



CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT AND CUSTOMER PATRONAGE OF SKIN CARE BRANDS IN PORT HARCOURT, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between celebrity endorsement and customer patronage of skin care brands in Port Harcourt. Cross-sectional research design was used for the study and the study population is the 36 registered skin care brands in Port Harcourt. A total number of one hundred and forty-four (144) copies of the questionnaire were sent to the management staff of these brands in order to elicit responses from them. In analyzing the data, descriptive and inferential statistics were employed and Spearman rank order correlation coefficient with the assistance of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 21 were used to measure the existence of relationship between celebrity endorsement and customer patronage. The results from the study established that the dimensions of the independent variables significantly associates with the measures of customer patronage of Skin care brands in Port Harcourt. The study further concludes that celebrity endorsement positively relates with customer patronage of skin care brands in Port Harcourt. It was recommended that Companies should monitor the behavior, conduct and public image of the endorser continuously to minimize any potential negative publicity.

Keywords: Celebrity Endorsement, Celebrity Trustworthiness, Celebrity Attractiveness, Customer Patronage, Customer Satisfaction, Repeat Purchase

INTRODUCTION

There is a high level competition presently in the consumer goods market and this is actually overwhelming in both new and existing products. To achieve sales and make profit in a competitive market as this, will require the organization to effectively seek to implement the various marketing promotional tools in order to strategically attract, persuade customers and in turn achieve their marketing objectives. Advertising is one of the promotional tools used by firms to create awareness about their products and services (Opuni et al., 2014). But due to the crowded advertisement contents and tons of voices and images that customers are exposed to on the media such as television, radio, newspapers, billboards and websites, organizations are now adapting into the new approach of promoting their products through the use of celebrity endorsement.

There is the tendency that people will always associate themselves with celebrities and most especially within the entertainment industry, which in turn make buyers to quickly associate themselves with product endorsed by celebrities. Celebrities are usually people who receive public recognition by a large group of people. Friedman and Friedman (2011), states that the term



“celebrity” is an individual who is known and recognized by the public, such as actors, sports athlete entertainers, among others. Celebrity endorsement becomes impactful when customer can get a clue of what the endorser genuinely likes about the product. However, celebrities can play a vital role when it comes to promoting brands through their endorsement (Bhasin, 2018).

Celebrity endorsement is a strategy that is used for consumer exposure where an endorser informs, educates, and persuades consumer to patronize a firm’s products and services. Every organization in business expects to successfully competitive favorably in market place. Lots of alternatives and competing products are begging to be heard and noticed in the market. Celebrity endorsement plays a major role in influencing consumer behavior and patronage, it has become a thing of concern as many organizations use celebrities to promote their products and still not do well in terms of sales growth.

A good number of skin care brands, despite their quality products, and quality services towards their customers’ needs and wants, paying attention to customer complaints and handling the complaints effectively, display civility and professionalism when serving the customers, they still find it difficult to achieve a reasonable patronage from customers and high profitability level. Due to this challenge in achieving their marketing objectives, firms tend to consider the use of other marketing strategies to achieve their marketing performance; hence, celebrity endorsement becomes crucial in influencing customer decisions and preferences.

Firms also enjoy a high level of popularity among other brands when they use celebrity endorsers to advertise a product (Deshwal, 2015). Thus, organizations invest heavily in convincing celebrities to endorse their products/brands. Firms often use this type of marketing strategy to communicate their new product attributes to potentials and retaining actual customers.

Involving a celebrity in an advertisement have proven to be powerful promotional strategy that helps firms to achieve patronage and finally leading to high sales volume (Laffety & Golsmith, 2010). Dean and Biswas (2013), noted that celebrity endorsement can bring about consumer awareness, advertisement rating, positive product evaluations and firm’s profit returns (Erdogan et al., 2013; Oyeniyi, 2014). Studies have also shown that celebrity endorsement increases the multiplier effect of how the product performs, product credibility, likeability of the products by consumers, memory of the advertisement and high level of customer patronage (Erdogan, 2010; Ericsson & Hakansson, 2009; Oyeniyi, 2014).

