

JGB 1542

**“Kathniels on Lazada: The Role of Fans and its Effect to
Celebrity Endorsements”**

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Abstract

Celebrity endorsement is a known marketing strategy globally. With the rise of celebrities, brands tap them to penetrate the fans. Kathryn Bernardo is one of the most sought-after product endorsers. In 2020, Lazada, a leading e-commerce platform in the Philippines, tapped her to be their prominent celebrity endorser.

Anchoring on Ohanian’s Source Credibility Theory (1990), the study examines if “Kathniels” (Bernardo’s fans) find her trustworthy, attractive, and expert. The study aims to know if fans will positively favor an ad featuring Bernardo. This tests if the celebrity’s credibility leads to a positive attitude towards the ad. This aims to understand if fans’ positive attitude towards the ad will purchase intention. This also examines if fandom will result in purchase intention for products endorsed by Bernardo. Overall, this study aims to understand the role of fans in strengthening the effects of using celebrity endorsement.

A purposive sampling method through an online survey was conducted. One thousand ninety-eight respondents participated; 813 or 74% were identified as Bernardo's fans. The data collected were analyzed using structural equation modeling, and the variables constructed were consistent and reliable. Also, the researchers conducted two batches of focus-group discussions with 11 participants.

The research shows that fandom's positive attitudes toward the ad lead to purchase intention. Fans are willing to change their preference based on the celebrity’s liking, thus, encouraging a positive attitude not just towards the ad. However, the attractiveness of the endorser does not influence the fans’ positive attitude towards the ad.

Despite celebrity endorsement being costly, it is recommended that brands consider utilizing it as part of their strategy but leveraging mainly on the celebrity’s trustworthiness and expertise to create a positive attitude towards the ad and, later, purchase among the fans.

Keywords: *Celebrities, Fans, Fandom, Source Credibility, E-commerce, Purchase Intention*

Introduction

E-commerce in the Philippines

The e-commerce industry in the Philippines experienced rapid growth in 2020, mainly due to the situations brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Statista (2020), 52% of Filipinos were first-time online shoppers when the pandemic hit. According to Magkilat (2020) in an eEconomy SEA 2020 report, the industry realized a 55% growth in the same year. Statista shows that food and personal care categories experienced a 64.3% growth in 2020. In 2019, the Philippines' market size in e-commerce was at USD 3 billion and was expected to reach USD 12 billion in 2025. The leading e-commerce websites in the Philippines are Shopee, Lazada, Zalora, and Beauty MNL.

Lazada Group

Lazada, owned by Alibaba, is the leading e-commerce platform in Southeast Asia with a presence in six countries - Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Lazada pioneers online shopping and offers a wide array of products. Statista shows that Lazada ranks second in the most visited e-commerce website in the Philippines. The company leverages celebrities and influencers to promote its brand.

Kathryn Bernardo and KathNiels

Kathryn Bernardo is a 25-year-old Filipina actress turned vlogger. Her career began in 2003, and she has been involved in several TV and film projects since then. Bernardo is the only Filipino actress with two films earning more than PHP 800 million each. She was named the box office queen of her generation by People Asia. Bernardo has an approximate net worth of USD 55.86 million, according to the net worth spot. Her successes come from the continued support of her fans, who are popularly known as "KathNiels." Companies that vary in product categories like fast food, cologne, shampoo, skincare, make-up, etc., hire the actress as their celebrity endorser. Currently, she is one of Lazada's endorsers in the Philippines alongside Mimi Yuuh, SB-19, Lee Min Ho, and Hyun Bin.

Review of Related Literature

Celebrity Defined

Celebrity status is achieving fame and becoming known by the public. Different experts defined a celebrity as people who are "well-known" (Boorstin, 1961), famous mainly because of their accomplishments in their respective field of exposure, which can be sports, entertainment, arts, business, or online (Wang, 2018), and those who just captured public attention due to media exposure (Tuner, 2004).

Marketers prefer celebrities to help increase awareness of their brand. The preference of celebrities has been associated with their ability to influence taste, lifestyle, and essential opinion leadership (Euromonitor, 2014). The use of celebrity endorsement has been a choice among

industries but costly on talent fees and production requirements set by their agency.

The fame brought by celebrities helps in promoting a product or service. Celebrities enjoy the perks of public recognition and earning from appearing, mentioning, or simply posting the brand in an advertisement (McCracken, 1989).

