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Ain Shams University

Faculty of Arts

Department of Media and Communication Sciences



**The Role of Celebrity Endorsement on Social Networks in Forming Brand
Attitudes among Egyptian Youth**

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Arts (PhD)

Department of Media and Communication Sciences

Faculty of Arts, Ain Shams University

Submitted by

Abdulrahman Mahmoud Ali Hasan Elsamni

Assistant Lecturer, Department of Media and Communication Sciences, Faculty of
Arts, Ain Shams University

Under the Supervision of

Prof. Dr. Heba Shahin

Professor, Department of Media and
Communication Sciences, Faculty of Arts,
Ain Shams University

Prof. Dr. Hussein Amin

Professor, Department of Journalism and
Mass Communication, The American
University in Cairo

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Abdulrahman Mahmoud Ali Hasan Elsamni

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Abstract

This study examines the role of celebrity endorsement on social networks, represented by Instagram, in the formation of brand attitudes among the Egyptian youth. Two studies were conducted by the researcher. The first is a quantitative content analysis of a sample of the posts by most popular Egyptian celebrity endorsers. The content analysis presented quantitative results with the aim to clarify the nature of Egyptian celebrity endorsements on Instagram, in relation to variables such as celebrity endorsers, number of posts, post types, post features, items encouraging user-interaction, and brand-related content in endorsement posts. The second is a survey study that used a questionnaire to investigate six main hypotheses, celebrity endorsement contribution to brand attitude, brand attitude relationship with demographics, purchase intention relationship with demographics, brand attitude contribution to purchase intention, celebrity endorsement association with Instagram use, and celebrity endorsement association with exposure to Egyptian celebrities on Instagram. The six hypotheses of the study were tested. The first hypothesis is supported, as 43% of the variances in brand attitude could be explained by celebrity endorsement. Celebrity-product match-up, trustworthiness, and expertise were found to significantly contribute to positive brand attitudes. Familiarity, on the other hand, significantly contributes to negative brand attitudes. Similarity and attractiveness did not have a significant contribution to brand attitudes. The second and third hypothesis of the study expecting demographic variables to have significantly statistical differences in brand attitudes and purchase intention were rejected. Age, gender, education level, social status, and economic status did not have an influence on brand attitude among Egyptian youth. The fourth hypothesis was supported, as 60% of purchase intention decisions could be explained by brand attitudes. The fifth hypothesis that expects a significant relationship between celebrity endorsement and Instagram use was partially supported, as a significant positive correlation were found for all variables, except Familiarity. The sixth hypothesis that expects a significant relationship between celebrity endorsement and exposure to Egyptian celebrities on Instagram was confirmed for all variables. The study provides recommendations to advertising agencies and media researchers.

Summary

This study aims to investigate the role of celebrity endorsement on social networks, represented by Instagram, in forming brand attitudes among Egyptian youth. This aim was achieved through two studies, the first of which is a content analysis of posts by Egyptian celebrities on Instagram, where the second is a survey study on a sample of Egyptian youth who follow celebrities on Instagram. Based on survey methodology, the researcher used a coding sheet for content analysis and an online questionnaire for data collection.

This study consists of eight chapters. The first of which includes an introduction, aims of study, and scientific and practical significance. The second chapter reviews literature in relation to study variables. The third chapter is the theoretical framework, with media theories and models that constitute the scientific basis of the study. The fourth chapter is methodology, reviewing research method and tools, as well as the sampling, research questions, and hypotheses of the study, in addition to validity and reliability tests. The fifth chapter is a content analysis of posts by Egyptian celebrities on Instagram, after which is the sixth chapter that includes the results of survey study on a sample of Egyptian youth between 18 and 35 years old, who follow Egyptian celebrities on Instagram. The seventh chapter includes results and discussion, where the eighth chapter entails conclusion, and future recommendations and suggestions.

