

## Effectiveness of celebrity endorsement on election candidates among CAS students

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### **Abstract**

This study analyzes and understands effectiveness of celebrity endorsement on election candidates among CAS students. It looked at how celebrity endorsements affect the perception of voters to political candidates in terms of their credibility, attractiveness, and popularity. The college is composed of one hundred and seventy-six (176) students. Ultimately, the researchers were able to study a sample size of fifty-one (51) students who were able to complete the survey. The method used in this study is descriptive research design. The results of the study show that while the attractiveness of a celebrity endorser has no direct bearing on voters' perception on political candidates, the popularity and credibility of the same celebrity endorser positively affects voter perception where the more popular and credible a celebrity is, the more likely a voter will vote for the endorsed politician. Based on the findings and results of the study, the researchers recommend that political aspirants must critically look at the popularity and perceived credibility of celebrities before they are employed to endorse their campaigns in order to ensure that the public image of the celebrity endorser does not become detrimental to the campaign of the political candidate. The researchers also recommend that voters be more scrutinizing in viewing political campaigns and endorsements. Voters should veer away from solely relying on celebrity endorsement and focus on the platforms and agendas of political candidates.

**Keywords:** celebrity, celebrity endorsement, credibility, attractiveness, popularity

## Effectiveness of celebrity endorsement on election candidates among CAS students

### 1. Introduction

It has been known that the use of celebrities in commercial advertising has a long-documented history dating back decades. The study of the use of celebrity for political ends, however, is largely unexplored. Researchers have found significant results regarding celebrity endorsements and politics; however, findings are not the same across groups and situations. Most of these researchers rely on components of celebrity endorser effectiveness for commercial products and draw from theory and variables used in existing research. The act of a notable person utilizing their reputation as a platform to influence others on political problems is known as celebrity influence in politics, sometimes known as "celebrity politics" or "political star power." According to Anthony Elliott, celebrities play an increasingly essential role in self-framings, self-imaginings, self-revisions, and self-reflection; and is a major structuring point in self and social identification. Anyone having a large following, such as professional athletes, actors/actresses, television personalities, or singers, or any other public figure is termed a celebrity.

Generally speaking, celebrities wield two distinct types of power: (1) they have the ability to educate and (2) the ability to persuade. They usually are able to apply these distinct types of power in various topics that they may choose to take about in public spaces such as television chat shows, events, or during their own heavily attended performances. Celebrities come from a variety of fields. Celebrities can come from a variety of industries, including television, movies, music, fashion, and others. We see this in the Philippines in many political parties in various regions, when specific celebrities back a particular party/candidate. Even in the 2016 presidential election in the United States, both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump (the current president of the United States) were backed by a slew of celebrities.

Several scientists have communicated the requirement for more examination concerning VIP legislative issues overall and superstar political supports are the same (Brubaker, 2011; Nownes, 2012; Street, 2004, 2012; Veer, Becirovic, & Martin, 2010). While the foundations of superstar legislative issues can be followed to the 1920s, the present consistently quick, consistently on media climate has changed both how individuals get data, and how they measure that data (G. Johnson, 2006, p. 387; Wellman & Haythornthwaite, 2008). Once consigned to the impulses of conventional media and the force of their press specialists, through online media, and VIP can participate in freely noticeable political conversation and action. While VIPs have utilized their status to elevate competitors and add to raising money endeavors before, the pervasiveness of online media made another way for big names to help applicants, to the degree that almost 20% of VIP Blog posts contained political messages (Burns, 2009, p. 50). Political web-based media posts from VIPs have become newsworthy by their own doing (Michaels, 2015). Past looking at, this concentrate likewise intends to decide the impacts of superstar impact as far as Social media, Advertisement, and Mass media as a feature of political mission. From studio proprietors attempting to harvest gigantic benefits to famous actors turned lawmakers, from legislators figuring out what to look like "official" for the camera to movies and TV series revolving around the oval office, the matter of being a VIP and the matter of being a lawmaker has progressively become in a general sense connected (Boorstin, 1992; Ross, 2011).

Over the years, celebrities have been utilized by politicians to be endorsed and to influence their fans to elect them, however its efficacy can only be investigated through surveys and in experimental studies. A party or a political candidate may be recognized and supported by unsustainable amount of people only because of the influence of a celebrity. This endorsement is not a free service; it may be compensated by the political candidate through monetary or projects through connections. Further, there was an indirect relationship between celebrity endorsement and political campaign wherein the celebrity's support or recommendation to the public does not directly affect the preference of the people, but it plays a part (Abdurrahaman, et al., 2021).

We live in the advanced universe of innovation, where individuals are associated and affected by the internet and broad communications. In the presence of advanced technology where online platforms are always available, influence from the internet cannot be excluded from considerations. Rather, it should always be a part of the marketing and advertising strategy of the politicians' teams to gain recognition, ensure power, and guarantee a chance in winning a spot at the top of the preference list of political candidates. A few perceptions should be not reasonable and just; center around famous people who utilize their notoriety to advance political competitors and their belongings. This research is conducted with the sole purpose of discovering how an individual's milieu of celebrities affects political campaigns and endorsements.

Due to the nature of politics in the Philippines, the criteria for winning and retaining seats/posts are solely determined by the number of public supporters a party/person has, and the number of votes a party/person receives is also determined by this criterion. And, to attract a larger number of supporters and votes, most political parties seek celebrity endorsements and influence because celebrities have a stronger public connection and a larger number of followers.

This study primarily focuses on the role of celebrity endorsement on election gratifying the best person to hold political office.

