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## Measuring the Impact of Celebrity Endorser Attributes on Private University Students' Behavioral Intention

Rabab Chouhoud  
Arab Academy for Science and Technology and Maritime Transport  
Alexandria, Egypt

M. Farid El Sahn  
University of Bahrain

Email: eiman\_medhat@yahoo.com

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### Abstract

This paper seeks to measure the impact of celebrity endorser attributes on Egyptian private university students' attitude towards advertisements and whether this attitude will lead to their behavioral intention. Quantitative research techniques were used to test consumer responses to celebrity endorsement of donating money and purchasing of products. Celebrity credibility has the most significant relationship with attitude towards the advertisement, in both the for-profit or not-for-profit sector. Celebrity attractiveness has the least contribution to attitude towards the ad, and is insignificant in the not-for-profit context. Finally, attitude towards the advertisement has a weak relationship with purchase and donation intention. This paper builds on previous work in the field, but proposes a comprehensive model for measuring the effect of celebrity attributes in both for-profit and not-for profit sectors in parallel among private university students in Egypt. The sampling decisions and the use of only an actor as a celebrity are the main limitations of the study. Different sampling methods, a different sample group, and using different types of celebrities are recommended for future studies. This paper gives a comprehensive view of celebrity attribute effects, combining attributes mentioned in previous literature and using the most popular attributes to develop the conceptual framework. This framework is applied to two contexts – not-for-profit and for-profit sectors - indicating a comparison of celebrity advertising in the two sectors. This paper also addresses a less explored region – Egypt, making it useful for future reference when addressing the topic in Egypt and the Middle East.

**Keywords** Celebrity endorsement, celebrity attributes, behavioral intention, non-for-profit marketing, Egypt.

**Paper type:** Research Paper

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## **1. Introduction**

Celebrities are often an integral part of the marketing process. They are used in advertisements to endorse everything from products to political figures to charities. Celebrity endorsers can be generally defined 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” (McCracken, 1989, p.310; Silvera & Austad, 2004). They project cultural meanings and when associated with products they transfer these meanings to the endorsed products. In turn, these meanings are passed to the targeted audience (McCracken, 1989).

Celebrity personalities can be found in print, radio, and approximately 20 percent of all television commercials in the United States. This phenomenon is even more prevalent in certain foreign markets with the number of celebrity advertisements being twice as high (Boyd & Shank, 2004; Creswell, 2008). The reason behind the use of celebrity endorsers in advertising is mainly to increase message persuasiveness (Knott & James, 2004). For this reason, companies all over the globe spend millions on advertisements that use celebrities. For example, in Ramadan 2010, Etisalat, Egypt’s third largest mobile network provider launched a campaign featuring some of Egypt’s most popular celebrities. This campaign cost a total of 48 million Egyptian Pounds (EGP) (Wahish, 2010). This technique continues to be a method of choice in advertisements in Egypt as each year since this campaign was run and there has been at least one advertisement during the year that used big time celebrities to endorse their products in Egypt. Most recently, during Ramadan 2015, a campaign by Vodafone Egypt has featured a number of Egyptian celebrities with their family members (many of which are celebrities as well) to endorse an offer that allows Vodafone users to send prepaid phone credit to family members of their choice. Thus, given the expenses of celebrity endorsements and its international prominence as a marketing practice, the effectiveness of this form of advertising is worth exploring.

Previous research has made little distinction between celebrity endorsements of for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. The not-for-profit sector currently poses an important and fast-growing part of the advertising and promotional field. With the worldwide spread of a more consumer-oriented culture, not-for-profit organizations are increasingly forced to use marketing

techniques that will grab the attention of target audiences. Consequently, celebrities and not-for-profit organizations find reasons to work together (Van den Bulck, Panis, Van Aelst, & Hardy, 2010). Despite remarkable growth, the impact of celebrity endorsers and their involvement in the not-for-profit context has not been fully explored. Moreover there is little research exploring the impact of celebrity endorsements in for-profit versus not-for-profit sectors in parallel.

Therefore, the main purpose of this research is to measure the impact of the attributes of celebrities featured in advertisements in terms of attitude towards the ad and whether this attitude will further lead to behavioral intention, particularly purchase intention and intention to donate money. The research starts with a review of the literature and development of hypotheses, followed by the methodology related to sampling decisions, measurement and data collection method. Discussion is formed regarding the findings and recommendations for future research are also put forth.

