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# THE ROLE OF PERCEIVED CELEBRITY FAME ORIGIN IN SHAPING PURCHASE INTENTIONS AMONG YOUNG CONSUMERS

## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** The study investigates how the perceived origin of a celebrity's fame—classified as ascribed, achieved, or attributed/celetoid (celetoid fame refers to celebrities known primarily for short-term media exposure, scandals, and public appearances)—influences consumer purchasing behaviour, particularly among younger audiences. While celebrity endorsements remain a prevalent marketing strategy, limited research has examined how media representation and the perceived legitimacy of such fame affect consumer purchase intentions.

**Methodology:** The research is grounded in Rojek's (2001) classification of celebrity fame and employs a survey conducted on a convenience sample of 902 respondents in Croatia. ANOVA and regression analyses were used to examine whether fame origin and demographic variables predict consumers' likelihood of purchasing endorsed products.

**Results:** Findings indicate that age ( $F = 20.633, p < .001$ ) and achieved fame ( $F = 15.613, p < .001$ ) are statistically significant predictors of purchase intention. Consumers aged 18–25 were more influenced by celebrity endorsements, and those who perceived celebrities as having achieved fame through talent and accomplishment were more likely to respond positively to endorsements. In contrast, ascribed and attributed/celetoid fame had no significant impact on purchasing behaviour, suggesting that the credibility and authenticity conveyed through media narratives play a key role in shaping endorsement effectiveness.

**Conclusion:** The results highlight that merit-based fame enhances the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements, particularly among younger audiences. These insights suggest that brands should strategically align with celebrities perceived as accomplished, not only from a marketing standpoint but also considering how these figures are communicated and perceived in the public sphere.

**Keywords:** Achieved fame, consumers purchase behaviour, Rojek's typology of celebrities' fame origin, celebrity endorsement, young consumers, media-centric production of fame

## 1. Introduction

In contemporary industry of marketing and media, celebrities are used for endorsements of products, services or brands—the greater the number of endorsement deals, the better. To secure more endorsement deals, celebrities need to possess various characteristics and influence consumer behaviour, i.e., encourage consumers to take action (to purchase a product, subscribe to a media platform, etc.). Research has shown that a celebrity's characteristics, such as credibility and expertise, can strengthen emotional attachment to a brand, influence consumer behaviour, and enhance brand image (Gofur & Shafariah, 2025; Aprianto et al., 2024). Additionally, social status plays an important role in shaping consumer preferences and loyalty (He et al., 2019). Although much has been written about celebrity characteristics, social status, and their role in branding (Turner, 2004; Marshall, 2016), the connection between the social origin of fame and consumer behaviour has been less thoroughly explored. Investigating how the social origin of a celebrity's fame interacts with celebrity endorsement strategies can shed light on how communication mechanisms shape consumer perceptions. The social status and media construction of a celebrity's fame are key factors in determining how effectively they can engage with audiences and influence consumer behaviour. Therefore, a deeper understanding of the origins of fame, as articulated by Chris Rojek (2001), can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements on consumer behaviour, specifically in relation to purchasing decisions. The study is focused particularly on younger audiences, that mostly correspond to Generations Y and Z, who actively engage with celebrity culture to identify how the perceived origin of a celebrity's fame influences the likelihood of consumers purchasing a product they endorse.

This paper has a few sections. It starts with the introduction, which outlines the research problem and significance. The next section presents the theoretical background, focusing on Rojek's (2001) classification of celebrity fame and prior studies on celebrity endorsements and consumer behaviour. It is followed by the methodology section, which describes the research design, sampling method, data collection instruments, and criteria for celebrity selection. The results section then presents the statistical analysis results, examining the impact of fame origin and demographic variables on consum-

er purchase intentions. The discussion section interprets these findings in light of existing literature, hypotheses and theoretical frameworks. Finally, the conclusion summarises the main insights, addresses the study's limitations, and suggests directions for future research.

