

## THE ATTITUDE OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TOWARDS CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

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### Abstract

**Purpose of the study:** The study aims to identify the factors that influence students' attitudes when celebrity endorsements are used through social media. It seeks to determine how effective endorsements are from the consumers' point of view.

**Methodology:** A study model was developed to show the effect of different factors on students' attitudes. A quantitative approach was used for data collection to support the model. This study employed a survey method using a questionnaire to gather information from participants.

**Main findings:** The findings show celebrity characteristics and social media advertisements affect students' attitudes. The results were positive for students' attitude towards celebrity endorsements through social media.

**Applications of the study:** The study provides insights into how businesses should plan marketing campaigns and influence students' attitudes towards celebrity endorsements through social media. Companies are encouraged to use social networks to track and respond to the opinions of their customers in a timely manner.

**Novelty/Originality of this study:** There is a shortage of literature that is associated with celebrity endorsements through social media. This study aims to fill in the gap in knowledge and practice by identifying business opportunities and optimizing available marketing tools that can be used in order to gain a better image.

**Keywords:** *Students, Attitude, Celebrity Characteristics, Social Media, Culture Influences, Celebrity Endorsements.*

### INTRODUCTION

Social media has reached a stage that changed people's opinions about certain behaviors. People check their social accounts frequently as they want to be connected to their friends, families, acquaintances and favorite personalities all the time. This has resulted in forming online fan base clusters for each of those personalities. Celebrities attract people in different ways; each one attracts the public with his/her particular attributes and is loved for unique qualities such as soothing voice, physical strength, look, sex appeal, beauty, talents, personal reincarnation, wealth, and power (Arora & Sahu, 2013). Celebrities are idolized by millions of people all around the world. People look up and envy them in the sense that the public perceives celebrities as individuals who have attained their dreams and accomplished most of what they aim for in life whether it is fame, wealth or peoples' admiration (Zipporah & Mberia, 2014).

Celebrities are adored, admired, respected, loved and even worshiped on each one of the existing continents. Social media is one of the marketing tools that play a huge role in impacting the public's perception through the use of celebrities' extravagant lifestyle, infamous gossip, monumental achievements, and unrealistic earnings. The public than are hooked and addicted to those sorts of news and stories. Social media has become an important part of people's lives that is causing a shift in their lifestyles and is the best way to communicate with family and friends, finding a job and gaining knowledge and learning (Chan, Leung & Luk., 2013). Marketers cannot ignore the role of social media and celebrity endorsements in influencing people's minds and impacting the final purchasing dissection (Williams & Chinn, 2010).

The young generations have become so charmed and obsessed with celebrity news and affairs as part of the indispensable conversation topic in their lives (Kowalczyk & Royne, 2013). Professionals described the Arab region as highly competitive and many celebrities are endorsing several products via social media. Many studies have been conducted to examine the endorsement of a single product or brand by a specific celebrity endorser, but there are less studies that have examined the impact of using celebrity endorsements through social media in the Arab region and a country like Bahrain. A few researchers like Tripp et al. (1994) found that negative credibility is held by consumers when the celebrity endorses numerous products. On the other hand, many researchers proved that celebrity endorsements boost the popularity of the product and increase sales (Schlachte, 2014; Samat et al., 2014; Gazal et al., 2016).

People in Bahrain are fascinated by celebrities like the rest of the world from news to trends and even gossip is immensely followed, tracked and commented on. Most individuals that are found to respect celebrities have a more positive perception of products and brands endorsed by their stars (Ilicic & Webster, 2015). Youth may have more admirations to their idols and may well be more influenced or impacted by their friends and virial marketing campaigns (Roy et al., 2015). Since social behavior studies in our region are few (Al-Ahmadi, 2011; Mohd Suki, 2014), the current study aims to discover the perception of

Bahraini college students and their attitude towards the celebrity endorsement process on various social media channels. The remainder of this paper is organized into six sections. First, we review related literature of celebrity endorsements through social media and students' attitudes. Second, covers the conceptual model and research hypotheses. Third, we explain the research methodology used in this research study. Fourth, we present the study results and analysis including hypotheses testing. Fifth, we discuss the main findings along with implications. Finally, we draw the conclusion along with suggestions for future research.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

