Artists on the Rise: An Exploration of the Role that Brand Collaboration Prestige Plays in the Development of Identification and Artist Attractiveness

Isabel Soldner
isoldner@vols.utk.edu

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Artists on the Rise

An Exploration of the Role that Brand Collaboration Prestige Plays in the Development of Identification and Artist Attractiveness

Researcher: Isabel Soldner
Advisor: Dr. Annika Abell

A Thesis in the Field of Marketing
for the Degree of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Haslam College of Business
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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to understand the impact that brand endorsements have on musical artists who are at different stages in their careers. By understanding how emerging artists (versus established artists) are impacted by the endorsement deals they engage in, we are able to advise the best course of action to positively propel their career. This research introduces identification with the artist as a mediating variable in the relationship between brand type and perceived endorser attractiveness. Across two studies, respondents evaluated four different advertisements. Each survey featured an artist at varying levels of fame—the first two advertisements displayed an established artist with a luxury brand and a non-luxury brand, and the second two displayed an emerging artist with the same luxury brand and non-luxury brand. Results show that participants’ perceptions of the brand have no impact on their evaluation of an established artist’s attractiveness, but for an emerging artist, participants used the brand as a cue to evaluate attractiveness. Specifically, while both surveys reported higher identification with the artist when paired with a non-luxury brand, only the emerging artist received a greater evaluation of attractiveness as a result.
Introduction

Today, the average consumer is exposed to roughly 5,000 advertisements per day (Holmes 2019). In the span of only forty years, the number of advertisements a consumer views per day has increased tenfold (Holmes 2019); media dominates our daily lives—between each scroll and view, we are inundated with sponsored posts, advertisements, and commercials by brands that are all vying for our attention and money. Due to this level of overexposure, brands must be creative in the manner in which they present their products and services to consumers so that it stands out from the other 4,999 ads. Brands have discovered that a large part of distinguishing one ad from another is the use of celebrity endorsers—this paper examines one specific facet of brand partnerships, namely: does the level of brand prestige in a brand partnership impact an emerging artist’s image more than an established artist’s?

While it is evident that brands reap intangible benefits related to endorser-brand associations and endorsers gain tangible monetary benefits, it is less clear how brand prestige impacts attitudes toward endorsers, specifically music artists. Exacerbated by the prominence of social media, endorsers are evaluated on every aspect of their engagements—brand endorsements are no exception. Brand endorsements are a major aspect of mainstream advertising, therefore brands are always searching for new ways to distinguish themselves from others. Media today is consumed and discarded at rates faster than ever before; brands face the challenge of staying relevant in this disposable society, especially with younger generations. However, luxury brands have discovered one way to combat this dilemma: pairing major celebrities with their brands (Rosenfeld 2020). Chanel and Louis Vuitton, two of the most valuable luxury brands in the world, created partnerships with big-name celebrities Pharrell and Rihanna, respectively (Rosenfeld 2020; Davis 2020). These partnerships “give greater meaning to the world of luxury brands” by bringing a new, exciting element to the brand (Rosenfeld 2020). Luxury brands have adapted their branding strategy to the way that people consume information today; by tapping into big-name celebrity partnerships, luxury brands can redefine their image over and over to match the desires of their target audience and keep them interested over a sustained period of time.
While luxury brands’ high revenues and prestige allow for a wide range of options when choosing celebrities to partner with, non-luxury brands do not have the same degree of freedom. It is typically uncommon for non-luxury brands to partner with big-name celebrities; some reasons for this include budget issues, differing target markets, and clashing personalities. In addition, celebrities are known to indulge in glamorous products, as allowed by their large salaries. Therefore, it might be confusing to see a wealthy celebrity endorsing a non-luxury brand, which are typically marked by lower prices relative to luxury brands. However, this trend might be beginning to shift, as one brand has mastered the art of non-luxury celebrity partnerships. Crocs, known for their rubber shoes, was once a downward spiraling business. This company performed a major turnaround by changing one thing: implementing culturally relevant partnerships. Crocs has partnered with many big-name artists such as Post Malone, Bad Bunny, and Drew (Justin Bieber), and each collection has sold out within minutes (Takanashi 2020). Crocs, now back on the radar, has set a precedent for non-luxury brands and celebrity collaborations—perhaps there is a market for more non-luxury celebrity partnerships? This study aims to examine aspects of this question.

More specifically to this study, there is limited research regarding brand-artist collaborations and whether partnering with a luxury brand or a non-luxury brand impacts consumer attitudes toward an established and an emerging artist. Therefore, this research seeks to examine how the level of brand prestige impacts attitudes toward emerging artists by testing a baseline against an established artist in two simulated brand partnership campaigns. Through two surveys administered to students at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, we established a baseline familiarity level of each artist in order to categorize each artist as established or emerging. Then we tested the implications that brand prestige (luxury versus non-luxury) has on the two artists. The results help determine which type of partnership is most beneficial to engage in for emerging artists hoping to increase awareness of their personal brand, thus positively influencing the perception of their music. Through this study, we can also begin to understand the
dynamic of an uncommon scenario in partnership advertising: established celebrities with non-luxury brands.