## 2. Theoretical background

### 2.1 Rojek's fame classification and the role of media representation of fame

A central theoretical framework for understanding contemporary celebrity culture is Rojek's (2001) tripartite classification of fame, which distinguishes between **ascribed**, **achieved**, and **attributed** forms of celebrity status. These categories provide critical insight into how fame originates and how it is perceived by the public, particularly in relation to authenticity, merit, and media influence. **Ascribed** fame is inherited, typically through familial connections, granting individuals such as royalty or aristocrats automatic social status (e.g., Prince William and Prince Harry). **Achieved** fame is earned through talent and accomplishments in fields like sports, music, and the arts (e.g., Pablo Picasso, Venus Williams). This type of fame carries strong connotations of merit and authenticity, often increasing public trust and admiration. **Attributed** fame, on the other hand, is often constructed by media and industry mediators (such as publicists, journalists and producers), with individuals like reality TV stars or viral figures gaining temporary fame through media representation rather than personal merit. An important notion for this study was Rojek's acknowledgement of the model's limitations, which led to the recognition of other forms of celebrities derived from attributed fame, such as **celetoids**—figures who experience brief yet intense media-driven fame, including reality TV contestants, streakers, or whistle-blowers, and **celeactors**—fictional characters who momentarily dominate public attention (e.g., Borat) (Rojek, 2001). This model was selected for the present research because it is the most frequently cited, along with its extended version. Rojek's model has proven useful for understanding the varying origins of fame and their implications for celebrity endorsements, particularly in distinguishing between those whose fame is inherited or earned versus those whose fame is manufactured by the media. Thus, understanding the origin of a celebrity's fame—whether ascribed, achieved, or attributed—can provide criti-

cal insights into how different types of celebrity influence consumer decision-making.

While Rojek's classification offers a foundational typology, contemporary scholars have emphasised the **central role of media representation** in shaping not only celebrity status but also public perceptions of legitimacy and value. As Turner (2004) and Marshall (2010) argue, celebrity is not simply a personal trait or social outcome, it is a **media product**, constructed through storytelling, repetition, and image framing. The **celebrification process** (Turner, 2006) transforms ordinary individuals into public figures by embedding them in media cycles that emphasise visibility over substance. This media-centric production of fame is particularly evident in the rise of digital influencers, who accumulate what Driessens (2013) describes as *celebrity capital*, a form of symbolic value built through sustained visibility rather than traditional credentials. These figures, often lacking institutionalised expertise, become powerful brand ambassadors due to their perceived relatability and frequent presence in the everyday media consumption of audiences (Abidin, 2018; Hearn & Schoenhoff, 2015). In the era of social media, such *attributed celebrities* have become increasingly prominent in endorsement research (Shao et al., 2024; Calvo-Porrall et al., 2021). Typically emerging from platforms like Instagram or TikTok, they are viewed as accessible and authentic, which enhances their persuasive capacity in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviours.

Numerous studies have emphasised that characteristics such as attractiveness, expertise, credibility, and social status are critical for consumers to perceive a celebrity endorser as trustworthy (Cansu & Sezen, 2025; Gaikwad & Muley, 2024). These attributes align with Rojek's fame typology: "achieved" celebrities often embody skill and merit, "ascribed" celebrities inherit recognition through familial or social status, while "attributed" celebrities may blend elements of both—depending on how they are framed by media narratives. However, the legitimacy of attributed fame remains contested. As Stewart and Giles (2019) argue, media discourse plays a powerful role in assigning moral and cultural value to different fame types. Attributed and *celetoid* celebrities are frequently portrayed as superficial or undeserving, reinforcing hierarchies of fame in which achieved celebrities are perceived as more credible and aspirational. This moral cod-

ing becomes particularly significant in commercial contexts, where perceived authenticity and legitimacy can determine the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements. Thus, while attributed celebrities may enjoy high visibility, their endorsement power is often shaped—and limited—by how they are constructed and evaluated within public and media discourse.

## 2.2 *Celebrity brand endorsement influence on consumer purchase decisions*

There are many factors that influence consumer purchasing behaviour, not only innovative marketing approaches (Pucelj et al., 2024), but also, increasingly, the involvement of celebrities in shaping consumer decisions. Here, we review previous research on celebrity brand endorsement and its influence on consumer purchase decisions.

