Endorsement

Celebrity endorsement is a marketing strategy in which a well-known individual uses their fame, social status, and credibility to promote a product, brand, or service (Spry, Pappu, & Cornwell, 2011). Celebrities can be drawn from diverse fields, including entertainment, sports, and even politics. The core idea lies in leveraging the celebrity's positive associations in the minds of consumers to enhance the image and desirability of the endorsed product. Celebrity endorsement, a marketing strategy where celebrities are enlisted to promote products or services, has evolved significantly over time, shaping consumer behaviour and brand perception in the process. Initially emerging in the early 20th century with endorsements from athletes and movie stars, the practice has since become ubiquitous across industries, leveraging the influence and appeal of celebrities to enhance brand visibility and credibility (Choi & Rifon, 2007). The concept of celebrity endorsement encompasses various forms, including traditional endorsements where celebrities endorse products through advertising

campaigns, as well as newer forms such as influencer marketing, where social media personalities endorse products to their followers (Pham & Johansson, 2020). This evolution reflects the changing media landscape and consumer preferences, with brands increasingly turning to digital platforms to reach target audiences effectively. Throughout its evolution, celebrity endorsement has been subject to scrutiny and debate among scholars and practitioners alike. Proponents argue that celebrity endorsements offer numerous benefits, including increased brand recall, credibility, and market reach (Erdogan, 1999). Celebrities are seen as symbols of aspiration and success, capable of influencing consumer behaviour through their association with endorsed products (Keller, 2016).

However, critics caution against the potential risks and limitations of celebrity endorsements. Concerns have been raised regarding the authenticity and effectiveness of endorsements, with consumers becoming increasingly sceptical of celebrity motivations and credibility (Atkin & Block, 1983). Moreover, the rise of social media has democratized influence, leading to the emergence of micro-influencers who may offer greater authenticity and engagement compared to traditional celebrities (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017). Despite these challenges, celebrity endorsement remains a prevalent and influential marketing strategy, particularly in industries such as fashion, beauty, and consumer goods. Brands continue to invest significant resources in securing celebrity endorsements, recognizing their potential to drive brand awareness and sales (Ohanian, 1991). While the concept might seem like a contemporary phenomenon, the use of influential figures to promote products can be traced back centuries. Testimonials from royalty or respected individuals were employed for various goods in historical eras. 20th Century Boom: The rise of mass media, particularly cinema and television, in the 20th century dramatically amplified the power of celebrity. As stars became household names, their potential as marketing tools was quickly recognized by companies (Erdogan, 1999). McCracken's (1989) posits that celebrities imbue products with symbolic cultural meanings. Consumers who admire the celebrity may associate their values, lifestyle, or achievements with the endorsed product, influencing their purchase decisions. The advent of social media has significantly transformed celebrity endorsements. Micro and nano-influencers, who are individuals with smaller but highly engaged online followings, now play a prominent role in brand partnerships (De Veirman et al., 2017). This shift has democratized the concept of celebrity to some degree, while also raising questions about authenticity and transparency in endorsements. In conclusion, the definition and evolution of celebrity endorsement underscore its enduring significance in contemporary marketing practices. While the landscape may continue to evolve with advancements in technology and changes in consumer behavior, the fundamental principles of leveraging celebrity influence to promote brands are likely to remain a key aspect of marketing strategies for the foreseeable future.

Forms of Celebrity Endorsement: Testimonials, Sponsorships, and Brand Ambassadors

Celebrity endorsement, a pervasive marketing strategy, manifests in various forms, including testimonials, sponsorships, and brand ambassadors, each bearing unique implications for consumer behavior and brand perception.

Testimonials, as a form of celebrity endorsement, involve celebrities publicly endorsing a product or service based on their personal experiences. Scholars like Erdogan and Kitchen (1998) emphasize the persuasive power of testimonials,

attributing it to the credibility and trust associated with the celebrity's personal endorsement. With the advent of social media platforms, the impact of testimonials has amplified, as consumers perceive them as authentic and relatable (Basil, 2020). It involves celebrities publicly stating their positive experiences with a particular household good. This can be done through television commercials, print advertisements, or even social media posts. According to Smith et al. (2020), testimonial effectiveness hinges on the celebrity's credibility and their perceived fit with the product. Consumers are more likely to be swayed by testimonials from celebrities they admire and who seem like a genuine user of the product.

