

# The Effect of Celebrity Endorsement on Customer Purchase Intention: A Comparative Study

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## ABSTRACT

In Pakistan the trend of celebrity endorsement is increasing rapidly as like in other developed and developing countries. The purpose of this paper is to examine the effect of celebrity endorsement on mobile phone purchase intention of male and female customers. A model was made to examine the factors affecting customer purchase intention and it was tested empirically using a sample of 800 (400 males and 400 females). The questionnaire strategy was used for this research and both male and female respondents were provided with same questionnaire. Descriptive statistics and regression was run to find the results. The paper found likeability, attractiveness, experience and personality to be the most effective components of the celebrity endorsement construct of the research model, making them key influencers of mobile phone purchase intention of male customers. The female customers see likeability, attractiveness and credibility of the celebrity while purchasing mobile phone. This research majorly focused on mobile phones purchase intention and celebrity endorsement. It is suggested that a researcher can further conduct a comparative study between males and females for any other product category with a large sample size. The paper outlines ways to effectively use celebrity endorsement for increasing customer purchase intention of male and female customers for purchasing mobile phone. A marketing manager or policy maker can follow these outlines in order to make advertising policy targeting male or female customers.

**KEYWORDS:** Celebrity endorsement, Purchase intention, Mobile phone advertisement, Source credibility, Endorser.

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## 1. INROUDUCTION

Consumer product market is becoming vast day by day, every passing day is contributing new products in market and because of this it is becoming difficult for marketers to penetrate the market for securing and sustaining the attention of consumer. In this competitive marketing environment if any service or product wants be known rapidly to consumers so that they can recall it, then it should focus on advertising campaigns mostly which can memorize product or service to customer [1]. Digital televisions and cellular phones are technological innovations which magnetize the attention of marketing researchers as regards to their adoption process [2]. "Innovation impacts on successfulness of an organization's strategies" [3] that is why Most of the business firms are following modern marketing strategies and these strategies rely deeply on advertising to promote the firm's product to their target market. Customers are becoming more sophisticated, educated, selective and intelligent so influencing customer is the ultimate goal of advertising strategy. In this era of competition it is great trouble for the advertisers to differentiate their advertisements from others as now a day companies are making advertisements modern, colorful, attractive, charming and entertaining but most of the customers do not pay desired level attention to advertisements and even not its attributes and components because they think that all advertisements form other competing firms are mostly similar. So advertisers have to focus on at least one element in advertising which cannot be ignored by the consumers and it can be celebrity endorsement [4]. Publicly recognized people, influencing icons that are admired and liked by the public and people get attracted towards them are called celebrities. They have strong impressive power because of which they can persuade the audience by their trust, likeliness or their attractiveness. Celebrity is defined by [5] as the person who is known to public is known as celebrity for example sports personalities, actors, entertainers and etc. Celebrity is used by advertisers to grab the more attention and attract audience towards product or an advertisement because celebrity talking about any product in advertisement will attract more people as compare to a common person and this is called celebrity endorsement. Hence, to boost the brand equity and brand awareness celebrity endorsement is a successful marketing approach [6]. It is defined by [7] as; celebrity endorsement means acquiring equity of any celebrity or attaching any celebrity with product or service for its promotion. Advertisements of three decades before contains mostly actors and sports personalities but now the scope of celebrity endorsement is widened much and advertisers use T.V artists, singers, models and sports figures in advertisements.

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It is believed that celebrities can swiftly connect the viewers and make the customers able to like or chose the product so if any brand or product is promoted by a renowned personality then it will increase the sales which would create a mutual benefit for the celebrity and specially the company [8]. It is not easy to choose celebrity because advertisers have to match the celebrity's image with the features and characteristics of product. This matching looks simple but the development of such advertisements having perfect match and then achieving desired results of the advertisement requires deep understanding of company's objective set for brand, selection of relevant celebrity for brand and developing suitable ways for measurement of the brand's success [9]. In Pakistan the trend of celebrity endorsement is also increasing rapidly as like in other developed and developing countries. Many of brands are using this strategy to increase their market share even several brands are using Indian film industry celebrities in their advertisements. Initially the celebrity endorsement was mostly used in advertisements of FMCG products but now there is a great trend to use celebrities in the ads of mobile handset. There is an extended history of advancement and innovation for the development of mobile phones and technologies which emerge because of dynamic changes in consumer's preferences and needs. Among these developments there is a fastest household adoption rate of mobile phone devices as compare to any other technology in world's modern history [10]. Pakistan is having the big market of mobile phone users and its increasing every day. The availability of 3G and 4G increase the sales of mobiles phone more so to capture such a big and growing market, advertisers are using celebrity endorsement in advertisements.