Starting with the authors who claimed that celebrity brand endorsement had an influence on the purchase decisions, Lestari and Wahyono (2021), who used the quantitative method, i.e., a survey of 115 participants, came to a conclusion that celebrity endorsers, online promotion and brand image had a positive impact on consumer purchase decisions. In their research, they claim that the predictors influencing consumer purchase are celebrity credibility, attractiveness and visibility. Annissa and Paramita (2021) conducted a survey with 216 participants from Generations Y and Z to examine whether celebrity endorsement of the Maybelline brand influenced consumer purchase decisions. Their findings confirmed a positive effect. The same predictors were crucial for purchase decisions, such as celebrity attractiveness, as well as skill in endorsing and product-related knowledge (i.e., expertise) (Annissa & Paramita, 2021). A subsequent study by Syalsabila and Hermina (2023) employed a questionnaire-based survey on a sample of 185 respondents, predominantly male (63%) and aged between 35 and 45, within the culinary industry. The authors concluded that the effective use of celebrity endorsements significantly increases customer engagement, which in turn has a positive impact on purchasing decisions. Specifically, the study found that higher consumer engagement correlates with a greater likelihood of making a purchase. In addition, in this study, the predictor that influenced positive consumer purchase decisions was attachment to the celebrity figure. In contrast, using a descriptive research technique in the cosmetics in-

dustry, Dey et al.'s (2024) research on 150 females belonging to Generation Z showed that females were positively influenced by celebrities to buy the product, and they also perceived the product more credible when it is endorsed by the celebrity. The study also found that celebrity personality was the most significant predictor of the consumer–celebrity relationship influencing purchase decisions. Further research on the influence of celebrity endorsement in the cosmetics industry was conducted by Rafiah and Rahmawita (2025) via an online survey involving 102 respondents. The study demonstrated that celebrity endorsements significantly impact purchasing decisions, accounting for 67.1% of the variance. Key predictors influencing consumer behaviour included the celebrity's credibility, physical attractiveness, alignment with the brand, and the ability to gain trust from product users.

Focusing on the tea processing industry, Ananda et al. (2024) conducted a survey-based study involving 225 participants, most of whom were female (60%) and aged between 22 and 25, representing Generation Z. The results were consistent with those of Dey et al. (2024), emphasising that celebrity personality serves as a significant predictor of consumer purchasing behaviour. Specifically, the study found that consumers are more likely to make positive purchase decisions when the endorsing celebrity is someone they admire or idolise. Ananda et al. (2024, p. 361) further stated that “celebrity product adoption can increase consumer purchase intentions, which directly influences their decision to purchase the iced tea product.” This conclusion is supported by similar findings from Aprilia and Hidayati (2020) and Park and Lin (2020).

Extending the focus to younger generations, prior studies have consistently shown that Generations Y (Millennials) and Z are particularly susceptible to the influence of celebrity culture, as they are the most active followers of celebrity-related media content (Mendick et al., 2018) and influencer culture (Jin et al., 2019; Centeno & Wang, 2017). In line with this, Macheka et al. (2024) conducted a questionnaire-based study targeting Generation Y, specifically exploring purchase intentions related to beauty products among female respondents (N = 203), most of whom (29.06%) were aged 36 and above. The results revealed that Estée Lauder was the most favoured beauty brand (35%), followed by Maybelline (26%) and L'Oréal (16%). The authors concluded that celebrities perceived as credible,

knowledgeable, and possessing domain-specific expertise have a positive influence on the purchase intentions of female consumers from Generation Y.

Building on previous findings that emphasise the role of celebrity credibility and expertise, further research has explored additional dimensions of influence within specific cultural contexts. Priyambodo et al. (2025) investigated the impact of celebrity endorsement within the K-pop fanbase and found that both celebrity credibility and physical attractiveness had a significant impact on purchasing decisions related to an electronic payment card, resulting in a reported sales increase of 73.7%. The study was conducted via an online survey with 95 respondents. Similarly, using a qualitative approach through semi-structured interviews with five Generation Z participants, Maharani et al. (2025) demonstrated the importance of celebrity attractiveness in triggering impulse purchases. An additional noteworthy predictor identified in their study was the celebrity's public speaking ability, which played a persuasive role in encouraging consumers to engage in purchasing behaviour.

Contrary to the majority of studies emphasising the positive effects of celebrity endorsements, several recent findings suggest a more limited or even negligible influence in certain contexts. Nuryanti et al.'s (2023) study among 636 students (the sample size was determined by the Slovin formula) showed that there is no positive influence between celebrity endorsers and purchasing decisions, highlighting that for a celebrity endorsement to be successful, the celebrity should not be overexposed. According to a questionnaire-based study, Pratama and Sudarmatin (2024) concluded that celebrity endorsements do not have a significant impact on consumer purchase decisions within the TikTok Shop platform. Their results indicate that the presence or absence of a celebrity endorser does not meaningfully affect consumers' purchasing behaviour. Expanding on this perspective, Yanti and Zamrudi (2025) conducted research on Generation Z consumers (N = 100) in the cosmetics sector and found that while celebrity endorsements had an insignificant impact, brand image and brand awareness played a more decisive role in influencing purchase intentions. Supporting this trend, Goldin and Rodiah (2025) investigated consumer behaviour in the fashion industry—specifically in relation to Adidas footwear—and reached similar conclusions: celebrity endorsements exerted only a marginal influence, whereas

brand image had a considerably stronger effect on purchasing decisions.