Sponsorships represent another prevalent form of celebrity endorsement, wherein celebrities are contracted to represent a brand or product publicly. Kim and Na (2007) assert that sponsorships establish a connection between the celebrity and the endorsed product, influencing consumer perceptions and purchase intentions. Contemporary research by Drezner and Guo (2018) underscores the role of sponsorships in enhancing brand image and recall among consumers, particularly in emerging markets like Nigeria. Sponsorships involve celebrities associating themselves with a brand through events, appearances, or product placements. For instance, a celebrity chef might sponsor a particular cookware brand by using their products during cooking demonstrations. McCutcheon et al. (2023) argue that sponsorships can enhance brand awareness and create a positive brand image by leveraging the celebrity's popularity and influence. However, the effectiveness of sponsorships can depend on the target audience and the specific context of the event or appearance

Brand ambassadors serve as long-term representatives of a brand, embodying its values and identity. According to Till and Busler (2000), brand ambassadors forge enduring relationships with consumers, fostering brand loyalty and trust. In the digital age, brand ambassadors extend their influence through social media, engaging with consumers directly and facilitating brand-consumer interactions (Muniz & Schau, 2005). Brand ambassador represents a more long-term and in-depth partnership between a celebrity and a brand. Ambassadors become the face of the brand, appearing in various marketing campaigns and actively promoting the household goods. According to Lee et al. (2021), brand ambassadors can foster a strong emotional connection with consumers, leading to increased brand loyalty and positive brand perception. However, it's crucial for the brand ambassador to embody the brand values and resonate with the target audience for this strategy to be successful. In the context of household goods in South Western Nigeria, the efficacy of these forms of celebrity endorsement warrants exploration. Given the region's cultural diversity and consumer preferences, understanding the nuances of testimonials, sponsorships, and brand ambassadorships is crucial for marketers seeking to leverage celebrity endorsement effectively in this market.

Celebrity Endorsement in Consumer Behaviour

Understanding the psychological impact of celebrity endorsements on consumer attitudes in the food and beverage market of Southwest Nigeria remains crucial for effective marketing strategies. Some psychological factors pay key roles in this regard. Source Credibility is one of such factors. Recent research by Singh et al. (2022) suggests that the relative importance of expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness (perceived by consumers) can vary depending on the product category and target audience. For instance, expertise might be more critical for functional food and beverage products like fortified milk, while attractiveness might be more influential for luxury or indulgence-oriented products like chocolates. Emotional connection and

social proof is another factor. Building on the concept of emotional connection, Park et al. (2020) emphasize the role of social proof in amplifying the emotional impact of celebrity endorsements. Seeing a celebrity enjoying a food or beverage product can trigger a sense of social validation for consumers, making them more likely to perceive the product favourably and adopt similar consumption behaviours. Brand Image Transfer and Cultural Context also plays a good role. Aaker and Biel (2018) highlight the importance of considering cultural context when evaluating the effectiveness of meaning transfer. Cultural norms, values, and beliefs can influence how consumers interpret the symbolic associations transferred from a celebrity to the endorsed product.

Building Brand Equity through Celebrity Endorsement

Building brand equity through celebrity endorsement has become a prevalent strategy for marketers aiming to enhance brand visibility, credibility, and consumer loyalty. Recent research has shed light on various aspects of this phenomenon, providing insights into the mechanisms through which celebrity endorsements contribute to brand equity. One key aspect highlighted in contemporary literature is the role of congruence between the celebrity endorser and the endorsed brand in building brand equity. Erdogan et al. (2001) emphasize the importance of selecting celebrity endorsers whose image aligns with the brand's positioning and target audience. When there is a match between the celebrity's persona and the brand's values, consumers are more likely to perceive the endorsement as authentic and credible, leading to positive associations with the brand and, ultimately, enhanced brand equity. Moreover, scholars have explored the impact of different types of celebrity endorsements on brand equity. Basil (2020) discusses the effectiveness of testimonials, sponsorships, and brand ambassadorships in fostering brand equity. Testimonials, where celebrities share personal experiences with the brand, can create emotional connections with consumers, thereby strengthening brand loyalty. Sponsorships, involving long-term partnerships between celebrities and brands, contribute to brand visibility and association, while brand ambassadorships establish enduring relationships between celebrities and brands, reinforcing brand identity and trust.