To the best of the researcher’s knowledge, most of these studies above were not carried out in the skin care brand firms. It is against this backdrop that

the researchers seeks to carry out this study on the relationship between celebrity endorsement and customer patronage of Skin care brand firms in Port Harcourt. Hence, the aim of the study is to examine the relationship between celebrity endorsement and customer patronage of organic skin care brand firms in Port Harcourt.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Source Effect Theory

In study of Apejoye (2013) it was seen that some features of a source (celebrity) can significantly affect the attitudes and reactions of consumers towards a firm's product. The source effect theory is divided into two categories which are: Source credibility and Source attractiveness. The Source credibility model is described as the acceptance and favorable response of consumers towards a given product will largely depend on the level of expertise, trustworthiness and knowledge the celebrity has. In a process where the celebrity is more knowledge and displays high level of expertise about the firm's product or service, then there's a possibility that the firm's sales maximization can be achieved (Ohanian, 2014). The source attractiveness model, states that the acceptance and response to a product by a consumer is based on the consumer's familiarity, likeability and similarity towards the celebrity. McCracken (2013), gave some inputs on the concept of familiarity, likeability and similarity. "Familiarity refers to the knowledge and information a consumer has about the celebrity through his availability and exposure in the media; likeability is the love and likeness that celebrity enjoys from a consumer due to the celebrity's physical appearance or behavior; while, similarity are those features and characters that the celebrity and the consumers shares that makes them behave same way. In otherwise, the physical attractiveness of celebrities may likely bring greater social response towards a firm's products (Apejoye, 2013).

Conceptual Review

Concept of Celebrity Endorsement

A Celebrity is a person, who has a remarkable reputation and commands some level of public attention and influence in a daily media space. A celebrity can also be a person that is famous and has prominence in a particular field, and he or she is popularly known by the general public. Celebrity endorsement is the use of celebrities to sell or increase sales volume of a firm's product. Presently, firms in Nigeria are seriously leveraging the entertainment industry, to order to employ the services of celebrities (such as music artists, actors/actresses and sportsmen to promote and project their goods and services in a better light (Osae, 2014).



Currently, the fledging Brand Ambassadors market is popularly growing and may likely be the fastest growing market in the nearest future. The use of celebrity brand ambassador was not commonly used by firms in Nigeria, until recently when it has gained more relevance, as a result of increasing visibility to television, and major sporting events taking place around the world. "A brand ambassador is known as a celebrity gotten by an organization to promote and sell its products or services. The brand ambassador is meant to actualize the corporate image of an organization in character, appearance, demeanor, morals and ethics. He has the sole responsibility to portray the firm in a positive light and transcribe the message of the firm in a way that consumers can gain further understanding of the firm and their products (Ugonna, 2014).

Dimensions of Celebrity Endorsement

Celebrity Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is defined as "message source that is seen to provide accurate and truthful information" (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). According to Moorman et al., (1993) trustworthiness is the ability to rely on someone's verifiable information. Trust also determines what people expects from a given situation and it reduces uncertainty they are likely to experience in any social and business interactions (Fan and Miao, 2012). According to Ayas, (2008), celebrity trustworthiness can be defined as 'the consumers' willingness to admit the risks against a celebrity due to positive expectations and behavior of the celebrity'. Trust can be seen as the consumers' awareness that the firm will meet and exceeds their needs and wants. Previous studies on trust have identified trust as an indicator to customer loyalty, and they highlighted the positive impact of trust on consumer loyalty (Kumar et al., 2013; Liu, Guo & Lee, 2011). Trustworthiness can be captured within the context of celebrity endorsement as a celebrity being honest, having integrity, and consumers believing the celebrities. Organizations use the value of trustworthiness by choosing celebrities who are highly regarded as being honest, reliable, and dependable.

Celebrity Attractiveness

Langmeyer and Shank (2012), define celebrity attractiveness as a concept that covers a whole lot. It's not just about the physical appearance or facial looks , but other attributes that a celebrity is expected to possess, such as sportsmanship, charm, grace, and intelligence. Attractiveness is about to how physically appealing and attractive the source of the message is to the target audience (Ohanian, 1991). Attractive endorsers are seen to be more positive and acceptable to showcase the endorsed brands (Mowen and Mowen, 2002). Using an attractive celebrity endorser in an advertisement has a way



impacting effectively on consumers than using a less attractive endorser. Consumers tend to form positive perception about such endorser.

Till and Busler (2013), posited that attractive celebrity positively impacts on consumer behavior towards a brand. The potency in using attractiveness source is more meaningful and profitable to the firm than using less attractive sources. In other words, brand image is positively affected by the attractive nature of the celebrity.

