

Celebrity Endorsement and Consumer Patronage of Carbonated Drinks in Anambra State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: The study investigated celebrity endorsement influences and consumer patronage of carbonated drinks in Anambra State, Nigeria. The study anchored on Commitment-Trust theory of relationship, specifically; celebrity personality, likeability, and experience influence on consumer patronage. 400 respondents in 21 Local Government Areas were sampled using the study questionnaire. Data were analyzed and presented. Multiple regression was used for hypotheses testing. Findings indicated personality and experience of celebrity had a weak positive but significant influence, $\beta = .051$, $p\text{-value} > .031$, and $\beta = .034$, $p\text{-value} > .001$ respectively, while likeability had weak positive no significant influence on consumer patronage of ($\beta = .052$, $p\text{-value} > .066$). The study, concluded that celebrity endorsement possessing strong personality, likeability and experience positively influence consumers' purchase.. The study recommended among other things that marketers of carbonated drinks should have deep consideration for celebrities with fascinating or enthralling personality, and whose likeability among fans is strong.

KEYWORDS: Celebrity Endorsement; Personality; Likability; Experience; Consumer Patronage; Carbonated Drinks

I. INTRODUCTION

The marketing of carbonated drinks has gone far beyond mere supply of firm's brands, reduction in sugar content or upgrading the product with natural ingredients (Koppikar, 2020). Rather, the top producers of the product in Nigeria such as Pepsi Company Plc and Coca-Cola Nigerian Bottling Company (NBC Plc.) makers of Pepsi, Coca-Cola, and Sprite among other brands expend a huge chunk of their budget in their persuasive promotional campaigns necessitated by stiff competition in the industry, and occasioning reduced patronage.

To address these challenges, it appears that the firms are employing disruptive promotional strategies including celebrity endorsement with the aim to appeal to the emotion and taste of the consumers. However, laudable as this initiative may seem, it has not been clear if the approach is yielding the desired results. It is against this backdrop that this study sought to investigate the extent of the impact of celebrity endorsement on the consumer patronage of the products.

Celebrity endorsement is one of the trendy tools for persuasive promotions in contemporary times. This involves the use of a famous person who has gained public recognition to promote a brand or product as a marketing communication strategy in order to elicit consumers' patronage. Bergkvist, Hjalmarson and Mägi (2016) noted that the strategy is a mutual agreement between an individual who enjoys public appeal and an entity/brand to use his/her social status to commercially promote the entity. This is on the estimation that consumers' favourable and positive evaluation of the product's celebrity endorser's personal characteristics which, according to Kelman (1961) include personality, likeability, experience, credibility and attractiveness will enhance the firm's sales performance.

Much as it is not clear when the first celebrity endorsement took place in Nigeria, the practice has exponentially increased in the country since the early 90's (Ifeanyichukwu, 2016). Odionye, Yareh, Ibekwe and Salami (2021) have disclosed some of the endorsement deals in the recent past including, for example, Kate Henshaw for Onga food seasoning in 2014, Sunny Nneji, Omotola Jalade Ekeinde and Jide Kosoko for Chivita juice drinks in 2016 amongst a host of others.

Suffice it to say that marketers employ the strategy fundamentally, to appeal to consumers' sense of association given the greater likelihood of enhanced consumer acceptance of a particular product because of the celebrity endorser.

Personality is a set of qualities that makes one distinct or interesting. Esangbedo (2011) [6] indicated that the personality of the celebrity is a vital factor that informs consumers' ability to recall a product; and as well, influences customers to accept information obtained from them as evidence about reality (Li, 2013). This means that celebrity personality has a way of conveying a message of products that are real or can be relied upon by consumers. This further implies that source personality is key to evaluating the kind of information put out to the public domain (Ilicic & Webster, 2011 [8]; Munnukka & Toivonen, 2016) [9].

Likeability is the affinity one has for something or somebody. Contextually, likeability is the favourable disposition towards a celebrity as a result of his/her physical appearance and behaviour, denoting target audience admiration of the focus person's accomplishments in the industry he/she explores. Solomon (2014). posited that likability is a consequence of receivers' acceptance of a source influence in terms of their personal attitude and value structures (Solomon, 2014).

In the world of marketing communication, celebrities in the entertainment industry particularly have been observed more liked by fans for their outstanding performance, their appealing personalities, and their qualities which stand them out among teeming others (Kazmi, 2017). Thus, celebrities have a unique way of influencing consumers given that they act as a source of inspiration to them.

Experience can be expressed as the extent to which a message is perceived to be a source of valid claims. Experience in a particular endeavour may make a celebrity appear reliable in the eyes of the consumers. According to Oyeniyi (2014), it is considered as an integral component of celebrity endorsement. Going further, Zafer (1999) asserted that experience of the endorser is critical only when consumers perceive it to be; otherwise, it is inconsequential. The choice of celebrities for endorsement is predicated on the knowledge and experience they possess regarding the product they are endorsing (Belch & Belch, 2021). The implication is that the celebrities' recommendation of a brand/product for consumers is not just for pecuniary reasons but born out of their knowledge within the target area that the product or brand is good.

Credibility on its part is seen as a person's forthrightness or trustworthiness. According to ZorBari-Nwitambu and Kalu (2017) credibility is seen from standpoint of a person's level of integrity, honesty and dependability the celebrity regarding the subject matter. More often than not, celebrities are usually perceived as credible sources of information about a firm or product they endorse. Credibility captures the tendency to exude implicit belief on someone with little or no doubt of being deluded. It has been contented that consumers are favourably disposed towards information that is emanating from a credible source, which eventually influences their values, attitudes, and opinions via the process of internalization. Expectedly, consumers are open to the influence of celebrities especially when they consider them reliable and credible. Euis and BasuSwastha (2012) summed up that credibility is a form of influence that induces internalization in the receiver if validity, truthfulness and trustworthy are fulfilled by the source.

Finally, physical attractiveness is the extent to which one's facial image or appearance appeals to others. Physical attractiveness when factored in promotional strategies tend to influence consumers' patronage when they recall produced or brands that are endorsed by familiar celebrities (Chi, Yeh & Tsai, 2014). McGuire (2013) though aligning with this view but contending that attractiveness goes beyond physical attractiveness stressed that it embodies any number of valuable features such as eloquence, sportsmanship, character, reliability among others which consumers might consider interesting in celebrity endorser. These features are capable of influencing consumers' patronage and their loyalty to the brand or product. Consumers tend to form idols out of celebrities as a result of the attractiveness of the celebrity which could lead to increased sales of the product or brand that is being endorsed by the celebrity.

Among the highlighted characteristics, Adam and Hussain (2017) indicated that celebrity attractiveness is about the key trait that most effectively promotes persuasive marketing messages. Against this backdrop, Gilal, Paul, Gilal, and Gilal (2020) believe that celebrities who are very attractive and carry a certain level of aura are mostly engaged by organizations than those who are less.

Patronage can be said to be the resolution of a consumer to buy a product, referring to a situation of a consumer making up his/her mind to patronize a product. It embodies the yardstick that impacts on the firm patronized by the consumer (Ogbuji, Onuoha & Abdul, 2016); and captures "repeat purchase, customer retention and customer referrals" (Awah, 2015).

Given the foregoing, the present study, wondering why the overly deployment of celebrity endorsers in the promotion of carbonated/mineral drinks product/brands in Anambra State, sets to ascertain what drives this penchant in the industry, and as it relates to the consumers' response.