The findings of the study concluded that:

- 1- Celebrity endorsement plays an important role in forming brand attitudes among Egyptian youth, as 43% of the variances in brand attitudes could be explained by celebrity endorsement. In addition, brand attitudes contribute to 60% of purchase intentions among Egyptian youth.
- 2- The most important variables of celebrity endorsement were celebrity-product match-up, trustworthiness, and expertise, where familiarity had a negative relationship with brand attitudes, and no significant contribution to brand attitudes were found for similarity and attractiveness among Egyptian youth.
- 3- There are no statistically significant differences in brand attitudes and purchase intentions according to demographic variables (age, gender, education level, economic status, and social status).

Keywords: Celebrity Endorsement, Brand Attitudes, Egyptian Youth, Social Networks

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Summary	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	viii
Chapter One: Introduction	1
1. Introduction	1
1.1. Background	1
1.2. Aims of the Study	2
1.3. Study Significance	3
1.3.1. Scientific Significance	3
1.3.2. Practical Significance	3
1.4. Problem Statement	3
Chapter Two: Literature Review	4
2. Literature Review	4
2.1. Celebrity Endorsement	4
2.1.1. Effects of Celebrity Endorsement	4
2.1.2. Celebrity Endorsement on Social Media	7
2.1.3. Micro-Celebrities Endorsement	11
2.1.4. Natural Celebrity Endorsement	14
2.2. Celebrity Endorser	14
2.2.1. Who is the Celebrity Endorser?	14
2.2.2. Celebrity Source Characteristics	15
2.2.3. Negative Celebrity Information	18
2.2.4. Para-Social Relationship with Celebrity on Social Media	20
2.2.5. Match-up Hypothesis	22
2.3. Brand	26
2.3.1. Brand Attitude	26
2.3.2. Brand Recall	27
2.3.3. Brand Experience	27
2.3.4. Brand Performance	28
2.3.5. Brand Type	29
2.4. Consumer Variables	29
2.4.1. Psychological Factors	29
2.4.2. Demographics	30
Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework	32
3. Theoretical Framework	32
3.1. Meaning Transfer Model	32
3.2. Source Attractiveness Model	33
3.3. Source Credibility Model	33
3.4. Product-Endorser Match-up Hypothesis	33
3.5. Celebrity Endorsement Model	34
3.6. Celebrity Credibility Model	36
Chapter Four: Methodology	38
4. Methodology	38
4.1. Method	38
4.2. Research Questions	38

4.2.1.	Analytical Research Questions	38
4.2.2.	Survey Research Questions	39
4.3.	Research Hypotheses	40
4.4.	Variables	42
4.5.	Sampling	43
4.6.	Data Collection	44
4.6.1.	Content Analysis	44
4.6.2.	Internet Survey	45
4.7.	Operational Definitions	45
4.7.1.	Social Networks	45
4.7.2.	Celebrity	46
4.7.3.	Celebrity Endorser	46
4.7.4.	Youth	48
4.8.	Inter-coder Reliability	48
4.9.	Scale Validity and Reliability	50
4.9.1.	Pearson Correlations	50
4.9.2.	Split-half Reliability	52
4.9.3.	Cronbach's Alpha	53
	Chapter Five: Content Analysis	54
5.	Content Analysis Results	54
5.1.	Egyptian Celebrity Endorsers on Instagram	54
5.2.	Egyptian Celebrity Endorsements on Instagram	58
5.3.	Content Analysis of Endorsements	62
5.3.1.	Captions	67
5.3.2.	Photos	71
5.3.3.	Videos	75
	Chapter Six: Survey	78
6.	Survey	78
6.1.	Sample Distribution	78
6.1.1.	Demographics	78
6.1.2.	Instagram Use	84
6.1.3.	Devices	87
6.2.	Following Egyptian Celebrities	90
6.2.1.	Exposure	90
6.2.2.	Checking Posts	92
6.2.3.	Noticing Post Items	97
6.2.4.	Interaction with Posts	102
6.3.	Egyptian Celebrity Endorsement	103
6.3.1.	Viewing Endorsements	103
6.3.2.	Purchasing Endorsed Products	104
6.3.3.	Types of Endorsed Brands	105
6.3.4.	Perceived Celebrity Motives	106
6.4.	Preferred Endorsement Type	108
6.5.	Celebrity Credibility	111
6.5.1.	Honourable	111
6.5.2.	Exquisite Personality	115
6.5.3.	Dignified Image	119
6.6.	Celebrity Endorsement Model	123

