

# Identify Factors Influencing on the Effectiveness of Celebrities Advertising

Zohreh Dehdashti Shahrokh (P.H.D)<sup>1</sup>, Amin Arefi (MBA)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor of Allameh Tabatabaee University

<sup>2</sup>Master of Allameh Tabatabaee University

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## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study aims to analyze the celebrity endorser advertising and to identify influencing factors on the effectiveness of celebrities advertising.

**Design/methodology/approach:** A theoretical model is developed and tested with a questionnaire on a sample of 893 students at the University of Allameh Tabatabaee in 2013. Structural equation modeling was used with LISREL 8.50 and spss for analyzing the data.

**Findings:** In this study the findings shows that the attractiveness of celebrities, credibility of celebrities and fit between celebrities and product affect the effectiveness of advertising. In the current study trustworthiness is the only factor that influence on credibility. Likeability influence on celebrities attractiveness and familiarity of the celebrity has the opposite effect on attractiveness.

**Originality:** This study is the first research in this area in iran.

**KEYWORDS:** Expert, Trustworthiness, Likeability, Similarity, Familiarity

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Advertising is a form of controlled communication that uses strategies to convince to make a buying decision the audience and take advantage of certain services. If you do not advertise properly your product will fail in the market(Satherland,1993). A consumer is bombarded with hundreds of commercial ads each day. According to a survey we spend a year and half of our life watching advertisings. One of the senior advertising agencies in the United States revealed that the rate of advertising failures are more than success ones because their impact is not usually measured. Question is raised that: What is the reason for success or failure? And how it can be reduced?

Today, the modern marketing strategy of most business firms rely on creative advertising to promote their products to their target markets and one of the creative strategies is celebrity advertising.

Advertisings have problem in influencing for this reason, some ads succeed and some do not. Endorsement is a promotional strategy that advertisers use for showing their products or brands. One of the endorsement is celebrity, Companies use them to deliver their advertising message and convince consumers of their brands (van der Veen,2004). Celebrity is very popular type of spokesperson(Tom et al. 1992). Queen Victoria was the first celebrity that endorsed Cadbury's Cocoa in 19th century (Sherman, 1985).

However, modern celebrity advertising originates in the United States but this manner in advertising is popular in other parts of the world such as New Zealand, South Korea, Turkey and India (Money et al, 2006). In Iran, advertisers use this approach but they had not reached to success. Due to culture and special interests in Iran, some of factors affect the successes of this advertising. This article seeks to identify these factors. In this method of advertising, choose the right celebrity is the most important so the main focus of this research is to identify factors that make the right choice for celebrity that effect on the effectiveness of advertising. This study combines the three popular models that there are for appropriate selection celebrity so we create perfect models that can help advertisers.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Celebrity Endorsement

Celebrities are part of reference groups. Reference group means "any group that positively or negatively affects a person's values, attitudes, or behavior"(Pride and Ferrell, 2003). Any person who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition to endorse a consumer good or service by appearing with it in an advertisement ( McCracken's ,1989). A celebrity is a well known personality "actor, entertainer, or athlete" who is known to the public for his or her accomplishment in areas other than the product class endorsed" (Shimp, 2003).

Work/performance of celebrities are different such as entertainers (musicians, actors, models, etc), sports figures, or politicians (Banytè et al,2011). According to Friedman & Friedman (1979), the term "celebrity" refers to

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\* **Corresponding Author:** Zohreh Dehdashti Shahrokh (P.H.D), Associate Professor of Allameh Tabatabaee University

an individual who is known to the public (actor, sports figure, entertainer, etc) for his or her achievements in areas other than that of the product class endorsed (Johanson & Sparredal, 2002). Celebrity endorsers have been used in advertising for their famous attributes such as beauty, talent, athleticism, power (Banytè et al,2011).

Many consumers like values and lifestyle of celebrities as success people and they for enhancing their own self-esteem impersonate celebrities' behavior (Alsmadi, 2006).

Celebrity endorsers are more effective in endorsed brand, attitudes towards advertising, intentions to purchase, and sales, than non-celebrity endorsers especially when they match with the target audiences and products (Wenqian , 2006). They can attract attention, recognition of brand names, increase message persuasiveness and create a personality for the endorsed brand and this means enhancing advertising effectiveness that is goal of advertisers (Mazzini et al,2010). Celebrities may be local, national or international / global and they are different based on their demographics(Banytè et al,2011).The success of this approach in advertisements depends on a number of variables, firstly, the use of a prominent person for an advertising campaign(Sliburyte ,2009).

