

Celebrity Endorsement on Gender-Based Conspicuous Consumption

Cansu Tor-Kadioglu^{a,b,c}, Sezen Bozyigit^d*

^aUniversity of Twente, the Netherlands

^bErasmus University, the Netherlands

^cWittenborg University of Applied Science, the Netherlands

^dTarsus University, Türkiye

Abstract: This study explores the irrational aspects of consumer behavior, focusing on conspicuous consumption driven by the pursuit of status and self-expression. It examines how consumers emulate celebrities based on key dimensions of celebrity endorsement— attractiveness, expertise, and credibility—and how these factors vary between genders. The research presents a conceptual framework that integrates conspicuous consumption with celebrity endorsement dimensions, supported by an extensive literature review. Data were collected from 403 participants belonging to the Y and Z generations through online surveys and analyzed using SPSS and AMOS software. The results reveal gender-specific differences in the influence of celebrity endorsement dimensions on conspicuous consumption. For female consumers, celebrity attractiveness and credibility significantly enhance conspicuous consumption, whereas expertise has a mitigating effect. In contrast, male consumers are primarily influenced by celebrity attractiveness. The study concludes that the allure of celebrities, as reflected in their attractiveness and credibility, promotes conspicuous consumption, while their expertise can diminish it. These findings provide valuable insights for businesses leveraging celebrity endorsements, particularly in gender-targeted marketing strategies, highlighting the importance of tailoring approaches based on consumer gender to maximize impact.

Keywords: conspicuous consumption, celebrity endorsement, advertisement, gender factor, Gen-Y, Gen-Z

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*Corresponding author's e-mail: c.torkadioglu@utwente.nl

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Introduction

Businesses can use advertising as a marketing communication tool to promote their products, and effective advertising strategies can result in changes in consumer purchasing behavior. The global advertising market reached a value of USD 547 billion in 2020 (Imarc, 2020). Global advertising spending is forecasted to recover to 5.8% growth in 2021, reaching a total of USD 579 billion (Dentsu, 2021). According to the last report, global ad spending is expected to rise to USD 620 billion in 2021, supported by a positive comparison to 2020, as well as the postponed Summer Olympics and the UEFA Euro football tournament (Sheth, 2021). While advertising represents a significant cost for businesses worldwide, the strategies employed are also crucial. In the digital age, one of the latest trends in advertising is the use of celebrities as brand ambassadors.

Utilizing celebrities as advertising faces is a strategy that helps capture and maintain consumer attention in a crowded market. The impact of celebrity endorsement on advertising effectiveness has been extensively studied by researchers, covering various topics such as physical attractiveness, celebrity credibility, celebrity-brand congruence, and the influence of social media influencers and transgressive celebrities. These studies have examined aspects such as celebrity credibility reactions (Goldsmith, Lafferty, & Newell, 2000), the selection of celebrity endorsers (Erdogan, Baker, & Tagg, 2001), the effectiveness of athlete celebrity endorsers (Schaefer, Parker, & Kent, 2010), the development of a celebrity athlete endorser effectiveness scale (Peetz, 2012), the influence of TV endorsers (Muralidharan & Xue, 2015), enhancing brand credibility through celebrity endorsement (S. W. Wang & Scheinbaum, 2017), source credibility and attractiveness models (Seiler & Kucza, 2017), number of endorsers (Handriana & Wisandiko, 2017), celebrity-brand congruence (Min, Chang, Jai, & Ziegler, 2019), impulsive buying intentions and celebrity endorsers (Zhu, Amelina, & Yen, 2022), consumers' perceptions of price and quality (Bennett, Anaza, & Andonova, 2022), consumers' purchasing intention (Nguyen, 2021), social media influencers and transgressive celebrities (Cocker, Mardon, & Daunt, 2021), and the marketing revolution of Tim Tebow (Moore, Keller, & Zemanek, 2011).

One type of emotionally driven consumption is known as conspicuous consumption, where individuals make purchases to display their status or prove themselves to others. According to Öztas and Bozyigit (2020), the physical attractiveness or reliability of celebrities featured in advertisements has a significant influence on purchasing behaviors like conspicuous consumption. Companies selling high-end products frequently employ celebrities as a strategic move to position their brand as a symbol of excellence and superiority. Conspicuous consumption, a term first introduced by economist and sociologist Thorstein Veblen in *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899), refers to the act of buying

luxury goods to signal wealth and social status Since Veblen's time, this concept has been frequently studied in the literature, with research exploring consumer status (O'cass & McEwen, 2004; Mayasari et al., 2022), status goods as commodities (Sivanathan & Pettit, 2010), different types of scarcity signals (Gierl & Huettel, 2010), cross-cultural analysis of consumers for branded fashion accessories (Souiden, M'Saad, & Pons, 2011), status consumption of handbags (Grotts & Widner Johnson, 2013), peer effects (Roth, 2015), the role of Facebook usage, envy, and narcissism (Taylor & Strutton, 2016), personality, income, and compensatory consumption (Landis & Gladstone, 2017), happiness and consumption (H. Wang, Cheng, & Smyth, 2019), ecotourism and environmental values (Beall, Boley, Landon, & Woosnam, 2021), the main effects of grandiose and vulnerable narcissism (Neave, Tzemou, & Fastoso, 2020), peer-group inequality (Harriger-Lin, Khanna, & Pape, 2020), and the relationship between social class and social self-esteem (Oh, 2021).