An advertisement with celebrity makes the customer or viewer easy to recall the brand [11] and mobile handset companies adopt this strategy to increase their customers and market share. The companies are using Indian film industry celebrities, Pakistan film industry celebrities, sports personalities and models. There are many companies who are selling mobile handset in Pakistan for example Q mobile, Rivo Mobile, Voice mobile, G five, LG, Huawei, Oppo, Samsung, Nokia, Haier and now Mobilink introduces the Jazz Xplod. Almost every company among them is using celebrity endorsement technique in their advertisements. Q mobile used many Indian film industry celebrities, Pakistan film industry celebrities in ads as like Zareen Khan, Mahira Khan, Priyanka Chopra, Shan, Arjun Kapoor, Kreena Kapur, Sonam Kapoor, Aditya Roy Kappor, Fawad khan, Shahid Kapoor, Jacqueline Fernendaz, Hamayoun and a drama artist Faisal Qureshi. It also used singer and sports icons as like Ali Zafar, Atif Aslam, Shehzad and Shahid Afridi. Advertisements of Huawei consists of Celebrities like Mahira Khan, Humaima Malik, Shehroz Sabazwari and Syra Yousaf. A voice mobile advertisement consists of Crickter Shahid Afridi, film star Fahad Mustafa and some local models. Celebrities in ads of G Five mobiles are Zareen Khan a bollywood actress, Noor a lollywood actress. Samsung is using Fawad khan in their advertisements. Other mobile handset companies as like Nokia, LG, Mobilink Jazz Xplod are using Ali Zafar, Atif Aslam, Nargis Fakhri and some local models respectively in their ads. Almost every mobile handset company is using tool of celebrity endorsement in their advertisements, so to grab a more market share marketer should focus on preference of both genders for celebrity in ad, consumer behavior and factors affecting consumer's choice. The study of [12] explored the factors that can affect the customer's choice for the selection of mobile phone in Pakistan. Results of this study showed that according to customers the new technology feature is the most important variable among others and it also work as a motivational force which persuade them for the purchase decision of new handset. Marketing strategy is directly affected by knowledge of consumer behavior [13]. So it is also important for marketer to get exact knowledge of consumer behavior. According to [14] females and males want dissimilar products and also ways of liking and obtaining these are different for them. There is vital role of gender in consumer behavior. It has been concluded that buying behavior of women customers is influenced by T.V. advertising [15].

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

It is seen and heard that endorser must be famous and dominator so that he or she can easily recognized in messy flow of communication. This is also the reason because of which celebrities have great eye catching and likeable personality [16]. Many research studies highlighted the use of celebrity having eye catching personality can enhance the feelings towards the advertisement. Commercials make such a systematic psychological mind-set that first the person recognize his surroundings and then react towards it [17]. The product having high emotional or social risk if advertised by famous person than the reliability will increase. If such products advertised generally then they might not create reliability because purchase intention is increased when the endorser is reliable or expert [18]. The use of famous person in advertisement of any product will persuade the viewers and increase purchase intention. A person can easily recall the product or brand endorsed by any celebrity. Many sales people use the support of celebrity so that they can improve the information in customer's mind [19]. [20] conducted a research for the investigation of impact of famous person endorser on customer approach to product and commercials. They made a framework linking approach to superstar endorser, mind-set towards product and feelings towards advertisement. This framework was practiced and certified with sample size of 193. The result of this study showed that approach of using celebrity or famous person can have impact on mind-