## **2.2 Selection of appropriate celebrity for advertisement**

The selection of appropriate celebrity for advertisement is a complicated issue that attracted interest of many researchers at both academic and practical levels (Banytè et al,2011). Analysis of scientific literature revealed that there are many models and criteria for selection of celebrity endorsers ( Eriksson & Hakansson, 2005; Bergstrom & Skarfstad, 2004; Osorio, 2002). Four models on celebrity endorsement strategy, which are source credibility model, source attractiveness model, product match-up hypothesis, and meaning transfer model but another factors are important for example, additional factors predicting the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement advertisements and impacts of different cultural values on implementation of celebrity endorsement ( Wenqian , 2006).

Each of these methods from special perspective examines the selection process and identifies personality factors that influence selection process. Therefore, in this paper, the three models (source credibility, source attractiveness, product match-up hypothesis) that affect selection process are examined.

### **2.2.1 The source attractiveness model**

Advertisers have chosen celebrity endorsers on the basis of their attractiveness to gain from dual effects of celebrity status and physical appeal (Singer, 1983). Physical attractiveness of the endorser may be central in context with change in attitude of the customer (Kahle & Homer, 1985). According to Erdogan (1999), attractiveness does not mean simply physical attractiveness, but includes any number of attributes that consumers might perceive in a celebrity endorser: for example, intellectual skill, personality properties, lifestyles, or athletic powers (van der Veen,2004). Attractiveness is an important indicator of effectiveness (Chao et al,2005); Studies reveal that using of attractive celebrity causes to increase attitude towards advertisements (Ranjbarian et al,2010). Joseph (1982) examined the impact of endorser attractiveness on opinion change, product evaluation, and other measures of effectiveness(Amos et al,2008). The studies concluded that attractive endorsers have a more positive impact on the products they endorse than less attractive endorsers (Amos et al,2008). Petty et al (1983) conducted attractiveness of endorsers in terms of a shampoo advertisement to comprehend effectiveness of advertising message types (Wenqian,2006). The celebrity endorsements based on the attractiveness of the endorser most of the time produces positive effect on consumers. Attractiveness of any source( in this approach means celebrity) depend on audience's perception of the source's similarity, familiarity, and likeability (Amos et al,2008).In general attractive endorsers are more effective promoters than unattractive endorsers (Till & Busler, 1998). Baker and Churchill (1977), however, found that while attractiveness was effective in increasing positive advertisement evaluations, it was not effective in producing stronger purchase intentions (Amos et al,2008). Using of an attractive endorser has a positive impact on consumer attitudes towards a brand, because attractive endorsers have a tendency to get more attention than less attractive ones( Ranjbarian et al,2010). High attractiveness, can help the customers to remember the brand during shopping, and using celebrities can get more attention than the advertisements that don't( Al Zoubi&Bataineh,2011).

Components introduced by Ohanian (1990) for attractiveness included classy, beautiful, elegant and sexy. Familiarity has been defined by Erdogan(1999) 'knowledge of the source through exposure' and Likeability means 'affection for the source as a result of the source's physical appearance and behaviour' (Erdogan, 1999).

Likeability has no effect on brand image but there is significant interaction between likeability and involvement(Barrow,2003). Likeability rises message persuasiveness and message persuasiveness is a component of advertisement's effectiveness (McGuire ,1985). Consumers find the celebrity more attractive if they perceive a celebrity endorser as similar to them and they are familiar with and like the celebrity (Amos et al,2008).

In view of this and the above it is expected that:

H1: Attractiveness of celebrities impact on effectiveness of advertising.

- H1a: Familiarity impact on Attractiveness of celebrities.  
 H1b: Similarity impact on Attractiveness of celebrities.  
 H1c: Likeability impact on Attractiveness of celebrities.

### 2.2.2 The Source Credibility Model

The Source credibility model, that is based on the assumption that consumers are more likely to accept a message if they find it credible (Banytè et al,2011). Source credibility is referred to identifying of communicator's positive properties which influences acceptance of a message by the receiver (Ohanian, 1990). The credibility of an advertisement plays an important role in convincing the target audience of the attractiveness of the company's brand (Schlecht,2003).