Previous studies have attempted to explore the influence or effect of celebrity endorsement on consumer patronage of mineral drinks. Instances of accessible empirical studies on this theme and related areas can be traced. Namitha and Thankachan (2019), and Goutam (2013) focused on celebrity endorsement in relation to consumer buying behaviour of aerated drinks. Nnamocha and Chukundah (2018). as well as Odili and Ukpai (2021). examined celebrity endorsement and customer patronage of Nigerian Bottling Company brands in Port Harcourt city of Rivers State.

Other studies including Osei-Frimpong, Donkor and Owusu-Frimpong (2019); Abbas, Afshan, Aslam and Ewaz (2018); Adnan, Ali Jan, Alam and Ali (2017); Khan, Rukhsar and Shoaib (2016).; Malik and Qureshi (2016) [30]; and Ifeanyichukwu (2016) explored celebrity endorsement in relation to consumer purchase intention, while others (Odionye, Yareh, Ibekwe and Salami, 2021; Namitha and Thankachan, 2019; Omoregbe & Samuel, 2019; Bhatti & Fiaz, 2019; Malik and Guptha, 2014 & Goutam, 2013) investigated consumer buying behaviour.

However, Omeje, Oparaugo, Anigbo and Chukwuka (2022) study digressed to analyzing celebrity endorsement and consumer choice of alcoholic beverages in Nigeria. Mixed findings discovered in these notable extant literatures which may be as a result of intervening variables including principally, the analytical procedural differences as well as observed paucity of researched literature in the current study area motivated the present research effort focused on Anambra State.

Following from the above, the personality, likeability, and experience of the celebrity endorser were deployed as the independent variables to explain the extent these physiognomies influence consumer patronage of carbonated drinks in the target study area. Hence, these variables translated to the hereunder research questions which the research sought to resolve, and correspondingly hypothesized in null as guide:

1. Does personality of celebrity influence consumer patronage of carbonated drinks?

Personality of celebrity does not significantly influence consumer patronage of carbonated drinks.

2. To what extent does likeability of celebrity influence consumer patronage of carbonated drinks?

Likeability of celebrity has no significant influence on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks.

3. What is the influence of experience of celebrity on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks?

Experience of celebrity has no significant influence on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks.

It is expected that the findings of this study will provide marketers including marketing campaign experts, and advertising agencies with verified current data/information, knowledge and insight to use to design and develop effective strategic persuasive promotional campaign tools that can induce the desired behavioural changes in the consumer that will drive enhanced demand and patronage of particularly soft-drink industry products/brands towards improved company sustainability. Similarly, the study findings constituting contribution to knowledge of impact of celebrity endorsement of firm's products will provide scholars and researchers with verified philosophical framework/reference source to extending or replication of the present and related line of investigation in the future in other geographical areas. In the same vein, the literate consumer segment will get insight into what celebrity qualities significantly drive brand association with a celebrity endorser from fan followership base.

II. LITERATURE/THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Celebrity Endorsement

Celebrities are people that have distinguished themselves in their area of endeavour to the point that they have gained public appeal. Celebrities, in succinct terms, refer to individuals that enjoy public recognition by a variety of people within the community (Kazmi, 2017). Their sterling attributes of extraordinary lifestyle, social status, attractiveness, and skills are not commonly observed in the community, which distinguishes them from the common people that eventually help them to enjoy a high degree of public attention (Rafique, 2012). According to Patra and Datta (2012), a celebrity is an individual that has attained greatness in a particular profession widely acclaimed in the society and enjoys enormous fan base as well as media attention.

Endorsement is the art of approving something. Contextually, it is a way of promoting brands with regular advertising in order to strengthen the overall brand equity (McCormick, 2016). ZorBari-Nwitambu and Kalu (2017) conceptualized celebrity endorsement using four dimensions: perceived expertise, trustworthiness, credibility and belief while Nnamocha and Chukundah (2018) measured celebrity endorsement using two dimensions: endorsement coverage and frequency of endorsement. According to Kang and Choi (2016), it is via celebrity endorsements that brand managers attempt to create and maintain strong brand personality in the minds and eyes of the target audiences. The rationale behind this phenomenon is that the promotional messages conveyed to the target audiences by these celebrities not only provide higher level of brand recognition but strengthens the overall brand equity (Han & Yazdanifard, 2015). Unlike non-celebrity endorsed brands, celebrity-endorsed brands provide a justification for consumers to consider their patronage and by extension, loyalty to a particular brand.

Celebrities have been argued to add value to a brand; therefore local and multinational companies are more willing to pay huge salaries to celebrities as they are respected and liked by the target audience, and can provide the organizations with an opportunity to change and influence the attitude and behaviour of the consumers (Shimp & Andrew, 2013). Moreover, it has been claimed by Mukherjee (2009) that companies have transformed their approaches from using anonymous endorsers to celebrities in the advertisement as they add

significant value in sustaining brand communication, which helps achieve a higher level of brand recall and attention.

Celebrity endorsement is a global business innovation that is used by carbonated drinks' firms to promote their brands. It is the use of a person who enjoys public recognition, fame and acceptance to appear in advertisements and promotions (Mahira, 2012). Contemporary firms have continuously inundated the world of marketing communication with the attractive advertisement, which finds it quite difficult to go unrecognized (Spry, Pappu, & Cornwell, 2011). It is in a dire bid for firms to exert competitive advantage over others that they look out for innovate ways such as celebrity endorsement to promote their products. In Nigeria, a number of celebrities have endorsed several products and services viz: Nkem Owoh, Tiwatope Savage-Balogun (Tiwa Savage), Olubankole Wellington (Banky W), Ayodeji Ibrahim Balogun (Wizkid), Funke Akindele, Ayodeji Richard Makun (A.Y), Kate Henshaw, Ali Nuhu, Genevieve Nnaji among others (Paramhar, 2016). The aforementioned celebrities have been endorsed by several firms dealing on products such as carbonated drinks, detergents, toothpastes, phones/gadgets, food items among others. In view of the foregoing, the business owners' foremost task is to create a marked distinction between them and their business rivals while not losing sight on the task of provoking consumers' loyalty to their product.

In contemporary times, advertisements and commercials are ignored by consumers while switching channels, or flipping through the newspapers and/or magazines (Rosca, 2010). Thus, the concept of celebrity endorsement in advertisement has gained significant prominence consequent upon its impact as well as the benefits that it offers to the overall brand (Chan, Leung & Luk, 2013). The use of celebrity endorsement is vital given celebrities' unique attributes of extraordinary lifestyle, social status, attractiveness, and skills that distinguish them from the common people that eventually help them to enjoy a high degree of public attention (Rafique, 2012).

The rationale of business owners behind this marketing strategy is that the promotional messages conveyed to the target audiences by these celebrities not only provide higher level of brand recognition but further strengthens the overall brand equity (Han & Yazdanifard, 2015). Arguably, celebrity endorsement adds value to a brand to the extent that local and multinational firms are more willing to pay huge sums to celebrities as they are respected and liked by the target consumers, and can provide the firms with an opportunity to change and influence the attitude and purchase decision of the consumers (Shimp & Andrew, 2013). The use of celebrities in commercials can have affirmative effect on the trustworthiness, message recall, memory and likability of the commercials and on the buying decisions of the target consumers (Roy, 2006). Celebrity endorsement can be emphasized around personality, likeability, experience, credibility and attractiveness.