This literature review provides a comprehensive overview of the varying degrees to which celebrity brand endorsements influence consumer purchase decisions. It can be seen that most of the research was conducted using surveys. A substantial body of empirical evidence indicates that celebrity endorsements can exert a positive and statistically significant impact on consumer behaviour, particularly among younger generations (Generations Y and Z) and within industries such as cosmetics, fashion, food and beverage, and digital services. Key factors identified as influential in shaping purchasing decisions include celebrity credibility, attractiveness, expertise, brand alignment, and the emotional attachment or idolisation of the celebrity by the consumer. Studies showed that well-executed celebrity endorsements, especially when tailored to the appropriate demographic and product category, enhance consumer trust, brand perception, and ultimately drive purchase intentions.

However, some studies show a limited or no influence of celebrity endorsement due to factors such as overexposure (Nuryanti et al., 2023), poor brand-celebrity fit (Yanti & Zamrudi, 2025), platform-specific dynamics such as on TikTok (Pratama & Sudarmiatin, 2024), and increasing consumer skepticism—especially among younger, media-savvy audiences.

In conclusion, while celebrity endorsements can be a powerful marketing tool and a tool for impacting purchasing decisions, their effectiveness is highly context-dependent.

### **3. Methodology**

Building on the theoretical concept and drawing from Rojek's (2001) model, this study explores how the perceived origin of fame—mediated through public discourse—influences consumer evaluations of celebrity-endorsed products. By linking fame typology to media representation, the research aims to uncover how consumers distinguish between different celebrity figures and how these distinctions shape their purchasing behaviour.

To strengthen the empirical grounding of the research model, the following hypotheses are informed by prior studies on celebrity endorsement and generational consumer behaviour. Existing

literature consistently identifies celebrity credibility, expertise, and authenticity as key predictors of endorsement effectiveness (Lestari & Wahyono, 2021; Rafiah & Rahmawita, 2025; Dey et al., 2024), with age and emotional attachment to celebrities shown to influence consumer response (Ananda et al., 2024; Macheka et al., 2024). Furthermore, media-saturation effects and trust in social media influencers are also relevant to understanding differences in consumer response by generation (Güneş et al., 2022).

H1: Consumer age and the perception that a celebrity has achieved fame through talent and accomplishments are statistically significant predictors of consumers' likelihood to purchase celebrity-endorsed products.

This is supported by prior findings showing that celebrity expertise and perceived effort (achieved fame) increase trust and purchase intention (Macheka et al., 2024; Rafiah & Rahmawita, 2025; Dey et al., 2024).

H2: The perception that a celebrity's fame is ascribed (inherited) or attributed/celebrity (media-constructed or short-lived) does not significantly influence consumer purchase intentions.

Several studies have shown a limited or no effect of celebrity endorsements when the endorser is perceived as overexposed or lacking authenticity (Nuryanti et al., 2023; Pratama & Sudarmiatin, 2024; Yanti & Zamrudi, 2025).

H3: Younger consumers (aged 18–25) are more likely to be influenced by celebrity endorsements than older consumers (aged 36 and above).

Empirical studies indicate that Generations Y and Z are more actively engaged with influencer content and more responsive to celebrity marketing (Centeno & Wang, 2017; Jin et al., 2019; Güneş et al., 2022).

H4: Younger consumers (aged 18–25) are more responsive to celebrities whose fame is perceived as media-constructed (attributed/celebrity) compared to consumers aged 36 and above.

Younger consumers show higher trust in social media influencers (Güneş et al., 2022) and are more likely to follow and emulate celebrities whose fame is driven by digital visibility (Anissa & Paramita, 2021; Ananda et al., 2024).