## **2. Literature review and hypotheses development**

Whether it is on behalf of a for-profit or not-for-profit entity, any advertiser will pay whatever it takes to create an advertisement that will lead to desirable results such as purchasing a product or donating time or money and marketer use celebrities to encourage such behaviors. Hence, to make sure that these large sums of money are being spent in the right place, it is important for companies to choose the celebrity that possesses the correct attributes in order to achieve optimal results. Though researchers have explored a number of celebrity attributes, the following attributes are the most prominent in celebrity endorsement research. Thus, it has been decided to use these measures to test the influence of celebrity attributes as portrayed in advertisements on the behavioral intention of a certain demographic in Egypt.

### **2.1 Celebrity Credibility**

Celebrities are generally viewed by consumers as credible sources of information about the products or organizations they endorse (Goldsmith, Lafferty, & Newell, 2000). This happens as a result of a process called internalization. The internalization process of social influence occurs when an individual accepts influence because the behavior is similar to his/her value

system (Daneshvary & Schwer, 2000). An individual accepts the influence, since it provides a solution to a problem, as long as the source of influence is considered credible (Daneshvary & Schwer, 2000; Ranjbarian, Shekarchizade, & Momeni, 2010). In the internalization process, the receiver learns and accepts the idea of the credible source, since he/she believes that information from this source represents an accurate position on the issue. Therefore, if an endorser who is known to be credible endorses a brand, consumers will be more likely to have a desirable idea about the advertisement and will consider taking an action (Ranjbarian et al., 2010).

**H1:** Perceived celebrity credibility is positively related to attitude towards the ad.

Academics and practitioners in the field of marketing and advertising continue to be interested in the concept of credibility (Goldsmith et al., 2000). Credibility refers to the extent to which the source is perceived as possessing expertise relevant to the communication topic and can be trusted to give an objective opinion on the subject (Ohanian, 1991). Thus, Goldsmith et al. (2000) state source expertise and trustworthiness are important in conceptualizing credibility and have been shown to be influential in persuading and in influencing attitudes.

## **2.2 Celebrity Expertise**

An endorser's expertise is 'the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions' (Erdogan, 1999, p.298; Spry, Pappu, & Bettina Cornwell, 2011). Consumers believe that one of the desirable qualities of a celebrity endorse is that celebrity needs to possess expertise, in that they should have a certain level of knowledge about the brand they are endorsing (Ilicic & Webster, 2015). The target audience's response to recommendations made by celebrity endorsers seem to vary directly with the celebrity's perceived level of expertise and the target's level of agreement with those recommendations (Amos, Holmes, & Strutton, 2008). In turn, not only can a celebrity that is perceived to be an expert be more persuasive celebrity expertise may be directly related to behavioral intention (Ohanian, 1991).

**H2:** Perceived celebrity expertise is positively related to attitude towards the ad.

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## **2.3 Celebrity Trustworthiness**

Celebrity trustworthiness is defined as ‘the consumer's confidence in the source for providing information in an objective and honest manner’ (Ohanian, 1991, p.47; Spry et al., 2011). Much of the literature supports the positive effect of trustworthiness on effectiveness (Chao, Wührer, & Werani, 2005). Previous research has also indicated that when the communicator was perceived to be highly trustworthy, an opinionated message was more effective than non-opinionated communication in producing attitude change. This leads to the belief that celebrity trustworthiness is vital for the success of a celebrity as an endorser. The source credibility model presumes that the success of a message is based on the perceived trustworthiness of the endorser together with perceived expertise (Hollensen & Schimmelpfennig, 2013) which leads to the deduction of the following hypotheses:

**H3:** Perceived celebrity trustworthiness is positively related to attitude towards the ad.

## **2.4 Celebrity Attractiveness**

Source attractiveness in communication literature mainly refers to ‘the source’s perceived social value’ (Solomon, Dahl, White, Zaichkowsky, & Polegato, 2014). Hence, when celebrities are used as sources of information, they are chosen by advertisers according to their attractiveness in order for advertisers to benefit from both their celebrity status and physical appeal (Erdogan, Baker, & Tagg, 2001). Most celebrity literature has particularly stressed on the importance of the familiarity and the likability of celebrities when endorsing products (Amos et al., 2008).

