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MODERATING EFFECT OF TRUSTWORTHINESS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CELEBRITY ATTRACTIVENESS AND CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTION AMONG STUDENTS OF KADUNA STATE UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

This study examined the moderating effect of trustworthiness on the relationship between celebrity attractiveness and consumer purchase intention among students of Kaduna State University. The specific objectives of the study are to investigate the effect of celebrity Attractiveness on consumer purchase intention and to determine the moderating effect of trustworthiness on consumer purchase intention. The study is underpinned by commitment trust theory as well as source trustworthiness theory. The research adopted a survey research design and collected primary data through structured questionnaires administered to the collages in Kaduna state university. A stratified sampling technique was employed, and data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) via Smart-PLS 4. The measurement model was assessed for reliability and validity using composite reliability, average variance extracted, HTMT, and the Fornell Larcker criterion. Findings from the structural model revealed that celebrity attractiveness had a positive and statistically significant effect on consumer purchase intention ($T = 6.344$, $p < 0.000$), trustworthiness had a positive and significant effect on consumer purchase intention ($T = 5.308$, $p < 0.000$)., while trustworthiness does not significantly moderate the relationship between attractiveness and purchase intention ($T = 1.004$, $p = 0.316$). the study recommends that Since trustworthiness does not strengthen or weaken the effect of attractiveness, firms may treat attractiveness and trustworthiness as independent drivers rather than interactive factors in endorsement strategy.

Introduction

Using celebrities as brand ambassadors may become a crucial tactic in today's marketing environment for influencing consumer behavior and enhancing brand impression. Celebrity appeal may be use by marketers to draw attention, improve brand recall, and stimulate buying intentions. Celebrity attractiveness, which includes physical appeal, charm, elegance, and charisma, is one of the main aspects of celebrity endorsement and may be found to be a crucial factor in determining customer reaction. According to theoretical underpinnings like the Match-Up Hypothesis (Kamins, 1990) and the Source Attractiveness Model (McGuire, 1985), when a celebrity's image and the product being promoted are congruent, an attractive endorser can greatly increase the persuasiveness of the message. The influence of attractiveness on consumer perception is more noticeable in the current digital era, as consumers are continuously exposed to visual media and influencer marketing (Hani et al., 2021).

Studies conducted worldwide like Rai, B., & Dahal, R. K. (2025) in Nepal, Farhat, S. (2025) in India and Malik, H. A., & Qureshi, M. M. (2016) in Pakistan have shown that customers' perceptions of commercials and their subsequent purchasing behavior are positively impacted by the beauty of celebrities (Jamil & Rameez, 2020). Celebrity endorsements have been deliberately employed in developed markets like the United States and the United Kingdom to set products apart in crowded markets. Consumers are influenced to have aspirational wants by attractive celebrities because they are seen as representing ideals of success and beauty (Amos et al., 2021). Influencer culture, where physical attractiveness continues to be a key factor driving engagement, brand loyalty, and consumer purchasing intentions, has also emerged as a result of the growth of social media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok (Yen et al., 2022).

As commercial communication grows more worldwide, the impact of celebrity appeal is also growing in importance in emerging economies, including a number of African countries. In order to appeal to young, image-conscious consumers, African firms are implementing Western-style promotional strategies, such as celebrity endorsements. Physically beautiful celebrities generate more favorable brand perceptions and buy intentions than less attractive ones, according to studies conducted in South Africa and Kenya (Makhanya & Pillay, 2022). Scholars such as (Nyaga & Maina, 2023) also point out that without credibility and product-celebrity congruence, beauty might not be enough on its own.

The fashion and entertainment sectors in Nigeria have given rise to a number of well-known superstars who have a significant impact on the attitudes and lifestyle decisions of consumers. In industries like cosmetics, fashion, and telecommunications, Nigerian consumers especially younger ones are very receptive to the looks, beauty, and fashion of celebrities, which has a direct impact on their purchasing decisions (Adebayo & Ojo, 2022). Nigeria's

advertising sector has taken advantage of this by using appealing superstars like Davido, Wizkid, and Tiwa Savage in significant marketing campaigns for Pepsi, MTN, and Techno Mobile. Their celebrity and physical attractiveness combine to generate a persuasive influence that increases consumer interest in the things they advocate (Ogunyemi, 2024). The durability of attractiveness-based endorsements in affecting long-term customer loyalty is still up for dispute, though. Some academics contend that although beauty initially draws in customers, it does not ensure repeat business unless it is backed by product quality and brand credibility (Onuoha & Nwankwo, 2023).