Following background research related to brand endorsements, luxury versus non-luxury brands, celebrity advertisements, and parasocial identification, we discuss our methodology, results, and limitations.

**Review of Literature**

**Brand Endorsements**

The use of celebrities in company advertisements has long-since evolved from 1893 when actress Lillie Langtry appeared on a pack of Pears’ Soap (Mistry 2006). The allure of such collaborative advertisements has yet to fade in the 21st century, as they continue to attract consumers in a growing industry now worth over 1118 billion US dollars (Cavill 2018). Today, brand collaborations provide unique opportunities for brands and endorsers alike to promote a common vision; these collaborations can occur across many fields, including with celebrities, artists, designers, museums, sports, science, etc. Initiating these types of collaborations has the ability to produce a multitude of positive ripple effects beyond enlarging the target market, innovating new products and services, differentiating oneself, promoting good causes, and motivating internal creativity, leaving few reasons to abstain from such partnerships (Michel and Willing 272). However, in an age plagued by an influx of advertising due to television, social media, and other easily accessible media outlets, advertisers and endorsers must be more thoughtful about their collaboration strategies in order to bring value to both parties.

**Effect on the Brand**

When initiating a marketing campaign, companies have many decisions to make—arguably most important being deciding who or what will endorse the product. Brands are eager to seek out opportunities with celebrities because these partnerships have an abundance of positive effects on the brand. Using celebrity endorsers in advertising is common practice for companies—a celebrity’s appearance alone can escalate a brand, therefore saving resources while effortlessly building credibility
for the brand (Byrne et al. 2003). This idea introduces the theory of meaning transfer from the celebrity to the brand and is verified in Miller and Allen’s 2011 study in which it is concluded that celebrities who appear in an advertisement with a brand can re-shape and alter consumer’s attitudes towards the brand. In this scenario, celebrities indirectly influenced what consumers thought of the brand. In addition to transferring meaning and rejuvenating the brand’s image, celebrity endorsers expand the scope of that brand’s target segment. This newfound visibility connects the brand and celebrity in the minds of consumers, creating an immediate memory-link to the brand’s products and services (Halonen-Knight and Hurmerinta 2010). This memory-link fosters effective advertisements; due to the short nature of advertisements and immediate attention-grabbing effects of celebrity endorsements, companies often turn to celebrities to help advertise their products and services (Tanjung and Hudrasyah 2016). Fans that watch such celebrity-endorsed advertisements instantly recognize the celebrity, which cuts through the clutter of the surrounding advertisements to which they are exposed (Armbruster 2006). Celebrity advertisements essentially clear pathways directly to the brand, which provides the brand with added visibility and positive celebrity associations.

Not only are celebrities exciting additions to a brand’s image, but they are also trusted ambassadors for a brands’ messaging. Celebrities wield a great amount of power and influence in society today because of their established position in the public world—companies capitalize on this phenomenon and enlist them to reinforce their company essence with an exciting message that consumers receive better than regular advertisements (Michel and Willing 75). Such surprise in advertisements has the ability to captivate consumers and immediately transcend them beyond the real world. Consumers reap joy from such idolization of celebrities, which only benefits and encourages brands to arrange collaborations with the hope of receiving a sense of meaning transfer and crossover appeal (Michel and Willing 93). This crossover appeal can extend into the celebrity’s fan base, attracting members because of the added ‘cool factor’ that the celebrity brings to the brand (Armbruster 2006). Collaborations go beyond just bringing an exciting face to a product or service— they lead to brand recall, spark innovation,
differentiation, company market value, and media buzz that lead to a competitive advantage for the brand (Michel and Willing 197).

In addition to the many benefits, companies must be wary of the risks involved with employing celebrities as endorsers of their brand. Celebrities are constantly under a spotlight, meaning each action—both positive and negative—is monitored, reported, and scrutinized. Companies surrender the right to control their celebrity endorsers’ behavior beyond the scope of their advertising agreement, meaning celebrities pose as risks for potential scandals. Such an occurrence has the capacity to negatively impact the celebrity’s image and the brand’s image, derailing any sort of positive associations with the brand from consumers (Tanjung and Hudrasyah 2016). In addition to the potential for brand-damaging optics, celebrities naturally draw national, sometimes global, attention; while this can be positive for a brand, such large-scale attention on the celebrity has the potential to detract from the actual content of the advertisement. In this case, the endorser unintentionally becomes a red herring and consumers are left unaware of the brand being promoted (Tanjung and Hudrasyah 2016). While these drawbacks are typically scattered occurrences, brands employing celebrity endorsers face the perennial issues of affluent consumer resistance, changing consumer tastes, and opportunistic hiring (Armbruster 2006). These risks have the ability to severely harm a brand’s reputation, but many companies continue to move forward with celebrity endorsements as a means of advertising their products and services because they decide that the rewards outweigh the risks.