Celebrity familiarity and likability have been linked to each other and are considered to represent a celebrity’s popularity among a certain target audience (Solomon et al., 2014). A market research agency called Marketing Evaluations Inc. based in the United States calculates the familiarity and likability of approximately 1500 well-known figures among consumers as a measurement to assist advertisers in selecting appropriate celebrity endorsers. This measurement is referred to as the “Q-rating” where Q stands for quality. Marketing Evaluations, Inc. then sells the data to various entities including television and movie studios, public relations professionals,

and advertisers (Erdogan, 1999; Knott & James, 2004).

However, some criticize Q-ratings because they are based on a simple ratio of likability to familiarity, which can lead to misleading results. For example, if a celebrity may be highly liked, but by only a small group of people who know him/her, the celebrity's Q-rating will be high. This would not be a valuable indication of whether the celebrity is suitable or not. This is because in mass advertising an unknown celebrity is not likely to be effective as an endorser, no matter how well liked they are among those who know them (Knott & James, 2004).

Nevertheless, by manipulating levels of celebrity attractiveness, scholars have proven that celebrity attractiveness has an impact on consumer beliefs (Silvera & Austad, 2004). Accordingly, this study aims to measure celebrity attractiveness' impact on attitude towards the ad. Therefore, the following hypothesis can be drawn:

**H4:** Perceived celebrity attractiveness is positively related to attitude towards the ad.

## **2.5 Celebrity Familiarity**

Familiarity is defined as 'knowledge of the source through exposure' ((Erdogan et al., 2001) in the celebrity endorsement context. Premeaux (2009) suggests that familiar celebrity endorsers are effective at attracting, and keeping, the attention of consumers. Furthermore, Miciak and Shanklin (1994), p.55 state that familiarity of a celebrity does not necessarily mean that he/she 'must be familiar to a wide audience', but only familiar to the target audience.

Furthermore, celebrity endorsers are considered to be "human brands". Human brands are defined as 'any well-known persona who is the subject of marketing communications efforts' (Thomson, 2006, p.104). Moreover, branding literature has shown that familiarity with a brand results in favorable attitudes since, when compared to unfamiliar brands, preexisting attitudes are already formed (Doyle, Pentecost, & Funk, 2014). Thus, in some sense, being familiar with the celebrity is believed to act as a shortcut the consumer uses when evaluating an advertisement in which the endorser is featured. Considering this, the following hypothesis is formulated:

**H5:** Perceived celebrity familiarity is positively related to attitude towards the ad.

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## **2.6 Celebrity Likability**

Celebrity literature refers to likability as ‘affection for the source as a result of the source’s physical appearance and behavior’ (Erdogan et al., 2001, p.39). Most studies regard attractiveness as attractive physical appearance, which does not necessarily reflect a consumer’s personal liking of the celebrity. In other words, just because a consumer finds a celebrity good-looking, this does not necessarily mean that the consumer favors the celebrity. A respondent in a qualitative study conducted to measure consumer responses to celebrity endorsement indicated this when she elaborated her feelings towards a certain celebrity by saying, “She looks good, but I don’t like her” (Tantisenepong, Gorton, & White, 2012, p.66). Nevertheless, source model research seems to concentrate mainly on attributes like physical attractiveness and credibility aspects like expertise and trustworthiness, while it is clear that if consumer liking of the celebrity is absent these celebrity attributes may be insignificant. Accordingly, this study treats celebrity familiarity and likability in isolation from physical attractiveness, but the attractiveness of the celebrity’s personality. Moreover, previous studies have stressed the significance of celebrity likability such is its effect on advertising effectiveness (Fleck, Korchia, & Le Roy, 2012; Tantisenepong et al., 2012).