## 2. Literature Review

Media celebrities are highly regarded in their societies; and this enables them function as effective promoters of persons, issues, products, and causes since they are perceived as believable, trustworthy, likeable and persuasive (Austin et al, 2008) agents. If a celebrity promotes a cause or a political candidate, then the media, the public and policy makers will take notice (Duncombe, 2007). Street (2002) states that social movements need to employ the use of celebrities to legitimize and promote their causes. Celebrities have been known to offer both their popularity and fame to social causes, brands or political and election campaigns. Once a cause can attract the attention of a celebrity, the celebrity could invite others through his or her own social network (Street, 2002). For instance, when celebrities mobilized efforts in campaigns like „Rock the Vote“, „Vote or Die“, „Declare Yourself“, it was observed by scholars that there is an inextricable link between politics and entertainment (Ridley, 2010; Brubaker, 2011). About 194 American celebrities including Oprah Winfrey, Will Smith, Tom Hanks, Jennifer Anniston, George Clooney, and Matt Damon support the election of the first black US president, Barack Obama (Durante, 2012). Political celebrity endorsement, by which is meant the practice of film and music stars publicly offering support to political aspirants during their election campaigns is on the rise. With the exponential growth of the entertainment industry particularly Nollywood and the music industries, celebrity culture has increased significantly in Nigeria. Originally confined to corporate brand endorsements, the practice has now been extended to endorsements of political aspirants.

### 2.1 Factors that Justify the Adoption of Celebrity Endorsement as a Campaign Strategy

In spite of the seemingly increasing distrust of celebrity endorsements of politicians among the electorate, campaign managers continue adopting it as a strategy. Previous success stories in the use of celebrity endorsement accounted for its deployment in the 2015 elections. According to Ayorinde, celebrity endorsement as a campaign strategy has been used in 2007 and 2011, though not the way it is done now (2015), and it was quite effective" (S. Ayorinde, personal communication, April 15, 2016). He specifically mentioned that in 1993, Tony Okoroji, president of Performing Musicians Association of Nigeria (PMAN) assembled a team of musicians, who showed their support for Moshood Abiola during his election campaign. He also stated that in 2007, some celebrities endorsed Jimi Agbaje, one of the gubernatorial candidates for Lagos, during his election campaign. This shows that celebrity endorsement of political candidates in the past had probably yielded success in creating awareness for the politician which is why the campaign managers considered it effective. Jideonwo said that celebrity endorsements make political candidates more popular and that if he had the means, he would adopt the celebrity strategy because „it is a useful strategy that leads to name recall" (C. Jideonwo, personal

communication, February 25, 2017). Ayorinde's and Jideonwo's assertions are in consonance with Street's (2002) insistence on celebrity power as legitimization and effectiveness. A second factor is the perceived alignment of the celebrity with the vision of the political candidate. Some celebrities seem to have endorsed politicians because they believed in the vision expressed by such candidates.

Deborah Ayorinde stated that celebrity endorsers were people who shared the aspirations of the party candidate and could effectively spread the campaign message through their popularity and large social media followership. The general belief is that celebrities are not knowledgeable in politics (Baum, 2006; West & Orman, 2012) and so to create the desired effect, the campaign managers decided to use celebrities that were politically articulate. He said „we were looking for celebrities that will key into our dreams, visions and aspirations. Celebrities that had shown traits of being politically inclined and who were progressively minded“ (S.Ayorinde, personal communication, April 15, 2016). In addition, Uti Nwachukwu claimed that he supported Ambode Akinwunmi because the latter struck him as a dedicated politician, “my first impression of him like I said when I endorsed him was someone who is ready to work” (U.Nwachukwu, personal communication, April 28, 2016). It is unclear, however, how celebrities who key into politicians' visions are identified and employed since quite often, such visions are not clearly articulated beyond publicity materials that splash photographs and slogans. Both Ayorinde's and Nwachukwu's comments portray a vagueness of ideas and unspecified dreams, visions or aspirations. This further suggests that there might be reasons other than alignment with an aspirant's political vision.

One contentious reason for the use of celebrity endorsements in election campaigns is attached to the financial benefits which celebrities are thought to obtain from such promotions. In contrast to the common belief in supporting politicians for money, an endorser summed up the views of several other celebrities by stating that he did not receive any monetary benefit for supporting the APC gubernatorial aspirant, Akinwunmi Ambode. Confidence in the politician to effect positive change rather than material gain spurred his action

Some of the celebrities have been supported by politicians and so they turn around to lend their support when the politicians are running for public office. For instance, Nollywood celebrities endorsed Goodluck Jonathan because of his support to the entertainment industry. During their endorsements, Rita Dominic and Ramsey Nouah said they supported Goodluck Jonathan because the entertainment industry benefitted from his administration.

A fourth reason why campaign managers would enlist celebrities is that such film and music stars enjoy huge popularity among the youth and women; and they have been described as role models for young adults (Brown, Basil & Bocarnea, 2003). Ayorinde stated that the campaign team believed that the messages passed through the celebrities to the public would resonate in the minds of people especially women and the youth. He said „the message was general but again we knew that sixty five percent of those we were targeting were the youths and women“ (S.Ayorinde, personal communication, April 15, 2016). One of the major reasons as stated by Ayorinde is that the party members were mostly men and the members could easily reach out to their fellow men so men were not the primary targets of the celebrities. The campaign team aimed at reaching women and youths, who they felt could be influenced by celebrities to vote.