A celebrity is an individual that gets acknowledgment from ordinary people for his work, talent, skills, attributes or position in the society and receives recognition from a significant number of people ([Arora & Sahu, 2013](#)). Celebrities achieve larger than life images for attributes like likeability, unattainable beauty and physical attractiveness ([Ravi & Saxena, 2015](#)). Marketers think that the great power of celebrities is that they can influence reference groups in different ways, such as giving personal recommendations about the benefits of using a product or act as a spokesperson for a company or brand ([Chan et al., 2013](#)). For breaking through clutter and seeking audience attention a growing use of celebrities in advertising as a tool of marketing strategy is noticed ([Wilson & Till 2011](#)).

Celebrity endorsements were originated from the developed world, but now are extending more in Asian markets([Roy et al., 2015](#)). In Asia, the growth of celebrity endorsements has seen a major rise. Celebrities influence Asian consumers and different generations, genders ([Roy et al., 2015](#)) needs to be strategically planned. For example, Islamic principles may influence Muslim consumers' perception of products and services endorsed by the celebrities that are in line with their faith ([Mohd Suki, 2014](#)). Celebrity endorsements gained a massive significance as an element of the marketing communication and media mix. Celebrity endorsements impact brand image significantly, improve recognition of brand names ([Petty et al., 1983](#)) and increase revenue when implemented well ([Arora & Sahu, 2013](#)).

Social media grew and evolved over time and enforced marketers to adapt to those changes by enhancing their tools and techniques. For instance, the use of word of mouth has shifted to social messaging and buzzes marketing, traditional flyers replaced by online banners, telemarketing and mailing list to emailing subscriptions, radio to podcasts and television taken over by video sharing and streaming. Celebrities on social media have boomed because of the increase of smart devices usage ([Barhemmati & Ahmad, 2015](#)), the spread of smartphones, and the availability to access virtual space which has reached everyone's fingertips. Celebrity endorsements are the most preferable and solid advertising technique to be used by marketers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to influence consumer purchasing decisions ([Choi & Rifon, 2012](#)). Traditional media is being swapped as the source to which people gather information about products and is replaced by social media which provides people with a new technique (electronic word of mouth) to gather information and evaluate the product from previous purchasers ([Hajli, 2014](#)). It enables any potential customer to make a better assessment of the product from social media and make his decision ([Bruhn et al., 2012](#)).

Marketers are expected to increase their effort through, application advertisements, blogs, and celebrity endorsements to deliver their message to consumer and influence their purchasing decisions to gain more profit. Marketers are not expected to miss out on the opportunities to get their message across directly to the user and influence the purchase behavior with the help of the celebrity endorser ([Nekatibebe, 2012](#)). The social media boomed in the early 2000s for major players like Facebook in 2004, Twitter in 2006, Instagram in 2010 and Snapchat in 2011, just to name a few; each with its different appeal, functionality, and specification ([Neumayer & Rossi, 2016](#)). While initially some social media channels did not allow companies to advertise within that as part of their policy, in fear of upsetting the users, today companies are allowed to use social media in more than one way, since they provide consumers with a speedy channel for voicing their experiences and comments. It also allows businesses to reach new consumers and gather data in a convenient way ([Chikandiwa et al., 2013](#)).

Establishing a business presence and signing up for social media accounts are essentially simple and free. The right information is a key factor that keeps the user interested and engaged. When the information provided by the business is not relevant, then it will be ignored or considered as spam in the realm of social media ([Gazal et al., 2016](#)). Credibility and confidence can play an important role in improving the persuasiveness of a message ([Atay, 2011](#)). A study that examines the antecedents of advertising avoidance on online social networking sites, highlights that an online social networking advertising is more likely to be ineffective if the user has a negative experience, the advertising is irrelevant to the user's needs, the user casts doubt in the communicated message, or is skeptical toward the communication medium ([Kelly et al., 2010](#)).