Attractiveness can also be seen as intellectual skills, personality properties, way of living, athletic performances and skills of endorsers (Erdogan, 19990). Celebrity attractiveness is defined as the extent to which consumers considers the source appealing and interesting (Teng et al., 2014; Kiecker & Cowles, 2001). In Celebrity attractiveness, consumers considers the source of the message as perceived social value, physical appearance, personality, social status, or similarity to the receiver (McCroskey & McCain, 1974). These brings about sharing a bond between consumers and the firms which can result in identifying with the source, and in turn, enhance purchase intention (Lee & Yurchisin, 2011).

Customer Patronage

Customer patronage is the compulsion, wants and thought inside the customers who incorporate the purchase of goods and services from a given outlet. Adiele et al., (2015) opines that patronage is burn out of the desire to be committed to an organization either based on its service quality or perceived service qualities. In the recent past, customer patronage has been associated with several factors, these includes; physical setting, business location, corporate identity and advanced inclination behavior (Adiele & Okpara, 2014, Ogwo & Igwe, 2012). Writing proliferates on the predecessors of customer support including item, administration, quality, administration condition, store decision, shopping experience, cost and product esteem, area, product and store environment, access in store air and cross classification item store evaluation.

Customer Satisfaction

Satisfaction is a general client disposition towards a specialist co-op, or an enthusiastic response to the contrast between what clients envision and what they get, with respect to the satisfaction of some need, objective or want. Kotler (2007) characterized satisfaction as an individual's sentiments of delight or dissatisfaction coming about because of organization an item seen presentation (or result) comparable to their desires. In this regards, the more clients are happy with items or services offered, the more prominent the odds are for a business to prevail as consumer loyalty prompts rehash buy, brand dedication and positive informal marketing.



Consumer satisfaction is an aggregate result of discernment, assessment, and mental responses to the utilization desire with an item or service. The degree of satisfaction is normally founded fair and square of client desire from the firm. Satisfaction can be defined as being able to fulfill a matter or to do something sufficiently.

Repeat Purchase

Repeat purchase can be further described as the placing of order after order by a customer from the same organization; it can also be seen as the buying of a product or service by a customer of the same brand. Repeat purchase customers are customers who are satisfied emotionally, intellectually, physically by an organization offering which could be in form of a product which exceeds their expectations leading to trust. In a relationship built on trust, commitment is engendered and becomes a major predictor of future purchases.

A repeat purchase therefore is often a measure of loyalty to a brand by customers, higher repeat purchase value means a well retained, satisfied customer, also higher repeat purchase value drives higher customer value, which means a better top line in the loyalty ladder. Customers repurchase purpose relies upon the worth acquired in their past exchanges, for example, fitting execution standards (benefits), rivalry and cost contemplations. Future buy aims additionally have a relationship with consumer loyalty. A celebrity can be seen as a “famous person”.

Relationship between Celebrity Endorsement and Customer Patronage

When an individual enjoys public recognition by a large group of people, that individual is referred to as a celebrity (Oyeniyi, 2014). Celebrity can also be seen as “a famous person”. It is usually when a person excels in his/her craft, skills, potentials etc. And they come out in public to perform and fulfill the demands of their profession. Celebrities are individuals who have accomplished more in their respective fields and it has made them to be widely known by the public. According to Deshwal (2015) in McCracken’s (2013) Celebrity endorser “is just a person who enjoys public recognition and who uses it on behalf of a consumer good during an advertisement (marketing communication). Celebrity endorsers are individuals who use their public recognition to promote a particular product in an advertisement. There are some important attributes that endorsers must possess which are appealing to marketers such as Beauty, power, talent and athleticism (Oyeniyi, 2014). Firms can use celebrities to reach out to their target market locations situated at the regional markets. Celebrity products match: This is a way of considering how friendly, compatible, humorous and outspoken the celebrity is with the firm’s product. Most organizations that engage the services of celebrity endorsement looked at credibility and public recognition

of celebrity across their consumers (Tripp and Carlson, 2012; Oyeniyi, 2014; Till, 2013).