A rather obvious but previously unexplored reason for political celebrity endorsement in 2015 was the visibility on social media where stars engage with their fans. A lot of election campaigning was done on social media and owing to the massive followership enjoyed by celebrities, campaign managers would leverage on that to reach their fans. Numerous campaign and endorsement videos were uploaded on YouTube. Jideonwo state, For Ambode, it created pop culture so the songs and pictures on social media made him more popular. It made people feel good towards him. (C. Jideonwo, personal communication, February 25, 2017). Celebrities who are active on social media were probably considered a great channel to communicate the campaign message. A Scarborough study in 2013 revealed that voters who follow celebrities find out much of their information from social networking sites, and these voters are influenced by what is presented on such sites. Voters influenced by

celebrities are more likely to take to Twitter, Facebook and other social sites to access news and information, find out information about services, and comment on brands (Scarborough, 2013). The campaign managers wanted celebrities who could communicate to the public through their large followership on social media platforms and possibly influence the attitude of the voters. The interviewer gathered that the aim of using celebrities was because they were popular, had enormous followership on social media platforms. An interviewee affirmed. We are talking about celebrities with nothing less than ... eight hundred thousand, even a million followers on Twitter and could reach a large audience" (S.Ayorinde, personal communication, April 15, 2016) cause requires the attention of a celebrity, that celebrity can utilize his social network to recruit other celebrities (Street, 2002).

## 2.2 Types of Endorsements

In its simplest form, an endorsement is an act of signifying one's approval or support to a person or object publicly ("Endorsement," 2015). Endorsement objects (or endorsees) can include many types of items and constructs such as brands, products, ideologies, laws, and even people, such as politicians. They may come from a variety of sources (or endorsers): celebrities, media, spokespeople, experts, or even the perpetrator or creator of the endorsee, such as a company's CEO. Endorsements can be categorized effectively by looking at two main attributes: 1) who is doing the endorsing (endorser), or 2) what or who is being endorsed (endorsee). A survey of the literature revealed several categories into which each may fall. The extent research looks at the endorser as a) a celebrity spokesperson, b) a non-celebrity spokesperson, c) an expert, d) a media entity, e) a brand or company, f) another organization, and g) a product user. The product user category includes both third-party endorsements and testimonials.

Reviewing the literature also reveals the endorsee as 1) a brand or product, 2) an ideology, policy, or law, 3) a person, or 4) an organization (Appiah, 2007; Biswas, Biswas, & Das, 2006; D'Alessandro & Chitty, 2011; Fedler, Smith, & Counts, 1985; Grazin & Brazell, 1997; Hain, 1975; Holbert, Shah, & Kwak, 2004; Howes & Sallot, 2013; Hurd & Singletary, 1984; Riesz & Shuchman, 1974; Roshwalb & Resnicoff, 1971; Ryu, Park, & Feick, 2006; Scarrow & Borman, 1979; Sierra, Hyman, & Torres, 2009; Summary, 2010; Wang & Muehling, 2012; Weaver-Lariscy & Tinkham, 1991; Westover & Randle, 2009; Woo, Fock, & Hui, 2006). The rest of this section is organized based upon this typology with a summary of overall findings following the review.

**Media Entity Endorser and Person (Politician)** - "When newspapers endorse, they take sides, and endorsements usually come at critical times in the campaign. Endorsements are a conscious political act" (Ansolabehere, Lessem, & Snyder Jr, 2006, p. 2). Simultaneously, politicians often seek media endorsements as one of the few ways they can gain campaign exposure at no cost (Weaver-Lariscy & Tinkham, 1991). In local races, politicians, particularly incumbents are often friendly or acquainted with editors, giving them indirect negotiating power in obtaining endorsements (Ragland, 1987; St. Dizier, 1986).

Because research of newspaper endorsements effects on candidates occurs in a natural experiment setting, it is difficult to isolate the endorsement as a key factor contributing to voting for the candidate, although the existing research suggests that newspaper endorsements can move an election 1 to 5 percentage points (Ansolabehere et al., 2006). When it comes to voting, researchers agree that in order to consider the influence of a media entity's endorsement, consumers must have at bare minimum awareness or recall of the endorsement (Fedler et al., 1985; Hain, 1975; Hurd & Singletary, 1984; Roshwalb & Resnicoff, 1971; Scarrow & Borman, 1979; Summary, 2010). After controlling for other variables that affect voting such as party 14 identification (Ragland, 1987; Scarrow & Borman, 1979), candidate selection process (Summary, 2010), campaign momentum (Summary, 2010), campaign appearance frequency (Summary, 2010; Weaver-Lariscy & Tinkham, 1991), newspaper endorsements appear to have a marginal, but significant effect on election outcomes. Product User Endorser and Brands/Product

**Understanding Celebrity** - As Boorstin (1992) explains, a celebrity is most simply "a person who is known

for his well-knownness” (p. 57). Rojek (2004) treats the term celebrity as “the attribution of glamorous or notorious status to an individual within the public sphere” (p. 10). Such attribution is contingent upon maintaining a cohesively evolving narrative of celebrity (Gabler, 2001) which is constantly in flux, as celebrities live in a here-and-now world where there is space for new celebrities to make it big (Cooper, 2008). Given that there is so much space for new celebrities, Lamport (2006) explains, “Fame is being known. Celebrity is being known by your first name. Monica Lewinsky became famous when people learned of her presidential activities. She became a celebrity when people called her Monica” (p. 1).

While the concept of well-knownness is not new, technology has increased the quantity of well-known individuals, as “the Graphic Revolution suddenly gave us, among other things, the means of fabricating well-knownness” (Boorstin, 1992, p. 47). Celebrities have existed throughout man’s history, however, modern communication enterprises have thrown the production and idolization of celebrities into overdrive, Shakespeare, in the familiar lines divided great men into three classes: those born great, those who achieved greatness, and those who had greatness thrust upon them. It never occurred to him to mention those who hired public relations experts and press secretaries to make themselves look great (Boorstin, 1992, p. 45). In this sense, the traditionalist argues that today’s celebrities have accomplished nothing. Most celebrities though, regardless of their public relations teams, have accomplished something: they are great athletes, entertainers, artists, musicians, and captains of industry (Gabler, 2001).