Pornpitakpan (2003) discovers that the majority of studies undertaken indicate that perceived source credibility has some degree of influence on communication effectiveness (Mazzini et al,2010). Information from a credible source (e.g. celebrity) can influence beliefs, opinions, attitudes and/or behaviour through a process called internalisation, which occurs when receivers accept a source influence in terms of their personal attitude and value structures (Erdogan, 1999).

Based on the source credibility model the effectiveness of a message originating from level of expertise and trustworthiness of celebrity that audiences perceived(Lafferty et al, 2002). Ohanian (1990) introduced components of trustworthiness included dependable, honest, reliable and sincere and for expert included expert, experienced, knowledgeable, qualified and skilled(van der Veen,2004).

The research relating to the source credibility of a celebrity endorser demonstrates how negative information regarding a celebrity can have a negative impact on perception of the advertising featuring the celebrity, and therefore decrease purchase intent (Amos et al,2008).

Goldsmith et al (2000) concluded the credibility of endorser had strongest impact on attitude-toward-the-ad and attitude-toward-the-brand for Mobil Oil company(Mukherjee, 2009). Ohanian (1990) showed there is no significant correlation between the perceived credibility of celebrity endorsers and the purchase intention (Sliburyte ,2009).

Expertise means knowledge, experience, and skills of an endorser regarding the advertised brand. For example, a sport athlete considered to be an expert when he/she endorses sport related products(Al Zoubi&Bataineh,2011). Expertise is defined as the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions and refers to the knowledge, experience or skills possessed by an endorser(Wenqian , 2006). Trustworthiness refers to the audience's confidence that the source provides information in an objective and honest manner (Pei-Shan& Hsi-Peng ,2013). Source trustworthiness refers to faithfulness and reliability of the spokesperson (Khatri, 2006). Further research indicates that if consumers perceive the source as trustworthy and as an expert in the products, which it endorses, consumers are likely to purchase the product (Daneshvary and Schwerk, 2000; Goldsmith et al, 2000). Celebrities may be credible sources if they have expertise in a particular area, such as an athlete endorsing shoes (Ratneshwar and Chiaken, 1991) or a beautiful model endorsing make-up (Mukherjee, 2009). Some authors argue that the perceived expertise of a celebrity endorser is one of the most persuasive elements of an advertisement(Sliburyte ,2009). In general, The literature investigating source credibility in settings involving persuasive communication generally indicates that a receiver's perception of the source's expertise positively influences source effectiveness (Ohanian, 1990). Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H2: Credibility of celebrity's impact on effectiveness of advertising.

H2a: Expert impact on credibility of celebrities.

H2b: Trustworthiness impact on credibility of celebrities.

### 2.2.3 Match-up hypothesis

The celebrity/product fit or 'match-up hypothesis', means what is the harmony between the celebrity endorser and the product being endorsed (Till & Busler, 2000). Celebrity/product fit makes ads more effective and it impact on brand attitude, but not for purchase intention(Amos et al,2008).

The 'match-up hypothesis' specifically suggests that the effectiveness depends on the existence of a 'fit' between the celebrity spokesperson and endorsed brand (Till and Busler, 1998). Celebrity/product fit is thought to function as a key determinant of endorsement effectiveness (Batra & Homer, 2004). Nature of the product endorsed interact positively characteristics of a celebrity(Lynchand Schuler, 1994). Celebrity product match-up was observed to facilitate desired changes in both consumer attitudes and behaviour towards promoted products, particularly in the case of the so-called attractiveness-related products, such as fashion industry goods endorsed by physically attractive celebrities(Sliburyte ,2009). The level of celebrity/product congruence will influence celebrity endorsement effectiveness because consumer attributions of the celebrity's motive for associating celebrity with the

particular product and Subsequently these attributions influence consumer evaluations of the endorser, the ad and the brand (Mukherjee, 2009).

Kamins and Gupta (1994) found that the match-up between a celebrity endorser and the endorsed brand also enhances the celebrity endorser’s believability and attractiveness(Amos et al,2008). Congruence or fit between the product and the celebrity is summarized in characteristics such as image, expertise or attractiveness (Till & Busler, 2000). It is hypothesized that:

H3: Fit between celebrities and product impact on effectiveness of advertising.