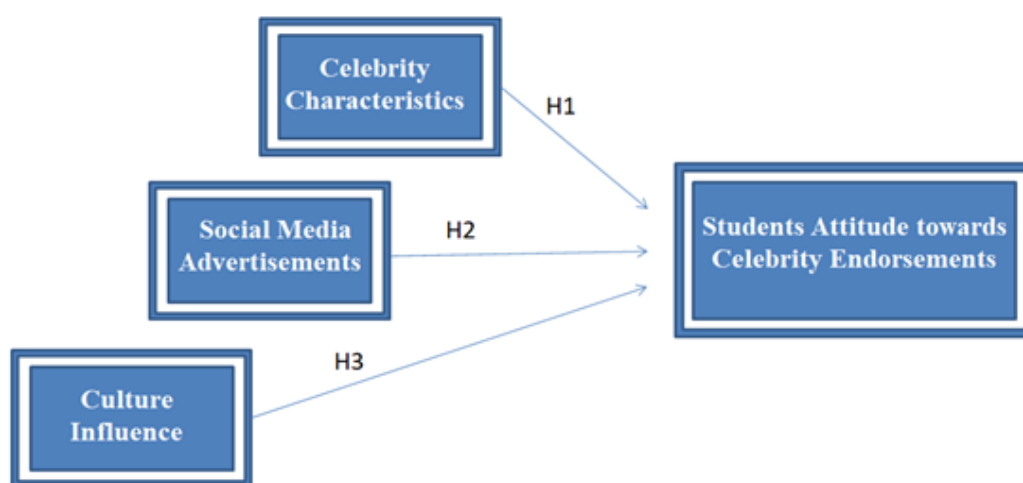
Culture is a complex term that is comprised of multiple layers and elements that contribute to defining and differentiating societies. The outer layer includes language, food, buildings, art, and monuments. The middle layer includes norms, customs, and values shared within the group. The core layer includes morals and beliefs held by individuals. Culture is a universal trigger of social behavior and interaction that is passed on to new generations within a society, sharing a common language and environment in various ways ([Reeves, 2012](#)). The Middle East and North Africa region are undeniably rich and diverse in its

culture, heritage, and customs. The Arabian countries including Bahrain share the same Arabic language, traditions, and gender roles (Al-Ahmadi, 2011; Chow, 2013; Littrell & Bertsch, 2013).

The society with a low level of tolerance for uncertainty prefers to attain control over everything in order to eliminate or avoid the unexpected. As a result, society does not willingly accept change and is very risk-averse, (Littrell & Bertsch, 2013). The individualism ranking is the lowest Hofstede dimension for the Arab world if compared to a world average ranking. This translates into a collectivist society culture and is established in a strong long-term commitment to the group including a family, as loyalty over-ride most other societal rules in a collectivist culture (Hofstede, 2011).

## CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The conceptual model for this research study is developed based on the empirical studies discussed in the literature review. The independent variables used in the study were the celebrity characteristics (CC), social media as the marketing delivery method (SM) and the students' culture (SC). The dependent variable was students' attitudes towards the endorsement on social media (AE). Figure 1 illustrate the study variables which are explained in the sections that follow.



**Figure 1:** Conceptual model

Celebrity endorser is defined as any person who is recognized in the eyes of the public for the accomplishment rather than the affiliation of the product endorsed (Friedman & Friedman, 1979). It can be viewed as the attachment of a popular character to a product or service via a contractual agreement between the firm and the character (Sassenberg et al., 2012; Sridevi, 2012). Studies have shown that brands endorse celebrities primarily to get noticed and stand out from the overcrowded world of broadcasted advertisements (Bhatt et al., 2013; Subhadip, 2012). Research indicates that choosing a celebrity solely on the stardom status does not guarantee success. Rather, the belief is to consider the worth of star association and connection to the brand and re-assessed as all mixtures are not equally effective (Ravi & Saxena, 2015). Thus, linkage between the star image and product features is very important in the selection of brand representative for any company.

