

Chapter 7

The Impact of Team's Identification Congruence Between Football Celebrities and Fans on Celebrities Credibility, Advertising, and Brand

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to find out and analyze the impact of team's identification congruence between football celebrity and fans on fans' attitudes towards credibility of the celebrity, advertising, and brand in a sample of four major fans groups via social media. A quantitative approach was applied through a questionnaire of 377 football fans in an Egyptian league that was distributed, collected and statistically analyzed. The findings revealed that the fans' attitudes towards credibility of the spokesperson, advertising, and brand are statistically and significantly affected by team's identification congruence between football celebrity and fans. The most vital recommendation of this research is that: team's identification congruence between football celebrity and fans should be taken into consideration before designing the advertising.

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INTRODUCTION

How to persuade? Or how the product is attracted by customers? These questions are the major reason of why advertising is applied (Jamil, and ul Hassan. 2014). As a result, organizations seek to use celebrities to display their advertising message. In Egypt, because of Egyptian people are fond of football, the majority of the companies involved (68%) in sponsorship are switched to the football field (Elsahn et al., 2012). Accordingly, the majority of celebrities of ads are football celebrities.

During the ads are designing, some types of congruencies are taken into considerations as self-brand image, celebrity-brand, ideal-brand Image, sponsor/ team's identification and a celebrity's image/ a consumer's ideal self-image which are improving the customer attitude towards celebrity, ads, and brand (Postica and António, 2015; Fleck et al., 2012; Choi and Rifon, 2012).

In otherwise, Similarity is "a supposed resemblance between the source and the receiver of the message; it can be measured if the source and receiver have similar needs, goals interest and lifestyle" (Ohanian, 1990). Moreover, Low and Lim (2012) pointed out that celebrity's fans have the same opinion regarding the endorsed products. Similarity between celebrity and customer increase the level of customer attitudes towards the celebrity, ads, and brand (Bhatt et al., 2013). In addition, some sports fans build rituals including friends with whom they gather, the food they eat, the clothing they wear, the brands they prefer, etc. (Dionísio et al., 2008). As a result, an extension of previous studies, this study tries to develop a new type of congruence namely celebrity / fans' team identification.

Accordingly, five gaps should be padlocked; firstly, though the relationship between the above mentioned types of congruencies and costumers' attitude towards the celebrity spokesperson, ads and brand was tested, a new type of congruence namely (Football Celebrity / Fans' Identification) congruence is constructed, validated and its relationship with costumers' attitude towards the celebrity spokesperson, ads and brand is examined as well. Secondly, although, some studies confirmed that the level of customer attitudes towards the celebrity, ads, and brand is increased by the similarity between celebrity and customer (Bhatt et al., 2013)., while other studies showed that there is a weak relationship between celebrity and customer and the level of customer attitudes towards the celebrity, ads, and brand (Dissanayake and Ismail, 2015). As a result, this study tried to discover the nature of this relationship in Egypt.

Thirdly, many studies linked between type of affiliation and customer attitudes towards brand (Mackenzie and George, 1983; Torlak et al., 2013; Saeed, and Azmi, 2014; Hirschman, 1983; Aerni, 2011; Chen, et al., 2017), there is no study tied to explore the relationship between football affiliation and customer attitudes towards brand. Fourthly, because of the opposing results of previous studies whether supporters of significant impact of celebrity credibility on ads and brand intention (Rafique and Zafar, 2012; Randhawa, and Khan, 2014; Chan et al., 2013) or dissenters (Bhatt et al., 2013; this study tried to explore the significant of this impact. Finally, this study tries to validate of some variable scales adapted with the Egyptian environment, like team's identification congruence between football celebrities and fans.

Accordingly, this research strives to answer the following three questions.

- To what extent team's identification congruence between football celebrity and fans leads to more favorable fans' attitudes towards credibility of the spokesperson, advertising, and the brand?
- Is there a relationship between fans' attitudes towards credibility of the spokesperson and fans' attitudes towards the advertising?
- Is there a relationship between fans' attitudes towards the advertising and fans' attitudes towards the brand?

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