

THE EFFECTS OF ENDORSER CREDIBILITY AND CORPORATE CREDIBILITY
IN AUTOMOBILE ADS

By

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To my family

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Aad	Attitude toward the Ad
Ab	Attitude toward the Brand
PI	Purchase Intention
ELM	Elaboration Likelihood Model

Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
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This study explored the effectiveness of endorser and corporate credibility in advertising. A sample of 117 students at UF, ages 18 to 28-years-old, participated in the current study. This researcher implemented a 2 x 2 experimental paradigm to manipulate and assess endorser and corporate credibility. Additionally, this researcher explored the dependent variables of attitude toward an advertisement, brand, and purchase intention based on traditional advertising measures. Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire measuring the effectiveness of advertisements. Possible main effects for endorser and corporate credibility and possible interactions of these variables were analyzed using an ANOVA. Results indicate that endorser credibility positively affected attitude toward the ad; however, no significant effects were found for brand attitudes and purchase intention. Conversely, corporate credibility generated more positive attitudes toward brand and purchase intention, but not attitude toward the ad. Moreover, an interaction effect concerning attitude toward the brand was also identified. Implications for marketers and advertisers based on the results of the current study are examined in the discussion section as well as limitations and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Today, a popular form of advertising is celebrity endorsement. In fact, celebrity endorsements accounted for approximately 20% of American advertisements (Solomon, 2009), indicating suggesting that many American companies recognize the fact that celebrity endorsements positively impact consumers' attitudes toward the ad (Aad), brand (Ab), and purchase intention (PI) in addition to other measures of effectiveness (Goldsmith et al., 2000). Celebrities are perceived as more credible than ordinary people due to their broad recognition and popularity; thus, advertisers expect to elicit positive impact using their credible images (Ohanian 1990). In fact, research suggests that celebrity endorsement may provide considerable financial profits for advisers using it in their advertising campaigns (Erdogan et al., 2001).

Credibility in Advertising

As a focus in marketing communication research, credibility refers to “the extent to which the source is perceived as possessing expertise relevant to the communication topic and can be trusted to give an objective opinion on the subject” (Belch & Belch, 1994, pp. 189-190). Cooper (1984) suggested that using credible endorsers improves the credibility of the advertisers and enhances ad recall. Atkin and Block (1983) showed that celebrities in ads create higher product evaluations and better ad ratings. Sternthal et al. (1978) suggested the credibility of a source determines the level of attention received by the consumer as well as the level of recall by the consumer. In other words, highly credible sources gain more consumer attention than less credible sources. In addition, highly credible endorsers produce more positive Aad and Ab than less credible endorsers do (Craig & McCann, 1978). Consequently, advertisers spend considerable effort and time selecting the celebrity with the most positive and powerful impact on their advertisement (Ohanian, 1990).

Credibility also extends to the company (Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999). If a company has little or no credibility, consumers may be wary of the company and their products. Keller and Aaker (1998) found a close connection between enhanced corporate credibility and brand success while Lafferty and Goldsmith's (1999) study indicated positive effects for Ab and PI when corporate credibility was high. Such findings, when applied to the world of advertising, raise questions regarding ads that feature two sources: the endorser or spokesperson and the corporate sponsor. Most previous studies have failed to account for the relationship between endorser and corporate credibility, despite the importance of corporate credibility. Thus, the current study focuses on the match between corporate and endorser credibility.

Current Study

Although endorser and corporate credibility have been researched separately and in some combination, to date, research has not explored endorser and corporate credibility using real brands and corporations. In addition, research confirms that automobiles are a high-involvement product for consumers (Hupfer & Fardner, 1971). When consumers shop for cars, they search for information actively and carefully decide before purchasing. Consequently, existing automobile advertisements typically emphasize the functional aspects of the product. As a result, few automobile advertisements use celebrities. However, advertisers have recently attempted to match celebrities and automobiles by launching companies into a highly competitive auto market. The focus of this study is to shed on the highly competitive auto market and the practice of launching car companies with relatively low priced products. Launching these companies into the U.S. market may result in one of two outcomes. Specifically, they could take higher position in the market than existing companies take or experience trust issues because of their extremely low pricing structures.

The strategies used in launching a car company and promoting new products are determining factors in the success of the company. Using ads to promote a new brand is a powerful promotional tool in establishing brand image and using celebrities is one strategy that enhances this process. However, few studies have examined the effectiveness of using celebrities in advertising auto brands. Based on this information, this researcher suggests that advertisers can develop effective ad strategies, thus increasing the level of brand awareness using celebrities. Therefore, empirical studies examining the combined effects of endorser and corporate credibility may yield important contributions to automobile marketing.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is increase understanding to of credibility sources on Aad, Ab, and PI by examining endorser and corporate credibility on consumers' attitudes in automobile ads. The study will focus primarily on two variables: endorser credibility (high versus low) and corporate credibility (high versus low). This researcher poses that Aad, Ab, and PI are influenced by corporate credibility—especially in automobile ads that do not tend to use celebrity endorsements—the results may help illuminate the relationship between the endorser and the advertiser in creating more effective advertisements.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEWS

Celebrity Endorsers

Sometimes a celebrity endorser is selected to endorse a new product with the intention of creating immediate appeal of the product and increasing profits (Dickenson, 1996). Several early positioning strategies were not successful in attracting customers' attention; however, research suggests that advertisers can use celebrity endorsers to launch new positioning strategies and thus transfer the celebrity's image to the products. In establishing global marketing, cultural barriers such as, language, space, relationships, and time must be taken in to consideration (Hofstede, 1984). Celebrity endorsers, especially those with international fame, may be effective tools for launching products in overseas markets.

Celebrity endorsements enhance brand awareness and gain a greater impact on advertising outcomes (Atkin & Block, 1983). The use of endorsers over the last century has ranged from the use of simple cards, on a small scale to the use of multi-media messages on a larger scale (Agrawl & Kamakura, 1995). The type of celebrity endorsers has also evolved from primarily athletes to today's celebrities that include men, women, boys, and girls related to sports, broadcast, radio, music, and movies (McCracken, 1989). Friedman and Friedman (1979) define a celebrity endorser as "an individual who is known to the public for his or her achievements in areas other than that of the product endorsed" (p. 63). Also, McCracken (1989) defines it as "any individual who enjoys public recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement" (p. 310). Thus, celebrity endorsers promote a product or service using their own recognition and are viewed as credible.

Consequently, researchers expect that ads using their credible images will elicit a greater impact on advertising outcomes (Ohanian 1990). Taylor et al. (1997)

demonstrated that the most important reason companies use celebrities is to increase product awareness. In the purchase process, awareness is the first step; if customers do not know advertisers' products, they will not have the chance to buy them. A celebrity involved in marketing the brand can increase consumers' product recall and share their charisma and success with the products (Taylor et al., 1997). Taylor et al. examined the effects of television commercials with varied levels of information content (high vs. low) on brand awareness. Results indicated that participants preferred less information, held positive attitudes toward the celebrities, and viewed the celebrities as a key visual component or important to the story line.