**H6:** Perceived celebrity likability is positively related to attitude towards the ad.

## **2.7 Celebrity Congruence**

Marketers use celebrity endorsers to heighten the appeal of their advertisements. Though the idea of using celebrities is appealing, research has emphasized the importance of establishing an appropriate connection between the celebrity and the product endorsed or between the celebrity's personality and some aspect of the product (Chan, Leung Ng, & Luk, 2013; Ohanian, 1991). The “Match-up Hypothesis” suggests that celebrity endorsers are more effective when there is a “fit” between the endorser and the endorsed product. This fit occurs when there is a correct match between the celebrity's image and the endorsed product or brand (Till & Busler, 2000).

The absence of connection between celebrity endorsers and products may lead consumers to believe that the celebrity is simply endorsing the product or service for personal financial

benefit. Also, the use of non-connected celebrities can result in the audience remembering the celebrity, and not the product or service. This predicament is referred to as the ‘vampire effect’ in which celebrities tend to suck the life out of a product when a relationship between the message endorsed and the celebrity is not established (Byrne, Whitehead, & Breen, 2003). This, of course, is something advertisers should seek to avoid, as the purpose of resorting to celebrity endorsement is for the promoted product to gain attention and not the celebrity.

Similar effects can be observed in the not-for-profit context as well. In a study Wheeler (2009) conducted, an equivalent of the product-match up theory was applied which Wheeler called “celebrity connection”. Wheeler (2009) elaborates in his research that a celebrity who shows proper fit with a non-profit organization is viewed by donors as a more credible source of information than another celebrity who seems irrelevant to the non-profit organization. Another finding was that source credibility generated by the connected celebrity directly affects intention to volunteer time and donate money. Therefore, a fit between the celebrity and the product being endorsed is crucial in order for the advertiser to attain desirable results whether it is a physical good, service, or a not-for-profit organization.

Researchers have come to the general conclusion that the higher the perceived congruence between the celebrity and the message conveyed, the greater the positive response will be towards advertising in terms of attitude (Erdogan & Baker, 2000; Kahle & Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1989, 1990; Lynch & Schuler, 1994; Till & Busler, 2000). For this reason H4 is devised:

**H3:** Perceived celebrity congruence is positively related to attitude towards the ad.

## **2.8 Attitude towards the Advertisement and Behavioral Intention**

Marketers are especially interested in consumers' attitudes towards advertisements. Attitudes generally have three basic components: affect (feelings), cognition (belief), and behavior. When referring to attitude towards the advertisement, the researcher is referring to the predisposition to respond in a good or bad manner to a certain advertisement during the occurrence of an exposure (Solomon et al., 2014). In other words, attitude towards the advertisement is whether the consumer thinks favorably of an advertisement or not.



Studies have been conducted to test the impact of using celebrities on consumer attitude towards the ad. Furthermore, previous studies regarding attitude towards the ad focus on its mediating role in advertiser's effects on behavioral intentions (Aziz, Ghani, & Niazi, 2013; Goldsmith et al., 2000). Past research has addressed these factors through various perspectives. However, these factors may change in different contexts. This leads to the belief that established views regarding celebrity endorsement may differ across different countries as what causes an advertisement to be impressive changes noticeably cross-culturally (Kalliny, Beydoun, Saran, & Gentry, 2009). For this reason, one may support (or contradict) previously conducted studies by measuring these factors in Egypt.

Behavioral intention is defined as the inclination of a person to engage in a certain behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). What factors cause behavioral intention and what behavioral intention leads to are addressed in the "The Theory of Reasoned Action". The Theory of Reasoned Action and its extension, the Theory of Planned Behavior posits that the direct cause of a person's behavior is that person's behavioral intentions. Since intentions to behave in a particular manner are the result of careful thought concerning the implications and consequences of such action, then that action is reasoned (McMahon & Byrne, 2008). These theories have been extensively researched and empirically supported in social science. They have stressed the importance of behavioral intention and its applications seem to be endless. In this study, behavioral intention is addressed in terms of purchase intention and donation intention.