One of the factors affecting conspicuous consumption is gender (Akin, 2021). It is known that men and women engage in consumption behavior for different reasons. For example, women shop for emotional reasons, while men shop for rational reasons (Tarka, Kukar-Kinney, & Harnish, 2022). It is widely acknowledged that men and women have distinct approaches to processing messages. These variances in message processing have been investigated from multiple perspectives, including biological, sociological, and behavioral differences (Cleveland, Babin, Laroche, Ward, & Bergeron, 2003; Edwards & La Ferle, 2009). While men receive and process the direct primary message of an advertisement, women are not satisfied with the initial message. Instead, they seek out multiple clues within the message, extract connotations, and provide more comprehensive data for information processing. Additionally, women tend to evaluate messages as more emotional than men. When it comes to advertising, women tend to remember the details of advertisements more vividly and engage more deeply with the messages. Simultaneously, women are more sensitive to visual details in advertisements and gravitate toward specific message content rather than general themes (Deneçli, 2015). In the literature review, the examination of gender and celebrity endorsement strategies extends to the perception of negative information (Edwards & La Ferle, 2009), intercultural contexts (Huang, 2021), perceived qualities, and consumer characteristics (Tzoumaka, Tsiotsou, & Siomkos, 2016), as well as strength, uniqueness, and favourability in brand association (Saini & Parayitam, 2020).

While reviewing the literature, it becomes apparent that the use of celebrities in advertising has been explored in the context of materialism (Agnihotri & Bhattacharya, 2021; Ahmed, Khattak, Iqbal, Farooq, & Iqbal, 2014; Chan & Prendergast, 2008; İnce, Bozyigit, & Tor Kadioglu, 2019), luxury consumption (Cuomo, Foroudi, Tortora, Hussain, & Melewar, 2019; Liu, Parganas, Chadwick, Anagnostopoulos, & Parganas, 2016; Shaari,

Hamid & Mabkhot, 2022; Yu & Hu, 2020) and gender (Deneçli, 2015; İsler, 2016). However, very few studies have examined the relationship between conspicuous consumption and celebrity endorsement (Sabir, Naeem, & Amin, 2016), and no study exploring the relationship between the sub-dimensions of celebrity endorsement and conspicuous consumption has been identified. As male and female consumers are known to engage in consumption behavior for different purposes, this study aims to investigate the impact of celebrity endorsement in advertisements on conspicuous consumption tendencies within the context of gender. The significance of this study for the industry is highlighted in the concluding section, which provides essential suggestions to assist industry practitioners.

Literature Review

Consumers' Attitudes Toward Celebrity Endorsements in Branding

Celebrities possess certain traits or characteristics that are widely recognized and coveted by the public, such as charm, attractiveness, and sometimes reliability (Gupta & Kishore, 2015). The use of celebrities in advertising is crucial for drawing attention to brands, imparting important cues about brand personality, and establishing a presence in the consumer's subconscious mind, ultimately convincing potential customers.

The utilization of celebrities in advertisements is grounded in the source credibility model. According to this model, the effectiveness of the message delivered by an endorser depends on consumers' perceptions of the brand advocate's expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness (Ohanian, 1990; Wang & Scheinbaum, 2018). If consumers perceive the celebrity as trustworthy, the celebrity featured in advertisements can significantly influence and alter the consumer's attitude (Ohanian, 1990). Expertise, in this context, refers to a person having received training related to a job or having a deep interest and substantial knowledge in a specific subject. As a person's expertise increases, the likelihood of consumers following their recommendations also increases (Ohanian, 1990). Wang and Scheinbaum (2018) further define expertise as the degree of understanding, skill, and knowledge attributed to the celebrity, emphasizing its positive impact on both brand attitude and purchase intention.

Attractiveness, on the other hand, is determined by how familiar, similar, and likable someone is (Wang and Scheinbaum, 2018). Ohanian (1990) highlights the importance of physical attractiveness in advertising, emphasizing that attractive celebrities are more endearing and can generate a positive attitude change in consumers toward the products they endorse. In his study, Ohanian (1990) measures the sub-factors of attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise using words such as: Attractiveness: unattractive—attrac-

tive, not classy—classy, ugly—beautiful, plain—elegant, not sexy—sexy; Trustworthiness: undependable—dependable, dishonest—honest, unreliable—reliable, insincere—sincere, untrustworthy—trustworthy; Expertise: not an expert—expert, inexperienced—experienced, unknowledgeable—knowledgeable, unqualified—qualified, unskilled-skilled. Several studies have consistently shown that celebrities enhance the persuasive power of advertising due to their generally favorable public image. The significance of celebrity endorsement has been widely discussed in the literature, and the implications of this practice for the industry are notable. For instance, Lord and Putrevu (2009) investigate the relationship between the dimensions of celebrity credibility (attractiveness, expertise, reliability) and consumer motivation. Awobamise and Jarrar (2018) find that what primarily captures customer attention is the quality of the product rather than the celebrity themselves.

“In recent years, the use of famous personalities in commercials and promotional videos has become increasingly popular, not only in Turkey but also globally. Some businesses go beyond simply featuring celebrities in advertisements, making them the face of their brand. Consumers have pre-existing perceptions of each celebrity, and these perceptions are transferred to the brand featured in the advertisement, creating a linkage between the celebrity and the brand (Biswas, Hussain, & O’Donnell, 2009). Gender differences in attitudes toward celebrities have been observed among consumers. For instance, research conducted by Klaus and Bailey (2008) reveals that female consumers exhibit a more favorable attitude toward celebrity endorsements compared to men, and they also prefer to see female celebrities in advertisements (Chan, Leung Ng, & Luk, 2013). The theory of celebrity endorsement can be linked to several other theories, such as social adaptation theory, balance theory, attribution theory, associative learning theory, as well as the elaboration likelihood model of persuasion and social influence theory (Petty, 2018).

Although most of them are about the attractiveness of celebrities, there have been many studies in the field of celebrity endorsement in advertising and the impact of physically attractive models’ immediate and delayed advertising effects on expertise and attractiveness (Eisend & Langner, 2010), celebrity and non-celebrity endorsement effectiveness (Napi, 2015), endorser credibility and social networking sites (Samat, Ramlee, Abu Bakar, Annual, & Rasid, 2016), trustworthiness, attractiveness and expertise (S. W. Wang & Scheinbaum, 2017). Extensive research has been conducted on celebrity endorsement in advertising over time, encompassing various aspects such as expertise (Biswas et al., 2009), brand recall (Palmieri, 2013), brand personality (Dissanayake & Weerasiri, 2017), business owners as endorsers (Maronick, 2006), avatars (Holzwarth, Janiszewski, & Neumann, 2006), micro-celebrities (Korotina & Jargalsaikhan, 2016), and product endorsements (Mikuláš & Shelton, 2021). These studies have examined their contributions

to advertising effectiveness and their impacts on consumers' attitudes and behaviors.