Celebrity endorsements can also be an effective way to capture customers' attention. As products become increasingly similar and media clutter increases, it is hard to differentiate among products with increased competition. Celebrity endorsements draw attention to the products and create a connection in the minds of the consumers (Sternthal et al., 1978). In addition, they can have strong effects on consumers' decision to purchase. Ohanian (1991) found that consumer decisions could be affected based on the expertise of the endorser, "Consumers are more likely to purchase a product that has been endorsed by a celebrity, especially if the product attributes to the celebrity success" (p. 48).

Based on previous research, celebrity endorsers positively affect advertising effectiveness measures such as Aad, Ab, and PI (Atkin & Block, 1983). Atkin and Block (1983) examined celebrity endorsers used in alcohol Ads among young audiences. Their investigation manipulated the celebrity endorsing an alcohol brand, resulting in three versions of ads featuring either a celebrity or a non-celebrity. In each case, ads with a celebrity were compared with the same ad using a non-celebrity. Results found that the ads containing a celebrity endorsement of the

alcohol product were highly effective with teenagers. In addition, all age groups viewed the celebrity endorser as more reliable and competent. Atkin and Block (1983) also suggested that a well-known celebrity endorser may be more influential for a number of reasons. First, consumers often perceive celebrity endorsers as highly dynamic, likeable, and attractive people. Additionally, their reputation attracts customers' attention to the products they endorse. Moreover, research had found that celebrity endorsements produce more sales, thus increasing the profitability of the company compared to products not endorsed by celebrities (Gabor et al., 1987). When advertisers pick a celebrity endorser, they need to consider many variables. Generally, the celebrity's appeal should be matched with the advertiser's message (Kamins, 1990). If advertisers select the latest celebrity without considering the target market, conducting in-depth research, and analyzing the celebrity's image, the ad campaign will fail (McCracken, 1989).

Endorser Effectiveness

Source Attractiveness Model

The Source Attractiveness Model, developed by McGuire (1984), suggests that an individual's message recognition is influenced by similarity (i.e., receiver and source), familiarity (i.e., knowledge), and liking. McGuire (1985) demonstrated that the source attractiveness resulted in the overall recognition of the message. Ohanian (1990) combined the Source Attractiveness Model and the Source Credibility Model, thus creating a measurement tool measure and assess celebrity expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. Ohanian characterized expertise as being informed, trained, educated, and competent, while trustworthiness is amount, or degree to which the listener believes the speaker. Finally, she defined attractiveness using existing research indicating that physical appearance provides significant

information of a first impression. Using these findings, Ohanian created a 15-item scale to assess identified traits, thereby providing researchers with a more valid and reliable approach for evaluating each component of celebrity endorsers' effectiveness and persuasiveness.

Source Credibility

Source credibility is considered a powerful strategy for effective persuasion. Kelman and Hovland (1953) defined source credibility as the level of perceived reliability of a message source for accurate and honest information. Source credibility has two major elements: expertise, which involves providing correct information (Rhine & Severance, 1970), and source trustworthiness, which is related to the degree of confidence (Mills & Jellison, 1967). McGuire's (1968) Source Credibility Model was the first method used to understand the characteristics necessary to generate effective advertising. Source credibility refers to the sender's attributes that are positive and that influence the receiver's recognition of a message. McGuire suggested two additional components of source credibility: expertise and trustworthiness. These factors contribute to changes in consumer opinion as well as serve as effective tools of persuasion. According to McGuire, these factors follow a five-step process—attention, comprehension, yielding, retention, and action—to bring about a consumer's attitude change. In addition to expertise and trustworthiness, researchers have proposed other constructs. Different dimensions of source credibility include message quality, believability, sociability, and potency (Wynn, 1987). Berlo et al. (1969) suggested the dimensions of safety, qualification, and dynamism. Yet, despite the various explanations for source credibility, expertise and trustworthiness remain the most generally used dimensions (McCracken, 1989).

Both components are important in effective persuasion and opinion change. A highly credible source generates more a positive evaluation and draws greater acceptance of arguments. As early as 1951, Hovland and Weiss found that highly credible sources change consumers' opinion to a greater degree than sources with low credibility; in most cases, a high level of source credibility leads to increased persuasion (Petty & Wegener, 1998) and attitudes toward the endorser and advertisement (Braunsberger, 1996).

An experiment conducted by Hovland and Weiss (1951) did not find a discrepancy between the amount of information absorbed by subjects exposed to low and high credibility conditions. However, opinions differed between the low and high credibility groups. High credibility sources experienced more changes of opinion in the advocated direction, whereas there was no such effect among the low credibility sources. Subjects had one more experiment four weeks after the first exposure. Once again, they found no difference in the amount of information between low and high credibility groups, but they once again found that there were more opinion changes in the advocated direction among the high credibility sources. After the four week experiment, participants who viewed low credibility sources showed a increase in opinion, and participants who viewed high credibility source showed decreases in opinion. This phenomenon is related to the sleeper effect in earlier research (Hovland et al., 1949), who discussed its possible connection to recall of the source, which was especially deficient in the very group that had initially been in disagreement with the position advocated in the message, and were then exposed to a source low in credibility and, after a delay, came to agree with the advocated position. Another interesting aspect is that Hovland, et al. (1949) examined not only their own determinations of low and high credibility sources, but

also found similar results based on participants' own interpretations of the source credibility level, whether or not it agreed with the experimenter's labels. In most cases, highly credible sources have led to increased persuasion in research and to affect positively attitudes toward both the advertisement and the endorser (Hovland et al., 1949; Braunsberger, 1996), but the effectiveness of source credibility is further refined by interactions with other sources, audience characteristics, or the message itself (Sternthal et al., 1978). Stern (1994) suggested that it is hard to effectively separate out the various components of source credibility in an ad. He identified three source elements that affect credibility: the sponsor, who is legally and financially responsible for the ad (such as a company promoting a product or a candidate running for office), the author of the ad, such as an advertising agency, and the person who actually relays the message in the advertisement, such as a celebrity or other endorser.

Source credibility is based on the receiver's perception (Perloff, 2003). People make decisions according to their knowledge, memories, and information in various contexts. Such contextual factors influence persuasive outcomes (Tormala & Petty, 2007). Tormala and Clarkson (2007) demonstrated that perceived source credibility is easily affected by other sources recently processed. In an environment with multiple messages, the receivers of the messages can be affected by previously processed messages. The previously processed perceptions function as a standard of comparison in making decisions about a new target message. According to Tormala and Clarkson (2007), if customers have a higher evaluation of expertise, they will produce more positive responses. Sternthal et al. (1978) also found persuasiveness as a factor in the connection between source credibility and other variables related to the source, channel, message, destination, and receiver.

