

# The Relative Effectiveness of Celebrity Endorsement for Print Advertisement

Irene Roozen<sup>1</sup> & Christel Claeys<sup>2</sup>

## ABSTRACT

The paper reports an experiment that investigates the effect of celebrity endorsers with good or bad fit, an unknown endorser, and compares this to an endorser free control condition. The relative effectiveness of celebrity endorsement is investigated on the basis of Spears and Singh (2004) and the meaning-transfer-model of McCracken (1989). In a pre-test study the fit between products and different celebrities was investigated. On the basis of these results different combinations of advertisements, high and low involvement products and 'high' fit score and 'low' fit score for celebrity were compared with the combinations without an endorser, and with an unknown (no celebrity) person. The experiment shows that celebrity endorsement is not always effective. This result was also found for the advertisements with the endorsement of celebrities who were found to match best with the products at hand. The results of this experiment therefore suggest that the considerable amounts invested in celebrity endorsement deserve serious consideration.

## JEL CODES

M31, M32

## KEYWORDS

Celebrity endorsement, Print advertisement, meaning-transfer-model

## 1. **Celebrity and Non-Celebrity Endorsement in Advertising: A Review of the Literature**

For more than fifty years the advertising industry has been using celebrity endorsement, Marilyn Monroe and Marlène Dietrich are famous examples (Iddiols, 2002). Research has shown that the use of celebrities in advertisements can have a positive influence on the credibility, message recall, memory and likeability of the advertisements and finally on purchase intentions (Menon, 2001; Pornpitakpan, 2003; Pringle and Binet, 2005; Roy, 2006). Today – no doubt inspired by the declining effectiveness of the different marketing communications (Blondé and Roozen, 2006) – the advertis-

ing industry is willing to pay the increasing rewards the celebrities are asking (the costs of the spot with Nicole Kidman for Chanel V amount to 7.5 million Euro; David Beckham for Adidas \$160 million; Gillette \$68 million and Pepsi \$25.5 million; Tiger Woods for Nike's golf advertisements \$18 million).

On the other hand, companies have limited control over the celebrity's persona which can also result in high risk and 'no gain' situations (e.g. the 'scandals' surrounding celebrities like Michael Jackson, Kate Moss, Britney Spears, Paris Hilton). Needless to argue that it is well worth to investigate the relative effectiveness of using celebrity endorsers compared to using non-celebrity spokespersons.

In the literature, two general models are often used to analyse celebrity endorsement: the source credibility model and the source attractiveness model. According to the source credibility model, credibility is modelled by expertise and trustworthiness (Hovland et al. (1953)). The attractiveness model contends that the effectiveness of a message depends on the source's 'familiarity', 'likeability', 'similarity' and 'attractiveness' to the respondent. Attractiveness has become an important factor through the increasing use of celebrities as endorsers for products, services and/or social causes (Patzer, 1983; Ohanion, 1990). Most television and print ads use physically attractive people. Already in the late seventies, research has shown that psychically attractive communicators are more successful in changing beliefs than unattractive communicators (Chaiken, 1979).

While analysing the influence of celebrity endorsement on the brands and or products shown in the advertisements, it is important to take into account the involvement effect. Kahle and Homer (1985) have shown that it is sensitive to variation and that the physical attractiveness of a celebrity affects the attitude change process. A physically attractive model exudes sensuality, can increase arousal which can affect information processing. For example, in the case of a stunningly attractive person who claims to use a beauty product the product in question may be assumed to be an element of the person's beauty formula. Information concerning attractiveness is conveyed more quickly than other information, even if it is not highly probative.

The categorisation of products into low and high involvement is based on the risk perceptions consumers have when purchasing products. Risk perceptions can be classified into four categories (Friedman and Friedman, 1979): psychological risk, financial risk, social risk, operational risk (e.g. the risk of buying a product that does not operate the way it should do). Celebrity endorsers have been found to be more effective in promoting products with high psychological and/or social risk than products with high financial and performance risks (Mehulkumar, 2005).

