Endorser Credibility Effects on Yemeni Males’ Consumer’s Attitude towards Advertisement and Purchase Intention

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Abstract

The use of celebrity as spokespeople for companies continues to be a popular method of advertising. The reason behind the popularity of celebrity advertising is the advertiser’s belief that messages delivered by well-known personalities achieve a high degree of attention and recall for some consumer. The present study assesses the impact of dimension’s source credibility on Yemeni’s male consumer’s attitude towards advertisement (Aad) and purchase intentions (PI). This study will use elaboration likelihood model (ELM) as predictor to explain the relationship between variables. Also, try to put some propositions serve the aim of this study. We surveyed 400 male consumers who viewed a real advertisement for Product Company. They rated the credibility of the endorser, and attitude towards the advertisement and purchase intention. Path analysis confirmed that endorser credibility had strongest impact on (Aad). It found also, that attractiveness of endorser had strengthened impact on (Aad), then expertise, and there is strong relation between (Aad) and (PI).

Key Words: Endorser credibility, Attitude towards advertisement, Purchase intention, Consumers, Yemen
1. Introduction

Professional communicators know how difficult it is to get a message over to an audience. Speeches are often received with skepticism. Business particularly focuses on an incredulous reception. Corporate speechmaking is an indispensable tool that must be used to maintain or gain credibility in an incredulous age. Speech offers a number of features: 1. it humanizes the message. 2. It is readily adaptable to the needs and interests of the audience. 3. It permits interaction. 4. It allows a person to probe an issue in considerable depth. Speech is a credible medium (Tarver et al., 1981).

Because of the importance of communicator's role, companies try to percent themselves, their products, and services with good communicators whom able to trigger consumer's perception and change their attitude toward companies and their products and services.

The rational of paying millions of dollars to these actors and athletes, of course, is that these message sources will add credibility to the advertisement. This added credibility due to the celebrity endorsement is expected in turn to enhance consumers' attitude toward ad (Aad), (Yoon et al., 1998).

Rusciolelli (1998), mentioned few questions as scales, if companies' want to choose the right spokesperson, these directions questions as follows:

- Does the speaker have credibility and cachet?
- Does the speaker have any correlation to your company's event?
- Does the speaker have the skills to deliver a compelling keynote address?
- Is the speaker over-saturated in the market?
- Will your audience relate to the speaker?
- Is the speaker too self-serving?
- Will the speaker overshadow your event?
- Will the speaker refer to your company in the speech?
- Are speakers chosen based on your company president's personal preferences?

Many advertisements feature well-known athletes, actors, and other famous people to influence consumer perceptions and purchase intentions of the advertised brands. Communications scholars and advertisers practitioners seem to share the belief that the perceived attributes or characters of product endorsers influence the persuasive effects of the ads. As much, the use of celebrities as spokespeople for brands is a popular method of advertising (Ohanian, 1991).

However, many researchers have demonstrated that (Aad) influences consumers' attitudes towards the advertised brand (e.g., Gardner, 1985; Homer, 1990; Goldsmith et al., 2000; 2002; 2004; Lutz, & Belch, 1986; Miniard, Bhatla, & Rose, 1990; Mitchell & Olson, 1981). They have found robust evidence that brand attitude (Ab) influences purchase intention (Pi).
A particularly noteworthy model in this stream of research is what is commonly known as the dual mediation hypotheses (DMH), originally proposed by Letz (1985) and later modified by Miniard et al. (1990) and Yoon et al., (1998). The basic premise of the DMH is that consumers' PIs are influenced by both (Ab) and (Aad) (either directly or indirectly through Aad's influence on Ab). This study will focuses on the effects of dimensions of source credibility on (Aad), (Ab), and (PI).

The commonly reported influence of source credibility on the dependent variables may be different in different cultures. For example, a message source perceived as an expert might be more persuasive than a source perceived as trustworthy in certain cultures. Similarly, a trustworthy source might be more effective in other cultures in eliciting positive reactions to the advertisement and the advertised brand.

2. Print Advertising in Yemen

According to Sallam (2008) mentioned that Print advertising practice in Yemen actually started during the Ottoman Empire in 1918 in a local newspaper called Sana’a. The advertisements at that time covered only foreign products from England and Germany. Local products were rare and so were their advertisements. Some local advertisements were about house and shop rentals as well as advertisements linked to social activities. Today, the number of advertisements has increased and new and modern advertising techniques are flourishing. Yemen marketers are now using the media to sell and promote their products - i.e. from tangible to intangible products. Although print advertising is still popularly being used, studies focusing on them and their effect on consumers’ behavioural purchase processes are scarce. To date, only two local studies were found focusing on the topic of advertising on Yemeni consumers’ behaviour. However, both studies were on TV advertising. The scarcity of advertising related studies may also be due to what has been decided previously about budget limitations that firms have and on the fact that Yemeni consumers can be irrational and they do not think about the purchase they make (Sallam, 2008).