In advertising contexts, source credibility is an important method for changing attitudes and enhancing advertisement effectiveness. Consequently, research has focused on source credibility on attitudes and behaviors. According to Warren (1969), a highly credible source leads to greater attitude change and better evaluations by receivers. MacKenzie and Lutz (1989) examined attitude formation relative to advertisements and brands to understand how credibility affects receivers' attitudes. Their findings suggested that perceived advertiser credibility is based on ad credibility. Most studies have suggested that a high credibility sources are more persuasive and has a positive effect on receivers' attitudes and behavioral intentions (Pornpitakpan, 2004).

Match-Up Hypothesis

Ohanian (1990) is one of several researchers who explored match-up between product and endorser. Kanungo and Pang (1973) suggested the characteristic of "fittingness," which is the perceived congruence between images of products and endorsers in the advertisement. Peterson and Kerin (1977) also proposed that an advertisement needs product/endorser congruency in order to enhance communication. Many researchers have emphasized that more match-up between the image of the product and endorser results in more effective communications (Kamins and Gupta, 1994; Kahle & Homer, 1985; Lynch & Schuler, 1994; Peterson & Kerin, 1977). Kamins and Gupta (1994) manipulated product and endorser congruency in terms of product image. These researchers found a match up effect in terms of running shoes to celebrities. Specifically, congruency was found with a celebrity but not with running shoes. Results also revealed high congruency produced more spokesperson believability and attractiveness and a more favorable attitudes toward the products. While Kamins and Gupta found significant effects in

terms of match-up, there is still disagreement as to how to measure effectiveness. Researchers have suggested a number of approaches capable of measuring effectiveness related to Aad, Ab, and PI (Ohanian, 1991; Goldsmith et al., 2000), but no single method has been suggested.

Several studies have been conducted considering attractiveness in advertisements (Friedman & Friedman, 1979; Kamins, 1990; Till & Busler, 2000). These studies indicate an effect of the match-up between endorser and product when the advertised product is evaluated. Two main factors affecting the endorser include identification and internalization by the consumer. When consumers follow an endorser because they derive satisfaction from feeling similar to the endorser, that is identification. When consumers follow an endorser because they have considered the behavior and adopt it as their own, this is internalization (Friedman & Friedman, 1979). A study was conducted to find out “whether or not the effectiveness of an endorser type is dependent upon the type of product being endorsed” (Friedman & Friedman, 1979, p. 64). Friedman and Friedman’s study suggested that consumers would evaluate celebrity endorsers more positively when celebrity endorsers were related to products that were high in social and mental risk. In addition, Friedman suggested that expert endorsers were evaluated more positively when related to products that were high in financial and physical risk. Finally, typical consumer endorsers were evaluated more positively when related to low-risk products (Friedman & Friedman, 1979).

The match-up hypothesis by discussed in Kahle and Homer (1985) and Kamins (1990) is another measure of source credibility effectiveness. This match-up proposes a logical agreement between endorser and product is important to get more positive results for the advertisement. Several studies have evaluated

attractiveness of endorsers and they have generally demonstrated that consumers' evaluation of the product in the ad is determined by the endorser/product match-up. Peterson and Kerin (1977) proposed that model/product congruency is important in advertisements for improving viewers' perceptions of the ad. In other words, image of the product and image of the mode should match, thus the model/product congruency in advertising is needed. In addition, Kahle and Homer (1985) suggested using the Product Match-Up Hypothesis to examine the effectiveness of endorsers. This hypothesis emphasizes the importance of matching celebrity endorsers and products. High congruency indicates that the model's advertising role is communicative and expresses the desired message (Peterson & Kerin, 1977).

Although the match-up hypothesis is connected with source attractiveness, it has recently been studied in the area of source expertise (Till & Busler, 2000). Till and Busler (2000) examined attractiveness on attitudes and PI to a perfume that is related to attractiveness and a pen that is unrelated to attractiveness. Although they expected a match-up effect, attractiveness led to more positive Ab and PI for both products. Hence, match-up effect did not occur. However, they conducted another study using candy bars and energy bars on two different sources that are same in attractiveness, photos of an actor and an athlete. This second study resulted in a match-up effect. The result shows that an athlete and an energy bar were a much better fit, and more positively affected brand attitudes than the incongruent conditions. Therefore, their study found a match-up hypothesis can be connected through expertise but not attractiveness.

Meaning Transfer Model

Meaning transfer is an important concept supporting the claim that personality influences brand image. It is based on the idea that consumers consider

not only the practical importance of products but also their meanings when they buy them (McCracken, 1989). McCracken concluded that the meaning of a brand is comprised of various factors, such as ethnicity, gender, nationality and social status. Levy (1959) claimed that “Modern goods are recognized as essentially psychological things which are symbolic of personal attributes and goals and of social patterns and strivings” (p. 119). McCracken (1989) proposed the cultural meanings related to the individual may also be an important factor for celebrity endorsers. The process of the endorsement can be explained by the Meaning Transfer Model. According to McCracken, celebrity endorsement relies on a three-stage process, which a celebrity endorser shares communication related to a specific product: 1) the consumer has an image of the celebrity; 2) the advertiser selects an endorser who represents the intended image of the product; and 3) the image of the product transfers to the consumer (Langmeyer & Walker, 1991).

Originally, meaning transfer explained the links among celebrity endorsers, consumers and brands. Compared to non-celebrity endorsement, celebrity endorsement is considered a more powerful tool for influencing consumers’ perceptions of products (McCracken, 1989). However, it is impossible that all cultural meanings related to a celebrity endorser are transferred to a product. Thus, in using the meaning transfer model, one should take the match-up hypothesis into consideration. In other words, the endorser/product match-up would be more effective as a way to come up with new marketing strategies. Usually, more association between endorser and brand results in a more effective the marketing strategy (Kamins & Gupta, 1994). Fowles (1996) argued that this concept can be related to all types of celebrity endorsement, explaining that “endorsements succeed only when consumers feel that meanings can shift along unimpeded paths from

performer to product – either because of an inherent affinity between the two or because of the ingenuity of the agency’s creative team, or both” (p. 131).

The Source Credibility Model, Source Attractiveness Model, Product Match-Up Hypothesis, and Meaning Transfer Model are all significantly related to one another. They are usually used to explore advertisers’ rather than consumers’ insights. Therefore, advertisers need to consider multiple additional factors that affect consumers to increase successful advertising effectiveness.

Endorser Credibility

A significant method for increasing advertising effectiveness is endorser credibility. Endorser credibility leads consumers to have a positive reaction to both the ad and brand (Atkin & Block, 1983; Goldberg & Hartwick, 1990). Lafferty and Goldsmith (1999) found the credibility of the endorser positively influenced consumers’ PI. Cooper (1984) suggested that using credible endorsers improves the credibility of the advertisers as well as enhances ad recall.