**Effect on the Celebrity**

Beyond impacting the brand, collaborations can have the reverse effect and impact the celebrity as well. Besides the obvious monetary benefit and additional exposure the celebrity gains as a result of the collaboration, brand attitude has the ability to be transferred onto a celebrity endorser via transfer theory (Doss 2011). As previously mentioned, transfer theory states that celebrities have the ability to “‘transfer’ his/her perceived qualities to the actual product”, but Doss discovered that the same effect is true when reversed: attitudes toward the endorsed brand can be transferred toward the perceptions of the celebrity’s
credibility and expertise (2011). Doss found that this is true regardless of whether the consumer views the brand positively or negatively—both conditions “can influence the expertise and credibility of the celebrity endorser” (2011). This discovery further reinforces the idea that celebrities must evaluate brand deals as selectively as actual brands do with celebrities due to the additional scrutiny that increased exposure through brand partnerships generates (Doss 2011).

Collaborations have the potential to serve as a source of wealth for celebrities, as long as careful consideration is made regarding the collaboration in question. Celebrities must evaluate the attitudes and perceptions toward a brand and consider whether or not they are congruent with their own brand and messaging. If the brand and celebrity in the collaboration end up being a good match, it has been found that “top celebrities of film and music have been able to command millions of dollars in single endorsement contracts…” (Doss 2011). However, while endorsement deals with brands can be lucrative endeavors for celebrities, they also have the potential to severely damage their image and credibility. This further underscores the importance of understanding the dynamics of celebrity endorsement deals.

One manner in which celebrities can manage how they are perceived and what type of endorsement deals they may attract is through thoughtful personal branding. Personal branding refers to the ways that one portrays themselves to others, which can be differentiated through a unique quality, experience, or self-presentation (Petruca 2016). Managing one’s personal brand as a celebrity is crucial—the massive following that celebrities generate online defines their identity. Even as an emerging artist, strong personal brands assist in gaining notoriety since they typically embody passion and relevance to viewers (Petruca 2016). As Petruca notes, “the personal brand is all about the difference that one can bring in the industry through the unique quality, experience, and way of presenting them” (2016). Social media remains the hub for curating a personal brand, as it is inexpensive and far-reaching; it is “the easiest way to grow a personal identity, to establish a reputation and become visible in a specific industry or niche” (Petruca 2016).
A celebrity’s personal brand plays an important role in brand partnerships, as “consumers seek brands that are congruent with their self-image” (Choi and Rifon 2012). Congruence between a brand and celebrity refers to consumers’ perceptions of how well of a fit the brand and celebrity are. Research shows that this concept of congruence factors into advertising success—endorsements are more effective when the endorser’s personal brand aligns with the products they are promoting (Choi and Rifon 2012). Understanding a celebrity’s personal brand and matching it with the values of a company’s brand, such as non-luxury and luxury brands, is crucial for a successful endorsement partnership.

**Luxury Brands vs. Non-Luxury Brands**

Within the context of brand endorsements, brands can be subdivided into two categories: luxury brands and non-luxury brands. Luxury brands command a prestigious image within the market and are perceived by consumers as high quality and authentic, prompting a deep connection with the consumer (Ko et al. 2019). They fulfill both functional and non-functional needs; functional values satisfy practical issues, while non-functional values represent indulgences and extensions of the consumer’s aspirational identities (Kwon et al. 2016). While conducting background research for this project, it was evident that luxury brand partnerships with celebrities are the focus of numerous studies that seek to explain topics ranging from purchase intentions to brand and celebrity identification. Marketers strategically initiate celebrity campaigns with their luxury brands because it is proven that “celebrities help bring the brand to life...in an atmosphere where personalities that shine brighter than the jewels or high fashion that they wear...” (Jones 2017). The natural fit between the brand’s elegance and the celebrity’s allure makes this pairing the standard for countless collaborations, some of the most popular including Gucci with Harry Styles and Balmain with Kanye West. When luxury brands advertise with celebrities, they are maintaining the elite aura, wealth, and exclusivity that fundamentally define the brand while simultaneously repositioning themselves with younger audiences. This accelerates the brands’ mission to expand their consumer base; by showcasing the latest talent, such as in Yves Saint Laurent with Travis Scott and Cartier with Willow Smith and Troye Sivan, brands remain culturally relevant. Adapting to
younger audiences with such artists has proven to be useful for luxury brands to expand their reach and create positive associations; collaboration success today is driven by the fact that luxury brands satisfy consumer’s psychological needs and self-expression, which celebrities enhance by supplementing with a sense of authenticity (Song and Kim 2020). While numerous studies explain the impact that celebrity collaborations have on purchase intentions, sharing behavior, and brand or attitude engagement, etc., we are yet to clearly understand how the brand impacts consumer’s evaluation of the celebrity’s image and appeal, specifically music artist celebrities. We explore this topic in subsequent sections.