Many studies have highlighted the importance of advertising in determining behavioral intentions. Shimp (1981) says that it is important to produce favorable attitudes towards advertisements in the minds of customers and argues that effectiveness of an advertisement depends on creating a favorable attitude toward the advertisement, which in turn has a direct impact on customer choice behavior. Mehta (1994) describes an Advertising Response Modeling approach to measuring advertising effectiveness that shows this direct link. Therefore, based upon these arguments it is posited that there is a positive relationship between attitude towards the ad and intentions to purchase and donate. Thus the following hypotheses can be formulated:

**H7:** Attitude towards the ad is positively related to purchase intention.

**H8:** Attitude towards the ad is positively related to donation intention

### **3. Methodology**

#### *Sampling Decisions and Procedures*

Based on the theories and findings reviewed, the study measures the impact of celebrity endorsers' attributes on Egyptian private university students' behavioral intention. The Egyptian university system is mainly divided into two sectors: government-run universities, which offer virtually free education, and private universities, which offer tuition-based education. Because part of the study seeks to realize the impact of celebrity attributes on donation intention, it is important to approach university students who are generally capable of donating money. Therefore, this study focuses on private university students as they mostly come from well-off families, capable of paying hefty tuition fees for their undergraduate education and therefore may have higher tendencies to donate. The study covers two governorates in Egypt- Cairo and Alexandria as these two governorates contain the greatest number of private university students in Egypt. All information regarding Egyptian population statistics was obtained from Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics in Egypt (CAPMAS, 2012).

The university student age group was chosen in particular due to its high influence as a segment. University students are capable of making their own decisions and either possess their own purchasing power or have a strong say in how the purchasing power of their guardians is spent. Young audiences are also more exposed to media and, therefore, more familiar with celebrities. Some studies have shown that even when it comes to pressing issues, like politics, celebrities have been shown to have an impact on young audiences' views (Jackson & Darrow, 2005). For these reasons, when assessing the influence of celebrity endorsements, university students are considered a key demographic. This conforms to the majority of prior research regarding celebrity endorsement (Alnawas, 2010; Klaus & Bailey, 2008; Mohammad & Mohammad, 2011; Spry et al., 2011). Moreover, a meta-analysis study conducted by Amos et al. (2008) contends that students may represent an ideal target market for celebrity advertising as

they are influenced more by celebrities than any other sample group.

The sampling method used is convenience sampling. The reason behind choosing this type of sampling is the difficulty of access of information in Egypt due to the lack of highly reliable formal references to use for segmenting the population. Moreover, convenience sampling is the best way to get information quickly and efficiently (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). However, in order to gain a more adequate representation of the private undergraduate student population in Cairo and Alexandria, the sample size was sectioned with respect to the proportion of the number of enrolled students in each university to the number of total number of students enrolled in private universities in the area. The final sample size was 404, with 137 respondents from Alexandria and 267 from Cairo with respect to the population size of each governorate.

#### **4. Research measurements and instruments**

The formulation of research measurements and instruments contained two phases. The first phase consisted of choosing suitable celebrity advertisements to use for the study. The second phase included developing the questionnaire to measure the research variables in accordance to the chosen celebrity advertisements.

##### **4.1 Research measurements**

Two television advertisements were chosen to conduct the study. One advertisement promotes a product and the other advertisement promotes a not-for-profit hospital featuring the same local celebrity. The researcher chose these advertisements in particular according to knowledge that this Egyptian celebrity was one of the very few that had been featured in both a for-profit advertisement and a not-for-profit advertisement. The celebrity, named Ramez Galal, is a locally known comedy movie actor. However, he is especially famous for his programs that run during the holy month of Ramadan in which he plays pranks on other celebrities. The two advertisements originally ran during the Ramadan before collecting the data, Ramadan 2012. A brief description of the two advertisements is presented in Table 1.

Table1: Advertisement Descriptions

Television Advertising	Description
“Halawa” El Rashidi El Mizan (For-profit organization)	The celebrity gives witty remarks about how one may do certain things without any real logical reasoning behind it. He points out, however, that the way one carries out these actions are “sweet” anyway – just like El Rashidi El Mizan’s product, “Halawa”. (The word sweet in Arabic is very close to the name of the product being endorsed)
New Hospital Branch The 57357 Cancer Children’s Hospital (Not-for-profit organization)	The celebrity is shown playing video games and making jokes with children being treated at the hospital. He encourages donating to the hospital, as they are planning to use the funds to open a new branch, which will help ensure that all Egyptian children cancer patients find a place to be treated.

