
THE CONGRUENCE EFFECT BETWEEN CELEBRITY AND THE ENDORSED HEALTH PRODUCT IN ADVERTISING

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Mayiladuthurai Taluk, Tamilnadu.**Abstract**

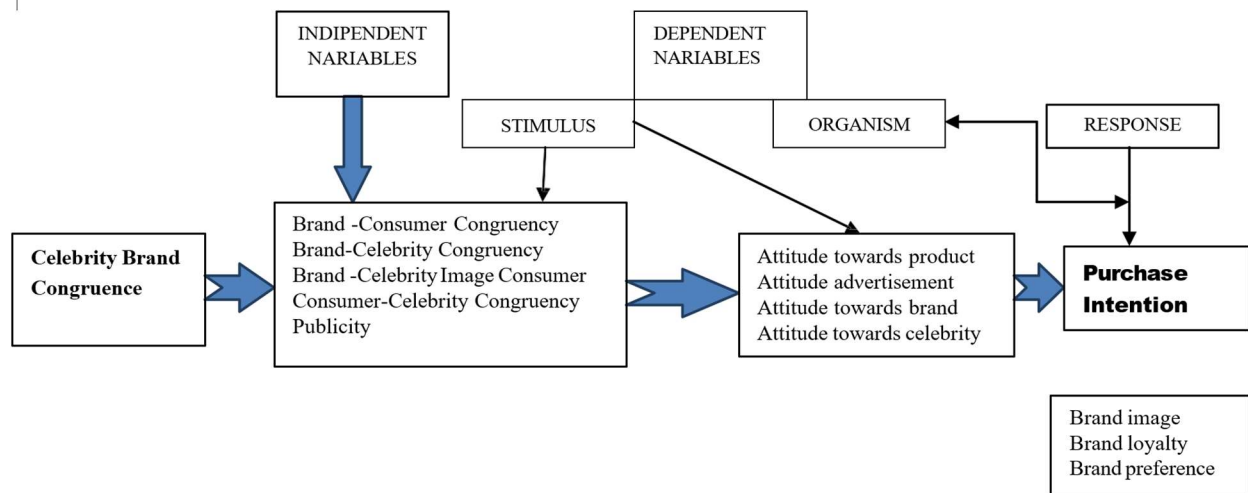
This research aims to study the congruence between a celebrity and a healthy beverages and its impact on the endorser credibility, the receptor's attitudes (attitude towards advertising and attitude towards the product) as well as his purchasing intentions. This concept of celebrity congruence was tested with four types of product (Alcoholic drinks, Non-alcoholic drinks, Sleep drinks, and hot drinks). An experiment was carried out with 60 individuals selected by quota. The empirical results have shown that more the celebrity is congruent with the endorsed product; he is perceived as more credible and generates more favorable attitudes and buying intentions among the receptors. Choosing the right celebrity with the right product type is a marketing decision indispensable to the success of the advertising campaign.

Keywords: Congruence, Credibility, Famous Endorsers, Attitudes, Purchasing Intention.**1. Introduction**

All advertisers want to take advantage of the advertising effectiveness of famous endorsers. In parallel, with this major interest given to famous endorsers in advertising endorsed strategies, there is a growing developed of a research current that has focused on the credibility and attractiveness of celebrity; the congruence between the celebrity image and the product image (Friedman and Friedman, 1979, Kamins, 1990 and Kamins and Gupta, 1994), the endorsed cultural foundations (Mehulkumar, 2005, Farrel and al., 2000 and Till and Shimp, 1998) and the celebrity choice (Erdogan and Backer, 2000 and Miciak and Shanklin, 1994). This major interest of advertising and marketing researchers regarding this enthusiasm for endorsed by celebrities continues to increase in advertising practices and perceived by Lehu (1993) as a fashion phenomenon that can never endure. This is explained by the potential benefits and financial benefits generated by celebrities. In this context, that our research is based on the fact that celebrities effectiveness results from the fact that they are able to influence in an explicit or implicit way the viewers behavior to choice certain endorsed products (Atkin and Block, 1984; Kamins, 1989). Through this research, we want to demonstrate the congruence essential role when the endorser characteristics "the celebrity attractiveness" are congruent with the product characteristics "product related to physical health" and its impact on the celebrity credibility, and

the receiver’s attitudes and buying intentions. So, our research aim is to demonstrate: "What is the congruence effect between an attractive celebrity endorser and a health product and its impact on the endorser credibility, receiver’s attitudes (attitude towards advertising and attitude towards the product) and the intentions to purchase?"

Therefore, three main objectives define our research: the first objective is to study the congruence between the endorser attributes and the health beverages. The second objective is to dismantle the celebrity congruence impact and the endorsed product on the celebrity endorser’s credibility, the receiver’s attitudes (attitudes towards the product and attitude towards advertising) and his intentions to purchase. And, the third objective is to emphasize that the celebrities persuasive effectiveness is, closely, linked to the choice of the endorsed product that generates more favorable attitudes and purchasing behaviors, as well as the success and effectiveness of advertising strategy of some advertisers.