Recent research has emphasized the significant influence of celebrity endorsement on consumer attitudes. Min et al. (2019) highlight the establishment of a relationship between the celebrity and the brand featured in the advertisement. They suggested that negative information about the celebrity may have an adverse impact on the endorsed brand. Moreover, this research indicated that celebrity-brand congruence and reputation significantly affect consumers' purchasing intentions and their attitudes toward the brand or product. Previous studies have also demonstrated that consumer purchase intention can be influenced by the credibility of celebrity endorsers (Goldsmith et al., 2000; Mansour & Diab, 2016). Another study finds that expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness are important in buying intention (Priyankara, Weerasiri, Dissanayaka, & Jinadasa, 2017). Erdogan et al. (2001) define credibility as "honesty and trustworthiness of the celebrity. Research has shown a positive correlation between the level of trustworthiness and consumers' attention (Wei & Wu, 2013). Additionally, Dean (1999) state that brand differentiation is at the core of the brand-building process, as consumers perceive the product as distinct from competing brands through perceived product uniqueness. Celebrity endorsements play a vital role in shaping this perception of product uniqueness.

Conspicuous Consumption

The concept of conspicuous consumption has been a central theme in Veblen's theory of the leisure class, which posits that mere possession of power and wealth is insufficient for earning people's respect. Instead, Veblen argues that demonstrating one's status is of utmost importance. Consumers strive to attain social recognition and status by using particularly expensive and conspicuous products. Conspicuous consumption can be defined as the intentional purchase, possession, and use of products and services that convey a distinctive self-image to others, often associated with high economic and cultural value. While conspicuous consumption is considered an intrinsic trait that motivates individuals to engage in extravagant forms of consumption to showcase their uniqueness through product selection and use, it's not merely about developing or influencing specific product preferences in a given situation. Rather, it's a deeper, individual variable that influences a consumer's purchasing decisions (Chaudhuri et al., 2011).

Research has revealed that conspicuous consumption is a means through which individuals seek social recognition, visibility, and the attainment of a specific social status (Tor Kadioglu & Yagci, 2021). Conspicuous consumption is mainly driven by psychological and sociological factors (O'cass & McEwen, 2004). Baudrillard argues that communication devices, such as advertising and public relations, serve to reward and satisfy while

simultaneously seducing and covertly tempting (Baudrillard, 1998). Advertisements often suggest that by using a particular product in a pretentious manner, individuals can ascend the social hierarchy and attain a respected status in society.

Within the literature, variables associated with conspicuous consumption include peer influence (Roth, 2015), peer influence with social media communication (H. Wang et al., 2019), jealousy and self-admiration (Taylor & Strutton, 2016), social media usage intensity, celebrity endorsement and materialism (Sabir et al., 2016), social exclusion and self-perception (Liang, He, Chang, Dong, & Zhu, 2018), happiness, jealousy and demographic variables (Wang et al., 2019), social cohesion, lifestyle, self-expression and brand awareness (Assimos, Pinto, Leite, & Andrade, 2019), income and investment preferences, travel abroad by plane, participation in golf, entrance to art museums, and electronic purchases (Landis & Gladstone, 2017). When studies on conspicuous consumption are examined, there are findings indicating that conspicuous goods carry different message signals depending on the gender of the user (Griskevicius et al., 2007; Segal & Podoshen, 2013; Sundie et al., 2011; Tor Kadioglu & Yagci, 2021; Y. Wang & Griskevicius, 2014). The conspicuous consumption of the consumer influenced by a celebrity reflects several factors such as lifestyle, attitude, appearance, personality, and consumption practices that depend on the consumer's relationship with the celebrity (Sabir et al., 2016).

Chaudhuri et al. (2011) recognize the significance of conspicuous consumption but point to issues with measurement scales. Therefore, they developed a new scale for this purpose. In this study, the authors utilized their scale, which includes terms such as opulence, exoticism, first-class products, originality, sophistication, high-priced brands, and luxury in its statements.

Method

In this section of the study, the authors will outline the research model, describe the sample, detail the data collection and analysis methods, and provide information on validity and reliability.

Research Model and Hypotheses



Figure 1. Research Model

The following hypotheses were created by the above model.

- H1:** The attractiveness of celebrity endorsement in advertisements affects women's conspicuous consumption.
- H2:** The trustworthiness of the celebrity endorsement in advertisements affects women's conspicuous consumption.
- H3:** The expertise of celebrity endorsement in advertisements affects women's conspicuous consumption.
- H4:** The attractiveness of celebrity endorsement in advertisements affects men's conspicuous consumption.
- H5:** The trustworthiness of celebrity endorsement in advertisements has a positive impact on men's conspicuous consumption.
- H6:** The expertise of celebrity endorsement in advertisements has a positive impact on men's conspicuous consumption.