#### 4.2 Questionnaire Development

The questionnaire used for this research was developed in English as the education in private universities in Egypt is mainly in English- making it easy for students to grasp. The questionnaire contained ad-specific questions about the variables. For instance, questions measuring celebrity credibility were asked once concerning the first ad shown, the for-profit ad, and once concerning the second ad shown, the not-for-profit ad. The study will refer to the for-profit ad as “Ad 1” and the not-for-profit ad as “Ad 2” in the following parts of the text.

#### 5. Data collection method

The data collection method used is quantitative research techniques, in the form of cross-sectional, structured, close ended, self-administered questionnaires.

The researcher ran a pilot test by administering questionnaires to a sample of 30 students enrolled in the Arab Academy of Science and Technology in Alexandria. This was to ensure that the questionnaires were clear, consistent, and easily comprehended by the sample. After running reliability analyses on the scales used and having a skilled academic go over the contents of the questionnaire, all scales proved to be reliable and only minor modifications were done to the

wording of the questions.

The research approach used is personal interviews in the form of consumer intercept at private universities in Cairo and Alexandria. The researcher kindly asked if students were willing to take part in a survey. If they agreed, before answering the questionnaire, the researcher showed the two television advertisements to the participants in order to ensure that the sample were aware of the advertisements rather than depending on the sample's recall.

## **6. Findings and analysis**

In order to analyze the data obtained from the questionnaires SPSS 21.0@ (Statistical Package for Social Science) was used. Each questionnaire was coded and entered into the SPSS data file. To obtain the results and findings of the research several analysis techniques were used reliability, correlation and regression analyses.

The first technique used is reliability analysis to ensure the consistency of the measures used for each variable. According to this analysis all the scales used to measure each variable were reliable, consistent over time, and free of error. The Cronbach Alphas were all above 0.6.

The second assessment conducted was the descriptive analyses, which were run on demographics of respondents indicating the sample profile. The analyses revealed that the sample profile consisted of 51% males as opposed to about 49% females. The majority of the sample was residents of Cairo (63%), and about 37% were residents of Alexandria. This is consistent with the population densities of these cities (CAPMAS, 2012). Students in their 4<sup>th</sup> year of university (43%) represented the majority of the sample, followed by year 2 students (30%), year 3 students (15%), and finally year 1 students (12%). This is because of the apparent lack of willingness of year 1 students to participate in the survey during data collection. Additionally, the low percentage of year 3 students is the result of the small number of students enrolled in year 3 in a general sense in Egypt because of a change from the Ministry of Education that had taken place resulting in students of Egyptian education to attend an extra year of elementary school. As for the monthly household income of the sample, which refers to the total monthly income of all family members in the household, the majority was above 15000 EGP (41%). This income range

was followed by 10001-15000 EGP (24%), 7001-9000 EGP (16%), 4001-7000 EGP (12%), and 1001-4001 EGP (5%). This finding is reasonable considering many families have at least two working family members and with the high tuition fees of private universities, a generally high income is expected from private university students' households.

Correlation analyses were conducted next. This evaluation demonstrates the strength and direction of the relationship between variables, in which results were used for hypothesis testing. This was followed by the conduction of regression analyses in order to determine the relative importance of the independent variables on attitude towards the ad as well as the impact of attitude towards the ad on two dependent variables, purchase and donation intention. In addition, regression analyses were used to measure the significance of the research model as a whole.

Table 2: Correlations

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Advertisement One Correlation</b>	<b>Advertisement Two Correlation</b>
Credibility and AAD	.459** Moderate, Significant	.457** Moderate, Significant
Expertise and AAD	.353** Moderate, Significant	.412** Moderate, Significant
Trustworthiness and AAD	.434** Moderate, Significant	.402** Moderate, Significant
Attractiveness and AAD	.372** Moderate, Significant	.240** Weak, Significant
Familiarity and AAD	.228** Weak, Significant	.170** Weak, Significant
Likability and AAD	.387** Moderate, Significant	.232** Weak, Significant
Congruence and AAD	.434** Moderate, Significant	.445** Moderate, Significant
AAD and Purchase Intention	.468** Moderate, Significant	--
AAD and Donation Intention	--	.444** Moderate, Significant

Table 3: Regression Analysis- Independent Variables and Intervening Variable

	Advertisement One			Advertisement Two		
Model	R Square	Beta	Sig.	R Square	Beta	Sig.
<b>Credibility</b>	.305	.279	.000	.308	.341	.000
<b>Attractiveness</b>		.158	.001		.028	.534
<b>Congruence</b>		.272	.000		.327	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Ad