Ohanian (1990) suggested three elements of endorser credibility: expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. Expertise relates to an individual’s perceived knowledge, abilities, and/or experience that enable him or her to provide accurate and credible information (Hovland et al., 1953). Trustworthiness is the consumer’s belief that the endorser is able to provide information sincerely and in an unbiased manner. Finally, attractiveness refers to the endorser’s physical attractiveness to the customer (Ohanian, 1991). Based on these definitions, consumers perceive knowledgeable, sincere, and physically attractive endorsers as credible and report positive attitude and behavioral feedback (Ohanian, 1991).

Given celebrities’ popularity and consumers’ high level of awareness of them, celebrity endorsers are expected to affect customers positively and create better

advertising outcomes through the use of their well-established images (Freiden, 1984). Customers perceive celebrities to be trustworthy, likable, and expert (Wheatly & Brooker, 1994). As a result, advertisements using celebrity endorsers are more persuasive than the non-use of celebrities (McGuire, 1969).

Corporate Credibility

Corporate credibility is a source credibility of interest to researchers. Fombrun (1996) notes that corporate credibility is a function of corporate reputation used to determine consumers' beliefs in the company's expertise and trustworthiness. Customers generally have established perceptions about corporate credibility because they already know many companies. Thus, companies about which consumers have already established perceptions are considered "representative of an accumulation of both information and experience acquired over time" while "the process by which attitude toward the advertiser affects Aad is likely to be more or less automatic" (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989, p. 53). Keller (1998) defined corporate credibility as "the extent to which consumers believe that a firm can design and deliver products and services that satisfy customer needs and wants" (p. 426). According to Keller, fundamental factors of corporate credibility such as expertise and trustworthiness affect the broader sense of the corporate reputation. As a result, corporate credibility can lead to positive attitudes by the consumer toward the corporation and Aad (MacKenzie et al., 1986).

Companies spend significant amounts of money to generate corporate advertising that enhances their image (Fombrun, 1996). Such expenditures are not surprising given that trustworthiness and expertise of a company are important because they influence newly launched products, successful brand extensions, loyalty for products, and sales (Fombrun, 1996). Keller and Aaker (1998) identified a

close connection between corporate credibility and brand success. Corporate credibility is an important component that positively influences Aad (Newell, 1993), Ab (Goldsmith et al., 2000; Newell, 1993), and PI (Goldsmith et al., 2000; Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999). Goldsmith et al. (2000) examined endorser and corporate credibility on Aad, Ab, and PI. These researchers surveyed 152 participants who were asked to view a fictitious Ad for Mobil Oil Company. Participants were asked about the corporate credibility, Aad, Ab, and PI. Findings indicate that endorser credibility positively affected Ab and PI. Results indicated that high corporate credibility may increase the validity of company claims in advertising and achieve greater effectiveness of advertising efforts (Goldberg & Hartwick, 1990).

Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

The elaboration likelihood model (ELM) explains how consumers' attitudes are affected by persuasion (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). ELM also defines the motivation to process central messages influencing the central and peripheral processing. According to Petty and Cacioppo (1986), ELM provides "a fairly general framework for organizing and understanding the basic processes underlying the effectiveness of persuasive communications" (p.125). ELM is based on the idea that receivers are influenced by the degree to which they engage in the elaboration of the persuasive issue. Such elaboration refers to "the extent to which a person thinks about issue-relevant arguments contained in a message" (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, p. 128), which are characterized based on a continuum of cognitive activities. As suggested by Petty and Cacioppo (1986) "complete elaboration of every argument and complete integration of these elaborations into a person's attitude schema" (p. 129).

ELM considers two routes of elaboration; specifically, the central and the peripheral routes. The ELM's central route is the main route for changing attitudes as

it emphasizes cognitive thoughts in processing messages (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). When a message is processed by the central route, a high level of elaboration, cognitive responses, and persuasion “likely resulted from the information presented in support of an advocacy” are generated (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, p. 125). The high level of elaboration involves “paying careful attention to the relevant information in the message, relating that information to previous knowledge stored in memory, and generating new implications of the information” (Petty et al., 2005, p. 84). This process causes the receiver to elaborate upon the message and significantly impacts the message receiver’s attitude change.

Meanwhile, the peripheral route is where elaboration is relatively low. People using the peripheral route are referred to as cognitive misers (Taylor, 1981). Along this route, processing messages depends on peripheral cues such as message length and source attractiveness. This occurs in a low-involvement situation; people process the basic level message that does not require much thought about the arguments. Therefore, the peripheral route is characterized by “an absence of effortful message elaboration” while attitudes generated by this route are “less accessible, persistent, resistant and predictive of behavior” when compared to those attitudes of the central route (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, p. 131). Thus, although both the central and peripheral routes are persuasive, the central route generates more enduring outcomes (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

Concerning the advertising context, ELM provides a theoretical model for studying the combined effects of endorser and corporate credibility. Corporate credibility is more often perceived as a central processing cue (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989). When an individual’s motivation to process an ad’s brand-related factors centrally rises, central processing increases as does its impact on brand attitudes.

Furthermore, if peripheral processing declines, the effect of brand attitudes on PI increases (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). In this model, the endorser is the peripheral processing cue. Consequently, the endorser's impact declines as central processing increases.

CHAPTER 3 HYPOTHESES

Many studies have examined celebrities as endorsers based on the idea that they tend to be perceived as better able to elicit consumers' positive responses (Kamins, 1989). Furthermore, celebrities are seen as credible endorsers; as such, they are expected to be able to create more favorable Aad (Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999), Ab (Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999), and PI (Ohanian, 1991). Therefore, it is expected that:

H1: The level of endorser credibility will have positive effects on (a) Aad, (b) Ab, and (c) PI.

Corporate credibility has also been shown to positively influence Aad and Ab (Newell, 1993). Lafferty and Goldsmith (1999) found that corporate credibility had a very strong effect on Aad, Ab, and PI. Thus, based on prior research on corporate credibility, it is hypothesized that:

H2: The level of corporate credibility will have positive effects on (a) Aad, (b) Ab, and (c) PI.

Finally, based on ELM, corporate credibility is perceived to be more central in processing than endorser credibility (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989). If customers use corporate credibility more for cognitive processing, it may in turn be more significant than endorser credibility when consumers form Aad, Ab and PI. Therefore, it is expected that:

H3: Endorser credibility will impact (a) Aad, (b) Ab, and (c) PI only when corporate credibility is high; when corporate credibility is low, endorser credibility will have no effect on these dependent variables.

CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY

Experiment Design

This research designed an experiment methodology to test the relationships among the variables. The study utilized a 2 (endorser credibility: high vs. low) x 2 (corporate credibility: high vs. low) factorial mixed model design. A total of 117 students from the University of Florida participated in this study for extra credit. Each participant was randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions. The number of each cell is described in Table 4-1.

Procedure

This researcher obtained approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Florida prior to data collection. University of Florida Students were recruited to complete a survey and surveys were administered in classrooms from April to May 2010.