3. Conceptual Framework

Based on what above-mentioned, this framework has been developed for the study.

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

![Diagram of Theoretical Framework]
4. Literature review

According to Anderson (1970), source credibility can be conceptualized as a "weight" that can enhance the value of information in a message. There is ample research evidence to support a main effect of source credibility such that a highly credible communication source is more effective than a less credible source in causing positive attitude change and behavioral intentions (Gotlieb & Sarel, 1991; Homer & Kahle, 1990; Ward & MaGinnies, 1974; Woodside & Davenport, 1974). The effectiveness of a highly credible source, however, has been found to be moderated by some contextual factors. For example, Yoon et al., (1998), cited from McCroskey, 1969; 1970; Miller, 1966; Ward & MaGinnies, 1974) they mentioned that, the main effect of source increases when a highly credible source is identified early in the message and use of evidence can increase the influence of a low-credibility source. In addition, the effectiveness of source credibility has been found to be moderated by some receiver characteristics including the locus of control, authoritarianism, involvement, and extremity of initial attitude. For instance, Yoon et al., cited from (Bettinghaus, Miller, & Steinfatt, 1970; Haley, 1972) they mentioned that, highly authoritarian people tend to be more influenced by high-credibility source. Johnson and Scileppi (1969) suggested that individuals highly involved with the issue are relatively immune to the effect of source credibility. In other words, people with low involvement may simply accept or reject the message on the basis of source without carefully examining the arguments. Yoon et al (1998) cited from (Dholakia & Sternthal, 1977) that, they found that people with initial positive attitude towards the advocated position were more influenced by a less credible source and people with initial negative attitudes toward the advocated issue were more persuaded by a more credible source.

In addition to studying the role source credibility in the persuasion process, a considerable amount of attention has been paid to what constitutes source credibility. Yoon et al., (1998) tried to flow the dimensions of source credibility over time, they mentioned, These studies have identified expertness and trustworthiness (Hovland & Weiss, 1951); safety, qualification, and dynamism (Berlo, Lemert, & Mertz, 1969); trustworthiness and competence (Bowers & Phillips, 1967); and authoritativeness and character (McCroskey, 1966) as possible dimensions of source credibility. Although various dimensions have been proposed, most of the studies suggest that expertise and trustworthiness are two of the most important and enduring components of source credibility. In the advertising context, attractiveness has also been suggested as a component of source credibility (McCracken, 1989; Ohanian, 1990).

However, Ohanian (1990), in next table (1) summarized the dimensions of source credibility and components of measure for source credibility which were used in previous studies.
Table 1: Summary of Major Research Studies that have addressed the components of Source Credibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Dimensions measured</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applbaum and Anatol, (1972)</td>
<td>• Trustworthiness</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Expertness</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dynamism</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Objectivity</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz (1969)</td>
<td>• Safety</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Qualification</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dynamism</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowers and Phillips (1967)</td>
<td>• Trustworthiness</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Competence</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeSarbo and Harshman (1985)</td>
<td>• Expertness</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Attractiveness</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Trustworthiness</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Likability</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCroskey (1966)</td>
<td>• Authoritativeness</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Character</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Authoritativeness</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Character</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simpson and Kahler (1980-81)</td>
<td>• Believability</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dynamism</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Expertness</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sociability</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitehead (1968)</td>
<td>• Trustworthiness</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Competence</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dynamism</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Objectivity</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wynn (1987)</td>
<td>• Expertness</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dynamism</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Believability</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sociability</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to dimensions of endorser credibility, (Ohanian, 1990; 1991; Goldsmith et al., 2000; 2001; 2002) have soured that endorser credibility has three dimensions, expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. Anyway, many studies considered endorser credibility (En/C) as antecedent of attitude towards advertisement (Aad), while (Aad) considers as the main input of attitude towards brand (PI) and between them direct relationship, (e.g., Goldsmith et al., 1999; 2000; 2001; 2002), and the following sections will discuss these variables:

4.1 Endorser Credibility’s Relationship with Attitude toward Advertisement

If a consumer has a positive perception about an endorser that appears in an advertisement, this will lead him or her to form a positive (Aad).