Research has shown that not only the classification of the product, source credibility and source attractiveness can influence the effectiveness of the celebrity endorser but also the match between the brand and or product with the celebrity. There should be congruence between the celebrity and the product in terms of characteristics such as image, expertise (Till and Busler, 1998, 2000) or attractiveness (Baker and Churchill,

1977; Kahle and Homer, 1985). The celebrity-product match model states that attractive endorsers are more effective when promoting products used to enhance one's attractiveness (Kamins, 1990) and that the impact will be not significant in the case of a product that is unrelated to 'attractiveness'. Kahle and Homer (1985) found that in the case of attractiveness related products the use of physically attractive celebrities increased message recall, product attributes, and purchase intention. An attractive celebrity will be also more effective for low involvement products (products low in financial and performance risk), than for high involvement products (Baker and Churchill, 1977). For technical products the expertise factor of the celebrity is a significantly more important factor (Till and Busler, 1998, 2000). However, congruency between the celebrity and the product in terms of characteristics such as image, expertise (Till and Busler, 1998, 2000) or attractiveness (Baker and Churchill, 1977) plays an important role for the effectiveness of the advertisement (Kahle and Homer, 1985) and an optimal match between the celebrity endorser and the product is therefore crucial.

Alternatively to using celebrity endorsers, companies can create endorsers themselves using not so well known individuals. This gives them great control over the process since they have developed the public characters of the endorsers for specific brands and/or products. The association between the created spokesperson and the brand is also stronger since it is unique which can be a great advantage compared to celebrity endorsers. Tom et al. (1992) found that created endorsers were more effective in creating a link to the product than celebrity endorsers. Mehta (1994) has found that there were no significant differences for the concepts 'attitudes towards the advertisement', 'attitude towards the brand' and 'intentions to purchase endorsed brands' between celebrity and non-celebrity endorsement advertisements. When confronted with non-celebrity endorsers, consumers were significantly more focused on the brand and its features, whereas with celebrity endorsers the subjects were significantly more concentrated on the celebrity in the advertisement. However, Atkin and Block (1983) and Petty et al. (1983) have found the opposite results of Mehta (1994).

## II. Research Design

On the basis of the review of the literature the conclusion can be drawn that celebrity endorsement can be effective, but only under well defined conditions. Celebrity endorsers are, however, typically expensive and there is a risk that the celebrity and or his/her unexpected behaviour overshadows the product. The review of the literature has also shown that the match between the brand and or product and the celebrity has to be optimal. All of this brings us to suggest that the use of anonymous models or even no model is still an option that should be considered seriously.

This study tries to elaborate on this suggestion by analyzing the effects of celebrity versus non-celebrity endorsers versus no endorser for a number of female interna-

tional celebrities with respect to three product categories (high -, low involvement and beauty product).

The pre-test phase attempts to analyse the congruency between the celebrity endorser and the product's image. In the experiment, the different congruencies between the product and celebrity endorsers are further investigated. The 'best' match and the 'worst' match between a celebrity and a product (based on the pre test results) are compared with an advertisement of the same product with an anonymous model ('non-celebrity endorsement') and with an advertisement of the product without a model (no picture – or 'non endorsement'), respectively. The main objective is to analyse the relative effectiveness of celebrity endorsement compared to 'non-celebrity' endorsement and 'non-endorsement'.

This objective is analysed on the basis of the following research questions: (1) What is the influence of the endorser on the attitude towards the brand? (2) What is the influence of the celebrity endorser on the attitude towards the advertisement? and (3) What is the influence of the endorser on the purchase intentions of the brand?

### III. Research Results

The choice of a celebrity by a company's marketing department is normally based on a sophisticated marketing plan. The marketing/advertising firm would determine the symbolic properties sought for the product which in fact are based on the symbolic meanings sought by the consumer. By taking into account budget and availability constraints the celebrity will be chosen who best represents the appropriate symbolic properties. In this research the celebrities under investigation were chosen from a list of persons with similar demographic characteristics. Only young female celebrities were taken into account to reduce variation on the grounds of age and gender. The age of the celebrity females was between 20 and 35 years old (to fit with the reference group of the sample used in this research). On the basis of research on the Internet, 13 female celebrities in the same pose on the picture were selected for three products with fictitious names: candy bar (low involvement), laptop (high involvement) and a beauty product. The different occupations which are represented are athletes, actresses, singers and models. 2 out of 13 female celebrities have a dark skin colour.