**2.2.4 Comparison Factors**

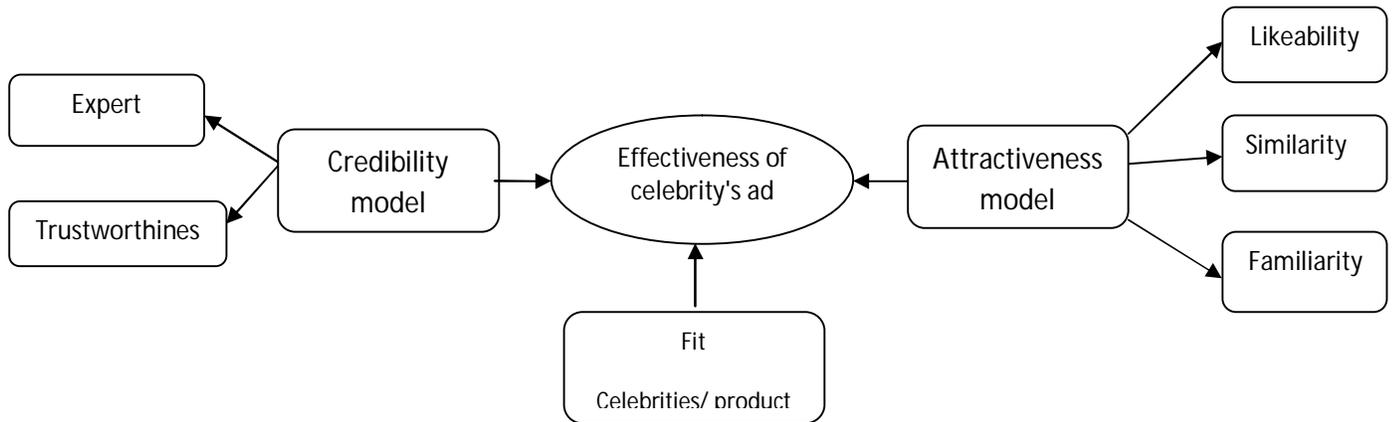
One of the most important criteria in choosing a celebrity endorser is Credibility. Advertisers for choosing celebrity consider familiarity and likeability then they focuses on gender of celebrity and they believe trustworthiness is more important than attractiveness(Mukherjee, 2009).

Source attractiveness is the personality, likeability and similarity of endorsers to the receiver, thus to the perceived social values of the source (Solomon et al, 2002). Expertise dimension is more significant than physical attractiveness for matching of a brand with a suitable endorser (Brian and Michael, 1998).

There was a significant relationship between physical attractiveness and trustworthiness, but the responses indicated that the perceived expertise of the endorser with the product significantly related to the purchase intention of the product (Barrow,2003). Till and Busler (1998) showed that an endorser' s expertise is more important than physical attractiveness in affecting attitude toward an endorsed brand( van der Veen,2004). The effect of some properties like credibility, physical attractiveness and likeability of celebrity are different from one celebrity to another celebrity (Amos et al, 2008).

**3. Conceptual development:**

Studies show that if selecting people are made by this method, it was hoped that advertising may be successful more. The conceptual model was designed by using the three models, this model is shown in Figure 1.



**Fig 1. Conceptual model of this study**

source: (Hovland , Jainis & Kelly`s ,1953)  
 ( Mc Guire`s 1985)  
 ( Till & Busler , 2000)

**4. METHODOLOGY**

**4.1 Research method**

The data of this study are gathered by using questionnaire that designed by the researchers and showing ads, each celebrity actors. The ads used in this study relates to three product categories including men`s clothings, Audio

and Video company and a brand of pen. Mohamadreza Golzar, Mohamad reza sharifinia and pooria poor sorkh are Iranian celebrities for these brands.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections.

The first section of this questionnaire measures the factors influencing effectiveness of an advertising.

A Likert-scale ranging from “ Very much” to “ Very little” was used. The final questionnaire for every ads have 29 items. A total of 385 questionnaires were collected over a period of a month. In the second section demographic questions were asked.