6.6.1.	Trustworthiness	123
6.6.2.	Expertise	126
6.6.3.	Similarity	129
6.6.4.	Attractiveness	132
6.6.5.	Familiarity	135
6.6.6.	Match-up	137
6.7.	Brand Attitude	139
6.8.	Purchase Intention	142
Chapter Seven: Results And Discussion		145
7.	Results and Discussion	145
7.1.	Answers to Research Hypotheses	145
7.1.1.	Celebrity Endorsement and Brand Attitude	145
7.1.1.1.	Trustworthiness	147
7.1.1.2.	Expertise	147
7.1.1.3.	Similarity	147
7.1.1.4.	Attractiveness	147
7.1.1.5.	Familiarity	147
7.1.1.6.	Match-up	148
7.1.2.	Brand Attitude and Demographics	149
7.1.2.1.	Age	149
7.1.2.2.	Gender	150
7.1.2.3.	Education	151
7.1.2.4.	Social Status	152
7.1.2.5.	Economic Status	153
7.1.3.	Purchase Intention and Demographics	154
7.1.3.1.	Age	154
7.1.3.2.	Gender	155
7.1.3.3.	Education Level	156
7.1.3.4.	Social Status	157
7.1.3.5.	Economic Status	158
7.1.4.	Brand attitude and Purchase Intention	159
7.1.5.	Celebrity Endorsement and Instagram Use	160
7.1.6.	Celebrity Endorsement and Exposure	162
7.2.	Answers to Research Questions	164
7.2.1.	Analytical Research Questions	164
7.2.2.	Survey Research Questions	170
Chapter Eight: Conclusion		177
8.	Conclusion	177
8.1.	Conclusion	177
8.2.	Limitations	178
8.3.	Future Recommendations	179
References		181
Appendices		193
Appendix A. Coding Sheet		193
Appendix B. English Questionnaire		197
Appendix C. Arabic Questionnaire		207

List of Tables

Table 1: Celebrity Endorsement Model
Table 2: Celebrity Credibility Scale
Table 3: Inter-coder Reliability
Table 4: Pearson's Correlations for the First Model
Table 5: Pearson's Correlations for the Second Model
Table 6: Split-Half Reliability for the First Model
Table 7: Split-Half Reliability for the Second Model
Table 8: Cronbach's Alpha for the First Model
Table 9: Cronbach's Alpha for the Second Model
Table 10: Most Popular Egyptian Celebrity Endorsers on Instagram in 2020
Table 11: Popular Egyptian Celebrity Endorsers in 2020 by Age
Table 12: Statistical Properties of Celebrity Endorsers in terms of Age
Table 13: Total Posts and 2020 Posts by Celebrity Endorsers on Instagram
Table 14: Posts and Endorsements by Egyptian Celebrities on Instagram in 2020
Table 15: Celebrity Endorsers on Instagram in 2020 by Percentage of Endorsements
Table 16: Endorsements of the five most followed Egyptian Celebrities in 2020
Table 17: Sample Distribution according to Gender
Table 18: Sample Distribution according to Age
Table 19: Sample Distribution according to Education
Table 20: Sample Distribution according to Family Income
Table 21: Sample Distribution according to Residential Area
Table 22: Sample Distribution according to Social Status
Table 23: Sample Distribution according to Instagram Membership Duration
Table 24: Sample Distribution according to Instagram Usage Frequency
Table 25: Sample Distribution according to Instagram Usage Duration
Table 26: Statistical Properties of Devices Used by the Sample to Check Instagram
Table 27: Statistical Properties of Voluntary Exposure and Involuntary Exposure
Table 28: Statistical Properties of Checking Posts by Egyptian Celebrities
Table 29: Statistical Properties of Noticing Items in Posts by Egyptian Celebrities
Table 30: Statistical Properties of Seeing Endorsements
Table 31: Statistical Properties of Purchasing Products
Table 32: Perceived Celebrity Motive Behind the Endorsement
Table 33: Statistical Properties of Preferred Endorsement Types
Table 34: Statistical Properties of Honourable Variable
Table 35: Statistical Properties of Honourable Items
Table 35: Statistical Properties of Exquisite Personality Variable
Table 36: Statistical Properties of Exquisite Personality Items
Table 37: Statistical Properties of Dignified Image Variable
Table 38: Statistical Properties of Dignified Image Items
Table 39: Statistical Properties of Dignified Image Items
Table 40: Statistical Properties of Trustworthiness Variable
Table 41: Statistical Properties of Trustworthiness Items
Table 42: Statistical Properties of Expertise Variable
Table 43: Statistical Properties of Expertise Items
Table 44: Statistical Properties of Similarity Variable
Table 45: Statistical Properties of Similarity Items