set towards product in anyway. Purchase intention can be said as the probability of customers to buy a product [21] or plan to purchase a brand in future [22]. Purchase intention of customer is affected by many external factors. For example during the information process of product it is greatly affected by word of mouth and during purchase process it is affected by price, product attributes and performance of endorser [23]. All the product categories cannot validate the reliability between celebrity endorsement and customer purchase intention as it is empirically demonstrated that there is very nominal relationship between celebrity endorsement and customer purchase intention for the soft drink category. There are certain product categories having no relationship [20]. In Pakistan many researchers did research on credibility of celebrity and celebrity endorsement generally but research on emerging trend of celebrity endorsement in mobile handset ads is very rare. A study of [24] disclosed that in advertisement the companies use models, social worker, actors and celebrities to influence customers about different models of mobile phone. The respondent's response to likeliness of different elements in advertisement of mobile handset shows that 25% respondents like actors, 25% like male models and female models were liked very much by 31% overall males and females in mobile handset advertisement and research conducted by [25] found that there is highest correlation of mobile phone purchasing with celebrity endorsement and for the reliability of celebrity correlation is more than image of celebrity but less than attractiveness for reliability of celebrity. The attractiveness of celebrity is first door for invitation of customers to find the other factors associating mobile phone brands. This research also find that Q mobile is at right way because of hiring Indian film industry faces as like Kareena Kapoor and other reason is that the faces of this industry are considered to be more attractive comparative to other available or existing faces.

Stronger buying involvement based on emotions is shown by females as compare to males because men rely on quality and efficiency mostly. Men's decisions are made for immediate needs and satisfaction but not for long term consideration. There is an opposite trend than this in females as they focus on long term consideration or buying again and again unlike men [26]. People prefer to like women and also feel positive toward women as compare to men [27]. For the selection of brand or a shop women are more likely to yield to emotional factors [28]. This means the impact of graphics, music, visual communication and lighting is more considerable for women and their perception of physical environment [29]. A research by [30] found that during the stage of problem recognition and information search for "traditional" female's products like cereals, home furnishing, appliances, etc the wives are more dominant but the husbands are found to be dominant in the information search stage for male products as like razors, television, automobile, etc. Marketing managers should evaluate marketing strategy for women in order to make products and services which can suit them because among women there is high volume and potential capacity of consumption markets [31]. The study by [32] revealed that in 'brand' and 'core technical features' the gender differences were very prominent. It's probably because female consumers are less familiar with core technical aspects. In 'physical appearance' and 'value added features' gender differences also emerged but they were not much significant. The female consumers do not find 'brand' as an important factor as men do because of female's irresistible orientation to 'physical appearance' of handset. Males are generally self-focused while females are responsive to the needs of both self and others. How much power the individual has is affected by situational factors, but in general, it shows that "men possess higher amounts of expert and legitimate power than women do, and women possess higher amounts of referent power than men do" [33]. In the study of [34] it was found that female consumers have greater intentions to buy from female celebrity endorser and male consumers have greater intention to buy from male celebrity endorser. On the attitude towards advertisement and purchase intention there is no impact of spokesperson's gender [35].

### **2.1. Source credibility model**

[36] reveal that greater credible resource of communication draws more constructive purchase behavior and is more significant than less credible resource, so to encourage the brand switching it is very much necessary to use extremely credible resource. As discussed by [9], in a company's marketing communications the importance of using a credible source has been a broadly researched topic for decades. Selection of celebrity is such phenomena in which the companies have to care about the credibility of celebrity because celebrities are taken on the basis of popularity in public so there is no guarantee of success and credibility of celebrity is positively correlated with willingness of consumer to buy. So it's proved that if celebrity is popular or famous but not credible then he will not stimulates the customer's willingness to buy [4]. The study conducted by [37] reveal that there is positive relationship between consumer's feelings to the advertisement, product, their buying intentions and celebrity credibility. Particularly source credibility comprises three dimensions: attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise [38].

After detailed statistical tests and literature review [39] made a celebrity endorser credibility scale which was having a three components and its presented in Table: 1.