2.1.2 Celebrity Personality

Personality is the quality of a person that differentiates him/her from others. It is a distinguishing factor. It makes a celebrity distinct from others. It is a quality that makes a celebrity stand out from the crowd. It is a manner of behaviour. For instance, a celebrity that takes on a youth personality is said to be behaving like a youth. A product or brand that is endorsed by such a celebrity is bound to elicit patronage given that youths especially within the Nigerian context are more in number than the children and the aged. Personality of the celebrity is an important factor that informs consumers' ability to recall a product or brand (Esangbedo, 2011).

Celebrity personality influences customers to accept information obtained from other sources as evidence about reality (Li, 2013). This means that celebrity personality has a way of conveying a message of products that are real or can be relied upon by consumers. This further implies that source personality is a key to evaluating the kind of information put out to the public domain (Ilicic & Webster 2015; Munnukka & Toivonen, 2016).

2.1.3 Celebrity Likeability

Likeability focuses on the admiration based on the accomplishments of the celebrity in the industry. In the world of marketing communication, celebrities are liked for their outstanding performance in the entertainment industry, their appealing personalities, and their qualities that help them to stand out in the industry (Kazmi, 2017). Charbonneau and Garland (2005) argued that celebrities that are liked by consumers are frequently used in advertisements as their voice has more impact on the consumers than non-credible models. Yilmaz, Eser, Muzaffer and Tutku (2011) [48] posit that, likable and source credibility increase attention and positive feeling to the advertising message which ultimately leads to purchase. It is preferable that customers get to like brands that they decide to buy.

Likability is a consequence of receivers' acceptance of a source influence in terms of their personal attitude and value structures (Solomon, 2014). Thus, celebrities have a way of influencing consumers given that they act as a source of inspiration to them.

2.1.4 Celebrity Experience

Experience of the endorser is critical only when consumers perceive it to be; otherwise it is not a necessity (Zafer, 1999). The choice of celebrities for endorsement is predicated on the knowledge and experience they possess regarding the product they are endorsing (Belch & Belch, 2021). The implication is that the celebrities' recommendation of a brand or product for consumers is not just for pecuniary reasons but born out of their knowledge within the subject area that the product or brand is good. More so, if the consumers perceive the celebrity as being proficient in the brand or product that he or she is endorsing, there is the likelihood of the consumers being persuaded to patronize the product or brand. That is to say that celebrities' experience is a pre-requisite for consumers' patronage and by extension loyalty to the product or brand that is being endorsed.

2.1.5 Consumer Patronage

A plan to patronize a particular commodity for use by a consumer is known as consumer patronage. According to Adiele, Grend and Ezirim (2015), customer patronage is the commitment of an individual to purchase a product because of its quality or perceived quality. They use two financial dimensions; namely, sales volume and profit margin, and one non-financial dimension; namely, customer retention, to measure customer patronage. Ogbuji, Onuoha and Abdul (2016) measure customer patronage in terms of customer satisfaction and referrals. Consumer patronage is premised on their opinion towards the source person, celebrity endorser (Amos, Holmes & Struton 2008). In other words, patronage could be a consequence of celebrity's opinion about their expertise rather than any other. According to White, Goddard, and Wilbur (2009), society of negative event with celebrity endorser has negative effects on purchasing decision. Several factors are responsible behind the shaping and reshaping of consumer purchase intention viz: the social factors, the psychological factors as well as the situational factors (Adnan, Ali Jan, Alam, & Ali, 2017).

Consumer patronage is the deliberate art of interaction that embodies cognition, affect and behaviour by which consumers assert their buying choices (Omeregbe & Osayande, 2018). It refers to a consumer's intentional plan to buy a commodity for future consumption. Suffice it to say that consumers' patronage can be influenced by sundry factors viz: socio-demography, culture, psychology, economy, age and gender. Interestingly, celebrity endorsement plays a vital role in provoking these various factors, more especially the psychological motive of the consumer to patronize certain products. These factors find expression in their perception, disposition as well as preferences, among others. A consumer makes a decision to patronize a product when he/she considers the product as worthy of the price that he/she is willing to part with. Thus, when consumers are fascinated about a brand of products, they become passionately attached with their behaviours which build into consumer loyalty (Osifo & Agbonifoh, 2018). More so, a product is purchased by a consumer in consideration of the value it adds to the consumer which can however be influenced by a celebrity endorser. When products meet the needs and preferences of consumers, the tendency is for the consumer to have favourable disposition towards the product, and loyalty to the product is the logical consequence.

Sushil and Ashish (2013) averred that consumer patronage embodies the processes involved in the selection and utilization of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy consumers' needs. Going further, consumer patronage is a function of the integrity of the endorser and how well the product has served the consumer in the time past. Samar and Samreen (2015) averred that emotional affections put a significant effect on the consumers and their patronage as they tend to link themselves with the brand of products endorsed by celebrities. Samar and Samreen added that these perceptions are done by consumers through their senses, discernment, attention, recall, reasoning, language among others. In other words, celebrity endorsement is a major determining factor that influences the decisions of consumers to buy a specific product through cognition. Thus, the best way firms can make consumers to patronize their products is to understand these aspects of consumers' psychological cognition and work accordingly.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Commitment-Trust theory of relationship. Commitment-Trust theory of relationship propounded by Morgan and Hunt in 1994 stipulates that two fundamental factors, trust and commitment must exist for a relationship to be successful. Celebrities are expected to make a deliberate commitment towards getting the trust of consumers on the product they are endorsing. The theory emphasizes a long-term quest to maintain a valued partnership in line with the postulations. That quest causes the business to continually invest in celebrity endorsements so as to elicit the consumer's patronage. The results of a relationship based on commitment and trust are increase in sales of products by eliciting consumer patronage.

The theory, further, postulates that firms might refund the customer or offer a discount on her next purchases. The business could incorporate the feedback mechanism to ensure that other consumers do not have the same bad experience. Put differently, via a series of relationship –building activities such as celebrity endorsement, the firm shows its commitment to the consumer and the consumer, in turn, takes a liking to the

firm's personality. This theory is of relevance to the study, to the extent that commitment, likeability, personality and trust are crucial for a relationship to be successful. When such a relationship exists, consumers decide to patronize the firms resulting in increase in product sales.

2.3 Theoretical Exposition

2.3.1 Celebrity Personality and Consumer Patronage

The highly competitive business environment has gained ascendancy in the last decade as firms have been employing effective marketing and promotional strategies to gain a competitive advantage and brand prominence on both domestic and international front for products such as carbonated drinks. Thus, Erdogan, Baker and Tagg (2001) stated that brand promotion does not only affect the brand awareness but consumer evaluation of brand or product attributes. However, with the changing perceptions of consumers in the market as well as altering consumer trends, the brands are required to be more persuasive in order to attract consumers and increase brand association (Kazmi, 2017). It could mean that advertisement brings about positive affirmations of consumers towards a product (carbonated drinks) or brand in which effective advertising strategy plays a vital role. However, Grönroos and Voima (2013) noted that poor advertisement would cause negative substantiation and opinions in the minds of consumers towards a product or brand. Carbonated drinks' firms apply integrated marketing communications, which combine diverse marketing activities with communication techniques to build brand awareness and loyalty among young consumers for unhealthy drinks (Jackson, Harrison, Swinburn & Lawrence, 2014).