Fig; 1 Framework for Celebrity Brand Congruence

2. Research Methodology

Here it is based on the literature to choose the appropriate celebrity as well as the proper product. To make a first selection of products and endorsers, here it is presented a list of 9 products to 60 students to evaluate according to the perceived degree risk and involved. Thus, a list of 6 celebrities was evaluated according to the attractiveness degree, knowledge and approval perceived among 60 students.

2.1 Product Selection

Based on the literature, here it is choose 9 products:

The product choice was based on the degree of perceived risk and the implication given to each product type. First, here it is evaluated the selected products according to perceived risk

(financial, performance, psychological, physical and sociological). Here it is choose Friedman and Friedman's (1979) 7 points differential semantic scale which it is retro-translated and adapted. To do so, a group of 60 students (Girls and Boys) was supposed to rank these 9 products. In order to, assess the involved and the subjects interest degree in each of these products, here it is choose the Biswas, Biswas and Das's scale.

This scale includes 2 items, the respondents evaluate on a 7 points differential semantic scale their degree of interest granted for each product. These evaluated products were ranked according to their average score of perceived risk and involved degree. This score is calculated from the average obtained by each product out of the total of 60 individuals. Here it is selected 4 products for the final experiment:

- Alcoholics beverages has been classified as a product with financial risk and high performance and more appropriate with an expert endorser.
- Non Alcoholics has been classified as a high psychological and social risk product with a celebrity endorser.
- Hot Drinks with a low score for perceived risks and low involved.
- Sleep Drinks with a low score for perceived risks and low involved.

2.2 Celebrity Selection

A list of 6 Indian celebrities (4 girls and 2 boys) was given to a group of 60 students (Girls and Boys). The subjects were supposed to evaluate each celebrity on a 7 point differential semantic scale for the following four attributes as shown in the following table: knowledge / approval / attractiveness / confidence (Friedman and Friedman, 1979). The celebrities assessed were ranked according to their average score the cited attributes. This score is calculated from the average obtained by each celebrity out of a 60 individuals in total. Here it is retained for final experiment, the celebrity having high average scores for the 4 attributes. So, Allah Rakha Rahman(Indian Musician) was chosen as a celebrity endorser for our final experiment.

Following these two pre-tests, here it is decided to work on the following 4 type of products:

- A Alcoholic Drinks as a product with financial and high performance risk as well as a certain level of high involved. This product type will be more appropriate with an expert endorser.
- A Non-Alcoholic Drinks is classified as a physical attractiveness product, with a high psychological and social risk and will be more appropriate with a celebrity endorser.
- A Hot Drinks is a product representing low risks on all levels and with a low involved degree. This product will be better suited with an ordinary consumer.
- A Sleep Drinks is a product representing low risks on all levels and with a low involved degree. This product will be better suited with an ordinary consumer.
- Allah Rakha Rahman, Indian Musician was chosen as a celebrity endorser for the final experiment.

2.3 Interaction Test between the Endorser Type and the Product

A third pre-test was conducted to assess the perceived congruence level of the celebrity with the three products chosen for poster design for the final study. A sample of 60 individuals (35 girls and 25 boys) was considered to assess the celebrity congruence degree with the four selected products (Alcoholic Beverages, Non-Alcoholic Beverages, Sleep Drinks and Hot Drinks). Here it is did an analysis of Nariance. The celebrity was perceived to be strongly congruent with the Alcoholic Beverages ($M=28.39$, $s=8.18$) than with the Hot Drinks ($M=18.09$, $s=10.73$), Sleep Drinks ($M=17.55$, $s=9.25$) and the Non-Alcoholic beverages ($M=15.68$, $s=11.088$). Thus, the difference in the celebrity congruence degree with the four products is significant ($Sig=0.003$).

2.4 Poster Design

Here it is used a professional graphic designer to design the 4 advertising posters for our research. In the 4 posters, the same celebrity was present with each product apart: celebrity / Non-Alcoholic, celebrity / Alcoholic Beverages, Celebrity/Sleep Drinks and celebrity / Hot Drinks.