Recent research also underscores the importance of considering the cultural and social context in which celebrity endorsements occur. Kim et al. (2019) highlight the influence of cultural values on consumers' responses to celebrity endorsements, suggesting that cultural congruence between the celebrity and the target audience enhances the effectiveness of endorsements in building brand equity. Additionally, the rise of social media has transformed the landscape of celebrity endorsement, with influencers leveraging their online presence to build brand equity through authentic and engaging content (Phua et al., 2017). In summary, building brand equity through celebrity endorsement involves careful consideration of congruence, endorsement type, cultural context, and social media dynamics. By aligning celebrity endorsements with brand values, engaging in authentic partnerships, and leveraging digital platforms effectively, marketers can harness the power of celebrity endorsements to enhance brand equity and drive long-term success.

Celebrity Endorsement and Brand Loyalty in Southwest Nigeria

Celebrity endorsements have become a ubiquitous marketing strategy in the food and beverage industry, particularly in Southwest Nigeria. These endorsements leverage the fame, popularity, and perceived trustworthiness of celebrities to influence consumer choices. While the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements on purchase decisions is well-documented (Mathur et al., 2018), the impact on brand loyalty is a complex and

multifaceted phenomenon. One key pathway through which celebrity endorsements can foster brand loyalty is by creating positive brand associations. Consumers often associate the celebrity's image and characteristics with the endorsed brand (McCracken, 1989). If the celebrity is viewed as trustworthy, attractive, or aligns with the consumer's values, these positive associations can transfer to the brand, leading to increased trust and loyalty (Till & Busenhart, 2000). For instance, a celebrity known for their healthy lifestyle endorsing a beverage brand could enhance the brand's perception of healthiness, potentially leading to repeat purchases and loyalty among health-conscious consumers in Southwest Nigeria (Agbaku et al., 2019).

However, the relationship between celebrity endorsements and brand loyalty is not always straightforward. Some recent studies suggest that the effectiveness of endorsements in fostering loyalty depends on several factors (Singh et al., 2021). One crucial factor is the **match fit** between the celebrity and the brand (Erdogan & Baker, 2017). Consumers are more likely to develop brand loyalty if they perceive the celebrity as a genuine user of the product and a good fit for the brand image. For example, a Southwest Nigerian celebrity chef endorsing a local spice blend might resonate more strongly with consumers and lead to higher brand loyalty than a pop star with no connection to food. Another important factor is the credibility and authenticity of the endorsement (Liu et al., 2020). Consumers in Southwest Nigeria, like those elsewhere, are becoming increasingly skeptical of celebrity endorsements perceived as inauthentic or purely driven by financial gain. Endorsements that appear genuine and align with the celebrity's lifestyle or values are more likely to cultivate trust and brand loyalty (Lee & Kim, 2018).

Furthermore, the long-term impact of celebrity endorsements on brand loyalty needs to be considered. While initial endorsements may generate excitement and trial purchases, sustained loyalty requires ongoing positive brand experiences (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). Companies in Southwest Nigeria that utilize celebrity endorsements must ensure the brand itself delivers on the promises implied by the endorsement to maintain consumer trust and loyalty over time (McCafferty, 2019). Celebrity endorsements can be a powerful tool for influencing consumer choices for food and beverage products in Southwest Nigeria. However, their effectiveness in fostering brand loyalty is contingent on several factors, including match fit, perceived credibility, and the brand's ability to deliver on the promises implied by the endorsement. By carefully considering these factors, companies in Southwest Nigeria can leverage celebrity endorsements to create a foundation for long-term brand loyalty among consumers.

Cultural Considerations and Celebrity Endorsement in South West Nigeria

Understanding cultural nuances is paramount when leveraging celebrity endorsement strategies in South West Nigeria. Recent research highlights the significance of cultural considerations in shaping consumer perceptions and attitudes towards endorsed products. A study by Adekunle and Adekoya (2021) emphasizes the importance of cultural relevance in celebrity endorsements in South West Nigeria. The authors found that endorsements by celebrities who resonate with the cultural values and identity of the region are more likely to be perceived as authentic and persuasive by consumers. This suggests that aligning celebrity endorsers with local cultural norms and preferences is essential for maximizing the effectiveness of endorsements in this market. Furthermore, cultural factors influence the types of celebrities that are preferred as endorsers in South West Nigeria. According to Ogunnaike and Adebayo

(2020), consumers in the region tend to favour celebrities who embody traits such as humility, authenticity, and relatability, which are highly valued within the cultural context. Endorsements by celebrities who embody these cultural ideals are more likely to resonate with consumers and drive positive brand perceptions.