### 3.1 Data collection and instrument validity

The research data were collected from August to September 2024 using a convenience sample of 902 respondents from Croatia. The survey was distributed via Google Forms to ensure broad accessibility and ease of participation. Based on previous research on branding, consumer behaviour, and purchasing decisions that commonly employed Likert scales as measurement tools (Che et al., 2025; Montecchi et al., 2024; 't Hart and Phau, 2022; Philip et al., 2023; Dey et al., 2024; Lestari & Wahyono, 2021; Nuryanti et al., 2023), this study also utilised a Likert-type scale to measure consumer responses.

A five-point Likert scale (from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) was used to assess respondents' attitudes toward each celebrity and their likelihood of purchasing the products endorsed by those celebrities. This approach allows for structured, reliable measurement of attitudinal and behavioural variables relevant to celebrity endorsement effects.

### 3.2 Sampling process and celebrity selection criteria

To reach a demographically relevant and media-savvy audience, the study employed the snowball sampling method (Milas, 2005; Pavić, 2021) appropriate for populations without a formal sampling frame, particularly within digital and social media communities (Noy, 2008). Although the study relied on a non-probability convenience sample, the use of a snowball strategy via a prominent social media figure ensured access to a target demographic that is highly relevant for this type of research.

The well-known Croatian Instagram influencer Ana Pulić was selected as an entry point. With over 113,000 followers and active collaborations with global beauty brands such as L'Oreal, she served as a strategically effective channel to reach Millennials and Generation Z—cohorts known for their high engagement with celebrity culture and strong susceptibility to celebrity endorsements (Centeno & Wang, 2017; Mendick et al., 2018; Singh & Banerjee, 2019; Sarwar et al., 2025; Rafael et al., 2023; Sabita & Mardalis, 2023; Yanti & Zamrudi, 2025; Veybitha et al., 2023; Azhar et al., 2024).

While the use of a convenience sample limits generalisability to the broader population, it is well-

aligned with the study's objectives and suitable for exploratory research focused on media and marketing behaviours among highly digital, media-oriented users.

For the purpose of testing the influence of the social origin of celebrity fame as a predictor of purchase intention, five celebrities were selected to represent the categories outlined in Rojek's (2001) fame typology. The selected celebrities included Ella Dvornik, Kim Kardashian, Kendall Jenner, Luka Modrić, and the fictional character James Bond. These individuals were chosen for their clear alignment with different fame types—ranging from inherited and achieved to media-constructed and fictional—thus ensuring a comprehensive representation of social fame origins relevant to the study context.

## 4. Results

This section presents the findings of the statistical analysis conducted to determine which factors significantly predict the probability of consumers purchasing a product endorsed by a celebrity. The analysis focused on four key predictors: age group, perception of ascribed fame, perception of achieved fame, and perception of attributed/celetoid fame. Due to methodological constraints, gender was excluded from the predictive analysis, as the sample included an insufficient number of male respondents ( $n = 48$ , 5.4%). However, a cross-tabulation of gender and age confirmed that the sample was predominantly female, with this distribution being statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 54.93$ ,  $p < .001$ ), which is relevant when contextualising the findings. Additionally, employment status was also omitted, as it did not show predictive significance in preliminary testing.

In order to examine whether the origin of celebrity fame serves as a predictor of purchase likelihood, particularly due to specific response patterns for Kendall Jenner and Kim Kardashian—the category of celetoid fame was included under the broader classification of attributed fame in the statistical analysis. Celetoid fame refers to celebrities known primarily for short-term media exposure, scandals, and public appearances, which Rojek (2001) conceptualises as a subcategory of attributed fame. Accordingly, respondents who assigned the status

of “celetoid” to specific celebrities were statistically coded under the attributed fame category.

Table 1 provides a descriptive summary of the demographic and conceptual variables used as predic-

tors in the subsequent analyses. These factors were considered relevant for exploring the relationship between the perceived origin of celebrity fame and its potential influence on purchase probability.

**Table 1** Descriptive overview of predictive factors

Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Age group (years)	18–25	567	62.9
Age group (years)	26–35	239	26.5
Age group (years)	36 and above	73	8.1
Employment status	Unemployed	98	10.9
Employment status	Employed	426	47.2
Employment status	High school student	112	12.4
Employment status	College student	243	26.9
Ascribed fame indicators	None selected	203	22.5
Ascribed fame indicators	1 selected	454	50.3
Ascribed fame indicators	2 or more selected	222	24.6
Achieved fame indicators	At most 1 selected	554	61.4
Achieved fame indicators	2 selected	242	26.8
Achieved fame indicators	3 or more selected	83	9.2
Attributed/celetoid indicators	None selected	113	12.5
Attributed/celetoid indicators	1 selected	214	23.7
Attributed/celetoid indicators	2 selected	399	44.2
Attributed/celetoid indicators	3 or more selected	153	17.0