Table 46: Statistical Properties of Attractiveness Variable
Table 47: Statistical Properties of Attractiveness Items
Table 48: Statistical Properties of Familiarity Variable
Table 49: Statistical Properties of Familiarity Items
Table 50: Statistical Properties of Match-up Variable
Table 51: Statistical Properties of Match-up Items
Table 52: Statistical Properties of Brand Attitude Variable
Table 53: Statistical Properties of Brand Attitude Items
Table 54: Statistical Properties of Purchase Intention Variable
Table 55: Statistical Properties of Purchase Intention Items
Table 56: Model Summary of the First Hypothesis
Table 57: ANOVA of the First Hypothesis
Table 58: Coefficients of the First Hypothesis
Table 59: Descriptives of Brand Attitude according to Age
Table 60: ANOVA of Brand Attitude according to Age
Table 61: Group Statistics of Brand Attitude according to Gender
Table 62: Independent Samples Test of Brand Attitude according to Gender
Table 63: Descriptives of Brand Attitude according to Education Level
Table 64: ANOVA of Brand Attitude according to Education Level
Table 65: Descriptives of Brand Attitude according to Social Status
Table 66: ANOVA of Brand Attitude according to Social Status
Table 67: Descriptives of Brand Attitude according to Economic Status
Table 68: ANOVA of Brand Attitude according to Economic Status
Table 69: Descriptives of Purchase Intention according to Age
Table 70: ANOVA of Purchase Intention according to Age
Table 71: Group Statistics of Purchase Intention according to Gender
Table 72: Independent Samples Test of Purchase Intention according to Gender
Table 73: Descriptives of Purchase Intention according to Education Level
Table 74: ANOVA of Purchase Intention according to Education Level
Table 75: Descriptives of Purchase Intention according to Social Status
Table 76: ANOVA of Purchase Intention according to Social Status
Table 77: Descriptives of Purchase Intention according to Economic Status
Table 78: ANOVA of Purchase Intention according to Economic Status
Table 79: Model Summary of Fourth Hypothesis
Table 80: ANOVA of Fourth Hypothesis
Table 81: Coefficients of Fourth Hypothesis
Table 82: Pearson Correlations for Celebrity Endorsement and Instagram Use
Table 83: Pearson Correlations for Celebrity Endorsement and Exposure