Several researches have sought to explain how trustworthiness mediates the relationship between consumer purchase intention and celebrity attractiveness. The relationship that exists between these variables is yet unclear. In developing economies were the studies were conducted such as Ekakitie and Okosodo (2023), Gupta (2023), and Phogat and Singh (2023) concluded that celebrity attractiveness has no significant impact on consumer behavior, while Homiga and Prasanna (2024), Sunny and Christopher (2023), and Amakyewaa, Di, Siba, and Abrafi (2021) among others found a positive effect of celebrity attractiveness on consumer purchase intention. Amakyewaa, Di, Siba and Abrafi (2021) recommended the use of trustworthiness as a moderator which this study will use as its moderator.

In conclusion, both globally and in Nigeria, consumers' purchasing intentions are greatly influenced by the beauty of celebrities. However, its impact is context-specific, necessitating a harmony between authenticity, brand fit, and aesthetic appeal. Local marketers must carefully consider how endorsers' attractiveness affects brand perception as Nigerian consumers continue to be exposed to global advertising trends, especially in a highly competitive and culturally varied market.

Research Question

i. How does celebrity attractiveness affect consumer purchase intention?
ii. How does trustworthiness affect consumer purchase intention?
iii. To what extent does trustworthiness moderate the relationship between celebrity attractiveness and consumer purchase intention?

Objectives of the study

Main objective of this study is to examine the moderating effect of trustworthiness on the relationship between celebrity attractiveness and consumer purchase intention.

Specific Objectives:

i. To examine the effect of celebrity attractiveness on purchase intention.
ii. To examine the effect of trustworthiness on purchase intention.
iii. To determine whether trustworthiness moderates the relationship between attractiveness and purchase intention.

Hypotheses of the study

i. Ho_1: Celebrity attractiveness has no significant effect on consumer purchase intention.
ii. Ho_2: Trustworthiness has no significant effect on consumer purchase intention.
iii. Ho_3: Trustworthiness does not significantly moderate the relationship between celebrity attractiveness and consumer purchase intention.

Conceptual Framework

In this section, the concept of celebrity Attractiveness and consumer purchase intention are discussed so as a better understanding of the concepts can be perceived.

Concept of celebrity endorsement

The term Celebrity Endorsement or Celebrity Branding is one of the techniques of Advertising used by companies to create recognition and grasp responses about the company's product and services. Harshitha and Manjunath (2017).The concept of celebrity endorsement in marketing revolves around utilizing the fame, influence, and credibility of well-known individuals to promote products, services, or brands. This strategy capitalizes on the strong emotional connections that consumers often have with their favourite celebrities, aiming to transfer those positive feelings onto the endorsed products or services Hommiga and prasanna (2024). Celebrity endorsement is a widely used marketing strategy that capitalizes on celebrities' fame, credibility, and aspirational appeal to influence consumer perceptions and decisions. Gupta (2023).

Concept of consumer purchase intention

Consumer purchase intention refers to the actions taken (both on and offline) by consumers before buying a product or service. This process may include consulting search engines, engaging with social media posts, or a variety of other actions. It is valuable for businesses to understand this process because it helps companies better tailor their marketing initiatives to the marketing efforts that have successfully influenced consumers to buy in the past (Gupta, 2023). Consumer buying behavior or Consumer purchase intention refers to the personal inclinations and actions related to the product. Consumer purchase intention refers to the decisions and actions individuals undertake in selecting and acquiring products or services. Recent literature stresses that purchase behaviour is strongly influenced by consumers' internal evaluations and emotional responses to marketing stimuli (Ayaviri-Nina et al., 2022). In Nigeria's competitive and digitalizing consumer marketplace, purchase decisions are increasingly shaped by visually compelling endorsement strategies that link celebrity appeal with perceived brand desirability.