Source: Authors

Of the total sample of 902 respondents, 879 provided complete responses to the items used in the statistical analysis of perceived celebrity fame origin and its influence on purchase intentions. All analyses related to this index were therefore conducted on this subsample. The sample (N = 879) consisted predominantly of participants aged 18–25 (62.9%), followed by those aged 26–35 (26.5%), and 36+ (8.1%). Employment status showed that nearly half of the respondents were employed (47.2%), with students (both high school and college) making up a considerable portion of the sample (12.4% and 26.9%, respectively).

Regarding the perceived origin of celebrity fame indicators, participants could indicate whether they believed certain celebrities (selected celebrities for the research purposes elaborated earlier) became

famous due to ascribed, achieved, or attributed (including celetoid) factors. Each indicator category reflects how many celebrities were assigned to that fame origin by the respondents. This approach allows for evaluating general perceptions of fame origin across different celebrity endorsements.

Table 2 presents the results of the general linear model analysis, identifying which predictors significantly influence the probability of purchasing a celebrity-endorsed product. For each predictor, the table reports the Type III sum of squares, degrees of freedom (df), mean square, F-value, significance level (p-value), and partial eta-squared as a measure of effect size. These values help determine the statistical significance and the relative contribution of each predictor to the model, based on the corrected total variance.

**Table 2 Predictors of purchase probability**

Predictor	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (p)	Partial Eta-Squared
Age group (years)	1117.138	2	558.569	20.633	0.000	0.045
Ascribed fame indicators	97.109	2	48.555	1.794	0.167	0.004
Achieved fame indicators	845.357	2	422.678	15.613	0.000	0.034
Attributed/celebrity indicators	9.634	3	3.211	0.119	0.949	0.000
Error	23768.997	878	27.072			
Total	138300.000	888				
Corrected Total	26137.387	887				

Source: Authors

The results indicate that two predictors—age group and perception of achieved fame—showed a statistically significant effect on purchase probability. Specifically, age group yielded a highly significant result ( $F = 20.633, p < .001$ ) with a partial eta-squared value of .045, indicating a small to moderate effect size. Likewise, perception of achieved fame was also statistically significant ( $F = 15.613, p < .001$ ) with a partial eta-squared value of .034, suggesting it is a meaningful predictor of consumer behaviour. In contrast, ascribed fame did not demonstrate a significant effect ( $p = .167$ ), and attributed/celebrity fame was found to have no statistical significance ( $p = .949$ ). These findings suggest that while perceived merit-based fame (achieved) and demographic factors (age) influence purchasing intentions, inherited or media-constructed fame plays a minimal role in shaping consumer decisions within this sample.

These findings align with Rojek’s (2001) typology, which emphasises that achieved fame, grounded in talent and accomplishment, carries greater symbolic and moral capital—traits that enhance credibility in endorsement contexts. This is further supported by empirical studies such as those by Ananda et al. (2024) and Rafiah and Rahmawita (2025), which showed that consumers respond more positively to endorsements from celebrities perceived as credible, accomplished, and authentic. The significant

effect of age and achieved fame confirms the first hypothesis (H1), which proposed these variables as statistically significant predictors of consumer purchase intention.

Conversely, the lack of significance for ascribed and attributed/celebrity fame supports the second hypothesis (H2), suggesting that inherited or media-constructed fame lacks the perceived authenticity required to influence consumer behaviour. Respondents showed lower levels of purchasing intentions when celebrities were associated with these fame origins, indicating a diminished level of consumer trust in endorsements perceived as unearned or media-constructed. The importance of age also aligns with previous literature, which highlights younger consumers as more receptive to celebrity culture (Mendick et al., 2018; Centeno & Wang, 2017) and celebrity endorsement influence (Syalsabila & Hermina, 2023; Dey et al., 2024).

In the next step of the analysis, we examined how the previously identified predictors specifically influence purchase intentions. Table 3 presents the results of parameter estimates, offering a more detailed understanding of the direction and strength of each predictor’s effect on the likelihood of purchasing a celebrity-endorsed product.