On the other end of the spectrum, non-luxury brands represent a large part of the rest of the market. They are defined by low to mid-range prices and are typically more accessible to consumers by being present in more cities and representing a larger portion of the target market in their advertising. Though less common, non-luxury brands sometimes strike deals with big-name celebrities. For example, shoe brand Keds secured Taylor Swift for a campaign in 2015, as well as H&M with Katy Perry (O’Reilly 2015, Reed 2015). These type of partnerships “help[ed] many different brands find customers that typically would never look into their company” (Mancilla 2020). Aspects of this study aim to expand the research surrounding non-luxury brand celebrity collaborations and investigate in which context non-luxury brands can be beneficial for an artist.

Lastly, when evaluating the effect of celebrity endorsements in luxury brand advertisements, a 2020 study conducted by Park and Yim found that luxury brands derive value intrinsically, regardless of celebrity affiliation. Consumers evaluate brands on their “meanings and features” alone, and essentially subtract celebrities out of that evaluation (Park and Yim 2020). In the same study, Park and Yim found that “celebrity endorsements could be effective in generating more positive brand attitudes for non-luxury brands, but not familiar luxury brands” (2020). This confirms that consumer evaluations of luxury brands are more staunchly defined and therefore they are resistant to external influences (Park and Yim 2020). This study aims to discover whether the opposite is true: are consumer’s opinions of established artists defined enough to resist a change in opinions when paired with luxury and non-luxury brands?
Parasocial Identification

The need to belong is a fundamental aspect of being human. Baumeister and Leary define this concept as the “pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive and significant interpersonal relationships” (1995). Due to this, individuals seek avenues where they can create such intimate relationships with others; however, the prevalence of social media has driven a wedge between such in-person interactions. To compensate, individuals are seeking such relationships online, many of which evolve into parasocial relationships. Parasocial identification is defined as “the one-sided relationship that individuals form with celebrities… these relationships can feel as real and intense as face-to-face interpersonal connections that encompass elements of friendship and understanding” (Cheng-Xi Aw and Labrecque 2020). Celebrity social media accounts provide glimpses into their glamor-filled lives, allowing individuals to connect with them on personal levels. This type of mass infatuation with celebrities gives public figures a great amount of social currency within today’s culture and provides the perfect opportunity for brands to capitalize on the amount of attention that celebrities command.

Since celebrities garner high levels of trust from customers, companies use celebrities as the messengers to promote their own products and services “in less intrusive ways” (Cheng-Xi Aw and Labrecque 2020). A consumer that feels an intimate connection to a celebrity that promotes a certain brand may rate the brand positively only because of their attachment to the celebrity (Cheng-Xi Aw and Labrecque 2020). Parasocial identification is a strong persuading factor in celebrity endorsements that has the ability to greatly influence a company’s advertising success.

Theoretical Concepts and Hypotheses Development

For over ten decades, companies have enlisted spokespeople— both famous and obscure— in brand advertisements in order to generate higher levels of brand awareness. While much research exists related to the impact that endorsers have on brands in brand collaborations, there is a gap in understanding if a particular case in the reverse is true: how do brands impact the endorser’s personal brand, specifically
in the case of luxury versus non-luxury brands and established versus emerging artists? An analysis of the related literature reveals that much is understood about how both the brand and endorser impact one another, as well as consumers’ motivations for leaning toward luxury or non-luxury brands. Consumers often gravitate toward luxury brands because it fulfills their aspirational identity, meaning they do not identify with the brand, but rather use the brand to achieve their perceived self-persona (Kwon et al. 2016). On the other end of the spectrum, non-luxury brands appeal to a large part of the rest of the market and often advertise using more subdued endorsers, making them highly relatable (Tanjug and Hudrasyah 2016). This relationship between non-luxury brands creating more relatable endorsers is confirmed via Doss’ transfer theory, which states that brands have the ability to transfer their perceived qualities onto the endorser (2011). Thus, it is hypothesized that:

**H1**: For musicians, collaborations with non-luxury (luxury) brands lead to higher (lower) identification with the musician.

While much of the literature discusses a brand’s advantages for enlisting celebrities in their advertisements such as the instant recognition and memorable pairing (Tanjug and Hudrasyah 2016), little is known about how a consumer’s perception of the brand impacts the celebrity’s perceived attractiveness. Attractiveness is a not-so-subtle attribute that contributes heavily to consumer perceptions of the brand and endorser. While it has been proven that physically attractive endorsers influence consumer perception of the advertisement and product more positively, it has also been found that more attractive individuals are favored and deemed more desirable relative to unattractive counterparts (Joseph 1982; Lemay Jr. et al. 2010). This confirms the notion that there are “heightened desires to bond with beautiful people” and therefore it can be concluded that attractive individuals are linked with more professional success.