Four different booklets were prepared and participants were randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions combining endorser and corporate credibility by distributing four different versions of the material packet. Participants were provided with information about the study; specifically that this study concerned an automobile advertisement. In a classroom, participants were exposed to a print advertisement for three minutes and asked to complete a short questionnaire. Participants were also asked general questions about demographic questions such as age, gender, race, and education.

Stimulus Materials

Stimulus Materials was created using Photoshop CS4 and the ad copy, "Prepare to master the road ahead," which was cited in an actual European auto brand. All the information of the ad was identical, aside from the identity of the

endorser and the credibility of the corporation. A full-page print advertisement for an automobile corporation was developed for the experiment. Four versions (Ad 1: High endorser credibility and High corporate credibility; Ad 2: Low endorser credibility and High corporate credibility; Ad 3: High endorser credibility and Low corporate credibility; Ad 4: Low endorser credibility and Low corporate credibility) of the advertisement were prepared, combining endorser credibility (high versus low) and corporate credibility (high versus low). George Clooney (high credibility) and David Hasselhoff (low credibility) were used as endorsers of the stimulus materials. Clooney was chosen as a high credibility endorser as he was anointed as The World's Most Powerful Celebrities 100 of *Forbes* in 2007 and 2009. According to *Forbes*, the more powerful the celebrity, the more influence they have on consumers' perceptions on the credibility and the company's marketing strategy. Meanwhile, Hasselhoff was chosen as a low credibility endorser considering his reputation; he was picked as 2009's worst celebrity by *Dailynews*. Hasselhoff was a symbol of health in 90s; however, his fame did not last long because of a severe alcohol addiction and divorce. In addition, Mercedes-Benz was chosen as the high credibility corporation and KIA was selected as the low credibility corporation. According to J.D. Power, resale value and vehicle quality are the most important factors for consumers when purchasing a car brand. Mercedes-Benz scores highest in retaining vehicle owners among automotive brands when making a new vehicle purchase; indeed, the corporation improved its retention rate by 7 percentage points to 66% in 2008. Meanwhile, KIA ranked 37% in 2009—below the average 48%. In addition, vehicle quality can be estimated in terms of performance, design, predicted reliability, fuel economy, safety, and environment. Mercedes was rated 9.1 out of 10, and KIA was rated 7.3 according to the U.S. News Scores in 2009.

Independent Variables

Endorser Credibility

Participants completed a 15-item, seven-point bipolar adjective scale developed by Ohanian (1990). This scale measured perceived attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise of celebrity endorsers. Five items, “Attractive/Unattractive”; “Classy/Not Classy”; “Handsome/Ugly”; “Elegant/Plain”; “Sexy/Not Sexy” measured attractiveness; five items “Dependable/Undependable”; “Honest/Dishonest”; “Reliable/Unreliable”; “Sincere/Insincere”; “Trustworthy/Untrustworthy” measured trustworthiness. Items were rated accordingly, “expert/Not an expert”; “Experienced/Inexperienced”; “Knowledgeable/Unknowledgeable”; “Qualified/Unqualified”; “Skilled/Unskilled” measured expertise.

Corporate credibility

Corporate credibility was measured using a scale developed by Newell (1993), which included an eight-item, seven-point Likert scale with four scales that measured trustworthiness and four scales that measured expertise.

Dependent Variables

Attitudes toward the Advertisement

Participants were asked to indicate their Aad on three, seven-point bipolar adjective scales, anchored by “good/bad,” “favorable/unfavorable,” and “pleasant/unpleasant” (Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999; Mackenzie & Lutz, 1989).

Attitudes toward the Brand

Subjects were asked to indicate their Ab on three, seven-point bipolar adjective scales, anchored by “satisfactory/unsatisfactory,” “favorable/unfavorable,” and “good/bad” (Burnkrant & Unnava, 1995; Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999).

Purchase Intention

Participants answered the question of their likelihood of buying the brand of automobile depicted in the advertisement. Three, seven-point bipolar adjective scales included the following responses “very likely/very unlikely,” “probable/improbable,” and “possible/impossible” (Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999; Yi, 1990).

Table 4-1. Study Design

		Corporate Credibility	
		High	Low
Endorser Credibility	High	n=30	n=29
	Low	n=29	n=29

CHAPTER 5 RESULTS

Sample Profile

Of the 117 valid samples, 31.6% ($n=37$) were male and 68.4% ($n=80$) were female. Participants' age ranged from 18 to 28 years old ($M=21.17$), but the majority (91.20%) were between 18 and 22 years old. The most common races in decreasing order of appearance included Caucasian (66.7%), Black (12.8%), Hispanic (10.3%), Asian (6.8%), and others (3.4%). Participants (86.3%) in an undergraduate program made up the majority of the sample. Participants in a graduate program included 10.3% of the final sample. In addition, 89.7% owned a car and 18.1% respondents bought their cars by themselves.

Reliability Checks

As shown in Table 5-1, the results demonstrated that the scales used in the study were reliable according to Cronbach's alpha levels. Cronbach's alpha for corporate credibility was .97 and for endorser credibility was .98; both had high internal consistency as well. Reliability measures suggested high internal consistency for the dependent variables: Aad (Cronbach's alpha= .97), Ab (Cronbach's alpha= .98), and PI (Cronbach's alpha= .93).

Manipulation Checks

Using one-way ANOVA, the results of manipulation checks for endorser credibility were successful ($F(1, 113) = 144.97, p < .001$). The results indicated that the manipulated high credibility endorser was more credible than the manipulated low credibility endorser. The manipulations for corporate credibility were also successful ($F(1, 113) = 127.73, p < .001$). Additionally, the comparisons demonstrated that participants perceived the stimulus materials as intended. The endorser credibility manipulation significantly affected the perceived endorser

credibility both in the high corporate credibility level ($F(1, 57) = 116.97, p < .001$), and in the low credibility level ($F(1, 56) = 51.65, p < .001$). Also, the corporate credibility manipulation resulted in the expected effect perceived corporate credibility both in the high endorser credibility level ($F(1, 57) = 67.43, p < .001$) and in the low credibility level ($F(1, 56) = 55.04, p < .001$).

Hypotheses Test Results

Tests of Hypothesis 1: Endorser Credibility Effects

The first set of three hypotheses examined the effect of endorser credibility on Aad, Ab, and PI. The hypotheses are as follows:

H1: The level of endorser credibility will have positive effects on (a) Aad, (b) Ab, and (c) PI.

To test this first set of hypotheses, ANOVAs were used to examine endorser credibility effects (high endorser credibility versus low endorser credibility) on Aad, Ab, and PI. For Hypothesis 1A, the results indicated that high endorser credibility yielded a more positive effect on Aad ($M = 5.32$) compared to low endorser credibility ($M = 3.19$; $F(1, 113) = 80.49, p < .001$). Thus, Hypothesis 1A is supported. However, for Hypothesis 1B, the result was not statistically significant. Participants did not indicate that the high endorser credibility had a more positive Ab ($M = 4.72$) than the low endorser credibility ($M = 4.51$; $F(1, 113) = .85, p > .1$). Thus, Hypothesis 1B is not supported. Finally, in regard to Hypothesis 1C, the results showed no significant effects on endorser credibility for PI. The high credibility endorsers demonstrated more positive Aad ($M = 3.82$) compared to low credibility endorsers ($M = 3.32$; $F(1, 113) = 3.07, p > .05$). Thus, Hypothesis 1C is not statistically supported (see Tables 5-3, 5-4, and 5-5).