**Table 3** Parameter estimates – effects of predictors on purchase probability

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig. (p)
Age group: 18–25	3.065	0.638	4.804	0.000
Age group: 26–35	0.984	0.683	1.441	0.150
Age group: 36+ (ref)	0.000			
Ascribed: 0 selected	0.349	0.715	0.488	0.626
Ascribed: 1 selected	-0.566	0.579	-0.978	0.328
Ascribed: 2+ selected (ref)	0.000			
Achieved: ≤1 selected	-4.319	0.774	-5.583	0.000
Achieved: 2 selected	-3.460	0.752	-4.603	0.000
Achieved: 3+ selected (ref)	0.000			
Attributed: 0 selected	-0.403	0.889	-0.453	0.650
Attributed: 1 selected	-0.442	0.749	-0.590	0.556
Attributed: 2 selected	-0.188	0.572	-0.328	0.743
Attributed: 3+ selected (ref)	0.000			

Source: Authors

The results show that respondents aged 18–25 are significantly more likely to be influenced by celebrity endorsements compared to the reference group (36+), with a positive and statistically significant coefficient ( $B = 3.065, p < .001$ ). This finding confirms the third hypothesis (H3), which stated that younger consumers are more receptive to celebrity influence in their purchasing decisions.

Regarding fame origin, the results indicate that participants who identified fewer celebrities as having achieved fame were significantly less likely to report high purchase intention, with negative coefficients for both “≤1 selected” ( $B = -4.319, p < .001$ ) and “2 selected” ( $B = -3.460, p < .001$ ) compared to the reference category “3+ selected”. Specifically, participants who perceived a greater number of celebrities as having achieved fame (i.e., earned through talent, skill, or professional accomplishment) demonstrated a higher probability of purchasing endorsed products. This suggests that perceived credibility and authenticity associated with merit-based fame play a key role in influencing consumer decisions.

This further reinforces earlier findings and supports the argument—grounded in Rojek’s (2001) typology—that perceived achievement-based fame is a strong driver of consumer trust and endorsement effectiveness (Dey et al., 2024; Lestari & Wahyono, 2021; Annissa & Paramita, 2021; Rafiah & Rahmawita, 2025).

In contrast, ascribed and attributed/celebrity fame again failed to reach statistical significance, indicating a minimal effect on purchase intention. These outcomes are consistent with the earlier analysis and theoretical expectations that authenticity, effort, and merit play a key role in shaping how consumers respond to celebrity endorsements, especially among younger, media-savvy audiences. Although attributed fame was not statistically significant, an interaction effect between age group and attributed fame status was tested to determine whether the impact of media-constructed fame on purchase likelihood varied across age cohorts. However, the analysis showed no statistically significant interaction, suggesting that the influence of attributed fame on consumer behaviour is consistent across age groups.

This finding contradicts the initial hypothesis H4, which proposed that younger consumers (aged 18–25), due to greater media exposure, would be more influenced by attributed fame than older participants. While it was assumed that younger cohorts, more immersed in social media and digital celebrity culture, might show greater susceptibility to celebrity fame, the data did not support this, suggesting that media-based fame does not have an age-differentiated effect.

This outcome may be partially explained by increasing media saturation and desensitisation among

younger users (Marwick, 2015; Abidin, 2018), as well as shifting attitudes toward influencer culture, where perceived inauthenticity or over-commercialisation can reduce persuasive impact (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019).

## 5. Discussion

The results of this study offer empirical support for the theoretical framework grounded in Rojek's (2001) classification of fame and further reinforce the relevance of media representation in shaping consumer responses to celebrity endorsements. Specifically, the findings confirm that achieved fame, defined as celebrity status earned through talent, skill, and personal accomplishment, is significantly associated with increased purchase intentions. This outcome is consistent with prior research highlighting the importance of celebrity credibility, expertise, skill and authenticity as critical predictors of endorsement effectiveness (Lestari & Wahyono, 2021; Annissa & Paramita, 2021; Rafiah & Rahmawita, 2025). These characteristics not only contribute to a more favourable brand image but also foster greater emotional attachment and trust among consumers—factors shown to directly influence purchasing decisions (Dey et al., 2024; Macheka et al., 2024).

Interestingly, ascribed fame (fame due to family background) and attributed/celebrity fame were found to be statistically insignificant in influencing purchase behaviour. This aligns with the critiques raised by Stewart and Giles (2019), who argue that attributed fame is often perceived as superficial, undermining consumer trust. Despite attributed celebrities often enjoying high visibility, the data reinforce the notion that visibility alone does not equate to influence, particularly when it lacks the grounding of perceived legitimacy or merit (Turner, 2004; Hearn & Schoenhoff, 2015).