Concept of Attractiveness

The concept of attractiveness is not about physical attractiveness, but also entails concepts such as intellectual skills, personality properties, way of living, athletic performance, and skills of endorsers (Adam & Hussain, 2017). Celebrities can be attractive because they established for example great sports performances and people have great respect for their achievement and therefore they are attracted to them (Priyankara et al., 2017). Celebrity attractiveness refers to the perceived physical appeal, lifestyle appeal, charisma, and general elegance associated with a celebrity endorser.

Recent research emphasizes that attractiveness extends beyond physical beauty to incorporate personality qualities, lifestyle elements, and symbolic appeal (Priyankara et al., 2021). In highly visual digital environments, attractive celebrities capture attention and increase consumers' emotional engagement with the advertisement, improving message credibility and brand appeal (Hani et al., 2022; Yen et al., 2024). Within emerging markets such as Nigeria where youth identity formation is increasingly shaped by fashion, entertainment, and social media attractive celebrities exert strong persuasive power by triggering aspirational associations aligned with contemporary consumer values.

Concept of Celebrity Trustworthiness

According to Griffin (1967), trust is the ability to rely on another person's communication behavior to accomplish a desired but unclear goal in a dangerous circumstance. Therefore, the message conveyed by the source will have a greater effect on the recipient the more reliable the source is thought to be. Because of the partial and temporal distance between buyers and sellers, trust can lower uncertainty or risk regarding the system, user-generated content, goods, sellers, or third-party organizations in a complex technical and social environment (Friedrich et al., 2019). Instead of asking strangers for advice, consumers typically ask people they can trust. Furthermore, trust in the online environment can reduce operational costs, including additional charges and browsing, comparison, and screening time (Liu & Guo, 2017).

Empirical Literature

Celebrity Trustworthiness and Consumer Purchase Intention

Orina (2022), conducted a study on the effect of celebrity endorsement on consumer purchasing behavior in the telecommunication industry in Kenya. The study surveyed 384 Kenyan consumers using structural equation modeling and found celebrity trustworthiness significantly influences purchase intentions ($\beta=0.32$, $p<0.01$), mediating attitude formation and reducing perceived risks in telecom choices. While insightful for East Africa, it focuses solely on telecommunications without integrating brand loyalty effects or student-specific dynamics. The current study is on KASU student which fills this gap by empirically testing celebrity trustworthiness alongside loyalty in Nigeria's university.

Hossain et al. (2025), authors of examined the influence of celebrity credibility, attractiveness, and expertise on consumer purchase intention, analyzed 450 Bangladeshi respondents via SEM and confirmed celebrity trustworthiness as a key predictor of buying behavior (path coefficient=0.28, $p<0.001$), outperforming attractiveness through credibility transfer. The weaknesses of the study is that it is limited to South Asian digital campaigns and general consumers, it overlooks African student volatilities like limited budgets; this study addresses this by quantifying dual effects of trustworthiness and loyalty among students in physical retail contexts, enhancing applicability to Nigerian youth.

Evan (2023), examined how celebrity endorsement influences consumer's purchase intention: The mediating role of consumer attitude. The study used 300 Indonesian fashion consumers on social media and reported trustworthiness exerting the strongest impact on purchase intent (standardized $\beta=0.364$, $p<0.001$) among

endorsement dimensions, fostering confidence and repeat buys. The weakness of the study is that its social media and fashion niche neglects student buyers of everyday goods; this study that focused on students bridges this gap by linking celebrity trustworthiness to tangible buying behavior.

Pokhrel (2023), conducted a study on celebrity endorsement strategy and consumer purchasing behavior. The study applied path analysis to 384 Nepalese FMCG consumers and revealed celebrity trustworthiness positively affects buying behavior ($r=0.45$, $p<0.05$), alongside credibility, emphasizing persuasion and loyalty formation. However, the study is regionally confined without student or economic controls and misses Nigerian university specifics; this study rectifies this through significant statistical validation of trustworthiness's interplay with brand loyalty among students.