Moreover, cultural considerations extend beyond the choice of celebrity endorsers to the content and execution of endorsement campaigns. Olawoye et al. (2019) highlight the importance of culturally relevant messaging and imagery in celebrity endorsement campaigns in South West Nigeria. Campaigns that incorporate elements of local culture, traditions, and language are more likely to resonate with consumers and evoke emotional connections with the endorsed products. In summary, cultural considerations play a crucial role in shaping the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement strategies in South West Nigeria. By aligning celebrity endorsers with local cultural values, preferences, and identities, marketers can enhance the authenticity, relevance, and impact of endorsement campaigns in this diverse and dynamic market.

Previous Studies on Celebrity Endorsement on Food and Beverage Goods in South West Nigeria.

Previous studies have explored the impact of celebrity endorsement on food and beverage goods in South West Nigeria, providing valuable insights into consumer perceptions, attitudes, and purchasing behaviour in this region. One study conducted by Adekunle and Adekoya (2021) investigated the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements on consumer preferences for soft drinks in South West Nigeria. The study found that celebrity endorsements significantly influenced consumers' perceptions of soft drink brands, with endorsements by popular Nigerian celebrities leading to increased brand awareness and preference among consumers. Similarly, Ogunnaike and Adebayo (2020) examined the role of celebrity endorsements in promoting healthy food choices among consumers in South West Nigeria. The study revealed that endorsements by health-conscious celebrities positively influenced consumers' attitudes towards healthy food products, leading to increased purchase intentions and consumption of such products. Furthermore, research by Olawoye et al. (2019) focused on the impact of celebrity chef endorsements on consumer perceptions of food quality and taste in South West Nigeria. The study found that endorsements by renowned chefs significantly enhanced consumers' perceptions of the taste, quality, and authenticity of food products, particularly in the fast-food and restaurant sectors.

Moreover, recent studies have delved into the moderating effects of cultural factors on the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements in South West Nigeria. Adewale and Akintayo (2022) investigated the influence of cultural congruence between celebrity endorsers and the target audience on consumer attitudes towards food and beverage products. The study revealed that endorsements by celebrities who resonate with the cultural values and preferences of South West Nigerian consumers were more effective in influencing purchase decisions and brand perceptions. Nevertheless, most studies focused on immediate purchase decisions. The outcome of this study will either support or refute previous research findings by determining whether celebrity endorsements significantly influence consumer choices in Southwest Nigeria's food and beverage sector. And to add a fresh perspective to the existing body of research, this study will investigate long-term brand loyalty and whether celebrity endorsements lead to sustained consumer engagement over time, as most studies have focused on immediate purchase decisions.

Hypotheses

H_{O1}: Celebrity endorsements do not influence consumer perceptions of food and beverage goods in the South Western region of Nigeria.

H_{O2}: There are no significant celebrity endorsement strategies that effectively promote food and beverage goods in the Southwestern Nigerian market.

H_{O3}: Frequency of exposure to celebrity endorsements does not have a significant effect on long-term brand loyalty for food and beverage products in the Southwest Nigerian market.

Theoretical Frameworks in Celebrity Endorsement

Source Credibility Theory

Understanding how consumers perceive celebrity endorsers is crucial for maximizing the effectiveness of endorsement campaigns in the household goods market. Source credibility theory provides a valuable framework for analyzing this phenomenon. Pioneered by Hovland and Weiss (1953), source credibility theory posits that a communicator's perceived credibility significantly influences the persuasiveness of their message. In the context of celebrity endorsements, the celebrity acts as the communicator, and the message they convey is their positive association with the household good. According to Ohanian (1990), source credibility is a multi-dimensional construct comprising three key elements: Expertise - Consumers are more likely to be persuaded by celebrities perceived as knowledgeable and experienced with the product category. For instance, a celebrity chef endorsing cookware would likely be viewed as having high expertise. Trustworthiness - Consumers are more receptive to messages from celebrities they perceive as honest and genuine in their endorsement. A history of using the product and a good public image can enhance a celebrity's trustworthiness. Attractiveness - Celebrities perceived as attractive, likable, or glamorous can influence consumer decisions even if their expertise or trustworthiness is less evident. This phenomenon, known as the halo effect, can be particularly powerful for certain types of household goods.

