

# The Influence of Celebrity Endorsement on Purchase Intention of Smartwatches in Cambodia

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## Abstract

The objectives of the research are to investigate the relationships between celebrity endorsement, the attitude toward the advertisement, the attitude toward the brand, and purchase intention, to examine the effects of the influence of celebrity endorsement on the purchase intention of the Smartwatches in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and to develop a marketing strategy to influence the Cambodian consumer behavior.

The convenience sampling survey was used to collect the data from 233 respondents aged between 18 and 45 living in Phnom Penh, Cambodia by online Google Surveys. Multiple Regression Analysis was also used to analyze the relationships between variables in this research.

This study shows that celebrity credibility, celebrity attractiveness, and product match-up are found to have positive influences on both attitudes toward the brand (38.70%) and purchase intention (46.20%) because all factors are significant in each relationship. As a result, the credibility and attractiveness of the celebrity endorsers significantly and positively affect the brand attitude and the brand credibility, and the purchase intention of the endorsed product/brand. The trustworthiness of the celebrity also has a positive impact on the brand attitude. This study also finds that the expertise and trustworthiness of the celebrity endorsers strongly influence the endorsed product/brand. Therefore, the main focus of the attention will be on hiring a celebrity endorser who has the expertise and trustworthy looks when the celebrity endorsement is used as a marketing strategy.

**Keywords:** Celebrity Endorsement, Purchase Intention, Brand Attitude, Brand Credibility

## Introduction

A well-known, interesting method of marketing communications is an advertisement. In the world of intense competition for attracting customer attention and launching new products, advertisers are compelled to employ celebrities that easily catch the public's attention. Celebrities can make advertisements turn heads and stand out from the rest; therefore, it improves the ability to effectively convey the message in the communication process (Muda, Musa, & Putit, 2012). Moreover, endorsements by celebrities are found to easily conjure up a brand name (Friedman & Friedman, 1979; Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983). Lots of studies also reveal that celebrity endorsers positively have an influence on significant advertising effectiveness measures such as attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, and purchase intention (Atkin & Block, 1983; La Ferle & Choi, 2005; Petty,

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Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983). In order to get these advantages, companies willingly pay celebrities to endorse their brands in advertisements. For this research, the effects of the influence of celebrity endorsement on the purchase intention of smartwatches in Cambodia will be explored in order to determine the factors that impact Cambodian consumers' attitudes toward the purchase intention and develop a marketing strategy to influence their behavior.

### **Research Purposes/Objectives**

1. To understand the concept of celebrities by investigating the effect on attitudes toward the advertisement, the attitude toward the brand, and purchase intention.
2. To explore the effects of the influence of celebrity endorsement on the purchase intention of Smartwatches in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
3. To develop a marketing strategy to influence the conduct of Cambodian consumers of Smartwatches.

### **Literature Review**

In this study, the five variables: 1) celebrity credibility, 2) celebrity attractiveness, 3) product match-up, 4) attitude toward the brand, and 5) purchase intention is used to examine the effect of celebrity endorsement on customers' attitude and purchase intention. Accepted models in celebrity endorsement are celebrity credibility, celebrity attractiveness, and product match-up (Ermeç Sertoglu, Catli, & Korkmaz, 2014). Attitude toward the brand and purchase intention are two traditional elements to measure the effectiveness of advertising. This research will use these elements to represent the responses of consumers to advertisements endorsed by celebrities. Generally, former studies find that these elements are interrelated and have an impact on consumer purchase behavior. Therefore, they are considered helpful measures of advertising effectiveness. Shimp (1981) finds that the content of the advertisement has a strong impact on attitude toward the brand, purchase intention, and the action of buying. Because celebrities are hired by lots of companies to act for their brand, it is important that they know the aspects influencing the attitude of the consumers toward the advertisement endorsed by celebrities.

### **Celebrity Credibility (CC)**

Wang, Kao, and Ngamsiriudom (2017) define celebrity credibility as a promotional tool that normally examines trustworthiness and expertise, and the information from a credible source can influence the beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and behavior of the customers. It is commonly utilized to evaluate endorsement effectiveness (Taghipoorreynh & de Run, 2016). Specially, a credible endorser usually has a positive effect on consumers' perceptions (Goldsmith, Lafferty, & Newell, 2000). Till and Busler (2000) emphasize that expertise positively affects attitude and purchase intention. Trustworthiness symbolizes the dignity, believability, and honesty of an endorser (Erdogan, 1999). Metzger et al. (2003) mention that an endorser regarded as greatly trustworthy and expert will make customers indifferent to the advertisement message, which causes them to unconsciously and highly accept the delivered message. Noticeably, celebrities are considered highly trustworthy and expertise can strongly influence the behavior of their followers.