List of Figures

- Figure 1: Meaning Transfer Model
- Figure 2: Celebrity Endorsement Model
- Figure 3: Celebrity Credibility Model
- Figure 4: Endorsers among Popular Egyptian Celebrities on Instagram (Pie Chart)
- Figure 5: Gender of Popular Egyptian Celebrity Endorsers on Instagram (Pie Chart)
- Figure 6: Profession of Popular Egyptian Celebrity Endorsers on Instagram (Pie Chart)
- Figure 7: Endorsements by Celebrity Name (Pie Chart)
- Figure 8: Endorsements according to Celebrity Gender (Pie Chart)
- Figure 9: Endorsements according to Brand Type (Bar Graph)
- Figure 10: Instagram Paid Internship (Pie Chart)
- Figure 11: Brand Tags (Pie Chart)
- Figure 12: Brand Location (Pie Chart)
- Figure 13: Directing User to Other Social Media Platforms (Pie Chart)
- Figure 14: Social Responsibility Campaigns (Pie Chart)
- Figure 15: Use of Captions (Pie Chart)
- Figure 16: Format of Caption (Pie Chart)
- Figure 17: Language of Caption Text (Pie Chart)
- Figure 18: Disclosure of Advertising (Pie Chart)
- Figure 19: Presence of Brand-Related Content in Captions (Pie Chart)
- Figure 20: Types of Brand-Related Content in Captions (Bar Graph)
- Figure 21: Encouraging User-Interaction in Captions (Pie Chart)
- Figure 22: Types of Encouraging User-Interaction in Captions (Bar Graph)
- Figure 23: Type of Post (Pie Chart)
- Figure 24: Photo-Based Posts (Pie Chart)
- Figure 25: Number of Photos (Pie Chart)
- Figure 26: Celebrity Appearance in the Photo (Pie Chart)
- Figure 27: Style of Photography (Pie Chart)
- Figure 28: Presence of Brand-Related Content in Photos (Pie Chart)
- Figure 29: Types of Brand-Related Content in Photos (Pie Chart)
- Figure 30: Style of Videography (Pie Chart)
- Figure 31: Presence of Brand-Related Content in Videos (Pie Chart)
- Figure 32: Types of Brand-Related Content in Videos (Pie Chart)
- Figure 33: Language of Videos (Pie Chart)
- Figure 34: Length of Video (Pie Chart)
- Figure 35: Video Duration in Seconds (Bar Graph)
- Figure 36: Sample Proportion According to Gender (Pie Chart)
- Figure 37: Sample Proportion According to Age Group (Bar Graph)
- Figure 38: Sample Proportion according to Education (Bar Graph)
- Figure 39: Sample Proportion according to Family Income (Bar Graph)
- Figure 40: Sample Proportion according to Residential Area (Pie Chart)
- Figure 41: Sample Proportion according to Social Status (Bar Graph)
- Figure 42: Sample Proportion according to Instagram Membership Duration (Bar Graph)
- Figure 43: Sample Proportion according to Instagram Usage Frequency (Bar Graph)
- Figure 44: Sample Proportion according to Instagram Usage Duration (Bar Graph)
- Figure 45: Using Smartphone to Check Instagram (Bar Graph)
- Figure 46: Using Tablet to Check Instagram (Bar Graph)