The major outcome of advertisement and brand promotion could be seen with how firms promote products such as carbonated drinks that would ultimately influence consumers' purchase decisions. According to Aaker and Biel (2013) celebrity personalities have been used in almost all the genres of marketing where brands are willing to spend on celebrity endorsement more than a commodity price. It goes without saying that firms shell out the sums for celebrity endorsement to capture the consumer's mind. The responses captured by consumers are associated with the benefits offered by the brand for which famous celebrities have been used to enhance consumer patronage. In the views of Rand (2014), advertisement is related to persuading and reminding consumers about the brand over and over again. Consequently, business owners use advertisement as a tool for reaching to the minds of consumers and persuading them to patronize the same brand or product over and over again.

It has been argued by Kabani (2013) that advertisement raises a couple of questions regarding the attitude of people towards the brand. The most vital facet of advertisement is consumers' retention and sustenance of brand loyalty. However, Benady (2014) asserted that some brand use commercials and ads with a celebrity included not only for enhancing sales but for drawing the attention of consumers by stimulating their minds towards the brand purchase. The implication is that advertisements have been employed by the marketers to make consumers take swift purchase decisions. According to Carrascosa, González, Cuevas and Azcorra (2013), the advanced era of technology has been using celebrity endorsement with a view to promoting the brand or product offered by the firm. However, the main concern is related to the needs and preferences of the consumers for which the availability of products attributes required are ensured via the use of a famous celebrity in the advertisements. In similar vein, the displayed product or brand attributes become needful to the consumers' inclination to take purchase decisions. The marketers use celebrities who have been known amongst audiences for their notable achievements in their chosen fields of endeavour.

The selection of a celebrity is hinged on personality attributes which are required to be aligned with the product or brand attributes (Keel & Natarajan, 2012). Arguably, celebrity endorsement is rather not a novel advertisement tool. In other words, it has been used over the years to elicit consumers' patronage of brands. However, it is becoming trendier in contemporary times than ever before. This may not be unconnected to the fact that in recent times, consumers are becoming emotionally attached to celebrities who have distinguished themselves in their various fields of endeavour. More so, the number of celebrities in advertisements has increased with a view to engendering consumers' positive response to the brand or product. According to Wei and Lu (2013), much as celebrity personality can come with a negative impact, it has been playing a pivotal role in stimulating the minds of the consumers. Choi and Rifon (2012) [66] argued that celebrity endorsement has played an influential role in introducing positive assertions from consumers; whereas Knittel and Stango (2009) [67] found that celebrity personality can also produce negative results. For instance, the irregular behaviour and extramarital affairs of Tiger Woods resulted in the estimated loss of \$5-\$12 billion in comparison to companies that did not consider using the celebrity in advertisement campaigns.

One more apparent and popular example of celebrity endorsement is the track record of Pepsi during the last ten years. With multiple strategies of brand endorsement using sports figures and actors used as brand endorsers, as was the case with Michael Jackson and Beyonce (Doss, 2011), which highlighted their Pepsi (carbonated drink) bottles and can with their pictures on them. Nowadays, various firms are making conscious investments in celebrity endorsements so as to improve their sales. McCormick (2016) noted that celebrities as

diverse as Elvis Presley, Beatles and Michael Jackson were instrumental in attracting young consumers, through their endorsements, to promote different products.

The evolution of celebrity endorsements dates back to the reign of Queen Victoria, herself a brand ambassador for Cadbury Cocoa during the 1880s. However, unofficial celebrity endorsements were used by a company named Goodwin and Co. who made cards with baseball players and published them on the packs of cigarettes they sold (Kazmi, 2017). Kazmi added that with the evolution of television and radio advertisements during the 1920's and 1930's, a rise in the trend of celebrity endorsements was observed, more inclined towards real human celebrities than non-human or fictional characters, although cartoon characters were also used as influencers. Such cartoon characters included Mickey Mouse, Tom and Jerry, Cinderella as well as Snow White (Halonen-Knight & Hurmerinta, 2010). In this era of advancement and globalization, celebrity endorsements are used as a communication medium as part of various public relation events, as a brand ambassador in conventional media and across the internet technology.

Celebrities play key roles in influencing younger consumers. International celebrities such as Justin Bieber and Taylor Swift are highly popular among young audiences with an outstanding influence on retail levels (Dix, Phau, & Pougnet, 2010). A similar influence has been observed in the previous literature, since after the birth of television and radio, but celebrity endorsement could not have attained its current level of impact without the latest technology and the advanced strategies adopted by the brand managers when viewed from the perspectives of retailers, consumers, and celebrities.

The foremost benefit that can be viewed through celebrity endorsement in the marketing campaigns is that the consumers are informed about the wide variety of products and services that the company has to offer its consumers, which eventually results in reaching a wider target market (Chung, Derdenger, & Srinivasan, 2013). Multinational companies like Nike, Reebok, and Adidas are the prime examples when it comes to companies that have used a variety of brand marketing strategies with respect to celebrity endorsement. Celebrity endorsement has provided the companies with an opportunity to reach the level of credibility through the endorsers based on their expertise, trustworthiness, likeability, and status.

Chang (2011) indicated that consumers are more attracted to brands that have higher involvement rate in comparison to products with lower involvement rate. Firms tend to focus on the selection and implementation of right strategies and techniques at the right time and place, which are more likely to influence the buying decisions, preferences, and priorities of consumers. Thus, celebrities are in the optimal position to mold and influence the perceptions, feelings, and attitudes of the consumers associated with specific brands in the business environment. Moreover, consumers are more inclined towards the purchase of carbonated drinks that help them to achieve and enhance the desired concept of self, which allows them to express and strengthen their self-identity and self-esteem.

The management of celebrities has long been considered as a vital component in developing carbonated drinks for the benefit of the consumers. Moore (2014) stated that sharing values with consumers is a corporate practice that enhances the competitiveness of a company and advances social conditions in the communities in which it operates. It goes without saying that with the enhancement of the competitiveness of a company, product-brand development receives a boost.

According to Moore (2014), there is an embracing of the concept by many of the world's leading corporations such as Nestle, Intel, Unilever, Coca-Cola and Western Union, and the framework and language of shared value has spread quickly beyond the private sector to governments, NGOs, civil society and academia. It is expected that both the celebrity's personality and the consumer link together in order to have a long term association with one another which will be a motivation for the development of product-brands (carbonated drinks). Celebrity's personality resonates with consumers in a unified manner towards the development of product-brands (carbonated drinks).

2.3.2 Celebrity Likeability and Consumer Patronage

Moreover, Anghel (2009) argued that brands with distinguished media celebrities are in a prime position to generate a higher level of brand recall and attention in comparison to companies that have not been endorsed by celebrities. This implies that consumers are brand-conscious and are more likely to purchase a brand that has endorsed celebrities with likeable qualities and characteristics. The literature has revealed that companies have frequently relied on the use of celebrities in advertisements to endorse their offered products and services through a variety of imagery. Companies have considered the attractiveness and likability of the celebrities while determining the celebrity's level of trustworthiness to ensure that consistent message and characteristics are reflected in their offered brand (Patel, 2009). This section of the literature has focused on examining the frequency of usage of celebrity endorsement by companies in the world of marketing communication while highlighting the success factors of celebrity endorsement as well as the negative impact of celebrity endorsement on the product.