In developing the research model and hypotheses depicted in Figure 1, the authors first conducted a review of studies that explore the relationship between celebrity endorsements in advertising and conspicuous consumption. However, it became evident that there are very few studies on this specific topic. In this study, which aims to contribute to the literature in this sense, celebrity endorsement was examined in three sub-dimensions. Ohanian (1990), who developed the celebrity endorsement scale, stated that this scale has three sub-dimensions: expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. Many studies in the literature (Sertoğlu et al., 2014; Gupta et al., 2015; Ince et al., 2019; Deshbhag and Mohan, 2020; Sari et al., 2021) have examined celebrity endorsement in the context of three sub-dimensions. However, no studies in the literature were found that examines the relationship between celebrity use and conspicuous consumption in the context of these three sub-factors. In this context, to support the hypotheses, in addition to the studies on conspicuous consumption, the authors also examined the use of celebrities in advertisements due to the known connection between conspicuous consumption and materialism and luxury consumption, and studies focusing on the relationship between materialism and luxury consumption. For example in their 2023 study, Ghade and Hessa explored the impact of celebrity endorsements on the purchasing habits of young Saudi Arabians. The study found that clothing, perfumes, cosmetics, and jewelry were the most commonly purchased products. Celebrities often employ indirect marketing methods to promote their products, and young people are drawn to celebrities due to their popularity and large social media followings. This influence can be seen in the way young people engage in conspicuous consumption, as they strive to purchase and display products that their friends do not have, leading to a sense of exclusivity and privilege. Sabir et al. (2016), con-

ducted a study that examined the relationship between celebrity culture and conspicuous consumption. They found that consumers actively use brands to construct their identities, are influenced by celebrities they perceive as close to them, and that consumer culture positively affects conspicuous consumption. Kose and Cakir (2016), in their analysis of magazine advertisements for the Louis Vuitton brand, noted that celebrities are frequently featured in these advertisements. They found that the social and physical attractiveness, as well as the credibility of famous models and actresses, are closely associated with the LV brand. Furthermore, they observed that the sense of status, the high value, the perception of exclusivity and quality, and the central role of hedonism in consumption, which aims to impress consumers, are reinforced by celebrity endorsement strategies in advertising. Liu et al. (2016) determined that the credibility and attractiveness of sports celebrities featured in advertisements for luxury brands positively influence the purchasing behavior of consumers. In his study, Dirsehan (2016) used a macromarketing approach to segment countries according to the basic luxury consumption criteria based on the literature review. These criteria include population, GDP, GINI coefficient, total female labor force, and cultural dimensions. These indicators are listed for a total of 60 countries and multidimensional scaling analysis (MDS) is conducted to see whether some countries form groups. In their study, Hani, Marwan, and Andre (2018) stated that the attractiveness of a celebrity endorser makes the advertisement more memorable in the jewelry sector. They also found that the credibility of the celebrity endorser has a positive impact on consumers' ad recall and purchase intention. Cuomo et al. (2019) found that when consumers admire and trust a celebrity, their perceptions of a particular brand are positively influenced by the celebrity-endorsed advertisement. They observed that the use of celebrities in advertising positively affects consumers' attitudes toward luxury brands and their purchase intentions.

Hypotheses were created separately for male and female consumers. Because there are studies in the literature showing that celebrity influence is perceived differently by male and female consumers. For example in her study analyzing the gender effect on the perception of celebrity endorsement, Lazar (2020) stated that women think that the product introduced by a famous person will give them a better image and find that product to be of higher quality, whereas men are more realistic than women and a product promoted by a celebrity is definitely of higher quality. It has been found that they do not believe that the product provides a better image and that they do not buy the products just because they are advertised by a charismatic, well-known person. Klaus and Bailey (2008) also stated that male and female consumers react differently to the use of celebrities in advertisements and that female consumers approach the use of celebrities in advertisements more positively than male consumers. Ahmed et al. (2014) determined that the use of celebrities

in advertisements positively affects materialism. Furthermore, İslser (2016) highlighted the differential effects of using celebrities in advertisements on male and female consumers. He noted that the appearance of a famous person in jeans and shampoo advertisements increases women's purchasing behavior, while the presence of a famous person in airline advertisements boosts men's purchasing behavior. Just as there are differences in responses to celebrity endorsements in advertisements, there are also distinctions between men and women in terms of conspicuous consumption. Akin (2021) emphasized that women tend to exhibit a greater tendency toward conspicuous consumption compared to men. Therefore, the research hypotheses were developed separately for men and women, as outlined in Table 5.

Research Sample and Data Collection Method

The research's target population comprises Gen-Y and Gen-Z consumers aged 18 and over living in Turkey. It's important to note that there is some variability in defining the birth years for Gen-Y and Gen-Z in the literature. Some researchers, like Susanthi et al. (2023) and Thariq (2023), consider Gen-Y to encompass those born between 1981 and 1999, while others, such as Kotler & Armstrong (2004) and Ma & Niehm (2006), suggest a range of 1977 to 1994. For Gen-Z, some authors, including Barhate & Dirani (2022) and Seemiller & Grace (2017), use a birth range of 1995-2010, while others, like Bennett et al. (2022) and Jones, Jo, & Martin (2007), define Gen-Z as those born in 2000 and later. In this study, the authors have defined Gen-Y as those born between 1981 and 1999 and Gen-Z as those born in 2000 and later.

The choice of Gen-Y and Gen-Z consumers as the research sample is justified for several reasons. Firstly, both Gen-Y and Gen-Z are known for being highly engaged with advertising, possessing a keen fashion and advertising awareness, and closely following popular culture (Lissitsa & Kol, 2016; Williams & Page, 2011). İnce et al. (2019) noted that Gen-Y consumers tend to adopt a consumption-oriented lifestyle, are more materialistic than other generations, and pay close attention to the preferences of celebrities whom they see as role models. Ellison, Padgett, and Fowler (2017) emphasized that Gen-Z consumers are significantly influenced by celebrity endorsements when making purchasing decisions, and even the trustworthiness of the celebrity endorser impacts Gen-Z's product preferences. For data collection, an online questionnaire was employed due to pandemic restrictions that made face-to-face surveys impractical. The questionnaire link was shared across various social media platforms, targeting Turkish consumers who fell within the Gen-Y and Gen-Z categories (aged 18 and over). Purposive sampling was employed, focusing on respondents who were likely to provide relevant and valuable information, in

line with Campbell et al.'s (2020) recommendation. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: the first part contained the scale items for the variables under investigation, and the second part featured demographic questions. In this study, the authors utilized Ohanian's (1990) 14-item celebrity approval scale, with one statement removed due to redundancy during the Turkish pretest. Additionally, the authors incorporated the 11-item conspicuous consumption scale developed by Chaudhuri, Mazumdar, and Ghoshal (2011). The scale items can be found at the end of this article for reference. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with the items using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaires, originally in English, were translated into Turkish by two researchers proficient in English and specialized in marketing. A pretest was conducted, and data collection took place between June 1st and July 5th, 2021, resulting in a total of 421 completed questionnaires. Of these, 18 were excluded from the analysis due to incorrect or incomplete responses.