Critics of celebrity, like Boorstin (1992), reflect with nostalgia upon a time when they believe heroes were great men of great accomplishment and valor, insisting that celebrities in the postmodern era lack the qualities that make a hero truly great. They point to warriors, gladiators, political leaders, and successful Olympic athletes in ancient Greece – the type of characters who live on in history, folklore, myths, and legends, disappointed that there has not, in their view, been a great man since Napoleon (Boorstin, 1992, pp. 46-47). They contend that we have turned from lauding those who reveal God to us, and in turn admire those who “reveal and elevate 17 ourselves” (p. 50). Yet, audiences are fascinated with characters who are more exciting than they are – wealthier and more fashionable, younger, and more attractive (McQuail, 2010, p. 360). “Stars by virtue of being stars come equipped with the first two prerequisites for celebrity,” publicity and most importantly, their narrative (Gabler, 2001, p. 6).

The celebrity’s narrative, or story of being a celebrity, is crucial to maintaining celebrity status. The celebrity need not be born royalty or slay dragons to attain notoriety. Nor is the celebrity’s value contingent upon the opportunities for greatness being thrust upon her. The celebrity may indeed be manufactured, but this process is not just one of a publicity factory pumping out new celebrities for magazines to sell stories about and movies to feature. The celebrity is collaboratively created by himself and the masses who choose to consume media about him. The celebrity co-creates a personal narrative that intrigues audiences while simultaneously taking on characteristics of characters she has played and creating narratives that capture public interest (Gabler, 2001). While the process of celebritization can be seen as “a mode of exploitation or objectification,” it can also be understood “as a form of enfranchisement and empowerment” (Turner, 2010, p. 13).

The heroes of the past may, indeed, have done “great things,” but the very concept of great things is limited by place, time, and culture. While the media industry, particularly film, may have a long history of reifying stereotypes, distorting cultural images, and favoring those with white skin, celebrities have also made political statements through both their art and their actions (Cooper, 2007, 2008; Engle, 2012; Fraser & Brown, 2002; Wheeler, 2011). While the growing number of media outlets seems to amplify the number of celebrities one may know, nostalgia for a time when people did not use public relations to enhance their own public persona is unfounded. The very etymologic nature of the term “celebrity” is Latin, referring to fame (Boorstin, 1992). While Bernays may have been the first to outline the foundations of public relations and call them such, the underlying process of self-promotion was not a novel idea. Julius Caesar, for example, had mastered the art of public relations, publicizing his military victories and using public forums to gain support for his ideas (Du Plessis, 2001; R. Smith, 2011).

While Boorstin (1992) acknowledges those who have historically obtained fame through the arts, he places a value judgment on the contemporary celebrity, asserting that an ever declining proportion of celebrities now come from the “serious arts,” but rather from “light entertainment” (p. 59). While all forms of entertainment may not be the most serious, comedic delight in entertainment and entertainment for the masses are not new art forms (BBC, 2003). Privileging “serious art,” or even labeling it as such places undue judgment on those who lack the education or resources to access it. The democratization of information and access has blurred the line. Simply “because a form of expressive culture was widely accessible and highly popular it was not therefore necessarily devoid of any redeeming value or artistic merit” (Levine, 2009, p. 233).

Like modernism, celebrity is not all fun and games. My epigraphs above, respectively comic and tragic, illustrate two persistent aspects of twentieth century celebrity discourse, both of which find a correspondence in modernist literature. The exchange between Simpson père and Simpson fils imagines celebrity as a glorious way of rising above the masses and transcending the anonymity that settles on ordinary citizens of society. However, the consequence of such exceptionalism, as the über-famous Valentino lamented just two years before his death at the age of thirty-one, may be that celebrity makes the self-contingent; identity depends on an audience for its continued existence, turning the individual into a stereotype, condemned to perform itself until death. These 19 processes, turns the psychological subject into an object, something that lacks agency over itself (p. 1). Irony ensues as “people aspire to fame, just as they aspire to political power, wealth, income, education, and health” (Van de Rijt, et al., 2013, p. 266). For some, the desire for fame is so strong that they are willing to compromise other achievements to attain it (D'Alessandro & Chitty, 2011, p. 369).

***Celebrity Endorsements in Politics*** - While the study of the use of celebrities in commercial advertising has a long-documented history dating back decades, the study of the use of celebrities for political ends is a largely unexplored field (Brubaker, 2011). Of the studies conducted, researchers have found significant results regarding celebrity endorsements and politics, however findings are not consistent across groups and situations. All but one of the six studies available, used student samples. While one of these studies (Veer et al., 2010) did not use a student sample, it is important to note that half of their respondents were under age 28. However, given the nature of the topic, student samples may be more appropriate in this area of research than they are in other areas.

Most of these researchers rely on components of celebrity endorser effectiveness for commercial products and draw from theory and variables used in existing research. In addition to looking at identification, Brubaker (2011) investigated a Third Person Effect of celebrity endorsements of candidates using real endorsements from the 2004 and 2008 Presidential Election cycles. Overall, respondents reported that they did not think they were personally influenced by out-group endorsements (endorsements for candidates in the opposite party), but that the general public would be influenced to have both a better impression of and higher 53 likelihood of voting for the candidate. In a politically polarized climate, those who are already strong partisans are unlikely to be swayed by celebrity endorsements from either side, as they are already solidified in their vote choice. “Although people knew that they were too knowledgeable to be influenced by the opposing candidate’s celebrity endorsement, they were concerned about others, within the general public and their own political party” (p. 19).