Till and Shimp (2023), conducted a study on the effect of celebrity physical attractiveness and trustworthiness on consumer purchase intention. The study used experimental designs on 400 U.S. participants to show trustworthiness drives purchases more than attractiveness ($\beta=0.52$, $p<0.001$) via source credibility models. The limitation of the study is that it is Western-centric and did experiment with general adults, it ignores emerging market student realities; this study fills these gapss by providing field-based evidence of celebrity trustworthiness enhancing loyalty-driven purchases.

Celebrity Attractiveness and Consumer purchase intention

Amakyewaa , Di, Siba and Abrafi (2021) Ascertaining the Impact of Celebrity Attractiveness and Familiarity on Consumer Buying Behavior Among Female University Students in Ghana. Using a quantitative and descriptive design, an online questionnaire was administered randomly through the various digital platforms to female students in Legon, KNUST, and UCC. Using a sample size of 450, the descriptive, correlation, and multiple regression analysis was undertaken to achieve the objectives of the study. firstly, celebrity attractiveness was established to have a positive and significant impact on consumer buying behavior Secondly, celebrity familiarity was determined to have a positive and significant impact on consumer buying behavior The study concludes that the buying behavior of female university students in Ghana is influenced by the attractiveness and familiarity of the celebrity used by an organization in promoting its offerings. Marketers and advertisers are called upon to engage celebrities who are physically attractive and familiar to the target consumers because it influences their choices. This study used only female student in Ghana, why not look at the entire student not only gender perspective.

Sunny and Christopher (2023) investigated celebrity endorsement (CEED) and consumer behavior in Nigerian telecommunication industry. A sample size of 374 customers was selected using the judgmental sampling techniques. Structured questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection while data collected were analyzed using OLS multiple regression estimation techniques. It shows that trustworthiness of celebrity has positive effects on behaviour of consumers; also, celebrity expertise has positive effects on buying behaviour of consumers (coefficient 0.681 & significance of 0.000). The study therefore recommends that, Telecom firms should always endeavor to produce quality products that will foster trust and believability to both the fans and their customers. This study used judgmental sampling technique, had it been the study used another sampling technique such as convenient sampling technique, the result could have been different.

Homiga and Prasanna (2024) studied the impact of celebrity endorsement on consumer buying behavior in Chennai The research methodology for this study involved a systematic approach to data collection and analysis. Primary data was gathered using a questionnaire, distributed to 105 respondents in Chennai. This method ensured direct engagement with participants and captured firsthand insights relevant to the research objectives. Secondary data was sourced from online journals, websites, and published articles, providing a contextual background and supporting the primary data. A convenience sampling method was employed, selecting participants who were easily accessible, while this method may not yield a statistically representative sample, it allows for efficient data collection. The result shows that celebrity endorsement has a significant impact on consumer buying behavior.

Theoretical Framework

The investigation was supported by the Source Attractiveness Theory and Commitment Trust Theory. According to the Source Attractiveness Theory, which was first presented by McGuire in 1985, source attractiveness theory directly explains why celebrity attractiveness influences purchase intention the major assumption of this theory is that I buy this because I like you and I want to be like you, a celebrity's attractiveness which encompasses their physical attributes, likeability, familiarity, and similarity to the target audience determines how effective they are as an advocate, attractive celebrities positively influence students' willingness to buy products.

Endorsers who appeal to consumers are more likely to influence them, appealing to good brand sentiments and buying inclinations. In the other hand Commitment Trust Theory was proposed by Morgan and Hunt (1994) posits that successful relationship marketing hinges on two key mediating variables: trust and commitment, the major assumption is that I trust you and I want to stay with you, I won't leave even if a cheaper option shows up, it fosters long-term relational exchanges between brands and consumers rather than transactional encounters (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Trust reflects consumer confidence in the brand's reliability, integrity, and benevolence, built through consistent delivery of promises, fair practices, and positive experiences that reduce perceived risks. Commitment represents an enduring desire to maintain the valued relationship, manifesting as affective (emotional attachment) or calculative (perceived value) forms, prompting investments like repeat advocacy despite alternatives (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). The theory explains KASU student findings by modeling commitment and trust as mediators that transform positive antecedents (e.g., satisfaction, shared values) into outcomes like cooperation, reduced uncertainty, and loyalty driven purchases.