Data Analysis Method of the Study

Before analyzing the research data, the normality distributions of the data were assessed. Kolmogorov-Smirnov is 0.00 for all variables. Attractiveness: skewness -0.765, kurtosis -0.314; Trustworthiness: skewness -1.619, kurtosis -2.185; Expertise: skewness -1.205, kurtosis -0.567; Conspicuous Consumption: skewness is -0.341, kurtosis is -0.834. In evaluating skewness and kurtosis, Orcan (2020) suggests that absolute skewness and kurtosis values less than 1.0 indicate slight non-normality, values between 1.0 and about 2.3 suggest moderate non-normality. Furthermore, some researchers accept variables as suitable for the normality assumption if skewness and kurtosis coefficients fall within the range of ± 2 , while others consider values within the range of ± 3 as indicative of normality (Sipahi and Kartal, 2018: 114). Given the available literature on kurtosis and skewness, along with the sufficiently large sample size, it was determined that the data had a normal distribution, allowing for the use of parametric analysis methods. The analysis began with descriptive statistics and proceeded to confirmatory factor analysis for each scale. Subsequently, structural equation modeling (SEM) was conducted using the AMOS program. The hypotheses were tested separately for male and female participants.

Validity and Reliability of the Study

To ensure the content and appearance validity of the study, the questionnaire was initially reviewed by two experts in the field, and their feedback led to several modifications. Following this, a pretest was administered to 40 participants, and the survey was further refined based on their feedback. Finally, factor analysis was conducted to verify the struc-

tural validity.

The reliability of the scale was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The scale demonstrated a reliability of 0.876 before conducting the confirmatory factor analysis and a reliability of 0.861 after the analysis. When the scale was randomly divided into two subsets, the coefficients were found to be 0.866 and 0.820, respectively. Additionally, the reliability of each sub-factor exceeded 0.864. The values of AVE (Average Variance Extracted) and CR (Composite Reliability) also fell within the desired range. Therefore, it can be concluded that the study provides satisfactory validity and reliability conditions.

Result

Analysis and Discussion

This chapter presents several modifications made to the research scales, demographic information, and results of the measurement model.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Gender	n	%	Generation	n	%
Women	180	44.7	Z	147	36.5
Men	223	55.3	Y	256	63.5
Total	403	100	Total	403	100
Monthly Personal Income (Turkish Lira = TRY)	n	%	Education Status	n	%
TRY 2,000 and below	104	25.8	Associate degree Undergraduate Postgraduate Total	137	34.0
TRY 2,101-4000	128	31.8			
TRY 4,001-6,000	80	19.9			
TRY 6,001-8,000	39	9.7			
TRY 8,001-1,0000	22	5.5			
TRY 10,001-12,000	12	3.0			
TRY 12,001 and above	18	4.5			
Total	403	100	Total	403	100

The research sample includes both Gen-Y and Gen-Z consumers. While the definitions of these generations can vary, this study considered those born between 1981 and 1999 as Gen-Y and those born in 2000 and later as Gen-Z. Table 4 provides an overview of the sample demographics: 55.3% are male, 44.7% are female, 63.5% belong to Gen-Y, and 36.5% are part of Gen-Z. A majority of participants are undergraduates, and 31.8% have a monthly income between TRY 2,101 and TRY 4,000. Before analyzing the research model, the validity and reliability of the scales were evaluated. This assessment involved examining the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Cronbach's alpha, and Composite Re-

liability (CR) coefficients. As indicated in Table 2, the study utilized two primary scales comprising four sub-factors and a total of 25 statements.

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Table 2. Changes on the scale

Scales		Statements number	Statements out of scale
Celebrity Endorsement	Attractiveness	5	1
	Trustworthiness	4	---
	Expertise	5	1
Conspicuous Consumption		11	3

As a result of the analysis, some statements were removed from the sub-factors. This situation is also seen in other studies using these scales. For example, in the study of Deshbhag and Mohan (2020), as a result of the analysis, expertise was used as 5 expressions, and attractiveness and trustworthiness were used as 3 expressions. Sari et.al. (2021) removed one statement from the trustworthiness sub-factor in their study. AT2 statement from the dimension of attractiveness (it is important for me that the celebrity is stylish and classy), EX2 (It is important to me that the celebrity is experienced for the promoted product), CC1 (When I buy a high-priced brand, it tells people around me something about me), CC4 (If I had the opportunity, I would like to hang a picture of a famous painter in my room.) and CC8 (I choose the product or brand that everyone will admire when creating my style) were excluded from the scale in line with the program's recommendation. The structural equation model was established with 20 statements, with three out of 25 statements being out of scale.