The credibility of Celebrity Endorsers

The celebrity status of the endorser influences the purchase intention of consumers. According to Goldsmith et al. (2000), a celebrity's credibility is a perception that they are experts and are trusted to give their opinion on the brand. The credibility of a celebrity may be influenced by their experience, knowledge, and trustworthiness towards the brand they promote. The celebrity is perceived to be a user of the products endorsed. Their expertise is an essential determinant of credibility (Rossiter and Smids, 2012).

Meanwhile, attractiveness does not influence purchase intention (Rodriguez, 2008). This is contrary to the findings of Biswas et al. (2006), where the physical attractiveness of celebrities connotes a positive customer perception of brands endorsed.

Deshbhag and Mohan (2020) focused on consumer risk perception. They have explored that the credibility of a celebrity influences consumers with impulsive buying behavior. Consumers believe in their messages showing a favorable attitude towards the brand.

The Fans and their Celebrity Endorsers

The role of fans towards celebrity endorsers has been challenged for three main reasons. First, exaggerated attitudes and behavior of fans result in annoyance. Fans created a perceptual bias as perceived by the public in general (Doss, 1999). Second, there are few studies and knowledge about fandom and their exaggerated behavior (Kahr, 2019). Third, unlike the correlation between brands and brand fans and celebrity and celebrity fans, celebrity fans and their effect on an endorsed brand is less direct. Though there are studies that show how fans become an asset to an endorsement, there is still little research on the effects of fans on celebrity endorsement.

A study shows positive and negative ways a fan can play a consumer's role. On the positive, fans can use a brand endorsed by a celebrity to enhance their self-concept. Further, a fan may also imbibe positive attitudes reflected by the celebrity endorser and integrate them into their personality. On the negative, fans may be distracted and confuse themselves with their identity and the celebrity, resulting in extreme behaviors (Hung, 2020).

Furthermore, the study emphasizes that the roles of fans in celebrity endorsements are significant. Since fans are inclined to process ads of their favorite celebrities, they act as early adopters of the endorsed products. They would voluntarily engage in promotional activities and purchase large quantities of the brand that the celebrity endorses. These are forms of extended support for their favorite celebrity endorser.

The support is clearly seen when they create and share user-generated content online in

different forms. This support becomes income-generating, thus creating a "fan economy" for the brands endorsed by the celebrity (Jia et al., 2018). Endorsing brands online has helped increase the influence of celebrities in turn, the use of online channels gave businesses opportunities to utilize celebrity endorsements (iResearch, 2018).

Fandom defined

Fandom is a subculture characterized by individuals with shared interests towards an object of media and building community and camaraderie (Jenkins, 2006). Tsay-Vogel & Sanders (2015) established fan engagement and identification, which entails four essential elements: (a) fans should perceive a sense of belonging, identification, and investments, and as members of a group; (b) fans should feel a strong influence within their fandom, and vice versa to foster a more robust connection; (c) fans should feel rewarded for their participation in the fandom; and (d) fans have shared emotional connection, sympathy, and camaraderie. In a fandom, fans engage with their favored media object on the internet and participate in celebrity-related activities and social events. Sullivan (2019) observed that fandoms become thoroughly invested in their favored celebrity due to their extended interactions and discussions regarding various media content featuring their idol. With this, fans start spending money, time, and energy collecting artifacts associated with their idols. This level of investment and involvement of fandom-related fans differentiates them from those with only a casual interest in the favored celebrity, as Coppa (2016) discussed.

Fandom as an Extended Market

Neoliberalism makes fans advocates of brands. Fans are members of a community, and to be a good citizen of that community, they must be consumers who fulfill happiness through consumer goods (Linden & Linden, 2018).

Furthermore, Da Silva and Las Casas (2017) argue that the engagement of fans with their idols moves them to consume products and services. For sports fans, engaged fans would find opportunities to be engaged as this becomes an avenue to meet or relate with their idols. In totality, fans are consumers who continuously and frequently spend on merchandise to satisfy their levels of fan engagement.

