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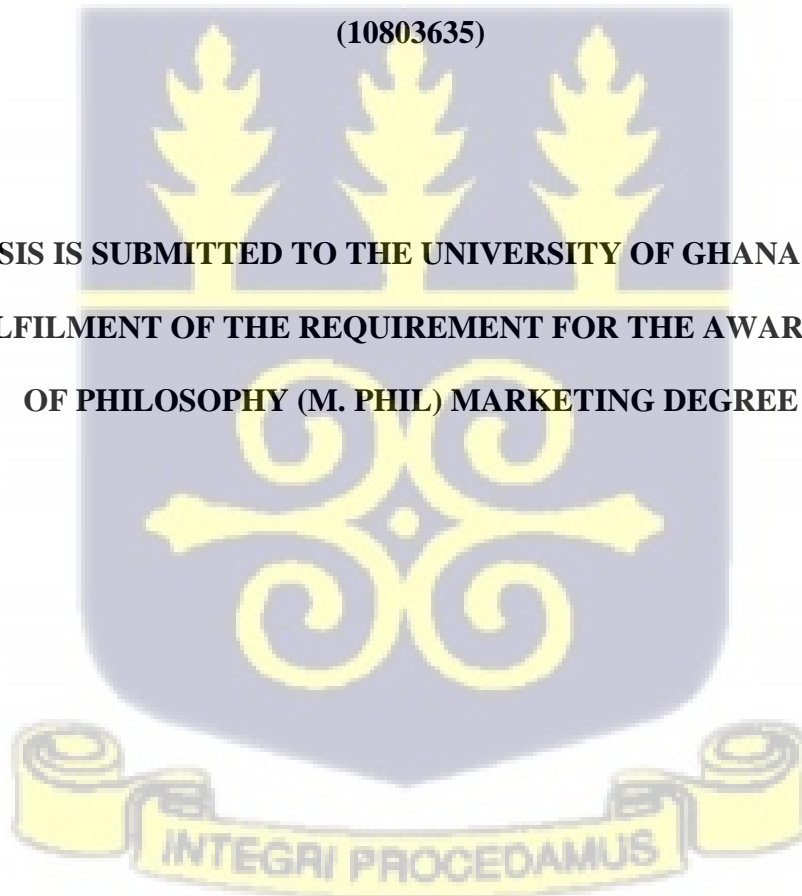
**CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT AND POLITICAL BRAND IMAGE: THE
MODERATING EFFECT OF GENDER**

BY

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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER
OF PHILOSOPHY (M. PHIL) MARKETING DEGREE**



DECEMBER 2021

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research work is the outcome of my study and has not been submitted for any academic award in this university or any other by anybody. All references used in this work have been duly acknowledged.

I, therefore, bear sole responsibility for any shortcomings.



20th December, 2021

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INTEGRI PROCEDAMUS

CERTIFICATION

I certify that this research work has been supervised according to all the required procedures of the University of Ghana.



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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated, first and foremost to the Almighty God for his grace and mercy upon me throughout the programme, to the Kwawu family especially my lovely wife, Kate Ziana Kwawu, my brothers Richard Quao, Jones Kwawu Dzadu, and many others through whom this work has seen the light of day. I say God bless you all abundantly for your immense support throughout this journey.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

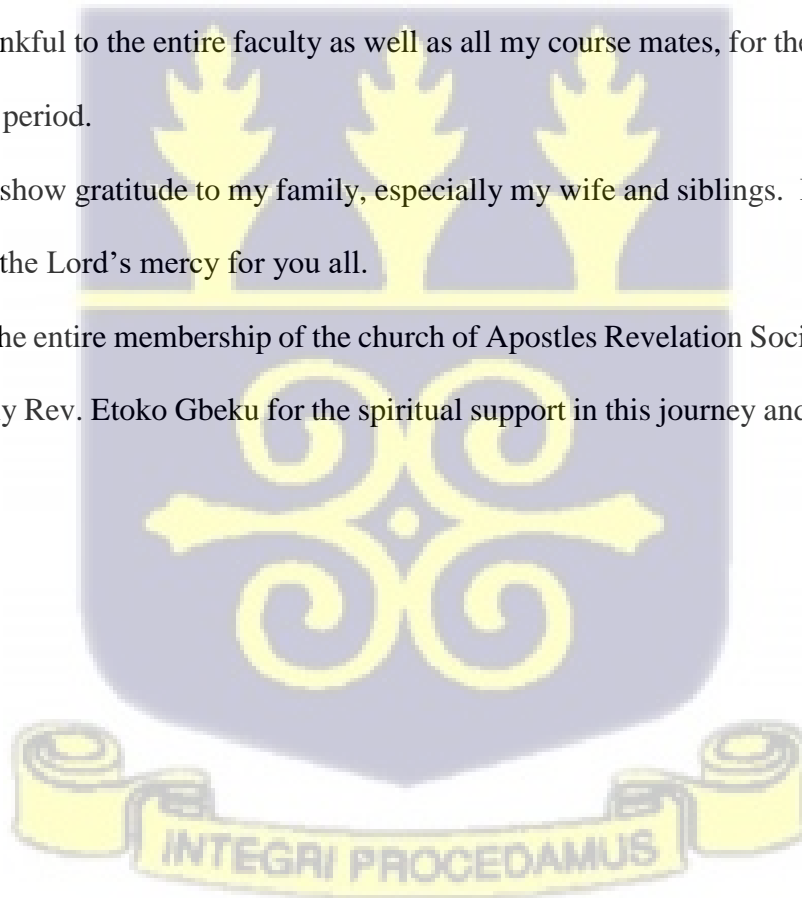
With profound appreciation and gratitude, I would like to acknowledge the Lord God Almighty, for His everlasting love and abundant grace throughout the academic journey. Without God, this journey would have been difficult.

I express my sincere appreciation to my two thesis supervisors, Dr. Kobby Mensah and Prof. Bedman Narteh for their advice, guidance and contributions to the successful completion of this work. Their tolerance level for my ignorance is much appreciated. My prayer for them is that, may the favour of the Almighty God locate them in all aspects of their lives and replenish whatever they have lost as they invested their time and efforts to bring the best out of me.

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ABSTRACT

The nature of politics in Ghana has been shaped by the democratic processes that characterize the electoral process. This new dimension in politics has brought healthy competition into the political environment, mounting pressure on political parties to employ marketing strategies that enable them to stay competitive. One major marketing strategy that has found itself in the political environment, is celebrity endorsement. In recent times, celebrities are widely employed to support political campaigns through advocacy and endorsement. This study sought to establish the impact of celebrity characteristics on political brand image and to ascertain the moderation effect of gender on relationships. The researcher employed a survey approach in collecting primary data for the study. The participants were 270 students of the University of Ghana who are registered voters in the Ayawaso West Wuogon Constituency. The quantitative research approach was employed using the “Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)” for the data analysis. The findings suggest that the attractiveness of a celebrity influences voters’ perception of a political party. The results also revealed that the credibility of a celebrity is crucial in the endorsement process. In addition, the findings point out that gender has no influence on voter perception about a political party image when the “credibility and attractiveness of the celebrity” is the center of discussion. The researcher concludes that the credibility and attractiveness of celebrities constitute value to the voter as it is believed that the reliance on the message of the celebrity leads the voter to make a good choices between contending political parties. It is recommended that political parties should continue to adore celebrity endorsement as a political strategy and in doing so, they should consider the physical characteristics of the celebrity endorser.

Keywords and Terms: Advocacy, Celebrities, Endorsement, Political Brand image, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

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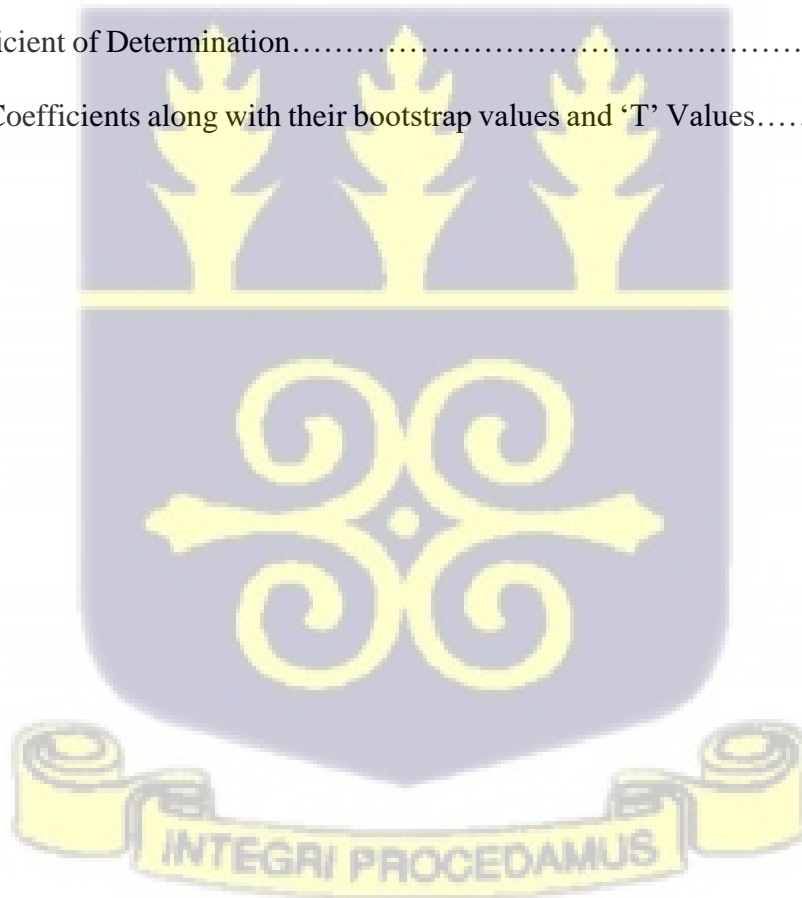
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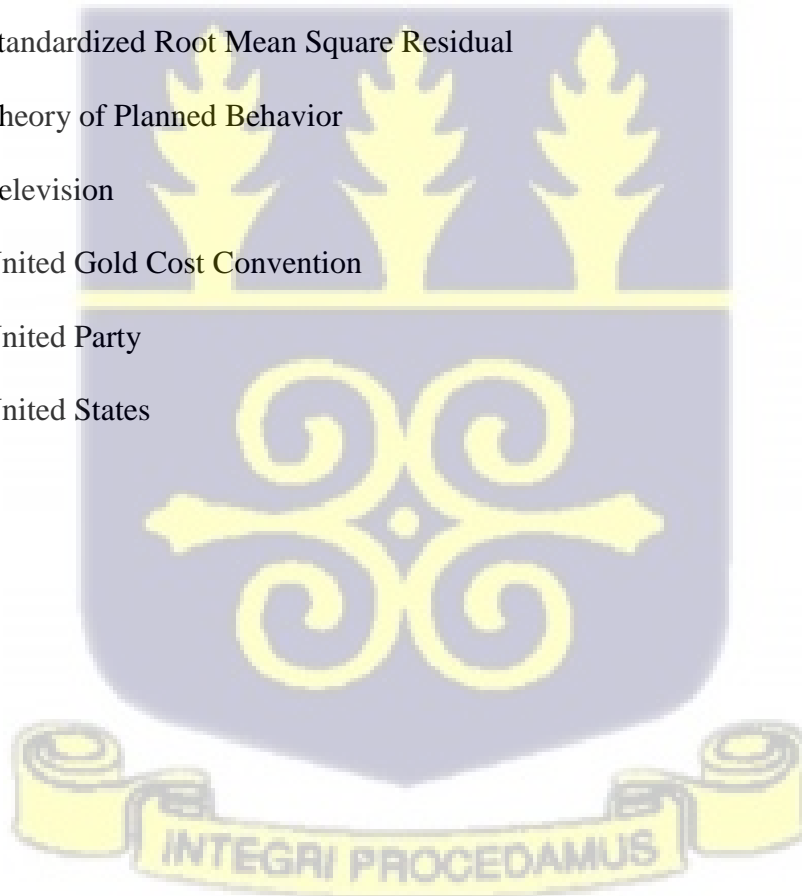
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFRC:	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AVE:	Average Variance Extracted
CC:	Celebrity Credibility
CFA:	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CPP:	Conventions Peoples Party
CR:	Composite Reliability
DEO:	District Electoral Officer
HTMT:	Heterotrait-monotrait
IBM:	International Business Machines
NAL	National Alliance Liberals
NDC:	National Democratic Congress
NFI:	Normed Fit Index
NLC:	National Liberation Council
NLM:	National Liberation Movement
NPP:	New Patriotic Party
NPP:	Nothern People's Party
NRC:	National Reconciliation Commission
PBI:	Political Brand Image
PFP:	Popular Front Party
PLS-SEM:	Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling
PNC	People's National Convention
PNDC:	Provisional National Defense Council

NPP	Notern People's Party
PNP	People's National Party
PPP:	Progressive People Party
SA:	Source Attractiveness
SEM:	Structural Equation Modelling
SIT:	Social Influence Theory
SMC:	Supreme Military Council
SPSS:	Statistical Package of Social Sciences
SRMR:	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual
SRMSR:	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual
TPB:	Theory of Planned Behavior
TV:	Television
UGCC:	United Gold Cost Convention
UP:	United Party
US:	United States



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This thesis is located within “political branding” and focused on reviewing relevant literature in both Traditional and Political Marketing. The decision to consider reviewing literature in both areas is born out of the significant link that political marketing shares with traditional marketing concepts, and branding for that matter. Major political parties across the globe are gradually embracing marketing concepts and processes (Wring, 1996). Though, political marketing as an academic discipline is relatively new (Speed, Butler, & Collins, 2015), political marketing, and by extension, political branding has occupied considerable space in both academic literature and among practitioners (Serazio, 2017).

The global acceptance of democracy as a system for political transitions has introduced a new paradigm into the electoral processes in recent times. This new paradigm has brought healthy competition in the political environment, forcing political parties to employ different marketing strategies that will enable them outsmart their competitors just like any industry player in the traditional marketing environment (Speed et al., 2015). This has been a global phenomenon and Ghana is not an exception.

A significant communication tool that finds itself in political marketing, and which is mostly adopted by political parties in the bid to sell themselves to target voters is Celebrity Endorsement (Osei-Frimpong, Donkor, & Owusu-Frimpong, 2019). This has become the primary focus of this research. Over the last decade, trends of using a celebrity to endorse a political brand has become very common in the global political marketing environment. In the United States, for instance, major parts to the presidential election campaigns, and strategists

relied heavily on the endorsement of a host of film and music stars to influence the actions of individuals of the civic society (Alasuutari, 2018). For example, Lebron James and Lady Gaga endorsed Hillary Rodham Clinton, while Robertson and Toby Keith endorsed Donald John Trump (Lilleker, Jackson, Thorsen, & Veneti, 2016).

In the context of Ghana, the political environment has also witnessed the extent to which celebrities were employed to support political campaigns. A number of renowned celebrities carefully selected from the entertainment industries threw their weights behind the main political parties in the 2020 presidential and parliamentary elections. For example, John Dumelo, a famous Ghanaian actor openly endorsed the NDC, while a popular Ghanaian comedian Kofi Adu known in the entertainment industry as Agya Koo, also threw his support behind the ruling New Patriotic Party. The situation was the same in previous elections (Hinson & Tweneboah-Koduah, 2010 ; Gyimah-Boadi, 2009). Again, during the 1992 General election, Ackah, a popular musician at the time, composed the anthem for the NDC. This, some political commentators believed, was pivotal to the victory of the NDC in the 1992 general election.

The question then is, ‘who is a celebrity?’ There have been few scholarly definitions of celebrity, which this thesis finds relevant to support the study. Gauns, Pillai, Kamat, Chen and Chang, (2018) defined celebrities as individuals who are capable of helping organizations, capture the attention of potential customers towards a particular brand, owing to their attractiveness and likeability. Schimmelpfennig and Hunt (2020), explained that celebrities are individuals who fancy public admiration and also possess distinguishing characteristics such as; attractiveness and trustworthiness. A celebrity may be a comedian, actor/ actress, sportsperson, among others who are recognized by the general public as someone who has an outstanding achievements in his or her field of talent besides the products or services he or she wishes to promote.

Celebrity endorsement occurs when an individual uses public recognition, he or she enjoys to promote a product or a service (Hennayake, 2017). An endorsement is a “stamp of approval” in advertising which could take the form of a written or spoken statement, supporting an idea, a person, or a company (Awobamise & Jarrar, 2018). Celebrity involvement in an advertisement has become a necessity in recent times, as people believe them to be trustworthy enough to give credible facts on which buyers may depend to make their buying decisions (Zak & Hasprova, 2020).

In the context of political marketing, celebrity endorsement can take different forms; such as absolute endorsement ‘I endorse this political party’, certainty ‘I belong to this political Party’, repeated ‘Vote for this political party’, or representational (just appearing in party colours). Research has shown that when celebrities endorse a brand, it enhances its (the endorsed brand) chances of acceptability among consumers (Rahman, Subiakto, Admojo, & Hariyati, 2020). Celebrity endorsement is also a form of promotional strategy which employs the services of popular individuals who are willing to lend their reputation to endorse a product or service.

Brand image, on the other hand, has been characterised as the collection of mental pictures, cognitive and or emotional resources that groups or individuals assign to a brand (Irani-Kermani & Jaenicke, 2017). Put differently, a brand image is a mental picture of the brand in the mind of the consumer (Bilgin, 2018). The brand is perceived to be distinct from the actual or functional product. Branding offers customers as well as organisations, significant advantages, such as easy recognition and management of a product or service. Narteh, Mensah, and Nyanzu (2017) postulated that the concept of branding is famous in the world of business as a strategy for drawing a distinction and assisting customers in making an informed purchasing decision. As a consequence, the concept of branding as a differentiating factor has

been extended to political party administration, candidate grooming, and policy development. The development of brand image involves marketing activities that give life to a normal product or service (Bilgin, 2018). This suggests that the celebrity endorsing the product does so with defined characteristics that enhances the possibility of changing consumers' buying behavior.

Brand endorsement is used in brand communication, to empower the endorser to serve as the mouthpiece for the brand, in different forms necessary to deliver the necessary information that will project the brand. Furthermore, Osei-Frimpong, Donkor and Owusu-Frimpong (2019) noted that celebrity endorsement influences advertising effectiveness, brand recognition, brand recall, purchase intention, and even purchase behavior of consumers. This suggests that consumers are quick to identify themselves with products and or services that are endorsed by celebrities and thus, helps them to recall the message being communicated which, may result in the possibility of influencing their purchase intention in the long run.

Previous studies in consumer behaviour have examined the role of gender differences and their impact on consumers' purchasing intention (Lin, Featherman, Brooks & Hajli, 2019; Mouakket, 2018). However, little is known in political marketing, regards the moderating role of gender on the relationship between "celebrity endorsement" and political brand image; thus informing the researcher's decision to consider gender as a moderating effect for this study.

It is in line with this, that this thesis relied on the Social Influence Theory (SIT) and Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) to examine the relationship between Celebrity endorsement and political brand image. The fundamental principle behind these theories is that, an individual is more inclined to accept another person if he or she identifies with that person (Till, 1998).

1.2 Research Problem

Quite a number of celebrities are often seen throwing their weights behind political parties and endorsing their campaign messages through participation in political events or public declaration of support to the political party or candidate (Idzikowski, 2019; Atikkan, 2015). In Ghana, the just-ended presidential and parliamentary election in 2020 has witnessed massive celebrity endorsement of political parties and candidates across the lengths and breaths of the nation. For instance, Lydia Seyram Alhassan, the then Parliamentary Candidate for the 2020 general election on the ticket of the NPP, in the Ayawaso West Wuogon constituency, had to rely on renowned celebrities for their endorsement when she realized the intensity of the competition between her and the famous Ghanaian celebrity, John Dumelo, who was also the parliamentary candidate for the National Democratic Congress (NDC). Among these celebrities were; Bismark the Joke, Kalybos, Bibi Bright, Prince Davido Osei, Jessica Williams and Jeneral Ntatia among others.

Though political analysts and campaign strategists believe in the use of celebrity political endorsements, which places the political party at an advantage and increases its chances of winning the election (Denton, Trent, & Friedenber, 2019), mere celebrity endorsement of an advertisement does not guarantee success (Dey, & Gayathri, 2021). Understanding the characteristics of a celebrity such as “Celebrity Source Attractiveness” and “Celebrity Source Credibility”, and the impact they have on the brand image of the political party is worth exploring.