Brubaker’s (2011) findings regarding partisanship make sense given that politicians often pander to the base to win nominations, and then begin to move more center during the general election to win the votes of non-partisans. Data from the 2004 election suggest “that most respondents reject the notion that celebrities might influence their voting behavior” (Pease & Brewer, 2008, p. 387). However, people are not always aware of the way media messages shape their attitudes and behavior.

Pease and Brewer (2008) explain voting using Popkin’s (1991) concept of “low information rationality,” that is that for individuals, “when thinking about presidential campaigns: instead of expending a great deal of effort in acquiring knowledge about campaigns, they use information shortcuts” that often come from their daily nonpolitical lives (Pease & Brewer, 2008, pp. 388-389). Voters often assess candidate viability in addition to desirability, particularly in primaries. Interestingly, in this study, liking the celebrity endorser, Oprah, did not lead

to more favorability or likeability for Obama as predicted by the meaning transfer model, but did translate to increased vote intentions for Obama. The researchers credit an increase in perceived viability of Obama in the general election garnered through Oprah's endorsement for this effect. Both Brubaker's (2011) and Pease and Brewer's (2008) studies dealt with real celebrity endorsements of real candidates. St. Dizier (1985) focused on newspaper endorsements rather than celebrity endorsements of a fictional candidate and found that in low information context, people look for subtle differences between two apparently similar candidates to make a vote choice. In this case, the only information experimental group participants were provided to differentiate between two candidates was each's party and which the newspaper endorsed. Those who did not receive any information to differentiate the two fictional candidates (control group) generally did not change their votes over the course of the experiment, as they had no new information to warrant a change.

Veer et al. (2010) had similar findings with regard to information and engagement. Looking at endorsement of the Conservative party in Britain by either a celebrity (Kate Winslet) or non-celebrity (selected in a pre-test), drawing from the ELM and source attractiveness models, they found that people who had been manipulated to have high political salience preferred the advertisement featuring the non-celebrity, whereas those with low political salience preferred the advertisement featuring Winslet. She was found to be more familiar and likeable than the non-celebrity, however, this did not translate into vote intention for the Conservative party. The study's authors suggest that while celebrity endorsers do little (or even possibly have slightly negative effects) for high political salience voters, they ought to be used in campaigns to increase political salience in the public. From a campaign standpoint, celebrity endorsements appear to only affect those who are not engaged.

Also investigating celebrity endorsements of political parties, Nownes (2012) directly suggested that we think about political parties as brands that celebrities use, in investigating the relationship between celebrity endorsers and politics (p. 497). While other researchers have used components of the celebrity endorsements for commercial products and brands theory, Nownes (2012) used the meaning transfer model, focusing particularly on identification to study the impact of information about celebrity support for political parties, namely Jennifer Anniston's financial contribution to the Democratic party and Peyton Manning's contribution to the Republican party. Nownes' (2012) findings suggest that when people like a celebrity who donates to a political party, they also report liking that party more, and conversely when people do not like a celebrity, they will report liking the party that celebrity donated to less. However, for partisans, the relationship is slightly more nuanced, as the relationship is a two-way street, and people who dislike Republicans in turn report more dislike of Peyton Manning after learning of his contribution, as people who dislike Democrats report more dislike of Jennifer Anniston for the same reason. For Jennifer Anniston, Democrats liked her more after learning of her contribution. The same could not be said for Peyton Manning with Republicans. Overall, the data show meaning transfer occurring in a political endorsement context.

Jackson and Darrow (2005) also used a meaning transfer approach when studying whether or not celebrity attribution of a statement about a politician affected agreement with that statement. Respondents in this study, conducted in Canada, were asked their level of agreement with a series of statements made by Canadian celebrities (Avril Lavigne, Alanis Morissette, Deryck Whibley, and Wayne Gretzky) about George W. Bush and U.S. policy. The control group was given no attribution to a celebrity for a statement. The experimental group received the name of the celebrity who made the statement. Two statements were critical of U.S. policy, one was supportive of U.S. policy, and one positive about Canada's decision not to go to war. Attribution of statements to Lavigne, Whibley, and Gretzky increased agreement with the statements. Morissette had no effect, presumably because she is no longer considered a pop star, as celebrity is fleeting. With respect to the source credibility model, these findings underscore previous findings suggesting that moderate credibility is more effective than high credibility in a spokesperson. With regard to the source attractiveness model, the researchers contend that public perceptions would support the notion that the celebrities chosen are attractive. In contrast with the other studies, Austin, Van de Vord, Pinkleton, and Epstein (2008) did not focus on feelings toward a politician or political party, but rather toward voting in general. By looking at complacency through a lens of identification with celebrities involved in GOTV campaigns, Austin and colleagues found that receptivity to these campaigns,



influenced by admiration for or identification with the celebrities involved, increased self-efficacy which leads to involvement and also decreased complacency, which also leads to involvement. Decreases in complacency are associated with additional gains in self-efficacy.

### 2.3 Research Framework

The theories that are built about the effectiveness of a celebrity in promoting are called the Celebrity Endorsement Theories. These are the source credibility theory and the source attractiveness theory. Both theories served as our theoretical framework. Whereas, it can explain why students are being persuaded by their idol celebrity and explains the effect of a celebrity's attractiveness.

**Source Credibility Theory** - A theory by Hovland, et al. back in 1953, the Source Credibility theory explains how people are more likely to be persuaded when the source presents itself as credible. This is if the celebrity's characteristics and message affect the receivers. This theory has been used in the 20th century; it was attempted to be used to influence the public's opinion. This concept was developed by Aristotle in his work called *The Rhetoric*. By comparing credible and non-credible sources using the same persuasive message, the study confirmed the assumption that credible sources tend to create the ideal effect on the crowd. Huge companies sign endorsement deals with models and celebrities for a reason. It is that these models and celebrities have assumed a role model status for other citizens, especially those who aspire to be just like them. Celebrities' characteristics as a communicator influence does not only work for commercials and advertising but also the choice of endorsers for political candidates and social causes.