Framework

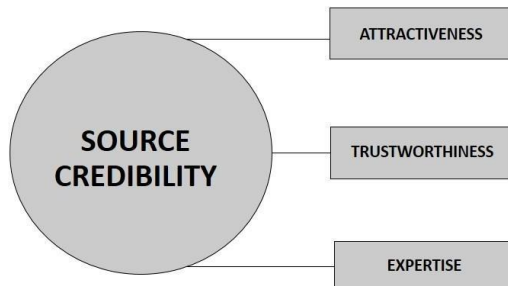
This study aims to determine the role of fans and its effect on celebrity endorsements. The researchers investigate the effects of fandom on the endorsers' perceived credibility, fandom concerning the attitude towards the brand, and fandom's effect on purchase intention. The study aims to look at fandom as an extended market - and if it proves to be a market that is worth investing in.

This research uses the Source Credibility Theory as a theoretical framework in determining fans' perceived celebrity credibility. Source Credibility refers to the endorser's positive characteristics, which can increase the level of acceptance and persuasion in the process of advertising (Ohanian, 1990). Credibility is defined as the believability of the addresser and its

perception in the listener's mind (Alder and Rodman, 2000).

Figure 1

The Ohanian Source Credibility Tri-Model Component (1990)



This argues that the effectiveness of the source will depend on the consumer's perceived level of attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness of a celebrity endorser (Hovland et al., 1953; Hovland & Weiss, 1951; Ohanian, 1990). This model argues that the following should be met for a source to be considered credible: attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise. This research is a continuing study of Castillo and Eder (2021) on the roles of fans in enhancing credibility endorsements.

Fandom

Participatory culture is at the heart of fandom. Jenkins (1992) described a participatory culture of fandom as created by other fans' feedback and driven by the desire for further connection with a "larger social and cultural community." Given that fans are expected to have a high level of involvement and engagement, the researchers develop hypotheses connected with the celebrity endorsers' perceived credibility.

H1: Fans will find their favored celebrity endorsers highly attractive

H2: Fans will find their favored celebrity endorsers highly trustworthy

H3: Fans will find their favored celebrity endorsers experts

Attitude towards the advertisement

Attitude towards the ad is defined as "thoughts and emotions of the consumer related to the ad" (Kirmani and Campbell, 2009, as cited in Dianoux et al., 2014).

H4: Fans will have a positive attitude towards the ad featuring their favored celebrity

H5: Perceived endorsers' credibility will positively impact attitude towards the ad

Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is the consumer's preference to buy the product or service related to consumers' behavior, perceptions, and attitudes. It is also considered the "kind of decision-making that studies the reason to buy a particular brand by a consumer (Shah et al., 2012, as cited in Mirabi

et al., 2015). This study also aims to know how fandom influences purchase intention.

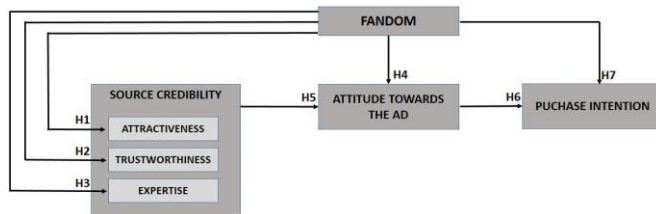
H6: Positive attitude towards the ad will result in positive influence on purchase intention

H7: Fandom will result in positive influence in purchase intention for products endorsed by their favored celebrity endorsers

In line with the objectives and the hypotheses developed, this study anchors on the conceptual framework, which encompasses the following constructs: Source Credibility that includes attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise; Fandom; Attitude towards the Ad; and Purchase Intention.

Figure 2

Conceptual Framework – The Role of Fans and its Effect on Celebrity Endorsements



Methodology

Participants

The participants were chosen via purposive sampling. A total of 1,098 respondents participated in this research. Respondents were screened according to their level of involvement and engagement with the celebrity, their co-fans, and their fan groups or fandom. Eight hundred thirteen respondents were identified as fans of Bernardo, commonly referred to as KATHNIELS.

Data Collection

A purposive sampling method was chosen to collect data. This allows them to focus on a population of the same interests and outline the significant impacts of the study findings. In this study, the online survey via Google forms was disseminated to KATHNIELS through the fandom's Facebook groups.

The online survey garnered a total of 1,098 respondents, and 74% of the total respondents are identified as fans of Kathryn Bernardo, members of any fandom group or community, have watched at least one Kathryn Bernardo content, and engaged in at least one Kathryn Bernardo content in social media.

Most of the respondents were 20-24 years old, a total of 43% of the whole. Interestingly, 93.1% are female, while the remaining males prefer not to disclose their gender. Further, 51% are students, 33.3% are employed, 8% are unemployed, 5.6% are self-employed, and others at 2.1%.