The constructs: source trustworthiness (credibility), source attractiveness and source expertise were measured by the reliable and valid scales of Ohanian (1990). To evaluate the match between the celebrity and the product, the subjects were asked to score 4 additional statements about the relationship between the celebrity and the product on a 7 point Likert scale of Macinnes and Park (1991) and later also used by Sengupta et al. (1997). Finally, the subject was asked to score the celebrity on a 10 point score taking personality, reputation and her appearance into account without linking this to a product.

**Table 1.** Average Score of the Celebrities for their Attractiveness, Trustworthiness, Expertise on 7 Points and their General Score on 10 Points.

	Attractive- ness (on 7 points)	Trustwor- thiness (on 7 points)	Expertise (on 7 points)			Avg. score On 10
			Beauty products	Candy bar	lap top	
Kim Gevaert	5,13	6,32	3,25	2,56	3,05	8.04
Maria Sharapova	5,33	3,80	5,29	2,96	2,62	6.67
Jennifer Aniston	5,96	5,36	6,16	3,41	2,88	7.89
Kate Moss	5,06	3,40	5,96	2,24	2,13	7.13
Gwen Stefani	4,77	4,94	5,13	<b>3,91</b>	2,95	6.73
Naomi Campbell	<b>5,27</b>	3,31	<b>6,42</b>	1,95	1,89	6.40
Scarlett Johanson	6,18	5,39	5,67	3,45	2,92	8.31
Kim Clijsters	4,28	6,54	2,58	3,59	3,12	7.63
Paris Hilton	3,89	2,85	5,39	2,67	1,44	4.88
Mariah Carey	4,17	3,72	5,74	3,28	1,81	5.96
Angelina Jolie	<b>5,87</b>	<b>5,24</b>	5,00	2,83	<b>3,56</b>	7.96
Beyoncé	5,82	5,16	6,38	3,12	2,40	7.88
Sarah J. Parker	5,55	5,43	5,90	3,21	3,28	7.60
Total avg. score	5.17	4.84	5.23	3.04	2.66	7.21

**Table 2.** The Average Scores on the Matches between the Celebrities and Products.

Celebrity (X)	Candy bar (Y)				Lap top				Beauty product			
	1 <sup>*)</sup>	2 <sup>**)</sup>	3 <sup>***)</sup>	4 <sup>****)</sup>	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Kim Gevaert	2,04	3,00	1,96	1,93	2,59	2,67	2,37	2,44	2,70	3,11	2,93	2,85
Maria Sharapova	2,50	2,28	2,56	2,61	2,22	2,17	2,28	2,39	5,44	5,11	5,11	5,17
Jennifer Aniston	2,86	3,21	2,54	2,50	2,64	2,82	2,36	2,39	6,21	6,21	6,14	6,07
Kate Moss	1,75	2,19	1,88	1,56	1,69	1,94	2,06	1,88	5,81	5,56	5,88	5,81
Gwen Stefani	<b>3,37</b>	<b>3,81</b>	<b>3,33</b>	<b>3,33</b>	2,63	2,89	2,52	2,37	5,07	4,85	4,70	4,89
Naomi Campbell	1,77	1,77	1,96	1,85	1,62	1,92	1,85	1,88	<b>6,46</b>	<b>6,12</b>	<b>6,42</b>	<b>6,27</b>
Scarlett Johanson	2,94	3,59	3,29	2,94	2,00	2,94	2,88	2,59	5,53	5,94	5,71	5,82
Kim Clijsters	3,39	3,68	3,11	3,11	2,82	3,00	2,86	2,79	2,43	2,71	2,32	2,36
Paris Hilton	2,50	2,56	2,39	2,39	1,17	1,61	1,22	1,50	5,67	5,06	5,11	5,44
Mariah Carey	2,88	3,17	3,04	2,96	1,63	1,67	1,71	1,54	5,96	5,58	5,75	5,46
Angelina Jolie	2,40	3,00	2,48	2,24	<b>2,88</b>	<b>3,28</b>	<b>3,28</b>	<b>3,04</b>	4,72	5,00	4,88	4,88
Beyoncé	2,84	3,16	2,88	2,64	1,88	2,16	2,20	2,24	6,42	6,32	6,48	6,52
Sarah Jessica Parker	2,67	2,95	2,62	2,76	2,62	3,00	2,76	3,00	5,76	5,86	5,67	5,76
Avg. Score	2,64	2,99	2,63	2,54	2,24	2,50	2,36	2,33	5,16	5,12	5,09	5,09