Celebrities would not want to damage their reputation by associating themselves with a bad product. Celebrity endorsement mainly focuses on the strength of the celebrity and tends to make the celebrity speaks directly to the public and provides an alternative to creative advertisement. The main motives behind celebrity endorsements for companies and marketers are instant brand awareness, recall, refreshing and strengthening brand image, and credibility (Abdussalam, 2014). Multiple studies give the same virtues for using celebrities (Opuni et al., 2014, Arora & Sahu, 2013; Ilıcık & Webster, 2015; Bhatt et al., 2013; Roy et al., 2013). When it comes to advertisements and marketing, the bottom line is what the people perceive and what attitude they have towards the advertisement, product, and brand (Samat et al., 2014). Several studies have found that celebrity endorsement affects attitude (Subhadip, 2012; Cunningham and Bright, 2012; Bhatt et al., 2013). Therefore, we can hypothesize that:

**H1:** Celebrity characteristics influence students' attitudes towards celebrity endorsements on social media.

In the past decade, almost all traditional media have gone through a major change that affected the marketing field and most of the physical advertising means have declined in use. The majority of printed media like magazines or newspapers faced difficulties and has seen a decline in the face of a rising virtual alternative, noting social media as one of those alternatives that have increased significantly as a marketing tool which is supported by communication technologies advancements (Gazal et

al., 2016). Companies had to change their marketing strategies and approach to spread their messages to consumers in response to the evolving communication technology (Grainger, 2010). Today, because of social media, companies can reach potential customers faster than ever before, spreading their messages and advertisements (Yee & Yazdanifard, 2013). Social media advertisements were found to affect attitude (Okorie, 2012; Brock, 2013; Samat et al., 2014; He et al., 2015). Hence, we hypothesize that:

**H2:** Social media advertisements influence students' attitudes toward celebrity endorsements.

Culture holds a level of importance in different industries such as tourism as well as marketing and advertising. Cultural elements could be used in advertising to ensure effectiveness (Maldonado, 2011). According to Hofstede (2011) some countries focus on the individual rather than society as a whole and are called individualistic countries. As in the case of Western cultures, people are expected to take care of themselves and their immediate families. Alternatively, people from the Middle East and Asia are integrated into specific groups from a young age, categorizing them as collectivistic cultures. Maintaining the harmony of the group becomes the main concern of any individual decision or action (Hofstede, 2011).

In collectivistic countries, advertisements emphasize the sense of belonging, conformity, and harmony. An example would be portraying people working together. Reeves (2012) research shows different studies comparing Eastern and Western advertisements and describes some findings. The dominant theme in Chinese advertisements is the family, as they must maintain stability and harmony within their societal cells. Other studies found that advertisements in Asian countries are linked more towards status, celebrity, beauty, and modernity (Bhatt et al., 2013), which contrast with individualism advertisements which emphasized independence and being different (Reeves, 2012).

Internet shopping is considered a global behavior; nonetheless, purchasing habits remain culturally bound. As members of a community, people can identify themselves with one or more cultures and countries. Some scholars have emphasized that on certain occasions, locally embedding a website is vital to business success. Hence, targeted websites should also be culturally sensitive in their thematic appearance, interactivity, and content. That could be achieved by adopting a product or service to a particular language and adjusting the look-and-feel to align with cultural taste and ensure successful global communication through websites, even though e-commerce sites are the outcomes of standardization in web communications and content (Jin, 2010). Therefore, we can hypothesize that:

**H3:** Culture influences students' attitudes towards celebrity endorsements on social media.

## METHOD

The study focuses on the influence of celebrity characteristics (CC), social media advertisements (SM) and culture (SC) on students' attitudes towards celebrity endorsement on social media (AE). The study targeted Bahraini college students exposed to celebrity endorsements via social media. Estimated registered college students in both private and public universities about 38,113 students in total (Moedu.gov.bh, 2018). Data was collected through a structured questionnaire as the main research instrument and primary source used to gather data consisting of multiple sections where mostly Likert scale was used with 1 being strongly disagreed and 5 strongly agree. The hypotheses were tested to figure out if the statements were true or not as well as the level of significance by implementing correlation and multi-regression tests. The target segment consists of young adults that are highly susceptible to celebrity influence, tech-savvy and greatly impacted by the Bahraini culture. Bahraini university students as a population, fall appropriately within the research objective.