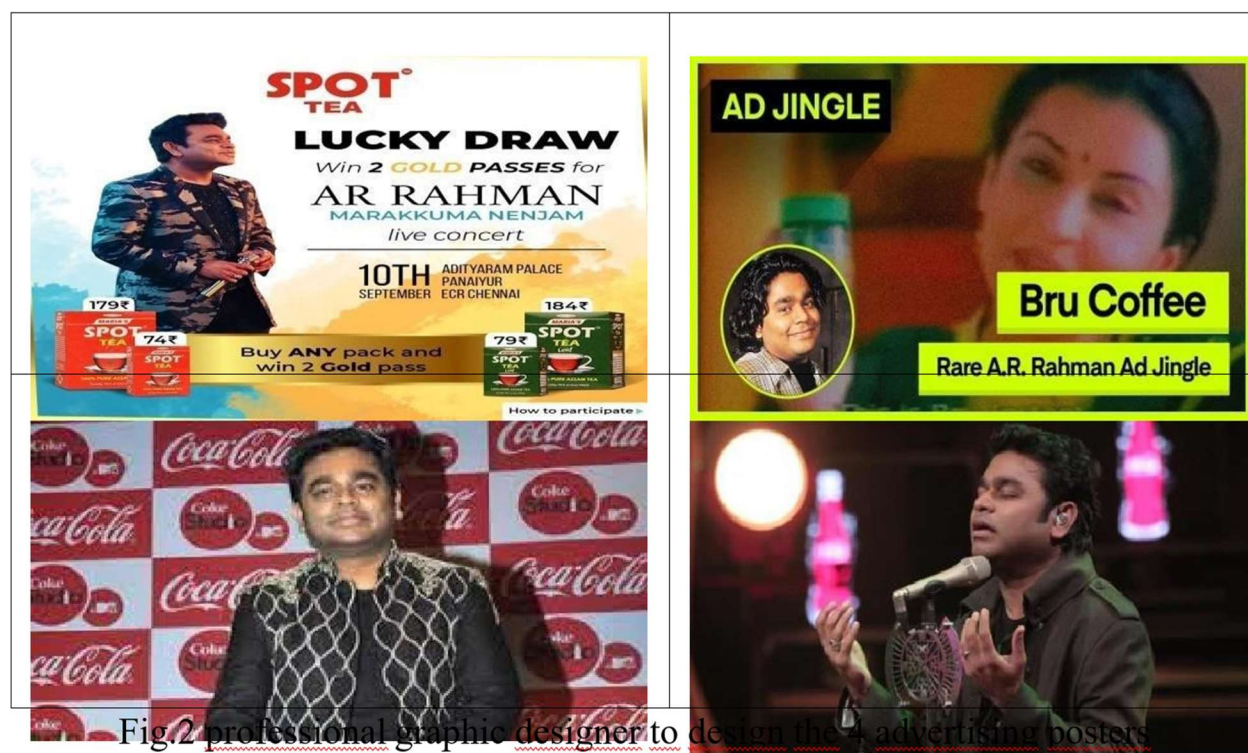


Fig.2 professional graphic designer to design the 4 advertising posters

These posters have the same design: the endorser photo is on the left side of the poster (with a text higher on the poster right) and the product or brand name is fictitious so as not to bias receiver's responses.

2.5. The Sample Selection

Our sample consisted of 60 individuals chosen for convenience, but here it is followed the quota method. Here it is selected three descriptive criteria (quotas) for our study: sex, age and socio-professional category. It is a reasoned choice survey.

2.6. The Experimental Method

Each respondent is exposed to each celebrity poster, separately, so that it can compare the celebrity congruence degree with the product and mark its attitudes and intentions to purchase and fills out three questionnaires. Each questionnaire is self-administered and lasts 15 minutes.

3. Empirical Results

Final results of Interaction between celebrity and product in our final experiment, the subjects evaluated the perceived congruence between the celebrity endorser associated with the three different product types (a Non-Alcoholic, a Alcoholic drinks, Sleep Drinks and a Hot Drinks). As a result, an Analysis of Variance was conducted. In terms of congruence, the results of ANOVA reveal that the celebrity "Allah Rakha Rahman" is perceived more congruent with the Non-Alcoholic ($M=36.13$, $s=8.50$, $n=114$) than with the Hot Drinks ($M=21.11$, $s=9.59$, $n=114$) or the Alcoholic drinks ($M=10.54$, $s=8.35$, $n=114$). The difference in the congruence degree of Allah Rakha Rahman with these three products is significant ($\text{Sig}=0.000 < 0.05$, $F=242.084$). These results show that celebrity advertising is more congruent with Non-Alcoholic as a product enhancing physical health than with cookie and or Alcoholic drinks. These results are confirmed by the following Fig:1