Nike is amongst the world's leading sportswear brands and was able to increase its sales by 400% by using Tiger Woods as a brand ambassador for its gold-related sportswear (Chung, Dardenger, & Srinivasan, 2013). Considering the outstanding increase in the level of sales caused by endorsing a celebrity, it has been argued that endorsing the right celebrity for the offered brand can result in positive outcomes related to brand image and brand awareness (Patel, 2009). Moreover, the testimony of Tiger Wood (i.e. association with Nike) was more than enough to influence the followers and fans to use the sportswear brand over others available in the marketplace.

In the view of Yilmaz, Eser, Muzaffer and Tutku (2011), likability and source credibility increase attention and positive feeling to the advertising message which ultimately leads to patronage. The expectation is that consumers will have emotional attachment to a product or brand before deciding to purchase it whenever they consider necessary. That is to say that consumers' emotional attachment to a product or brand has a way of eliciting their patronage and by extension, enhancing their loyalty to the brand or product. Suffice it to say that consumers' patronages depend on their ability to assimilate the message that is being conveyed by the celebrity endorser. However, not all available messages are assimilated at the same time. Moreover, consumers have a way of identifying with celebrities to the extent that consumers wish to say what the celebrities say, wear what they wear, do what they do and by so doing, align with their personality to the point of deciding to patronize a product that they are endorsing.

There have been debates in the literature as to whether or not celebrity endorsement positively influences consumer patronage. For instance, Zahaf and Anderson (2008) found out that the celebrity factor in itself does not have any real effect on the consumers' patronage even though the willingness to buy can be enhanced by a celebrity endorser. In other words, in cases where the factors that influence the willingness to buy are absent, the celebrity endorser would not have any impact on patronage. Given the divergent views concerning how celebrity endorsement influences the consumer patronage, it is not in doubt as to why certain firm's relentless use celebrity endorsement has been unsuccessful.

Albert, Ambroise and Valette-Florence (2017) demonstrated that celebrities have become famous for more than the TV shows or the movies; they appear on the covers of the magazine because they endorse the products, perfume and clothing belonging to different brands. In this regard, the celebrities can make a notice about what they are endorsing and hence create a significant impact on the identity of the person. According to McCormick (2016), the celebrity endorsement is the manner in which the consumers become knowledgeable and educated in an elusive manner regarding different products which are endorsed by the celebrities.

Bexley (2014) stated that consumers can perceive a product to be of higher quality if it is heavily advertised. The author also identified that advertising or celebrity endorsement can influence the perception and attitudes of the consumers regarding the quality of the product as it can eventually influence the buying behaviour of the consumers. As determined by Renton (2006), the use of the celebrities in the endorsement of the brands is intended towards attracting the target audience as they bring meaning to the brand which consumers perceive beneficial to meet their demands and expectations. As long as the celebrity endorser is authentic and reliable, he/she can help the companies in lending credibility to the brand and influence the direction in which the brand is perceived by the consumers.

Consumer's perception of quality is a subjective evaluations of the brand (Wilson, Reedy, & Krebs-Smith, 2016), and Tsiotsou (2006) notes that this is influenced by internal and external product attributes, which is an evaluation basis for the consumer. In this vein, celebrity endorsement with reference to their familiarity, attractiveness and trustworthiness is likely to influence consumer's perceived quality of the brand endorsed. Pappu, Quester and Cooksey (2006) noted that consumer's association with a brand coupled with their level of brand awareness could lead to developing loyalty to a particular brand. As a marketing strategy to enforce brand loyalty, celebrity endorsement is likely to achieve a higher degree of attention and recall, increase brand awareness and create positive feelings towards brands (Solomon, 2014). This suggests that the use of celebrities in advertisements to convey the brand message and subsequent endorsement of the brand is likely to influence consumer brand loyalty. When a credible source endorses a brand or product, consumers perceive the brand or product as being of high quality.

Perceived quality is of paramount importance to business owners given the belief that it has a beneficial effect on marketing performance. It is an attribute of a brand that could influence consumer patronage and brand loyalty (Olsen & St. George, 2004). Olsen and St. George (2004) added that perceptions of quality lead to satisfaction which ultimately, influences patronage among consumers. Perception of quality is a basic driver of consumers' purchase decisions across a wide range of categories in both goods and services market (Brady & Cronin, 2001). Interestingly, consumers make decisions to purchase a particular brand or product due to its perceived quality and they are in vast majority of cases, committed to recommending others to the product if they consider their needs and aspirations met. According to Sutherland (2007), network quality indicators including network access, service access, service integrity, coverage, and no drop calls are vital influencers of consumers' perception of cell phone service quality. Over time, this leads to brand loyalty as their occasional

purchase increases in frequency. Going further, Olsen and St. George (2004) averred that if perceived quality evaluation can lead to satisfaction, which reflects on consumer's feeling state, quality can predict a consumer's state of feeling and patronage. This indicates that perceived quality of a brand is likely to influence brand loyalty and patronage on the part of the consumer if the celebrity's likability is a factor for the consumers.

2.3.3 Celebrity Experience and Consumer Patronage

Celebrity experience offers firms a variety of benefits, irrespective of the form of advertisement considered by the firm. The key to successful celebrity experience is the relevance and broad appeal of the celebrity that could help the firm in the generation of attention of consumers in the marketplace (Keel & Natarajan, 2012). People in the contemporary business environment tend to have a disposition that 'if the celebrity is using a specific brand, I can use that brand as well' or 'if the specific brand is good for a celebrity, it will be good for the people too' (Keel & Natarajan, 2012). Celebrities tend to induce strong purchase meanings and create optimistic assertiveness towards an advertisement as compared to a spokesperson). More so, if a firm is successful in relating a product correctly to the celebrity, it is believed to produce an increase in net sales (Hunter, 2009). The aforementioned philosophies inspire firms to operate in carbonated drinks' firms to advertise their brand so as to create the impression that its sole purpose is to help the audience achieve the desired level of success.

Moreover, it has been revealed that consumers are more inclined to purchase brands that are continually used or endorsed by celebrities to meet their personal need (Keel & Natarajan, 2012). This is essential because; endorsement of brands by celebrities elicits instant credibility, which the consumers hold dearly to influence their patronage.

Advertisement has a cardinal role in increasing the brand awareness in the marketplace. In similar manner, celebrities' experiences play an influential role in building brand awareness within the industry (Keel & Natarajan, 2012). Arguably, celebrity endorsement in advertisement helps businesses to quickly build brand awareness in comparison to archaic forms of advertisement. The term brand awareness refers to the number of consumers within the marketplace that are familiar with the products and services offered by firms in the contemporary business environment (White, Goddard, & Wilbur, 2009).

Firms, irrespective of their size and nature of operations, have dedicated a lot of time and money to achieve the desired level of brand awareness amongst the consumers through the use of celebrity endorsement (Keel & Natarajan, 2012). Firms have been argued to consider using local celebrities with requisite advertising experience for enhancing the awareness of consumers, rather than endorsing celebrities that have a lower impact on the consumers' patronage.