1.3 Research Gap

It is not in doubt that quite a number of research have been carried out in the field of marketing to examine the influence of “celebrity endorsements” on merchandises (Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016; Knoll & Matthes, 2017). However, Osei-Frimpong et al. (2019), posited that research that examined the role of celebrity endorsement within a larger political marketing strategy is quite marginal. Again, though, similar studies have commenced recently on growing democracy in Latin America and Asia, previous studies in this area principally focused on the United States and European nations (Agyepong, 2017), leaving the context of African with little or no focus. In Ghana, the limited amount of research in the area of political marketing, according to Hinson and Tweneboah-Koduah, (2010), mainly focused on “political marketing techniques”.

Lastly, moderating effect of a celebrity’s gender and how this could influence the relationship between “celebrity endorsement” and political brand image has also not been critically examined. This research is an initial effort to bridge the gaps by examining the influence of major celebrity characteristics such as Celebrity Source Attractiveness and Celebrity Source Credibility on political brand image in Ghana, while at the same time, testing the moderating effects of gender on the relationships between celebrity attractive ness and celebrity credibility on political brand image.

1.4 Aim and Objective of the Study

The overall objective of this research is to examine the impact of “celebrity endorsement” on “political brand image”, with gender as a moderator. The following are the specific objectives that this research sought to pursue.

1. To assess the effect of “source attractiveness” of celebrity on political brand image.

2. To evaluate the effect of “source credibility” of celebrity on political brand image.
3. To examine the moderating role of gender on the relationship between Source attractiveness of celebrity and political brand image.
4. To examine the moderating role of gender on the relationship between Source creditability of celebrity and political brand image.

1.5 Research Question

1. To what extent does the source attractiveness of celebrity influence the political brand image?
2. What is the relationship between “source credibility” of celebrity and political brand image?
3. What is the moderating role of gender on the relationship between “source attractiveness” of celebrity and “political brand image”?
4. What is the moderating role of gender on the relationship between source credibility of celebrity and political brand image?

1.6 Significant of the Study

Similar to providers of physical products and services in commercial businesses, political parties employ marketing strategies such as commercial adverts which often feature celebrities endorsing the political party or its candidate, ignoring the risk that might come with this approach. Celebrities themselves may not be aware of the major characteristics of an endorser that might be appealing to the voter.

The significance of this study, therefore, is at three levels; it brings to bear a very significant input to the global academic discourse on political marketing. Additionally, it contributes to

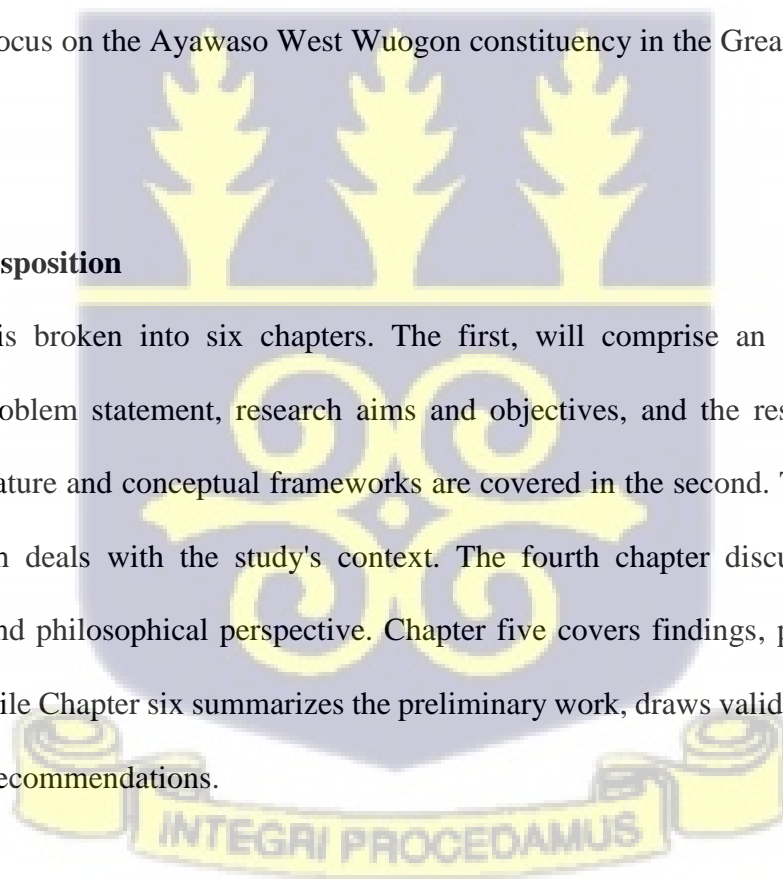
knowledge by offering an empirical understanding of how celebrity endorsement of a political party, influences its brand image. Specifically, it serves as the road map for political parties to select the right celebrities for their campaign. Finally, the findings of this research may be extremely beneficial to students and scholars as it will make available gaps in literature for them to explore further for better understanding with regards to the nature of the relationship among variables such as “celebrity political endorsement and political brand image” in the Ghanaian context.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of this research is confined to two main political parties in Ghana (NDC and NPP), with a special focus on the Ayawaso West Wuogon constituency in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana.

1.8 Chapter Disposition

This research is broken into six chapters. The first, will comprise an introduction, the background, problem statement, research aims and objectives, and the research questions. Review of literature and conceptual frameworks are covered in the second. The third chapter of this research deals with the study's context. The fourth chapter discusses the study's methodology and philosophical perspective. Chapter five covers findings, presentations and discussions, while Chapter six summarizes the preliminary work, draws valid conclusions, and makes further recommendations.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter laid the foundation for the background, problem statement, objectives, and significance of the study. This chapter reviews literature that is relevant to the primary concepts and theories and developed the conceptual framework for the study.

2.2 Theoretical Review

Theories are well-established principles that have been developed to explain, forecast, and interpret occurrences, as well as, in many cases, to question and extend current knowledge within the limits of critical boundary assumptions. Dunstone and Caldwell (2018) argue that theories explain and assist researchers to better understand the phenomenon of human behavior relative to communication. Through theories, scholars from various traditions have been able to describe and explain the universal human experience.

With the nature of this research, it is necessary to back it up with relevant theories that can help form hypotheses and guide conclusions at the end of the data analysis in terms of the research objectives and hypotheses. A thorough examination of the numerous theories justifies the adoption of the Social Influence Theory and the Theory of Planned Behavior to conceptually explain the relationship between “celebrity endorsement” and “political brand image”.

2.2.1 Social Influence Theory (SIT)

Herbert Kelman, a Harvard psychologist, proposed the Social Influence Theory in 1958. The primary idea behind the SIT is that referent persons influence the attitudes, beliefs, and

subsequent actions or behaviors of others via three processes; “compliance, identification, and internalization”. Kelman (1958) hypothesized that social influence alters attitude and behavior, and that these variations may happen at different “levels.” According to him, these differences can be attributed to variations in how people accept influence. The theory explained three principal processes of influence.

According to the theory, compliance occurs when people accept influence and adopt the induced behaviour in order to gain rewards (or approval) and avoid penalties (or, disapproval). With this, “the social effect of accepting influence is responsible for the gratification obtained by compliance.” (Kelman, 1958, p.53). “Identification is perceived to occur when individuals adopt the induced behavior in order to form desired and beneficial relationship with another person or group”. As a result, “the act of conforming provides satisfaction” (Kelman, 1958, p.53). “Internalization is thought to occur when people accept influence after seeing the induced behavior's content to be gratifying, with the content indicating other people's thoughts and actions”. “Individuals embrace the induced behavior because it is consistent with their value system, according to the study”. “In this case, therefore, the satisfaction occurs due to the content of the new behavior” (Kelman, 1958, p.53).

According to the author, each of these processes may be described as a function of the three influence determinants: (a) the significance of the desired effect, (b) the intensity of the influencing agent, and (c) the potency of the induced reaction (Kelman, 1958). The social influence theory (SIT) can be used to explain celebrity endorsement (Osei-Frimpong et al., 2019). SIT, according to Li (2013), describes how individuals or groups are influenced by referent others to act in a certain way. This notation was supported by Venkatesh and Brown (2001). Again, Osei-Frimpong et al. (2019) emphasized that referent people tend to influence

others via exchange of knowledge.

More so, Li, (2013) believes that people have a strong drive to adhere to meet the expectations of others. “This shows that celebrity endorsements communicate genuine and actual messages or information about brands, which may alter an individual's impression of the brand as a result of some kind of social identification” (Osei-Frimpong et al., 2019, p. 105). In the works of Munnukka, Uusitalo, and Toivonen (2016); Ilicic and Webster (2015); as well as Samu and Wymer, (2014), “celebrity credibility” is seen as vital in assessing the information buyers receive.

The theory has been employed by a number of scholars to establish conditions under which endorsement of a political party will encourage people to make decisions that reflect their desires (Osei-Frimpong et al., 2019; Boudreau, 2020). Boudreau (2020) again noted that ordinary citizens are generally uninterested in paying attention to political messages due to their beliefs that the costs outweigh the advantages. As a result, the average person frequently avoids gatherings that sought to give political messages and instead, rely on proposals from relevant sources, such as celebrities (Downs, 1957). This thesis extends the theory to political marketing to help explain the relationship between celebrity endorsement and political brand image.

2.2.2 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen developed the Theory of Planned Behaviour in 1988, based on the theory of reasoned action in 1980 (Conner & Sparks, 2015). The theory aids in predicting and comprehending the individual's intention to engage in certain behavior. The theory suggested that behavioural success is driven by intention (motivation) and ability (behavioural control). There are six key constructs in this theory; attitudes, behavioural intention, subjective

norms, societal standards, perceived authority, and perceived behavioural control. An individual's negative or positive thinking about doing an activity is referred to as their attitude.

The motivational elements that influence the performance of a behaviour are referred to as behavioural intention. The stronger the desire to conduct the behaviour, the more likely it will be carried out. The individual's belief in the approval or disapproval of the behaviour by others (friends, family members) is referred to as the subjective norm. The behaviour of a group in a cultural setting is referred to as social norms. Perceived authority refers to the factors that are thought to assist or hamper behaviour performance. Perceived behavioural control refers to a person's sense of how difficult it is to do the desired behavior (Francis et al., 2004). The TPB is founded on the concept that humans are rational and utilize available information in a methodical manner. People also examine the consequences of their acts before deciding whether or not to engage in particular behaviours' (Conner, 2015).

2.2.2.1 Limitations of the theory

The weaknesses of TPB include the assumption that the individual gained the opportunity and resources required to succeed in doing the intended behaviour, independent of purpose. Other elements influencing motivation and behavioural intention, such as anger, fear, mood, or past experience, are ignored. While it considers normative influences, it disregards environmental and economic factors that may affect a person's decision to engage in an activity. It also assumes that behaviour is the result of a linear decision process that ignores the possibility of change throughout. While the idea of perceived behavioural control was a significant contribution to the theory, it says nothing about genuine behavioural control. The theory makes no mention of the temporal gap between "intent" and "behavioral action."

The theory has been successfully applied for this reason in similar study (Cuomo, Foroudi, Tortora, Hussain, & Melewar, 2019; Ndlela & Chuchu, 2016). It emphasises that (a) sentiments toward the candidate or during vote casting for the aspirant, (b) “subjective norms” and “social stress” associated with voting, and (c) “perceived behavioural control” over voting for the aspirant may all impact the willingness to vote for the aspirant (Atikcan, 2021). When it comes to voting, the process is often conducted in the shadows, which means that individuals cannot be held responsible for their actions and that social tension is generally low. As a result, social norms are rarely used to predict the outcome of a vote (Rosema, 2004). Perceived behavioural control is even less of an influence. With this line of reasoning, the research examines voting intentions in relation to candidate attitudes and attitudes themselves in relation to candidate emotions. The approach backs up the notion of Planned Behaviour, which sees emotions as a necessary antecedent to approaches (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2005).

2.3 Conceptual Review

2.3.1 Emergence of Political Marketing

Political marketing has come into the limelight in recent times as one of the most promising marketing concepts, attracting study interest from all around the world. Scholars like Scammell (1999) have used terms like political communication, political marketing, political management, and political packaging to describe the concept as far back as the 1990s. Political marketing, according to Ormrod (2011), may be seen as both a social construct and a service, with distinct characteristics.

Nor, Asaari, Karia and Haron, (2006) contend that political marketing has been discussed since the 1950s when a definition was proposed for the concept by Kelley (1956). Rothschild (1978) was among the first experts in both developed and developing countries to apply marketing ideas such as segmentation and advertising to political marketing research. In the US, media

shifts, the necessity for professionalism in political crusades, and the increased power of pressure groups affected the evolution of political marketing (McNair, 2017).

Major authors to the political marketing literature include, Scammel (1999), Butler & Collins (1996), Newman (1994), and Narteh et al. (2017). Political marketing was considered in this age as an exchange relationship that enables political parties, and electorates communicate with one another in a manner that leads to productive partnerships (Hughes & Dann, 2009). Similarly, Wring (2002b) claims that political marketing began after World War II, with the introduction of mass commercial television and the concurrent rise of the advertising sector. Political marketing, as defined by Baines and Osuagwu (2008), is a comparatively new phenomenon, in spite of the fact that the processes involved in political campaigning have been in existence for a long time.

A recent study in the area, has, however, found that marketing terminologies like branding, market segmentation, marketing mix, brand equity, etc are crucial in formulating strategies for political campaigns (Lees-Marshment, 2001; Kolovos, 2005).

2.3.1.1 Defining Political Marketing

Political marketing has grown in popularity since its inception in the 1950s, giving rise to a variety of definitions. Various meanings have emerged from literature during the previous two decades. Political marketing, according to Butler and Collins (1996), is the selling of ideas and opinions on a political party or a candidate. Political marketing, according to this definition, is a method of promoting a political product. O'Shaughnessy et al. (2012) defined the concept as the planning, executing, and controlling political programs aimed at generating, building, and maintaining positive exchanges relationships between the political party and electorates towards attaining the party's objectives.

According to Osuagwu (2008), political marketing is the application of marketing concepts, principles, and approaches to political challenges by individuals, groups, organizations, and governments. “Although in Ghana political marketing communication is a new phenomenon, its focus on the deployment of strategies for informational and communication requirements of democracy have been great” (Mensah, 2017 p.10). Fairchild et al., (2003) suggested that political marketing, is the act of building, sustaining, and enhancing long-term partnerships for the benefit of society in order to meet the goals of individuals in an organization. Again, Political marketing, according to this concept, is the exchange of values at the global and local levels. Hughes and Dann (2009) also explained that political marketing is a set of activities, employed by political parties or candidates in an attempt to add their voices to the conversation. Lees-marshment and Marland (2012), identified; competitive advantage, excellent customers service, innovation, and marketing research as essential functions employed to support political movements. They emphasise that they are roles that could influence numerous political goals, as Mensah (2007) has described them as political functions. Mensah (2007) and Venu (2008) divide the “political marketing mix” into four categories: “product, cost, distribution, and communication” respectively. Meanwhile, according to Lees-Marshment (2001), marketing functions such as branding, positioning, and segmentation are necessary for political success. O’Shaughnessy (2001) and Henneberg (2004) explained that political marketing involves developing, and maintaining long-lasting relationships with target voters at profit for political parties and society at large, while at the same time, ensuring that the aims of the different political parties and institutions engaged, are satisfied via reciprocal exchanges and campaign commitments. “Political marketing” is a strategy adopted by leaders of political parties to improve their chances of winning elections. It also allows them to modify some part of their behaviour and strategies, such as policy, membership, organogram, electoral system, etc. so as

to fit well into the circumstances and character of the political market (Lees- Marshment, 2001).

Marketing had such an impact on political activities to the extent that the approach used to promote products and services is now repeated in the promotion of political candidates, policies, and ideologies in order to support today's politicians to win an election and attain political effectiveness. Existing literature (Kotler, 1998; Smith & Hirst, 2001; Newman & Sheth, 1985; Smith & French, 2009; Butler & Collins, 1996; & Lees- Marshment, 2001) have all pointed to the fact that political institutions' marketing principles and strategies are relevant in electoral activities.

2.3.2 Branding defined

Several entities have misread and misunderstood the term branding, which refers to the process of imbuing organisations and products with brand features and other external characteristics or attributes (Hair, 2015). There appears to be no agreement regards the true meaning of the term branding, resulting in several scholars proposing their own definitions to suit their study interests (Olsen, Chung, Graf, Lee, & Madanoglu, 2004). Chapleo (2010) argues that branding has a brand problem as a result of the absence of agreement on how the concept is defined. Several writers have defined the concept in terms of its goal. Branding is the act of distinguishing a product or service (Field et al., 2012). Likewise, Ballantyne and Atike (2007) believed that branding is the tactics of distinguishing a product, service, event, or an idea, in order to allow for differentiation.

Brands, according to Casey and Daniel (2013), are neither trademarks nor risk reducers, nor are they simply names. Brands, according to Jones and Bonevac (2013), are a "definition of a particular company or product." They interpreted branding to mean the act of situating a firm or product in the correct category, including developing brand recognition and identification,

as well as separating it from the rest of the offers in that area, with reference to their definition of brands. “Branding is the process of endowing products and services with the power of a brand, and it involves giving a specific product a meaning by building and defining a brand,” (Kotler & Kotler, 2016).

Businesses use branding to make it easier for customers to recognise their products and organisations, and also offer reason to prefer the organisation's products over those offered by competitors (Kotler & Kotler, 2016). According to the author, branding is the intangible sum of a product's features, such as its brand aspects, price, and reputation, as well as how it is sold. The process of endowing a political party with brand elements that enhances the chances of being preferred by voters, in an election is defined as political branding in this study.

2.3.2.1 Importance of branding to organizations

Branding offers several advantages for both the organization, service, and product, as well as the wider public (Keller & Kotler, 2016). The advantages of branding for businesses are listed and explained below;

2.3.2.1.1 Creation of Identity

Branding enables a company to build its own identity by utilising brand features and other parts of its visual corporate identity (Low & Fullerton, 1994). According to Keller (1993), branding also allows an organisation to distinguish itself in an aggressively competitive market by allowing them to be differentiated from other businesses that offer similar goods and services. Corporate identity covers all visible and non-visual identification aspects that establish the organization's visibility and distinguish it from other organizations (Balmer, 2008)

2.3.2.1.2 Legal Protection

Businesses can use branding to legally protect some of their products' and organizations' distinguishing traits. According to Keller and Kotler (2016), Branding offers an organization the opportunity to safeguard the distinctive aspects of their goods and services from possible replication by competitors in today's congested commercial climate. Branding allows firms to own intellectual property rights, giving the brand owner a sense of protection. This legal protection allows the company to sue any competitor who tries to illegally duplicate the brand. Obtaining legal protection for a brand allows companies and in this case, political parties to keep competitors at bay (Keller, 2000).

2.3.2.1.3 Mark of Quality

Branding, according to Casey and Daniel (2013), serves as a quality signal to consumers. Buyers make decisions based on their views of product quality (Chen, Tseng, & Lin, 2011). Organizations can use branding to address any concerns customers may have about the quality of their products (Keller & Kotler, 2016). Customers can be informed about the quality of a company's offerings through marketing and corporate communications channels (Aaker, 1996). In the twenty-first century, branding is critical for businesses since it serves as a means through which customers are assured of quality products and services.

2.3.3 Definition of Brand Image

Good marketing activity involves the transfer of a positive brand image to the public (Bian & Moutinho, 2011). Brand image is very crucial in influencing consumers' brand choices and buying decisions, as well as contributing to brand equity (Bian & Moutinho, 2011). Keller (1993), postulated that a positive brand image helps to position a company, protects it from competitors, and increases market share.

The concept has been a topic of discussion in consumer behavior research as far back as the early 1950s and has since not adopted a fixed definition of the concept for past decades (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990). It is therefore not surprising that there is little agreement on how the concept should be implemented (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990). As a result of the absence of a clear basis for the operationalization of the concept, brand image has been defined in a number of ways subject to the study goal.

Various authors have presented various definitions for brand image in the existing literature. While Faircloth, Capella and Alford (2001) believe that the concept is a summation of emotional components associated with brands, others define it as a combination of physical and emotive components (Martinez & Pina Perez, 2009; Aaker, 1991). The table below summarizes the many definitions offered.

Table 2.1: Different definition of Brand Image proposed by some Authors

Authors	Definition of brand image
Ofosu-Boateng & Agyei (2020)	“Brand image is simply how a brand is perceived by consumers”.
Daama (2018)	“Brand image is the a collection of brand associations preserved in the memory of a customer”.
Keller (1993)	“Brand image is the set of perceptions about a brand the consumer forms as reflected by the brand associations”.
Hayes (1999)	“Brand image consists of three major components; the product attributes, perceived product benefits and the brand personality”.