### **Celebrity Attractiveness (CA)**

Celebrity attractiveness is a form of advertising that puts emphasis on the physical features or characteristics of an endorser (Erdogan, 1999). Noticeably, the physical attractiveness of celebrities causes a high rate of acceptance of the advertisement. Previous

studies have found that there is a positive correlation between relationships among celebrity attractiveness, consumer attitude, and purchase intention (Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983; Erdogan, 1999). Celebrity attractiveness has a direct influence on endorsement effectiveness (McGuire, 1985). An attractive celebrity can positively effect consumers. Till and Busler (2000) also stress that attractive endorsers with positive attitudes are able to have a positive influence on customers' purchase intention. Celebrities who have wonderful physical features are likely to grab the attention of their followers.

### **Product Match-Up (PMU)**

Product match-up is construed as investigating the congruence between an endorser and the brand (Kamins, 1990). To achieve desired outcomes of advertisement, fitting together well between an endorser and the product is crucial. Till and Busler (1998) add that this congruence is able to bring about success in the marketing strategy. An important match-up relationship frequently results from a strong connection between an endorser and the product (Misra & Beatty, 1990); that is, celebrities as brand endorsers need to closely match the features of the product. Kamins and Gupta (1994) emphasize that a perfect match-up will arouse a positive attitude toward the endorsed brand. The primary objective to obtain the purchase intention of the consumers is a perfect match between an endorser and the brand (Shimp, 2000). The ideal match between celebrities and the product, therefore, will produce good, satisfactory advertising results.

### **Attitude toward the Brand (ABR)**

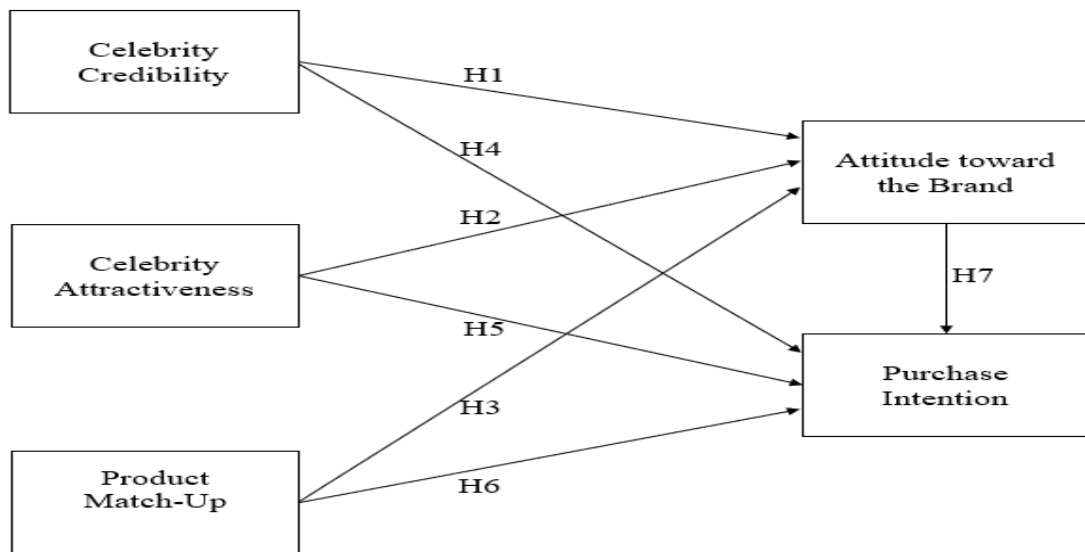
Attitude toward the brand is defined as a person's internal evaluation of the brand (Mitchell & Olson, 1981), and it is a relatively enduring, unidimensional summary evaluation of the brand's presumably energizing behavior (Spears & Singh, 2004). Furthermore, it is a tendency to reflect upon the positive or negative impact of a certain brand after customers have seen an advertisement for that brand (Phelps & Hoy, 1996). It is their emotional reaction associated with their feeling toward an advertisement of a product/brand, which makes their intention of purchasing the product/brand either positive, negative, favorable, or unfavorable. The customers' attitude toward the brand also has a positive influence on the purchase intention of that brand (Qurat & Mahira, 2012; Aycha & Kaouther, 2010; Mazzini et al., 2014).

