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UNDERSTANDING CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT OUTCOMES THROUGH THE LENS OF FAME TYPOLOGIES: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Abstract: *This aim of the paper is to investigate the link between a celebrity's social origin - categorized as achieved, ascribed, or attributed - and the success of brand endorsement campaigns. By applying Rojek's tripartite fame typology, the study analyses ten recent celebrity endorsement cases from various industries and world. Through comparative qualitative analysis, the research explores the degree to which a celebrity's fame origin influences consumer response (through purchase, brand recognition and perception) and endorsement outcomes. The findings suggest that while social origin plays a role in shaping public perception, the alignment between brand image and celebrity persona is a stronger determinant of campaign success. Most campaigns analyzed were successful, indicating that effective strategic branding can transcend the limitations posed by fame origin. This study introduces the social origin of celebrity status - based on Rojek's typology - as a key variable in understanding endorsement outcomes, offering a new perspective beyond traditional marketing models. Scientific contribution of this paper can be found in strategic insights for designing more targeted and socially - informed celebrity endorsement campaigns across diverse media and market contexts.*

Keywords: *branding, celebrity endorsement, mass media, marketing campaigns, Rojek fame model*

JEL Classification: *M31, L82, D91*

INTRODUCTION

In an era where celebrity endorsement remains a cornerstone of brand business strategy, the social origin of fame has emerged as a critical yet underexplored factor influencing endorsement success. This paper investigates the relationship between a celebrity's pathway to fame - whether achieved through personal merit, inherited from familial status, or constructed via media platforms - and its impact on brand

recognition and endorsement success. Drawing upon (Rojek, 2001) tripartite model of celebrity classification, the study examines endorsement outcomes across a spectrum of global industries and cultural contexts. Through a comparative analysis of recent empirical cases, this research seeks to uncover patterns in consumer perception and behavioral response that correlate with the endorser's social origin. This study aims to bridge the gap in existing literature by analyzing how a celebrity's social background is connected to endorsement campaign success. By evaluating case studies from various industries and regions, the research seeks to determine whether a celebrity's origin - be it through inheritance, merit, or media fabrication - are connected to the - affects success of brand endorsements. The research can open the perspective of connection between celebrity social origin and brand endorsements success.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As a century-old phenomenon (Erdogan, 1999) used more frequently in the past decade (White, Goddard, & Wilbur, 2009), celebrity endorsement is still a focal point of contemporary academic research. This strategy is employed due to several factors: celebrities hold significant influence within society (Eng & Jarvis, 2020), they effectively capture consumer attention (Muda, Musa, & Putit, 2012; Pavlović, Vuković, & Hunjet, 2020), shape consumer perceptions of brands (Osei - Frimpong, Donkor, & Owusu - Frimpong, 2019), and introduce an element of divergence (Shiva, Arora, & Rishi, 2022). When using this strategy, some of the authors claim there are lack of measurable objectives for the campaign success (Olmedo, et al., 2020), but according to Brooks et al. (2021) success can be measured in different ways such as increasing consumers' online attention via social media, building up online community, achieved key performance indicators and brand recognition. But, also in way of increased product sales (Jun, Han, Zhou, & Eisingerich, 2023), as well as through changes in customer-based brand equity (Alimpić, Slijepčević, & Madić, 2025). Nowadays, this topic is still the focal point of contemporary academic discourse and has been researched by various industries like the health industry (i.e. surrogate in vitro fertilization), the food industry in study by Ogunbola et al. (2024), beauty industry (Yanti & Zamrudi, 2025) and fashion industry (Chen, Wang, & Wang, 2024). Celebrities from various industries engage in endorsement activities; however, as noted by Wei (2024), celebrities from the entertainment and sports sectors continue to attract the most scholarly attention in this context. Interestingly, this trend has remained largely unchanged over the past decade, as Yen & Teng (2015) also reported that actors and athletes were predominantly used in celebrity endorsements - a pattern further illustrated in Table 1 of the following chapter.