There is a reliance on celebrity experience for both local and multinational companies to position their brands in the mind of consumers. Even though positioning the brand might seem to be an insignificant aspect, firms have relied on celebrities' experience to promote the brand, where the purpose is to bring the specific brand on top of the consumers' list when making purchase decisions (Alsmadi, 2006). In simpler words, the concept of product positioning concentrates on placing the offered products and services in the minds of the target audience. Brand positioning has been argued to help the brands in the creation of an image that makes them remember the specific brand at the right time and place (Malik & Sudhakar, 2014). The experience of celebrities have played a crucial role by becoming ambassadors of brands to make the target audience familiar with the brand while ensuring that the consumers would prefer the brand over others during patronage.

Celebrity endorsement has offered a variety of benefits and opportunities to companies in the intensely competitive business environment; it has been argued that using celebrities in advertisement has not always achieved the desired results and outcomes. In particular, celebrity endorsement may offer the company positive results in the short-time period, but in the long-run, it may have negative consequences for the company. In this regard, Knittel and Stango (2009) suggested that the prominent issues with celebrity endorsement include exclusivity and morality. For instance, the Tiger Woods scandal resulted in the loss of approximately 3% market share of the companies that were associated with the celebrity. Sponsors like PepsiCo and EA lost approximately over 4% of their market share and faced negative publicity by the aforementioned scandal (Knittel & Stango, 2009). Even though the association of the brands with Tiger Woods presented businesses with a variety of benefits and opportunities in the short time-period, but as a whole, the endorsement resulted in the loss of shareholders from \$5 to \$12 billion.

In the 21st century, celebrities are frequently used by companies for a variety of endorsements, irrespective of the fact that they belong to the sports or entertainment industry. A research report revealed that pharmaceutical companies have frequently relied on celebrities in advertisements to increase the consumers' frequency of usage of offered products and services. In particular, the return on investment of pharmaceutical companies with respect to celebrity endorsement was found to have a positive relationship. Meanwhile, the literature has also revealed that celebrity endorsement in pharmaceutical advertisements has resulted in a

tremendous increase in the use of medicinal products as compared to other companies operating within the same industry.

Undoubtedly, celebrities have a significant impact on the attainment of desired goals and objectives of a brand. This has been posited as the fundamental reason that firms have relied on celebrity endorsement for almost everything ranging from clothes to gadgets and food to cars. The overall impact of celebrity's experience can easily be judged by the fact that even political parties have relied on celebrities to influence the general public in changing their preferences, perceptions, and opinions about the political parties (Veer, Becirovic & Martin, 2010). Even though celebrities have played an influential role in changing the attitude and behaviour of consumers towards a brand, the number of research studies indicating their relationship and effect are scarce in number. However, Lauder (2012) observed that celebrity experience has become the source of companies' competitive advantage.

2.4 Empirical Review

Anetoh, Ndubuisi, Ikpo and Okoro (2022) ascertained the influence of celebrity attributes on consumer preference for GSM services in Onitsha Metropolitan Area of Anambra State. Cross-sectional research design was utilized for the study. A sample size of 384 GSM subscribers was used for the study. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Multiple regression analysis was used for data analysis. The findings of the study established that celebrity credibility had a positive and significant influence on consumer preference for GSM services. Additionally, celebrity expertise had a positive and significant influence on consumer preference for GSM services. More so, celebrity trustworthiness had a positive and significant influence on consumer preference for GSM services.

Osei-Frimpong, Donkor, and Owusu-Frimpong (2019) assessed the impact of celebrity endorsement and the moderating effect of negative publicity on consumer purchase intention or attitudes in an emerging market in Ghana. Survey research design was used to give direction to the study. The sample for the study comprised 500 consumers. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data. Mean and standard deviation were used for data analysis. The findings indicated that a celebrity endorser who had attributes such as attractiveness, trustworthiness and familiarity, had a positive influence on consumer perception of quality, purchase intentions and brand loyalty. However, celebrity endorser's negative publicity had no moderation effect on consumer purchase intention.

Abbas, Afshan, Aslam and Ewaz (2018) examined the effect of celebrity endorsement on mobile phone purchase intention of male and female customers in Thailand. Survey research design was employed for the study. 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 were used for data analysis. 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 outlined ways to effectively use celebrity endorsement for increasing customer purchase intention of male and female customers for purchasing mobile phone.

Adnan, Ali Jan, Alam and Ali (2017) examined the relationship between the super star endorsements and the consumer purchase intention in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. The study has been conducted by taking 790 respondents from the urban and sub urban areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. Data were collected using questionnaire. Data were analyzed using simple linear regression analysis. The findings of the study revealed that a positive relationship existed between the celebrity endorsements and the buying intention of the buyers. The study has described useful academic as well as managerial implications for both the local and global brand advertisers.

ZorBari-Nwitambu and Kalu (2017) looked at the link between celebrity endorsement and customer loyalty in the telecommunications industry in Port Harcourt. Correlation research design was utilized for the study. The participants of the study comprised 50 top managers/contract staff of five big telecommunication companies in Port Harcourt: MTN, Airtel, Glo, 9mobile and Starcomms. Data were collected using interviews. Analysis of data was carried out using Pearson's Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression. The revelation of the finding of the study was that credibility and expertise both consistently showed a positive relationship with all the dimensions of customer loyalty.

Ifeanyichukwu (2016) determined the effect of celebrity endorsement on consumer purchase of a product in Nigeria. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The sample size for the study comprised 200 young adults who were conveniently selected as respondents for the study. Questionnaire was used to

collect data. Regression was used to test for the significance of the hypotheses generated. The findings of the study revealed that celebrity endorsement had a positive effect on consumer purchase of a product in Nigeria.

Ikegwuru and Kalu (2016) explored the linkage between the attributes of celebrity endorsements and brand loyalty and the behavioural components of these attributes within the consumers of soft drink products in the Nigerian Tertiary institutions. Survey research design was employed to give direction to the study. The sample size for the study comprised 435 consumers. A 22-item questionnaire was used for data collection. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha internal consistency; Spearman's Correlation Analysis and Regression Analysis. The findings of the study revealed that attractiveness emerged as the most outstanding attributes of celebrity endorsements within the soft drink industry context, followed by expertise, and trustworthiness. Attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness were found to have a strong positive influence on brand loyalty.

Goutam (2013) analyzed the influence of celebrity endorsement on buying behaviour of soft drinks in the city of Belguam. Survey research design was used for the study. 100 individuals ranging from age 17 to 35 years, were used as representative sample for the study. To inquire, the researcher used questionnaire then treatment with data was made through software. According to the findings, 68% individuals were exposed to television celebrity endorsed advertisements of a specific soft drink. The findings of the study further showed that these advertisements are facilitative for brand awareness and recall among respondents. Additionally, it was indicated that celebrity endorsement is subject to the firm.

Agrawal and Dubey (2012) examined the effect of celebrity endorsement on customers' purchasing behaviour in Varanasi City. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The sample for the study comprised 400 customers. Questionnaire was used for data collection while data analysis was done using frequencies and percentages. Positive consumer buying decision on a product due to the effectiveness as an advertising tool of prominent endorsements was revealed. The cumulative findings of the study further showed that consumers are influenced by not only the consistency of ads but also the accurate relation between the star and the branded commodity. Therefore, an important criterion to take into account for the correct matching of the product and the endorser advertising by publicity companies also.

III. METHODOLOGY

Survey research design was adopted for the conduct of the study. The study was carried out in Anambra State. Anambra is a State in South-East geo-political zone of Nigeria. The capital and seat of government of the State is Awka. There are 21 Local Government Areas in the State. Anambra is bounded by Delta State to the West, Imo State to the South, Enugu State to the East and Kogi State to the North.