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Moreover, 62% of the respondents' income was PHP10,000 and below the total population.

Instruments

A total of 71 questions were included in the online questionnaire. These questions were crafted to test all variables used in the study.

Screening questions

The researchers used four screening questions answerable with a Yes or No to identify whether the respondents belong to the KATHNIEL fandom. These questions confirm if the respondent considers him or herself a fan, the respondent's online and offline interaction and engagement with KathrynBernardo-related activities, and ownership of any Kathryn Bernardo or KATHNIEL merchandise. If the respondent answered Yes to all screening questions, the respondent is considered a member of the fandom and was assigned a numerical value of 1. A value of 0 was assigned to a respondent who answered No to at least one of the questions.

Source Credibility Theory Variables

Following Ohanian's Source Credibility Theory framework, Celebrity Attractiveness, Celebrity Trustworthiness, and Celebrity Expertise were considered predictors of fandom's attitude towards the ad leading to purchase intention.

The study utilized a 5-point Likert Scale whereas, 5: Strongly Agree, 4: Agree, 3: Neutral, 2: Disagree, 1: Strongly Disagree, to test the variables constructed in the framework. Using this, the researcher tested the respondents' perception of Kathryn's Credibility as an endorser by showing Lazada's "Nasa Lazada 'yan" static ad featuring the celebrity. Respondents' Attitudes towards the Ad and Purchase Intention were also tested using the same measure.

Focus-group discussion (FGD)

The researchers conducted a focus-group discussion among two groups with 11 participants. The FGD aimed to gather qualitative insights anchored on the conceptual framework.

Data Analysis

The data collected in this study were analyzed using SmartPLS version 3 to calculate the effect of the constructed variables in the conceptual framework.

After collecting data, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test the applicability of the Source Credibility Theory to determine fandom's roles in enhancing the effects of celebrity endorsements.

The researchers generated descriptive statistics, intercorrelations, and reliability coefficients of the scales by evaluating the outer measurement model to calculate the constructed variables' reliability, internal consistency, and validity in a framework. The outcomes of the inner

structural model are evaluated via Bootstrapping and Blindfolding procedures to measure the following: coefficient determination (R^2), T-statistics, predictive relevance of the model (Q^2), and Path coefficient to evaluate the inner structural model to observe the framework's predictive relevancy and to observe the relationships between the variables constructed in the framework.

Discussion of Results

The data seeks to examine the fandom's role in enhancing the effects of celebrity endorsement. The data gathered were analyzed using SMARTPLS. 3.0 to test the hypothesis stated in the study anchored on Source Credibility Theory.

Outer Measurement Model Evaluation

According to Hussain et al.(2018), this model is used to calculate the reliability, internal consistency, and validity of the constructed variables in the conceptual framework.

According to Hair et al. (2014), the internal consistency of the model is confirmed if Cronbach's Alpha values yield at least 0.700. Meanwhile, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), according to IGI Global, measures to assess convergent validity of the constructs in the model. According to Wong (2013), AVE values of the latent constructs should exceed the minimum threshold of 0.500 to confirm convergent validity.

Table 1
Construct Validity and Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Attractiveness	0.940	0.807
Expertise	0.955	0.847
Trustworthiness	0.959	0.859
Attitude Towards the Ad	0.951	0.835
Purchase Intention	0.940	0.849
Fandom	1.000	1.000

With all variables yielding Chronbach's Alphavalue of >0.700, the internal reliability and validity of all variables are confirmed. Further, all latent variables yielded AVE values >0.500. Exceeding the minimum threshold, the convergent validity of the model is also confirmed. Table 1 shows the constructs of the conceptual model range from 0.940 - 1.00 and AVE values of 0.807 - 1.000.

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Following the Fornell-Larcker criterion, the variables were tested to establish the discriminant validity of the latent factors. Hussain et al. (2018) discussed that a path model's discriminant validity is used to manifest that the variables are distinct from each other. To use the Fornell-Larcker criterion (1981), the square root of the AVE of each latent variable is compared with the cross-loading values of other constructs and should be greater than any of the constructs in the path model. As shown in Table 2, the square root of AVE for all variables is calculated and arranged diagonally on the table to show correlations between the latent variables. Table 2 implies that each construct in the path model is distinct from the other.