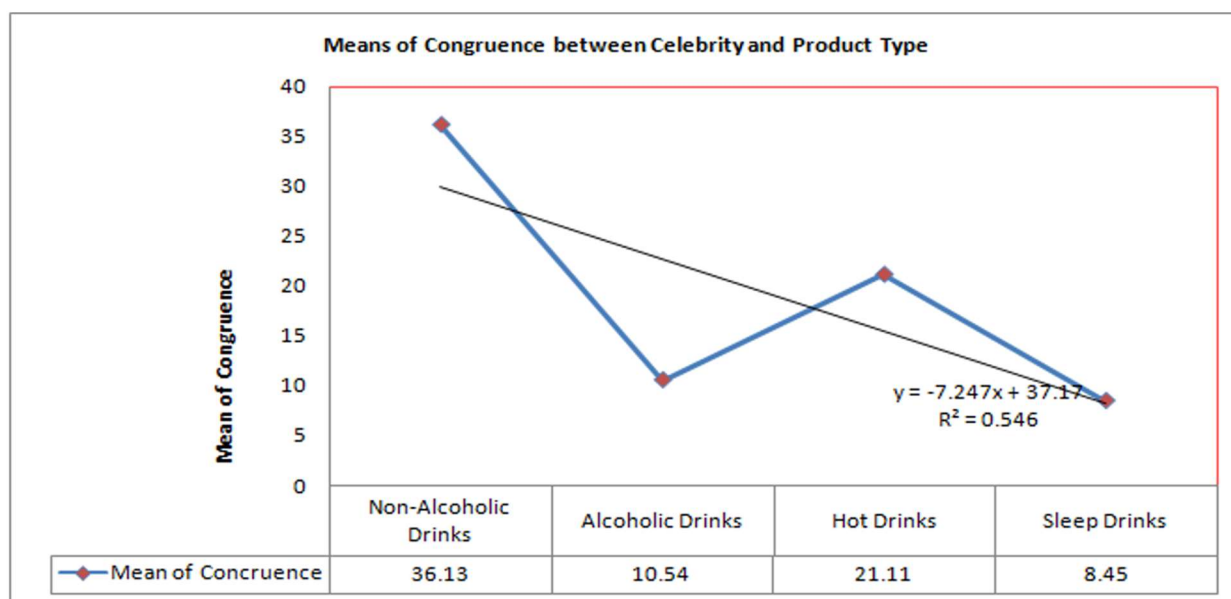


Fig 3: Means of Congruence between Celebrity and Product Type

Thus, the expert as an endorser is perceived to be more congruent with the Alcoholic drinks ($M=39.70$, $s=6.11$, $n=114$) than with the Non-Alcoholic ($M=26.44$, $s=8.44$, $n=114$), Hot Drinks ($M=12.13$, $s=10.20$, $n=114$). The difference in the expert congruence degree with these four products is significant ($\text{Sig}=0.000 < 0.05$, $F=303.06$). The expert is more congruent with a technological product "Alcoholic drinks" than with a healthy product "a Non-Alcoholic" and or a product with low risk "Hot Drinks". These results are shown by the following Fig:1

Moreover, the ordinary consumer is perceived to be more congruent with "Hot Drinks" ($M=36.42$, $s=7.19$, $n=114$) than with the Non-Alcoholic ($M=24.08$, $s=9.87$, $n=114$) and "Alcoholic drinks" ($M=8.35$, $s=4.96$, $n=114$). The difference in the congruence degree of this endorser with these three products is significant ($\text{Sig}=0.000 < 0.05$, $F=384.874$). These observations are shown in Fig 3.