To ensure the validity of the adapted questionnaire items, the questionnaire was validated by four academic experts where few amendments were made on the questionnaire items based on their feedback. The result of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for research constructs used in this study is shown in Table 1. The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values for all research constructs are greater than 0.7 which means that the questionnaire items are considered acceptable according to Cavana et al. (2001).

**Table 1:** Reliability Test Results for all research constructs

Construct	Total no. of items	Cronbach's $\alpha$ reliability coefficient	Reliability level
Celebrity Characteristics CC	4	.700	Reliable
Social Media SM	6	.719	Reliable
Culture Influence CI	6	.762	Reliable
Students' Attitude AE	13	.847	Reliable

The sample size was calculated using a formula. The sample was approached through interaction with respondents (university students) as well as an online survey. The sample data was collected throughout a non-probability sampling method (Etikan, 2016). The sample size (SS) was determined by setting 90% level of confidence at 5% tolerance error, standard deviation assessed at .5 and the population was estimated at 38,113 of registered students (Moedu.gov.bh, 2018).

$$SS = (Z\text{-score})^2 * p * (1-p) / (\text{margin of error})^2$$

$$SS = (1.645)^2 * 0.5 * (1-0.5) / (0.05)^2$$

$$SS = 2.706025 * 0.250 / 0.0025$$

$$SS = 270.6025$$

(Z-score is 1.645 for a 90% confidence level)

Then you need to adjust it to your specific population.

$$SS_{\text{adjusted}} = (SS) / 1 + [(SS - 1) / \text{population}]$$

$$SS_{\text{adjusted}} = (270.6025) / 1 + [(270.6025 - 1) / 38,113]$$

$$SS_{\text{adjusted}} = 269$$

Universities' students were approached to participate in the survey and encouraged to share with other student acquaintances via mobile devices and email. (319) questionnaires were received and 285 were valid responses used in the data analysis. Four main factors were used to construct the questionnaire. The first was Celebrity Characteristics (CC), which had four items that were all adopted from [Samat et al \(2014\)](#). The second factor was Social Media Endorsements (SM) that consists of six items, three of them were adopted from [Hajli \(2014\)](#) and two from [the site \(2014\)](#). The third factor was Culture Influence (CI) that consists of six items; three of them were adopted from [Schlachte \(2014\)](#). The fourth factor was Attitude toward Endorsements (AE) that consists of thirteen items, three items from [Dom et al. \(2016\)](#) and the other items were from [Liligeto et al. \(2014\)](#). Each construct was modified and validated for the purpose of this research.

## ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This section presents and discusses study findings including the results of hypotheses testing. Pearson's correlations test between all the variables was carried out. (285) university students participated in the survey with results of their attitude on celebrity endorsements through social media ( $M=3.3258$ ,  $SD=.60202$ ), celebrity characteristics ( $M=3.2667$ ,  $SD=.63143$ ), social media advertisements ( $M=3.0830$ ,  $SD=.66012$ ) and culture influence ( $M=2.6240$ ,  $SD=.70961$ ). A value of  $r = 0.513$  indicated that there is a positive association between the Celebrity Characteristics (CC) and Social Media (SM) variables. The value of  $r = 0.477$  indicated that there is a positive association between the Celebrity characteristics (CC) and Attitude on Endorsements (AE) variables. The strongest positive association recorded was between Social Media (SM) and Attitude on Endorsements (AE) variables at  $r = .633$ . Culture Influence (CI) indicated that there is a weak positive association with all three variables, Celebrity Characteristics (CC), Social Media (SM) and Attitude on Endorsements (AE) scoring  $r = .035$ ,  $r = .277$ ,  $r = .174$  respectively.