- Figure 47: Using Laptop to Check Instagram (Bar Graph)
- Figure 48: Using Desktop Computer to Check Instagram (Bar Graph)
- Figure 49: Using Smart TV to Check Instagram (Bar Graph)
- Figure 50: Visiting Profiles of Egyptian Celebrities on Instagram (Bar Graph)
- Figure 51: Seeing Posts by Egyptian Celebrities on Instagram Feed (Bar Graph)
- Figure 52: Checking Photo Posts by Egyptian Celebrities (Bar Graph)
- Figure 53: Checking Video Posts by Egyptian Celebrities (Bar Graph)
- Figure 54: Checking Stories Posted by Egyptian Celebrities (Bar Graph)
- Figure 55: Checking Highlights Posted by Egyptian Celebrities (Bar Graph)
- Figure 56: Checking Live Streams Posted by Egyptian Celebrities (Bar Graph)
- Figure 57: Checking Reels Posted by Egyptian Celebrities (Bar Graph)
- Figure 58: Checking IGTV Posted by Egyptian Celebrities (Bar Graph)
- Figure 59: Noticing Captions in Posts by Egyptian Celebrities (Bar Graph)
- Figure 60: Noticing Post Tags in Posts by Egyptian Celebrities (Bar Graph)
- Figure 61: Noticing Location Tags in Posts by Egyptian Celebrities (Bar Graph)
- Figure 62: Noticing Mentions in Posts by Egyptian Celebrities (Bar Graph)
- Figure 63: Noticing Hashtags in Posts by Egyptian Celebrities (Bar Graph)
- Figure 64: Noticing Hyperlinks in Posts by Egyptian Celebrities (Bar Graph)
- Figure 65: Noticing Paid Partnership in Posts by Egyptian Celebrities (Bar Graph)
- Figure 66: Caption Items that Encourage Egyptian Youth to Interact with Post (Bar Graph)
- Figure 67: Seeing Egyptian Celebrities Endorse Brands on Instagram (Bar Graph)
- Figure 68: Purchasing a Product/Service as a Result of Endorsement (Bar Graph)
- Figure 69: Types of Celebrity Endorsed Brands Seen by Egyptian Youth (Bar Graph)
- Figure 70: Perceived Celebrity Motive (Pie Chart)
- Figure 71: Celebrity Endorsement Type 1 “I endorse” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 72: Celebrity Endorsement Type 2 “I use” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 73: Celebrity Endorsement Type 3 “I ask” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 74: Celebrity Endorsement Type 4 “I appear” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 75: Honourable Item 1 “Trustworthy” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 76: Honourable Item 2 “Reliable” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 77: Honourable Item 3 “Knowledgeable” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 78: Honourable Item 4 “Compatible” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 79: Honourable Item 5 “Ethical” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 80: Exquisite Personality Item 1 “Handsome / Beautiful” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 81: Exquisite Personality Item 2 “Physically Attractive” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 82: Exquisite Personality Item 3 “Glamorous” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 83: Exquisite Personality Item 4 “Charming” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 84: Exquisite Personality Item 5 “Sophisticated” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 85: Dignified Image Item 1 “Making Contribution” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 86: Dignified Image Item 2 “Showing Empathy” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 87: Dignified Image Item 3 “Avoiding Controversy” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 88: Dignified Image Item 4 “Speaking Up” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 89: Dignified Image Item 5 “Being Humble” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 90: Trustworthiness Item 1 “Honest” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 91: Trustworthiness Item 2 “Reliable” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 92: Trustworthiness Item 3 “Sincere” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 93: Trustworthiness Item 4 “Trustworthy” (Bar Graph)
- Figure 94: Expertise Item 1 “Experience” (Bar Graph)

- Figure 95: Expertise Item 2 “Knowledge” (Bar Graph)
Figure 96: Expertise Item 3 “Skills” (Bar Graph)
Figure 97: Similarity Item 1 “Lifestyle” (Bar Graph)
Figure 98: Similarity Item 2 “Interests” (Bar Graph)
Figure 99: Similarity Item 3 “Perspectives” (Bar Graph)
Figure 100: Similarity Item 4 “Likings” (Bar Graph)
Figure 101: Attractiveness Item 1 “Prettiness” (Bar Graph)
Figure 102: Attractiveness Item 2 “Elegance” (Bar Graph)
Figure 103: Attractiveness Item 3 “Appearance” (Bar Graph)
Figure 104: Familiarity Item 1 “Television/Cinema” (Bar Graph)
Figure 105: Familiarity Item 2 “Events/Festivals” (Bar Graph)
Figure 106: Match-up Item 1 “Suitable Celebrity” (Bar Graph)
Figure 107: Match-up Item 2 “Suitable Brand” (Bar Graph)
Figure 108: Brand Attitude Item 1 “Likeability” (Bar Graph)
Figure 109: Brand Attitude Item 2 “Quality” (Bar Graph)
Figure 110: Brand Attitude Item 3 “Satisfaction” (Bar Graph)
Figure 111: Brand Attitude Item 4 “Confidence” (Bar Graph)
Figure 112: Purchase Intention Item 1 “Seeking Information” (Bar Graph)
Figure 113: Purchase Intention Item 2 “Seeking Products” (Bar Graph)
Figure 114: Purchase Intention Item 3 “Trying Products” (Bar Graph)
Figure 115: Purchase Intention Item 4 “Purchasing Products” (Bar Graph)