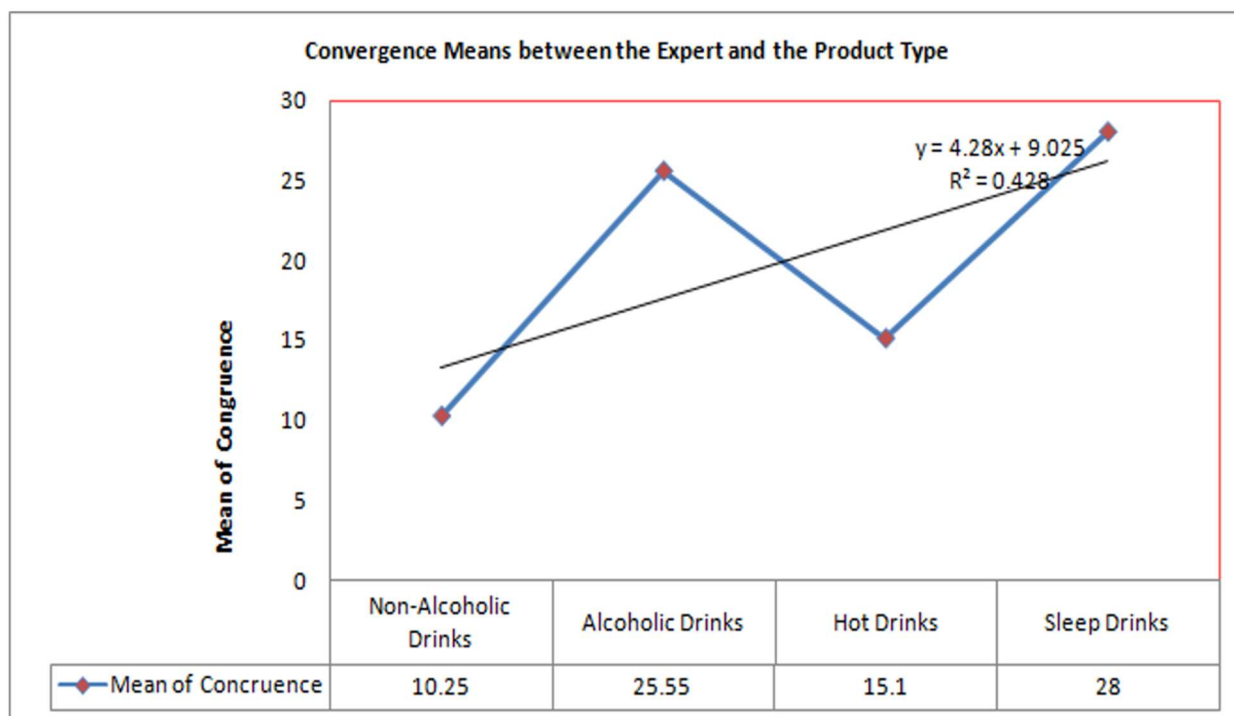


Fig. 4 Convergence Means between the Expert and the Product Type

Among our research objectives is to test empirically that the congruence between the characteristics of the endorser (attractiveness) and the characteristics of the product (health beverages: Non-Alcoholic) generates attitudes, purchasing intentions and endorser credibility favorable to the receptors. Indeed, here it is want to show empirically what product type is appropriate with a celebrity endorser and generates favorable purchasing behavior?

In order to answer all these questions, here it is use an Analysis of Nariance (ANONA) since the dependent variables are quantitative and the independent variables (product type) are qualitative. In a second part, here it is use a simple linear regression to validate certain hypotheses since they are purely quantitative variables.

4. Hypothesis Results

Analysis of ANONA Results and Interpretation

- Hypothesis 1: The congruence between an attractive celebrity endorser and health beverages has a significant positive effect on attitude towards advertising.

Table 1: Attractiveness Evaluation degree by endorser type

Dependant Variable : Attractiveness					
Endorser Type	N	Means	Average Difference	F	Sig.
Celebrity	60	25.42	3.9	49.12	0.000
Expert	60	22.55	3.22		
Ordinary Consumer	60	15.00	3.65		

The difference in the attractiveness of the four endorsers types is significant (Sig = 0.000 < 0.05, F=45.82). Comparison of attractiveness averages shows that celebrity is more attractive

(M=19.45, s=3.9, n=340) than the expert (M=18.85, s=3.22, n=340) M=18.43, s=3.65, n=340). These results are confirmed by the Fig below:

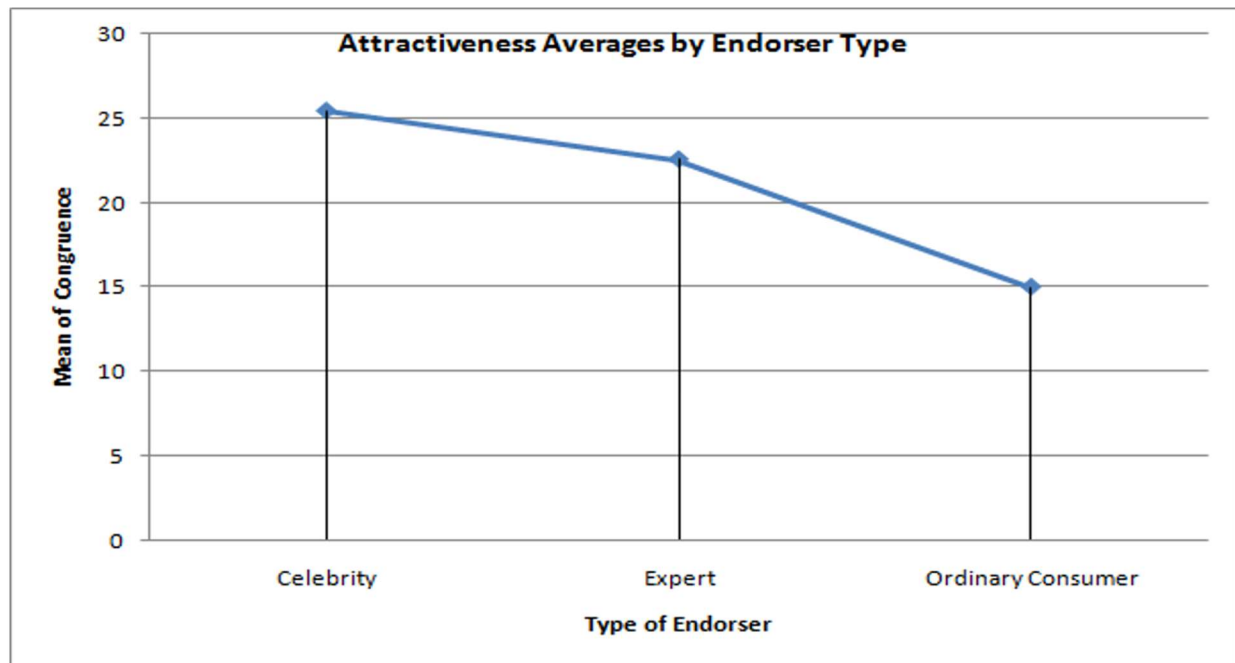


Fig 5: Attractiveness Averages by Endorser Type

By observing diagram 2, here it is observe that celebrity is perceived more attractive with a healthy product "Non-Alcoholic" (M=19.49, s=3.7, n=114) than with an ordinary product "Hot Drinks" (M=19.49, S=3.7, n=113). This contradicts the literature. Allah Rakha Rahman is perceived to be less congruent with the Alcoholic drinks (M=19.37, s=3.7, n=113).