**Table 2:** Pearson's Correlation Testing values for all the variables

		CC	SM	CI	AE
CC	Pearson Correlation	1	.513**	.035	.477**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.553	.000
	N	285	285	285	285
SM	Pearson Correlation	.513**	1	.277**	.633**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	285	285	285	285
CI	Pearson Correlation	.035	.277**	1	.174**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.553	.000		
	N	285	285	285	285
AE	Pearson Correlation	.477**	.633**	.174**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	285	285	285	285

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A multiple regression analysis tests ([Hair et al., 1998](#)) is used to test the hypotheses, but in order to do multiple regressions we have to convert the data to linear equation and find out the mean of each construct. Table 3 shows the result of the multiple regression tests. The R-value is (0.658) which states that there is a positive relationship between the variables and the attitude of the university students toward celebrity endorsements through social media, and the R square which is (0.433) indicates that about (43.3%) of the students' attitude explained by the independent variable in the model of the research. The F test is



(71.454) which is > than (1.96), and the F significant is (0.000) which is < than 0.05, and that significance rate indicates that independent variables used in the study have a significant relationship with the dependent variable AE.

**Table 3:** Multiple Regression Analysis among independent variables

Independent Variables	Beta	T-test	Sig. Level
Celebrity Characteristics CC	.210	3.984	.000
Social Media SM	.519	9.447	.000
Culture Influence CI	.022	.475	.635
<b>R</b>	.658		
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	.433		
<b>F test</b>	71.454		
<b>Sig F test</b>	<b>0.000</b>		
<b>No. of Observations</b>	<b>285</b>		

Celebrity characteristics factor-beta is (.210), t-test value is (3.984), and significant level is (.000) < than (0.05) leading to accept the hypothesis because of having a positive impact on students' attitude towards celebrity endorsements on social media. Social media factor-beta is (.519), t-test value is (9.447), and significant level is (.000) which is < than (0.05). Based on the result of the beta test for this factor, we could say that this factor has a positive impact on Bahraini college students' attitude towards celebrity endorsements on social media. Culture factor-beta is (.022), t-test value is (.475), and significant level is (.635) > than (0.05). The results inform that we should reject the hypothesis, as it has a positive but insignificant impact on students' attitude towards celebrity endorsements on social media in Bahrain.

For hypotheses testing, Table 4 shows two out of three hypotheses were accepted. Findings show that celebrity characteristics and social media advertisements have a significant impact on university students' attitudes towards celebrity endorsements through social media in Bahrain. However, the culture factor was rejected after examining its significant level (0.635) which is larger than 0.10. Moreover, comparing the beta for all the previous factors, it was found that social media held the highest beta among all the factors (0.519), which means that social media have the highest impact on student's attitude towards celebrity endorsements in Bahrain. Celebrity characteristics' beta score was 0.210, indicating that celebrity attributes have a high impact on students' attitude towards celebrity endorsements through social media.

**Table 4:** Hypotheses Testing

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES	REASON	DECISION
<b>H1:</b> Celebrity characteristics influence students' attitudes towards celebrity endorsements on social media.	At 5% significance P-value= 0.000 < 0.05	Accepted
<b>H2:</b> Social media advertisements influence students' attitudes toward celebrity endorsements.	At 5% significance P-value= 0.000 < 0.05	Accepted
<b>H3:</b> Culture influences students' attitude towards celebrity endorsements on social media	At 5% significance P-value= 0.635 > 0.05	Rejected

## DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Students' attitude towards celebrity endorsements on social media in Bahrain was positive. Based on the conceptual model, the factors that influence celebrity endorsement on social media were identified. The data analysis shows that following a celebrity endorser on social media influences student's brand awareness. It was not surprising that the majority of the students participating in this study have indicated that they became aware of a brand because a celebrity-endorsed it on social media and celebrities post information about brands that they use and engage with their fans, since fans frequently follow celebrities on social media to gain information about them (Cunningham & Bright, 2012). Attractiveness had the most positive impact of celebrity characteristics, followed by informative ability and interactive attributes from social media. The results showed that Snapchat and Instagram were more used and preferred by Bahraini students. This requires business to carefully select the right social media platform for businesses to use when implementing a celebrity endorsement marketing campaign. Our study goes in line with Liligeto et al. (2014) who emphasized the importance of selecting the right advertising medium.