Anambra State, by the last census, has a population of 4,055,048 people (National Population Commission [NPC], 2006) with a land mass of 1,870 square meters. Anambra State is home to some tourist sites including Golden Tulip Destination Centre (Agulu), Ogbunike Cave, Igbo-Ukwu Museum, and Odinani Museum Nri. It is also rich in cultural heritage. Anambra State prides itself in cultural festivals like Imo-Awka festival of Awka, Achukwu festival of Ekwulobia, New yam festival, Nwafor festival at Ogidi. From the foregoing, it can be deduced that soft drinks are massively patronized in the study area. The population of the study is 3,575,627 adults in Anambra State going by the 2022 projected census data (National Population Commission, 2020).

The sample size for the study comprised 400 adult consumers of carbonated drinks drawn from the 21 Local Government Areas in Anambra State. This sample was determined from the 3,575,627 adult population using Taro Yamane (1967) sampling formula at allowable error of 5% and 95% confidence interval: $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)}$.

where:

- n = Sample size
- N = Population size (3, 575, 627)
- e = Tolerable error (5%)
- 1 = Constant

Therefore:

$$\begin{aligned} &= \frac{3, 575, 627}{1+3, 575, 627(0.0025)} \\ &= \frac{3, 575, 627}{8, 940.0675} \\ &= 399.95 = 400 \text{ approx.} \end{aligned}$$

Thus, the sample size was proportionally distributed among the 21 local government areas of the State.

The respondents were conveniently and judgmentally sampled, implying that only the consumers/customers of the study product found at the dispensing/purchasing or consumption points willing to participate in the study were issued the questionnaire for the study's raw data. The questionnaire instrument was

tested for reliability, i.e. the internal consistency of the variables, by test-retest technique and further analyzed in the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. The higher the alpha value, the higher the reliability among the indicators considered (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1992). The decision rule adopted in the study on the minimum acceptable level is based on Nunnally (1978), which is 0.7. The test results amounting to overall average of 0.79 which is above the recommended threshold indicates that the questionnaire instrument is reliable.

The data collected for the were presented and analyzed in frequency tables and percentages with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0; frequency tables and percentages for demographic variables; mean and standard deviation for the research questions; while multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The multiple regression equation or model of specification is thus econometrically represented:

$$Y = a + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + e \quad \text{Equation 1}$$

$$CP = a + \beta_1PER + \beta_2LIK + \beta_3EXP + e \quad \text{Equation 2}$$

where:

- CP = Consumer Patronage
- PER = Personality
- LIK = Likeability
- EXP = Experience
- a = Intercept
- β = Regression coefficient of parameter 1–3
- e = Error term

3.1 Decision Rule

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), in regression analysis the effect size of the predictor variables is given by the beta weightings. Muij’s (2004, cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007) suggested a criteria for interpreting effect size: 0–0.1 weak effect; 0.1–0.3 modest effect; 0.3–0.5 moderate effect; >0.5 strong effect. This criterion was used to determine the influence of the predictor/independent variables (personality, likeability, expertise) on the outcome/dependent variable (consumer patronage). H_0 is supported if p-value is less than 0.05; otherwise H_0 is not supported and H_a is supported. Accept H_a if the p-value is less than or equal to 0.05.

IV. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Data from 384 copies of the questionnaire found to be correctly filled were used in the analyses.

4.1 Part A: Respondents’ Demographics

Table 1. Distribution of respondents’ demographics

Gender	Freq.	%
Male	214	55.73
Female	170	44.27
<i>Total</i>	<i>384</i>	<i>100</i>

Age	Freq.	%
21-30	125	32.55
31-40	94	24.48
41-50	83	21.61
51 and above	81	21.09
<i>Total</i>	<i>398</i>	<i>100</i>

Results in Table 2 show that 214 (55.73%) respondents were males while 170 (44.27%) respondents were females. Further, on the age distribution of the respondents, those between the ages of 21-30 totaled 125 (32.55%) whereas respondents between the ages of 31-40 were 94 (24.48%). Respondents between the ages of 41-50 were 83 (21.61%) while those above the age of 50 were 81 (21.09%).

4.2 Part B: Presentation of Data on Research Questions

Table 2. Mean ratings of respondents on the influence of personality of celebrity on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks (N=384).

Sn.		Mean	SD	Remark
1.	I see models advertising soft drinks as being friendly.	5.33	0.76	Agree
2.	I think models advertising soft drinks are not reserved.	6.02	0.72	Agree
3.	I feel that models advertising soft drinks are creative.	5.05	0.80	Agree
4.	I feel models advertising soft drinks are open to new experience.	6.13	1.66	Agree
5.	I think models advertising soft drinks are not quarrelsome.	5.21	1.53	Agree
Weighted Mean		27.74	5.49	Agree

Results in Table 2 showed that the weighted mean score of 27.4 was above the cut-off weighted mean score of 17.5. This indicated that the respondents were in agreement that personality of celebrities positively influenced their patronage of carbonated drinks. The standard deviation of 5.49 showed homogeneity in the responses of respondents.

Table 3. Mean ratings of respondents on the influence of likeability of celebrity on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks (N=384).

Sn.	Item	Mean	SD	Remark
6.	I have the feeling that models advertising soft drinks are very likeable.	5.30	0.70	Agree
7.	I see models advertising soft drinks as being very agreeable.	5.00	0.72	Agree
8.	I think models advertising soft drinks are very popular.	5.01	0.77	Agree
9.	I feel models advertising soft drinks are very pleasant.	5.82	1.63	Agree
10.	I see models advertising soft drinks as being accommodating.	5.18	1.50	Agree
Weighted Mean		26.31	5.34	Agree

Table 3 showed that the weighted mean score of 26.31 was above the cut-off weighted mean score of 17.5. This indicated that the respondents were in agreement that likeability of celebrities positively influenced their patronage of carbonated drinks. The standard deviation of 5.34 showed homogeneity in the responses of the respondents.

Table 4. Mean ratings of respondents on the influence of experience of celebrity on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks (N=384).

Sn.	Item	Mean	SD	Remark
11.	I think models advertising soft drinks are experts in their chosen fields.	6.03	1.70	Agree
12.	I feel models advertising soft drinks are well-experienced in their chosen fields.	5.40	1.62	Agree
13.	I see models advertising soft drinks as being knowledgeable in their chosen fields.	5.31	1.77	Agree
14.	I feel models advertising soft drinks possess the necessary qualification for advertisement.	5.98	1.63	Agree
15.	I think models advertising soft drinks are well-skilled.	5.38	1.50	Agree
Weighted Mean		28.10	8.24	Agree

Results in table 4 showed that the weighted mean score of 28.10 was above the cut-off weighted mean score of 17.5. This indicated that the respondents were in agreement that experience of celebrities positively influenced their patronage of carbonated drinks. The standard deviation of 8.24 showed homogeneity in the responses of the respondents.

4.3 Part C: Preliminary Analysis

Table 5. Mean and standard deviations of independent and dependent variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Personality	27.74	5.49
Likeability	26.31	5.34
Experience	28.10	8.24
Consumer Patronage	26.73	5.41

Table 5 presented the descriptive statistics of the independent variables and dependent variable. Celebrity Experience has the highest mean rating with rating of 28.10 while, likeability of celebrity had the lowest mean rating of 26.31. However, all the mean scores were above average. The standard deviation scores suggest that respondents' ratings of celebrity likeability (SD = 5.34) was more cohesive compared to the ratings of other variables. On the other hand, there was more variability in the respondents' ratings of celebrity experience (SD= 8.24) than the ratings of other variables.