Table 4: Regression Analysis- Intervening Variable and Dependent Variables

	Advertisement One			Advertisement Two		
Model	R Square	Beta	Sig	R Square	Beta	Sig
<b>Ad</b>	.219	.468	.000	.197	.444	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

b. Dependent Variable: Donation Intention

The main findings of the study indicate the support of all proposed hypotheses as shown by the correlation analysis. In addition, most independent variables showed a moderate variance in the intervening variable, except for attractiveness, including its components, in the case of the not-for-profit ad (Ad 2), and familiarity as a component of attractiveness in both ads. This leads to the questioning of the importance of celebrity attractiveness as a celebrity attribute. Also, attitude towards the ad showed a moderate variance in both dependent variables – purchase intention regarding Ad 1 and donation intention regarding Ad 2.

Furthermore after running the regression analysis, the contribution of celebrity attributes as a whole to attitude towards the ad was found to be the same in both cases – representing a moderate variance in the intervening variable. Individually, however, the celebrity attractiveness attribute had an insignificant contribution to attitude towards the not-for-profit ad. Finally, the role of attitude towards the ad in the variance of the dependent variables was also similar –

having a weak contribution in behavioral intention in both cases.

## **7. Discussion**

The findings of this study provide important insights that can be useful for for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. The use of celebrities in advertising can be very costly, thus it is important that practitioners use research implications to ensure the effectiveness of this form of promotion. In general, most of the projections implied in previous studies used to formulate the model applied in this research have been further supported (Goldsmith et al., 2000; Ohanian, 1991; Ranganathan & Henley, 2008). However, there are some points practitioners must pay special attention to in order to apply celebrity advertising in the most fruitful way in the Egyptian context.

Celebrity advertising and celebrity attribute effects have been a topic of research for decades (Choi, Lee, & Kim, 2005). Historically, companies have used celebrities to produce desirable results like the ones tested in this research, positive attitude towards the ad and purchase intentions. Additionally, with the increase of public interest in not-for-profit organizations, NPOs have recently turned to this form of advertising to compete for these results regarding donations. The effects of this form of advertising, however, have proven to have some difference when applied to different countries (De Mooij, 2003). For this reason it is crucial, that research done in this field be held across different international contexts. Advertisers must realize that what may seem effective in the West, could prove to have very different results in other regions like the Middle East. Thus, they must tailor celebrity-advertising efforts to Middle Eastern tastes, in this case the Egyptian consumer.

The results of the study were very similar when it came to the contribution of celebrity attributes to attitude towards the ad. Celebrity credibility showed the highest impact, followed by celebrity congruence, and celebrity attractiveness. Therefore, it is important for advertisers to choose celebrities who are perceived as credible sources of information. However, interestingly the amount of perceived credibility a celebrity may possess varies according to the context of the advertisement. Hence, advertisers should deal with perceived celebrity credibility ad-specifically.



This is closely related to the finding of the notable contribution of perceived celebrity congruence. Practitioners should be aware of how suitable the celebrity is for the subject addressed in the advertisement. Finally, though this attribute contributed the least to attitude towards the ad, the results of the research indicate that practitioners should choose celebrities who possess qualities that are attractive to the target audience in the for-profit context. In the not-for-profit context, however, perceived celebrity attractiveness had insignificant contribution to the variance in attitude towards the ad, meaning it is something not-for-profit advertisers do not need to pay much attention to when considering celebrity advertising. With these implications in mind, advertisers considering celebrity advertising could attain better results when seeking favorable attitudes towards their advertising campaigns.