**Table: 1 Source Credibility Scale**

Attractiveness	Trustworthiness	Expertise
Classy-Not Classy	Sincere-Insincere	Knowledgeable-Unknowledgeable
Sexy-Not sexy	Honest-Dishonest	Expert-Not an expert
Beautiful-Ugly	Trustworthy-Untrustworthy	Skilled-Unskilled
Attractive-Unattractive	Dependable-Undependable	Experienced-Inexperienced
Elegant-Plain	Reliable-Unreliable	Qualified-Unqualified

[40] described trustworthiness as delivering consistently what has been promised. Trustworthiness in statement is the intensity of Identification of communication as well as the spokesperson and observer's extent of assurance [41] and he also explores that effective attitude change can be produced by an extremely opinionated message from a very trustworthy communicator, while immaterial impact is proved by non-trusted communicators. Males trust on males and women trust more on women celebrities [42]. It's according to gender but the level of trust and trustworthiness is same at the different stages of consumers [19]. [43] concluded that towards a brand, positive effect on consumer attitude is caused by attractive celebrity. The process of identification occurs when receiver accepts the message transferred by the attractive source and identifies with the endorser; through this process attractiveness can determines the effectiveness of endorser [44]. [45] manipulated likability of celebrity and physical attractiveness of celebrity, and then measured purchase intention and attitude on the similar product; Edge razors. Results show that the participants who were exposed to an attractive celebrity liked the product more as compare to the participants exposed to an unattractive celebrity. The Dimension of expertise is also referred to as "competence" [46], "qualification" [47], "expertness" [48] or "authoritativeness" [49]. Expertise refers to "the degree to which the endorser is perceived to have the adequate knowledge, experience or skills to promote the product" [50].

## 2.2. Personality, Likeability, Experience, Credibility, Attractiveness:

[51] designed a scale to measure how customers get identified with celebrities or popular fictional characters and this is named as celebrity-persona par asocial identification scale (CPI). Personality of the celebrity is the most important thing because it can rapidly increase sales make customers able to recall the product or brand [1]. Likeability is the "affection for the source as a result of the source's physical appearance and behavior" [52]. [52] stated that celebrities are used in commercials because people liking celebrity also like the brand associated with celebrity. Experience can be defined as "the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions" [53]. Experience in particular area may make celebrity a credible source as if beautiful model endorse makeup [38] or an athlete endorse shoes [54]. As indicated by [55] that for the successful endorsement, experience is accepted as the most significant component and a research shown that the expertise perceived by endorser has a positive impact on attitude change in persuasive communication [56]. [57] concluded that on the tendency to emulate celebrity there is a similar effect of experience of the celebrity and trustworthiness but experience of the endorser is important only when consumers perceive is to be so otherwise it is not important [58]. A method normally used in advertising to influence consumers' attitudes toward the purchase intentions, product evaluations, and ad is endorser credibility [59]. Credibility means the observation of individual towards the certainty of a part of information [53]. To entail a communicator's positive characteristics which affect the receiver's acceptance of a message, a term of "Source credibility" is used [39]. Items included from the potency dimensions and activity served only to obscure the construct because source credibility had been conceived as an attitude or evaluation towards a source [60]. In a firm choosing a celebrity endorser which is followed by likeability, familiarity and gender, the credibility is the most important criteria as in this expertise is the most important piece following trustworthiness and then attractiveness [61]. Credibility comprises two components, trustworthiness and perceived expertness [62]. From consumers, celebrities are usually viewed as credible sources of information about the firm or product they endorse [63]. Physical attractiveness is the degree of one's facial image to elicit favorable reactions from others [64]. [45] conducted a research focused on measurement of purchase intention and consumer's attitude on the basis of two dimensions: Likability and attractiveness. Results predict that there is a greater influence of attractive celebrity on consumer's product likability as compare to unattractive celebrity and at the same time to create purchase intention attractive celebrities were found more persuasive than unattractive celebrity. Among both genders as compare to attractive males, attractive female's endorser is more preferable [65]. To gain from dual effects of physical appeal and celebrity status, advertisers chose celebrities on the basis of their attractiveness [66].