**Source Attractiveness Theory** - Attractiveness can be based on familiarity, likability, and closeness of celebrity to a citizen. That is where the citizen imitates his or her favorite celebrity. The Physical appearance, the intelligence and the charisma are very well a part of this theory. It is believed by most that the more beautiful the celebrity is the more memorable it is to the citizens. The source of attractiveness plays a vital role as attractiveness plays a role in the categorization of stereotypes.

### 2.4 Research Problems

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements on election candidate among CAS students: What is the profile of the respondents in terms of Age, Sex and Course? What type of social media is being used by the endorser as perceived by the respondents, during election campaign in terms of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube? What are the effects of celebrity endorsement in political election in terms of; Credibility, Attractiveness, and Popularity? Is there a significant relationship between the profile and the effect of celebrity endorsement on political campaign?

### 2.5 Research Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the profile and the effect of celebrity influence on election candidates.

## 3. Methodology

**Research Design** - In this study, quantitative method design was used which is based on their underlying research questions and objectives. The researchers used the numerical form put into categories, or in rank order, or measured in units of measurement by the use of graphs and tables of raw data in explaining the data by the use of quantitative approach. Moreover, this study determined the effects that influenced the respondents on celebrity endorsement, and how the celebrity influenced political campaigns; in addition, the researchers discovered how these effects can influence people's decision-making in terms of celebrity influence. Setting these objectives, the researchers gathered information which was very useful in conducting the study.

**Locale of the Study** - The study was conducted at the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). The study was conducted via online survey thru Google forms distributed through the respondents' emails or messengers for those who studied at Northwestern University, Laoag City, Ilocos Norte. College of Arts and Sciences is a Liberal Arts Department in Northwestern University. The department opened in 1949. It offers courses such as Bachelor in Arts in English Studies, Political Science, Mass Communication, as well as Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics, Psychology, Computer Science, and Biology. Northwestern University is a private non-sectarian educational institution in Laoag City, Ilocos Norte. The university has a total of nine hectares (22 acres) of land accommodating seven (7) buildings comprising of nine (9) colleges. The University has the most accredited programs, North of Manila, by PACUCOA. Moreover, it is also granted by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) a deregulated status and it is an International Standard Organization (ISO) Certified.

**Population and Sampling** - The total population of the study was consists of one hundred seventy-six (176) students from the College of Arts and Science (CAS) for the Academic Year 2021-2022. Using Nueman in terms of getting the population and where convenience sampling is used for the 51 students at the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). The respondents in this study were the fifty-one (51) of the total population of ninety-eight (176) College of Arts and Sciences students at Northwestern University AY. 2021-2022.

**Data Gathering Instrument** - The results obtained will be evaluated using an online form that will help the students of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) complete the survey with no time or date constraint. Given concern for confidentiality, the form did not require filling of names and thus, only their e-mails were collected which was not disclosed to the panel. It should be noted that the online form is handled by the researchers only. In the conduct of the study, the researchers made the questionnaire checklist was used to gather the needed data for the respondents' profile. The questionnaire made was based on the general knowledge of the general population (GP) of the Philippines on their electoral choices. The researchers themselves made the questionnaire which was checked by the adviser and it will be validated by the panel members. The questionnaire had three (3) parts: The first part is the profile of the respondents; the second part determines the social media being used, the third part was formulated for the effects of celebrity endorsement on election candidates in terms of; Credibility, Attractiveness, and Popularity; This revealed the difference on the profile and the effect of celebrity influence on political campaign. The questionnaire was validated through Cronbach's Alpha of 0.985 which indicates excellent reliability.

**Data Gathering Procedure** - Prior to the conduct of this study, the researchers requested the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences to conduct the study. Upon approval, the researchers personally administered the questionnaires to the respondents. The survey questionnaire was conducted using Google Forms, based on the availability of respondents', whenever they have access to internet. The respondents were not given a time limit to answer the survey questionnaire, however, the respondents were requested to submit their responses within 1-3 days. Data gathered was tabulated, interpreted, and analyzed using appropriate statistical treatment tools.

**Data Analysis** - To treat the data on the respondents' profile, frequency count, and percentage was used. To determine the effectiveness' influence on the respondents' decision-making in selecting a celebrity is influenced by social media, advertisement, **mass media**, the researchers got the weighted mean and turned it into a descriptive interpretation based on the data gathered.

**Ethical Considerations** - Ethical considerations were used in the conduct of the research among the respondents. The research's goal and the participants' contributions were explained in detail to them. After presenting and discussing the goals and objectives, informed consent was acquired. The informed consent contained the following: (a) an agreement between the researcher and the participants that the latter will give permission to involve themselves in the study; (b) an information that the participants can withdraw any time, can ask questions and can refuse to answer the questions if they feel uncomfortable about the questions; (c) an explanation of the possible risk and potential benefits of the study to allow them to make decisions about their participation in the study; and (d) a description of the participants' rights which will be reiterated at the

beginning of each data gathering. All of the questions were answered clearly and honestly.