We theorize that because the celebrities who appear in such endorsements are established, consumers already have a definite opinion of who they are and what they represent, therefore eliminating
the possibility that the endorsed brand will transfer its qualities onto the celebrity. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

**H2a:** For an established artist, higher identification with the artist will not influence attractiveness perceptions.

In the case of emerging celebrity brand endorsements, the endorsers are typically perceived as neutral due to their smaller levels of fame relative to established artists (Saeed et al. 2014). We theorize that this neutrality invites consumers to form their own opinions of the endorser based on the brand they are associated with. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

**H2b:** For an emerging artist, higher identification with the artist will lead to higher perceptions of attractiveness.

**Theoretical Framework**

Figure 1 is a conceptual model that presents the proposed effects of artist type and identification on perceived attractiveness, and specifically how identification is hypothesized to mediate the effects of its subsequent variables. These relationships are based on previous research in areas related to brand endorsement relationships, celebrity endorsers, luxury vs. non-luxury brands, and parasocial identification.
Methodology & Results

Study 1

The purpose of this study is to test how the type of brand collaboration—luxury versus non-luxury—impacts an established artist’s perceived attractiveness. The main focus of Study 1 features singer-songwriter John Legend, as well as luxury brand Gucci and non-luxury brand Old Navy. We chose John Legend as the artist for this study due to his popularity; not only does he have over 28 million monthly listeners on the streaming platform Spotify, but he is one of only sixteen people to win an EGOT (Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, Tony), making his fame distinctive. He was also named People Magazine’s 2019 Sexiest Man Alive (Chiu and Rubenstein 2019). In this study, we are testing hypothesis 2a in order to discover whether a higher identification with John Legend will influence his perceived attractiveness.

Sampling

This research applies voluntary response non-probability sampling by utilizing the University of Tennessee’s undergraduate marketing subject pool. Surveys were created using Qualtrics.
Data Collection

Primary source data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire in SONA and was available to students over the course of one week in September 2020. Participants were granted with .5 SONA credits upon completion of the survey.

Questionnaire Design

Survey 1 was a two-cell between subjects design in which Gucci was assigned to cell one and Old Navy was assigned to cell two. Each cell’s advertisement featured John Legend as the celebrity endorser. Only one of the cells, randomly assigned, was displayed to each participant. For example, if a participant was assigned cell one, they were presented with a hypothetical Gucci advertisement that displayed John Legend as the endorser (Appendix 1: Figure 2a). If a participant was assigned to cell two, they were presented with a hypothetical Old Navy advertisement that displayed John Legend as the endorser (Appendix 1: Figure 2b). Each hypothetical advertisement was designed to mimic a true advertisement by each of the brands, including style and layout.

Measurement Instruments

This study implemented 7-point Likert scales in order to measure participant’s sentiments related to John Legend’s affiliation with each brand type. In order to understand how brand type (luxury versus non-luxury) affects the dependent variable (artist attractiveness), multiple academic articles were referenced to build relevant scales. We sourced information from Ohanian’s (1990) Source-Credibility Scale in order to create questions that would measure John Legend’s perceived attractiveness (Appendix 3). Ilicic and Webster’s (2016) Celebrity Brand Authenticity Scale helped create questions that measured perceived authenticity of John Legend (Appendix 3). Dubois and Duquesne (1993) and Heine’s (2010) Luxury Consumption Scale helped build the questions used to measure participant’s opinions toward luxury and non-luxury brands (Appendix 3). Lastly, to measure the degree of parasocial identification consumers feel as a result of the advertisements with John Legend presented in the survey, Auter and Palmgreen’s (2000) Audience-Persona Interaction Scale was referenced (Appendix 3).
**Demographic Profile of Respondents**

A total of 165 respondents were tested and recorded in Study 1. Figure 3 shows the demographic profile of the reported respondents for this study. It shows that of the respondents, the 16–20-year-old age group was dominant. These results were expected due to surveying subjects from the University of Tennessee’s undergraduate marketing research pool.

![Age Profile of Respondents for Study 1](image)

Figure 3

Figure 4 displays the gender profile of the survey respondents, showing that there were approximately 4% more male survey respondents than female respondents.
Results

Of the 165 respondents recorded, participant’s mean familiarity level of John Legend was $M_{Familiarity} = 5.10$ on a 7-point Likert scale, indicating that most participants were relatively familiar with this artist. To measure the effect of the brand collaboration on identification with John Legend we used the same 7-point Likert scale, coded as 1= strongly agree and 7= strongly disagree, and referenced Auter and Palmgreen’s (2000) Audience-Persona Interaction Scale to build our questions. For example, a sample question states, “John Legend reminds me of myself.” To view a comprehensive list of questions on this scale, see Auter and Palmgreen’s (2000) Audience-Persona Interaction Scale in Appendix 3. Lastly, to analyze the results of these questions as one, the five items in the Interaction Scale were combined to form an Identification Index and tested for reliability using Cronbach’s alpha. The scale reliability coefficient is $\alpha = .84$, indicating that the scale items are internally consistent.