### **Purchase Intention (PI)**

Purchase intention is the conscious plan of a person to try to purchase a brand (Spears & Singh, 2004). Morwitz (2014) construes purchase intention as a marketing instrument that is broadly used to evaluate the effectiveness of a marketing strategy in order to forecast sales and market share.

## Conceptual Framework and Research Hypotheses

The proposed conceptual framework of this study is in figure 1.



**Figure 1** Conceptual framework adapted from Lim et al., (2017) and Muda et al., (2014)

The hypotheses in this research are proposed as follows:

- H1: Celebrity credibility has a positive influence on attitude toward the brand.
- H2: Celebrity attractiveness has a positive influence on attitude toward the brand.
- H3: Product match-up has a positive influence on attitude toward the brand.
- H4: Celebrity credibility has a positive influence on purchase intention.
- H5: Celebrity attractiveness has a positive influence on purchase intention.
- H6: Product match-up has a positive influence on purchase intention.
- H7: Attitude toward the brand has a positive influence on purchase intention.

## Research Methodology

### Sampling and Data Collection

Non-probability sampling is used in this research in the form of convenience sampling. With this sampling technique, the samples will be chosen with subjective judgment instead of random selection. This study uses quantitative research to analyze the main determinants of smartwatch users in Phnom Penh, Cambodia by using survey questionnaires conducted on previous studies, modified for this study, and designed with a 5-point Likert scale from 1 to 5 (strongly disagree to strongly agree) to examine each variable and the convenience sampling survey. The Indexes of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) were used to evaluate the content validity of each item of the questionnaires rated either -1 (Irrelevant), 0 (Unclear), or +1 (Relevant) to evaluate how closely it met the objectives of the research. The items lower than 0.5 were either revised or left out, while those higher than or equal to 0.5 were reserved. The population of the study is all smartwatch users aged between 18 and 45 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The sample size for this study was calculated by Green (1991), and the minimum required sample was at least 82 respondents. However, the target sample size of this research was 150 respondents. The pilot test of 30 sample respondents was collected for primary data, and the first draft questionnaire was tested by Google Surveys to ensure the reliability and validity of the scale items. Based on the results of the pilot test, Cronbach's alpha values of the five variables were all over 0.80, so all of the scale items were

satisfactory. With a few minor adjustments, the final questionnaires were finally given out online by Google Surveys to 233 respondents in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, via E-mail, Facebook Messenger, and Telegram for the data collection. With the results of the final test, Cronbach's alpha values of each variable were above 0.80. Thus, all of the scale items were good and fulfilled the criteria, requirements, and standards of the reliability and validity of the collected data for this study.

## Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the demographic factors of the questionnaires. The reliability analysis was made to measure the internal consistency of all scale items in the questionnaire. Pearson Correlation Coefficient Analysis was used to measure the relationship between variables. Multiple Regression Analysis was employed to explain the relationships between a dependent variable and independent variables.

## Research Results

### Descriptive Statistics for the Demographic Factors

The data for this study were collected online from 233 anonymous questionnaire respondents aged between 18 and 45 living in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and the demographic profile of the is respondents in Table 1.

**Table 1** Demographic Profile of the Respondents

| <b>Personal Information</b> | <b>Respondent</b>         | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage (%)</b> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>               | Male                      | 78               | 33%                   |
|                             | Female                    | 114              | 49%                   |
|                             | Other                     | 41               | 18%                   |
|                             |                           | <b>233</b>       | <b>100%</b>           |
| <b>Age</b>                  | 18-26                     | 60               | 26%                   |
|                             | 27-35                     | 89               | 38%                   |
|                             | 36-45                     | 84               | 36%                   |
|                             |                           | <b>233</b>       | <b>100%</b>           |
| <b>Education</b>            | Below bachelor's degree   | 55               | 24%                   |
|                             | Bachelor's degree         | 122              | 52%                   |
|                             | Above bachelor's degree   | 56               | 24%                   |
|                             |                           | <b>233</b>       | <b>100%</b>           |
| <b>Occupation</b>           | Student                   | 3                | 1%                    |
|                             | Government Employee       | 34               | 15%                   |
|                             | Private Company Employee  | 41               | 18%                   |
|                             | Banker                    | 41               | 18%                   |
|                             | Non-organization Employee | 77               | 33%                   |
|                             | Freelance                 | 27               | 11%                   |
|                             | Business Owner            | 6                | 2%                    |
|                             | Home-stayer               | 4                | 2%                    |
|                             |                           | <b>233</b>       | <b>100%</b>           |