Relationship between Celebrity Trustworthiness and Customer Patronage

Customers are the major resource and assets for the survival of any organization. Without customers, no organizations will be in existence. Advertising the firm's products is basically the sources of attracting or bringing customers to the company, and when the company achieves this, they tend to move over to the next customer so as to satisfy and retain the customers which bring about customer loyalty. Advertising a firm's product is an essential area in the marketing strategy which is linked with lots of marketing tools and techniques.

Celebrity trustworthiness is an aspect that plays a vital role in today's competitive marketplace. Firms go the extra mile to snatch customers from their competitors in order to enhance their marketing performance. But with the rate of crowded commercials by these firms, it is usually very difficult for customers to even recall all the commercials on a daily basis. But snatching and attracting these customers can be possible if the advertisements are carried out effectively. Since advertisement is one of the essential aspects of attracting customers to a firm's product, it is necessary that it is done in a creative and fascinating way with the use of celebrity endorser to enhance the firm's products. In order to create appealing, fascinating and attractive advertisement commercials, the most popular technique is the use of a celebrity endorser. The celebrity endorsement strategy is a strategy that should be integrated with the market segment characteristics, and the other aspects of the marketing mix such as product design, branding, packaging, and pricing. The product message that will be advertised by the celebrity must likewise be made clear, simple and appealing so as to enable customers to always remember the product and its message whenever they see the advert. It is on this note that we hypothesized as follows:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between, celebrity trustworthiness and customer patronage of skin care brands in Port Harcourt.

Relationship between Celebrity Attractiveness and Customer Patronage

Consumables markets seem to be crowded and firms find it difficult to penetrate the market to capture and retain customers' attention. The challenge is as a result of the increase in the rising number of firms with their competing products in the market with primetime television adverts clustering a large number of promotional content. Celebrities are individuals who like open recognized by a large number of a specific group of people.

Dean and Biswas (2001), are of the opinion that celebrity endorsements can help increasing consumer awareness, ratings on adverts, and evaluating preferred products. It is worthy to note that successful celebrity endorsements are likely to have massive impact on firms' financial returns (Erdogan, Baker and Tagg, 2001).. However, celebrity endorsement is not something to joke about regarding its financial and image consequences as a result of bad endorsement. Inadequate judgment in choosing an endorser can harm the firm's sales and their corporate image. Advertising as a marketing communication tool helps in coordinating consumer behavior and purchases. A market that is highly competitive, just like Nigerian market, achieving the objective of using the services of a good endorser is an uphill task. As such, consumables companies create various types of measures to encourage and influence positive consumer behavior, which may likely lead to achieving the firm's marketing objectives. And the use of public figures in advertising can help in generating, traffic, publicity and attention from the consumers. Base on the above discourse, we therefore hypothesized that as follows:

H₀2: There is no significant relationship between, celebrity attractiveness and customer patronage of skin care brands in Port Harcourt.

Conceptual Framework

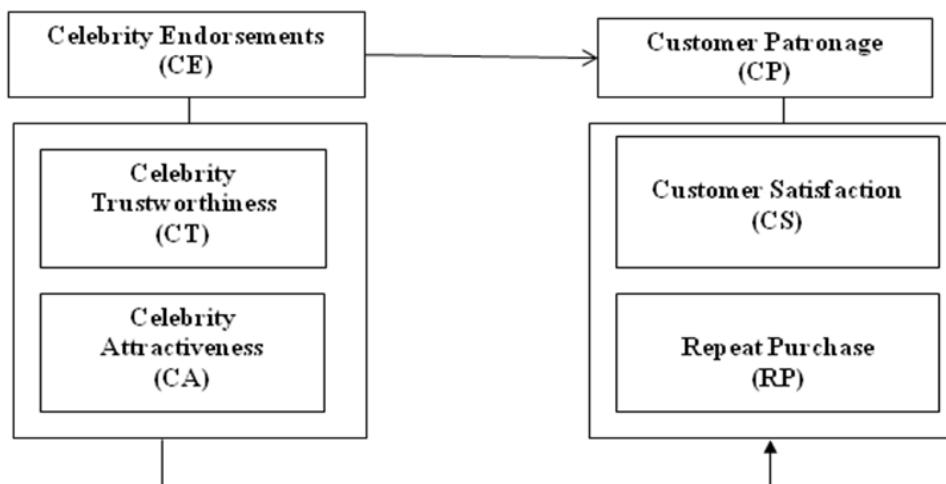


Fig 1.1: Celebrity Endorsement and Customer Patronage

Source: Researcher's Operationalization, (2025) adapted from Oyeniyi (2014), Magnini, Honeycutt and Cross (2008), McCroskey (2008), Whitehead (2012).

METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional survey design was used, and this is because it helps in providing data for the entire population under study. The population of this study was made up of all registered skin care brands in Port Harcourt,

Nigeria. According to Nigerian Directory, there are thirty-six (36) registered skin care brands operating in Port Harcourt, Nigeria (Nigerian Directory Release, 2025). For the sake of precision and elimination of unnecessary biases on determining the sample size, the researcher studied the entire elements of the skin care firms in Port Harcourt. Four (4) copies of well-structured questionnaire were sent out to each of these skin care brands which the customers of this firms filled the questionnaire. A total of one hundred and forty-four (144) copies of the questionnaire were used to collate responses from these skin care brands. The respondents for the study were drawn conveniently, which means convenient sampling technique will be adopted for this study. On this note, the researcher conveniently selected four (4) respondents from each of the registered skin care brands in order to respond to the questionnaire. In total, one hundred and forty-four (144) copies of structured questionnaire were sent out, which were used for our analysis. Pearson Moment Correlation statistical analytical method was used to analyze the data collected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution

Questionnaire	Frequency	Percentage	%
Administered	144	100	
Retrieved	109	75.7	
Not retrieved	35	24.3	
Retrieved usable	89	81.7	
Retrieved not usable	20	18.3	

Source: Researcher's Field Desk, 2025

The tables show how the questionnaire for the study were sent out and collected, were one hundred and forty-four (144) copies were sent out . Out of the 144 copies, one hundred and nine (109) copies with a percentage of 75.7% were gotten back, and thirty-five (35) copies with a percentage of 24.3% were not collected. From the one hundred and nine (109) copies collected, eighty-nine (89) copies with a percentage of 81.7% were useful, and twenty (20) copies with a percentage of 18.3% were not useful.

Test of Hypothesis One

H₀1: There is no significant relationship between Celebrity trustworthiness and customer satisfaction of skin care brands in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 2: Celebrity Trustworthiness and Customer satisfaction

	Celebrity Trustworthiness	Customer Satisfaction
Celebrity Trustworthiness	1.00	
Customer satisfaction	.910**	1.00

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Source: Field Survey Data, 2025, SPSS 21 Output

From the Table, the Pearson correlation coefficient showed a correlation value of 0.910, while the p value gave 0.000., the coefficient of determination is 0.828 which represents 82.8%. This value indicates that there is strong and positive link between celebrity trustworthiness and customer satisfaction; hence the H_01 that states that there is no significant relationship between variables, celebrity trustworthiness and customer satisfaction is rejected, also because p value (0.000) is less than 0.05. This is a therefore a confirmation from the result that there is a significant impact of celebrity trustworthiness as a celebrity endorsement tool on customer satisfaction.

Test of Hypothesis Two

H_02 : There is no significant relationship between Celebrity trustworthiness and repeat purchase of skin care brands in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 3: Celebrity Trustworthiness and Repeat purchase

	Celebrity Trustworthiness	Repeat purchase
Celebrity Trustworthiness	1.00	
Repeat purchase	.915**	1.00

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Source: Field Survey Data, 2025, SPSS 21 Output

The table shows that the Pearson correlation coefficient value is 0.915 and the p value is 0.000, while the determination of coefficient is 0.837 making up 83.7%. This further agrees that there exist a strong and positive connection between celebrity trustworthiness and repeat purchase of skin care brands in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria; hence the H_02 that states that there is no significant effect of celebrity trustworthiness as a celebrity endorsement mechanism on repeat purchase is rejected, while p value which is (0.000) is less than 0.01. This is also an indicator that from the result gotten, that there is significant percussion of celebrity trustworthiness and repeat purchase.

Test of Hypothesis Three

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between Celebrity attractiveness and customer satisfaction of skin care brands in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Celebrity Attractiveness and Customer satisfaction

	Celebrity Attractiveness	Customer satisfaction
Celebrity Attractiveness	1.00	
Customer satisfaction	.899**	1.00

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Source: Field Survey Data, 2025, SPSS 21 Output

The Pearson correlation coefficient value from the table is 0.899, and a p value of 0.000 with a coefficient of determination which is 0.808 rounding up to 80.8%. This exhibits that there is a strong and positive link between celebrity attractiveness and customer satisfaction of skin care brands in Port Harcourt, hence, the **H₀₃** which states that there is no significant effect of celebrity attractiveness as a celebrity endorsement tool on customer satisfaction is therefore rejected, since p value which is (0.000) is less than 0.05. This further displays that from the result that there is significant relationship between celebrity attractiveness and customer satisfaction.