Davis, Golicic, & Marquardt (2009) “Brand image is a product of physical and emotional attributes consumers associate with brands”.

Nandan (2005) “Branding is the set of beliefs held about a particular brand”

Source: Author’s Construct (2021)

2.3.4 Various Dimensions of Brand Image

The phrase "Brand Image" is often employed to describe a variety of things, including concepts, products, and services (Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer, & Exler, 2008). To succeed in business, a company's branding should be linked to the expectations, values, and lifestyles of its customers (Dadzie & Boachie-Mensah, 2011). According to the authors, a brand can be defined as a property that transmits an assurance, which includes hedonic and utilitarian characteristics that customers associate with a brand. They also stated that internally formed requirements for personal rewards, recognition, approval, or ego pleasure are satisfied by affective characteristics, whereas “functional features” externally induced consumption issue. Brand image is defined as "the consumer's set of perceptions about a brand as expressed through brand associations" (Keller, 1993). Martínez, Montaner and Pina (2009) claim that image of a brand is determined by the thoughts that customers associate with it. Academics and practitioners have been developing scales for measuring brand image for decades. While some writers believe that brand image consists of cognitive or functional features as well as emotional attributes of brands (Aaker, 1996; Alwi & Kitchen, 2014; Da Silva & Alwi, 2006), Others argue that brand image includes both functional or cognitive and emotional aspects of a brand (Aaker, 1996; Faircloth, Capella, & Alford, 2001; Alwi, 2009; Martinez & Pina, 2000). Aaker (1996) developed dimensions of brand image based on brand personality; nevertheless, the model was challenged for including firms that ranked high due to “functional advantages”. The functional

or cognitive component of an image is tied to concrete characteristics such as quality and pricing, whereas the affective or emotional dimension is associated with brand personality (Aranda, Evangelina, Mar Gómez, & Arturo Molina, 2015).

Keller (2003) claims that, though intangible parts of branding such as emotion may assist in lighting up consumer components of brand knowledge, other brand image characteristics such as cognitive attributes of brands are equally significant in grasping a company's image. Keller (2003) goes on to say that incorporating both cognitive and emotive characteristics of brands into understanding brand image will improve researcher's ability to model buyers' emotions and practitioners' ability to target their marketing operations. Malhotra (2005) backs up Keller (2000), arguing that, for years, purchasers' purchase choice research has focused on cognitive factors, and calls for a shift. Individuals' perceptions of reality vary based on their personal experiences and circumstances, and these disparities account for each individual's subjective sense of reality when establishing brand perceptions (Da Silva & Alwi, 2005). According to the Author, this reality has significant consequences for theory and practice, having revealed that each individual has a distinct brand representation. The results from related studies indicate that brand knowledge can be acquired through a variety of methods, including customer satisfaction, objective reality, communications derived from marketing communication efforts, constructed reality, as well as word of mouth recommendations (Da Silva & Alwi 2005; Triantafillidou & Siomkos, 2014).

The cognitive and affective components of a consumer's brand image perception are possible (Alwi & Kitchen, 2014). Researchers have attempted to study the role of cognition and affect in brand image studies (Da Silva & Alwi, 2005). According to Agarwal and Malhotra (2005), attitude and consumer purchasing decisions are the results of a combination of dimensional

attributes, major brand attributes, and general effects on feelings and emotions. The model proposed by Agrawal and Malhotra (2005) contributes significantly to the understanding of consumer behavior, since Da Silva and Alwi (2005) developed a brand image model based on this concept. Grimms (2005) researched into the relative importance and impact of affective, conative, and cognitive behavior on their ability to forecast brand preferences. The result found that the whole component of attitudes toward the brand is distinct and relevant in an attempt to clarify brand choice, with cognitive brand features having the most influence. Other related studies in the literature also pointed to the importance of effective and cognitive aspects in the establishment of a consumer's brand image (Keller, 2003; Agarwal & Malhotra, 2005). Major literature on a brand image focused on the traditional marketing system, leaving the political system with little attention (Scammell, 1999).

2.3.5 Conceptualisation of Political parties as Brands

Individual bits of information (referred to as nodes) that join together in memory to create more complicated associative networks constitute brand knowledge (French & Smith, 2010 ; Till, 1998; Srull & Wyer, 1989). As a "node" gets triggered by the others, a condition or process known as activation takes place, and information is recovered from memory (De Groot, 1989). Voters can also use brand personality to lower the perceived danger of casting their votes in favour of the wrong candidate. Politics is a "credence service" in that, it is impossible to tell whether promises will be kept at the time of purchase or voting (Mahajan & Wind, 2002).

Voters' perceptions of political parties and candidates are influenced by the political brand. Keller (1993), noted that political brands are not material but intangible, consisting of information about a certain thing that people retain in their minds. It was suggested that politics is a "credence service" as it is impossible to tell whether policy promises will be kept at the time of purchase (voting). Brands influence voters' perception and evaluation of political

parties and candidates (Mahajan & Wind, 2002)

2.3.6 Dimensions of Political brand image

Dimension	Applied to a Political Brand
Performance / Track record	<p>Performance has to do with the expected operating characteristics of a product or service (Crozet, & Milet, 2017). In the context of political marketing, it is conceptualized to mean the consistency with which political parties satisfy the needs of the citizens.</p> <p>Some of the performance requirements are related to subjective preferences, but when they are the preference of almost every consumer and in this case voters, they become as powerful as an objective requirement (Gal, & Simonson, 2021).</p>
Reliability	<p>The dimension of reliability shows the probability of the product having signs of error within a specific period (Parsons, Kruijt & Fox, 2019). In the case of a political brand, the dimension measures the consistency with which a political party or</p>

	<p>candidate can be trusted to deliver on its promises.</p>
<p>Perception of service quality / Public image</p>	<p>The perception of something is not always reality (Grace, 2016). Meaning that a product or service can have high scores on each of the seven dimensions of quality, but still receive a bad rating from customers as a result of negative perceptions from customers or the public.</p> <p>In the context of political marketing, voters sometimes beveled to lack valuable information to enable them to make an informed decision regards the choice of candidate. Public image of a candidate or political party is enhanced with the quality of campaign messages, which shape how the public perceive a candidate or a political party.</p>

2.4 Meaning of Celebrity endorsement

A celebrity endorser is someone who is well-known for accomplishments outside of the product category he or she supported (Masato, 2021). The use of celebrities by multinational corporations to promote their brands is an additional effort to complement advertisements in an attempt to increase the product's popularity and ease of recognition for the objective of

purchase incentive. People are drawn to stars or celebrities because of their level of association with them (Nouri, 2018). Adnan, Jan , Ali, and Shah (2018) noted that Celebrity endorsement techniques have a huge positive effect on communication. Celebrities are individuals who use their status to persuade people to buy a product or service. They have more influence in advertisements than anybody else because of their credibility and unique position, which leads to purchase intent. In today's marketing environment, endorsers are also used to draw attention to advertisements, resulting in favorable effects and increased buy intentions.

Because of their likeability and attractiveness, celebrities are said to draw attention to advertisements (Adam & Hussain, 2017; Jamil & Rameez, 2014). Celebrities in advertisements are picked not just for their fame, but also for the best fit with the product they are advertising. For example, how acceptable is Junaid Jamshed in an ad for toilet cleaners, or a guy for endorsing women's fairness creams? Similarly, the physical attractiveness of the endorser is a significant factor in high social acceptance. As a result, celebrity traits are just as important for a product's success as brand attributes. Nagar (2021) emphasized that a celebrity's persuasion and persuasion techniques are based on traits associated with a celebrity, which make endorsement more effective.

On the other side, researchers have conducted counter-analyses such as over-endorsement, or if a celebrity becomes unprofessional, there would be a detrimental impact of celebrity endorsement on the product. As the number of products sponsored by celebrities grows, so does the celebrity's worth and influence (Hearn & Schoenhoff, 2016). Celebrities' involvement in the negative event makes them less encouraging or appealing to the product or service they endorse (Awobamise & Jarrar, 2018; Jamil & Hassan, 2014). As a result, celebrity traits are just as important for a product's success as brand attributes. Nagar (2021) again emphasized

that a celebrity's persuasion and persuasion techniques are based on traits associated with the celebrity. This, according to the author, makes endorsement more effective.

2.4.1 Source Attractiveness

Attractiveness is another factor that influences the communicator's first assessment. (Samarasinghe, 2018). According to Enke and Borchers (2019) appealing communicators are continuously perceived to have a greater positive influence than less attractive communicators. Several additional investigations have confirmed similar results, suggesting that beauty boosts positive sentiments. (Wang & Scheinbaum, 2018; Ohanian, 1990; Kahle & Homer, 1985). According to Samarasinghe (2018), Purchase intention is more likely to be influenced by attractive endorsers. Given the nature of the political climate in recent times, beauty and attractiveness remain important elements in the selection of political brand endorsers.

Physical attractiveness, according to Chaker, Walker, Nowlin and Anaza (2019), is an informational signal that has subtle and enduring impacts, establishes a defined pattern of observable differences, and transcends culture in its influence. Pisulkar et al., (2019) claim that beauty is a higher recommendation than any letter of introduction.

The physical look of celebrity endorsers received high social approval and acceptance. Physical attractiveness has a positive effect on consumer behavior toward a product and service when compared to an unattractive person (Agam, 2017). Similarly, all items linked with a person's physical attractiveness or face looks, such as facial treatments, beauty soaps, clothes, hair colors, and shampoos, are greatly influenced by celebrity physical attractiveness.

Attractiveness is a strategy for changing attitudes (Seiler & Kucza, 2017). As a result, a physical appearance is a powerful tool for influencing voter perceptions through their appearance and style. Despite the fact that the literature on source attractiveness has been

confirmed, some research studies contend that physical attractiveness has a greater impact on the brand image (Onu, Nwaulune, Adegbola, & Kelechi, 2019). While attractive celebrity endorsers increase perceptions about advertising and organizations, their influence on developing recurring purchase intentions is ambiguous (Cuomo et al., 2019). In today's crowded media environment, attractive celebrities are still considered to have "stopping power" and appeal to voters (Mahamah, 2018; Puomisto, 2020). As a result, voters' opinions of the political brand image improve. Furthermore, the attractiveness of a celebrity can improve brand memory and a good attitude toward a political party (Abdurrahaman, et al., 2021). Based on these discussions the study hypothesis that;

H1: Source attractiveness has a positive significant impact on political brand image.

2.4.2 Trustworthiness / Credibility

The term "trustworthiness" relates to an endorser's "honesty, integrity, and credibility" (Lu, 2021; Erdogan, 2001). The widespread perception among consumers is that celebrities are reliable sources of information (Cooley & Parks-Yancy, 2019; Goldsmith et al., 2000). It is believed that a person you trust may easily persuade you to believe in invisible things, and that person is more credible than everyone else in society. Furthermore, if the individual is an expert in the field for which he or she is advocating, he or she will be more convincing. It is supported to the extent that the recipient views the source to have appropriate knowledge, skills, or experience, as well as the capacity of the source to deliver impartial, objective information (Belch & Belch, 1994; Gupta, Agarwal, & Singh, 2020). In similar ways, a celebrity in a marketing context can be quite powerful if it is known, who is speaking, what is being said, and how believable that person is. According to Jenkins, Ilicic, Barklamb and McCaffrey (2020), commercial celebrity with competence is more trustworthy or believable. Brubaker, (2020) suggested that a celebrity endorser's credibility is a useful source that has cognitive and

positive effects on purchase desire. It is also the celebrity's trustworthiness that mitigates the negative consequences of rumors. Also, Khan and Zaman (2021) found that celebrity credibility is a crucial component in raising the trust of voters for political brands. However, it is important to state that celebrities who endorse several brands are likely to be less credible compared to those who endorse individual products (Santos, Barros, & Azevedo, 2019; Silvera & Austad, 2004). Source credibility, according to Browning and Sweetser (2020), is a manifested attribute that impacts voter perceptions. Without credibility, the other traits of the endorser are unlikely to be useful in changing voters' attitudes and perceptions about a political party (Nisbett & DeWalt, 2016). This is consistent with the findings of Kumar, Kalidas, and Abbas (2016), who claim that celebrities are seen to be more trustworthy than non-celebrities and are able to impact voter perception towards a political brand. This discussion has led to the following hypothesis:

H2: Source credibility exert a positive and significant influence on Political brand image.

2.4.3 Celebrity Gender

Previous research into the relationship between endorser gender and consumer gender has yielded two opposing conclusions: endorser gender has no significant impact on consumer attitudes toward products and endorser gender has a significant impact on consumer attitudes toward products (Freiden, 1984 as cited in Samarasinghe, 2018). The researcher used a durable and neutral product to see if the gender of the endorser had any effect on consumers' attitudes toward television ads (Samarasinghe, 2018). As a consequence, the gender of the endorser had no bearing on the attitudes of the consumers (226 adults and students). In a similar study, Carsky and Zuckerman (1991), as cited by, Samarasinghe (2018) studied the association between male and female endorsers and three neutral products: Tylenol, a pain reliever tablet, Bailey's Irish Cream drink, and Club Med vacations. They discovered that when it came to the

chance of purchase and attitude toward the advertising, there was no connection between the endorser's gender and the respondent's gender.

Spasova and Taneva, (2021), on the other hand, discovered a link between the endorser and the consumer. Attractive female models elicited better responses than attractive male models in both genders, with males showing a distinct advantage. Consumers respond differently to female celebrity endorsers than to male celebrity endorsers (Huang, 2021), and advertising featuring female celebrities is rated higher than ads featuring male celebrities. Female supporters have also been demonstrated to be more trustworthy than male supporters (Mensah, 2021; Klar, 2018).

Caballero and Pride (1984) as cited by Arora, Prashar, Parsad, and Tata (2019) studied whether the gender of the endorser in a direct mail campaign had an impact on the recipients' purchasing decisions. They discovered that exhibiting an extremely attractive female on a photograph raised recipients' purchasing intentions more than showing an unattractive male, female, or even an appealing male. Tom et al., on the other hand, challenged TV viewers to identify the brands of products linked with the spokesperson broadcasting television advertising, such as dishwashing products, beer, and toilet tissue. Female spokespersons were more effective for female audiences, whereas male spokespersons were more effective for male audiences. One probable explanation is that female spokesperson have more referent power when dealing with female customers, but male spokespersons have more influence when dealing with male customers. This supports the argument posited by Boyd and Shank (2004), that customers consider endorsers of the same gender as more trustworthy, regardless of product category. Su and Tong (2016) also published a study that indicated that, while female respondents did not show a preference for female or male endorsers, male respondents were affected 2.51 times more by male endorsers in terms of purchasing intention than female respondents.

Voters, on the other hand, evaluate an advertisement featuring a model of the opposing sex higher than an advertisement featuring a model of their own sex, according to Baker and Churchill (1977). Su and Tong (2016) have arrived at a different conclusion. The researcher claims that a celebrity's gender has an impact on the type of product they are most suited for, with male celebrities being preferred for banking, financial services, and apparel, while female celebrities were preferred for cosmetics, soaps, and food products. Academic studies on the role of gender in studying the relationship between celebrity endorsement and political brand image are quite ambiguous. Grounding on this argument the study hypothesises that;

H3a: Gender significantly moderates the relationship between source attractiveness and political brand image.

H3b: Gender significantly moderates the relationship between celebrity credibility and political brand image.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

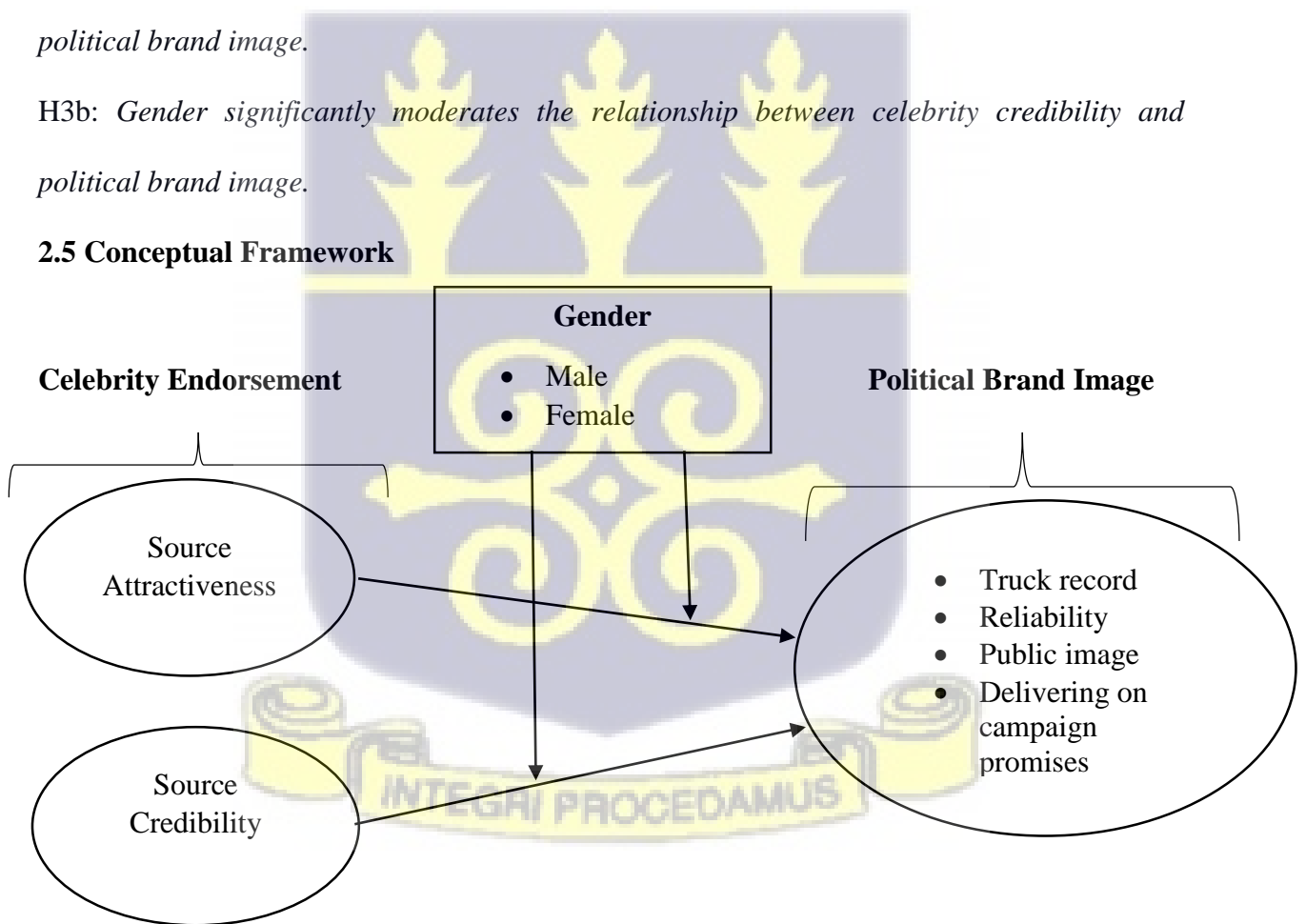


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author's Construct (2021)

Figure 2.1 reflects the pictorial representation of the variables in the study and how they interplay in the objectives. Figure 2.1 shows the thematic areas of the objectives of this study and how the main variables in the study hold up and theoretically link up to one another to achieve the stated objectives. The conceptual Framework as it is pictorially shown in Figure 1 reveals the four main variables employed in this study: source attractiveness, source credibility, political brand image, and gender. The independent variables in Figure 1 are source attractiveness and source credibility which are theoretically believed to have an influence on a political brand image which is the dependent variable. Also, there is an independent variable that plays a mediating role in the relationships between source attractiveness and political brand image on one side and source credibility; and political brand image on the other side. The link between source attractiveness and political brand image reflects objective 1 which sought to assess the influence of source attractiveness of celebrity on the brand image of political parties. Secondly, the link between source credibility and political brand image portrays objective 2 which sought to examine the influence of credibility of celebrities on political brand image. Further, objective three of this study examined the mediating role of gender on the relationship between source credibility, source attractiveness, and political brand image and this is evidenced by the link that settled on the path between source attractiveness and political brand image; and source credibility and political brand image.



CHAPTER THREE

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

3.1 Introduction

Political marketing has grown in popularity over the years (Hinson & Tweneboah-Koduah, 2010; Dankwah & Mensah, 2021; Munoz & Towner, 2017; Narteh et al., 2017; Lilleker, Lees-Marshment, & Jennifer Lees-Marshment, 2005; Schafferer, 2006), with political parties all over the world adopting traditional marketing practices to help them develop competitive strategies that put them ahead of their competitors.