Similarly, the researcher safeguards the confidentiality and anonymity of each participant by assigning a code to each participant based on the reference and connected to the survey questionnaire guide. In submitting the data collected from the respondents, the researcher did not write the identities of the participants. Only the researcher had idea where the statement came from. For their protection, the information was kept in a personal drive with the researcher's own email address and password. The participant's privacy was protected by the researcher's refusal to share the details of their encounters. In addition, the study claims that there is never a financial, familial, or proprietary consideration of the researchers, whether from the sponsor or the study location that causes a conflict of interest. This is to assure that there was no bias or injustice at any point during the investigation, and that only the necessary steps or procedures were followed. They were not subjected to any physical, psychological, or mental abuse because they are teachers and do not belong to any vulnerable category.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

**Table 1**

*Profile of the respondents (n=51)*

|                      | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Sex                  |           |            |
| Male                 | 17        | 33.34      |
| Female               | 34        | 66.66      |
| Age                  |           |            |
| 18-24                | 42        | 82.35      |
| 25-29                | 7         | 13.73      |
| 30 and above         | 2         | 3.92       |
| Courses              |           |            |
| BA-Political Science | 15        | 29.41      |
| AB-Communication     | 9         | 17.65      |
| BS-Psychology        | 11        | 21.57      |
| BS-Computer Science  | 13        | 25.49      |
| BS-Biology           | 1         | 1.96       |
| AB-English Language  | 2         | 3.92       |

The table shows that the female respondents had shown more interest and response to the study as opposed to male respondents. The female respondents account for 66.6% or 34 out of 51 respondents whilst male respondents only account for 33.34% or 17 out of 51 respondents. Case in point, it seems that females tend to be more unbiased towards a person's sex in selecting a leader in contrast to most males. Helgesen (1990) and Rosener (1995) proposed that female is more likely endorsed celebrity are more inclined to fill this leadership need than men, by drawing upon characteristics they are encouraged to uphold as part of their femininity including an emphasis on cooperation rather than competition and equality rather than a supervisor-subordinate hierarchy. More recently, Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, and Ristikari (2011) conducted a meta-analysis examining the extent to which stereotypes of leadership are culturally masculine and determined that "leadership now, more than in the past, appears to incorporate more feminine relational qualities, such as sensitivity, warmth, and understanding" (p. 634).

In terms of age, the age group of 18-24 yield more responses with 82.35% or 42 out of 51 respondents – more than the age groups 25-29 with 13.73% or 7 out of 51 respondents & 30 and above with 3.92% or 2 out of 51 respondents. The result was expected as the population that were sampled are in college level with the age group 18-24 as more dominant in number. Lastly, on the status within organizations of the respondents', most of the respondents are 29.41% of the population consists of 15 AB-Political Science students, 17.65% of the population consists of 9 AB-Communication students, 21.57% of the population consists of BS-Psychology students, 25.49% of the population consists of BS-Computer Science students, 1.96% of the population consists of 1 BS-Biology student and lastly, 3.92% of the population consists of 2 AB-English Language students, celebrity endorsed on election shows that those who were elected as leaders are not based on their gender but has something to do with their performance as suggested by the performance theory that says, gender does not matter

but it is solely based on the performance.

**Table 2**

*Type of Social Media being used in Endorsing Celebrity on Election Candidate*

| Type of Social Media | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Facebook             | 19        | 37.25      |
| Instagram            | 9         | 17.65      |
| Twitter              | 7         | 13.72      |
| Youtube              | 16        | 31.38      |

Table 2 shows the type of social media being used in endorsing celebrities on political campaign. It can be drawn from above that the 37.25% of the population consisting of 19 respondents use Facebook, 31.38% of the population consisting of 16 respondents use YouTube, 17.65% of the population consisting of 9 respondents use Instagram and the remaining 13.72% of the population, consisting of 7 respondents use Twitter. Running ads on various types of media, candidates can reach audiences that otherwise may not have been paying attention to the election and build name recognition, highlight important issues, and call attention to the shortcomings of their opponents, so a society, we are still dealing with the fallout from these revelations and trying to determine what kind of controls, if any, should be placed on social media platforms when it comes to political advertising.

The results outlined in table 3 shows how effective celebrity endorsements are in terms of a voter's decision to support a candidate. The results of the survey show that attractiveness has no bearing on the voting decision of participants in supporting a candidate. On the other hand, the perceived credibility of the celebrity is shown to have a positive impact in terms of voting choice, with a mean of 1.97, indicating that voters sometimes decide to support a political candidate based on their perceived credibility of the celebrity endorsing the same.

**Table 3**

*Effectiveness of Celebrity Endorsement of Election Candidate*

| Effectiveness   | WM   | Interpretation |
|---|------|----------------|
| <i>Attractiveness</i>   |      |                |
| I get attached to the political candidates endorsed by a celebrity                              | 1.57 | Never          |
| The presence of the celebrity as the endorser of the political candidate is effective.          | 2.02 | Sometimes      |
| I find political candidates campaign ads attractive if they are endorse by a celebrity.         | 1.71 | Never          |
| If my favorite celebrity dislike that certain candidate I tend to dislike him/her to.           | 1.26 | Never          |
| I will support the candidate my favorite celebrity is endorsing.                                | 1.74 | Never          |
| Mean:   | 1.66 | Never          |
| <i>Credibility</i>  |      |                |
| Candidate become more credible when endorsed by a celebrity.                                    | 2.40 | Sometimes      |
| I think campaign ads with celebrity is more effective   | 1.88 | Sometimes      |
| I find political candidates credible if they are endorse by a celebrity                         | 2.29 | Sometimes      |
| My favorite celebrity gives me a positive image of a candidate                                  | 1.71 | Never          |
| I think that negative publicity about a celebrity endorser can influence my decision of voting. | 1.56 | Never          |
| Mean:   | 1.97 | Sometimes      |
| <i>Popularity</i>   |      |                |
| The political candidate's popularity is increased when endorsed by a celebrity.                 | 2.33 | Sometimes      |
| Political candidates are identified with the celebrity associated with them.                    | 2.02 | Sometimes      |
| I will not support candidate that is endorsed by a celebrity who gets involve in a scandal.     | 1.75 | Never          |
| I support candidates endorsed by a celebrity.   | 1.67 | Never          |
| I will not support my most hate celebrity is endorsing.   | 2.50 | Sometimes      |
| Mean:   | 2.05 | Sometimes      |
| OVERALL MEAN:   | 1.89 | Sometimes      |