Methodology

This study employed a survey research design, sought to ascertain how celebrity attractiveness affected Kaduna State University student (KASU) customers' purchasing decisions. The study's population consists of KASU students. Using Yamani's (1967) sample size determination table, a sample size of 392 was obtained for the study. The study's sample was selected using a stratified sampling design. To prevent overrepresentation of students from all the collages, stratified sampling was employed. Hence, each college stands as stratum and Bowel's Formular was employed to choose individuals from the strata.

S/No	College	Total No in college	Stratum
1	College of communication	5952	118
2	College of Arts	3775	75
3	College of Computing, Engineering and Science	7658	152
4	College of Agric	1151	23
5	College of Allied Health	975	19
6	College of Medicine	271	5

Source: Author's computation based KASU Registry records, 2026

Measurement of variables

Celebrity trustworthiness was measured using Ohanian's (1990) trustworthiness subscale consisting of exactly 5 items. It was also measured on a 5 point Likert Scale ranging from 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree. celebrity Attractiveness (5 items) and consumer buying intention (5 items) were measured using the Pokhrel (2023), A 5-point rating system, with always = 5 and never = 1, was applied to all of the modified objects.

Result and Discussion

PLS-SEM Modelling

A PLS path model contains two (2) elements; first, the measurement model and second, the structural model. The measurement model specifies the relations between a construct and its observed indicators. In contrast, the structural model also known as the inner model specifies the relationships between the constructs.

Measurement Model

Assessment of a measurement model encompasses determination of individual item reliability, internal consistency reliability, content validity, convergent validity and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2011).

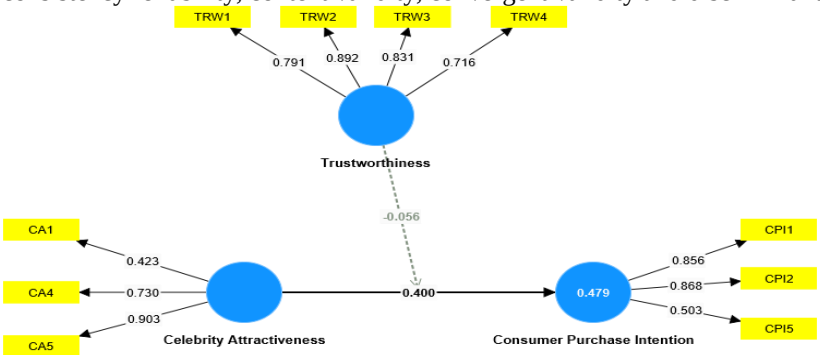


Figure 1: Measurement Model

Table 1: Item Loading, Internal Consistency, and Average Variance Extracted

Construct	Items	Loading	CR	AVE	
Celebrity Attractiveness	CA1	0.423	0.742	0.509	
	CA4	0.730			
	CA5	0.903			
consumer purchase intention	CPI1	0.856	0.798	0.580	
	CPI2	0.868			
	CPI5	0.503			
Trustworthiness	TRW1	0.791	0.884	0.657	
	TRW2	0.892			
	TRW3	0.831			
	TRW4	0.716			
	Trustworthiness x Celebrity Attractiveness				1.000

Source: PLS 4

Individual Item Reliability

The individual item or factor reliability of reflective constructs was determined using the outer loadings of each construct's indicators (Hair *et al.*, 2017). Based on Hair's *et al.* (2014) rule of thumb, an indicator with a loading must be between 0.40 and 0.70, and thus the deletion is subject to the increment of the AVE and CR. Hence, following Hair's *et al.* (2014) rule of thumb, out of 15 items measuring 3 reflective constructs of this study, only 5 items (i.e., CPI3, CPI4, CA2, CA3, and TRW5) were deleted. Therefore, based on the criterion given by Hair *et al.* (2017), all the remaining items are reliable to measure their respective reflective latent constructs. Therefore, based on the criterion given by Hair et al. (2017), all the remaining items are reliable to measure their respective reflective latent constructs.