Despite the fact that political marketing is a global phenomenon, some countries have been sluggish in adopting it. Scholars in political marketing like Scammell, 1999; O'cass, 1996 and Lilleker and Lees-Marshment, (2005) raised some concerns about the influence of marketing orientation on political activities, questioning the application of the traditional marketing theories in the political environment. Meanwhile, research has also suggested that political marketing has gained grounds in the global market as a result of the nature of democracy, which holds that voters are capable of holding elected politicians responsible (Ley, 2017).

In principle, this democratic process allows voters to assess political parties' brand image in order to make an informed decision about whether or not to vote for the political parties. In this regard, the political brand's attractiveness and credibility are critical. Celebrity endorsement is one of the key marketing methods that has been borrowed into the global political scene. In order to attract votes, prominent political parties around the world frequently hire celebrities to advocate for their businesses. In the context of Ghana, the situation had not been different. As a result, the research in this chapter looks at the influence of celebrity endorsement on political brand image in Ghana.

In context, this thesis focused on examining the impact of celebrity endorsement as a political marketing strategy, on the political brand image in Ghana. Due to time and financial constraints, the University of Ghana situated within the Ayawaso West Wuogon constituency in the Greater Accra region has been purposely selected for data collection. This chapter covers the history of Ghana, Ghana's political history, the emergence of political marketing, the political and constitutional provisions, and the overview of the electoral commission of Ghana.

3.2 Ghana's Historical Background.

Ghana is a country on Africa's western coast that is often known as the "Gateway to Africa." Ghana is bounded by Togo on the east, Cote d'Ivoire on the west, Burkina Faso on the north, and the Gulf of Guinea on the south. Ghana has a population of over 32 million people, who are divided into over a hundred ethnic groups, each with its own culture and language. However, the English language has become the country's lingua franca as a result of colonization (Ghanaweb, 2021). There are 16 administrative regions currently in Ghana. These territories are comparable to internal colonial borders drawn by colonialists before independence in order to keep traditional administrations and tribes intact. (Oelbaum, 2004). Ghana has over seventy ethnic groupings. The Akan make up 47.5 percent of the population, followed by the Mole-Dagbon (16.6%), the Ewe (13.9%), the Ga-Dangme (7.4%), the Gurma (5.7%), the Guan (3.7%), the Grusi (2.5%), the Kusaasi (1.2%), and the Birkpakpaam (3.5%). According to Mwakikagile (2017), in Ghana, socio-economic differences between ethnic groups contribute an important component to ethnic identity. Ethnicity combines culture, geographic, developmental and economic variables, transforming political criticism into ethnic expression. It is worth noting that history has led to some disparity—particularly among the Akans—that is likely to return in the 2024 general election.

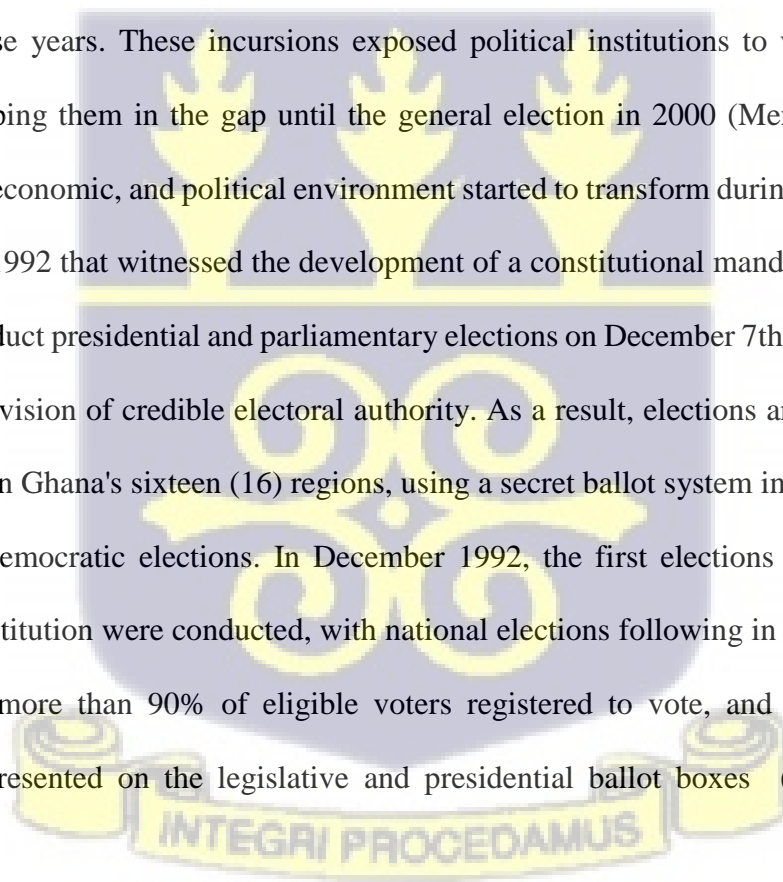
Although it is supposed that most Akans vote in unison, it was discovered that the other groups like the people of Fanti, Akyem, and Brong Ahafo, do not mostly vote with the people of Ashanti due to the Asantes' imperialist tendencies in the “pre-colonial era”. Within this time, the desires of the Asante King to extend his realm and have direct access to the British at the coast resulted in conflict among the Akans in Ghana's south. In the year, 1958, the then Conventions Peoples Party (CPP) led by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah enacted the Emergency Powers Act, separating the Ashanti and Brong Ahafo regions and allowing them to run their own administrative issues. This, Asante and Gyimah-Boadi (2004) noted that the people of Ashanti opposed, creating another source of contention between the two Akan groups; Brong and the Asante. These intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic conflicts have persisted in Ghana's northern areas since pre-colonial times, and are not limited to the Akans. Smaller ethnic groups seeking power and a way out of their status as second-class citizens with little political or traditional clout are said to be the source of these disputes. Conflicts over land and resources have also occurred between the various communities, which are identical to those found within the Akan tribe.

The word "northerner" refers to someone from the country's north. Though not an ethnic group, the term has become a means of identity and is frequently mistaken to represent the ethnicity of someone from the north. Asante and Gyimah-Boadi (2004), posited that there are approximately fifteen ethnic groups in Ghana's northern region, each with its own traditions, dialects, and customs. Nonetheless, they all share certain social and cultural traits. Due to the fact that the British concentrated more on developing the country's urban and southern regions during colonial times, there has always been a divide between the north and south, as well as rural and urban Ghana. The people of the Northern sector of Ghana and rural residents lack basic social amenities such as electricity, portable water, medical care among others enjoyed by those in the southern sector.

3.3 Ghana's Political System

Ghana's political system is democratic, with competitive elections. The electoral politics have been infused with a well-institutionalized party system between 1992 and 2020. The country has gone through many political revolutions throughout the years, from enslavement to colonial authority, “multi-party democracy”, “post-independence transition” to a military regime, and eventually restoration of the “multi-party democracy” in 1992 (Handley & Mills, 2001; Bob-Milliar & Paller, 2018).

Many party structures, communication infrastructure, and other “pro-democratic entities”, including, the election committee, were all brought in on the trail of military intrusion throughout these years. These incursions exposed political institutions to vulnerability and disrespect, keeping them in the gap until the general election in 2000 (Mensah, 2012). The socio-cultural, economic, and political environment started to transform during the momentous referendum in 1992 that witnessed the development of a constitutional mandate. This sparked the need to conduct presidential and parliamentary elections on December 7th every four years, under the supervision of credible electoral authority. As a result, elections are held in all 275 constituencies in Ghana's sixteen (16) regions, using a secret ballot system in accordance with the policy of democratic elections. In December 1992, the first elections under the fourth republican constitution were conducted, with national elections following in 1996. In the year 2000, slightly more than 90% of eligible voters registered to vote, and six parties were completely represented on the legislative and presidential ballot boxes (Agyeman-Duah, 2005).



3.4 Political History of Ghana

Politics in Ghana appears, to have always been marked by ethnic divisions. According to Kisaka and Nyadera (2019), the politicization of ethnicity was brought about by the African state democratization and multi-party politics, which can be witnessed throughout Ghana's history and continues to influence politics in recent times. Michalopoulos and Papaioannou, (2015) also remarked that ethnicity grew more prominent in Ghanaian politics as a result of the diverse intensities with which successive regimes through their policies and varying degrees of success, have politicized ethnicity. The military and civilian regimes in Ghana have replicated “pre-independence voting patterns” between the “Danquah-Busia bloc”, principally Asantes, and the Nkrumahists (Amponsah, 2020). These two parties were led by J.B. Danquah and Kwame Nkrumah, respectively (Whitfield, 2009). Both of these parties had opposing philosophical perspectives, with one appealing to the elite and perceived to be ethnically exclusive (UGCC) and the other more ethnically inclusive (CPP) and viewed as a people's party. In recent years, both the NPP and the NDC have been accused of engaging in similar methods. The NPP has been connected to the pre-independence Danquah/Busia heritage, while the NDC has been likened to the CPP's (Whitfield, 2009).

Ghanaian politicians were already dividing the nation along ethnic lines prior to independence, with ethnicity as a unifying system and a method of eliciting public support. These ethnically related organizations, founded in response to the CPP's strong resistance, have formed coalitions to fight the “governing party”. The election was won by the CPP in 1952, 1954, and 1956. Since 1954, a plethora of new political parties has emerged to contest in elections along ethnic and regional lines (Ghanaweb, 2008). The Northern People's Party (NPP), for example, was created by its leaders and elites to defend the interests of the northern people. “The Togoland Congress” was another example. “This organization which was founded in 1951

combine “Togoland's British” and “French-defined regions” (Morrison, 2004).

Three months after the National Liberation Movement's (NLM's) elections, an Asante nationalist movement arose. The Asante people controlled the leadership of this group, which was established to protect the people of Asante as well as their institutions. The NLM was battling for national authority in the Volta Region and attempted to form coalitions with the Anlo Youth Association and the Northern People's Party (Allman, 1993).

The expansion of the NLM in Ghana has resulted in a number of challenges. The NLM brought with it an age of insecurity and violence in the Ashanti region and its surroundings, as well as the issue of whether elections would be conducted before independence and what sort of constitution Ghana would choose. The NLM promoted elections, stating that they had emerged after the 1954 elections and that further polls were required to establish if either party was popular (Whitfield, 2009).

Though the CPP won elections in 1956, it performed badly in the Asante, Volta, and Northern regions, encouraging the NLM to continue its call for a federal government. Southern Togoland did not participate in the independence festivities, and disagreement between the people of Ga and the CPP called for the establishment of “the Ga-Shifimokpee” or “The Ga-Standfast Association”. The “Ga-Shifimokpee” combined forces with the group to resist the CPP.

In December, 1957, “Avoidance of Discrimination” Act was passed, which outlawed the establishment of political parties along regional, religious or ethnic lines. The Togoland Congress Party and the National Liberation Movement, as well as the concept of federalism, were all crushed as a consequence of the passage of this legislation. The “quasi-federalist regional assemblies” established by the Independence Constitution of 1957 were also

dismantled in 1959.

The CPP abolished the NLM and demanded an investigation into its practices. In addition to removing the British, Chief Regional Commissioners were appointed by Nkrumah. He also approved the Emergency Powers Act in January 1958, which gave him the ability to separate Brong Ahafo and form its own House of Chiefs (Asante & Gyimah-Boadi, 2004). As a consequence, recurrent clashes between the Asantes and the Brongs have persisted to this day. At the same time, Nkrumah promoted all pro-CPP chiefs in the Ashanti region to the level of paramount chiefs (Jallow, 2014).

Ethnic conflicts persisted throughout Ghana's First and Second Republics, and the politics of ethnicity exacerbated ethnic tensions. The opposition united in 1957 to institute the UP, headed by an Kofi Abrefa Busi, an Akan. In 1966, Major Afrifa (Asante) and Colonel Kotoka (Ewe) conducted a coup, but the unity was short-lived. In 1967, Akan junior officers conducted a coup attempt, during which Kotoka was slain.

In the same year, Afrifa was able to capture control of the military administration and the “National Liberation Council, without the assistance of Kotoka, signifying the start of the divide between the Akans, mainly the Asante and the Ewes (Okai, 2017). When the NLC was handed over to Busia in 1969, the division became even more obvious. The dismissal of 568 workers in the public sector, under the 1969 constitution's Transitional Provisions, allegedly due to an overrepresentation of Ewes in high positions, and the fact that the National Alliance of Liberals (NAL) leader, K.A. Gbedemah, was an Ewe, all helped to heighten conflict (Asante & Gyimah-Boadi, 2004). The people of the Volta region have voted against alleged “Akan-based parties”; the Popular Front Party (PFP) due to the fact that it was led by Victor Owusu,

an Ashanti, who the “Voltarian” overwhelmingly opposed due to his claims about the “Ewes” being inward-oriented (Adu-Amankwaah, 2008). In several Ghanaian newspaper stories, the two main regions; Ashanti and Volta have been tagged, the "World Banks" in terms of the number of votes for the NPP and NDC respectively, in the Fourth Republic. Ghana has gone through various stages where the governing leadership attempted to separate governance from the country's ethnic politics. However, ethnicity appears to have emerged on the political stage on multiple occasions.

Under I.K. Acheampong's leadership, the “National Reconciliation Commission” (NRC) came to power in 1972 and made a concerted effort to limit the influence of ethnicity in Ghanaian politics. The ex-CPP and ex-Progress Party's activities were banned, and political opposition and activity were restricted. To combat the challenges generated by “tribalism” in Ghana’s political system, the NRC prohibited the term "tribe" from all national papers and urged against ethnic expressions to promote national unity (Glate, 2015). The NRC went further to encourage ethnic harmony by asking that the surnames of ethnic origin and tribal face markings be abolished. I.K. Acheampong was credited with forming Ghana's most ethnically balanced government; yet, Acheampong's interactions with Ewes in Ghana, as well as his tense relations with Togo as a result of rejecting their goals, drove Ewes away and generated widespread dissatisfaction. After a series of coup attempts, Acheampong and the NRC was deposed in 1975, much like the majority of Ghanaian administrations.

Following the collapse of the NRC, the coup brought the Supreme Military Council. The SMC's goal in gaining power was to disrupt Acheampong's political center and replace it with an isolated ruling alliance to run the country. This new type of government jeopardized people's clientelistic ties and cut them from accessing direct and indirect opportunity to the decision-

making apparatus on which they relied (Glate, 2015). This served to unite the various ethnic groups and elicited responses based on class and ethnicity. The Ewe, Akan, and several northern groups showed their displeasure with the SMC, but the hotbed of opposition was supposed to spread from the coast to Kumasi. Another area of society became politicized as a result of the SMC regime's displeasure. Local community organizations began to politicize and participate in political activism in 1977, three major causes prompted ethnic factions who had previously opposed the government to ultimately mobilize against it. They criticized the government's shrinking resource availability and demanded compensation, as well as the government's declining benefits (Glate, 2015). Though some literature on Ghanaian ethnic cohesion gives the impression that some ethnic groupings are never able to reach an agreement, especially Ewe and Asante in Ghanaian history, the research revealed that ethnic groups in Ghana value power and the significance of patronage relationships above ethnic divides.

Economic growth at the time, and even still in Ghana, as well as the government's capacity to fulfill its commitments and pledges made to voters, are vital to a regime's success, and the primary reason for the SMC's opposition. During the SMC administration, the "urban ethnic" elite had a key role as the principal speakers in policy reforms. Protests against the administration took many different forms. Petition signatures were collected, public debate and criticism escalated, and professionals withheld their services in protest. Although there existed ethnic solidarity during this time, ethnic divides and violence occurred as separate ethnic groups campaigned for their own interests, which were often limited and detrimental to some ethnic groups. Growing dissatisfaction in the country, formed a feeling of oneness that culminated in the establishment of the "Union Government" concept, or "Unigov" in Ghana, in October 1976. The "Union Government's" principal purpose was the intention to form "a democratically sanctioned non-party federation of key horizontal (class-linked) and vertical

(ethnically based) groups, including the military and police." The council proposed the concept of "Unigov" in the strive to return power to civilian control, and in January 1977, the council again established a commission and selected Justice Koranteng-Addow as its chairman. An effort to establish a Union Government could not succeed, making the ethnic elite finally find a single cause to rally around, mobilizing community conflicts that lasted long into what had come to be known as "the Spring of 1978"(Chazan, 1982).

The "Armed Forces Revolutionary Council" (AFRC) was eager to reconstitute a civilian government and adopted a draft constitution that had been provided to them with certain changes. They proceeded to organise a general elections that had been set for the month of June and July, and brought to the public knowledge, the new constitution. The party then stepped down after the elections, enabling the Third Republic's new president and parliament to take office on September 24, 1979. Dr. Hilla Limann, a northern diplomat with Nkrumah connections and a PNP candidate, was chosen as the next president. During his presidency, he struggled to consolidate Ghana's democracy, but he supported the newly founded democracy and, unlike the previous government, valued people's human rights. With the unhappiness produced by the crumbling economy, there was little opposition to a December 31, 1981, coup by flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings and a handful of enlisted and retired soldiers to depose Limann and his administration.

Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings then formed the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), which consisted of seven members and was presided over by Rawlings. When the PNDC came to power in 1979, it suspended the constitution, officially dismissed the president and his government, delayed Parliament, and banned all existing political parties, creating a unilateral authority. The PNDC urged citizens to use their political power by organising defense

committees in their areas and workplaces.

The PNDC, on the other hand, decided in December 1982 to decentralise the powers of government from Accra and distribute same to several districts, regions, and local communities. They have also decided to designate district and regional secretaries to wield administrative responsibility and lead district and regional councils. By 1984, the PNDC had attempted yet another shift, establishing the “National Commission on Democracy” to explore the procedures needed to establish participatory democracy in Ghana. A "Blue Book" was created in July 1987, defining the processes for elections at district levels in the late 1988 to form district assemblies (Bureau of African Affairs).

As a consequence of external and internal demand for democracy, a “Consultative Assembly” was established, comprised of delegates from different geographic regions as well as civic and commercial groups. In order to establish the fourth republic, the Consultative Assembly was tasked with developing a draft constitution that incorporated PNDC viewpoints. The PNDC approved the constitution after it was written, and a referendum was held on April 28, 1992, with the constitution receiving 92 percent approval. The restriction on party politics was repealed on May 18, 1992, in preparation for multiparty elections. On January 7, 1993, the constitution went into effect. Following this, the PNDC attempted to disassociate itself from what it had previously been, forming the NDC with its supporters, which has remained faithful to Nkrumah's ideas. The NPP was created along Busia/Danquah lines as well, and it is still regarded as an Akan party today.

Learning about Ghana's past is important, in the sense that, Ghana retains its alignment with the Busia/Danquah and Nkrumah periods even in the Fourth Republic. Despite the fact that the NDC is tagged as an Ewe party due to the origin of the founder, Rawlings, it is profoundly

based on the Nkrumah heritage, which has drawn many groups to it. A good foundation was laid to analyse the number of ethnic orientations in Ghanaian politics and how the elite takes advantage of it.

3.4.1 The Political and Constitutional Provisions

In April 1992, a national referendum ratified a new constitution which was based on a model adopted by the US. Ghana is a federal democracy with a multiparty political system and an executive presidency. The unicameral Parliament is the national legislature, with 275 members elected every year in a general election. Prior to the 7-8 December 2012 elections, Parliament was expanded from 230 to 275 members. The President, who is also the “commander-in-chief” of Ghana's armed forces, is elected to rule for two four-year terms in democratic elections. If no presidential candidate receives more than 50% of the vote, a new election must be held within 21 days between the two leading contenders.

Prior to a general election, a flag bearer of a political party appoints a running mate, who eventually becomes the vice president, should the party win power. Upon assumption of office, the president in consultation with the council of elders, appoint Ministers of state, who are subsequently approved by parliament. The president is additionally advised by two bodies: a twenty-five-member council of state made up primarily of leaders of the various regions together with president appointees, and a national security council of twenty members, led by the Vice President.

A regional coordinating council assists each of the sixteen (16) regional ministers, one for each region. There are currently 260 administrative districts, each of which is led by a district chief executive and has its own district legislature. Several delegates to the state council are elected

by regional colleges, which are made up of representatives chosen by district assemblies and regional houses of chiefs.

3.5 The Post Rawlings Regime

Mr. Jerry John Rawlings was forbidden by the constitutional provisions from running for re-election in the December 2000 presidential election after 19 years in government. For this reason, vice president John Evans Atta Mills was given the baton to contest on the ticket of the NDC. Unfortunately, he lost the election to the New Patriotic Party leader John Agyekum Kuffour leading to the first democratic transition of power, ever witnessed in Ghana. In the same general elections, the NPP also gained the majority of parliamentary seats.