Following this analysis, we performed an independent-samples t-test with brand type (non-luxury/ luxury) as the independent grouping variable and the Identification Index as the dependent variable. This test showed significant effects (Table 1, Figure 5), such that participants who saw the Old
Navy (non-luxury) brand collaboration advertisement (versus the luxury Gucci brand collaboration advertisement) were more likely to identify with John Legend.

Table 1
Mean Identification Level with John Legend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Mean*</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old Navy</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>1.05004</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>t (163)=2.109</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gucci</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>1.05401</td>
<td>83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Mean score on 7-point scale gauging level of identification anchored by 1= strongly disagree and 7= strongly agree

Figure 5

In further development of our research objectives, we aimed to measure the effect of the brand collaboration on the attractiveness of John Legend. We asked participants to rate the artist’s attractiveness on two items (1= attractive/classy, 7= unattractive/not classy). The results were combined and measured using the bivariate Pearson Correlation, yielding a coefficient of r=.50. This indicates that there is a moderate positive relationship, allowing us to accept the relationship between both questions.
Furthermore, an independent-samples t-test performed with the brand type (non-luxury/ luxury) as the independent grouping variable and attractiveness as the dependent variable, displayed below in Table 2 and Figure 6, and did not show any significant effect.

Table 2
Mean Attractiveness of John Legend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Mean*</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old Navy</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>1.24921</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>t (163)=.407</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>&gt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gucci</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>1.18966</td>
<td>83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Mean score on 7-point scale anchored by 1= attractive and 7= unattractive

Discussion

The results of Study 1 support hypotheses H1 and H2a, specifically that participants identify more with artists who are paired with non-luxury brands and that this higher identification will not impact the perceived attractiveness of an established artist. Overall, John Legend was perceived as relatively attractive with an average attractiveness of 2.38 on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1= attractive and
7= unattractive. It is evident that even though individuals were more likely to identify with the artist when he collaborated with a relatively more affordable brand, this identification had no downstream effects on attractiveness. When taking John Legend’s 2019 win as People’s Sexiest Man Alive into account, we can infer that individuals have a pre-formed perception of the artist; therefore, potential external influences, such as brands, are very unlikely to alter that perception (Chiu and Rubenstein 2019). This discovery is particularly important from a marketing perspective, as it helps artists and managers understand how they can best position themselves and their talent in a way that will continue growing their fanbase. These results suggest that established artists innately have more freedom in curating their endorsement deal portfolio, simply because they gain no benefit from partnering with more affordable brands. However, established artists must recognize that they are not immune to failure, particularly demonstrated in Doss’ 2011 study finding that celebrities are judged on “attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise” and that any decrease in even one of these categories can damage the celebrity’s image. While successful endorsement deals have the potential to earn an artist millions of dollars, unsuccessful deals risk severely damaging their image (Doss 2011).

From a research perspective this study reveals that despite identifying with a brand, these types of advertisements have little to no effect on an established artist’s attractiveness. By eliminating this variable, future studies can focus on testing different factors in order to understand what has the potential to impact an established artists’ image. From a theoretical perspective, this study does little to help understand how endorsements featuring established artists operate. While we can conclude that the focal dependent variable, attractiveness, is not impacted by brand type, we are unable to determine any positive or negative impact on the celebrity endorser. Therefore, we cannot draw concrete conclusions which may advise artists the best course of action when evaluating endorsement proposals. Study 2 will reveal the principal factors impacting emerging endorser attractiveness.
Study 2

The purpose of Study 2 is similar to Study 1, but instead of testing how luxury versus non-luxury brands impact an established artist’s perceived attractiveness and identification, we replaced the established artist with an emerging artist. We aimed to understand how emerging artists are impacted by the brand collaborations they engage in, and hopefully provide insight into the best ways emerging artists can grow their personal brand in a positive and efficient manner. This study continues to use luxury brand Gucci and non-luxury brand Old Navy, and features artist Chris Blue as the main stimulus. Chris Blue, while very similar to John Legend in musical style and appearance, amasses a smaller following than John Legend. Chris Blue has just over 37 thousand monthly listeners on streaming platform Spotify and was the season twelve winner of the musical competition series The Voice; he is considered an emerging artist relative to John Legend. In this study, we sought to discover whether brand type (luxury vs. non-luxury) in a brand collaboration has an effect on emerging artists. Our goal is to benchmark the results of Study 2 with the results of Study 1 and conclude whether a significant effect is present regarding how each artist is perceived in both scenarios.