(\*) If I think of X as endorser, I think almost directly of product Y; \*\*) The idea that X as endorser works for Y, is according to me an optimal fit; \*\*\*) I think that X is a relevant endorser for Y; \*\*\*\*) I think that X is a suitable endorser for Y.

The subjects for the pre test were 28 student volunteers from third bachelor at a large urban university in Brussels, Belgium. 48% of the subjects were female, the age of the subjects was between 21 and 25 (average age was 22 years). The subjects were not informed about the objective of the research. They were asked to participate in a written questionnaire – answers from respondents unfamiliar with the celebrity involved were eliminated. The written questionnaire was in total 26 pages and the average time to fill out the questionnaire was half an hour.

Most of the celebrities were recognised by the subjects, Kim Clijsters, Kim Gevaert and Jennifer Aniston were recognised by 100% of the sample, Kate Moss had with 57% the lowest score for recognition. On average, 82% of the celebrities were recognised.<sup>3</sup>

The average scores could be measured for the constructs ‘trustworthiness’, ‘attractiveness’ and ‘expertise’ because of the sufficient high scores for Cronbach’s alpha. The Cronbach’s alpha scores for source trustworthiness (credibility) is 0.978, for source attractiveness is 0.881 and for source expertise-candy bars is 0.961, source expertise-beauty products is 0.975 and source expertise-lap top computers is 0.971. Also an explorative factor analyses for the different items of the constructs separately shows that the items of the construct load on one factor with sufficient high scores on ‘total variation explained’ (72.5% and higher for the five different constructs separately).

In Table 1, the scores for the constructs ‘trustworthiness’, ‘attractiveness’ and ‘expertise’ are given. The results of Table 1 show that the celebrity Paris Hilton has the lowest score on attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise with the lap top computer, her general score on 10 points is also significant lower than the other celebrities. For beauty products the expertise score of the Belgian tennis player Kim Clijster is the lowest whereas Naomi Campell has the highest expertise score for this product. Naomi Campell has the lowest score for expertise with the candy bar, for this product the expertise score is the highest for Gwen Stefani.

Interestingly, the celebrities are considered to have the highest expertise for beauty products with much lower scores for candy bars and lap-tops.

In Table 2 the match scores of the different celebrities with the products are given. Table 2 shows that for candy bars the celebrity Gwen Stefani has for all 4 items on average the highest scores for this product. This also indicates that Gwen Stefani has the best match with the candy bar. For the celebrity Naomi Campbell the opposite result for candy bars is found. For the high involvement product, the lap top computer, Paris Hilton has the worst match whereas Angelina Jolie has the best. The results of the explorative research suggests that celebrity Naomi Campbell would be suitable for promoting a line of beauty products and the worst match is found for the Belgian tennis player Kim Clijsters. As in Table 1, the scores are on average highest for beauty products, followed by the scores for candy bars and lap-tops.

On the basis of the research results of Table 1 and Table 2 the best and the worst match between the products and the celebrities are selected and used for the experiment where the attitude towards the brand, attitude towards the advertisement and the purchase intention of the different advertisement are investigated for the different celebrity product combinations.