As we are living in the era of immense influence of social media celebrities, famous people with no special skills, so called DIY celebrities, self-made figures leveraging digital tools to bypass traditional media (Turner, 2004), often constructed by media and industry mediators (such as publicists, journalists and producers), i.e. attributed celebrities, various research in recent years has shown that they are more frequently used for endorsements (Zahran, 2024; Kasuma & Rabbani, 2024) with digital user behavior (clicks, shares and recommendations) becoming a key mediator of campaign reach (Vojvodić & Matić Šošić, 2025). Various typologies of fame and celebrity classification have emerged in academic literature, reflecting the complexity and evo-

lution of celebrity culture. Turner (2004) distinguishes between “ordinary” and “extraordinary” celebrities, where the former gain fame through reality media exposure and the latter through notable achievements in fields such as sports or acting. Boorstin (1963) introduced the idea of the “pseudo-event” celebrity, arguing that many modern celebrities are famous not for their accomplishments but for their media visibility. Driessens (2013) proposed a sociogenetic model that considers celebrity as a form of mediated visibility shaped by both structural forces and individual agency. Marshall (2014) emphasized the performative dimension of celebrity, framing it as a product of public persona management in media space. Among these frameworks, Rojek’s (2001) tripartite model of celebrity classification - ascribed, achieved, and attributed - offers a particularly robust lens for analyzing the origins of fame. Ascribed celebrities inherit their fame through family lineage or social position (e.g., royal family members or children of celebrities), achieved celebrities earn their fame through individual talent and effort (e.g., successful athletes, artists), while attributed celebrities - or “celetoids” - gain short-lived fame primarily through media exposure, often without significant accomplishment. Rojek’s model is especially relevant for examining endorsement outcomes because it centers on the social origin of fame, which this study posits as a potentially significant factor in consumer perception and campaign effectiveness. By focusing on how fame is obtained, rather than just its visibility or function, Rojek’s classification allows for a deeper analysis of authenticity, credibility, and trust - key elements in successful brand endorsement strategies, which are also closely tied to the way media and marketing construct desirable public images (Velov & Kolev, 2021). Although the three - part model of celebrity classification was originally proposed by Rojek, it has since been adopted and adapted by other scholars such as Stewart & Giles (2019), Marshall (2014), and Turner (2004), further demonstrating its applicability and theoretical significance.

As noted earlier, they are various types of celebrities and there are lots of celebrity characteristics for consumers to trust them, like attractiveness, expertise, skills, good image, authenticity, etc. Studies show attractiveness is especially impactful (Can-su & Sezen, 2025; Sharma & Kumar, 2024). However, other factors like credibility, skills (Gofur & Shafariah, 2025; Gaikwad & Muley, 2024), charm, image (Mkerwa, 2024; Dankwah, Kwakwa, & Ibrahim, 2024) and social status (Pavlović, Vuković, & Hunjet, 2020) also play key roles in endorsement effectiveness.

This article aims to answer the next research questions via chosen up to date and relevant articles which include celebrities via endorsement campaign, covers up different industries where celebrities are coming from and meets the Rojek model criteria.

RQ1. Can there be a link between the social origin of celebrity fame and brand endorsement success?

RQ2. Does the success of a campaign vary depending on the estimated origin of the celebrity participating in the campaign?

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative, comparative case study approach to examine celebrity endorsement outcomes across different industries and markets. The ten articles included in Table 1 were selected from reputable academic databases (Google Scholar, EBSCO, ProQuest, Taylor & Francis, Wiley, and Elicit) and published within

the last ten years. The inclusion criteria focused on studies that analyzed **successful or unsuccessful celebrity endorsement campaigns**, as well as on the **metrics used to assess campaign effectiveness**, such as sales impact, brand attitude shifts, consumer engagement, or brand value. A further selection criterion concerned the **type of celebrity**, ensuring that the final sample represented all three categories of Rojek's (2001) fame typology—**ascribed, achieved, and attributed**.