Moreover, the significant role of age as a predictor, particularly the increased receptivity among respondents aged 18–25, aligns with the broader literature emphasising Generations Y and Z as the most actively engaged demographics in celebrity culture and social media (Mendick et al., 2018; Centeno & Wang, 2017). These findings confirm H3, which posited that younger consumers, specifically aged 18–25, are more likely to be influenced by celebrity endorsements compared to older age groups. Previous studies consistently report similar

patterns; for example, Annissa and Paramita (2021) and Ananda et al. (2024) demonstrated that younger audiences are not only more exposed to celebrity-driven marketing but are also more susceptible to endorsement effects when the celebrity is perceived as relatable, aspirational, or trustworthy. Furthermore, Syalsabila and Hermina (2023) and Dey et al. (2024) found that attachment to a celebrity figure, especially one admired or idolised by younger consumers, can significantly increase emotional engagement and, consequently, purchasing behaviour. This is particularly true when the endorser embodies credibility and expertise, as these traits resonate with the values of younger, media-savvy consumers who are increasingly selective and critical of overtly commercial or inauthentic content (Dey et al., 2024). The present study extends these insights by empirically confirming that age, combined with perceptions of achieved fame, forms a strong basis for predicting endorsement effectiveness among younger audiences.

Although attributed fame was not found to be a significant predictor of purchase intention, an additional analysis tested for an interaction between age group and attributed fame to determine whether its influence varied across generations. Contrary to Hypothesis 4, the interaction was not statistically significant, indicating that media-constructed fame does not differentially impact younger versus older consumers.

This finding suggests that, despite greater exposure to digital celebrity culture, younger consumers are not necessarily more susceptible to attributed or celebrity fame. Instead, their purchasing decisions—like those of older cohorts—appear to rely more on perceived credibility and authenticity than mere visibility. These results reinforce the notion that media presence alone is insufficient to drive endorsement effectiveness without a foundation of perceived legitimacy.

Taken together, these findings contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how the origin of fame, filtered through media narratives and audience interpretation, affects consumer behaviour. While many prior studies confirm the general positive impact of celebrity endorsement on purchase intentions (e.g., Lestari & Wahyono, 2021; Syalsabila & Hermina, 2023), the present research clarifies that the type of fame matters, and that consumer evaluations are conditioned by both demographic factors and perceptions of legitimacy.

These insights not only validate Rojek's theoretical model in a marketing context but also reaffirm that celebrity endorsement is most effective when strategically aligned with public expectations of merit and credibility.

## 6. Conclusion

This study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how the origin of celebrity fame, shaped through media narratives and audience interpretation, influences consumer behaviour. While celebrity endorsements are generally shown to have a positive impact, the findings highlight that the perceived legitimacy of fame—particularly when achieved through merit—plays a decisive role in shaping consumer trust and purchase intentions. The analysis confirmed that achieved fame is a statistically significant predictor of purchase intention ( $F = 15.613$ ,  $p < .001$ ), while ascribed and attributed/celebrity fame showed no significant effect. Additionally, younger consumers (aged 18–25) were more responsive to celebrity endorsements overall ( $F = 20.633$ ,  $p < .001$ ), reaffirming the relevance of this demographic for endorsement strategies. These results validate Rojek's model in a contemporary marketing context and reaffirm that effective

endorsements depend not just on visibility, but on alignment with public expectations of credibility, authenticity, and expertise.

From a practical standpoint, brands should be strategic in selecting celebrity endorsers, prioritising those whose fame stems from perceived talent, skill, or professional achievement. Authenticity and a clear alignment between the celebrity's image and the brand's values can significantly enhance consumer trust and engagement. Marketers should also remain attuned to evolving audience perceptions, especially in the digital age where fame can be rapidly constructed and deconstructed.

Despite its contributions, the study has limitations, including a sample predominantly composed of young female respondents, which may affect generalisability. Additionally, the dynamic and evolving nature of digital fame may not always fit neatly into existing theoretical categories, highlighting the need for further refinement. Future research should adopt longitudinal and cross-cultural designs, incorporate micro-influencers, and explore platform-specific dynamics. Combining quantitative and qualitative approaches would offer a more comprehensive view of how fame is constructed, communicated, and interpreted across different audiences and media environments.

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