Questionnaire I	Questionnaire II	Questionnaire III	Questionnaire IV
Candy bar & anonymous model Beauty product & Naomi Campell (pos. fit) Lap top & Paris Hilton (neg. fit)	Candy bar & no picture Beauty product & Kim Clijsters (neg. fit) Lap top & Angeline Jolie (pos. fit)	Candy bar & Gwen Stefani (pos. fit) Beauty product & anonymous model Lap top & no picture	Candy bar & Naomi Campell (neg. fit) Beauty product & no picture Lap top & anonymous model

Figure 1. Research Design of the Advertisements Used in the Questionnaire.



Figure 2. An example of the lap top advertisements.



For the experimental research, a  $3 \times 4$  factorial design is formulated (for an overview see Figure 1). For every product category the best- and worst match between the product and the celebrity is used, and an advertisement with an anonymous model (non-celebrity endorser) and one with no model (non endorsement) is analysed. In Figure 2, an example of the 4 advertisements of the high involvement product 'the lap top' with the name 'Powertop Q12' is shown (these products are not sold in Belgium).

The first advertisement is the advertisement with the best match between the product and the celebrity. The advertisement to the right, has the worst match between the celebrity and the product. The written text used in the advertisement is the same for all the advertisements. It is clear that the position of the anonymous model on the picture is different from the position of the celebrities. The literature has shown that for technical products the expertise factor of the celebrity is a significantly more important factor than the attractiveness factor (Till and Busler, 1998, 2000; Kamins, 1990; Bower and Landreth, 2001). In Figure 2 an overview of the research design of the second research phase is given.

For all the three advertisements in the questionnaire the subjects were asked to score the following constructs: (1) Brand attitude (Ab) – a semantic differential scale of 10 items measured on 7 point (Spears and Singh, 2004); (2) Attitude towards the advertisement (Aad), a semantic differential with 9 items measuring the 'affective' components and 4 items measuring the 'cognitive' components of the attitude towards the advertisement on a 7-point scale (Spears and Singh, 2004). The different components of Aad are taken into account because of the important value of 'attractiveness' and 'expertise' within the research of celebrity endorsement. For beauty products a higher value for the affective component is expected whereas for high involvement products a higher value for the cognitive component for the best match is expected. (3) Purchase intention (PI) 4 items on a 7 point Likert scale (Jamieson and Bass, 1989 and Putrevu, 1994).

The experimental subjects were 200 student volunteers from a large urban university in Brussels Belgium who were not involved in the pre test. The subjects were not informed about the objective of the research. They were asked to participate in a pre-test of different advertisements for a foreign company who would like to launch three of their products in Belgium. In total 200 subjects – for every written questionnaire 50 – participated.

The age of the subjects was between 18 and 25 (average age 20 years, standard deviation of 10 months). 63% of the subjects were female. No significant differences for age and gender were found between the four different experimental groups.

Average scores for the constructs 'brand attitude (Ab)', 'attitude towards the advertisement (Aad)' for the affective and cognitive component, and 'purchase intention



(PI) could be determined because of the sufficiently high scores of Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach's alpha scores for 'brand attitude' is 0.899 (and higher for the other products), for purchase intention the score is 0.84 and higher and for attitude towards the advertisement affective component the score is 0.90 and higher, and for the cognitive component the attitude towards the advertisement is 0.76 and higher. Also the results of an explorative factor analyses for the different constructs separately shows that the items of the constructs load on one factor with sufficiently high scores for the total variation explained' (67.5% and higher for the four different constructs separately for the different products).

**Table 3.** Average Scores for Ab, Aad-Affective and Aad-Cognitive, and PI for the Different Advertisements Used for the Different Products.