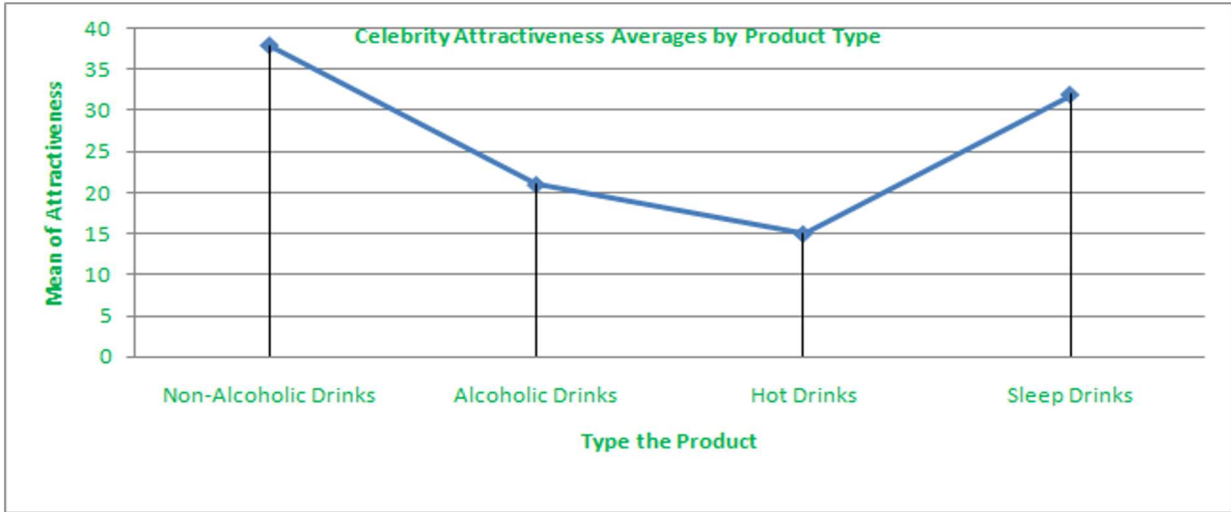


Fig. 6: Celebrity Attractiveness Averages by Product Type

Table 2: Congruence Effect between Celebrity and Non-Alcoholic on Attitude towards Advertising

Dependent : Attitude towards Advertising	N	Averages	Sum of Averages	F	Sig.
Celebrity/Non- Alcoholic	60	25.85	2855.45	46.24	0.000
Celebrity/ Alcoholic	60	19.55			
Celebrity/Hot Drinks	60	12.10			
Celebrity/Sleep Drinks	60	8.12			

The ANONA results show that the relationship between the endorser congruence (celebrity / Non-Alcoholic) and the attitude towards advertising is significant (Sig.=0.000 <0.05, F=40.86). H2 is Confirmed.

Thus, the analysis of Fig. 3 shows that more the celebrity endorser is congruent with the endorsed product (healthy beverages), he generates more favorable attitudes towards advertising than when he endorses a technological product and an ordinary product.