**Table 1** Demographic Profile of the Respondents (Con.)

| Personal Information  | Respondent    | Frequency  | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------|---------------|------------|----------------|
| <b>Monthly Salary</b> | Under USD180  | 2          | 1%             |
|                       | USD181-USD430 | 48         | 21%            |
|                       | USD431-USD680 | 80         | 34%            |
|                       | USD681-USD930 | 64         | 27%            |
|                       | Above USD930  | 39         | 17%            |
|                       |               | <b>233</b> | <b>100%</b>    |

**Reliability Analysis**

The reliability analysis is performed to test the reliability of the questionnaires to ensure whether or not the collected data are reliable and consistent. Cronbach’s alpha is used to assess the internal consistency reliability of the scale items, and the coefficient alpha values illustrated by Tavakol and Dennick (2011) are as follows:

**Table 2** Cronbach’s Alpha

| Cronbach’s Alpha        | Internal Consistency |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| $\alpha \geq 0.9$       | Excellent            |
| $0.8 \leq \alpha < 0.9$ | Good                 |
| $0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.8$ | Acceptable           |
| $0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$ | Questionable         |
| $0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$ | Poor                 |
| $\alpha < 0.5$          | Unacceptable         |

**Source:** Adapted from Tavakol & Dennick (2011)

A pilot test was done to check the validity and reliability of the scale items. After that, the final test of the study was performed to find Cronbach’s alpha values that validate the reliability of all scale items.

**Table 3** Reliability Statistics

| Construct Name                  | Number of Scales | Alpha Value (n=233) |
|---------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Celebrity Credibility (CC)      | 5                | 0.843               |
| Celebrity Attractiveness (CA)   | 5                | 0.832               |
| Product Match-Up (PMU)          | 3                | 0.843               |
| Attitude toward the Brand (ABR) | 5                | 0.852               |
| Purchase Intention (PI)         | 3                | 0.838               |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>21</b>        | -                   |

Based on Table 3, the values of Cronbach’s alpha were above 0.80. Therefore, all of the scale items in this study were valid and reliable.

Pearson Correlation Coefficient Analysis

- CC: Celebrity Credibility
- CA: Celebrity Attractiveness
- PMU: Product Match-Up
- ABR: Attitude toward the Brand
- PI: Purchase Intention

Pearson correlation coefficient analysis is used to measure the relationship between variables. Table 4 finds a positive correlation between all independent variables and the dependent variable. It shows that 0.642 is the highest value of the correlation between celebrity credibility and celebrity attractiveness among the four independent variables. All correlation values are less than 0.8 (Shrestha, 2020), which means there is no multicollinearity problem. This indicates that the independent variables and the dependent ones have no relationship with one another in this research study.

**Table 4** The Correlation Matrix of all Variables

| Variable | CC      | CA      | PMU     | ABR     | PI |
|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----|
| CC       | 1       | -       | -       | -       | -  |
| CA       | 0.642** | 1       | -       | -       | -  |
| PMU      | 0.573** | 0.606** | 1       | -       | -  |
| ABR      | 0.509** | 0.560** | 0.530** | 1       | -  |
| PI       | 0.562** | 0.596** | 0.591** | 0.592** | 1  |

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

### Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) is used to predict the relationships between the independent variables and dependent ones and to test the hypotheses whether are accepted or rejected in the research study. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is employed to determine the strength of the correlation amongst the multiple independent variables in the model of the MRA and to check their multi-collinearity. It is also run to make an adjustment to the data not specified in the study and used to measure a variable error compared to the standard one in the model. Salmerón, Pérez, López, and Garcia (2015) reveal that to accurately present the data, the VIF is used to find the collinearity error and to analyze the correlations among different variables, and Stephanie (2015) emphasizes that the VIF value between 1 and 5 among is interpreted as moderately correlated, which means it is acceptable.