		Candy bar	Beauty Product	Lap top
<b>Ab</b>	<b>1 Best match</b>	3.86	4.16	4.34 <sup>*2</sup>
	<b>2 Worst match</b>	3.60	4.15	3.51 <sup>*1,3,4</sup>
	<b>3 Anonymous model</b>	3.52 <sup>*4,1)</sup>	4.51	4.46 <sup>*2</sup>
	<b>4 No-model</b>	4.07 <sup>*3</sup>	4.07	4.41 <sup>*2</sup>
<b>F-value(p-value)</b>		3.00 (0.032) <sup>2)</sup>	2.36 (0.073)	7.36 (< 0.001)
<b>Aad-affective</b>	<b>1 Best match</b>	3.76	3.96	4.06
	<b>2 Worst match</b>	3.66	3.81 <sup>*3</sup>	3.48 <sup>*3,4</sup>
	<b>3 Anonymous model</b>	3.69	4.50 <sup>*2,4</sup>	4.55 <sup>*2</sup>
	<b>4 No-model</b>	3.88	3.90 <sup>*3</sup>	4.23 <sup>*2</sup>
<b>F-value (p-value)</b>		3.89 (0.761)	4.19 (0.007)	6.10 (0.001)
<b>Aad-cognitive</b>	<b>1 Best match</b>	3.48	3.71	3.79
	<b>2 Worst match</b>	3.17	3.72	3.18 <sup>*3,4</sup>
	<b>3 Anonymous model</b>	3.31	4.22	3.86 <sup>*2</sup>
	<b>4 No-model</b>	3.75	3.95	4.22 <sup>*2</sup>
<b>F-value (p-value)</b>		2.37 (0.072)	2.03 (0.111)	6.68 (< 0.001)
<b>PI</b>	<b>1 Best match</b>	3.33	3.18	3.57
	<b>2 Worst match</b>	2.57 <sup>*4</sup>	2.82 <sup>*3</sup>	2.93 <sup>*3,4</sup>
	<b>3 Anonymous model</b>	2.99	3.62	3.87 <sup>*2</sup>
	<b>4 No-model</b>	3.48 <sup>*2</sup>	3.00 <sup>*3</sup>	3.86 <sup>*2</sup>
<b>F-value (p-value)</b>		5.90 (0.001)	4.66 (0.004)	5.18 (0.002)

In Table 3 the average scores for the different advertisements for the different constructs Ab, Aad (affective- and cognitive component) and PI are given. To analyse significant differences between the different advertisements for the same brand a univariate unifactorial analysis of variances for the different constructs separately

has been carried out. In Table 3 the subscript “1” indicates that – on the basis of the Bonferroni post hoc test – advertisement 3 ‘anonymous model’ differs significantly from advertisement 4 ‘no-model’. The subscript “2)” indicates that a significant difference could be found (p-value of ANOVA test of 0.032) between the different ads for candy bars and their scores on Attitude towards the Brand. The significant differences between the advertisements are marked in Table 3.

The research results of Table 3 indicate that for high-, low involvement and beauty products the advertisements with an anonymous model have 7 out of the 12 highest average scores for the four different constructs, while the advertisements with no-model has for 5 out of the 12 the highest average score. This means that irrespective of the product, the best match between the celebrity and the product does not automatically result in a significantly higher score on one of the measured constructs. However, the overall research results do confirm that a bad match between a celebrity and a product almost automatically leads to low scores on attitude towards the brand, attitude towards the advertisement for the affective and cognitive component and purchase intention (the “worst match” has the lowest or the second lowest score on all 12 construct-product combinations).

For the low involvement product ‘candy bar’, the scores of the attitude towards the brand, the attitude towards the advertisement (for both components) and purchase intention are in all cases the highest for the advertisement with no model (no picture). The advertisement with the best match between the celebrity and the candy bar has the second highest score for all the measured constructs. This is in contrast with the results found in the review of the literature where an attractive celebrity is typically an effective endorser for low involvement products (products low in financial and performance risk).

For the beauty product the anonymous model has the highest scores for the different constructs. It should be underlined that the anonymous model used for this product had a different position than the two celebrities. Moreover, a close-up of the face of the anonymous model and part of her breast was shown whereas for the celebrities the picture shows more or less the ‘whole person’ (see Figure 2). It is possible, therefore, (also see Figure 2) that in the picture shown the anonymous model is considered to be more attractive than the best match celebrity. This is consistent with the finding that especially the affective component of the attitude towards the advertisement has a significantly higher score. This, in turn, may suggest that for beauty products very attractive ‘sexy’ anonymous models could be at least as effective as very expensive celebrities like Naomi Campbell. This result corresponds with the celebrity-product match-up model which states that attractive endorsers are more effective when promoting products used to enhance one’s attractiveness (Kamins, 1990).