Interestingly, the popularity of the celebrity also affects voters' choices. Results of the study show a mean of 2.05, indicating that voters can sometimes be persuaded into supporting a political candidate due to celebrity endorsement popularity. However, literatures and previous studies and even current events shows that there are some people within are more likely willing to elect those that their celebrity advertises instead of selecting someone they really think worthy of running an office. According to Aristotle (as cited in Ohanian, 1991, p. 47), "Beauty is a greater letter of recommendation than any letter of introduction". Physical attractiveness is a very

important factor which, if used properly, can result in the success of celebrity endorsements. In previous research, physical attractiveness has been measured in terms of elegant, attractive, sexy and classy (Ohanian, 1990). Marketers tend to use celebrities in advertisements based on their attractiveness to get maximum use of their status as a celebrity and their physical appeal (Singer, 1983).

The source attractiveness model has its origin in psychological research and is considered an effective way to convey a message using a celebrity. However, the effectiveness of the process depends on the source's similarity, familiarity, attractiveness, and likability to the respondent (Ohanian, 1990). Friedman & Friedman (1979), in their study, explained that there are three types of endorsers that are widely used these days: a celebrity endorser is a person who is well known to the public as an entertainer, athlete, or actor etc. for his/her achievements as a celebrity. An expert endorser is a group or an individual who has upper-knowledge in any field i.e. a famous dentist will endorse toothpaste as they are viewed as an expert in the field of dentistry etc. Moreover, a consumer endorser is a person who has no special knowledge whatsoever but is used in advertisements to show how a normal person thinks about the product. The main purpose of the study of Friedman & Friedman (1979) was to see the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements in different product types. Moreover, another purpose was to see which one among the three endorsers (expert endorser, celebrity endorser and consumer endorser) is more effective and for this one must understand the importance of trustworthiness, expertise, similarity, familiarity, and likability.

The Pearson Correlation coefficient on the age variable shows that there is a positive relationship between attractiveness, credibility, and the popularity of the celebrity with the age of the respondent. This is to say that older voters are more likely to vote for/support political candidates endorsed by who they perceive as attractive, credible, and popular celebrities. However, the researchers were only able to obtain a correlation significant at 0.10 level under the attractiveness variable.

**Table 4**

*Relationship between the Profile and the Effectiveness of Celebrity Endorsement on Election Candidate*

| Profile of the Respondents         | Effectiveness of Celebrity Endorsement on Political Campaign |             |            |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------|------------|
|                                    | Attractiveness   | Credibility | Popularity |
| Age Pearson Correlation            | .295   | .123        | .166       |
| Sig. (2 tailed)                    | .058   | .438        | .293       |
| N                                  | 51   | 51          | 51         |
| Sex Pearson Correlation            | -.014  | .053        | .005       |
| Sig. (2 tailed)                    | .929   | .739        | .973       |
| N                                  | 51   | 51          | 51         |
| Courses Of CAS Pearson Correlation | .441*  | .152        | -.039      |
| Sig. (2 tailed)                    | .003   | .337        | .806       |
| N                                  | 51   | 51          | 51         |

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

On the other hand, the table also shows that sex is negatively correlated with attractiveness but is positively correlated with credibility and popularity. This implies that females are less likely to consider the attractiveness of celebrities in their choice to support an endorsed political candidate but are likely to look into the credibility and popularity of the celebrity in doing so. However, the researchers were not able to establish a significance level at 0.10, 0.05, and 0.01. Finally, the results of the survey show that course variable is positively correlated with attractiveness and credibility but is negatively correlated with popularity. Overall, it is only the course and attractiveness variable where the researchers were able to obtain a statistical significance at the 0.01 level.

## 5. Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn, majority of the respondents are females that are within the age group of 18-24. Facebook is the preferred social media platform to be used by a celebrity endorser when it comes to political campaigns. The age of the respondents is significantly related to the attractiveness of the celebrity endorser of political campaigns, it is apparently that sex and course of the

respondents are significantly related to the credibility and popularity of the celebrity endorser of political campaigns. The respondents' choice of a political candidate to support were more likely to be influenced by the credibility and popularity of the celebrity endorser of political campaigns, rather than the attractiveness of the latter. We therefore conclude that popularity and credibility is the biggest effects endorsing political candidate in their decision making of the respondents.

### 5.1 Recommendations

In the light of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are given: Since Facebook is the most preferred social media platform to be used by celebrity endorsers, politicians should look for a celebrity endorser that has a huge following and audience in the said platform. Leaders should focus more into the credibility and popularity of a celebrity rather than the attractiveness, before selecting an endorser. Lastly, celebrities should focus more on building a credible image and a reliable fan base when endorsing a political candidate. Voters should not solely rely on the attractiveness of the celebrity endorser when choosing a political candidate to support and should look into other aspects as well and voters should considering the credibility of the celebrity endorser, should also look into the political candidate's credibility and platform. Future researchers are also encouraged to explore the impact of the platform and campaign movement of a political candidate to the voters' decision in choosing a candidate to support. Future researchers are encouraged to look more into the relationship between the sex and age of the respondents and their choice of a political candidate. Future researchers should consider making brief essay and simple articles for the readers.

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