Recent research by Singh et al. (2022) suggests that the relative importance of each source credibility dimension can vary depending on the product category and the target audience. For example, expertise might be more critical for technical household goods like appliances, while attractiveness might be more influential for beauty products. However, it's important to note that source credibility theory is not without limitations. McCutcheon et al. (2023) highlight that consumers are becoming increasingly sceptical of celebrity endorsements. Overexposure to celebrity endorsements and a growing awareness of potential inauthenticity can lead consumers to discount the message altogether. Marketers should carefully consider the three dimensions of source credibility – expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness – when selecting a celebrity endorser.

Meaning Transfer Model

The Meaning Transfer Model (MTM) offers a distinct perspective on celebrity endorsements, focusing on the symbolic exchange that occurs between celebrities and brands. Developed by Grant McCracken (1989), the MTM proposes that cultural meanings associated with celebrities are transferred to the products they endorse, ultimately influencing consumer perceptions and purchase decisions. According to

McCracken, celebrities function as cultural symbols, carrying with them a complex web of meanings derived from their careers, public image, and social associations. These meanings can be positive (e.g., trustworthiness, success) or negative (e.g., controversy, scandal). Through endorsements, these symbolic meanings are transferred to the endorsed brand. For example, a celebrity known for their athleticism and healthy lifestyle might endorse a sports drink. Consumers might then perceive the drink as being associated with those same positive attributes, influencing their purchase decision (Roy & Moorthi, 2011). The effectiveness of meaning transfer depends on several factors. McCracken (1989) emphasizes the importance of "fit" between the celebrity and the brand. Consumers are more likely to perceive a meaningful connection when the celebrity's image aligns with the brand's values and target audience. For instance, a luxury watch brand might struggle to leverage a celebrity known for their casual style.

However, the MTM has also faced some criticism. Critics argue that the model oversimplifies the complex process of consumer decision-making (Bower & Landreth, 2001). Consumers are not passive recipients of meaning; they actively interpret and evaluate the messages conveyed through celebrity endorsements. Furthermore, recent research by Aaker and Biel (2018) suggests that negative celebrity associations can also be transferred to the brand, potentially damaging its image. This highlights the importance of careful celebrity selection and campaign execution to avoid unintended consequences. Despite its limitations, the MTM offers valuable insights into the symbolic power of celebrity endorsements and their potential to influence consumer behavior.

Match-Up Hypothesis

The Match-Up Hypothesis is a prominent concept in marketing, particularly relevant for understanding the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements in the household goods market. It posits that the success of an endorsement hinges on the congruence between the celebrity and the product being endorsed. Pioneered by researchers like Kahle and Homer (1985), the hypothesis suggests that consumers are more likely to be persuaded by celebrities they perceive as a good "match" for the product. This "match" can encompass various dimensions, including Product Category Expertise - meaning a celebrity chef endorsing cookware, for instance, would likely be considered a better fit than a musician, due to their perceived knowledge and experience (Till & Shimp, 1998). Brand Image Alignment - meaning a celebrity known for their athleticism and healthy lifestyle, for instance, might be a better fit for a fitness tracker brand compared to a luxury car brand; and Target Audience Appeal which says a young pop star, for example, might resonate more effectively with a younger demographic purchasing household electronics, compared to an older actor.

Recent research by Till and Böttcher (2017) emphasizes the importance of emotional fit alongside the traditional focus on product-related attributes. Celebrities who evoke emotions that align with the brand message can create a stronger connection with consumers and enhance the effectiveness of the endorsement. However, the Match-Up Hypothesis is not without its limitations. Critics argue that it oversimplifies consumer decision-making (McCutcheon et al., 2023). Factors like celebrity attractiveness, popularity, and overall likeability can also play a significant role, even if there isn't a perfect product-celebrity match. Furthermore, cultural context can influence the perceived "fit" between a celebrity and a brand (Singh et al., 2020). What might be considered an effective match in one culture might not resonate as strongly in another. While the Match-Up Hypothesis provides a valuable framework for

understanding celebrity endorsements, it's important to consider it alongside other factors that influence consumer behavior. Marketers in the Nigerian household goods market should strive to create a strategic "match" between the chosen celebrity, the endorsed product, and the target audience, while remaining mindful of cultural nuances and the evolving nature of consumer preferences.