Following the literature review, the celebrities in each study were classified using Rojek's typology, after which endorsement outcomes were analyzed through secondary data such as sales impact, brand recognition, purchase intention, consumer engagement, e-WOM responses, and shifts in brand attitudes. Prior research has shown that celebrity endorsement can positively shape brand image and purchase decisions (Anwar, Wibowo, Andrian, & Setiyani, 2023; Aprilia & Hidayati, 2020; Jun, Han, Zhou, & Eisingerich, 2023; Sari, Hayu, & Salim, 2021; Wong, Fock, & Ho, 2020; Đukić & Buljubašić, 2025), while other studies demonstrate that endorsement effects can be limited or negative, depending on perceived celebrity–brand fit, credibility, and authenticity (Srivastava, Tiwari, & Shastri, 2020). Findings by Chen et al. (2024) further highlight that endorsement performance can be linked to increased brand awareness, improved positioning, and sales growth, stressing the multidimensional nature of endorsement success. However, an important methodological limitation emerged: **empirical studies focusing on endorsement campaigns involving ascribed celebrities are significantly less common**, with most peer-reviewed work examining achieved or attributed celebrities. While additional examples of ascribed celebrity branding (e.g., members of royal families, celebrity heirs, “nepo babies”) were identified in practitioner reports and media analyses, these sources were excluded due to their non-academic nature. To address this gap, the study was expanded to include **experimental research designs** that provide robust measures of endorsement effectiveness despite not analyzing real-world campaigns. Two such studies were added due to their relevance: Rialti et al. (2024), who experimentally tested **Kylie Jenner's** endorsement effect through shifts in brand attitudes generated by her positive or negative e-WOM messages; and Duthie et al. (2017), who evaluated the endorsement impact of **Prince William**—an ascribed celebrity—through experimentally measured **willingness-to-engage (WTE)** with a conservation campaign. These studies enabled the inclusion of ascribed celebrities under controlled conditions, thus strengthening the dataset where real-world evidence is limited.

This two-phase analytical approach—first assessing fame origin and then comparing endorsement outcomes—allowed the identification of patterns between a celebrity's social origin and campaign performance. It further highlighted the centrality of **public perception, cultural intermediaries**, and the interpretative role of audiences (Bastian & Hajirah, 2025), especially in contexts where marketing communication transparency is limited (Yang & Battocchio, 2020). Rojek's typology was chosen because it provides a nuanced perspective on how fame origin shapes consumer response, complementing more traditional economic measures of endorsement success.

THE LINK BETWEEN CELEBRITY SOCIAL ORIGIN AND BRAND ENDORSEMENT SUCCESS – RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first criterion for analyzing recent works was to determine the social background of celebrities who are useful for endorsements. The authors selected three examples per social origin category, with four for “achieved” due to one involving scandal, reflecting research by Wong et al. (2020) that negative publicity can benefit endorsements and aligning with Rojek’s view of scandal-driven fame as a form of attributed celebrity (celetoids).

Looking from a perspective of successful campaign, measuring it via consumers purchasing, the celebrities who have been categorized in table as “achieved” have earned their celebrity status because of their skills and achievements, for example BTS boy band from South Korea are known for their skills of singing and dancing, and not only for mentioned skills but also according to Widyawati et al. (2020) for expertise in celebrity endorsement. Furthermore, in the same category of music industry is Kanye West, who also left an impact in the fashion industry as a designer. Celebrities can be successful across various industries, transferring their appeal from one product category to another and embodying a wide range of lifestyles. Several theoretical models help explain why such transfers can be effective. Wong et al. (2020) summarize these foundational perspectives. They note that, according to McGuire’s (1985) affect-transfer model (2020, p. 2), endorsement success may occur when consumers’ positive feelings toward an endorser are transferred to the endorsed product. Wong et al. (2020) also reference McCracken’s (1989) meaning-transfer model, which proposes that symbolic meanings associated with an endorser can move from the celebrity to the product and ultimately to the consumer. Furthermore, the authors draw on the source-credibility model, originally developed by Hovland and Weiss (1951) and later expanded by Pornpitakpan (2004), which posits that the perceived credibility of an endorser (expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness) can influence how persuasive the brand or product message is (Wong, Fock, & Ho, 2020).