Internal Consistency Reliability

The present study used composite reliability (CR) to determine the internal consistency reliability of the constructs. It has been suggested that a reflective latent construct is said to be reliable when it has at least 0.70 value (Hair *et al.*, 2014). As shown in Table 1, Celebrity Attractiveness has a CR value of 0.742, Consumer Purchasing Intention has 0.798, and Celebrity Trustworthiness has 0.884. Thus, going by the aforementioned rule of thumb of 0.70 and above for the acceptable values of CR, the researcher has concluded that all of these constructs are reliable as all their respective composite reliability's values are above the threshold (Hair et al., 2017).

Convergent Validity of Reflective Models

The primary approach to confirm convergent validity in reflective constructs is through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Typically, an AVE of 0.50 or greater is recommended to establish convergent validity (Hair et al., 2017), as this level implies the latent construct accounts for at least half of the variance in its indicators (see Hair et al., 2017). Adhering to the 0.50 threshold for AVE, all reflective constructs demonstrate convergent validity, with each surpassing this benchmark. In particular, drawing from the PLS-SEM algorithm outputs displayed in Table 1, Celebrity Attractiveness has an AVE of 0.509, Consumer Purchasing Intention has 0.580, and Celebrity Trustworthiness has 0.657, respectively.

Discriminant Validity

This study employs the Fornell-Larcker criterion to assess discriminant validity. According to this method, a construct achieves discriminant validity if the square root of its Average Variance Extracted (AVE) exceeds its correlations with all other reflective constructs in the model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Based on the provided data, all reflective latent constructs meet this criterion, as shown in Table 2. The square roots of the AVEs for each construct, that is, Celebrity Attractiveness (0.714), Celebrity Trustworthiness (0.762), and Consumer Purchase Intention (0.810), are higher than their respective correlations with other constructs.

Table 2 Discriminant Validity: Fornell and Larcker

Construct	celebrity Attractiveness	consumer purchase intention	celebrity Trustworthiness
Celebrity Attractiveness	0.714		
Consumer Purchase Intention	0.633	0.762	
Trustworthiness	0.651	0.620	0.810

Source: PLS4

Structural Model Result

Under the structural model, the study tested the hypothesis of the study, and determined the coefficient of determination (R^2).

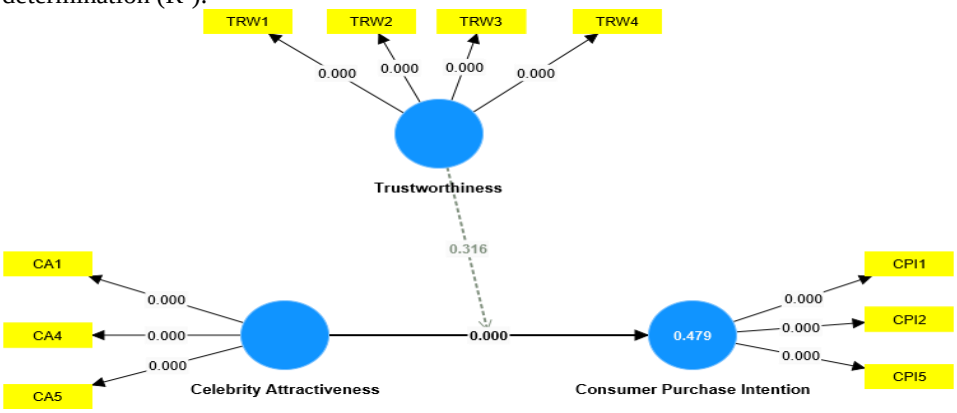


Figure 2: PLS Algorithm (Direct and Indirect Relationship)

Coefficient of Determination

The R^2 value reflects the combined influence of exogenous variables on the endogenous variable. The R^2 value for consumer purchasing intention is 0.479. This indicates that 47.9% of the variance in consumer purchasing intention is explained by the exogenous latent variables in the model. This R^2 value suggests strong predictive accuracy of the model, demonstrating that the exogenous constructs (celebrity trustworthiness and celebrity Attractiveness) collectively account for a significant portion of the variation in consumer purchasing intention (Hair et al., 2017). Hence, the remaining 52.1% is explained by other variables not captured in the model.