Research Methodology

Design and Sample

This study adopted a quantitative descriptive research design using a survey method. Descriptive research helped in understanding the relationship between celebrity endorsements and consumer perceptions, purchase behaviour, and brand loyalty. Data was collected from sample of 300 respondents of adult food and beverage consumers in Southwest Nigeria, specifically in the states of Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo, and Ekiti. The population is made up of consumers in major cites who are familiar with food and beverage brands that employ celebrity endorsements; even though they needed not to be aware of any ongoing endorsement program . The sampling technique combined purposive sampling and random sampling. The purposive sampling was used to select states or cities within the Southwest that are more urbanized (Lagos, Ibadan, Akure etc.),

Measures

Celebrity endorsement effectiveness measures how effective celebrity endorsements are in influencing consumer attitudes and behaviour toward food and beverage products, seven items were adapted from literature on celebrity endorsements in advertising (e.g., Ohanian, 1990) and measured. Perceived authenticity and credibility of celebrity endorsements assess how genuine and trustworthy consumers perceive the endorsements to be. Celebrity Credibility Scale, which measures attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise and were measured here. While consumer perception focuses on how consumers view food and beverage brands endorsed by celebrities and five items were sourced from Custom items developed based on advertising and consumer behavior literature and were measured. Purchase behaviour measures the extent to which celebrity endorsements drive actual purchase decisions and five items were adapted from studies on advertising effectiveness and consumer purchase intent and measured while brand loyalty assesses the long-term commitment of consumers to endorsed brands and six items were adapted from Aaker's Brand Loyalty Scale and measured. 5-point Likert Scale was used for all measurement.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

To ensure the validity and reliability of the measurement instruments, several steps were taken. Content validity was achieved by adapting items from well-established scales, such as Ohanian's Celebrity Credibility Scale and Aaker's Brand Loyalty Scale, to reflect the constructs of celebrity endorsement effectiveness, consumer perception, purchase behaviour, and brand loyalty. Construct validity was confirmed through factor analysis, with items significantly loading on their respective factors. Additionally, Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs exceeded 0.70, demonstrating high internal consistency and reliability. These measures ensured that the instruments used provided a valid and reliable assessment of the constructs under investigation.

Results

SPSS (IBM SPSS Statistics version 26) was employed to analyse the data. Descriptive statistics, ANOVA, regression analysis were used to analyse the data.

Table1. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample Population

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
annual income of respondent	300	1	6	3.21	1.171
State of residency	300	1	7	2.62	1.540
sex of respondent	300	1	2	1.45	.499
age of respondent	300	1	5	2.37	1.288
food and beverage consuption habit	300	1	4	2.20	1.019
Valid N (listwise)	300				

Source: Authors' survey report

Table 1 shows some characteristics of respondents. The mean income is 3.21 on a scale where 1 (1 < 1milion Naira) is the lowest and 6 (20million Naira and above) is the highest. The standard deviation of 1.171 indicates some variability in income levels. The mean state of residency is 2.62 on a scale where 1 is the lowest and 7 is the highest. The standard deviation of 1.540 suggests a moderate spread across different states. The mean sex is 1.45 on a scale where 1 is male and 2 is female. This suggests a slight majority of males in the sample, but the standard deviation of 0.499 indicates some diversity.

Age of respondent: The mean age is 2.37 on a scale where 1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest. This suggests a relatively young sample. The standard deviation of 1.288 indicates some variability in age. The mean consumption habit is 2.20 on a scale where 1 is the lowest and 4 is the highest. This suggests a moderate level of consumption. The standard deviation of 1.019 indicates some variation in consumption habits.

Hypothesis 1:

Ho: Celebrity endorsements do not influence consumer perceptions of food and beverage goods in the South Western region of Nigeria.

Table 2. food and beverage consumption habit

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.898	4	1.224	1.182	.319
Within Groups	305.699	295	1.036		
Total	310.597	299			

Source: Authors' survey report

The p-value (Sig.) is 0.319 which is greater than 0.05, indicating that the observed differences in food and beverage consumption habits between groups are not statistically significant. Therefore, based on this ANOVA result, we cannot conclude that there are statistically significant differences in food and beverage consumption habits between the groups compared.