For this study, each variable is analyzed in three important steps. Firstly, the relationship between celebrity credibility, celebrity attractiveness, product match-up, and attitude toward the brand is tested. Secondly, this research examined the relationship between celebrity credibility, celebrity attractiveness, product match-up, and purchase intention. Lastly, a test was done on the relationship between attitude toward the brand and purchase intention. The results of the analysis are as follows:

**Table 5** The Regression Analysis of CC, CA, PMU, and ABR

| Model           | Coefficients                |                          |                           |          |         | Collinearity Statistics |       |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------|---------|-------------------------|-------|
|                 | Unstandardized Coefficients |                          | Standardized Coefficients | t        | Sig.    | Tolerance               | VIF   |
|                 | B                           | Std. Error               | Beta                      |          |         |                         |       |
| Constant        | 1.673                       | 0.203                    |                           | 8.248    | 0.000** |                         |       |
| CC              | 0.142                       | 0.057                    | 0.175                     | 2.478    | 0.014*  | 0.535                   | 1.871 |
| CA              | 0.268                       | 0.066                    | 0.295                     | 4.045    | 0.000** | 0.503                   | 1.988 |
| PMU             | 0.193                       | 0.052                    | 0.251                     | 3.683    | 0.000** | 0.575                   | 1.738 |
| <b>R Square</b> | 0.387                       | <b>Adjusted R Square</b> | 0.379                     | <b>F</b> | 48.281  | <b>Sig.</b>             | 0.000 |

Source: Dependent variable: ABR, \*\*p < 0.01, \*p < 0.05

According to Table 5, the results ( $F = 48.281$ ,  $R^2 = 0.387$ ,  $**p < 0.01$ ,  $*p < 0.05$ ) proved that the variance in the ABR was 38.70% in Cambodia. Thus, the regression model of this study research was good as Minitab (2013) mentioned that the R-Squared values would be lower than 50% when the prediction of human behavior was attempted. This was because it was not easier to predict human beings than physical processes. It was noticed that there were highly significant relationships between three elements among CC, CA, and PMU — that is, CC, CA, and PMU had positive influences on ABR.

The highly significant relationship between CC and ABR at the Significant Level = 0.05 was at  $p = 0.014^*$  and  $Beta = 0.175$ , the highly significant relationship between CA and ABR at the Significant Level = 0.01 was at  $p = 0.000^{**}$  and  $Beta = 0.295$ , and the highly significant relationship between PMU and ABR at the Significant Level = 0.01 was at  $p = 0.000^{**}$  and  $Beta = 0.251$ .

The above showed CC, CA and PMU significantly explained ABR. It meant that the ABR relied upon the trustworthiness and expertise of celebrity endorsers, the physical attractiveness of celebrity endorsers, and the congruence and strong connection between a celebrity endorser and the brand. The CA of 29.50% with the Standardized Coefficients was the main element followed by PMU of 25.10%, and the CC of 17.50%.

Based on the results above, Hypotheses H1, H2, and H3 were acceptable.

**Table 6** The regression analysis of CC, CA, PMU, and PI

| Model           | Coefficients                |                          |                           |          |         |             | Collinearity Statistics |  |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------|---------|-------------|-------------------------|--|
|                 | Unstandardized Coefficients |                          | Standardized Coefficients | t        | Sig.    | Tolerance   | VIF                     |  |
|                 | B                           | Std. Error               | Beta                      |          |         |             |                         |  |
| Constant        | 0.942                       | 0.225                    |                           | 4.177    | 0.000** |             |                         |  |
| CC              | 0.202                       | 0.064                    | 0.210                     | 3.175    | 0.002*  | 0.535       | 1.871                   |  |
| CA              | 0.301                       | 0.074                    | 0.279                     | 4.082    | 0.000** | 0.503       | 1.988                   |  |
| PMU             | 0.274                       | 0.058                    | 0.301                     | 4.710    | 0.000** | 0.575       | 1.738                   |  |
| <b>R Square</b> | 0.462                       | <b>Adjusted R Square</b> | 0.455                     | <b>F</b> | 65.623  | <b>Sig.</b> | 0.000                   |  |

Source: Dependent variable: PI,  $**p < 0.001$ ,  $*p < 0.01$

Based on the results in Table 6 ( $F = 65.623$ ,  $R^2 = 0.462$ ,  $**p < 0.001$ ,  $*p < 0.01$ ), it indicated that 46.20% was the variance in the PI in Cambodia. This meant it was a good model according to Minitab (2013). The positive, significant relationships were found among all of the three elements, that is, CC, CA, and PMU had positive influences on PI.

The significant relationship between CC and PI at the Significant Level = 0.01 was found at  $p = 0.002^*$  and  $Beta = 0.210$ . Another significant relationship between CA and PI at the Significant Level = 0.001 was exactly at  $p = 0.000^{**}$  and  $Beta = 0.279$ . The other significant relationship between PMU and PI at the Significant Level = 0.001 was at  $p = 0.000^{**}$  and  $Beta = 0.301$ .