The category of achieved celebrities includes actors like Ini Edo and Ufoma McDermott from Ogunbola et al. (2024) study and Sajal Aly from Jabbar et al. (2024) study. These nationally prominent rather than globally recognized figures illustrate that achieved celebrities outside dominant Western media circuits can also serve as effective brand endorsers. Within the category of attributed celebrities, the studies identify social-media figures whose celebrity status is constructed through industry practices and self-production, often referred to as DIY (“do-it-yourself”) celebrities (Turner, 2006; Gamson, 2011). An example is Bilal Munir, a Pakistani Instagram influencer known for IT product reviews, featured in the study by Jamil et al. (2023). A prominent illustration of DIY celebrities includes American TikTok influencer Charli D’Amelio, whose fame emerged from self-produced dance videos, as well as YouTube creator Michelle Phan, recognized for her beauty content (Brooks, Drenten, & Piskorski, 2021). As noted by Deller and Murphy (2020), individuals who attain visibility and influence through platforms such as YouTube can also be understood as celebrities, further supporting the classification of these figures within the attributed category.

Within the category of **ascribed celebrities**, the selected studies include figures whose celebrity status is inherited through family lineage, social position, or dynastic prominence. Paris Hilton and Kylie Jenner exemplify celebrities whose fame orig-

inates from being born into globally recognizable and influential families, aligning with Rojek’s (2001) definition of ascribed fame. Their cases further demonstrate that inherited celebrity status doesn’t preclude endorsement effectiveness: for instance, Hilton’s influence on Rich Prosecco sales, as reported in Wong et al. (2020), illustrates that inherited visibility can translate into measurable commercial outcomes. Similarly, Kylie Jenner’s experimentally tested e-WOM effects (Rialti, Zollo, Kim, & Yoon, 2024) show that ascribed celebrities can shape brand attitudes even outside traditional endorsement contexts, particularly when promoting leading brands in competitive markets. Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge, represents another form of ascribed celebrity rooted in royal lineage. Experimental evidence from Duthie et al. (2017) demonstrates that his presence in conservation campaign materials significantly increased willingness-to-engage (WTE) among participants compared with non-celebrity controls, highlighting that inherited fame can function as a persuasive source within pro-social and charitable contexts. These examples collectively indicate that although scholarship on ascribed celebrity endorsement is more limited, available studies show that inherited fame can exert meaningful influence on consumer engagement and brand-related outcomes when tested under controlled conditions.

Table 1. Celebrity endorsement campaigns

AUTHOR(S) AND ARTICLE NAME	CELEBRITIES	SOCIAL ORIGIN	BRAND ENDORSMENT
(Jun, Han, Zhou, & Eisingerich, 2023) When is celebrity endorsement effective? Exploring the role of celebrity endorsers in enhancing key brand associations	BTS boy band (BTS is acronym of Bangtan Sonyeondan or “Beyond the Scene,” Grammy awarded boy band form South Korean active in genre of pop music)	Achieved (the boy band got this celebrity status through a combination of talent and hard work in singing and dancing)	Successful: McDonald’s launched the ‘BTS Meal’ across six continents and 50 countries worldwide in the year 2021. The celebrity endorsement helped to boost sales worldwide
(Mitra, 2023) Celebrity Endorsement and Its Impact on Sales	Kanye West (American grammy awarded rapper, song writer, music producer, fashion designer, music and movie director)	Achieved (K. West got this celebrity status with enormous skills and expertise in music, fashion industry, and setting trends)	Failed: In the year 2022, Adidas had to finish the collaboration with Kanye West when he made some antisemitic comments on the social media, which left the company at the risk of losing \$560million