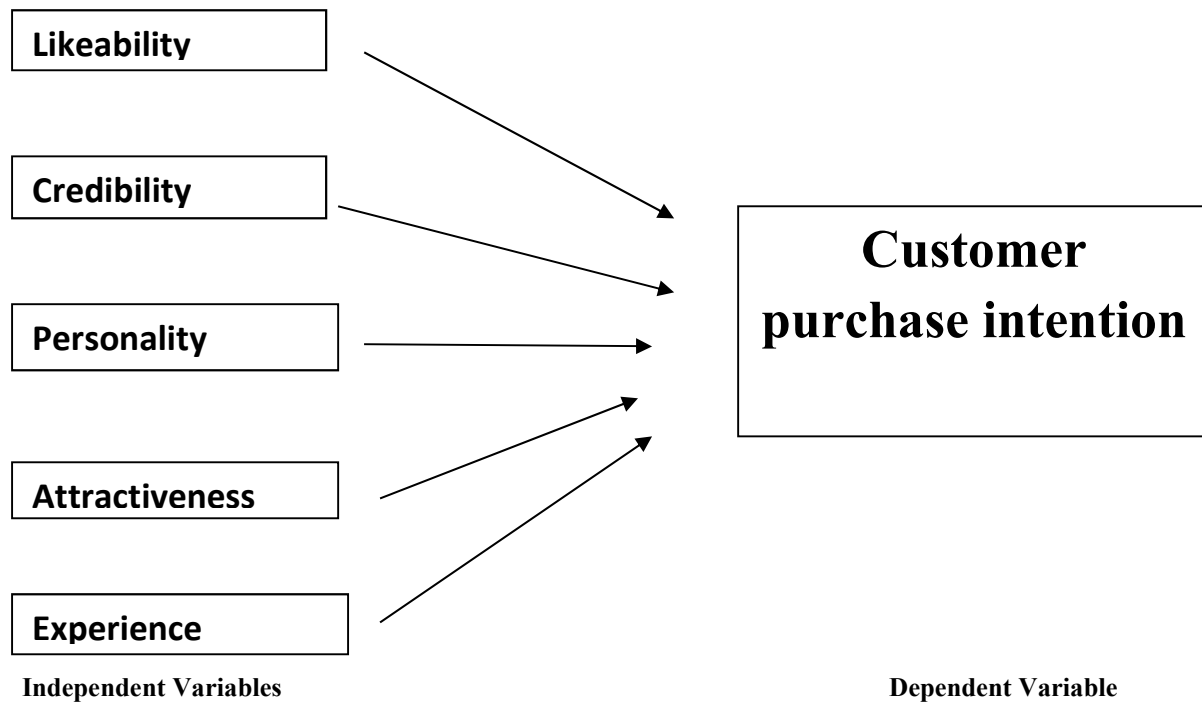
A renowned quotation by Aristotle [67] "*Beauty is a greater recommendation than any letter of introduction*".

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is quantitative in nature and SPSS software was used in order to get results of regression applied on variables. The purpose of conducting research is to analyze the importance of various variables associated with celebrity endorsement on customer purchase intention towards mobile phone and to find which variable would affect male and female customers. The research objective of this study is to find the effect of celebrity's likeability, attractiveness, personality, experience and credibility on purchase intention of male and female customers towards mobile phone. The sample of 800 respondents was chosen for this study among which 400 were females and 400 were males. The research was conducted only in Faisalabad and data was collected by convenient sampling from the students of different universities.

**Conceptual framework and Hypothesis:**

The conceptual framework for this research is shown in figure 1.1 below:



**Figure 1.1**

On the basis of literature variables shown in Fig 1.1 were defined. Attractiveness [58] [44] , experience [58] [68] [67] [69], personality [51] [70], credibility [71] [62] [63] [58] and likability [52] [45].

On the basis of these variables following hypothesis were made:

- H1: Likeability of the celebrity has positive effect on purchase intention of male customers.
- H2: Likeability of the celebrity has positive effect on purchase intention of female customers.
- H3: Credibility of the celebrity has positive effect on purchase intention of male customers.
- H4: Credibility of the celebrity has positive effect on purchase intention of female customers.
- H5: Personality of the celebrity has positive effect on purchase intention of male customers.
- H6: Personality of the celebrity has positive effect on purchase intention of female customers.
- H7: Experience of the celebrity has positive effect on purchase intention of male customers.
- H8: Experience of the celebrity has positive effect on purchase intention of female customers.
- H9: Attractiveness of the celebrity has positive effect on purchase intention of male customers.
- H10: Attractiveness of the celebrity has positive effect on purchase intention of female customers.