The above-mentioned results explained that CC, CA, and PMU significantly influenced PI. This clarified that these elements were related to one another and had an effect on the purchase behavior of the consumer. The Standardized Coefficients of PMU of 30.10% was the most important element followed by CA of 27.90% and the CC of 21%.

Therefore, Hypotheses H4, H5, and H6 were acceptable.



**Table 7** The regression analysis of ABR and PI

| Model           | Coefficients                |                          |                           |          | Collinearity Statistics |             |       |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------|-------------------------|-------------|-------|
|                 | Unstandardized Coefficients |                          | Standardized Coefficients | t        | Sig.                    | Tolerance   | VIF   |
|                 | B                           | Std. Error               | Beta                      |          |                         |             |       |
| Constant        | 1.169                       | 0.259                    |                           | 4.521    | 0.000*                  |             |       |
| ABR             | 0.702                       | 0.063                    | 0.592                     | 11.159   | 0.000*                  | 1.000       | 1.000 |
| <b>R Square</b> | 0.350                       | <b>Adjusted R Square</b> | 0.347                     | <b>F</b> | 124.529                 | <b>Sig.</b> | 0.000 |

Sauce: Dependent variable: PI, \*p < 0.001

According to results of the Table 7 (F = 124.529, R2 = 0.350, \*p < 0.001), the variance in the PI was 35%. Based on Minitab (2013), this was a good model because positive, significant relationships were found between these variables. As a result, ABR had a positive influence on the PI.

The significant relationship between ABR and PI at the Significant Level = 0.001 was located at p = 0.000\* and Beta = 0.592.

The result indicated that ABR significantly had an impact on the PI. It explained that these two elements were interconnected. The Standardized Coefficient of ABR was 59.20%.

Hence, Hypothesis H7 was acceptable.

**Table 8** The Summary of the Hypothesis Testing

| Hypothesis | Path      | Beta  | t      | Sig.  | Result   |
|------------|-----------|-------|--------|-------|----------|
| H1         | CC ⇒ ABR  | 0.175 | 2.478  | 0.014 | Accepted |
| H2         | CA ⇒ ABR  | 0.295 | 4.045  | 0.000 | Accepted |
| H3         | PMU ⇒ ABR | 0.251 | 3.683  | 0.000 | Accepted |
| H4         | CC ⇒ PI   | 0.210 | 3.175  | 0.002 | Accepted |
| H5         | CA ⇒ PI   | 0.279 | 4.082  | 0.000 | Accepted |
| H6         | PMU ⇒ PI  | 0.301 | 4.710  | 0.000 | Accepted |
| H7         | ABR ⇒ PI  | 0.592 | 11.159 | 0.000 | Accepted |

In this study, CC, CA, and PMU were found to have positive influences on both ABR and PI.

## Discussion

### H1: Celebrity Credibility Has a Positive Influence on Attitude Toward the Brand.

Hypothesis H1 is supported as celebrity credibility has a significant relationship with attitude toward the brand at the Significant Level = 0.05 with p = 0.014\* and Beta = 0.175. The result of Hypothesis H1 indicated that the attitude toward the brand relied on the trustworthiness and expertise of celebrity endorsers as Wang, Kao, and Ngamsiriudom (2017) point out that credibility consists of trustworthiness and expertise. Moreover, celebrities who are considered trustworthy and experts have a big influence on their followers' behavior (Metzger et al., 2003). Celebrities who have expertise in the brand/product are deemed to be trustworthy, so they become credible and have a positive influence on the endorsed brand. Based on this finding, an advertiser should hire a celebrity with levels of expertise in the brand because this makes people have trustworthiness in the brand endorsed by the celebrity.

**H2: Celebrity Attractiveness Has a Positive Influence on Attitude Toward the Brand.**

Hypothesis H2 is also supported because celebrity attractiveness has a positive relationship with attitude toward the brand at the Significant Level = 0.01 with  $p = 0.000^{**}$  and Beta = 0.295. According to the result of Hypothesis H2, the attitude toward the brand depends upon the physical attractiveness or characteristics of a celebrity endorsing the brand. A previous study by McGuire (1985) shows that celebrity attractiveness has a direct influence on endorsement effectiveness. The finding of Hypothesis H2 suggests that a marketing expert should hire an attractive celebrity to promote the brand as the celebrity endorser with an attractive look makes people's attention positively associated with the brand, recall of advertising messages easy, and purchase intentions formed.