Table 3. Important values of scale expressions

Construct	Dimensions	Items	Factor Load	Cr. Alfa	CR	AVE	
Celebrity Endorsement (Ohanian, 1990)	ATTRACTIVENESS	AT1	0.706	0.864	0.870	0.63	
		AT3	0.840				
		AT4	0.901				
		AT5	0.707				
		TR1	0.790				
	TRUSTWORTHINESS	TR2	0.842	0.920	0.912	0.73	
		TR3	0.932				
		TR4	0.840				
		EX1	0.861				
	EXPERTISE	EX3	0.868	0.908	0.911	0.72	
		EX4	0.934				
		EX5	0.724				
		CC2	0.619				
	Conspicuous Consumption (Chaudhuri, Mazumdar, Ghoshal, 2011)	CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION	CC3	0.585	0.894	0.89	0.52
			CC5	0.756			
CC6			0.777				
CC7			0.759				
CC9			0.694				
CC10			0.757				
CC11			0.804				

In Table 3, the authors present the factor loadings, Composite Reliability (CR), Cronbach's Alpha, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for the scale items. To assess convergent validity, it is recommended that the AVE exceeds 0.5, while factor loadings, alpha coefficients, and CR values should be at or above 0.70 (Hair, 2010; Kizgin, Jamal, Dey, & Rana, 2018). From the table, the authors observe that factor loadings range from 0.585 to 0.934, CR coefficients for the sub-factors range from 0.87 to 0.91, and Cronbach's alpha coefficients fall within the range of 0.864 to 0.920. Additionally, AVE values range from 0.52 to 0.73. Upon reviewing the CR, AVE, and Cronbach Alpha values, it is evident that the model's validity and reliability meet the recommended standards.

Table 4. The goodness of fit values of the scales

Scales	X ²	df	X ² /df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
Celebrity Endorsement	168.783	50	3.376	0.934	0.966	0.077
Conspicuous Consumption	55.015	20	2.751	0.968	0.977	0.066
Good Fit Values *			≤3	≥0.90	≥0.97	≤0.05
Acceptable Fit Values *			≤4-5	0.89-0.85	≥0.90	≤0.08

According to Table 4, the scales have acceptable fit values. In addition to confirmatory factor analysis, exploratory factor analysis was also conducted. The following values were obtained from the factor analysis total variance explained: 70.497%, KMO: 88.6%; Bartlett’s test of sphericity: X2: 5292.112, s.d.: 190, $p < 0.0001$. The values derived from both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses are in alignment.

The fitness indices and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) ($=0.031$) indicate a good fit for the model (RMSEA: 0.057; CFI: 0.923; GFI: 0.850; X2/df: 2.318).

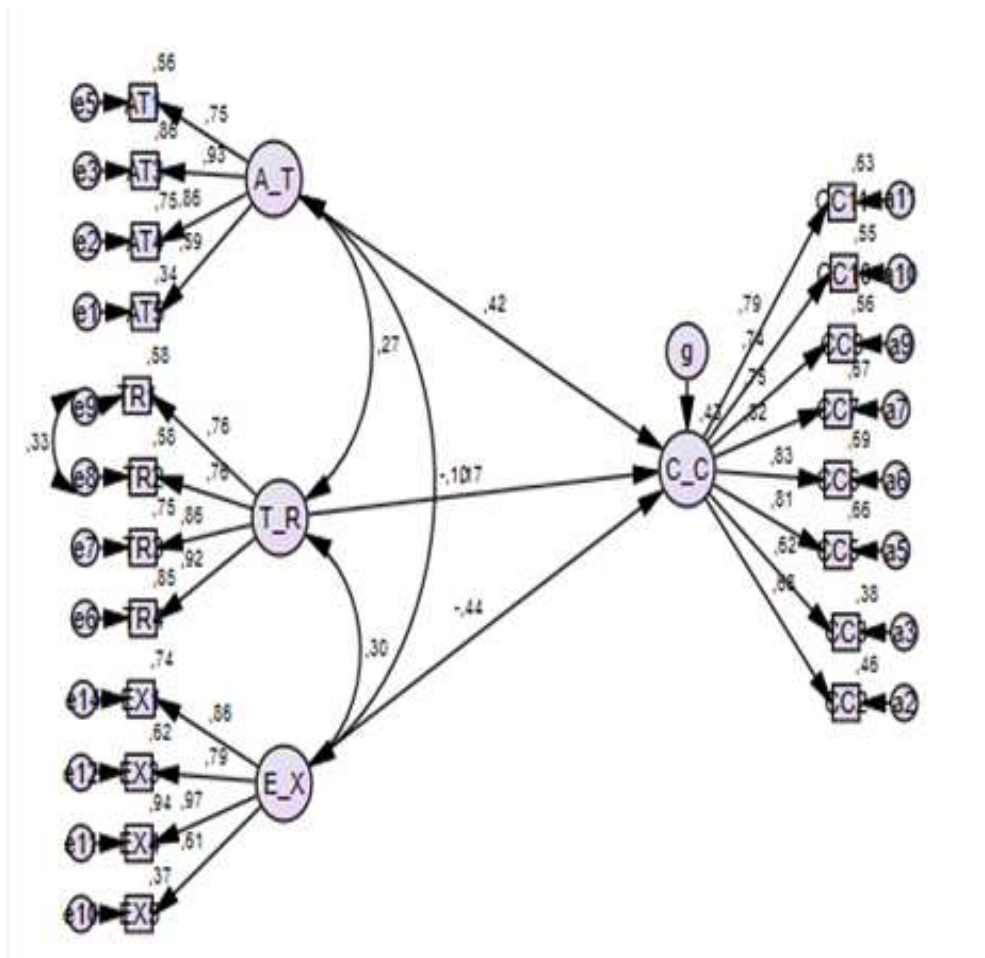


Figure 2. Model for Women

According to Figure 2, the attractiveness of the celebrity ($\beta_1 = 0.419$; $p < 0.05$) and the credibility of the celebrity ($\beta_1 = 0.165$; $p < 0.05$) used in advertisements has a positive effect on conspicuous consumption, while the celebrity’s expertise has negative effect ($\beta_1 = -0.444$; $p < 0.05$) for female consumers. These effects have also been examined for male consumers.