Discussion of Findings

From the results presented in the preceding sections, the findings were discussed:

The first hypothetic statement (H₀₁) which states that, there is no significant relationship between celebrity trustworthiness and customer satisfaction of skin care brands in Port Harcourt. Celebrity trustworthiness was tested statistically against customer satisfaction with the use of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis tools. This is to help in evaluating the significant connection between celebrity trustworthiness and customer satisfaction for which the result exhibited that the both variables has a significant relationship ($R = 0.910$; $R^2 = 0.828 \sim 82.8\%$). Our analysis further unveiled the both variables positively and significantly relates with each other. Furthermore, the second hypothetical statement (H₀₂) which states that there is no relationship extent between celebrity trustworthiness and repeat purchase of skin care brands in Port Harcourt. The result explains the existence of a significant relationship between both variables ($R = 0.915$; $R^2 = 0.837 \sim 83.7\%$). The analyzed data displayed a strong and positive significant relationship between celebrity trustworthiness and customer satisfaction of skin care brands in Port Harcourt. The findings revealed in this study are in line with what Pughazhendi and Ravindran (2012) and

Opuni et al. (2014) posited in their study that celebrity trustworthiness positively relates with sales performance.

The second hypothetical statement (H_0_2) was structured to examine the relationship between celebrity trustworthiness and repeat purchase of skin care brands in Port Harcourt. The result gotten from the study displayed an existence of significant relationship between both variables ($R = 0.915$; $R^2 = 0.837 \sim 83.7\%$). The analyzed data exhibited that there is an existence of a strong and positive significant relationship between celebrity trustworthiness and customer satisfaction of skin care brands in Port Harcourt. This finding also conforms to the work of Pughazhendi and Ravindran (2012) and Opuni et al. (2014) that celebrity trustworthiness relates positively with sales performance.

Celebrity attractiveness was also tested statistically with the measures of customer patronage (customer satisfaction and repeat purchase) using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis tools. Hypothesis three (H_0_3) focuses on examining the relationship that exist between celebrity attractiveness and customer satisfaction of skin care brands in Port Harcourt. The result gotten displayed an existence of a significant relationship between both variables ($R = 0.899$; $R^2 = 0.808 \sim 80.8\%$). Our analyzed data further exhibited that there is a strong and positive relationship between celebrity attractiveness and customer satisfaction of skin care brands. While hypothesis four (H_0_4), evaluated the extent of relationship between celebrity attractiveness and repeat purchase of skin care brands. The outcome of the result from the study displayed an existence of a significant and positive relationship between celebrity attractiveness and repeat purchase at ($R = 0.913$; $R^2 = 0.834 \sim 83.4\%$). However, the findings of the study indicate the tendency of celebrity attractiveness to positively influence customer patronage of skin care brands regarding, customer satisfaction and repeat purchase. The findings are in line with the works of Oyeniyi (2014) and Khan et al. (2016) whose results revealed that the celebrity attractiveness positively influences customer patronage.

CONCLUSION

From the study carried out, it's been discovered that celebrity endorsement has lots of impact on how consumers sees or views the business world. Although celebrity endorsement influences the overall prices of product, their importance cannot be over-emphasized. That is to say that, celebrity endorsements plays a vital role in the success of any given organization. Furthermore, the researcher concludes that celebrity endorsement has a significant and positive impact on the customer patronage of skin care brands.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The endorser should be attractive to the target audience in certain aspects like physical appearance, intellectual capabilities, athletic competence, and lifestyle. It has been proven that an endorser that appears attractive as has a greater chance of enhancing the memory of the brand that he/she endorses. Celebrities, who possess expertise in the field of skin care products, should endorse skin care products as consumers get influenced by such expertise competence.

Companies should monitor the behavior, conduct and public image of the endorser continuously to minimize any potential negative publicity. One of the most effective ways to do this, is to ensure that celebrity endorsement contracts are effectively drafted, keeping in mind any such negative events.

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