**4.2 Data collection and sample:**

The research was conducted in 2013. The data was collected from 386 students of Allameh Tabatabaee university at Tehran( Iran). In this context, respondents aged among 18 to more than 29 were included in sample. The reliability analysis for the items included in the questionnaires generated Cronbach coefficient Alpha scores that is showed in the table(1) which are higher than 0.70 , which shows levels of internal consistency, as the minimum is stated to be 0.70.

The following values are the average of three questionnaires.

**Table 1. Cronbach Coefficient Alpha**

Variables	item	$\alpha$
Credibility of celebrities	3	.709
Expert of celebrities	3	.855
Trustworthiness of celebrities	4	.861
Attractiveness of celebrities	4	.869
Likeability of celebrities	2	.854
Similarity	3	.805
Familiarity	3	.688
Celebrity/ Product fit	3	.823
Effectiveness of advertising	3	.866

**4.3 Measures:**

In order to measure credibility of celebrities, we used negative information about celebrities, positive information about celebrities and purely financial aspects by celebrities.

Some Ohanian (1990) scales were used to measure expert of celebrities which contains experienced, knowledgeable, qualified.

Some Ohanian(1990) scales were used to measure trustworthiness of celebrities which contains reliable, honest, sincere and respected.

In order to measure attractiveness of celebrities, we used four items including attractive, classy, elegant and beautiful that all items has also been used in Ohanian (1990) scale.

In order to measure likeability, we used behavior, physical appearance and well known.

In order to measure similarity, we used cultural similarity, life style similarity and Interests similarity.

In order to measure familiarity, we used Seen in movies, seen in films and Seen in ceremonies and celebrations.

In order to measure Celebrity/product fit, we used image, expert and overall Fit.

In order to measure effectiveness of advertising, we used purchase intention, recall and Attention.