Sampling

This research applies voluntary response non-probability sampling by utilizing the University of Tennessee’s undergraduate marketing subject pool. Surveys were created using Qualtrics.

Data Collection

Primary source data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire in SONA and was available to students over the course of one week in October 2020. Participants were granted with .5 SONA credits upon completion of the survey.

Questionnaire Design

Survey 2 was also a two-cell between subjects design, in which cell one advertised Gucci and cell two advertised Old Navy. Like Study 1, only one of the two cells was randomly displayed to each
participant. Study 2’s advertisements were slightly different in appearance than Study 1’s; this time, they were hypothetical Instagram posts with the same photo of Chris Blue in each, just alternating between displaying a Gucci logo (Appendix 2: Figure 7a) and an Old Navy logo (Appendix 2: Figure 7b). The purpose of this change is to maintain consistency between the advertisements that appear in the survey—this allows us to rule out the possibility of bias which may have been caused by the inherent differences between each brand’s true advertising elements.

Measurement Instruments

The same exact scales used in Study 1 were referenced in this study in order to be able to better compare the results. Each instance citing ‘John Legend’ was replaced with ‘Chris Blue’. All scales can be referenced in Appendix 3.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

A total of 187 respondents were recorded in Study 2. The age profile displayed in Figure 8 shows that the 16–20-year-old age group was dominant. This is due to the fact that the marketing subject pool available on SONA is comprised of undergraduate marketing students.

![Age Profile of Respondents for Study 2](Figure 8)
Figure 9 below displays the gender profile of respondents recorded in Study 2. The ratio of male to female respondents is 7:5.

![Gender Profile of Respondents for Study 2](image)

**Results**

Of the 187 respondents recorded, the mean familiarity level of Chris Blue recorded on a 7-point Likert Scale is $M_{\text{familiarity}} = 1.75$, indicating that participants were relatively unfamiliar with the artist. Study 2 was measured exactly the same as Study 1. After repeating the indexing process for artist identification described in Study 1 and testing for Cronbach’s alpha, we found a reliability of $\alpha = .90$, indicating that the scale items are internally consistent.

An independent-samples t-test performed with brand type (non-luxury/ luxury) as the independent grouping variable and the Identification Index as the dependent variable showed significant effects (Table 3), such that participants who saw the Old Navy brand collaboration advertisement (versus the Gucci brand collaboration advertisement) were more likely to identify with Chris Blue.
Table 3
Mean Identification Level with Chris Blue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Mean*</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old Navy</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>.97517</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>t (185)=2.992</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gucci</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>1.16591</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Mean score on 7-point scale gauging level of identification anchored by 1= strongly disagree and 7= strongly agree

Figure 10 displays the mean identification with Chris Blue.

![Mean Identification with Chris Blue](image)

Figure 10

We measured the effect of the brand collaboration type on Chris Blue’s attractiveness in the exact same way as Study 1. Both items were combined using the bivariate Pearson Correlation, yielding a coefficient of r=.48. This indicates a positive medium-strength relationship.

An independent-samples t-test performed with the brand type (non-luxury/luxury) as the independent variables and attractiveness as the dependent variable showed significant effects (Table 4). Participants in the Old Navy condition perceived the artist to be more attractive (or, less unattractive).
Table 4
Mean Attractiveness of Chris Blue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Mean*</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old Navy</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>1.09318</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>t (185)=-2.024</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gucci</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.26933</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Mean score on 7-point scale anchored by 1= attractive and 7= unattractive

Figure 11 displays the mean attractiveness of Chris Blue. Note: the smaller the number, the more attractive.

Discussion

The results of Study 2 support hypotheses H1 and H2b, specifically that collaborations with non-luxury brands lead to higher identification with the artist and that this higher identification will lead to a higher level of perceived attractiveness of the emerging artist. Overall, this study indicates that participants were relatively unfamiliar with Chris Blue ($M_{Familiarity}$=1.75), meaning that the artist is less well-known than John Legend. Interestingly, for the less familiar artist, participants use the brand
collaboration as an attractiveness cue. Participants were more likely to identify with Chris Blue in the Old Navy condition, as well as more likely to rate the artist as more attractive and classier.

These findings are interesting and align with Tanjung and Hudrasyah’s research citing that since non-celebrity endorsers (or in this case a lesser-known celebrity) typically capture less attention, there is an increased focus on the brand or products being promoted (2016). From this, we are able to conclude that since consumers become hyper-aware of the brand in emerging artist endorsements, their perception of the brand influences their perception of the endorser. From a marketing perspective, these results allow emerging artists to understand how potential brand endorsement deals may impact their public perception. Just like all businesses in their infancy, it is especially important for emerging artists to understand how each brand deal, social media post, or media appearance could potentially impact their career. Based on the results of this study, it would be beneficial for emerging artists to endorse brands that consumers identify with until they become established and there is no longer an effect, as discovered in Study 1.