Nevertheless, when addressing the effect of attitude towards the ad and its final contribution to behavioral intentions, the findings suggest implications that are very important to advertisers. In both instances, the contribution of attitude towards the ad was very weak whether in the case of purchasing the promoted product or donating to the promoted NPO. This implies that celebrity advertising may not be the best choice when seeking behavioral intentions. There is more to the traditional idea that a favorable or unfavorable ad will affect the intentions of consumers. It is too simple to believe that whether the target audience likes or dislikes the advertisement will lead to understanding the way the target audience will eventually behave. This is especially noticeable in the not-for-profit context. Not-for-profit advertisers may turn to other kinds of endorsers when attempting to create awareness and encourage donors. For instance, in the same Ramadan the celebrity not-for-profit advertisement was run, a simple television ad featuring a young girl diagnosed with cancer who is being treated at the hospital was shown silently crying at the beginning then smiling by the end of the ad as a representation of the hope the hospital gives to children who seem helpless. This ad touched the hearts of many viewers and may have had a more noticeable impact on potential donors, as it was an ad that was talked about highly amongst Egyptians especially at the time. Thus, for the NPO used in this study, which is known for using multiple celebrities in their campaigns, celebrity endorsement may not be the most beneficial advertising method.

In addition, the study suggests the effect of television advertising in promotion. It is

apparent that television advertising has lost its momentum among the modern Egyptian university student. Other promotional tools like online advertising and viral marketing campaigns are what get young Egyptians more involved. Companies like Red Bull and Coco Cola have successfully implemented unconventional promotional tools by having on-campus events to encourage this segment's interaction. This approach is one that could be used by for-profit and not-for-profit organizations alike. It is important that advertisers have more of an Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) approach to their campaigns rather than relying solely on television advertising in order to enhance the quality of communication with target audiences. It is worth mentioning however, that this approach will lead to more desirable results among target audiences as long as the IMC campaign proves to be consistent and clear in the message it is sending. If the use of celebrities is chosen, for instance, the celebrity should be involved in all the promotional tools used by the organization.

## **8. Limitations and directions for future research**

Every study has limitations and this study is no exception to this rule. However, this does not make the findings any less significant. Moreover, the gaps existent in this study allow room for further research regarding this topic in Egypt.

The study used a non-probability convenience sampling technique with an undergraduate student sample, which makes it difficult to generalize results. Also, the study was conducted on only private university students in two geographical areas in Egypt, Cairo and Alexandria. Furthermore, only one celebrity promoting one type of product and one type of charity was used in the study, which provides a narrow perspective of the effect of celebrity attributes on behavioral intentions.

This study adds to the very diverse findings existent regarding celebrity source effects. Though there have been certain conclusions made about the link between celebrity attributes and behavioral intentions, it is vital to proceed to measure the effects in a variety of ways to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of this approach.

Given the narrow segment used in this study, studies may apply the research measures

across a wider range- both private and public university students. However, in this case studies may focus on donating time rather than just donating money- the main reason why private university students were used in this research. This will aid in gaining a more comprehensive understanding of behavioral intentions of university students regarding celebrity endorsement students given the variety of backgrounds Egyptian university students come from. By including public university students it will be reasonable to conduct the study across other regions in the country including other urban areas as well as rural ones. This will make way for a thorough analysis of the effect of celebrity endorsement and how it may vary across geographic segments given the various subcultures present in Egypt. Moreover, a wider age prospect may be used to test the effectiveness of celebrity attributes. Advertisers usually use celebrities to attract younger audiences, however, could the use of celebrities be an effective way to encourage behavioral intentions across other demographics?

Additionally, more studies can be undertaken using different types of celebrities. Typically, celebrity endorsers include entertainers, athletes, politicians, business people, and religious figures (Hsu & McDonald, 2002). In this study an entertainer was used, however, results may differ if other types of celebrities are used in the study.

The use of a different type of celebrity may especially make a difference in the not-for-profit sector. For instance, Egyptians are known to be a generally religious nation- Muslims and Christians alike. Knowing this, advertisers of Egyptian NPOs sometimes use famous religious figures, like scholars from Al-Azhar and Coptic Priests. Studies have proven that religiosity is a factor that is related to donation intention (Ranganathan & Henley, 2008). People who are characterized with religiosity consider donating as a part of their religious duty. Accordingly, NPOs can use this feeling to their benefit by creating more awareness for their cause, possibly through the use figures that will seem credible to this type of audience. Thus, measuring the impact of using known religious figures as endorsers in not-for-profit advertising is an area worth exploring.

Finally, replications of this research can be done in other countries in the Middle East, as the use of celebrities is popular in this region. This can be done to gain an understanding of how

different cultures within the same region react to this form of advertising.

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