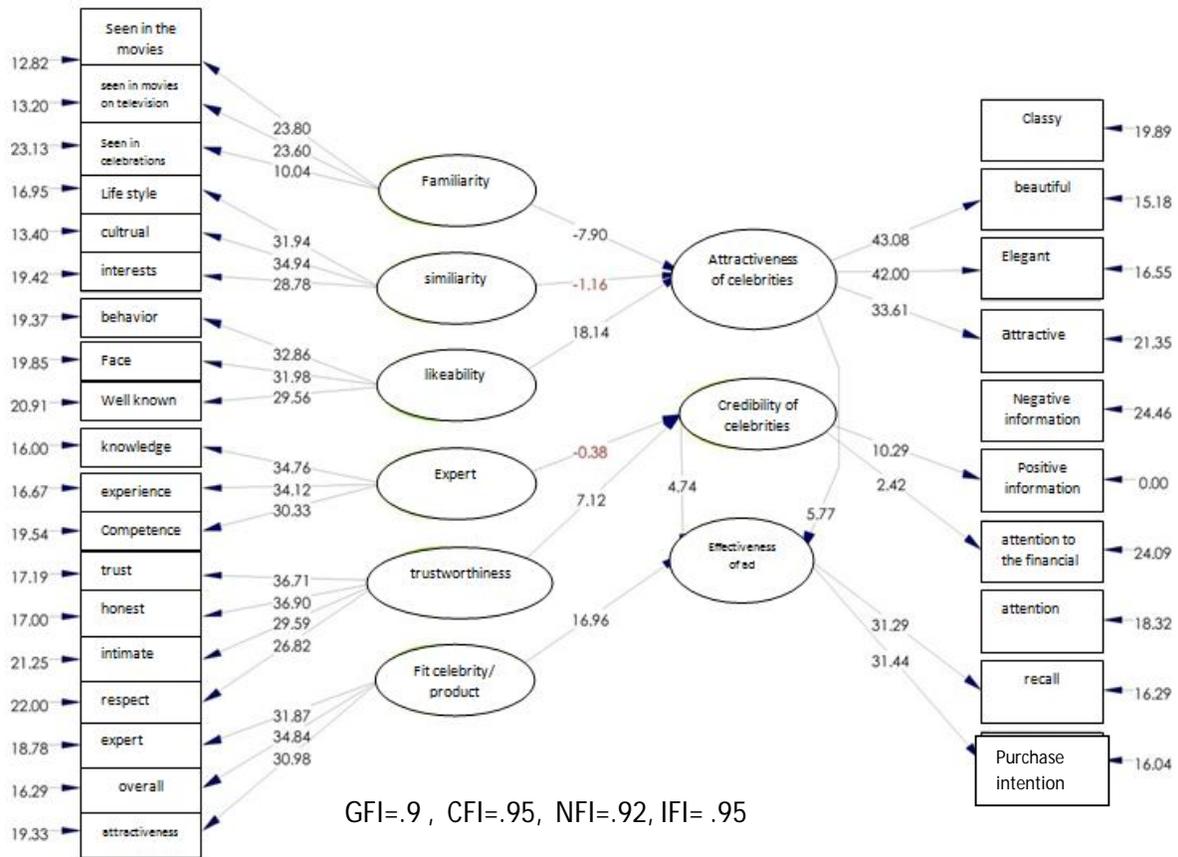
**5. RESULTS**

The sample for the initial examination of the structural model was 386 students. The structural model was estimated in LISREL 8.30 with a correlation matrix as input.

The overall fit indices for the structural model were above the advocated range ( $\chi^2$  (df)=2.886. Both the absolute fit statistics (GFI=.9, RMSEA=.068) and the relative fit indices (CFI=.95, IFI=.95, NFI=.92) suggested that the structural model fit the model adequately.

All factor loadings of constructs were tested at5% error level, all factor loadings were significant at the95% confidence level(t-statistic ranges out to -1.96 to +1.96have been), and related structures of measurement have been able to make a significant contribution.

Fig.2 provides the path estimates for the structural model, and Table 2 summarizes the Significance coefficients (t-value) for this study.



**Fig 2. Path estimates of the structural model**

**Table 2. t-valuee**

		<b>t-value</b>
<b>Familiarity</b>	→ <b>Attractiveness of celebrities</b>	-7.90
<b>Similarity</b>	→ <b>Attractiveness of celebrities</b>	-1.16
<b>likeability</b>	→ <b>Attractiveness of celebrities</b>	18.14
<b>Expert</b>	→ <b>Credibility of celebrities</b>	-.38
<b>Trustworthiness</b>	→ <b>Credibility of celebrities</b>	7.12
<b>Credibility of celebrities</b>	→ <b>Effectiveness of advertising</b>	16.96
<b>Attractiveness of celebrities</b>	→ <b>Effectiveness of advertising</b>	5.77
<b>Celebrity/ Product fit</b>	→ <b>Effectiveness of advertising</b>	4.74

According to the results of the path coefficients, t value, the coefficient of determination and significance level, we can say:

Hypothesis “H1”, which posited that attractiveness of celebrities effect on effectiveness of advertising , is supported (p < .05).

Familiarity and likeability in the 95% confidence level has a significant impact on the attractiveness of celebrities but the similarity does not affect the attractiveness of celebrities. The effect of likeability on attractiveness of celebrities is direct and positive, but the effect of familiarity on attractiveness of celebrities is indirect and negative.

So in this study hypothesis ” H1a” and “H1c” were supported ( p < .05) but not hypothesis “H1b” ( p > .05).

Hypothesis “H2”, which posited that credibility of celebrities effect on effectiveness of advertising , is supported (p < .05).

Trustworthiness in the 95% confidence level has a significant impact on the credibility of celebrities ( p < .05) but the expert does not affect credibility of celebrities( p > .05).

So in this study hypothesis “H2a”was not supported ( p > .05) but hypothesis “H2b” was supported( p < .05).

Hypothesis c, which posited that celebrity/ product fit was positively related to effectiveness of advertising is supported.

## 6. DISCUSSION

In this research we aim to identify factors (direct or indirect) influencing the effectiveness of celebrities in advertising. We designed our research model based on three models that included source credibility model, the source attractiveness model and match-up hypothesis. The result of studies of these models showed that the result was different in various countries based on culture, interests and target audience.

The coefficient  $\beta$  is determined that if there is a fit between celebrity and the product is the most important factor in the effectiveness of advertising. If advertisers pay attention to this factor, their advertisements would be more successful. The ratio of credibility to attractiveness has lower ranking, this result shows involvement of respondent with ads have been lower because people have little knowledge of the product being advertised.