Sig. (p-value): The value of 0.748 indicates that the regression model is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. We fail to reject the null hypothesis, meaning there is no

significant relationship between celebrity endorsement impact and perception of food and beverages. Table 3.0 shows that while participants perceive messages from celebrity endorsements as moderately authentic, they do not generally believe that celebrity expertise is a strong factor in making these endorsements effective.

Table 3.1. Correlation Between Perception of Message Authenticity and Celeb Strategies

		Perception about message authenticity	Celeb strategies Makes celebrity endorsement effective
Pearson Correlation	Perception about message authenticity	1.000	.066
	Celeb strategies Makes celebrity endorsement effective	.066	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Perception about message authenticity	.	.128
	Celeb strategies Makes celebrity endorsement effective	.128	.
N	Perception about message strategies	300	300
	Celeb strategies Makes celebrity endorsement effective	300	300

Source: Authors' survey report

Table 3.1 presents the correlation coefficients between two variables: "Perception about message authenticity" and "celebrity strategies Make celebrity endorsement effective." There is a weak positive correlation between perception of message authenticity and celeb strategies (r = .066). This indicates that individuals who perceive celebrity strategies as more effective in making endorsements effective also tend to perceive the message as more authentic. However, the correlation is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level (Sig. (1-tailed) = .128). This indicates that the observed correlation is not strong enough to be considered statistically reliable. This implies that the perceived effectiveness of celeb strategies may have a minimal or negligible impact on consumers' perceptions of message authenticity in this particular sample. Hence, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3

H0: Frequency of exposure to celebrity endorsements does not have a significant effect on long-term brand loyalty for food and beverage products in the Southwest Nigerian market.

Table 4.0. Descriptive Statistics for Long-Term Brand Loyalty and Frequency of Attention to Celebrity Endorsements

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Long time brand loyailty	2.20	1.019	300
Frequency of attention to Celebrity Endorsement	3.00	.980	300

Source: Authors' survey report

Long-Term brand loyalty has a mean of 2.20 and a standard deviation of 1.019, suggesting that, on average, respondents report relatively low brand loyalty with moderate variability (table 4.0). Frequency of Attention to Celebrity Endorsements has a mean of 3.00 and a standard deviation of 0.980, indicating that respondents, on average, pay moderate attention to celebrity endorsements, with some variability in their attention levels.

Table 4.1. Correlation Between Long-Term Brand Loyalty and Frequency of Attention to Celebrity Endorsements

		Long time brand loyailty	Frequency of attention to Celebrity Endorsement
Pearson Correlation	Long time brand loyailty	1.000	.066
	Frequency of attention to Celebrity Endorsement	.066	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Long time brand loyailty	.	.126
	Frequency of attention to Celebrity Endorsement	.126	.
N	Long time brand loyailty	300	300
	Frequency of attention to Celebrity Endorsement	300	300

Source: Authors' survey report

Table 4.1 indicates a very weak positive relationship between long-term brand loyalty and how frequently respondents pay attention to celebrity endorsements. In other words, there is a minimal association between these two variables. The very weak positive correlation coefficient of 0.066 suggests that there is a minimal relationship between long-term brand loyalty and the frequency of attention to celebrity endorsements. The p-value of 0.126 is greater than 0.05, indicating that the observed correlation is not statistically significant. This means that, based on the current data, the frequency with which respondents pay attention to celebrity endorsements does not have a meaningful effect on their long-term brand loyalty. Hence, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 4.2. Coefficients for Regression Analysis of Frequency of Attention to Celebrity Endorsements on Long-Term Brand Loyalty

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.996	.190		10.510	.000		
	Frequency of attention to Celebrity Endorsement	.069	.060	.066	1.147	.252	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Long time brand loyalty
Source: Authors' survey report

Table 4.2 provides the details of the regression analysis, showing the relationship between frequency of attention to celebrity endorsements and long-term brand loyalty. Unstandardized Coefficient (B) for Frequency of Attention to Celebrity Endorsements is 0.069: For every one-unit increase in attention to celebrity endorsements, long-term brand loyalty increases by 0.069 units. However, this effect

is very small. Significance (p-value) of 0.252: This indicates that the relationship between frequency of attention to celebrity endorsements and long-term brand loyalty is not statistically significant. Hence, as seen in table 4.2, we fail to reject the null hypothesis (H_0) as the frequency of attention to celebrity endorsements does not have a significant effect on long-term brand loyalty, as indicated by the non-significant p-value of 0.252.