Table 2
Square Roots of AVE and Correlation Coefficients

	Attitude towards the Ad	Attractiveness	Expertise	Fandom	Purchase Intention	Trustworthiness
Attitude towards the Ad	0.914					
Attractiveness	0.644	0.898				
Expertise	0.718	0.775	0.921			
Fandom	0.332	0.319	0.382	1.000		
Purchase Intention	0.783	0.649	0.728	0.353	0.921	
Trustworthiness	0.691	0.824	0.846	0.327	0.71	0.927

Inner Structural Model Evaluation

After establishing the validity and reliability of the conceptual model, the outcomes of the inner structural model are assessed after that. The following are measured to observe the conceptual models' predictive relevance and assess the relationships between the constructed variables - coefficient determination (R^2), T-statistics, and predictive relevance of the model (Q^2).

Coefficient determination and Q^2 statistics were measured through a cross-validated

redundancy test via blindfolding procedure. According to Hussain et al. (2018), coefficient determination (R^2) is used to measure the overall effect in size and variance in the endogenous variables for the structural model. The value measured than is used to assess the predictive accuracy of the conceptual model. As defined by Hair et al. (2014), and R^2 value is considered substantial if it yields a value of 0.75, moderate if 0.50, and weak if 0.26.

On the other hand, according to Hussain et al. (2018), the Cross-validated redundancy (Q^2) criterion predicts the endogenous latent constructs in the conceptual model. To confirm the predictive relevance, Q^2 values must yield greater than 0.

Table 3

R² values and Cross-validated Redundancy

	R²	Q²
Attractiveness	0.102	0.079
Expertise	0.146	0.121
Trustworthiness	0.107	0.09
Attitude towards the Ad	0.548	0.452
Purchase Intention	0.623	0.522

The predictive accuracy of the conceptual model in this study is considered moderate according to the R^2 values measured, while variables constructed in the model posed a predictive significance according to the Q^2 values yielded.

Path coefficients and P-Values

A bootstrapping procedure through SMARTPLS 3.0 was done to check the structural path significance in the conceptual model. As Wong (2013) explained, this procedure uses many subsamples from the original sample size to transpire standard bootstrap errors. This will provide an approximate T-value to test the significance of the structural path of the model. The bootstrapping procedure evaluates the path coefficients and p values of the variables in the path model.

The significance of the hypotheses constructed in this study is tested using path coefficients and P values. Hussein et al. (2018) discussed that path coefficients denote the expected variation in the dependent variable for a unit variation in the independent variable constructs. Path coefficients yielding greater values signify more substantial effects on the endogenous variables. The P-value assesses the changes in the bootstrapping procedure utilizing 5000 subsamples. After carrying out the procedure, the paths recording no signs of changes affirms the significance of a hypothesis drawn from the conceptual model.

Table 4

Path Coefficients for Path Models; P-value <0.05

	Path Coefficients	P-value	Result
FANDOM -> ATTRACTIVENESS	0.319	0	Supported
FANDOM -> TRUSTWORTHINESS	0.327	0	Supported
FANDOM -> EXPERTISE	0.382	0	Supported
FANDOM -> ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE AD	0.064	0.01	Supported
ATTRACTIVENESS -> ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE AD	0.123	0.068	Not supported
FANDOM -> TRUSTWORTHINESS	0.327	0	Supported
EXPERTISE -> ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE AD	0.41	0	Supported
ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE AD -> PURCHASE INTENTION	0.748	0	Supported
FANDOM -> PURCHASE INTENTION	0.105	0	Supported

Data affirmed that fandom positively influences the variables about source credibility (H1, H2, and H3). Results show that fans find their idol credible because of their attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise. Results also confirm that fans positively perceive an ad featuring their favored celebrity (H4). However, according to the results, only trustworthiness and expertise in the source credibility variables influence positive attitudes towards the ad, while attractiveness does not (H5). Results show that a positive attitude towards the ad will positively influence purchase intention (H6). The research also affirmed that a positive attitude towards the ad positively influences purchase intention. Lastly, it was confirmed that fandom positively influences purchase intention (H7).

Fans find their idols credible

As Erdogan (1999) explained, attractiveness is labeled as positive characteristics of a person that comprise physical attractiveness, personality, athletic ability, among others. Data shows that fans find their favorite celebrity highly attractive (H1). Based on the FDG, fans see Kathryn Bernardo as beautiful, and her beauty as a Filipina is very relatable. They also find Kathryn approachable. She is very loving, caring, and appreciative, not just to her family and loved ones but also to her fans.