For the high involvement product, the lap top, the results of Table 3 suggest that for the cognitive component of the attitude towards the advertisement, the advertisement

with no picture is most effective. Research has shown that for technical products the expertise factor of the celebrity is a significantly more important factor (Till and Busler, 1998, 2000). However, our analysis suggests that for technical products focusing only on the product without using (non-) celebrity endorsers is the most effective manner to underscore the cognitive aspects of the product. The results for purchase intentions are broadly similar for all four advertisements, except for the worst match celebrity endorser. The relatively high scores for the (non-) celebrity endorsers are surprising, the literature review suggests that attractive celebrities are more effective in endorsing an attractiveness related product or a low involvement product (products low in financial and performance risk). One possible explanation may be that lap tops in reality are a “cross-over” product, combining features of high involvement products with those of attractiveness/life-style related products. The considerable emphasis that some lap top manufacturers put in design features (e.g. Apple, iPod, ...) also points in this direction (Wikipedia, 2007).

#### IV. Discussion

The research results confirm some of the key findings reported in the literature, but also contain some significant differences with what other researchers have found. This may be due to the sample used (consisted of students with an average age of 20) and the fact that only three products of the three product categories were analysed. However, most of the literature on this subject dates to the 1990s and significant cultural changes and developments in consumer product categories have occurred since.

Bearing this in mind, however, the results suggest tentatively that the use of attractive non-celebrity endorsers could be as effective in influencing attitudes and purchase intentions as the use of celebrity endorsers across very different products. A poorly matched-up celebrity endorser, on the other hand, is in nearly all cases amongst the least effective advertisements. Another feature of the research results reported in this study is that no-endorsement advertisements (not using pictures of (non-) celebrities) may be relatively effective. Given the very high cost of using celebrity endorsers, it would be useful to extend and deepen this research.

There are various ways in which this could be undertaken:

First, a larger number of products should be analysed. Moreover, in light of the findings in this research, it would be interesting to explicitly analyse the perceived nature (e.g. low involvement) of the products since this may differ from standard categories found in the literature of the 1980s and 1990s which may not be fully relevant to today's product mix and young generations.

Secondly, it would be interesting to analyse to what extent generational and cultural differences affect the relative effectiveness of different advertisements. Extending the research to other age groups, introducing regional variation (city vs. country-side)

and covering nationals in more countries would be necessary to obtain results that can be more easily generalised. Our research results are obtained from a sample of Belgian students. These limitations obviously imply that the study can only provide some pointers to these research questions at hand relevant to Belgian students. The analysis would therefore have to be replicated in different countries and across different population segments to analyse whether the results can be generalised.

Thirdly, there are some indications in this research that the nature of the pictures used for endorsers (revealing, sexy, close-up vs. full frontal) may have a significant effect. Given that such variations can be easily obtained at low cost in designing real life advertisement campaigns, this extension could be highly relevant.

Finally, this analysis has limited itself to young female celebrity endorsers, leaving open the question whether older and/or male (non-)celebrities are perceived differently for some product categories. This again, should be addressed in follow up research.

#### NOTES

1. HUB-Hogeschool Universiteit Brussel – Associated with Katholieke Universiteit of Leuven. Email: irene.roozen@hubrussel.be. Address: Stormstraat 2, 1000 Brussels, Belgium.
2. HUB-Hogeschool Universiteit Brussel – Associated with Katholieke Universiteit of Leuven. Email: Christel Claeys@hubrussel.be. Address: Stormstraat 2, 1000 Brussels, Belgium.
3. Recognition level: Kim Gevaert, 100%; Maria Sharapova: 64%; Jennifer Aniston: 100%; Kate Moss: 57%; Gwen Stefani: 93%; Naomi Campbell: 89%; Scarlett Johanson: 61%; Kim Clijsters: 100%; Paris Hilton: 64%; Mariah Carey: 86%; Angelina Jolie: 93%; Beyoncé Knowles: 89%; Sarah Jessica Parker: 72%.

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