Table 6. Correlations among predictors. N=384

	Personality	Likeability	Experience
Personality	1	.487	.570
Likeability	.487	1	.449
Experience	.570	.449	1

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

To ascertain whether there is multi-collinearity among the predictors, correlation matrix was conducted to ascertain the size of the correlation between the predictors. As shown in Table 9, there was no multi-collinearity since none of the predictors had the acceptable correlation of .80 and above. Therefore, multiple regression was conducted on the three (3) predictor variables.

4.4 Part D: Factor Analysis

Table 7. KMO and bartlett's tests

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.505
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4971.604
	Df	300
	p-value.	.000

Table 7 above presents the KMO and Bartlett's tests for determining the adequacy of sample size for factor analysis. The test value of .505 indicates that the sample supports the use of factor analysis. This is because the value is within the 0.50 adequacy criterion indicated by Field (2018).

4.5 Part E: Test of Hypotheses

Table 8. Showing the model summary^b

The current study examined the three stated hypotheses in chapter one.					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.537 ^a	.419	.06	5.40338	1.866

a. Predictors: (Constant), Personality, Likeability, Experience

b. Dependent Variable: Consumer Patronage

Table 8. Showing the model summary^b

Table 9. Showing the ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	211.760	5	42.352	7.624	.003 ^b
	Residual	11007.075	377	29.196		
	Total	11218.836	382			

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Patronage

b. Predictors: (Constant), Personality, Likeability, Experience

Table 10. Test of significance of regression beta weights of celebrity personality, likeability, experience as predictors of consumer patronage

Predictors	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p-value
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	20.043	3.304		6.07	.000
Personality	.111	.051	.212	2.18	.030
Likeability	.047	.052	.147	.91	.066
Experience	.135	.034	.154	1.03	.001

R=.537, R²=.419, F = 7.624, p>0.05

Table 10 above presented the test results for the three hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀1: Personality of celebrity does not significantly influence on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks.

As shown in table 10, personality of celebrity has a weak positive but significant influence on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks ($\beta = .051, p\text{-value} >.031$). The null hypothesis is, therefore, not supported. Hence, the study accept that personality of celebrity significantly influence consumer patronage of carbonated drinks, is accepted.

H₀2: Likeability of celebrity has no significant influence on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks.

Still on table 11 results, likeability of celebrity has weak positive no significant influence on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks ($\beta = .052, p\text{-value} >.066$). Since the p-value was greater the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is supported.

H₀3: Experience of celebrity has no significant influence on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks.

The results in table 10 indicated that experience of celebrity has weak positive significant influence on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks, ($\beta = .034, p\text{-value} >.001$). Consequently, the null hypothesis is not supported implying that experience of celebrity has significantly contributed to the consumer patronage of carbonated drinks in the study area.

V. DISCUSSION

5.1 Influence of personality of celebrity on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks

The results of the current study showed that the personality of celebrity had a positive influence on consumers' patronage of carbonated drinks. This implies that much as the personality of a celebrity influences positively on the tendency of a consumer to give their loyalty to a product. There could, however, be other reasons informing a consumer's patronage of carbonated drinks. These findings is consistent with the position of Ifeanyichukwu (2016) that celebrity endorsement had a positive effect on consumer purchase of a product in Nigeria. Further collaboration is found in the results of Abbas, Afshan, Aslam and Ewaz (2018), though in the digital sector, that personality is 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. Nnamocha and Chukundah (2018) findings, in collaboration, confirms that both endorser's coverage and frequency of endorsement had a strong positive correlation with customer patronage, measured by repeat purchase and brand loyalty.

5.2 Influence of likeability of celebrity on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks

The findings of the current study showed that likeability of a celebrity does not influence consumers' patronage of carbonated drinks. This implies that much as consumers tend to patronize carbonated drinks based on their love for the celebrity that is endorsing the product, likeability is not a determinant of their patronage of the product. The implication is that consumers' patronage of carbonated drinks goes beyond the likeability of the celebrity. This findings disagree with some extant researches. For instance, Goutam (2013) found that likeability of celebrity endorser has a positive influence on consumer buying behaviour of soft drinks in Belguam City. Similarly, Omoregbe and Samuel (2019) found that all celebrity endorser's attributes, likeability inclusive has positive and significant link with consumer purchasing decision.

5.3 Influence of experience of celebrity on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks.

The findings of the current study showed that the experience of celebrity had a positive influence on consumers' patronage of carbonated drinks. The implication is that though the experience of a celebrity influences consumers' tendency to patronize carbonated drinks, it is, however, not a strong driver to consumers' patronage of the product. Thus, other sundry factors could be linked to consumers' patronage of carbonated drinks. The finding of the current study collaborates with the position of Odili and Ukpai (2021) that the effect of celebrity expertise is significant on customer patronage. In addition, Anetoh, Ndubuisi, Ikpo and Okoro (2022) found that celebrity credibility (outcome of expertise etc.) has a positive and significant influence on consumer preference for GSM services.

The findings of Nnamocha and Chukundah (2018) agree on the positive influence of celebrity endorser's experience indicating that both the endorser's coverage and frequency of endorsement had a strong positive correlation with customer patronage measured by repeat purchase and brand loyalty, though with slight disagreement with regard to the strength of positive influence. Further disagreement results of the current study is the findings of Daha, Acheampong, Bakare and Ramanathan (2018) which showed that expertise of a celebrity does not influence Nigeria's Generation Y-ers intention to purchase the endorsed product. These contrary results may be linked to disparity in sample characteristics. Or, it could be connected to the difference in the products that are objects of endorsement. Apparently, experience is measured by how often a celebrity has been used for the endorsement of a product.

VI. IMPLICATION TO RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

The present study contributes, with empirically verified information to further understanding of the strength/weight of pertinent factors – celebrity endorser's personality, likeability and experience underlining consumers' patronage of carbonated drinks; an enrichment of literature in the area of celebrity endorsement and consumer patronage. It also contributes to the existing theory on commitment-trust relationship by factoring in endorser personality, likeability, and experience, in the light of the scientific discovery of the study, as drivers of consumer patronage.

VII. CONCLUSION

In the light of the findings of the study on the study variables, personality, likeability, and experience, the indication is that the variables had significant positive influence on consumer patronage of carbonated soft/mineral drinks. The study, therefore, concluded that endorsement of carbonated soft/mineral drinks by celebrities positively influence consumers' purchase of the product in Anambra State of Nigeria.

7.1 Recommendations

The study recommended that marketers of carbonated drinks should have deep consideration for celebrities with fascinating or enthralling personality/character, and whose likeability among fans is strong. Similarly, believability of the endorser stemming from his/her expertise and credibility is of very a critical point that must be put into consideration. These are crucial in engaging any brand ambassador for enhanced consumer appeals.

VII. FURTHER STUDIES

1. Further investigation is required on the causes of the weak positive influence of celebrity likeability, and experience on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks in Anambra State.
2. Evaluation of the influence of further celebrity characteristics including credibility, and attractiveness on consumer patronage of carbonated drinks in Anambra State is also needed.

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