Tests of Hypothesis 2: Corporate Credibility Effects

The second set of three hypotheses examined the effect of corporate credibility on Aad, Ab, and PI. The hypotheses are as follows:

H2: The level of corporate credibility will have positive effects on (a) Aad, (b) Ab, and (c) PI.

To test the second set of hypotheses, ANOVAs examined endorser credibility effects (high corporate credibility versus low corporate credibility) on Aad, Ab, and PI. The results were not statistically significant for Hypothesis 2A, although they were for 2B and 2C. The results failed to show more positive Aad for the high credibility company ($M = 4.40$) compared to the low credibility company ($M = 4.10$; $F(1, 113) = 1.52, p > .1$), failing to support Hypothesis 2A. However, participants reported positive Ab in high corporate credibility situations ($M = 5.70$) compared to low corporate credibility situations ($M = 3.53$; $F(1, 113) = 85.75, p < .001$). Likewise, the high credibility company had a more positive Ab ($M = 4.16$) than the low credibility company ($M = 2.98$; $F(1, 113) = 17.01, p < .001$). Thus, Hypotheses 2B and 2C were statically supported (see Tables 5-3, 5-4, and 5-5).

Tests of Hypothesis 3: Interaction Effects

The third set of three hypotheses examined how the interaction between corporate and endorser credibility influences Aad, Ab, and PI. The hypotheses are as follows:

H3: Endorser credibility will impact (a) Aad, (b) Ab, and (c) PI only when corporate credibility is high; when corporate credibility is low, endorser credibility will have no effect on these dependent variables.

To test this set of hypotheses, ANOVAs examined the interaction between corporate and endorser credibility influences on Aad, Ab, and PI. The results were not

statistically significant ($F(1, 113) = .64, p > .1$) for Hypothesis 3A, failing to show that the interaction between corporate and endorser credibility influences Aad. Thus, Hypothesis 3A is not supported. However, significant interaction ($F(1, 113) = 8.89, p < .01$) occurred regarding the effects of corporate and endorser credibility on Ab. Thus, Hypothesis 3B is supported. Finally, the results for Hypothesis 3C did not show significant interaction ($F(1, 113) = 1.39, p > .1$) concerning endorser and corporate credibility on PI. Thus, Hypothesis 3C is not statically supported (see Tables 5-3, 5-4, and 5-5). Additionally, results of one-way ANOVAs showed significantly more positive Ab with the high credibility endorser ($M = 6.16$) compared to the low credibility endorser ($M = 3.29; p < .05$) in the high corporate credibility level (see Tables 5-6 and Figure 5-1).

Table 5-1. Reliability Analysis for Independent and Dependent Measures

Measures		Number of items	Cronbach's α
Independent Measures	Corporate Credibility	3	0.972
	Endorser Credibility	15	0.976
Dependent Measures	Aad	3	0.966
	Ab	3	0.979
	PI	3	0.926

Table 5-2. Ad Attitude, Brand Attitude, and Purchase Intent Distribution, Means, and Standard Deviations for Four Experimental Conditions

	n	Aad		Ab		PI	
		mean ^a	s.d.	mean ^a	s.d.	mean ^a	s.d.
High CC / High EC	30	5.57	1.18	6.16	0.96	4.24	1.70
High CC / Low EC	29	3.23	1.37	5.24	1.62	4.08	1.68
Low CC / High EC	29	5.08	1.08	3.29	1.32	3.40	1.40
Low CC / Low EC	29	3.13	1.50	3.77	1.08	2.56	1.36

^aAverage of 3 seven-point scale items

CC = Corporate Credibility
EC = Endorser Credibility

Table 5-3. Analysis of Variance: Corporate Credibility and Endorser Credibility Effects on Aad

Factor	SS	df	MS	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
CC	2.54	1	2.54	1.52	0.220
EC	134.60	1	134.60	8.49	0.000
CC x EC	1.07	1	1.07	0.64	0.425
Error	188.961	113	1.67		

CC = Corporate Credibility
EC = Endorser Credibility

Table 5-4. Analysis of Variance: Corporate Credibility and Endorser Credibility Effects on Ab

Factor	SS	df	MS	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
CC	137.67	1	137.67	85.74	0.000
EC	1.36	1	1.36	0.85	0.395
CC x EC	14.27	1	14.27	8.89	0.004
Error	181.435	113	1.66		

CC = Corporate Credibility
 EC = Endorser Credibility

Table 5-5. Analysis of Variance: Corporate Credibility and Endorser Credibility Effects on PI

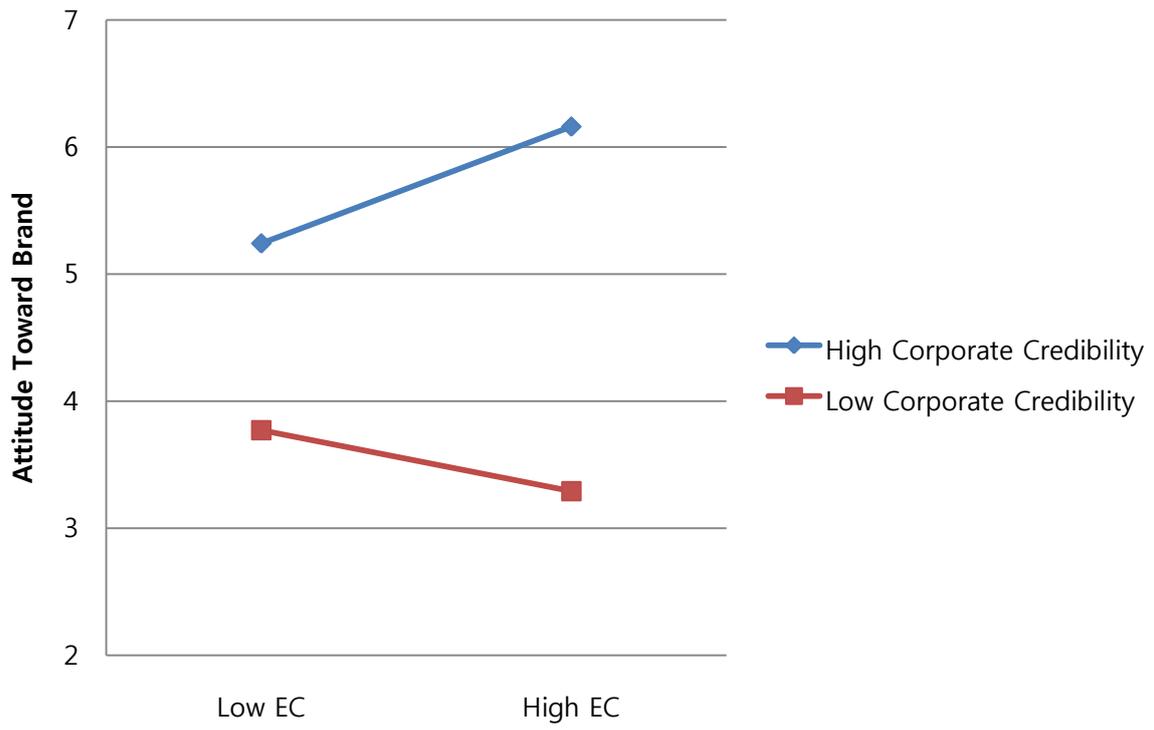
Factor	SS	df	MS	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
CC	40.70	1	40.70	17.00	0.000
EC	7.35	1	7.35	3.07	0.082
CC x EC	3.33	1	3.33	1.39	0.241
Error	270.45	113	2.39		