(Ogunbola, Ogbeide, Subulola, Dipo-Adedoyin, & Ridwan, 2024) Influence of Celebrity Endorsement on Women Fertility on Social Media.	Ini Edo (Nigerian actress in Netflix series)	Achieved (Ini Edo got this celebrity status through an acting career lasting more than 20 years)	Successful: Ini and Ufuoma used their testimonies to preach about the good and the bad of surrogacy and IVF. There has been noted increase in the acceptability and exploration of surrogacy and IVF as an option for childbearing now compared to before endorsement
	Ufuoma McDermott (Nigerian actress, director, former model and beauty pageant titleholder)	(Ufuoma McDermott earned this celebrity status through her various skills and expertise in her career)	
(Jabbar, Sheikh, & Raza, 2024) The relationship between celebrity endorsement and masstige brand value: The moderating effect of brand credibility.	Sajal Aly (Pakistani actress and model)	Achieved (Sajal Aly earned this celebrity status via excellent skills in acting in TV shows and Pakistani movies)	Successful: If she is linked to a fashion brand, such as in a brand advertisement, it is possible to a great extent that her positive effects are transferred to the connected brand and enhance the brand's value
(Jamil, Qayyum, Hassan, & Khan, 2023) Impact of social media influencers on consumers' well-being and purchase intention: a TikTok perspective	Bilal Munir (Pakistani Instagram influencer for electronic products with 484k followers)	Attributed (Bilal Munir career got respected because he is educated as an engineer and his opinion on social media for electronic products has influence)	Successful: Most technology brands in Pakistan collaborate with Bilal Munir because he is credible, tech-savvy and consumers are tending to purchase more after his review
(Brooks, Drenten, & Piskorski, 2021) Influencer Celebrification: How Social Media Influencers Acquire Celebrity Capital	Charli D'Amelio (American Tik Tok influencer with 157.3m followers) Michelle Phan (American YouTube Influencer with 8,58m followers)	Attributed (Charlie D'Amelio has social media fame via dancing on Tik Tok videos) (Michelle Phan has social media fame via reviewing beauty products on her YT channel)	Successful: Charli endorsed Dunkin with her drink "The Charli" and it got more recognition among generation Z. Michelle Phan had a successful endorsement deal with Lancôme and the brand after that got more recognizing

(Sari, Hayu, & Salim, 2021)	Suhay Salim	Attributed	Successful: The research of the authors has proven that the endorsement of the beauty influencer has a significant effect on positive publicity and purchasing decision of Korean skin care product "Some By Mi"
The Effect of Trustworthiness, Attractiveness, Expertise, and Popularity of Celebrity Endorsement	(Indonesian Instagram influencer with 683k followers)	(Suhay Salim got her social media fame reviewing make up products and as make-up artist)	
(Wong, Fock, & Ho, 2020)	Paris Hilton	Ascribed	Successful: In 2010, the sales of Rich Prosecco increased from seven million to ten million cans in the first year of Paris Hilton's endorsement, and the company's revenues continued to grow by 65.24% in the second year
Toward a Process-Transfer Model of the Endorser Effect	(American celebrity, one of the heirs to the Hilton hotel chain founded by her great-grandfather Conrad Hilton)	(Paris Hilton was born into a rich and famous family; the family built an empire in the hospitality industry)	
(Rialti, Zollo, Kim, & Yoon, 2024)	Kylie Jenner	Ascribed	Successful (partially): In an experimental setting, her positive e-WOM posts significantly improved attitudes toward Nike, whereas for Adidas the experimentally measured e-WOM endorsement effect showed no significant impact.
Mega- influencers and brand dynamics: Shaping attitudes toward leading and challenger brands through electronic word of mouth	(American celebrity, daughter of Kris Jenner -TV producer, and Caitlyn Jenner-retired Olympic gold medalist, and half-sister of media personality Kim Kardashian)	(Kylie Jenner inherited fame from famous parents and siblings)	
(Duthie, Diogo, Keane, & Knight, 2017)	Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge	Ascribed	Successful: In an experimental copy-testing study, participants showed higher willingness-to-engage (WTE) with the conservation campaign when the advertisement featured Prince William compared with the non-celebrity control, indicating a successful endorsement effect measured through WTE responses rather than real-world behavioural outcomes
The effectiveness of celebrities in conservation marketing	(British royal celebrity/ younger son of King Charles III and Diana, Princess of Wales)	(Prince William also inherited fame from famous parents-royal family)	

The cases presented in Table 1 show that most analyzed endorsement campaigns were successful, supporting prior findings that celebrity endorsements can strengthen brand performance, sales, and consumer-based brand equity (Wang, Chen, Nie, & Wang, 2019; Nzuva, 2021; Alimpić, Slijepčević, & Madić, 2025). These results align with research on global brand visibility, such as Jun et al. (2023) who demonstrated that the BTS–McDonald’s partnership boosted international sales and enhanced brand recognition. Successful endorsements were also observed among attributed celebrities, where credibility, expertise, and popularity—key determinants identified by Sari et al. (2021) and Jamil et al. (2023)—effectively drove purchase intentions, exemplified by Bilal Munir’s influence in the tech sector.