Kufuor received an outright majority in the first round of the presidential election in December 2004, receiving 53.4 percent of the vote. His primary opponent, NDC's Atta Mills, received 43.7 percent of the vote, with an 83 percent turnout. The NPP won 128 seats, the NDC 94, the PNC four, and the CPP three in parliamentary elections. In his second term, Kufuor committed to making poverty reduction a top priority.

In December 2008, the parliamentary and presidential elections were extremely close. The NDC won that election but failed to secure all their parliamentary seats. Specifically, the NDC obtained 115 parliamentary seats, the NPP; 108, the PNC, 2 the CPP; 1 and 4 seats to the independent candidates. Atta Mills of the NDC (50.2%) narrowly defeated the NPP's Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo (49.8%) in the second round of the presidential election, overturning the first-round result of Akufo-Addo, 49.1% and Atta Mills, 47.9%. Observers from the Commonwealth were present.

Following President Atta Mills' death in 2012, John Dramani Mahama, the vice president at

the time, was sworn in as President, as required by law. The NDC won 148 of the 275 seats and the NPP, 123 seats in the expanded Parliament in December 2012 elections, with a turnout of more than 80%. In the first round, the NDC's candidate, incumbent President Mahama, received 50.7 percent of the vote, with the NPP's Akufo-Addo receiving 47.7% and the other six contenders receiving the remaining 1.6 percent. The elections were conducted in the presence of Commonwealth observers led by former Lesotho Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili, who said that the election had been generally peaceful but that the level of women's participation as candidates, and thus as representatives, was very low.

In 2016, the incumbent president, John Dramani Mahama, and the flag bearer of the National Democratic Party (NDC) lost to Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo Addo of the New Patriotic Party. The transition was smooth without any court issues with regards to the presidential election, though some members of the then ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) accused the main opposition party, the New Patriotic Party of bringing experts from other countries to help hack the election. The 2020 General elections, as per the constitution was held on 7 December. The incumbent President Nana Akufo-Addo of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) was re-elected in the first round after securing a majority of the votes. Former President John Dramani Mahama was not convinced with the outcome and threatened to contest the results.

The NPP, however, lost its parliamentary majority, garnering exactly as many seats as the opposition NDC, resulting in a hung parliament with a single independent serving as kingmaker. The National Democratic Congress (NDC) ended up in court, just like in the 2012 general election, to challenge election results, claiming that the outcome did not reflect the results announced at polling stations across the country. This, many people including the international communities believed was a democratic step by the affected political party. In the

end, the court ruled in favour of the new Patriotic Party on the basis that there was not enough evidence of proof of any electoral manipulations.

3.6 Arms of Government

3.6.1 Executive Branch

The Office of the Presidency, along with his Council of State, establishes executive authority. The president is the commander in chief of the armed forces, as well as the head of state and government. He appoints the vice president as well. More than fifty percent of the presidential appointment for ministerial positions, according to the constitution must be chosen from members of Parliament. The elections in 2012, was contested in the Supreme Court of Ghana by NPP's Nana Akuffo Addo, with the Supreme Court ruling that the President, John Dramani Mahama, had legally won the election.

3.6.2 Legislative Branch

The Legislative powers of government are vested in Parliament, consisting of a unicameral 275-member body plus the Speaker. To become law, legislation must receive the president's approval, who possesses a qualified veto over all measures except those accompanied by a vote of urgency. Members of parliament are elected by simple majority vote in single-seat constituencies for a four-year tenure. The voting method has promoted Ghanaian politics to become a two-party system, as predicted by Duverger's law. This implies that there are two major political parties, and it is extremely impossible for anybody to gain electoral victory under the flag of any other party. Since 1992, elections have been conducted every four years. The presidential and parliamentary elections are held simultaneously, usually on December 7th. The powers of the judiciary are separate from the other two arms of government. The Ghanaian Supreme Court has broad judicial review powers. At the request of any aggrieved

person, it is permitted by the Constitution to rule on the constitutionality of any legislation or executive action. The hierarchy of courts is mostly derived based on the British legal systems. All civil and criminal concerns fall under the authority of the courts. The Superior Courts of Judicature, founded under the 1992 Constitution, and the Inferior Courts, established by the act of Parliament. The Superior Court of Ghana, the Court of Appeal, the High Court of Justice, and the Regional Tribunals are the Superior Courts, from highest to lowest. Ever Since the Courts Act 2002, the Circuit Courts, Magistrate Courts, and special courts (such as the Juvenile Courts) have been considered inferior courts. Mrs. Georgina Theodora Wood was sworn in office as the first female Chief Justice of Ghana's Supreme Court in 2007.

3.7 The Electoral Commission of Ghana

The Head office of the Electoral Commission is located in Accra, despite the fact that the Chairperson has the authority to convene the Commission anywhere in Ghana. The Commission must convene at least once every two (2) months, for a total of six (6) meetings each year. The Commission's seven (7) members jointly form the organization's policymaking and administration body, as well as exercise general supervision over its staff's activities. The Electoral Commission "Act of 1993 (Act 451)" authorizes the Commission to appoint such Committees as it deems appropriate to carry out its tasks. Such committees may not be members of council, but should be led by a member appointed by the Commission. The Commission is not bound by the conclusions of such bodies. All seven Commissioners have the same authority over the Commission's officers and other staff. The Chairperson and two Deputy Chairpersons, who are permanently stationed in the Head Office, represent the Commission on a daily basis. They carry out the Commission's managerial functions on its behalf, either collectively or individually.

3.7.1 Departments

At the head office, there are seven (7) departments. A Director oversees each of these divisions. Elections, Finance, Information Technology, Human Resource and General Services, Research and Monitoring, Training, and Public Affairs are the departments involved.

3.7.2 Regional Offices

A regional office of the Commission is led by a Director, in whose absence, his or her deputy acts. A Regional Office and its staff, unlike the Head Office, are not formally organized into functional divisions and departments. A Regional Director and his team oversee operations as well as finance and administration. As a result, a Regional Director reports to the Commission via the Head Office Directors, depending on the situation. The Commission is attempting to place its offices in the majority of the 16 regions in its own facilities. In order to provide a suitable office for the Commission's activities, the Commission's office is physically segregated from government department offices.

3.7.3 District Offices

A District Electoral Officer (DEO) is in charge of a District Office of the Commission and has direct reporting to the Regional Director. As it is with a regional office, there are no functional divisions or departments in a District Office.

3.7.4 Election Officials

Thousands of officials from all categories are assigned to temporary electoral tasks by the Commission during elections. These people may not be direct employees or members of the Commission but plays significant roles during this period. These officials are recruited by the District Electoral Officer (DEO), who works closely with them. In this regard, the DEO must:

Recruit the best people for the job, organize and supervise their proper training, instill in them the proper attitude toward electoral work (impartiality, probity, and accountability) and maintain the Commission's integrity, coordinate their operations in a spirit of teamwork, and accord them the importance, respect, and dignity that they deserve.

3.7.5 The Emergence of Political Marketing in Ghana

Ghana's historic elections in 2000 were regarded as "extraordinary" by Handley and Mill (2001). This achievement may be credited to the manner in which the whole election process that year generated enough optimism for Ghana's democratic process to continue. That election according to Mensah (2011), was particularly significant in Ghanaian history, being the first in the country's history that a democratically elected government handed over to another through the ballot box.

This remarkable feat sparked a series of debates among the press, academia, and other players in the bid to better understand what exactly contributed to the effective preparation and active participation in the elections (Youde, 2005) This success did not come easily, and it took a conscious and persistent effort on the part of these political parties to implement novel marketing strategies in their campaign in order to outperform their competitors (Mensah, 2012). This innovative campaign strategy that appealed to the general public exemplified worldwide political marketing and communication trends. Mills and Handley (2000) and Smith, (2002) both agree that the trends are mostly positive, notwithstanding a few hiccups. Marketing and communication were crucial throughout the whole campaign process in 2012. Election campaigns in Ghana attract a lot of media interest, particularly during parliamentary and presidential elections, for which the 2012, 2016 and 2020 election campaigns were not excepted. Executives of political parties recruited consultants to assist with marketing

techniques towards an effort to increase their political parties' competitiveness as well as candidate success in elections by enhancing communication and persuasiveness (Tweneboah-Koduah et al., 2010).

The Author again believed that, political parties that used marketing and branding strategies beat their competitors and seemed to favourably sway voters from the conventional reasons like tribalism, ethnicity, and the strength of incumbency. The experience of the PPP outnumbering long-established political parties such as the CPP and PNC is a famous example. This move, Gyimah-Boadi and Yakah (2012) think, was linked to a variety of issues during the 2012 elections, including an abysmal “pre-poll description of the brand”, its features, and the product, among others. When comparing political parties to commercial brands, most observers and practitioners seem to use the phrase "political branding." As a result, branding is progressively becoming part of Ghanaian political literature (French & Smith, 2010; Keller, 2002).



CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The methodological approach to primary data collection, processing, and presentation is discussed in this chapter. The usual strategy that a researcher follows when undertaking a research endeavor is known as a research methodology (Igwenagu, 2016; Kumar, 2018). The research approach, research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, research area, instrument, data collection procedure, and data analysis are all covered in this section.

4.2 Research Paradigm

A paradigm is “a set of shared views, values, and practices among members of a scientific community that serves as a guide or map, defining the types of problems scientists should explore and the types of explanations they accept” (Kuhn, 2012). As a consequence, these beliefs and values may be represented as “a continuum; objectivism at one end and subjectivism” at the other end (Matney, 2019); resulting in various classifications that distinguishes paradigms (Majid, Khan, Yasmin, Rehman, Yousafzai & Tariq, 2020). Regardless, positivism, interpretivism, realism, relativism, and critical realism are the most commonly suggested paradigms in social science research that mirror the primary hypothetical philosophical feelings (McGhee & Grant, 2017). As a result, these various study paradigms provide the viewpoint from which the researcher designs the methodology used in the study (Ishtiaq, 2019). According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), each paradigm is a set of epistemological, ontological, and methodological assumptions that serve as a framework for separating and clarifying them (see Table 4.1). As a result, an explanation of the philosophical viewpoint taken for this investigation is required.

Table 4.1: Research Paradigms

<p>“ONTOLOGY (What is the nature of reality?)’</p>	<p>“EPISTEMOLOGY (What is the nature of knowledge generated?)”</p>	<p>METHODOLOGY (“How is knowledge created?”)</p>
<p>POSITIVISM “There is a single, objective and tangible reality”</p>	<p>“Value- Free. Knowledge acquired is objective, and free of temporal influences and context-free”.</p>	<p>“Researchers develop research questions and hypotheses which are subsequently tested empirically, under controlled conditions”. “Deductive reasoning”.</p>
<p>INTERPRETIVIST ; “There are several realities which are influenced by human experiences and perceptions”. “Reality is socially constructed socially”.</p>	<p>“Value-Laden” “Knowledge created is subjective, time-bound and context dependent”</p>	<p>“Acquisition of knowledge comes with the recognition of the various interpretations and constructions of reality that exist, and attempting to establish patterns”. “Inductive logic and emergent design”</p>
<p>REALISM “Reality is “real” yet just partly and randomly comprehensible, necessitating triangulation from numerous sources in an attempt to enhance better understanding”. “Relativism Multiple realities exist”. “Reality as truth is not absolute”, “it is relative, and</p>	<p>“Value-Cognisant/Value-aware. Findings are most likely to be true”. “Researcher needs to triangulate any perceptions collected”. “The interpretation of the world necessitate some form of human intervention”</p>	<p>“Social phenomena are understood through hypotheses that are tested in order to develop patterns of relationships and hence, most possible explanation. Hypothetic Deduction”. “The acquisition of knowledge is influenced by the global</p>

<p>it depends on something and it does exist”</p>		<p>view and research paradigm of a researcher”. “Researchers focus more on creating and developing new theories - useful solutions to specific Problems”.</p>
<p>CRITICAL REALISM “There are two worlds - transitive and intransitive”. “What we witness and learn with our mind – the views of reality is transitive. Intransitive expresses reality as it exists”.</p>	<p>“Transitive world is value-laden and changing continually”. “Intransitive world has underlying structures and mechanisms that are 'relatively enduring - that is what we want to Study”.</p>	<p>“Researchers strive to Dismantle and comprehend the structures and mechanisms which underpin the subjective realities that exist”. “Triangulation from several sources is necessary to figure it out. retroductive / reasoning”.</p>

Source: Boateng, (2014)

This study adopted a positivist approach. The positivist technique of examining social reality, according to Hasan (2016), is founded on the philosophical ideology of August Comte, a French philosopher who relied on observation as a tool for studying human behavior. Nonetheless, Johnson and Duberley (2000) noted that numerous research in social science now derives their insight methodologies from agreement or disapproval to positivism. In effect, most philosophers believe that positivism is now the basis and driving force behind management research (Johnson & Duberley, 2000). The positivist framework must be understood in terms of scientific principles and assumptions. These include; determinism,

empiricism, parsimony, and generality, according to Williams (2020).

According to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), "determinism" implies that occurrences are caused by a variety of factors, hence perceiving such connections is crucial for desire and control. The term "empiricism" refers to a collection of empirical evidence that is verifiable, to support theories or assumptions. 'Parsimony' refers to explaining a phenomenon most mildly and understandably possible, while 'generality' refers to the process of summarizing a particular phenomenon's perspective to the rest of the world. In line with the ensuing argument, the positivist approach was considered suitable, since the main goal of this research is to investigate the relationship between celebrity endorsement and political brand image, and also test the hypotheses, using data obtained from a substantial sample size, to make it possible for generalization of results obtained.

Creswell and Creswell (2017), indicate that the philosophical techniques and methods adopted by a researcher may necessitate the use of quantitative, qualitative, or mixed research methods. This study adopts a quantitative research method, which essentially supports positivist claims for developing knowledge (i.e., cause and effect relationships, research questions and hypothesis testing, and the use of theories) through research designs such as experiments and surveys, data collection, and analysis (Kennedy, Farrell, Paden, Hill, Jolivet, Cooper, & Schindler, 2011; Creswell, 2014). Hence, the researcher deployed the Social Influence Theory (SIT) and the Theory of Planned behavior to account for the relationships (Osei-Frimpong et al., 2019; Ababio, 2019).

4.3 Research Instrument and Method

The researcher employed a survey approach in collecting primary data for this study. This was achieved, using questionnaires. According to Kumeckpor (2002) a questionnaire is a master plan

containing relevant questions relating to a particular problem or phenomenon to be examined. The questionnaire was closed-ended which was adapted based on the objectives of the study. The questions were scaled using a five-point Likert scale to enable the researcher in making deductions or inferences between endogenous variables and the exogenous variables.

The questionnaire was chosen for the study because it was deemed fit for literature, an effective and efficient way of gathering data from a substantial sample size, within a short period (Oosterveld, Vorst, & Smits, 2019; Rowley, 2014). In order not to succumb to interview bias, Banerjee (2019) recommend the use of close-ended questionnaires as respondents do not provide their answers which are often based on personal judgment. Moreover, respondents have ample time to provide responses they have critically thought of. Furthermore, the merit associated with the use of the questionnaire in data collection is that it is less expensive (Jager, Putnick, & Bornstein, 2017).

Concerning the Likert scale used in measuring the variables for the study, respondents were asked to tick appropriately where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree. The questionnaire had three sections that captured the demographics of the study, source attractiveness, source credibility, and political brand image.

Section A obtained demographic data of respondents which covered six (6) questions in all. The first question sought to identify the gender of the respondents, the second had to do with the respondents' age group, the next question followed with their educational level and occupation. The question was posed on whether the gender of the celebrity mattered and if it did matter, respondents were asked to indicate the gender group of celebrities that affected their voting patterns. To ensure that the outcome of the study is retrieved from the targeted

respondents, a question was asked about the respondents being registered voters and again the number of times voted. This was necessary because all respondents who answered ‘no’ to the question “Are you a registered voter in Ghana” and respondents who had not voted before were cleaned from the final data for analysis. This was to ensure respondent eligibility and a reflective outcome of the actual situation in Ghanaian politics.

Section B captured the instruments for measuring political brand image such as “*I vote for the political party that deliver on what it promises and what it stands for*”, “*I like political parties with positive public image*”. These scales were adapted from Daama, (2018). Section C captured questions on source attractiveness which entailed questions like “*Good looking celebrities always align themselves with my preferred political party*”, “*Celebrities that are appealing associate themselves with the political party I choose to vote for*”. Scales on source attractiveness and source credibility were adapted from Wei and Wu (2013).

The last section (D) captured indicators for source credibility. Questions were asked about the reliability of the celebrity, honesty, sincerity among others. For instance, “*Celebrities that are honest usually approve my choice of a political party; Celebrities that endorse my preferred political party are reliable*”. These scales were also adapted from Wei and Wu (2013). Researchers recommend that to review the wordings of the items for easy comprehension by the respondents during the actual survey, the questionnaire to be used for data collection, should be piloted using a smaller portion of the estimated sample size (Geisen & Murphy, 2020). Hence to pretest and assess the variables, some tutors were entreated to review the questionnaire for clarity, consistency, and possible repetitions. This ensured the effective structuring of the questionnaire for a clearer understanding. In ensuring reliability and consistency, the researcher conducted a prior study engaging 40 respondents on the university

of Ghana campus, representing the sample size for the pilot study.

The piloting enabled the researcher to revise the research instrument and improved the data collecting technique. Data was gathered using self-administered questionnaires, as well as an online link to the softcopy of the questionnaire. Some of the respondents were initially contacted for approval to complete the questionnaire before the online survey was conducted. Only respondents who were willing to assist in the research were sent the link or a hard copy of the questionnaire to complete (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The researcher received two hundred and seventy (270) questionnaires out of the three hundred administered.

4.4 Research Design

Research design serves as a road map for attaining objectives and gathering data to answer the study question (Turner, Cardinal, & Burton, 2017). The research design, commonly employed for a study is exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). This study is explanatory because it examines the relationship between celebrity endorsement and political brand image. Rahi (2017), indicated that there are five different strategies for collecting and analyzing data to serve as empirical evidence: experiment, surveys, archival analysis, history, and case studies, all of which can be used for exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory research. The survey approach was judged appropriate because the focus of this study was to test hypotheses based on data obtained from large sample size to allow for generalisation (Saunders et al., 2009).

A survey, according to Apuke (2017), is a process that selects participants from a population from who data is collected and analysed to draw conclusions based on the population. As a result, a survey is a way of gathering data about the features, actions, or views of a large group

of people, referred to as a populace (Rahi, 2017). Depending on whether they reject or include explicit views on a time measurement, survey designs are classed as "cross-sectional" or "longitudinal." (Selase, Selase, Ayishetu, Comfort, Stanley, & Ebenezer, 2019).

Following the nature of the scientific inquiry that underpins this study, the explanatory research design was used. As a result, the logic of cause-and-effect relationships among the constructs of interest – celebrity attractiveness, celebrity credibility (independent variables), and political brand image (Dependent variable) – is driving the research. An explanatory design study is used to determine the degree and nature of correlations, Explanatory studies examine a setting or a specific topic to explain the boundaries of relationships between variables (Creswell, 2017). The goal of explanatory research is to figure out why some things happen to predict what will happen in the future (Spector, 2019). The fact that the data is quantitative almost always necessitates the employment of a statistical test to prove the validity of the correlations and also informs the decision to approach the subject quantitatively.

4.5 Research Approach

The quantitative research approach was employed based on the main aim of the studies, specific objectives/hypotheses, and the type of primary data to be collected and evaluated. The concepts (celebrity endorsement and political brand image) were by nature calculable and subject to statistical influence. According to Creswell (2017), a quantitative approach explains events by gathering numerical data and analyzing it using mathematically based tools, such as statistics. Quantitative methods, which typically employ rational logic, seek predictability in human lives by disaggregating the social world into empirical additives known as variables (constructs), which can be numerically represented as frequencies or rates, and whose relationships with one another can be investigated using statistical strategies, and which can be accessed through

researcher-introduced stimuli and systematic measurement (Ben-Shlomo, Brookes, & Hickman, 2013; Rahman, 2020).