Chapter One: Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Internet allowed brands to reach consumers through branded websites and online advertisements. Social networks, such as Facebook and Instagram, provided more opportunities for brands to stay connected with their customers via business pages. Interestingly, the online presence of a brand through social media is not limited to its own business page only, but brands are being widely featured by celebrities on their online profiles and fan pages, in a form of celebrity endorsement that takes place on social networks.

The number of social networks users is increasing remarkably. In a report issued in 2021, the number was estimated as 4.2 billion users of social media, which is double the number of users in 2016 (Datareportal, 2021). In Egypt, the number of social media users at the start of 2022 was equivalent to around half of the population (Datareportal, 2022).

As social media networks attract more users, celebrity profiles gain millions of users from different nationalities and regions. For example, the Portuguese footballer Cristiano Ronaldo has surpassed 400 million followers in 2022 on Instagram. Accordingly, brands try to use the huge reach of celebrities to large fan bases to promote services and products among consumers, especially the youth.

The youth represent the most age group of Instagram that has reached 2 billion users in December 2021. It has its most users worldwide from the age groups between 18 and 24 years old, and between 25 and 34 years old (Statista, 2022a). In Egypt, two thirds of Instagram users aged between 18 and 34 years old (Statista, 2022b), from a total of more than 18 million Instagrammers in May 2022 (Statista, 2022c).

On one hand, an apparent value of studying online celebrity endorsement could be observed, due to the role social networks could play, if used efficiently, in forming brand attitudes and building preferable images of services and products.

On the other hand, there is an importance of studying Instagram, the photo and video sharing social network, and its efficiency as a means of promoting brands among the youth, who represent the largest age group of Instagrammers in Egypt and worldwide.

Therefore, this study aims at defining the role of celebrity endorsement on social networking sites (represented by Instagram) in the formation of brand attitudes among the Egyptian youth. The analytical study is a content analysis of a purposive sample of endorsements posted by Egyptian celebrities on Instagram to determine its characteristics and trends. The survey study investigates more than 400 Egyptian celebrity followers between 18 and 35 years old, to decide the attitudes formed towards endorsed brands, and whether consumer variables, such as demographics, and endorser variables, such as source credibility and celebrity-product match-up have impacts on the brand attitudes.

1.2. Aims of the Study

- To define the nature of celebrity endorsement by Egyptian celebrities on social networks.
- To determine the factors influencing the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement on social networking sites.
- To measure the extent that brand attitudes of the youth are influenced by celebrity endorsement on social networks.
- To test the relationship between the attitudes towards brand and purchase intention among the youth.

- To measure if demographic variables has statistically significant differences over brand attitude among the youth.
- To measure if demographic variables has statistically significant differences over purchase intention among the youth.

1.3. Study Significance

1.3.1. Scientific Significance

- The importance of studying the role of celebrities on social networks.
- The scarcity of Arab studies related to celebrity endorsement on social networks.
- The need to define the factors influencing the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement on social networks.

1.3.2. Practical Significance

- Serves as an indicator for Egyptian advertisers and marketing agencies.
- Suggests practical strategies for increasing the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement on social networks.
- Studies Egyptian youth who constitutes, according to demographics, the largest portion of advertising target audience in Egypt.
- Relates to the role of celebrity in forming attitudes among the youth, which could help later in social development process.

1.4. Problem Statement

This study tries to provide a better understanding of celebrity endorsement on social networks in Egypt to help advertising agencies and marketing practitioners use celebrity endorsement in a more effective and profitable manner that would save time, effort, and cost, and achieve preferable brand attitudes and purchase intentions of the endorsed brands among the Egyptian youth.