Nevertheless, the literature acknowledges that endorsement outcomes can vary. Till & Schimp (1998) and Adiba et al. (2020) argue that scandals or negative publicity can damage brand image. This pattern appears in one of the unsuccessful cases within the sample: the termination of Adidas’ collaboration with Kanye West, where the celebrity’s inappropriate behavior created reputational harm and financial loss (Mitra, 2023). Huang (2020) similarly notes that the moral downfall of celebrities can undermine campaigns, especially when brands depend heavily on the celebrity’s perceived authenticity. At the same time, many brands deliberately engage celebrities who have become highly visible due to scandals or negative publicity. In Rojek’s framework, such figures may be classified as *celetoids*—a form of attributed celebrity whose fame is intensified by media attention rather than professional achievement. A well-known example is Nike’s 2018 campaign featuring former NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick, whose public protest against the national anthem led to his departure from the league. Despite the controversy, the campaign proved successful (Marie, 2025), illustrating that scandal-associated visibility can, in certain contexts, enhance rather than diminish endorsement effectiveness. These findings support the view—consistent with Rojek’s typology—that celebrity visibility shaped by controversy may align more closely with attributed fame, resulting in unpredictable endorsement effects.

A particularly illustrative case regarding the complexity of fame is Paris Hilton. Despite being one of the least liked celebrities at the time, Hilton’s endorsement of Rich Prosecco was commercially successful. As explained by Wong, Fock, & Ho (2020), this outcome contradicts predictions based solely on affect-transfer, meaning-transfer, and source-credibility theories. Their proposed process-transfer model suggests that consumers may transfer not only positive attributes but also the *evaluation process* itself—whether valenced or not—onto the brand, explaining why ascribed celebrities with mixed public perceptions can still generate strong endorsement outcomes.

Across all examined studies, **nine out of ten** endorsement cases were successful. Although social origin didn’t independently determine campaign outcomes, it shaped the type of persuasive value each celebrity contributed. Achieved celebrities generally signaled credibility and expertise but carried reputational risks associated with high visibility. Ascribed celebrities—such as Paris Hilton, Kylie Jenner, and Prince William—enhanced symbolic value and aspirational associations, while attributed celebrities were especially effective at driving engagement and purchase intention through relatability and strong digital presence (Hameed, Malik, Hadi, & Raza, 2023; Jamil, Qayyum, Hassan, & Khan, 2023; Listiawati, Ahmad, Amelia, & Zaelani, 2024). Over-

all, the findings underscore that **brand–celebrity congruence and consumer perception**, rather than fame origin alone, are central to endorsement success.

CONCLUSION

This review demonstrates that a meaningful connection can be observed between the social origin of celebrity fame and the effectiveness of endorsement campaigns. Across the analyzed cases, achieved celebrities most consistently generated favorable outcomes due to their credibility and demonstrated expertise, attributed celebrities proved highly effective in digital environments where authenticity and audience engagement drive consumer behavior, while ascribed celebrities provided symbolic and aspirational value when aligned with appropriate brand identities. Although fame origin alone does not determine endorsement success, the comparative analysis shows that it shapes the type of persuasive capital each celebrity can contribute. As a review based on secondary data, the study synthesized findings from recent empirical and conceptual works selected according to clearly defined criteria, including publication recency (last ten years), relevance to celebrity endorsement practice, representation of all three categories in Rojek's typology, and the inclusion of measurable outcomes of endorsement success. This approach allowed for a comprehensive overview of contemporary endorsement dynamics, though it remains limited by the availability and heterogeneity of existing studies—particularly the scarcity of empirical research involving ascribed celebrities and the predominance of self-reported measures in primary sources. Overall, this review contributes not only to endorsement scholarship but also to broader celebrity studies and communication studies by demonstrating how different forms of celebrity capital—shaped through labor, heredity, and digital mediatization—influence audience perception and meaning-making processes. The findings underline the value of integrating fame typologies into analyses of mediated influence and highlight the need for future research to adopt more robust methodological designs, including behavioral and experimental approaches, as well as cross-cultural comparisons. Such work would offer a deeper understanding of how fame origin, media visibility, and evolving audience expectations jointly shape the influence and communicative power of contemporary celebrities.

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