**H3: Product Match-Up Has a Positive Influence on Attitude toward the Brand.**

Product match-up has a highly significant relationship with attitude toward the brand at the Significant Level = 0.01 with  $p = 0.000^{**}$  and Beta = 0.251, so Hypothesis H3 is supported. The result of Hypothesis H3 reveals that the attitude toward the brand relies on the congruence and strong connection between a celebrity endorser and the brand. When a celebrity brand endorser has a strong connection with the product features, it results in a perfect match-up relationship (Misra & Beatty, 1990), and the endorser's congruence with the brand makes the marketing strategy successful (Till & Busler, 1998). Kamins and Gupta (1994) also add that the perfect match-up has a positive impact on the brand/product endorsed. The finding of this hypothesis recommends that an advertiser should hire celebrity endorsers who greatly resemble the brand, customers will associate it with the celebrity, and the advertisement messages will reside in their minds.

**H4: Celebrity Credibility Has a Positive Influence on Purchase Intention.**

Celebrity credibility has a positive relationship with purchase intention at the Significant Level = 0.01 with  $p = 0.002^{*}$  and Beta = 0.210. This proves that Hypothesis H4 is supported. Based on the result of Hypothesis H4, celebrity credibility has an effect on the purchase behavior of the consumer, for trustworthiness and expertise are the main elements of credibility (Wang, Kao, & Ngamsiriudom, 2017). In addition, Metzger et al. (2003) state that celebrities considered trustworthy and expertise strongly influence the behavior of their followers. As the result of this hypothesis implies, consumers of smartwatches form their purchase intention based on the endorsement of celebrities with trustworthiness and some levels of expertise in the product/brand. These two conditions make celebrities become credible and strongly influence the purchase intention of smartwatch consumers. Therefore, a marketing strategist should hire a celebrity endorser who fulfills these two conditions to influence consumers' purchase intention.

**H5: Celebrity Attractiveness Has a Positive Influence on Purchase Intention.**

Celebrity attractiveness statistically has a positive relationship with purchase intention at the Significant Level = 0.001 with  $p = 0.000^{**}$  and Beta = 0.279. It means that Hypothesis H5 is supported. The finding of this hypothesis confirms that celebrity attractiveness influences consumers' purchase behavior. This is because an attractive celebrity directly influences the effectiveness of the endorsement (McGuire, 1985). Furthermore, the attractiveness and positive attitudes of the celebrity endorsers positively influence customers' purchase intention (Till & Busler, 2000). Therefore, an advertiser should engage pretty and attractive celebrities to promote the product/brand as they can make the advertising messages more striking and attractive, and they attract the customers' attention toward the endorsed product/brand and purchase intention.

**H6: Product Match-Up Has a Positive Influence on Purchase Intention.**

Product match-up has a significant relationship with purchase intention at the Significant Level = 0.001 with  $p = 0.000^{**}$  and Beta = 0.301. Thus, Hypothesis H6 is also supported. According to this hypothesis' result, product match-up also affects the purchase behavior of the consumers since the ideal match between the celebrity endorser and the product leads to consumers' attitudes toward advertisement and purchase intention (Shimp, 2000). The result of Hypothesis H6 also proves that the match-up congruence of the celebrity endorser with the brand/product has a positive influence on customers' attitudes and purchase intention. As a result, a marketing expert should involve a relevant celebrity in advertising a brand/product with a message or image resembling the brand/product that is positive and suitable because it inspires customers' confidence in the brand/product.

**H7: Attitude Toward the Brand has a Positive Influence on Purchase Intention.**

Attitude toward the brand has a significant relationship with purchase intention at the Significant Level = 0.001 with  $p = 0.000^{*}$  and Beta = 0.592. It means that the H7 Hypothesis is supported, and the hypothesis result shows that the attitude toward the brand and purchase intention are interconnected. Phelps and Hoy (1996) indicate that attitude toward the brand is a predisposition to place a focus on positive or negative effects on a particular brand when customers get themselves exposed to the brand advertisement. This influences customers' purchase intention toward a brand/product positively, negatively, favorably, or unfavorably because their emotions and feelings reflect reactions to the advertisement of the brand/product. Studies by Qurat and Mahira (2012), Aycha and Kaouther (2010), and Mazzini et al. (2014) also confirm that the customers' attitude toward the brand has a positive impact on the purchase intention toward the brand. The result of this hypothesis proves that the previous studies are correct, and attitude is used to predict customers' intentions and behavior. When customers' attitude toward the brand becomes more positive, it will probably make them intend to purchase the brand. To positively influence the attitude toward the brand of the customers, marketing managers should create a message that is both meaningful and suitable for the celebrity endorsing the brand/product. The advertisers need to choose the right celebrity for their brand/product along with an advert message that they wish to transfer in order that the customers better perceive the advertisement and take a positive attitude toward the brand/product.