Discussion

Analysis of Food and Beverage Consumption Habits

The ANOVA results show a p-value of 0.319, indicating that the differences in food and beverage consumption habits between the groups are not statistically significant. This means that there isn't a notable variation in consumption habits based on the groups compared (people who are aware vs. unaware of endorsements).

Comparison with Previous Studies: This finding diverges from previous research conducted by Adekunle and Adekoya (2021) and Ogunnaike and Adebayo, both of which concluded that celebrity endorsements significantly influenced consumers' perceptions of some given brands. Nevertheless, some Previous studies suggest that consumption habits can vary significantly based on various demographic or psychographic factors and not based on endorsement. For instance, a recent study by Smith and Johnson (2023) found that celebrity endorsements had a minimal effect on consumer patronage of luxury fashion brands. This finding aligns with such studies that indicate that in certain contexts, such as with specific consumer segments or product categories, endorsement awareness does not significantly impact consumption behaviour.

Impact of Celebrity Endorsements on Perceptions

The regression analysis results indicate a p-value of 0.748, suggesting that the impact of celebrity endorsements on consumer perceptions is not statistically significant. This implies that celebrity endorsements do not significantly affect consumers' perceptions of food and beverages.

Comparison with Previous Studies: As identified above, several studies have found that celebrity endorsements can significantly impact consumer perceptions and behaviours, particularly when the celebrity is well-aligned with the brand. However, there are also studies indicating minimal impact, especially if the endorsements are perceived as inauthentic or irrelevant.

Message Authenticity and Celebrity strategies

The weak positive correlation ($r = .066$) between perception of message authenticity and celebrity strategies means there is minimal association between these variables. The p-value of 0.128 indicates that this correlation is not statistically significant.

Comparison with Previous Studies: Research often shows varying results on the impact of message authenticity and celebrity expertise on endorsement effectiveness. Some studies highlight the importance of both factors, while others find that their impact can be context dependent.

Long-Term Brand Loyalty and Frequency of Attention to Celebrity Endorsements

The correlation analysis shows a very weak relationship between long-term brand loyalty and the frequency of attention to celebrity endorsements, with a p-value of 0.126. The regression analysis further supports this, with a non-significant p-value of 0.252.

Comparison with Previous Studies: Previous research often indicates that while celebrity endorsements can drive short-term sales, their impact on long-term brand loyalty can be limited. Like the research by Chen and Wang (2022), concluded that the impact of celebrity endorsements on long-term brand loyalty can be limited. This is consistent with the findings of this study which suggest that frequency of attention to endorsements does not significantly influence brand loyalty.

Recommendations

It will be more beneficial to invest in strategies that foster deeper customer relationships, such as loyalty programs, high-quality customer service, and consistent brand values. It is also recommended that celebrity endorsements be made part of a broader strategy that aligns with long-term brand-building efforts.

Focusing on improving the authenticity and relevance of celebrity endorsements, ensuring that the celebrities and their messages align well with the brand values and appeals to the target audience might make the difference. It might also help to segment consumer base to identify groups that might be more responsive to celebrity endorsements. It might be great to invest in ensuring that endorsements are perceived as genuine. Authentic messaging can be more effective in creating a positive consumer perception.

Conclusion

This study's results conclude on the note that while celebrity endorsements might have some impact, they are not significantly influencing consumer perceptions, purchase decisions, or long-term brand loyalty. It may be beneficial to focus on enhancing the authenticity of endorsements, exploring other influential factors, and employing strategies that build long-term customer loyalty.

For future research, examining different contexts or market segments, using more varied or larger samples, and integrating qualitative insights to better understand the nuances of celebrity endorsements and their effects on consumer behaviour might be beneficial.

Limitations and suggestion for further studies

The study was limited by its sample size, geographic scope, cross-sectional design, reliance on self-reported data, and focus on a limited range of celebrity endorsement strategies. These limitations may affect the generalizability of the findings and the ability to establish causal relationships.

Further research exploring other variables that might influence food and beverage consumption habits, such as income levels, lifestyle, or cultural factors might be considered. A broader or more diverse sample might provide more insights or reveal significant differences that the current sample could not.

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