This method usually begins with data collecting based on a hypothesis or idea, and it is then followed by the use of descriptive or inferential statistics (Amrhein, Trafimow, & Greenland, 2019). Inferential approaches are frequently called as such since conclusions from statistical hypotheses tests lead to trendy extrapolations about a population's features. Quantitative methods are frequently predicated on the premise that there is a singular "truth" that exists, regardless of what people believe (Shah, Shah, & Khaskhelly, 2019)

Because it is often made up of a larger sample that is chosen at random, the quantitative impacts are expected to be generalised to a whole population or a sub-population (Rahman, 2020). A few challenges with quantitative research methods include the fact that it takes snapshots of a phenomenon rather than in-depth analysis, and it ignores test-takers' and testers' reviews as well as what they indicate through something (Rahman, 2020).

4.6 Sampling

4.6.1 Target Population

A study population is a group of persons who are the focus of research or inquiry. This study looked at students at the University of Ghana, Legon, located in Ghana's Ayawaso West Wuogon constituency. The university is located around 13 kilometers northeast of Accra, Ghana's capital. It was established in 1948 as the University College of the Gold Coast and became a full university in 1961. The university currently has four colleges (colleges of health sciences, basic and applied sciences, humanities, and education), five (5) institutes, nineteen (19) schools, and eleven (11) learning centers. It is also Ghana's biggest and oldest public

university, as well as the largest and oldest in the country. Currently, there are about 60,000 students enrolled (University of Ghana, 2021).

University of Ghana students were considered an appropriate population because there is precedent to support this choice. In the first place, similar studies (Munyoro & Nhevere, 2019; Arah, 2012) focused on university students. It was also picked because of its prestigious standing as Ghana's oldest, largest, and most-endowed institution. Furthermore, when compared to other schools of learning, it has the largest population. Once again, it is claimed that enormous celebrity endorsement occurred in the constituency in which the university is located. Finally, Legon was chosen because of its proximity to the researcher, which aided in overcoming time and cost restrictions.

4.6.2 Sample Size & Sampling Procedure

It is crucial to identify the representative sample size before selecting the sample to be surveyed. The sample size is a fair representation of the overall population (Anderson, Kelley, & Maxwell, 2017). This is the total number of persons who are chosen for a study. According to Denscombe (2017), researchers employ samples in studies for a variety of reasons and purposes including cost, degree of exactness, in conclusion, speed of work, time, and availability and accessibility of aspects of the population being studied. This study used a total sample of 270 voters out of the registered voter population of the University of Ghana students, as considered to represent the total population for the purpose of this study. The choice was based on the assumption that Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) requires a sample size of at least 100 respondents (Hair et al., 2019). This is also within the recommended range of 200 to 300, as suggested by Garver and Mentzer (1999). Also, Kristensen and Eskildsen (2010) indicated that a sample size of about 250 is often appropriate for PLS-SEM, and this was subsequently affirmed by Hair et al. (2011). According to Bradley and Henseler (2007), the

amount of money and time allotted to the survey will often determine the sample size for data collection. This provides further justification for the choice of the sample size of 270.

4.7 Justification of Study Sampling Techniques

Respondents were chosen using non-probability sampling procedures for this study. Purposive sampling was used in particular to pick respondents for the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). According to, Sharma (2017) Purposive sampling (also known as judgment, selective, or subjective sampling) is a sampling technique that enables the researcher to choose members of the population to participate in the study based on the researcher's judgment (Sharma, 2017). Purposive sampling allows the researcher to select members of a sample for a specific reason based on a set of criteria (Campbell et al., 2020)

4.8 Eligibility Criteria

- A registered voter
- Voted at least once
- Register in the Ayawaso West wuogon constituency

4.9 Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) – Partial Least Squares (PLS)

The study examines multiple relationships simultaneously. The dependent and independent variables are both latent constructs evaluated with the help of certain observable variables. SEM is a set of statistical methods, such as factor multiple regression and analysis, that allow for the simultaneous evaluation of several dependent relationships (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). As a result, SEM may be used to test and confirm theories. Unlike multiple regression, SEM acknowledges and accounts for inaccuracies in measuring constructs, while helping minimize total inaccuracy associated with the model (Astrachan, Patel & Wanzenried, 2014; Hair et al., 2021). To gather and analyze data, Smart PLS version 3.2.3 and IBM SPSS- 21 were employed. However, IBM SPSS was used for descriptive statistics such as measures of central tendency, frequency tables, and regression. Using SEM and PLS, Smart

PLS 3 was used to investigate the structural component of the measurement and the structural model (Hair et al., 2014). PLS, on the other hand, may be thought of as a subset of regression-type data analysis approaches. When compared to CB-SEM, Jöreskog & Wold (1982) claim that Smart PLS is more suited to handling very intricate predictive models and is also a useful tool for examining predictive research models throughout the stages of theory development (Gimbert, Bisbe, & Mendoza, 2010).

Another benefit of the PLS-SEM technique is that no assumptions regarding data distribution are required (Hair et al., 2014; Khan, 2014).

According to Hair (2009), there are six major steps involved in analyzing data using SEM. The initial stage begins with the definition of individual constructs, followed by the measurement model. The following stage is to design the research to generate empirical data; the fourth stage is to examine the validity of the measurement model; the fifth stage is to specify the structural model, and finally, to assess the structural model's validity. We use the two-step SEM technique described by Hair (2009) to evaluate the model. However, before attempting to validate the structural model, the measurement model must be evaluated for validity and reliability. Having confirmed that the measurement model has met all conditions for reliability and validity, the structural model is evaluated.

4.9.1 Model evaluation

Hair et al. (2017) suggested that, before evaluating a model for study, the 'indicators' and 'constructs' measurements should be estimated. This is referred to as dimension model assessment. In addition, the researcher must examine the variable's 'structural model' to ensure their suitability. The empirical metrics let researchers relate theoretically developed dimension and structural models to reality.

4.9.2 Measurement Model Evaluation

This model primarily evaluates the validity and consistency of the instrument. The researcher must guarantee that high Cronbach alpha and composite reliability are acquired while analyzing measurement models (Hair et al., 2017). Individual indicator reliability must also be checked, which is accomplished through the use of “item loadings”. The examination of validity is separated into two sections; “convergent validity” and “discriminant validity”. The average variance extracted (AVE) determines convergent validity, whereas the Fornell-Larcker criteria, cross-loadings, and the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) correlation ratio determine discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2017).

4.9.1.1 Internal consistency

According to Saunders and Naidoo (2018), consistency is an indicator of the dimension's correctness, precision, and consistency. Consistency is also an indication of internal reliability, or how effectively the test items assess the same concept or construct (Boone, 2016). The Cronbach alpha coefficient is commonly used to assess the internal consistency of measuring scale items (Hair et al., 2006). Although "Cronbach alpha" is a popular method for assessing consistency, Peterson and Kim (2013) revealed that it has a lower limit and so undervalues actual consistency. Based on this logic, the study employed both the composite reliability approaches and Cronbach alpha which are often used in structural equation modeling (Henseler et al., 2014; Hair et al., 2016).

4.9.1.2 Indicator reliability

This is used to evaluate the reliability of constructions. As a consequence, the indicator reliability was determined by interacting with the indicators that assess the various structures through "item loadings." When an item loading exceeds 0.70, indication reliability is achieved.

Scholars have highlighted, however, that an "item loading" of 0.5 to 0.7 may be preserved, since removing the item may affect the "Composite Reliability (CR)," "Cronbach Alpha (CA)," and "Average Variance (AVE)" (Hair et al., 2014).

4.9.1.3 Convergent validity

Convergent validity is the extent to which a measure has a full connection with other measures of the same construct (Hair et al., 2017). Regardless, when employing the domain sampling model, indicators of an insightful concept are viewed as a distinct technique to measuring the same construct. The convergence is determined by calculating the "average variance extracted (AVE)" of the indicators' outer loadings (Hair et al., 2017; Hair et al., 2014).

It is crucial to recognise that the largest "outer loadings" on a structure indicate that the "outliers" are being caught by the structure. The researcher considered that all indicators' "outer loadings" should be statistically significant at the very least. Because a large "outside loading" might be rather light, a typical 'rule of thumb' is that the homogenised "outer loadings" should be 0.708 or higher (Hair et al., 2017) The square of a consistent indicator's "outer loading" is the amount of variation in an item explained by the construct and is sometimes referred to as the variance extracted from the item.

4.9.1.4 Discriminant Validity

The discriminant validity was employed to categorise how dissimilar a hypothesis is from other constructs (Schimmack, 2021), whilst the "convergent validity" was employed to ensure this similarities the constructs found are mirrored by their indicators (Martini et al., 2015). Similarly, "discriminant validity" is achieved by construct correlations and "cross-loading standards", whereas convergent validity is achieved through "Average Variance Extracted (AVE)" and factor loadings (Kim et al., 2014; Hamid, Sami, & Sidek, 2017).

4.9.3 Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Analysis

Henseler, Ringle and Sarstedt (2015) explained that HTMT is how indicators are connected and measured across constructs (i.e., the heterotrait-monitrait method connections) in comparison to the (regular) mean of the average associations of indicators calculating the same construct (i.e., the monotrait-heteromethod correlations). Put differently, the HTMT technique approximates what the true connection between two constructs would be if they were perfectly measured (i.e., if they were seamlessly reliable). This is known as a disattenuated connection, and a disattenuated relationship between two constructs that are near to one suggests a lack of discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2017).

Hair et al. (2017) defined a good model's cross-loadings as “the one in which indicators load extremely well on their intended factors and also cross load with other factors”. The rule of thumb is that the “factor loadings” should be more than 0.70, with a matching “cross-loading” of 0.30. Cross-loadings are a method of testing discriminant validity for reflective models that is an alternative to the “average variance extracted (AVE)” (Hair et al., 2014).

The second approach used in testing discriminant validity is Fornell-Larcker (Hair et al., 2017). The Fornell-Larcker method would be used to compare the square root of the “average variance extracted (AVE)” values with the latent variable correlations to assess discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2014; 2017). As a result, the square root of each build's AVE should be bigger than its greatest association with any other construct. Another method for analyzing the Fornell-Larcker criterion's outcome is to see if the AVE is greater than the squared correlation with other constructs (Hair et al., 2017). However, Fornell-rationale Larcker's is that a concept has a greater variation with its associated indicators than other constructs.

4.9.4 Structural Model Evaluation

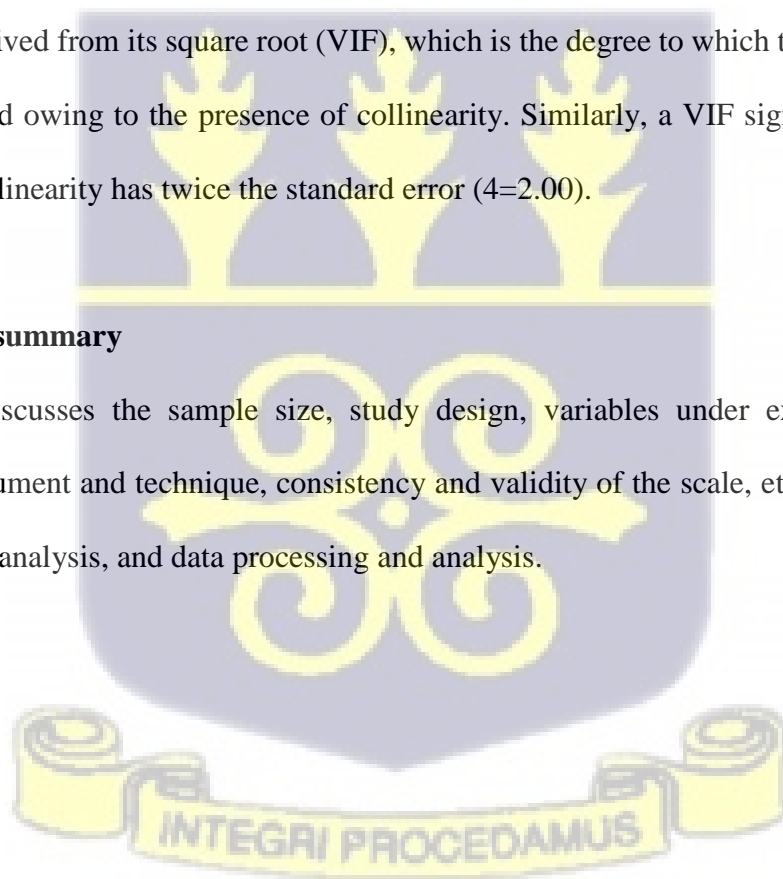
It is crucial to note that after the paradigm measurements have been proven to be trustworthy and reliable, the value of the structural model results is addressed. It requires evaluating the model's extrapolative capabilities, the interactions between the components (Hair et al., 2017), as well as providing a graphical representation of the approach to be used.

4.9.5 Assessment of Multicollinearity

According to Hair et al. (2017), variance inflation factor (VIF) is the “give-and-take” of the tolerance (i.e., $VIF_{xs} = 1/TOL_{xs}$), and a tolerance value of 0.25 for x_1 (TOL_{x_1}) turns into a VIF value of $1/0.25 = 4.00$ for x_1 (VIF_{x_1}). Other scholars, on the other hand, believe that the term VIF is derived from its square root (\sqrt{VIF}), which is the degree to which the standard error has accumulated owing to the presence of collinearity. Similarly, a VIF significance of 4.00 implies that collinearity has twice the standard error ($\sqrt{4} = 2.00$).

4.10 Chapter summary

The chapter discusses the sample size, study design, variables under examination, data collection instrument and technique, consistency and validity of the scale, ethical issues, data processing and analysis, and data processing and analysis.



CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters captured the literature review, which aided the development of the study’s hypothesis and methodology. The current chapter focuses on the outcome of the analyzed data and also presents the findings of the study. It starts with the demographical data of the participants and presents the preliminary analyses followed by the hypothesis testing. The data analysis was performed using PLS-SEM, a second-generation multivariate analytical software tool (Hair et al., 2016; Sarstedt, Hair , Nitzl, Ringle, & Howard, 2020).

5.2 Respondent Demographics

Table 5.1: Descriptive Statistics of Respondents

Demographic variables	Frequency (270)	Percentages (100)
Gender		
Male	127	47.0
Female	143	53.0
Age		
18-30 years	112	41.5
31-40 years	114	42.2
41-50years	40	14.8
50 and above	4	1.5
Level of Education		
No formal education	1	0.4
Junior High School	2	0.7

Senior High School	84	31.1
Polytechnic/ Diploma	64	23.7
Bachelor Degree	106	39.3
Masters' Degree	13	4.8

Employment Domain

Professional	133	49.3
Self-employed	112	41.5
Not-employed	25	9.3

Does Celebrity Gender Matter to You?

Yes	189	70.0
No	81	30.0

Indicate the celebrity gender That matters to you

Female Celebrity	225	83.3
Male Celebrity	45	16.7

Source: Field Survey (2021)

NB: Total valid response (N) = 270; Missing values = 0 for all variables presented

Table 5.1 is a tabulated outline of the participants' demographics. These are represented in frequencies and percentages. The total sample size was 270, out of this sample 53.0% were males and 47.0% were female. The ages of the respondents ranged from 18 to 50 and above.

The majority of the respondents were 31-40 years representing 42.2% followed by 18-30 years which was made up of 41.5%. The least were respondents above 56 years representing 1.5%. This implied that most of the respondents were adults and were capable of making independent decisions concerning which political party to choose and vote into power. This outcome is a reflection of the active populace in the Ghanaian political sphere. It also reveals that all respondents had attained 18 years and above indicating their eligibility to be included in the study sample size. This is imperative because the study outcome depends on the participants' response hence, due diligence was needed to ascertain the ages of the respondents so that the result is not skewed. The educational level of the respondents was ascertained. From the sampled data most of the participants were degree holders constituting 39.3%, next was senior high school certificate holders representing 31.1% followed by diploma holders which were 23.7% of the total sample. This implies that when the respondents were educated, they could read and understand the questions posed to them without much difficulty which often arise from respondents who had less or no education. Information on the occupation of the respondents was ascertained and from the table, it can be seen that 49.3% of them were professionals, 41.5% were self-employed and 9.3% were not employed. This depicts that most of the information retrieved was from professionals and self-employed. The respondents were asked if the gender of celebrities who endorse political parties matters to them. The result revealed that 70% of the respondents were concerned about the gender of the celebrity endorsers. The questionnaire probed further to investigate which celebrity gender they will prefer to endorse their political party. It was revealing to realize that 83.3% of the respondents indicated female celebrities as favorable. This implies that the majority of voters are influenced by female celebrities.

5.3 Preliminary Analysis

Before the SE, a preliminary analysis of data was conducted. This was to ensure the normality

of the data distribution and also a prerequisite in the application of SEM in testing hypothesized relationships.

5.3.1 Test for Normality

In preventing issues of bloated figures of model fit, there is the need to ensure that the data is normally distributed. The normality of the gathered data was identified using the conclusive skewness and kurtosis values of each latent construct. For data to be normally distributed, Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) as cited by Wadi, Almasarweh, Alsarairah and Aqaba (2018) recommended that the absolute values of the skewness and kurtosis of the constructs must be within the yardstick of -2 and +2. In performing this analysis, the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS was employed).

Table 5.2: Summary of the Test for Normality

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev	Skewness	Kurtosis
SA	3.6323	.76634	-.690	.243
CC	3.4410	.74330	-.574	.243
PBI	4.2345	.68379	-1.545	.243

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Table 5.2 indicates the results of the normality of the data distribution which shows that the latent variables in the study attained the absolute values of skewness and kurtosis threshold of -2 and +2 indicating a normal data distribution.

5.4 Measurement Model Evaluation

Preceding an assessment of a model for investigation, Hair et al. (2017) elucidate that there should be an estimation of the measures of the indicators as well as the variables. These

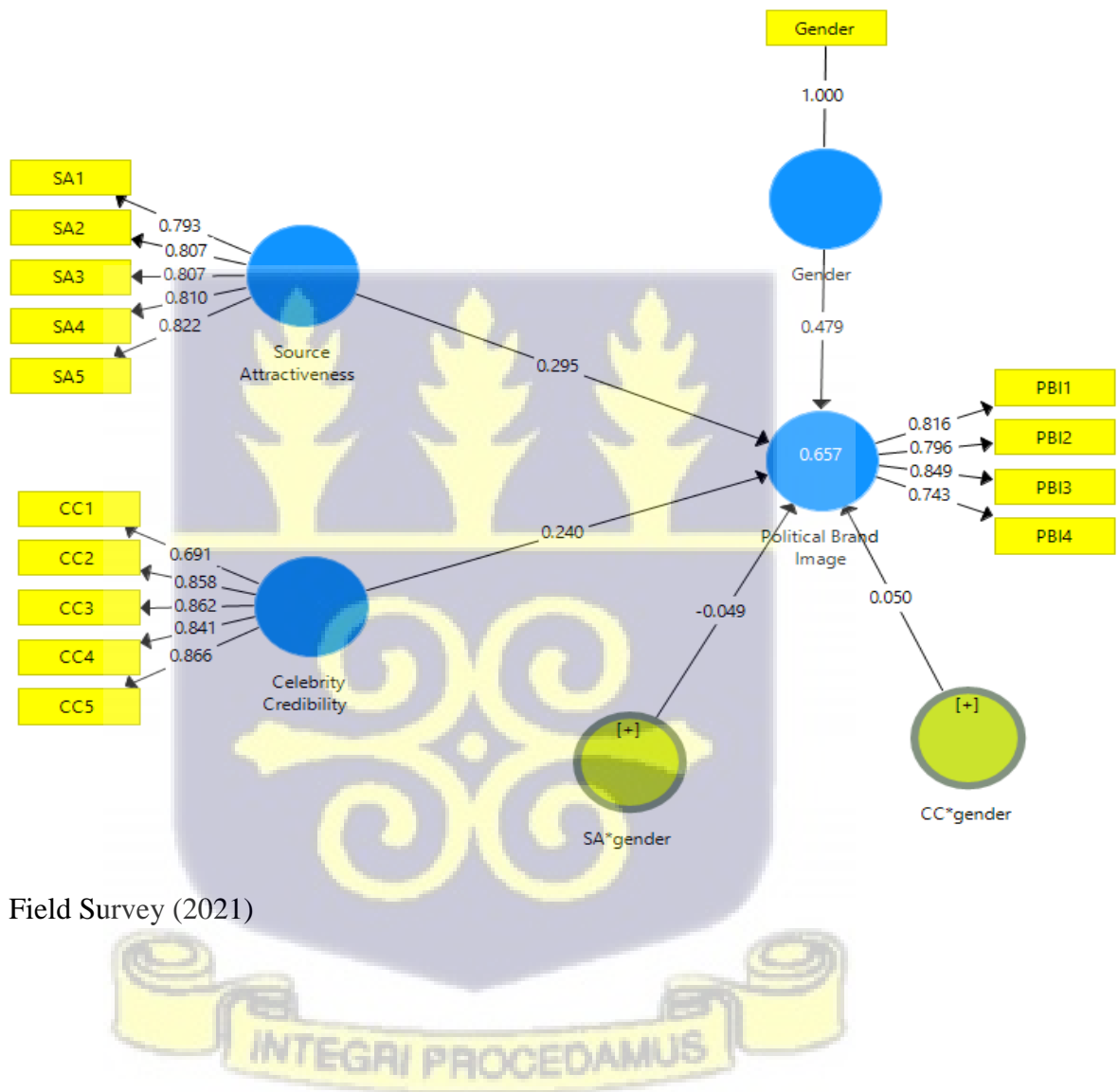
measures are the model evaluation and the structural evaluation, this is done to test the goodness of fit. The empirical measures assisted the researchers in linking with reality, the hypothetically established dimension and structural models. This thesis investigates the impact of celebrity endorsement on political brand image, with gender as a moderator. Partial Least Squares (PLS) based structural equation modeling was used for this empirical study. According to Ringle, Sarstedt, Schlittgen and Taylor (2013), PLS is based on principal component analysis and a combination of recurrent regression to analyse variations in the construct connected with the model. The advantage of this model is that it helps in forecasting all path coefficients and loading of discrete constituents and also preventing biases and uncertain threshold predictions. Based on current developments, Henseler, Ringle and Sarstedt (2016) suggested that PLS is a constructive and effective statistical tool for analysis that minimizes Type II error and test relationships.