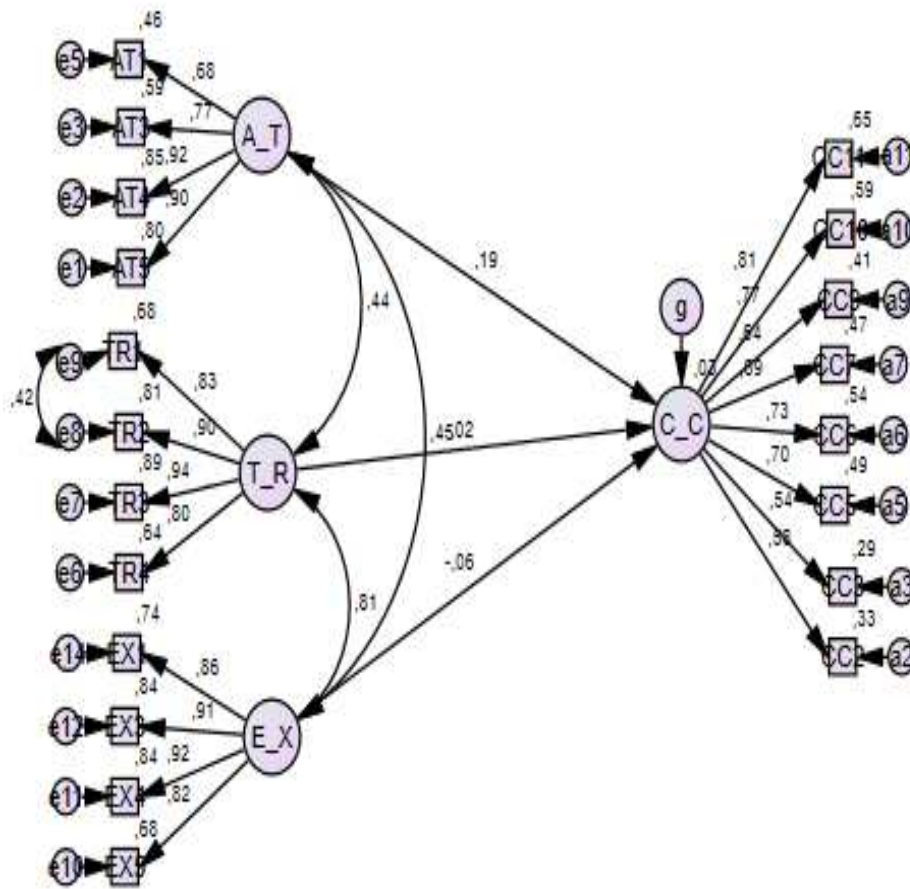


Figure 3. Model for Men

Figure 3 illustrates that only the attractiveness of the celebrity ($\beta_1=0.193$; $p<0.05$) used in the advertisement has a significant positive impact on the conspicuous consumption of male consumers. However, the credibility or expertise of the celebrity and the celebrity’s expertise do not exert any effect on the conspicuous consumption of male consumers. The hypotheses established in this study were evaluated and summarized in Table 5; of the six hypotheses of the study, four were accepted and two were rejected.

Table 5. Results of Hypothesis

H1: The attractiveness of celebrity endorsement in advertisements affects women’s conspicuous consumption	Accepted
H2: The trustworthiness of the celebrity endorsement in advertisements affects women’s conspicuous consumption	Accepted
H3: The expertise of celebrity endorsement in advertisements affects women’s conspicuous consumption	Accepted

H4: The attractiveness of celebrity endorsement in advertisements affects men's conspicuous consumption	Accepted
H5: The trustworthiness of celebrity endorsement in advertisements has a positive impact on men's conspicuous consumption	Rejected
H6: The expertise of celebrity endorsement in advertisements has a positive impact on men's conspicuous consumption	Rejected

Conclusion and Discussion

In today's dynamic consumer landscape, where the focus has evolved beyond mere functionality toward products that cater to both physiological and psychological needs, one can confidently assert that human behavior is not solely driven by rational motives (Aksu, 2023). Consumption has transcended its traditional role as a means to an end, becoming an end in itself. Products have transformed into powerful tools for self-expression, allowing individuals to convey nuanced information about their identities. Nowhere is this transformation more evident than in the realm of conspicuous consumption, where individuals wield their purchases as vehicles for projecting social status and personal identity. This phenomenon is perhaps most striking among young consumers, profoundly influenced by the celebrities they admire. Younger generations readily adopt the behavior and style of these celebrities in their pursuit of external admiration. This has led businesses to strategically employ celebrities in their advertising campaigns, recognizing their potent sway over consumer choices. While celebrity attractiveness is undeniably an important factor in celebrity selection, trustworthiness and expertise play equally pivotal roles, especially in the context of specific products. There is research (Ellison et al., 2017; İnce et al., 2019; İslar, 2016; Klaus & Bailey, 2008) that has consistently highlighted that the influence of celebrities in advertisements can significantly vary based on the age and gender of the target audience. This study's primary goal is to delve into the intricacies of how celebrity endorsements impact conspicuous consumption while scrutinizing gender-based differences.

The research sample predominantly comprises female consumers, primarily representing Gen-Y. Their monthly incomes mostly range between 2101-4000 TL, a profile that underscores the salience of reliability, expertise, and attractiveness as dimensions for evaluating the use of celebrities in advertisements. These findings harmonize with prior studies. For instance, İnce et al. (2019) emphasized the primacy of reliability among Gen-Y consumers. The research outcome offers compelling evidence that the attractiveness of celebrities featured in advertisements positively influences conspicuous consumption among both male and female consumers. This implies that an appealing celebrity

in an advertisement serves as a potent catalyst, compelling consumers to acquire showy products that act as vehicles for showcasing various facets of their identities. Attractiveness and conspicuous consumption converge in their core aim: to elicit admiration and attention, effectively establishing the rationale for celebrity endorsements in advertisements.