Test of Hypotheses

The result of the test of hypotheses is presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Hypotheses Testing

	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values	Decision
Celebrity Attractiveness -> Consumer Purchase Intention	0.063	6.344	0.000	Reject
Trustworthiness -> Consumer Purchase Intention	0.071	5.308	0.000	Reject
Trustworthiness x Celebrity Attractiveness -> Consumer Purchase Intention	0.055	1.004	0.316	Accept

As shown in the Table 3, Celebrity Attractiveness has a positive significant effect on consumer purchase intention (T-value = 6.344, P-value = 0.000). Thus, $H0_1$ is rejected at 5% level of significance. This implies that celebrity Attractiveness significantly drives consumer purchase intention meaning that attractiveness add value to marketing communication by enhancing consumers interest and persuasion towards product. Similarly, celebrity trustworthiness shows a significant positive effect on consumer purchasing intention (T-value = 5.308, P-value = 0.000). Consequently, $H0_2$ is rejected at 5% level of significance which implies that consumers are more likely to buy products endorsed by celebrities they perceive as honest and credible. Furthermore, the moderating effect of trustworthiness on the celebrity Attractiveness has an insignificant effect on consumer purchase intention (T-value = 1.004, P-value = 0.316) Thus, $H0_3$ is accepted at 5% level of significance. This implies that trustworthiness and celebrity attractiveness does not add value to consumer purchase intention.

Discussion of Findings

The study investigated the moderating effect of trustworthiness on the relationship between celebrity Attractiveness and consumer purchasing intention among consumers in KASU due to growing market competition and endorsement strategies. The objective of the study is to determine the moderating effect of trustworthiness on consumer purchase intention among the students of Kaduna State University (KASU) The finding revealed that celebrity Attractiveness has a positive significant effect on consumer purchasing behavior in KASU. This finding is in line with the Source Attractiveness. Theory which posits that endorsers' physical appeal, familiarity, likability, and similarity enhance message credibility and consumer persuasion, with trustworthiness serving as a pivotal dimension that transfers positive associations to the endorsed brand (McGuire, 1985). In this study, the significant effect of celebrity trustworthiness aligns seamlessly with the theory, as trustworthy endorsers evoke greater affinity and compliance, thereby influencing KASU consumers' buying behavior through affective pathways (Ohanian, 1990).

Hence, celebrity trustworthiness increases endorsement efficacy by signaling reliability which ultimately channels consumer attitudes into tangible purchases (Kamins, 1989). This finding is in line with previous findings such as Munjal (2020), sunny and Christopher (2023), and Homiga and Prasanna (2024), who also established a positive significant effect of celebrity Attractiveness on consumer purchasing intention.

The second objective of the study is to determine the effect of celebrity trustworthiness on consumer purchasing intention among KASU students. The finding revealed that celebrity trustworthiness has a positive significant effect on consumer purchasing intention in KASU. This finding is explained by the Commitment-Trust Theory which sees celebrity trustworthiness as a multifaceted construct where trust and commitment mediate the path to behavioral outcomes like repeat buying and resistance to competitors (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). This signifies that KASU consumers develop affective commitment through positive brand experiences, which foster emotional attachment that translates into higher purchase frequency and volume, even in a competitive market. This finding is in line with previous findings such as Orina (2022), Hossain et al (2025), and Evan (2023), who also established a positive significant effect of celebrity trustworthiness on consumer purchasing intention.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusively, this study established that celebrity Attractiveness and celebrity trustworthiness significantly and positively influence consumer buying behavior in KASU which aligns with Commitment-Trust Theory and Source Attractiveness Theory. These findings Demonstrates the relational and persuasive mechanisms that drive purchases in emerging markets where marketers can enhance retention and sales among competitive pressures. Based on the findings and conclusion, the study recommends that,

- **i.** Prioritize partnerships with locally booming celebrities which are high on trustworthiness to boost endorsement credibility and purchase intentions.
- **ii.** Firms should prioritize physically attractive celebrities when designing endorsement strategies, as attractiveness enhances persuasive impact and increases consumers' likelihood of purchasing.
- **iii.** Since trustworthiness does not strengthen or weaken the effect of attractiveness, firms may treat attractiveness and trustworthiness as independent drivers rather than interactive factors in endorsement strategy.

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