The study aimed to set a benchmark and evaluate the trend in social media adoption and its function as a marketing tool. According to the results obtained from the survey, all the respondents were found to be social media users and have a social media presence. Furthermore, they all spend significant amount of time on different social media channels. The culture was found to be an insignificant factor on students' attitude towards celebrity endorsements through social media, but this research

was limited to the quantitative approach and does not provide the “why”. Culture might still be an influencing factor in how students select their favorite celebrities or what celebrity attributes they find most appealing. Nonetheless, open to other interpolations, culture was not influencing students’ attitudes towards celebrity endorsements through social media as they may have found the social media environment to be a constraint-free from any cultural obligations.

Several studies have pointed out that celebrity endorsements are effective for product promotion because they increase the recalling capacity of a brand and helpful for brand awareness ([Abdussalam, 2014](#); [Arora & Sahu, 2013](#)). Our study results are supported by literature review on celebrity endorsements as trustfulness and attractiveness were found to have impacted over students’ attitudes ([Ohanian, 1990](#)). Our study found that products that endorsed were seen better than other products. [Cunningham and Bright \(2012\)](#) too concluded that source characteristics are important to know the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements on social media.

Endorser credibility was found to be significantly linked to attitude toward social media advertising. A credible source of characteristics such as attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness creates online users have a favorable attitude towards social media advertising ([Samat et al., 2014](#)). Findings also correlate with other studies where credibility is viewed an important factor in the success of celebrity endorsements in social media ([Jin & Phua, 2014](#)). Furthermore, the study results support the findings of [Maoyan et al., \(2014\)](#) that social media marketing stimulates external factors and influences consumer's inner perception factors for likely purchase intention. Variation was found in the culture factor as the results did not show significant impact on Bahraini college students’ attitudes towards celebrity endorsements through social media. Younger people were predominantly attracted by celebrity endorsers as they value the entertainment skills of media celebrities ([Chan et al., 2013](#)). A significant increase in revenue is made when a firm’s product is endorsed by celebrity advertising ([Opuni et al., 2014](#)).

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study investigates the factors influencing the attitude of university students towards celebrity endorsements through social media. The findings indicate that two of the three factors (Celebrity Characteristics and Social Media Endorsements) do indeed influence university students’ attitudes towards celebrity endorsements through social media. The culture was found to be an insignificant factor. The celebrity characteristics factor contains attractiveness, trustworthiness, experience, and credibility. Those elements were found to have positive impact on how Bahraini students feel and behave towards celebrity endorsements. Furthermore, social media elements such as interactivity, shareability, and ease of use were found to have high positive significant contribution to Bahraini students’ attitudes towards celebrity endorsements.

Bahraini college students’ preferences are slightly different in terms of social media applications from global trends. Nevertheless, college students are well informed and in sync with global behavior. As this research has further highlighted the important roles of celebrity characteristics and communication medium on students’ attitudes towards celebrity endorsements, the findings pointed out the fact that students’ attitudes towards celebrity endorsements through social media were influenced by celebrity and social media without specifying neither any celebrity nor a specific media channel. This study brings new findings with regards to Bahraini consumer’s perception of celebrity influence and communication technology in marketing strategies, which is not much covered in the literature of this region’s consumer perspectives.

This study shows a significant relationship between attitude towards endorsement and celebrity characteristics as well as social media, thus, providing additional insights into consumer “Students” attitude towards marketing tools, adding a new element to the academic literature on marketing strategies while extending the knowledge about the Bahraini consumer. The study provides insights into how businesses and organizations should plan upcoming marketing campaigns and influence students’ attitudes towards the delivered message. With more media reporting on celebrities, firms can further understand factors that can influence consumers’ buying behavior. Marketers can align their actions; marketing offers and marketing communications using social media effectively. Companies are encouraged to use social networks to track and respond to the opinions of their customers in a timely manner. They are recommended to select more preferable social networks such as Snapchat and Instagram that help them reach and influence younger targeted Bahraini consumers.

A comparison between celebrity types or nationalities could be examined in future research to understand their impact on consumer behavior. A change in research methodology, for example; a mix of qualitative and quantitative could enhance findings. Future research can focus on celebrity’s categorization based on talent and gender. The factors influencing Arab consumers’ attitude towards celebrity endorsements to be tested on a bigger population. Celebrities go beyond just products’ endorsements as they have become brands. Another research opportunity is to study a celebrity brand.

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