Based on the findings mentioned above, this study makes significant contributions to the existing research as follows:

1. An attractive celebrity who has expertise and trustworthy looks has a positive effect on Cambodian smartwatch users.
2. The match-up congruence of the celebrity endorser with the brand/product has a positive influence on Cambodian consumers because it inspires their confidence in the endorsed brand/product.
3. The positive attitude toward the brand that causes a customer to understand and evaluate the brand subconsciously and favorably has a positive effect on the purchase intention of the brand.

As a result, this research offers marketing experts the following practical considerations.

1. Smartwatch advertisers should hire a celebrity endorser who is familiar with the brand and has a big impact on consumers' attitudes to establish a trustworthy brand that leads them to actively seek to purchase the brand.
2. Smartwatch managers may show information certified by a reliable organization to show the technical quality of production.

3. Smartwatch marketing experts should involve classy, beautiful, attractive, and sexy celebrities with expertise and trustworthy look in the brand campaign to effectively improve the credibility of the brand and to best influence the customers' attitude as they make people's attention positively associated with the brand, recall of advertising messages easy and purchase intentions formed.

4. Smartwatch managers should hire celebrity endorsers who greatly resemble the brand because customers will associate it with the celebrities, the advertisement messages will reside in their minds, and it inspires their confidence in the brand. Therefore, this will trigger customers' purchase intention.

5. Smartwatch marketing managers should choose the right celebrity for their brand along with a meaningful advert message that they wish to convey, so the customers better perceive the advertisement and take a positive attitude toward the brand.

6. This study brings considerable benefits to a brand advertisement by using celebrity endorsement to raise brand awareness among the target customers and get a better understanding of the customers' behavior toward the celebrity endorsement.

7. The findings of this research give smartwatch marketers considerable knowledge of how to win wider recognition and create a positive perception of the products in Cambodian competitive markets.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, all hypotheses are found to be supported, and the findings show that the effect of celebrity endorsement has a positive impact on the brand/product and purchase intention. The elements such as celebrity credibility, celebrity attractiveness, and product match-up play an essential role in an advertisement in the present-day competitive markets to win wider recognition and create a positive perception of the products.

## **Theoretical Implication**

The findings prove that attitude toward the brand and purchase intention are both interconnected and depend on the celebrity endorsers' expertise, trustworthiness, physical attractiveness, and brand congruence. This study illustrates that attitude toward the brand has a significant influence on purchase intention and that celebrity endorsement causes a positive attitude toward the brand that subconsciously triggers a customer to favorably understand and evaluate the brand, which has an impact on the purchase intention of the brand. It also brings considerable benefits to a brand advertisement by using celebrity endorsement to raise brand awareness among the target customers and get a better understanding of the customers' behavior toward the celebrity endorsement.

## **Managerial Implication**

From the perspective of the managerial implication, the advertisers should pay much attention to the celebrity's credibility and attractiveness. To effectively improve the credibility of the product/brand and to best influence the customers' attitude, they should make an investment in an attractive celebrity endorser that the customers consider trustworthy. Moreover, they should hire a celebrity who has the expertise and trustworthy looks because these source characteristics of the celebrity endorser have positive impacts on the attitude toward the brand, the credibility of the brand, and the purchase intention of the brand that is endorsed by the celebrity.

## **Recommendation for Future Research**

One of the limitations in this research is the sample size of 233 respondents that which was not big enough to generalize the research results. Another is that it cannot be fully used

to form a marketing strategy to target the whole country as it only focused on Cambodian people living in Phnom Penh. The other is that it was conducted online only, so it was unable to properly and timely address the issues encountered by the respondents when they did not understand the questionnaires fully. This can affect the research results in spite of their cost-effectiveness. For future research, the study should target other groups of people in other areas of Cambodia to get different views of Cambodian people about celebrity endorsement, and it should be conducted both online and offline to get better results. New variables for the celebrity endorsement on purchase intention are recommended because they can provide new insights about the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement in the customers' purchase intention, so the research results become more accurate and valid.

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