Van der Waldt et al. (2009) described trustworthiness as the endorser's honesty, integrity, and believability. Data confirmsthat Kathryn is also found as highly trustworthy (H2) as the fans see her using the products she endorses through the different platforms. For instance,she uses her endorsed products in her vlogs to ensure product quality. They emphasized that she will notbe in show business for a decade if she is not trustworthy.

On the other hand, expertise is explained as “the degree to which the endorser is perceived to havethe adequate knowledge, experience or skills to promote the product” (Van der Waldt et al., 2009). The data validates that Kathryn is also an expert (H3), more so when the fans mentioned during the FGD that she carefully chooses the product she endorses, and she uses her skills while endorsing the product.

Fans' attitude towards the ad

The survey shows that fans project a positive attitude towards an ad that features their celebrity idol (H4). This is supported by a related study by Adam & Hussein (2017), implying that people will get more attracted to celebrity-endorsed ads than those without celebrity endorsements. Furthermore, advertisements with celebrity endorsements lead to a more effortless and better product recall.

In the source credibility variables, however, the attractiveness of a celebrity does not influence a positive attitude towards the advertisement. On the other hand, the trustworthiness and expertise of a celebrity play an essential role in customers' attitude towards an advertisement (H5). It is interesting to note that, in the related study of Rodriguez (2008), attractiveness does not influence purchase intention. This is confirmed in the focus group discussion conducted that although they perceive Kathryn Bernardo as beautiful, they find it essential to see her using the product she endorses, not just posting about it. Furthermore, thus, fans perceive her as credible, being a celebrity endorser.

However, this study's findings do not entirely reconcile with Eren-Erdogmus's (2016) study that indicates the significant effect of celebrity credibility and attractiveness on consumers' attitudes towards an ad. Furthermore, a similar study by Patel & Basil (2017) argues that celebrity attractiveness increases the interest in an ad among target consumers.

A study by Thomas and Johnson (2019) confirms that a celebrity's trustworthiness highly influences a positive attitude towards an ad and thus creates a more effective endorsement for a brand. In addition to this, the study conducted by Wiedmann and Mettenheim (2019) also emphasizes that the most significant credibility dimension is trustworthiness, followed by attractiveness, while the relevance of expertise is virtually nil.

Fandom's influence to purchase intention

The study affirms that a positive attitude towards the ad positively influences purchase intention (H6). In a related study, Salam and Algamash (2016) confirm that exposure to an advertisement influences consumers, thus forming purchase intention.

Results of this study affirm that fandom positively influences purchase intention (H7). In the focus group discussion, fans confirmed that since Lazada hired Bernardo as their celebrity endorser, they have been using the platform more often. It is also important to emphasize that if Lazada loses Bernardo as an endorser, fans will discontinue their platform's support. The fans also stated that they buy the products that Bernardo endorses even though they do not use them as often.

Related studies affirm H7. In a study by Hung (2020), the purchase decision of fans is triggered by the endorsement of their favored celebrity more than their perceived need for a particular product or service. Further, Hung (2020) argues that fans are consistent buyers of brands endorsed by their idols. Fans would purchase products in considerable quantities. Further, in a study by Silva and Verissimo (2019), it was affirmed that supporters who highly identify with the celebrity are more likely to purchase from the brand.

Conclusion

Celebrity endorsement is still one of the most used marketing execution strategies globally. The use of fans in marketing molds the strategies on how brands communicate with their audience. This study proves that fandom plays a crucial role in strengthening celebrity endorsements.

This study validates that “Kathniels” see Bernardo as attractive, trustworthy, and an expert, proving that she is a credible celebrity endorser. Her credibility also leads to a positive attitude towards the brand's ad, which then pushes for purchase intention.

However, in terms of her credibility as a celebrity endorser, her trustworthiness and expertise significantly influence fans' attitudes towards an ad, while attractiveness was considered insignificant. Given this, also, this study affirms that fandom positively influences purchase intentions. Marketers must engage the celebrity's fans to favor the brand highly. Fans are willing to change their preference based on the celebrity's liking, thus, encouraging a positive attitude not just towards the ad. Therefore, favored celebrities must be visible in the brand's marketing execution strategies like ads, events, press releases to activate the fans. Companies must communicate to fans on platforms where they are highly present.