Based on the research we found that attractiveness of celebrities is an important factor in celebrities advertisement. Wenqian Gan (2006) also stated that one of the factors supporting the effectiveness of celebrities in advertising is attractiveness. But Hovland et al(1953) and Ohanian (1991) believed that perception of attractiveness of celebrities by audience is more important than attractiveness of celebrities. so in this study we assume (like another research) similarity, likeability and familiarity are factors that measure attractiveness of celebrities. Results show likeability has a direct impact and familiarity has an indirect impact on the attractiveness. These means that new faces are more attractive compared to well-known celebrities and likeability of the celebrity has a direct impact on attractiveness.

The most debated hypothesis is “ similarity of audience with the celebrity has no effect on attractiveness. However, this hypothesis has been strongly confirmed in previous researches.

Credibility of celebrities is an important factors in celebrities advertising but caused the credibility among the audience depends on different countries culture and characteristics of the target audience.

Pornpitakpan (2003) found credibility of the source is related to effectiveness communication. Erdogan ( 1999) showed that data reported from an authoritative source can effect on opinions, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors of audience. But Hovland et al (1953) and Ohanian (1991) believed that understanding credibility of celebrities by audience is more important than credibility of celebrities. So in this study we assume like another research, expert and trustworthiness are factors that show credibility of celebrities. Results shows that trustworthiness is the only important factor.

Hypothesis about the impact of the "Fit between celebrities and product “on "advertising effectiveness" has been approved. These results are similar with results of Till (1998), Choi et al (2005) and Wenqian Gan (2006) works.

The latest research of Biswas & Odonnel (2009) showed that the fit between the celebrity and the product result in admission of the product and intention of its purchase is affected.

## 7. Conclusion

Some studies show that celebrities can not influence customer behavior but other studies show that celebrities are able to make the customer want to buy.

Companies pay large money for using of celebrities in advertising because celebrities attracted more customers to use product or service and profile picture of him by the fame and popularity. But effectiveness of these depend on the target audience's culture and society.

First, advertisers examine their target audience, if consumer`s involvement with advertisement is low, they have to use attractive celebrity and if the consumer`s involvement with advertisement is high using credible celebrities would be preferable.

In this study, we found that attractiveness of celebrities, validity of celebrities and fit between celebrities and product are factors that directly effect on effectiveness of advertising.

In the current study, the trustworthiness is the only factor that makes credit and likeability makes celebrities attractive and familiarity has the opposite effect on attractiveness.

The researchers suggests that advertisers when choosing a celebrity movie star, choose a movie star, do not consider just a pretty face but first, know their target audience then with quantitative and qualitative research determine factors that cause target audience, the more interesting to see a celebrity. Then choose celebrities eligible or make celebrities with these factors.

If advertisers are going to use celebrities in their ads, they must more emphasis on the fit between the product and celebrities.

Expertise is not the only component represents this fit but appearance and behavior of celebrity can also be indicative of fitness, for example, someone who is handsome and beautiful can be used in modeling advertising or when a famous person in the general population is known as a serious patron of the traffic laws. He can participate in police advertising.

Advertiser can use celebrities that are identified with specific genres, for example, If the celebrity is a famous comedian, ad can be designed to be humorous.

Advertisers need to looking for reliable celebrities or before the advertised with jobs (Example: helping a charity in the name of a celebrity) to make sense who is a credible person.

Advertisers have to ensure the trustworthiness and validity of a celebrity. "If for any reason or event undermine your credit, this contract may be terminated" this condition can be used in contract terms of the contract due to a celebrities realized, now their behavior purchased and are careful about their behavior.

Famous people who want to earn money through ads have always careful about their behavior in order to create confidence in the minds of audience.

### **8. Limitations and future research:**

Assumption affect the expert on credibility is the hypothesis that was not confirmed in this study, while ad Mr. Sharifi Nia (audio and video) was about their field, but the hypothesis was rejected. Unfortunately, at the time of the survey, negative event occurred on the life of Mr. Sharifini so respondents did not respond correctly, so this factor requires further investigation.

The effect of celebrity athletes who have participated in the campaign is another suggest for future researches.

The sample that is pretty logical decision but this method of advertising is almost a sense; therefore in future studies sensitive sample like students and children can be used.

In this study, we used only ads that male actors participated in the campaigns, in future studies.

We suggest studying the role of women celebrities in advertisings.

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