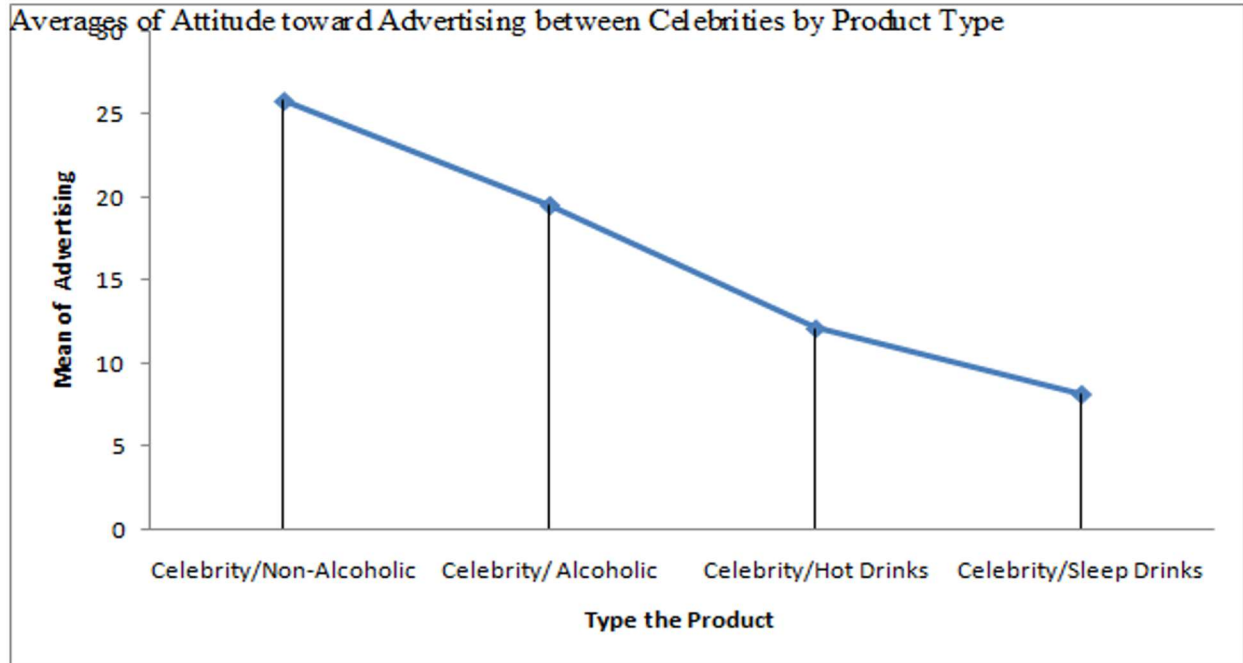


Fig. 7: Averages of Attitude toward Advertising between Celebrities by Product Type

Hypothesis 3: The congruence between an attractiveness celebrity endorser and a healthy beverages has a significant positive effect on attitude towards the product.

Table 3: Congruence Effect between Celebrity and Non-Alcoholic on Attitude towards the Product

Dependant variable : Intention to purchase	N	Averages	Sum of Averages	F	Sig.
Celebrity/Non-Alcoholic	60	24.50	1270.24	635.12	0.000
Celebrity/Alcoholic	60	22.10			
Celebrity/Hot Drinks	60	18.25			
Celebrity/Sleep Drinks	60	12.54			

The ANONA results show a significant positive effect (Sig=0.000, <0.05, F=10.42) between congruence (celebrity / Non-Alcoholic) and attitude towards the product. H3 is confirmed. Here it is find that celebrity generates more favorable attitudes towards the product when he endorses a healthy beverages than a technological and or ordinary product. These are confirmed by the following diagram:

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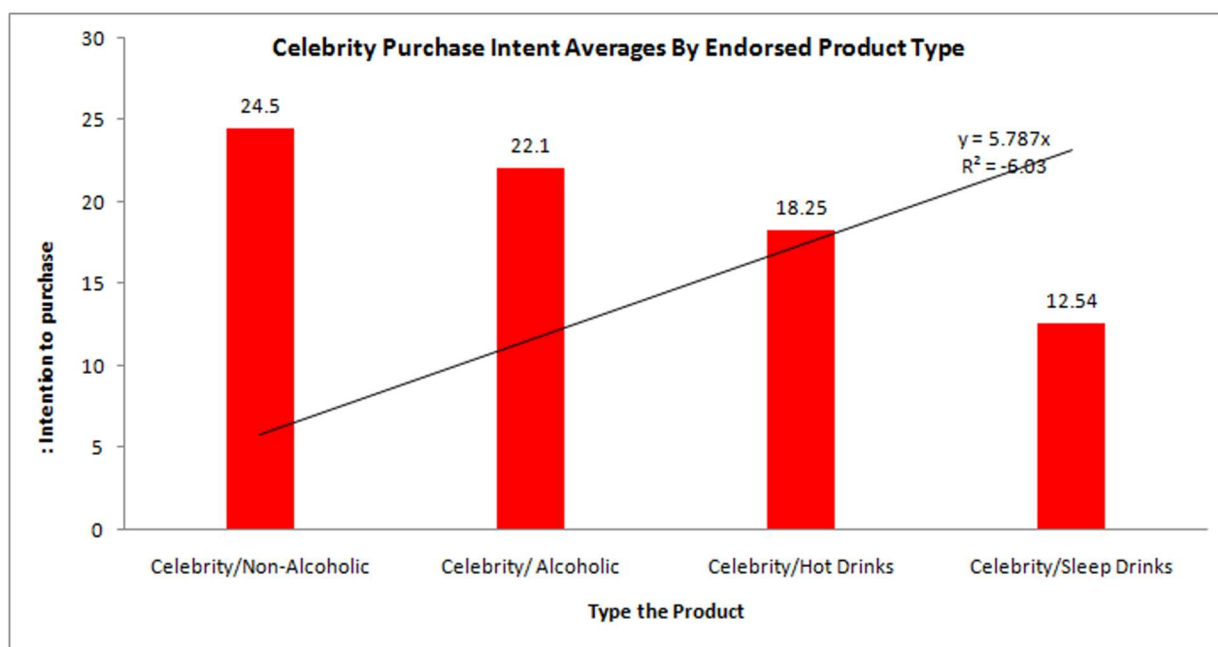


Fig. 8: Averages of the Attitude towards the Product of Celebrity According to the Product Type

Hypothesis 4: The congruence between an attractive celebrity endorser and a healthy beverages has a significant positive effect on the intention to purchase.