CC = Corporate Credibility
 EC = Endorser Credibility

Table 5-6. Means and p-values for Each Experimental Cell on Ab

	High Corporate Credibility mean ^a	<i>p</i>	Low Corporate Credibility mean ^a	<i>p</i>
High Endorser Credibility	6.16	0.011	3.29	0.132
Low Endorser Credibility	5.24		3.77	

^aAverage of 3 seven-point scale items



EC = Endorser Credibility

Figure 5-1. Endorser Credibility by Corporate Credibility Interaction for Ab

CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION

The present study sought to explore how corporate and endorser credibility influences consumers' Aad, Ab, and PI. The study further examined the interactive effects of corporate and endorser credibility, particularly the theories of the ELM and source credibility. By using an experimental research design and utilizing ANOVA data analysis, this study identified theorized constructs related to corporate and endorser credibility effects on Aad, Ab, and PI. Based on the results of the current investigation, this researcher notes that corporate and endorser credibility do play a role in advertising effectiveness. However, some of the results turned out to be different than expected. The following paragraphs discuss the findings related to the hypotheses.

Evaluation of Hypotheses Evaluation of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 stated that high endorser credibility influenced Aad, Ab, and PI more than low endorser credibility; however, results indicate that endorser credibility led to positive Aad, but not Ab or PI. These findings on the influence of endorser credibility on consumers' positive reactions to an ad is consistent with prior studies (Atkin & Block, 1983; Goldberg & Hartwick, 1990; Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999). Specifically, participants' reported more positive responses toward the ad when the ad was from a high credibility endorser.

However, results do not support endorser credibility effects on Ab and PI. These findings may be due to the type of endorser. The current study used celebrity endorsers, which may have affected the Ab since celebrity endorsers might influence Ab less than expert endorsers do (McGuire, 1969). Additionally, three components (attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness) can be used to evaluate endorser credibility; however, only attractiveness significantly affected endorser credibility

among the three endorser credibility components. Using celebrity endorsers may be enough to attract the consumers' attention; however, they this endorser type may be less effective for Ab than expert endorsers. Furthermore, endorser credibility may not have significantly affected PI since respondents might buy the product because of its particular attribute rather than based on the endorser. The ELM suggests that, in the high involvement condition, a product's specific attributes or brand might be more important in the decision to purchase a product.

Because automobiles are a high involvement product, the endorser's influence on the decision to purchase may have less influence on PI compared to product attributes, brand attributes, or corporate credibility. Moreover, due to the automobile products' high involvement, the endorser functioned as a peripheral cue in this study; therefore, these finding support the notion that corporate credibility is a more influential factor with regard to PI.

Hypothesis 2 proposed that high corporate credibility positively influenced viewers' Aad, Ab, and PI compared to low corporate credibility. Findings found that corporate credibility affected viewers' Ab and PI, but not Aad. Participants appeared to be influenced by the company's credibility when formulating their Ab and PI, thus supporting research reported by Newell (1993) and Fombrun (1996). According to Laroche et al. (1996), corporate credibility may increase consumers' confidence of a product resulting in a positive Ab and PI. The current study found that corporate credibility was significant in the positive direction compared to endorser in determining brand attitude. These findings are is consistent with Lafferty and Goldsmith (1999), which found that the majority of consumers stated that their brand attitudes were influenced by corporate credibility. However, the current study did find that corporate credibility yielded no significant effect on participants' Aad. Lafferty et

al. (2002) suggested that endorser credibility is more influential on Aad; whereas, corporate credibility was related to Ab. In addition, since automobiles are a high involvement product and customers place focus on special attributes or specific brands, corporate credibility may have less influence on Aad compared to Ab and PI. Thus, in evaluating an ad, corporate credibility may not have a significant effect on Aad.

Hypothesis 3, which proposed that the interaction between corporate and endorser credibility was partially supported in the current study. Based on the results, the interaction between corporate and endorser credibility leads to positive Ab, but not Aad or PI. Using the ELM of persuasion, interactions between corporate and endorser credibility were predicted. Based on ELM, corporate credibility was perceived as more central in processing than endorser credibility. The findings that customers use corporate credibility for cognitive processing and corporate credibility has a significant effect on consumers for Ab were consistent with a prior study (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989).

However, the findings did not support that that interaction with corporate and endorser credibility led to positive Aad and PI. Such a result may stem from an unmeasured variable (e.g., involvement). For example, more women participated in the current study than men. Perhaps men are more involved with automobiles than women while women pay more attention to endorsers (Petty et al., 1983). Moreover, the company's credibility may be of less significance for women when evaluating ads for specific products.

In addition, participants in the current study were young and in terms of celebrity endorsers, only male celebrities were used. These facts may have affected the Aad. In other words, the limited subject pool and use of male-oriented celebrities

may have created confounded variable. Additionally, central and peripheral cues may have functioned in reverse. For, example, using the celebrity endorser in a central function may have increased their influence in the decision making process. Finally, results for PI should be carefully considered since participants could not afford to purchase the products themselves, which may have skewed the results as well; only 17.48% had bought a car on their own.

Managerial Implications

From the standpoint of business practice, the main contribution of the present study is that it provides empirical evidence that interactions between endorser and corporate credibility can strongly influence brand attitude. In addition, the findings indicate both types of credibility affect Aad, Ab, and PI. Although this understanding of credibility does not solve all the substantial problems, it could provide a clue to approach the problems. Automobiles represent a high involvement product. Thus, corporate credibility is a major factor affecting customers' Aad, Ab, and PI, and customers need to make a total decision in consideration of price, performance, design and other various attributes. Therefore, the effectiveness of endorsers is relatively lower than for other products, but recently, the attempt to match endorsers' images to automobiles has been used to evoke some emotional attraction. The results of this study showed consumers' Aad depends on endorser credibility, whereas their Ab and PI significantly depend on corporate credibility. In order to achieve the marketing goals effectively, advertisers need to not only enhance their credibility, but also select high credibility endorsers, because companies can enhance their image and credibility by advertising (Fombrun, 1996). Newell (1993) suggested that credible sources positively influence Aad and Aad affects Ab and PI. In addition, aylor et al. (1997) noted that an important reason for using celebrities is

to increase product awareness. If customers do not know advertisers' products, they will not have the chance to buy them. However, advertisers need to be cautious in selecting endorsers. Because advertisers spend significant amounts of money to use endorsers in their advertisements, they need to consider endorser credibility that can affect corporate credibility to maximize the effectiveness of advertising.