In assessing the measurement model, the researcher first conducted the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to ensure the validity of the scales. The factor loadings in addition to the values of Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted were displayed in table 5.4. Confirmatory factor analysis is used as a tool that consents to theories (Henseler, Hubona, & Ray, 2016) and is expected to remove all forms of errors in examining the factor structure of construct (Bandalos & Finney, 2018).

In assessing the measurement model, Confirmatory Factor Analysis was employed to assess the validity and reliability of the scales, factor loadings and model fit. CFA is required to eliminate all types of errors associated with the model (Hair et al., 2020). Based on the results of the factor loadings, the original CFA was established in this study comprising of the latent variables, namely; source attractiveness, celebrity credibility, celebrity gender, and political

brand image. Bandalos and Finney (2018) recommended that two out of the observed variables should at least be maintained for each of the unobserved variables after deletion to enhance the measures of model fit. Figure 5.1 depicts the direct and moderating relationships, coefficient, and factor loadings.

Figure 5.1: Direct and moderation path Analysis



Source: Field Survey (2021)

5.5 Test of Fitness of Model

In assessing the model fit, the researcher conducted the model fitness test. Although there are multiple fit indices, researchers have proposed that a combination of two or more fit indices be used to determine a model's fitness only if an acceptable threshold is satisfied. Hence the study

employed Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and Normed Fit Index (NFI).

It is important to note that the SRMR and NFI values were retrieved using PLS-SEM.

According to Hu and Bentler, 1999, SRMR values below 0.08 are considered the best fit and

also indicate that the model is not misspecified (Henseler et al., 2014). Bentler and Bonett

(1980) expounds that, NFI results should fall between 0 and 1, and as it gears towards 1 the

better the fit. NFI values above 0.9 signify an acceptable fit (Dijkstra & Henseler, 2015). Table

5.3 presents the summary of the model fit.

Table 5.3: Model Fitness Indices

Fit Indices	Thresholds	Authors	Final CFA Mode
SRMR	<.08, excellent; .08-10, acceptable	Hu and Bentler (1999) Henseler et al., (2014)	0.072
NFI	>0.7, excellent; 0.7-1, acceptable	Bentler and Bonett (1980) Dijkstra et al., (2015)	0.942

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Note: SPMR = Standardized Root Mean Square Residual NFI = Normed Fit Index

The confirmatory factor analysis shows that the conceptual model had a better fit to the data, with SRMR = 0.072 and NFI = 0.942. These fit indices show a superior model fit.

5.6 Validity and Reliability

5.6.1 Reliability

Reliability focuses on the consistency and duplication of constructs. To examine the measurement model's accuracy, the reliability of the internal consistency of the items was assessed. This was analyzed by evaluating measurement loadings inside the relating constructs.

In the literature, Nunnally (1994), as cited by Farmer and Kim (2020) recommends the use of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) to examine the internal consistency reliability of a measurement model and further suggested a threshold value of 0.70.

This study employed both but placed much emphasis on composite reliability (CR) as it has been recommended as most suitable for Smart PLS. Contrary to Cronbach's alpha, CR does not take into consideration the number of items being examined and does not rely on assumptions that all indicators are equally reliable for different items in a sample (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011). As shown in Table 5.4, all coefficient values of CR and Cronbach's alpha were above 0.7 demonstrating internal consistency.

5.6.2 Validity

The researcher in testing for validity examined two types of validity; convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity has to do with how well the observed variables and items in the study relates. This can be examined by employing the composite reliability, factor loadings and average variance extracted (Hamid et al., 2017). According to Lukman, Khan, Latif and Bichi, 2019, composite reliability (CR) values should be above 0.7 and 0.5 for average variance extracted (AVE). Hair et al. (2016) recommend factor loadings above 0.5 and 0.7, however, loading below these thresholds should be deleted to achieve internal consistency.

The outcome displayed in table 4 shows all thresholds were met as recommended by Hair et al. (2016).

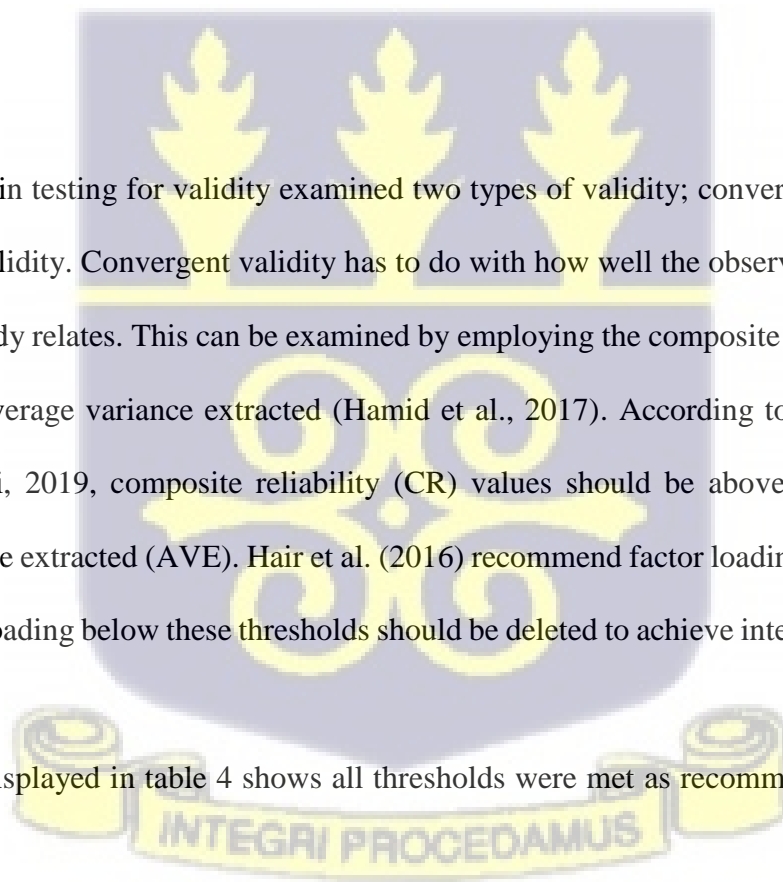


Table 5.4: Measurement scale and model indicators

	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Source Attractiveness					
SA1	0.793	0.867	0.869	0.904	0.653
SA2	0.807				
SA3	0.807				
SA4	0.810				
SA5	0.822				
Source credibility					
CC1	0.691				
CC2	0.858				
CC3	0.862				
CC4	0.841				
CC5	0.866	0.882	0.893	0.914	0.683
Political Brand Image					
PBI1	0.816				
PBI2	0.796				
PBI3	0.849				
PBI4	0.743	0.815	0.817	0.878	0.643

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Note: Source Attractiveness (SA), celebrity credibility (CC), political Brand Image (PBI)

5.7 Fornell-Larcker Criterion for Discriminant Validity

The extent to which individual constructs are measured is known as discriminant validity. The study was assessed by adopting the Fornell-Larcker standard. This is examined by comparing the square root of the AVEs with the correlations between constructs. The outcome is presented in Table 6 below. From the result in Table 6, the square root of the AVE for celebrity credibility and source attractiveness (0.826) was found to be more than the correlation beneath it (0.607 and 0.600). The square root of the AVE for political brand image and celebrity credibility (0.802) was also found to be more than the correlation values beneath it (0.624). A similar result was found between political brand image and source attractiveness. Thus, the study concluded that discriminant validity is achieved for the study.

Table 5.5: Fornell-Larcker Standard for Discriminant Validity

	SA	CC	PBI
Celebrity credibility	0.826		
Political Brand Image	0.607	0.802	
Source Attractiveness	0.600	0.624	0.808

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Note: Source Attractiveness (SA), Source credibility (CC), political Brand Image (PBI)

5.8 Cross Loading Analysis

In examining discriminant validity of the indicators, the constructs' cross-loadings is statistically, a basic technique to employ. The outer loadings of indicators on the related construct should be greater than any of its cross-loadings on the other constructs. Therefore,

the appropriate way to examine and report the cross-loadings is in a table with rows for the indicators and columns for the latent variable (Hair et al., 2017). The table below displays the cross-loadings of the data collected. Based on the result from Table 5.5, five indicators for celebrity credibility had cross-loading or more of at least 0.7 (by approximation). Also, four indicators for political brand image had a cross-loading of more than 0.7. Moreover, five indicators for source attractiveness had a cross-loading of more than 0.7. This cross-loading had been boldened in Table 5.5 and by implication, the various constructs: celebrity credibility, political brand image, and source attractiveness were satisfactorily estimated since each of the constructs measured had not less than four indicators having cross-loading of more than 0.7.

Table 5.6: Cross Loadings

Indicators	Celebrity credibility	Political Brand Image	Source Attractiveness
CC1	0.691	0.404	0.472
CC2	0.858	0.486	0.503
CC3	0.862	0.511	0.505
CC4	0.841	0.578	0.503
CC5	0.866	0.505	0.501
PBI1	0.408	0.816	0.586
PBI2	0.608	0.796	0.453
PBI3	0.543	0.849	0.524
PBI4	0.399	0.743	0.439
SA1	0.405	0.458	0.793
SA2	0.510	0.497	0.807
SA3	0.484	0.484	0.807
SA4	0.462	0.527	0.810

SA5 0.554 0.545 **0.822**

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Note: Source Attractiveness (SA), celebrity credibility (CC), political Brand Image (PBI)

5.9 Structural Model Analysis

In PLS-SEMM, after the measurement model is examined, the structural model is also assessed. The structural model is the representation of the associations amid the constructs under study. Figure 1 shows a full estimation of the structural model and the number of variances accounted for (R^2) in the dependent variable. To generate the standard errors and t-statistics of the conceptualized relationships, bootstrapping was performed congruous with (Chin, 1998). A bootstrapping resampling technique of two hundred and seventy samples was used. This enabled the researcher to assess the factual significance of the path coefficients. The study employed a five percent level of significance ($p < 0.05$) as a measure of statistical conclusion. Table 5.6 presents a summary of the outcome.

Table 5.7: Coefficient of Determination

R Square (R^2)	F square (F^2)	Q Square (Q^2)
Political Brand Image	0.657	0.348
Source Attractiveness		0.021
Source Credibility		0.054
Gender		0.054

Source: Field Survey (2021)

The outcome of the PLS-SEM depicts that the coefficient of determination i.e. the R square (R^2) is 0.657 for the PBI endogenous latent variable. This means that the two latent variables, Source attractiveness (SA) and Source credibility (SC) accounted for 6.57% of the variance in

a political brand image (**PBI**). Furthermore, the assessment of the structural model at a significant level of $p < 0.05$; 0.1 (2-tailed) (Hair et al., 2014) and the strength of the path showed the relationships established between the variables.

5.10 Effect Size Assessment (f^2)

To evaluate whether a predictor construct has a substantive influence on the dependent variable, the effect size f^2 was employed. The larger the f^2 value, the higher its influence on the independent variable (Chin, 1998). The outcome of the f^2 values is displayed in Table 5.6. It can be realized that the effect size of almost all the independent variables was above 0.02 which is an indication that the removal of these variables will have a substantial influence on the model. This implies that the contribution by the individual constructs in explaining political brand image has an effect on the model. However, from table (5.8) the f^2 values for party brand and occupation were below the accepted threshold of 0.02.

5.11 Predictive Relevance (Q^2)

The Q^2 also known as the Stone Geisser's Q^2 is a criterion or an indication for predictive relevance (Geisser, 1974). If the value $Q^2 < 0$ then it means the model is very poor, all independent variables cannot explain the dependent variable hence there is no predictive relevance. On the other hand, if the resulting Q^2 is larger than 0, then it is an indication that the exogenous constructs have predictive relevance for the endogenous construct under consideration (0.02, small predictive relevance; 0.15, medium, and 0.35 large) (Chin, 2010). This was achieved by employing the blindfolding technique. From table 5.7, it can be concluded that the model has a large predictive relevance. Thus, all the exogenous variables have predictive relevance for the endogenous variables.

Table 5.8: Path Coefficients along with their bootstrap values and ‘T’ Values

Model	Original	Sample	Standard	T Statistics	
	Sample	Mean	Deviation	(O/STDEV)	P Values
	(O)	(M)	(STDEV)		
CC-> PBI	0.240	0.239	0.045	5.387	0.000
SA->PBI	0.295	0.298	0.041	7.274	0.000
Gender -> PBI	0.479	0.478	0.042	11.284	0.000
SA*gender -> PBI	-0.049	-0.047	0.043	1.126	0.261
CC*gender -> PBI	0.050	0.046	0.042	1.173	0.241

Source: Field Survey (2021)

Note: Source Attractiveness (SA), celebrity credibility (CC), political Brand Image (PBI)

The results from the PLS-SEM revealed that the coefficient of determination R^2 is 0.657 for the **PBI** endogenous latent variable. This explains that the two latent variables, source attractiveness (SA) and celebrity credibility (CC), accounted for about 65% of the variance in political brand image (FP). Also, testing the associations of the structural model, the significance level was established at $P < 0.05$ (2-tailed) (Hair et al., 2014) and the strength of the paths revealed the relationships between the variables.

5.12 Hypothesis Testing

H1: Source attractiveness has a positive significant effect on political brand image.

The first hypothesis tested the relationship between source attractiveness and political brand image. The analysis shows that source attractiveness had a significant and positive relationship on political brand image with the original sample ($\beta = 0.295$), statistics ($t = 7.274$), and significant value ($p < 0.000$). This indicates source attractiveness has a direct impact on

political brand image. Therefore, hypothesis H1 was accepted.

H2: Source credibility exert a positive influence on Political brand image

The second hypothesis tested the influence of celebrity credibility on political brand image. The relationship between celebrity credibility and political brand image was found to be significant with the original sample ($\beta = 0.240$), statistics ($t = 5.387$), and significant value ($p < 0.000$) which indicates that *celebrity credibility* exerts a positive influence on political brand image. Therefore, hypothesis H2 was accepted

5.13 Moderation Test

Henseler and Chin (2010) asserts that the moderation test occurs when there is a variation between two constructs due to the introduction of a third construct. This disparity normally occurs when the third construct introduced strengthens the relationship direction (Baron & Kenny, 1986). The study adopted a two-stage approach in assessing the moderating role of gender amid source attractiveness, celebrity credibility, and political brand image. The two-stage approach has been recommended to have high levels of statistical power (Hair et al., 2017). The two-stage approach is also known to be able to handle both formative and reflexive moderators. This approach was performed by first running the endogenous and exogenous variables of the model without the moderating variable to estimate the scores of the latent variables. This procedure is recommended by Henseler and Chin (2010). The next procedure was to apply the moderating effect of the moderator variables, creating a single-item measure to represent the interaction term (Hair et al., 2017). Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle and Gudergan (2018) state that for a moderator hypothesis to be supported the interaction effect must be significant.

H3a: Gender significantly moderates the relationship between source attractiveness and political brand image.

The third hypothesis tested gender as a moderator between source attractiveness and political

brand image. The moderating effect was found to be insignificant with the original sample ($\beta = -0.049$), statistics ($t = 1.126$), and significant value ($p < 0.261$) which indicates that the gender of a celebrity does not impact the source attractiveness and political brand image. Therefore, hypothesis H3a was not accepted.

H3b: Gender significantly moderates the relationship between source credibility and political brand image.

The second part of the third hypothesis tested gender as a moderator amid celebrity credibility and political brand image. The moderating effect revealed an insignificant relationship with the original sample ($\beta = 0.050$), statistics ($t = 1.173$), and significant value ($p < 0.241$) which indicates that gender does not strengthen the relationship amid celebrity credibility and political brand image.

5.14 Discussion of Major Findings

The surge in the use of celebrity endorsement as a political strategy in Ghana and beyond has prompted the call for this study. The purpose of this study was to assess the relationship between celebrity endorsement and political brand image with celebrity gender as a moderator. Specifically, two major characteristics of celebrities were examined. These characteristics informed the explicit objectives and hypothesis of the study.

The first objective of the study sought to establish the relationship impact of source attractiveness of celebrity endorsement on political brand image. This objective was established by revealing a direct positive and significant impact of celebrity attractiveness on political brand image. This finding aligns with the study of Beckham (2013), as the study revealed that source attractiveness is essential for effective celebrity endorsement. Seiler and

Kucza (2017) in their study indicated that the attractiveness of a celebrity is an indicator of effective endorsement. However, their study pointed out that source attractiveness is a multi-dimensional construct. Hence, this study queried the components of celebrity attractiveness and found that the physic of the celebrity impacts greatly on voters' perceptions and decisions about political parties. Comparatively, celebrity familiarity, personality, and likability unlike the physical attractiveness of the celebrity have a minimal but positive influence on political party image. The study of Chao et al. (2005) affirms this outcome by asserting that physically attractive celebrities are predictors of effective advertising and are mostly subjected to favorable personality traits than their less attractive folks. This finding was ascertained by conducting a comparative study on attractive celebrities and less attractive counterparts. Ohanian (1991) examined the influence of Physical attractiveness on consumer behavior. The outcome showed a positive and significant effect of physical attractiveness on consumer behavior. This finding was established within a commercial marketing perspective but affirms the outcome of the current study with political marketing context. These further ground the assumptions underpinning the 'consumer-voter' theory which connote that in political marketing setting the consumer is the voter.

Several studies have discovered that although attractive endorsers have a positive impact on consumer perceptions about products they endorse, it does not produce a strong intention to purchase (Seiler & Kucza, 2017; Till & Busler, 2000). Grounding on the 'consumer-voter' theory, this finding may imply that the physical attractiveness of the celebrity will impact positively on political brand image, however, its effect on voter intention to vote for the political party might be minimal. Caballero, Lumpkin and Madden (1989) in an observational study revealed that endorser attractiveness has no effect on advertising effectiveness.

The outcome of this study confirms the political strategy of Lydia Seyram Alhassan, a member

of parliament for the Ayawaso West Wagon constituency in Ghana. The Member of Parliament was contested by an attractive celebrity who was associated with favorable personality traits. The incumbent Member of Parliament (Lydia Seyram Alhassan) executed the celebrity endorsement strategy by bringing on board several equally attractive celebrities in the same industry with the opponent (John Dumelo). This neutralized the source effectiveness of the celebrity opponent ensuing in a massive win for the incumbent Member of Parliament. This again signifies the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement precisely source attractiveness.