The results show a significant relationship (Sig=0.000, <0.05, F=17.85) between the congruence (celebrity / Non-Alcoholic) and the purchase intention. H4 is confirmed. Here it is find that more the celebrity is congruent with the endorsed product; here generates more favorable buying intentions. These findings are confirmed by the following Figure.

Analysis and interpretation of Simple Linear Regression results

Hypothesis 1: The congruence between an attractive celebrity endorser and a healthy beverages has a significant positive effect on the endorser credibility.

Table 5: Credibility Congruence Effect

Model	Unstandardize d coefficient		Standardized Co-Efficient	t	Sig.	F	R ²
	B	Standar d Error	Beta				
Constant	38.65	0.654	0.987	61.50	0.000	865.254	0.512
Congruent	0.925	0.028		40.25	0.000		

The table results show that the relationship between congruence and credibility is significant (Sig=0.000, <0.005) and positive ($t=39.89 > 1.96$, $F=1591.56$). $R^2=0.61$, which means that congruence accounts for 61% of the perceived credibility endorser. H1 is confirmed.

Hypothesis 7.1: The endorser credibility has a positive significant effect on attitudes toward advertising.

The simple linear regression results show that the relationship between credibility and attitude towards advertising is significant (Sig=0.000, <0.05) and positive ($t=26.64$, > 1.96 , $F=709.965$). $R^2=0.4212$, Which means t the endorser credibility accounts for 41.10% of the attitude towards advertising. H7.1 is confirmed.

Hypothesis 7.2: The endorser credibility has a significant positive effect on attitude towards the product.

From our empirical results, we can say that celebrity is more attractive than non-celebrity endorsers (expert and ordinary consumer). He is perceived to be more congruent when he is associated with a healthy beverages "Non-Alcoholic" than a technological "Alcoholic drinks" product or an ordinary product "Hot Drinks" and generates more favorable credibility, attitudes and purchasing intentions (H1, H2, H3 and H4 are confirmed). Thus, celebrity endorsers are perceived as attractive and charming people. Because of this, they are perceived as more persuasive when associated with products related to physical health. They subsequently generate favorable attitudes and buying intentions. This confirms the results of Backer and Churchill (1977), Kahle and Homer (1986), Kamins (1990), and Till and Busler (2000).

The longer the endorser is perceived as credible, the more likely he will produce favorable attitudes towards the endorser, the product as well as favorable purchasing intentions (H7.1, H7.2, H7.3 are confirmed) since it is perceived more persuasive. Thus, credibility has a significant positive effect on the attitude towards the product and the intention to purchase. From the above, it is emphasize the importance of credibility notion in advertising strategies, since it has a positive impact on the advertising appreciation, the product and can also influence receiver's intention to purchase. This converges with the research of Ohanian (1991), O'Mahony, Meenaghan (1998), Sternal, Philips and Dholokia (1978), and Goldsmith et al (2001). According to our research, H5 assumes that the attitude towards advertising has a significant positive influence on attitude towards the product. More the receiver appreciates the advertiseed in question, more he will have the opportunity to take more interest in the promoted product and subsequently to pay more attention to it. These results converge with Kamins and Gupta (1994), Frieden (1984), Kahle and Homer (1985), and Till and Busler (1998).

H6 assumes that the attitude towards the product has a significant positive effect on the purchase intention. Also, we can say that more the receiver appreciates advertising, more he will give attention and interest to advertising. Thereafter, he may form a more favorable attitude towards the product and the intention to buy or test the product in question (H6 is confirmed). Our empirical

findings are consistent with previous work by Friedboys and Friedboys (1979), Kahle and Homer (1985), Smith, Sieboys and Fisher (2008), and Irene Roozen (2008).

Conclusion

Here it is conclude that the congruence between the endorser characteristics (endorser attractiveness) and the endorsed product characteristics (healthy beverages) is a research topic of vital importance in the advertising strategies success.). So, more the endorser is congruent with the product he endorses, more he will generate more favorable attitudes in terms of advertising, product and buying intentions. Stimulate the intention to buy the promoted product is the first goal of any business through a given advertised. Therefore, selecting appropriate and credible endorsers in advertising is a managerial decision for the advertising campaign success, the induction of favorable attitudes and buying intentions.

Our research shows that the congruence notion in advertising has a significant importance since it influences the receptor's attitude formation process. In fact, taking this concept into account in the managerial world can guarantee the campaigns success of certain advertising at considerable cost.

Choosing the right celebrity with the right product type is a strategic reflection for the company that questions its success and notoriety. Thus, we focused our reflection on the credibility notion that is essential to meditate the congruence effect and the advertising persuasion process. More the endorser is congruent with the endorsed product, he is perceived more credible. This notion is closely linked with the congruence notion. This can determine the success of certain advertising strategies.

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