By understanding the roles of credible sources in the advertising context, marketers and advertisers are able to better comprehend the impact of multiple credibility sources on consumers. As a result, they are able to increase marketing effectiveness and communication strategies in considering the importance of credible sources. Thus, advertisers need to take steps to protect and improve their corporate credibility, as such awareness may affect consumers' responses.

CHAPTER 7 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

There are various limitations to this study. One limitation is that the sample comprised more females (68%) than males (32%). As previously discussed, men may be more involved in automobile-related merchandise than women, who may pay more attention to the endorser (Petty et al., 1983). Including more males in a future sample is advisable, as they tend to be more involved with the purchase of automobiles.

Another limitation seen in this study is the composition of the sample. The subjects were almost exclusively advertising students, which is only a small part of the population. Consequently, ad avoidance could not be measured as advertising majors will pay more attention to the ad than a typical consumer. Ad avoidance should be higher in a more diversified sample. Moreover, this study utilized a convenience sample data from a limited geographic region; as a result, the results cannot be generalized to a more diverse population. Future research should use probability samples of consumers to enhance external validity. A more diverse and larger sample with larger experimental cells may provide more significant results, leading to clearer opinions and perceptions among participants. This would also provide the opportunity for future research to examine the demographics of automobile customers in general. Gender and ethnicity should be considered as well as how the fit of the sponsor might moderate the negative effects of advertising.

Additionally, the study took place in a classroom setting, which may have resulted in task involvement than would occur when examining ads and evaluating brands in a natural setting. In the current study, participants viewed a single ad in the context of a copy test, yet this is not a normal approach as most people view ads while reading a magazine or newspaper. Thus, reactions may differ in more

naturalistic settings. However, it is important to note that this limitation does not compromise the study's internal validity as this factor likely did not differentially affect the treatment groups. Examining whether the effects occur in more typical conditions would enhance the generalizability of these results

Also, the findings of the current study are limited in regard to celebrities and corporations. Future research should enhance the findings' generalizations by using additional endorsers and corporations. Incorporating the use of experts or company executives could further expand the capacity of the findings. As expert endorsers may be involved in Ab and PI more than celebrity endorsers, advisers might pick diverse endorsers for ads; however, this needs to be examined in more detail. Finally, to expand the generalization of this study, broadcast ads need to be considered in future studies.

Many of the hypotheses proposed in this study were not supported by the data. This may have been because this study did not consider levels of product involvement. Future researchers should assess the relationship between endorser and corporate credibility in considering levels of product involvement as well as the effect of between one brand attribute and multiple brands on customers' attitudes. Consumers' product involvement may serve as a moderator variable, showing relations between consumers and advertisements. As such, involvement of products needs to be added and measured into the study. In addition, given that brands often have more than one attribute, managers should know how corporate and endorser credibility affects marketing of products with multiple attributes in ads.

APPENDIX A
SAMPLE OF QUESTIONNAIRES

Please review the following ad. Take as much time as you need.

(See advertisements in Appendix B)

Considering your reaction to the ad you just saw, for each pair of words below, please select the corresponding number that accurately describes your evaluation of the ad.

Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
Unfavorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favorable
Unpleasant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Pleasant

Please identify your feelings about **Mercedes-Benz**. Using the following adjectives, please circle the number that reflects your opinion.

Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
Unfavorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favorable
Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good

How likely would you purchase **Mercedes-Benz**? Using the following adjectives, please circle the number that reflects your opinion.

Very unlikely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Very likely
Improbable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Probable
Impossible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Possible

How would you rate **George Clooney in the ad** you just saw? Using the following adjectives, please circle the number that reflects your opinion.

Unattractive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Attractive
Not classy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Classy
Ugly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Handsome
Plain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Elegant
Not sexy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Sexy
Undependable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Dependable
Dishonest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Honest
Unreliable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Reliable
Insincere	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Sincere
Untrustworthy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Trustworthy
Not an expert	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Expert
Inexperienced	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Experienced
Unknowledgeable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Knowledgeable
Unqualified	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Qualified
Unskilled	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Skilled

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with following statements about **Mercedes-Benz**.

	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree	
Mercedes-Benz has a great amount of experience.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mercedes-Benz is skilled in what they do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mercedes-Benz has great expertise.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mercedes-Benz does not have much experience.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I trust Mercedes-Benz.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mercedes-Benz makes truthful claims.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mercedes-Benz is honest.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I do not believe what Mercedes-Benz tells me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

The following are questions about car ownership.

1. Do you have a car?

Yes

No

2. If you have a car, did you pay for it by yourself?

Yes

No

3. If you have a car, what brand is it? _____

The following are demographic questions that will only be used for statistical analyses.

1. What is your age? _____

2. What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female

3. What is your ethnic background? (circle one)
 - a) Caucasian
 - b) African American/ Black
 - c) Hispanic/ Latino
 - d) Asian
 - e) American Indian/Alaskan Native
 - f) Hawaiian Native/Pacific Islander
 - g) Other (please specify) _____

4. What is your education level? (circle one)
 - a) High school graduate
 - b) Working on undergraduate degree
 - c) Working on graduate degree
 - d) Completed graduate

APPENDIX B
STIMULUS MATERIALS: PRINT-ADS



A white Mercedes-Benz C-Class sedan is shown from a front-quarter view on a dark, reflective surface. To the right, a close-up portrait of George Clooney is shown, looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a dark, gradient sky.

C-Class
**Prepare to master
the road ahead.**
Nicely equipped for about \$ 34,000

George Clooney, Spokesperson for Mercedes-Benz

 Mercedes-Benz



A white Mercedes-Benz C-Class sedan is shown from a front-quarter view on a dark, reflective surface. To the right, a close-up portrait of David Hasselhoff is shown, smiling at the camera. The background is a dark, gradient sky.

C-Class
**Prepare to master
the road ahead.**
Nicely equipped for about \$ 34,000

David Hasselhoff, Spokesperson for Mercedes-Benz

 Mercedes-Benz



VG
**Prepare to master
the road ahead.**
Nicely equipped for about \$ 34,000

George Clooney, Spokesperson for KIA



VG
**Prepare to master
the road ahead.**
Nicely equipped for about \$ 34,000

David Hasselhoff, Spokesperson for KIA



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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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