Recommendations

Given the conclusions above, it is recommended that Lazada maximize Kathryn Bernardo's fans to promote their brand. Anchoring their current campaign, “Nasa Lazada 'Yan,” the researchers propose the action plan below as part of their Integrated Marketing Campaign.

Table 5

Proposed Integrated Marketing Communications Plan for Lazada (Q4 2021 - Q1 2022)

Research Finding	Action Plan	IMC Tool	Platform	Q4 2021			Q1 2022		
				Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Based on FGD, fans are mainly on twitter. Kathryn's way of bonding with them is through Twitter.	Maximize Kathryn Bernardo endorsement by releasing more Kathryn-related visuals highlighting double-double promos, payday sale promo. Each content should include products or brands she already endorses or uses.	Digital Marketing	Twitter						
85% of respondents consider promos and free shipping vouchers when using an e-commerce platform.		Digital Marketing	Facebook, IG, Youtube Ads						
Fans allot 5 hours or more for Kathryn updates; Wherever Kathryn is, fans follow	Partner with and ASAP segment promoting 12.12 promo. Feature christmas-related products that Kathryn will be using during the Christmas season.	Digital/TV	TV						
According to the FGD, wherever Kathryn is present, the fans follow her.	Create an 11.11 LazLive event with Kathryn to trigger the use of Lazada app by fans	Digital/Sales Promotion	LazLive						
Trustworthiness & Expertise have positive influence towards an attitude towards the ad	Sponsor a vlog featuring best Lazada finds in Kathryn's channel	Sponsorships	Sponsored vlog						
According to the FGD, wherever Kathryn is present, the fans follow her.	Organize a Zoom Valentine's date with fans and launch a Kathryn free shipping promo code for Lazada	Event Marketing	Zoom						
93% of fans are women. Top product categories are women apparel, health and wellness.	Launch a monthly Twitter Spaces Sessions engaging with fans, and talk about Lazada "budol" finds.	Digital Marketing	Twitter Spaces						
Based on FGD, fans are mainly on twitter. Kathryn's way of bonding with them is through Twitter.	Boost Lazada tweets with Kathryn-related contents	Digital Marketing	Twitter						
93% of fans are women. Top product categories are women apparel, health and wellness.	Sponsor a vlog featuring women's fashion and accessories. Theme could be: pandemic styling tips, pandemic summer styling	Digital Marketing	YouTube						
85% of respondents consider promos and free shipping vouchers when using an e-commerce platform.	Celebrate Kathryn Bernardo's birthday in LazLive to generate traction in the app	Sales promotions	LazLive						
Age of fans are in the younger segment.	Post a back to school finds on Instagram	Digital Marketing	IG post						
Age of fans are in the younger segment.	Use LazLive to have Kathryn feature her style tips on "new year, new me" theme during online classes and meetings	Digital Marketing	Youtube vlogs						
85% of respondents consider promos and free shipping vouchers when using an e-commerce platform.	Create special promo codes for Kathryn Bernardo fans and release it on Twitter on pay day sales and double double campaigns.	Sales promotions	Free Shipping post						
Fans have positive attitude towards the ad featuring their favored celebrity.	Utilize SEO/SEM by using Kathryn Bernardo related keywords for Lazada	Digital Marketing	SEO/ SOM						

Overall, the campaign utilizes digital marketing, sponsorships, event marketing, and sales promotions, which were evident in the research findings. Moreover, the materials are suitable in mobile as fans are more present in smartphones than desktop computers. The plan runs for six months and would undergo monitoring and evaluation to strategize how the campaign should move forward.

Limitations and Future Research

The study focused on the role of fans and its effect on celebrity endorsements. Results confirmed that fandom influences perceived source credibility, attitude towards the ad, and purchase intention. The study was limited to the fandom of Kathryn Bernardo, more popularly known as KathNiels. Since this study mainly focused on the said fandom, study results from other fan communities may differ. With these limitations, several recommendations for further studies are put forward for consideration.

Related literature suggests several levels on how fans engage with their favored celebrity. Further research may investigate if these levels and classifications affect attitudes towards the ad and intent to purchase. Also, with the rise of influencers, future research may look into the fanbase of influencer-turned celebrities. Future studies may examine if the same variables will be supported if the main topic for discussion is an influencer's fanbase. Lastly, since results show that a celebrity's attractiveness does not positively impact attitude towards the ad, further research may also investigate the mediating factors as to how fans find their idol attractive.

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