Previous studies confirm that a credible endorser can serve as an important antecedent in the evaluations of advertisements and brands. Specifically, a credible endorser has shown to have a positive effect on the consumers’ (Aad), (Goldsmith et al., 1999; 2000; 2002;
Goldberg et al., 1990; Mitchell et al., 1981; Mackenzie, Lutz & Belch, 1986). Thus, (En/C) has a direct relationship with (Aad).

4.2 Attitude towards Advertisement and Purchase Intention

The consumer, who is effectively affected by advertising, may form a positive (Aad) that may then influence the consumer’s (PI). Previous studies found a direct relationship between (Aad) and (PI) for familiar and unfamiliar brands, (e.g., Goldsmith et al., 2000; 2002; Wahid & Ahmed, 2011; Ahmed & Wahid, 2012). This relationship appears when affective responses are evoked, especially under conditions of low involvement.

An indirect relationship between (Aad) and (PI) through (Ab) may also happen, especially when the consumer develops a positive (Aad) which leads him or her to form (Ab) and then starting to build a positive (PI), (Shimp & Gresham, 1985; Mackenzie, Lutz & Belch, 1986; Brown & Stayman, 1992; Yoon et al., 1998). The direct effect of (Aad) on (PI) is further supported by many studies conducted previously found positive effects of (Aad) on (PI) when familiar and unfamiliar brands are tested.

Phelps & Hoy (1996) in their study found out there is a significant effect of (Aad) on (PI) for both familiar and unfamiliar brands. Saliagas & William (1987), in their study, found out that (Aad) had an effect on (PI) when Product Novelty was included as a moderating variable. However, Shimp & Gresham (1985) found out that (Aad) had both the direct effect on (PI) and the indirect effect through (Ab). In addition, Homer (1990) also found out that (Aad) had an effect on (PI).

5. Hypotheses

Credible endorser can serve as an important antecedent in evaluations of advertisements and brand. Specifically, a credible endorsers has been shown to have a positive effect on consumer's attitude towards advertisement, (e.g., Goldsmith et al., 1999; 2000; 2002; Goldberg, et al., 1990; Mitchell et al., 1981; Mackenzie, Lutz, and Belch, 1986). So, endorser credibility has direct relationship with (Aad). In addition, endorser credibility has indirect relationship with (Ab) through (Aad) when consumer is interested with advertisement he/she will form positive attitude toward the advertised brand that available in the (Ad). The present study assumes direct relationship between (En/C) and (Aad) and (Ab). Thus, this study hypothesis that:

H1: Endorser credibility (En/C) has direct and positive relationship with (Aad).

Corollary hypotheses are as follows:

H1.1: attractiveness of endorser credibility has direct and positive relationship with (Aad).
H1.2: trustworthiness of endorser credibility has direct and positive relationship with (Aad).
H1.3: expertise of endorser credibility has direct and positive relationship with (Aad).
A consumer, who is effectively affected by advertising, may form positive attitude toward an
advertisement (Aad) that may then influence the consumer’s purchase intention (PI) directly. There is supposedly a direct relationship between (Aad) and (PI), (Goldsmith et al., 2000). For example, Cox and Locander (1987) found out that (Aad) is directly related to (PI) for both, familiar and unfamiliar products. Goldsmith et al., (2000) whose study on unfamiliar products also proved this relationship. The present study therefore hypothesizes that:

**H2: There is a positive and direct relationship between attitude toward advertisement (Aad) and purchase intention (PI).**

6. Methodology

6.1 Choice of Real Product Advertisement

Yemeni’s consumer who act as users of cover head product (Projeh) were considered the population for this study. However, since this will include many of them only Yemenis’ men, who wear and use Projeh product were selected as samples. To achieve the objective, an advertisement for a very popular and well known brand for a cover head product in Yemeni i.e. Projeh, was chosen to be evaluated by Yemeni’s consumers. A total of 400 questionnaires were personally distributed to selected group of Yemeni’s consumers. The questionnaires contain a full-page advertisement of the Projeh brand and also the picture of the person who endorses the brand to represent the En/C and a series of related questions pertaining to the objectives of the study.