Nonetheless, the impact on male consumers is more nuanced, where only attractiveness significantly influences conspicuous consumption. In contrast, among female consumers, trustworthiness emerges as an additional driver of conspicuous consumption, while expertise takes on an unexpected role. Intriguingly, expertise emerges as a dampener on conspicuous consumption among female consumers. When the celebrity endorsing the product possesses expertise in the advertised domain, participants tend to adopt more utilitarian purchasing decisions, grounded in pragmatism. These celebrities serve as purveyors of valuable information about the product, prompting consumers to make rational buying choices. Consequently, conspicuous consumption, driven primarily by emotions, takes a backseat in such scenarios. These findings align with earlier studies in the field, mirroring the results of Ince et al. (2019), where attractiveness had a positive impact and expertise had a negative impact on materialist consumption due to celebrity endorsements in advertisements. The study by Liu et al. (2016) resonated with this study's findings, highlighting the significance of attractiveness and trustworthiness. Similar effects were observed in the studies of Hani et al. (2018) and Cuomo et al. (2019), emphasizing the positive influence of trustworthiness on luxury consumption. The gender-specific findings affirm the studies of Klaus and Bailey (2008), Erkal (2013), and Akin (2021), where women responded more positively to advertisements with celebrities. Furthermore, the observation that female consumers exhibit a more pronounced response to celebrity endorsements in conspicuous consumption than their male counterparts dovetails with the findings of Klaus and Bailey (2008), Erkal (2013), and Akin (2021).

Practical Implications

The implications of this research resonate deeply with both businesses and consumers, offering valuable insights. Modern consumers, particularly the younger generations, are drawn into unnecessary consumption in their pursuit of social status projection through their purchases. This form of consumption fosters conspicuous consumption, a phenomenon that is widely criticized for promoting excessive and ostentatious spending.

However, this study introduces an intriguing dimension by revealing that featuring specialized celebrities in advertisements can mitigate conspicuous consumption among female consumers. For businesses considering the use of celebrities in advertising, espe-

cially for utilitarian products, highlighting the expertise of the chosen celebrity presents an opportunity. For instance, a cosmetic company could feature a makeup artist who can provide informed insights into the product's benefits. This approach, which leverages the expertise of celebrities in advertisements, can potentially boost sales, particularly among businesses targeting women, by providing useful information that encourages informed purchasing decisions and curbs unnecessary and pretentious consumption.

The research findings underscore that celebrity attractiveness is a potent driver of conspicuous consumption among both male and female consumers. However, it's noteworthy that trustworthiness is a factor that predominantly influences female consumers. This brings attention to the critique of objectification in both genders through conspicuous consumption. Businesses in sectors such as clothing, perfumes, or luxury goods may opt to emphasize celebrity attractiveness in their advertisements, capitalizing on the allure of these celebrities to capture consumer attention.

In contrast, trustworthy celebrities can be employed to promote brands that require consumer trust, like cars or hotels, leveraging consumers' confidence in these celebrities to favor the respective brands. However, it's crucial to recognize that sustained indulgence in conspicuous consumption has detrimental consequences for both society and the economy. Consequently, when selecting celebrities for advertisements, it is advisable to consider their expertise to prevent the exacerbation of conspicuous consumption, an unsustainable pattern of expenditure.

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical implications of this study transcend its immediate findings. They illuminate the intricate interplay between celebrity endorsements, consumer behavior, and conspicuous consumption. This research underscores the modern shift in consumer motivations, which has expanded to encompass not just functional attributes but psychological dimensions. It highlights the inherently complex and non-rational nature of consumption behaviors (Aksu, 2023), positioning consumption as a conduit for self-expression and social signaling. This shift underscores the concept of conspicuous consumption, where products assume symbolic roles as markers of social status, revealing the powerful role of consumption as a means of self-expression. The study further illustrates how celebrities, as influential figures, significantly mold the consumption patterns of younger generations. Celebrities trigger the emulation of behaviors and appearances, thereby influencing consumer choices and purchase intentions. Consequently, businesses strategically use celebrities in advertisements to capitalize on these dynamics and effectively capture the attention of potential consumers.

Limitations

It is imperative to acknowledge the inherent limitations of this study. The research sample predominantly represents the Y and Z generations, potentially constraining the generalizability of the findings. To enhance the applicability of this research, future investigations should incorporate a broader age spectrum, enabling robust comparisons across generational cohorts. Furthermore, the exclusive reliance on questionnaire-based data collection, while insightful, may have limitations in providing in-depth insights. To address this constraint, future research endeavors could integrate qualitative methodologies, such as focus group interviews or in-depth interviews enriched with 5W 1H questioning. This methodological diversification would unearth the intricate nuances underpinning the relationship between celebrity endorsements and conspicuous consumption, enriching our understanding of this complex phenomenon.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 Celebrity Endorsement Scale

APPENDIX Source-Credibility Scale	
Attractiveness	
Attractive—Unattractive	
Classy—Not Classy	
Beautiful—Ugly	
Elegant—Plain	
Sexy—Not sexy	
Trustworthiness	
Dependable—Undependable	
Honest—Dishonest	
Reliable—Unreliable	
Sincere—Insincere	
Trustworthy—Untrustworthy	
Expertise	
Expert—Not an expert	
Experienced—Inexperienced	
Knowledgeable—Unknowledgeable	
Qualified—Unqualified	
Skilled—Unskilled	

(Ohanian 1990:50)

Appendix 2 Conspicuous Consumption Scale

1. It says something to people around me when I buy a high priced brand	0.73
2. I buy some products because I want to show others that I am wealthy	0.56
3. I would be a member in a businessmen's posh club	0.63
4. Given a chance, I would hang a Hussain painting in drawing my room	0.73
5. I would buy an interesting and uncommon version of a product otherwise available with a plain design, to show others that I have an original taste	0.81
6. Others wish they could match my eyes for beauty and taste	0.72
7. By choosing a product having an exotic look and design, I show my friends that I am different	0.74
8. I choose products or brands to create my own style that everybody admires	0.72
9. I always buy top-of-the-line products	0.59
10. I often try to find a more interesting version of the run-of-the-mill products, because I want to show others that I enjoy being original	0.59
11. I show to others that I am sophisticated	0.55

(Chaudhuri et al 2011:220)