**4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

The questionnaire strategy was used for this research and both male and female respondents were provided with same questionnaire. In order to test the reliability of Cronbach's coefficient alpha was used and it comes 0.882 on average as shown in table 1, so it means that our research is acceptable. The spss was used to analyze the results of regression to prove which hypothesis is acceptable. The descriptive analysis of this study showed that among total population of 800 there are 400 female (50 %) respondents and 400 male (50 %) respondents. After that the respondents were classified on the basis of their educational level including, diploma, technician, Bachelor, Masters and PHD. Results showed that among population of 800, 32.1 % respondents have Bachelor and 67.9 % respondents have Master degree. At last it was found that among the population of 800 respondents, (44 %) have less than 5 years, (37.6 %) have 5 to 10 years, (16.5 %) have 11 to 15 years and 2 respondents fall into the category of 16-20 years of practical job experience.

**Table 2: Cornbach's coefficient alpha**

<b>Likeability</b>	0.882
<b>Credibility</b>	0.883
<b>Personality</b>	0.880
<b>Attractiveness</b>	0.881
<b>Experience</b>	0.886
<b>Customer Purchase Intension</b>	0.884

**Table 2.1: Results of regression (male respondents)**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.439	.149		23.031	.000
	Likeability	-.437	.082	-.205	-5.348	.000
	Credibility	-.052	.042	-.069	-1.255	.210
	Personality	.426	.030	.748	14.160	.000
	Attractiveness	-.654	.039	-.835	-16.874	.000
	Experience	-.191	.052	-.219	-3.646	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Customer purchase intention

Table 1.1 shows all variables used in our model and significance column in it shows the significance level of variables. To check the significance we used the values below 0.05. Four out of five constructs including personality, attractiveness, likeability and experience meet this standard and they are significant predictors. Finding of Table 1.1 provides support for only four hypotheses. In significance level less than 5% we can state with 95% confidence that likeability, personality, attractiveness and experience have positive effect on purchase intention of male customers. Purchase intention of male customers is not affected by endorser credibility because it has significance level below 0.05. The prediction of variables for purchase intention is directly proportional to absolute value of Beta. So in this case our most important predictors are attractiveness (0.835), personality (0.748), experience (0.219) and likeability (0.205). The results of our study showed that according to male respondents attractiveness of endorsers has more effect and then personality, experience and likeability of endorser are important for the purchase intention of male customers. It is very much important to note that attractiveness of endorser is most important criterion. According to respondents if celebrity in advertisement would be attractive then it would increase purchase intention of mobile phones by male customers.

**Table 1.2: Results of regression (female respondents)**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.256	.175		12.916	.000
	Likeability	.154	.041	.208	3.733	.000
	Credibility	-.204	.047	-.233	-4.358	.000
	personality	-.075	.052	-.076	-1.427	.154
	Attractiveness	-.169	.056	-.155	-3.029	.003
	Expertise	.058	.037	.081	1.581	.115

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Purchase Intention

Table 1.2 shows that the result of regression from the data collected form female respondents. The questionnaire used for males and female respondents was same also the sample size was equal. Significance level shows that likeability,

credibility and attractiveness are significant predictors for purchase intention of female customers. Findings of this table support only three hypotheses. It can be said that likeability, credibility and attractiveness of endorser have positive effect on purchase intention of female customers. If the value of Beta is more than more the variables of celebrity endorsement will affect customer purchase intention. In this case most important predictors are likeability (0.208), credibility (0.233) and attractiveness (0.155). More over our study show that credibility of the endorser has more effect and then likeability and attractiveness of endorser are important for purchase intention of female customers.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This study shows the importance of celebrity endorsement criteria and effect of celebrity endorsement on purchase intention of male and female customers for mobile phone. The research highlighted the effect of endorser likeability, personality, attractiveness and experience on purchase intention of male customers. The perception of female customers is different so they showed different results. Study found that purchase intention of female customers for mobile phone is affected by likeability, attractiveness and credibility of celebrity. Two things are common between the perception of male and female customers and those are likeability and attractiveness but in female respondents one thing is different i.e credibility so it means that celebrity having attractiveness, likeability and credibility can increase the purchase intention of female customers towards mobile phone. A celebrity in mobile phone advertisement having likeability, personality, attractiveness and experience can increase purchase intention of male customers. So, hypotheses H1, H2, H4, H5, H7, H9, H10 are accepted.

A marketing or media manager should focus on likeability, personality, attractiveness and experience of celebrity while making mobile phone ad for male customers. Some mobile phone models are only designed for females so while making advertisement for those phones manager should keenly focus on likeability, attractiveness and credibility of celebrity.

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