These men were invited to a showing of an advertisement and then were asked to fill in a survey questionnaire. A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree were used to measure responses for all En/C, (Aad), (Ab) and (PI) variables in the study. To En/C, Newell and Goldsmith’s (1999) instrumentation were closely followed although there were items on which were developed specifically to suit the study’s objectives. En/C was initially proposed as three-dimensional; i.e. expertise (6 items) five adopted from (Goldsmith et al., 1999), 1 self-developed. Trustworthiness (5 items), while attractiveness (4 items). This study however enlisted 4 items to be measured for expertise dimension (3 from Newell and Goldsmith (2001), 1 self-developed) and 6 items for trustworthiness (4 from Newell and Goldsmith (2001), 2 self-developed). But the results of the factor analysis explored that 4 items of the endorser’s trustworthiness were dropped because of a cross factor, so this study just used only two dimensions of endorser credibility which are namely endorser (attractiveness and expertise). For (Aad), the study adapted Holbrook and Batra (1987) and Goldsmith et al.’s (1999; 2002) instruments. For (Ab), five items were adapted from the study of Goldsmith et al. (1999; 2002), and lastly, this study adopted the three items measure from Goldsmith et al. (1999; 2002) study for (PI).
7. Results

Of the total 400 respondents surveyed, all of them use cover head product Projeh, most of them were found to be married (78 percent). The majority of the respondents are aged over 25 years (80 %). In addition, the most of them have first degree (97 %). However, approximately 87 % of them admitted their concern about the brand of cover head that they used in their wearing.

7.1 Multiple Regression Analysis

The multiple regression analysis is the statistical technique used to analyze the relationship between a single dependent (criterion) variable and several independent (predictor) variables (Hair et al., 1998).

7.1.1 En/C – Aad relationship

The multiple regression analysis is the statistical technique used to analyze the relationship between a single dependent (criterion) variable and several independent (predictor) variables (Hair et al., 1998; 2000). In order to test the hypothesis, both dimensions of endorser credibility (i.e. attractiveness and expertise) seem to have an effect on (Aad) with a significant value of β = 0.40 (p<0.01) and β = .19 (p<0.05) sequential. These results indicate that H1 is accepted and two of its corollary hypothesis, i.e. H1.1, H1.2 are accepted and Table 1 bellow shows that.

Table 1: H1 - The effect of endorser credibility (En/C) dimensions – i.e. expertise and trustworthiness, on Aad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude toward Advertisement</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t-test</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>VIF</th>
<th>tolerance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Endorser’s Expertise</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorser’s Attractiveness</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ** p<0.01, *p<0.05

R² Adjusted R Square F Value

.39
.38
59.4**

7.2 Simple Regression Analysis

The simple regression analysis is the statistical technique used to analyze the relationship between a single dependent (criterion) variable and single independent (predictor) variables. In order to test the first hypothesis (H2), the simple regression analysis was used to find the effect of (Aad) on (PI). The results of this analysis provide answers for the hypotheses tested in present study in next table as follows.
7.2.1 (Aad)-(PI) relationship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purchase Intention</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t-test</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>VIF</th>
<th>tolerance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward Advertisement</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R Square</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F Value</td>
<td>142.9**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ** p<0.01

Results explored that (Aad) explained (.28) of the variance in (PI) ($R^2=.28$). The variable of (Aad) was found positively and significantly associated with (PI) as ($\beta=.53$, $p<0.01$), it is obvious then that hypothesis (H2) is accepted.

8. Discussion and Implications

The objective of this study as stated earlier is to investigate the (En/C) relationship with (Aad), and to explore the relationship between (Aad) and (PI). The study found that in terms of (En/C-Aad) relationship, the first component, endorser attractiveness was found to have a greater impact on (Aad), then, endorser expertise, while trustworthiness of endorser was negative effect on (Aad). This result reflects that Yemeni consumer is impacted by attractiveness of endorser more than his expertise to trigger him/her toward advertising. This result seems to contrast with previous studies’ results. For example, (Yoon, et al., 1998) as they found that attractiveness has more effect on (Aad) than other dimensions.

In terms of (Aad) - (PI) relationship, the present study found positive and significant effect of (Aad) on (PI), and this agrees with Goldsmith et al., (2000; 2002) and reflect the important role of consumer’s (Aad) to form his/her (PI).

9. Conclusions

This study has undertaken an in-depth review of endorser credibility (En/C) and its effect on (Aad), also the effect of (Aad) on (PI). The findings provide an understanding of Yemeni’s consumer behavior and thus gave practitioners some ideas in understanding how to use the endorser credibility factor to enhance the consumers’ attitude towards advertisement (Aad) and their purchase intention (PI). It is hoped that the study can provide insights for further research in this area and help policy makers of companies to employ the implementation of the role of source credibility as it is found to be the main driver of consumer behavior in marketing. However, the limitations of the study need to be noted. For instance, using a sample size of only 400 Taiz male consumers means that the results cannot be generalized for all Yemeni consumers. And that collecting data at only one point in time knowing that source credibility is based on long-term marketing strategies that needs time to be built and to be nurtured points to the more appropriately used longitudinal approach study in order to cope with the long-time nature of the marketing strategies investigated in this study.
References