The second objective examined the impact of celebrity credibility on political brand image. The result of the analyzed data revealed a significant effect of celebrity credibility on political brand image. This means that the credibility of a celebrity has a positive impact on the image of a political party. This finding is imperative because studies in commercial marketing have revealed the goodwill of a celebrity is transferred unto the product they endorse whereas negative associations of the celebrity are as well transferred unto the product. This affects consumer perception of the brand image. In line with the current findings, this implies that the credibility of a celebrity perceived by voters can be transferred to the image of a political party if that celebrity endorses a political party. This is to state that the credible image attained by the celebrity endorser can be imposed on the image of a political party which may influence voter decision. It is therefore pertinent that political strategists consider the credibility of the celebrity pivotal to the success of the disseminated message. This outcome is in line with the study of Osei-Frimpong et al. (2019) who found the credibility of a celebrity to have a strong influence on the product image and impact positively on consumer intention to patronize such products. Seiler and Kucza, 2017 in their study revealed that the credibility of a celebrity endorser plays an essential role by positively influencing the behavior of voters towards political party brands. Amos, Holmes and Strutton (2008) affirms this study by reporting that

highly opinionated information from trustworthy celebrities produces effective attitudes towards the message whereas less-trusted communicators' impact proved futile. According to Seiler and Kucza (2017), the credibility of the celebrity is an important element in advertising. Their outcome showed that the credibility of an endorser resonates with low-involvement voters which influences their perceptions about a political party. The political marketing literature holds that non-partisan voters normally cast their vote based on shortcut heuristics hence, this finding connotes that the credibility of a celebrity is imperative to the non-partisan voter segment as they assess it as a heuristic for decision making. Further, the use of credible celebrities has the tendency of mitigating the negative cues a voter may have towards a political party. This according to Toncar, Reid and Anderson (2007), is orchestrated by neutralizing the negative perceptions towards the party, resulting in greater message impact and acceptance by and the voter. Wood Shen, (2016) argues that without the credibility trait of the celebrity all other traits of the celebrity are unlikely to have a positive effect on the image of a political party. Hence it is appropriate that the credibility of a celebrity is considered essential in selecting an endorser.

The third and fourth objectives examined the moderating role of gender on the relationship between source attractiveness and celebrity credibility on political brand image. The outcome of the study showed that both hypothesized relationships were insignificant. Detailing further, this means that gender does not strengthen the relationship amid source attractiveness and political brand image nor does it significantly affect the relationship between celebrity credibility and political brand image. It was revealing to ascertain that the gender of the celebrity had a direct significant impact on the outcome variable, which means that voters do not only consider the attractiveness and credibility of the celebrity but they equally consider the gender of the celebrity. Although gender had a significant impact, its moderating effect

proved insignificant. This means that when voters are considering the credibility or attractiveness of a celebrity endorser as a heuristic for decision-making, they may not consider the gender of the celebrity. Using Prince David Osei one of the celebrities who endorsed Lydia Seyram Alhasan for instance, when a voter is assessing the credibility of Prince David, they may not consider his gender as a factor hence, the credibility of the celebrity will be considered in isolation, that is, from gender. This finding relates with previous studies (Knoll & Matthes, 2017; Ohanian, 1990b) as they reported that there was no significant impact of gender as a moderator on perceived trustworthiness and attractiveness on voter behavior. This is to conclude that in selecting a credible or attractive endorser for a political campaign, the gender of the celebrity should not be allocated much attention. However, the gender of the celebrity must be considered while choosing an endorser but not when the focal point of selection is dependent on credibility or attractiveness.

5.15 Chapter Summary

This chapter encapsulates the analytical procedures and outcomes of the examined data. The first section captured respondent demographics followed by a test for normality which was to ensure that the data was evenly distributed. PLS-SEM analysis was performed after the test for normality. The SEM analysis entailed the model evaluation assessment which detailed out the reliability and validity of the adapted instruments and again dealt with issues of multicollinearity. The analysis further examined the structural model which was peculiar to the testing of the hypothesized relationships. The latter part of this chapter added to the literature by discussing the results of the analysis.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The latter chapter presented the findings of the study and discussed them in relation to the objectives of the study and the reviewed literature. This chapter advances the prior chapters by systematically summarizing the current study and further elaborates on the limitations, conclusions and provides recommendations as well as directions for future research.

6.2 Summary of the Study

The purpose of the study was to establish the impact of celebrity characteristics on political brand image and to ascertain the moderation effect of gender on the relationships. Precisely, the study aimed at achieving four objectives. The first objective was to assess the impact of source attractiveness on political brand image. The second objective was to examine the effect of celebrity credibility on political brand image. The third objective was to determine the moderating role of gender on source attractiveness and political brand image and the last objective was to analyze the moderating effect of gender on celebrity credibility and political brand image. The outcome of the analyzed data showed that two out of the four hypothesized relationships were significant. These two established hypotheses were the direct relationships whereas the other two moderation hypotheses proved insignificant. It was imperative that the context of the study was considered and as such the study elaborated on some topical issues deemed relevant for the study. Prior research within the discipline was studied aided with discussions that compared and contrasted the findings of the relevant studies which informed the literature review of the study. The methodology of the study ensued in the literature review. The study adapted survey instruments that aided the collection of data for analysis. Three hundred questionnaires were administered through the purposive sampling technique and out

of that two hundred and seventy were received. The data was screened to ensure the removal of missing data. The data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics with a statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 23. The PLS-SEM 3.2.8 software was used for the path analyses in analyzing the measurement and structural model (Hair et al., 2017).

5.3 Major Findings

The first objective of the study was to investigate the impact of source attractiveness on political brand image. Respondents were asked questions relating to the attractiveness of celebrity endorsers in order to ascertain whether it had any impact on their perceptions about a political party image and whether it influences their voting decisions. The outcome of the analysis showed that the attractiveness of a celebrity influences voters' perception of a political party. Among the two hundred and seventy participants, several of them agreed that they are attracted to celebrities with whom they share common values. The majority of the respondents strongly agree that the physical attribute of the celebrity attracted them the most. Physical traits such as good looking, classy, stylish, and appealing were the leading components of source attractiveness construct. As argued earlier, attractive celebrities are patronized and their messages are very much accepted by voters than less attractive celebrity endorsers. This is to emphasize the evidence that attractive celebrities are effective advertisers.

The second objective was to establish the relationship between celebrity credibility and political brand image. The results revealed that the credibility of a celebrity is crucial to the discernment of the message by its target recipients. This is ground on the celebrity credibility theory which explicates that consumers are influenced by a message if they perceive the source to be credible. Similarly, if the source of the message is perceived as not be credible, it negatively affects the message discernment. Further, the theory underlining brand association

expounds that the image of the associator is easily transferred onto brands. This means that when a celebrity endorses a political party there is the tendency of image transfer from the celebrity to the party endorsed.

When a celebrity endorses a political party there is an established association between the political party and the celebrity. Hence, when the celebrity is perceived credible, its impact is inferred from the image of the political party. This is to state that political parties in selecting celebrity endorsers must keenly scrutinize the credibility of the celebrity before signing them on board.

The third hypothesis examined the moderating role of gender on source attractiveness, Celebrity credibility, and political brand image. Demystifying this objective, the first part of this objective assessed the moderating effect of gender on source attractiveness and political brand image. The results proved insignificant. This means that the gender of the celebrity does not inform voters when they are considering the attractiveness of the celebrity. The second hypothesis sought to determine the moderating effect of gender on celebrity endorsement and political image. The outcome revealed gender as an insignificant moderator amid the relationship between celebrity credibility and political brand image. This implies that voters in considering the credibility of a celebrity as a heuristic do not factor in the gender of the celebrity. This means that gender has no influence on voter perception about a political party image when the credibility of the celebrity is the center of discussion.

6.4 Conclusion

Based on the key findings of the study, the conclusion can be drawn that celebrities have an influence on the image formed by political parties as far as voters' decisions are concerned. Put

differently, celebrities are able to influence voters to align themselves with political parties in Ghana through their attraction and credibility. Celebrities that are attractive (in personal form and appearance) and those that are perceived by voters as being credible (in terms of values and trustworthiness) are able to project a positive image for political parties they associate with. This results in voters toeing the line of such political parties that receive endorsement from attractive and credible celebrities. Nevertheless, the gender of celebrities does not matter as it does not influence the image of political parties and hence voters' choice of political parties. The conclusion drawn in this study is supported by several empirical studies as well as the social exchange theory and the theory of planned behavior. In relation to the social exchange theory, the credibility of celebrities constitutes value to the voter as it is believed that the reliance on the message of the celebrity leads the voter to make a good choice between contending political parties. Thus, the reliance on the credibility of celebrities in choosing a political party helps to minimize the risk of choosing the wrong political party by the voter.

6.5 Recommendation

The increasing rate of celebrity endorsement in politics prompted the call for this study. The study sought to examine the characteristics of celebrities that affect political brand image. The findings revealed that source attractiveness and source credibility of the celebrity highly impact the image of political parties. Gender as a moderator had an insignificant relationship amid source attractiveness, source credibility, and political brand image. In agreement with these findings, the study recommends the following to political parties.

The first recommendation to political parties is the continual adoption of celebrity endorsement as a political strategy. This strategy is recommended because it is proven to be an effective medium of endorsement and advertising. Therefore, political parties need to allocate resources towards the procurement of celebrity endorsers.

The next recommendation to political parties is to consider the physical characteristics of the celebrity endorser. This is because the study's outcome showed that the majority of voters are most concerned about the physical looks of the celebrity. For instance, the good-looking nature of the celebrity, how classic is the celebrity, the stature of the celebrity among others are some characteristics these voters consider. When voters are able to identify and resonate with these ambiances of the celebrity, they are likely to form a positive image and attractiveness towards the political party.

Further, the credibility of the celebrity should not be left in the dark. This should be imminent before the awareness creation stage. This is crucial because the credibility of the celebrity impacts the image of the political party they endorse. Through brand associations, the positive or negative credibility of the celebrity will be associated or transferred to the political party. This will have a massive impact on the image of the party perceived by the voters. As a result, this will affect the electoral outcome of the elections.

Finally, the gender of the celebrity should be considered. The analysis revealed that the gender of the celebrity is equally important. The majority of the respondents strongly agreed that they prefer female celebrity endorsers over male celebrity endorsers. Hence, political parties must take keen notice of this outcome and make appropriate decisions towards the nomination and selection of their celebrity endorsers. However, in considering the attractiveness or credibility of the celebrity on the party's image, the issue of gender should not be a major concern.

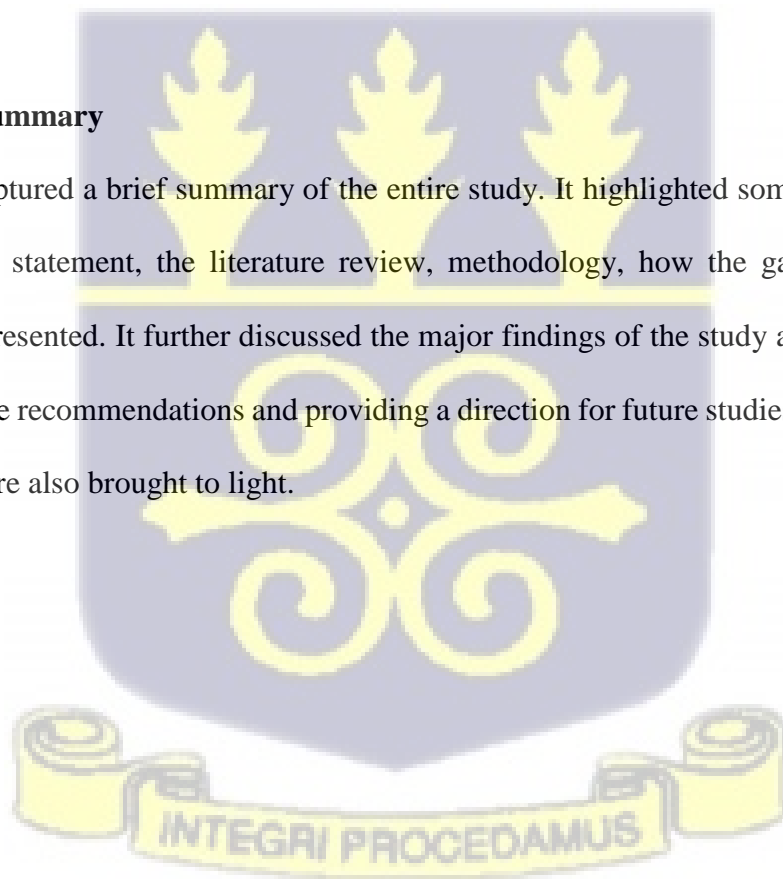
6.6 Limitations and Directions for Future Studies

In spite of the knowledge this study has contributed to literature, there still remain some limitations. Firstly, although the sample size is sufficient for the current study, its

generalization will be deficient. Future studies should consider a larger sample size to confirm the outcome of this study and to aid in the generalization of the findings. Further, studies of this nature are dominated by quantitative studies. Hence, future studies should consider an exploratory study to identify other celebrity characteristics that may not have been captured in the existing literature but have a significant impact on voter perception and political brand image. This study utilized a cross-sectional approach. It is therefore recommended that future studies consider using a longitudinal approach to examine the efficacy of the research area. Finally, employing judgmental /selective sampling technique to determine the respondents show biases. It is recommended that future studies consider simple random sampling technique in selecting respondent.

6.7 Chapter Summary

This section captured a brief summary of the entire study. It highlighted some relevant issues in the problem statement, the literature review, methodology, how the gathered data was analyzed and presented. It further discussed the major findings of the study and concluded by suggesting some recommendations and providing a direction for future studies. The limitations of the study were also brought to light.



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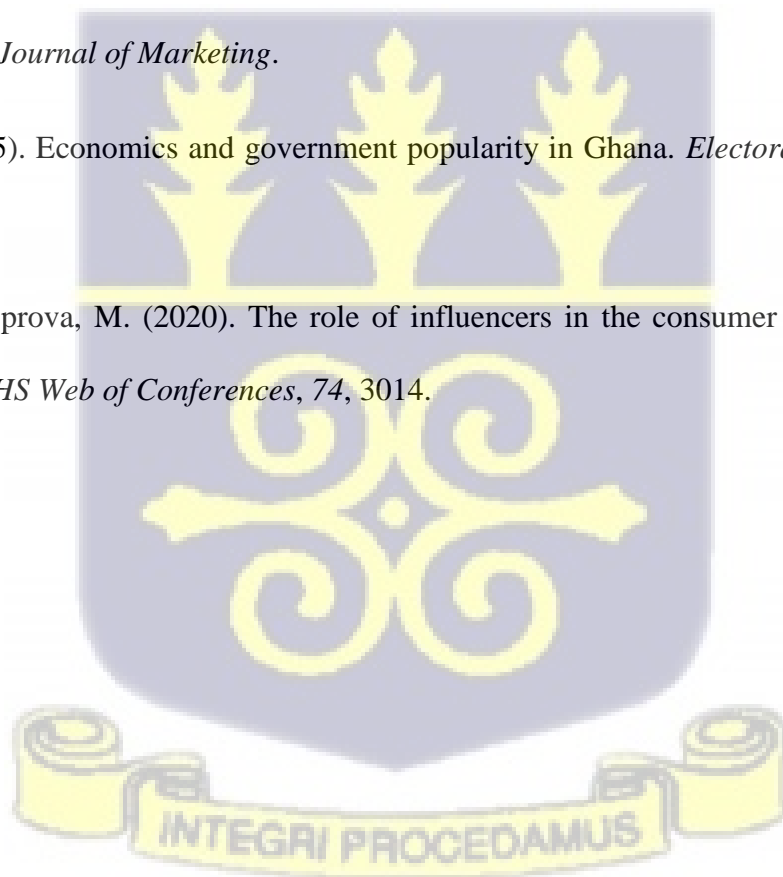
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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

QUESTIONNAIRE

**Topic: CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT AND POLITICAL BRAND IMAGE: THE
MODERATING EFFECT OF GENDER**

Preamble: I am a student from the University of Ghana Business School pursuing Masters' Degree in Marketing. I humbly implore you to spare me few minutes of your precious time to respond to these questionnaire items as you share your thoughts on the various statements. You are highly assured that your identity is totally held anonymous and every response you provide is considered as highly confidential. Thank you in advance for your willingness to assist me in this regard.

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Please indicate your gender:

- Male []
- Female []

2. Please indicate your age bracket:

- Below 20 years old []
- 20 - 30 years old []
- 31 – 40 years old []
- 41 – 50 years old []
- Above 50 years old []

3. Highest Level of education:

- No formal education []
- Junior High School []
- Senior High School []
- Polytechnic/ Diploma []
- Bachelor Degree []
- Masters' Degree []
- Doctorate Degree []
- Others [] Please indicate:

4. Indicate your occupation:

- Professional []
- Self-employed []
- Not-employed []

5. Does gender of celebrities who endorse political party matter to you?

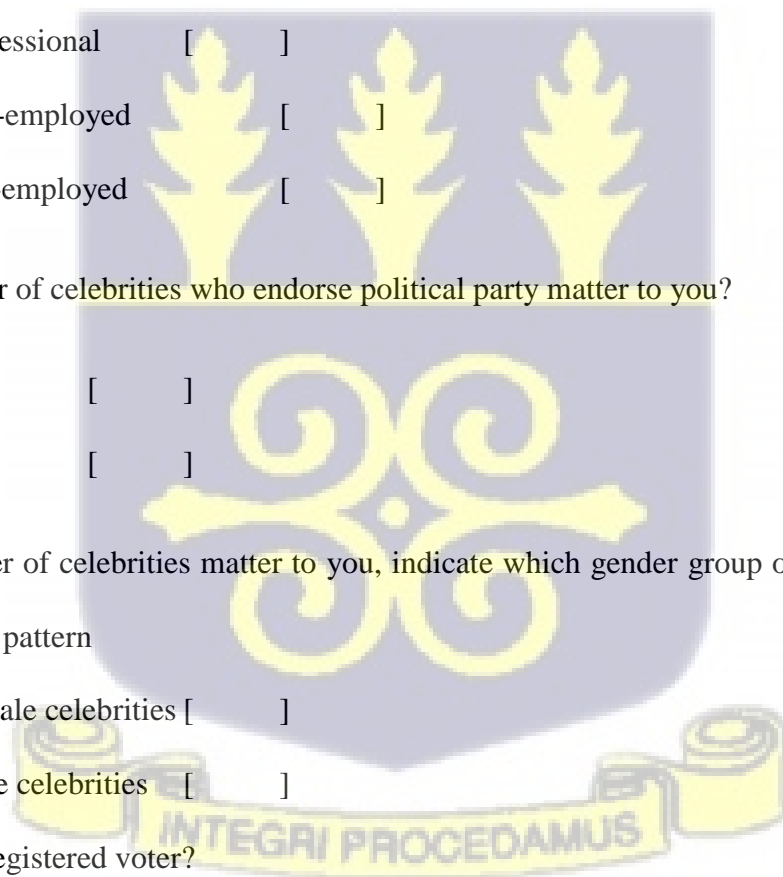
- Yes []
- No []

6. If the gender of celebrities matter to you, indicate which gender group of celebrity affect your voting pattern

- Female celebrities []
- Male celebrities []

7. Are you a registered voter?

- Yes []
- No []



8. Number of times voted in a general election

- Once []
- Twice []
- Thrice[]
- More than thrice []

Section B: Political Brand Image

From each of the following items/statements indicated in the questionnaire, please select (tick) one option that correctly applies to you.

Note: SD [Strongly Disagree]; D [Disagree]; U [Uncertain]; A [Agree]; and SA [Strongly Agree]

	Statement on Political Brand Image	SD	D	U	A	SA
1	I vote for political parties that deliver on their campaign promises					
2	I vote for political parties that exhibit good track records.					
3	I think thoroughly when selecting a political party					
4	I vote for political parties that are reliable.					
5	I vote for political parties preferred by my family and friends					

6	I select political parties that are generally associated with a positive public image					
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Section C: Source Attractiveness

From each of the following items/statements indicated on the questionnaire, please select (tick) one option that correctly applies to you.

Note: SD [Strongly Disagree]; D [Disagree]; U [Uncertain]; A [Agree]; and SA [Strongly Agree]

	Statement on Source Attractiveness	SD	D	U	A	SA
1	I vote for political parties endorsed by celebrities that are good looking					
2	I vote for political parties endorsed by celebrities that look classy					
3	I vote for political parties endorsed by fashionable celebrities.					
4	I vote for political parties endorsed by celebrities who are appealing.					
5	I vote for political parties endorsed by stylish celebrities.					
6	I vote for political parties endorsed by celebrities that many people have good impression for.					
7	I vote for political parties endorsed by celebrities who are much experienced to influence me					

Section D: Celebrity Credibility

From each of the following items/statements indicated on the questionnaire, please select (tick) one option that correctly applies to you.

Note: SD [Strongly Disagree]; D [Disagree]; U [Uncertain]; A [Agree]; and SA [Strongly Agree]

	Statement on Celebrity Credibility	SD	D	U	A	SA
1	I vote for political parties endorsed by celebrities who are reliable					
2	I vote for political parties endorsed by celebrities who are dependable					
3	I vote for political parties endorsed by celebrities who are honest					
4	I vote for political parties endorsed by celebrities who are sincere					
5	I vote for political parties endorsed by celebrities who are trustworthy					
6	I vote for political parties endorsed by celebrities who are knowledgeable					
7	I vote for political parties endorsed by celebrities who society has much respect for.					

THANK YOU