From a research perspective, this study uncovers the role that details have in influencing endorsement factors. We are able to gain a small-scale understanding of how multiple factors within an endorsement image converge to influence consumer perception of an endorser. From a theoretical perspective, this study reveals how endorsements featuring emerging artists operate. In this case, any impact on endorser attractiveness and identification is influenced by brand type—this provides insight into understanding how consumers process and react to the stimuli they are exposed to. This proposes the idea that consumers evaluate the entire advertisement together, brand and endorser, and that this assessment influences their attitude toward the endorser. The combined findings of Study 1 and 2 prove noteworthy in understanding one specific facet in the large world of endorsement research.

**Mediation Effect**

In Study 2 we observed a mediation effect, such that the effect of the independent variable (brand type) influenced the endorser’s attractiveness through the level of identification.
**Results**

We used Model 4 of Andrew Hayes’s PROCESS Macro with 5,000 bootstrapped samples to estimate the indirect effect of identification (detailed in Preacher and Hayes 2004). Specifically, we used the brand collaboration type (Old Navy vs. Gucci) as the independent variable, identification as the mediator, and attractiveness as the dependent variable. As the 95% confidence interval for the indirect effect did not include zero (Effect= .1017, BootSE= .0613, 95 CI= [.0078, .2407]), we find evidence that identification mediates the effect of the brand collaboration on attractiveness. The direct effect is not significant when controlling for the mediator. The results of the mediation analysis support hypothesis H2b—identification mediates the effect of brand type on attractiveness.

**Discussion**

For well-known artists, participants did not use their perception of the brand as a cue to evaluate attractiveness. However, for lesser-known artists, attractiveness changed based on the affordability and reliability of the brand in the collaboration. This effect was mediated by the identification with the celebrity.

**General Discussion**

This research proposes the idea that a brand endorser’s attractiveness hinges upon two variables: the endorser’s popularity level and the brand’s relatability. Conventional experimental design procedures were used to test the hypotheses. We found that while participants can identify more with an established artist in a non-luxury advertisement, the level of attractiveness does not change as a result. Essentially, more relatable brands do not have the ability to elevate an established artist’s image. These results find evidence supporting hypotheses H1 and H2a, indicating that established artists might have a greater degree of freedom to choose endorsement deals with a wide range of brands without the risk of creating negative associations in consumers’ minds. However, this means that the effect could be true in the reverse as well— an established artist might be unable to improve their image as a result of a brand
collaboration. Future research could investigate what it would take for an established artist to improve their image and attractiveness through brand collaborations.

Contrarily, we found that the level of brand identification can influence an emerging artist’s attractiveness. These results find evidence supporting hypotheses H1 and H2b, indicating that an emerging artist’s attractiveness is influenced by the consumer’s ability or inability to relate with the brand endorsement image. While it is more sustainable for emerging artists to partner with relatable brands while they gain footing in their industry, it does not mean that they can never partner with more luxurious brands. Once the artist has developed a large enough following to where they are easily recognizable and known, artists have the freedom to choose the brand regardless of how much consumers identify with it without the risk of stalling their career.

The results of this research prove novel in understanding how emerging artists can most effectively manage their brand as they work to gain footing within the industry. Artists typically struggle for years before they gain any traction, and only a small number of struggling artists actually end up becoming established. Understanding such implications related to brand endorsements—a major source of income for artists—is particularly important for emerging artists as these deals have the ability to boost an artist’s attractiveness and credibility, both of which can have a positive impact on their level of popularity. Perceptions of attractiveness for an emerging artist appear to be rooted in the idea that consumers are able to identify with the artist and feel he/she is a “friend” or “someone like me”; this feeling can establish a more intense feeling of admiration with consumers and thus increase the artist’s level of popularity. However, the opposite may be true as well—if an emerging artist partners with a brand that is deemed not as relatable to consumers, there might not be any positive effects. This is especially interesting given that, according to transfer theory, the glamor and prestige associated with the luxury brand could be expected to transfer over to the emerging artist. However, in this research, we find that it is only the identification caused by the non-luxury brand has a positive effect on the artist’s appeal.
Both this research and Choi and Rifon’s 2012 study indicate that consumers gravitate towards brands that align with their self-image. We find that emerging artists who partner with brands that consumers can identify with will create a positive association with the artist and their perceived attractiveness. This association has the potential to influence a multitude of other positive effects, such as increasing the artist’s social media following, their song streams on different platforms, or their sales of merchandise and concert tickets—any of these unintended benefits will only expedite an emerging artist’s goal of becoming established.

By nature, luxury brands are highly attractive symbols and possessions characterized by strong, unique reputations (Nueno and Quelch 1998). Consumers are generally drawn to these distinctive items and associations, thus making the results of our studies somewhat surprising. We only found effects related to the non-luxury brand—it would be interesting to understand whether the result is different across other categories of brands, such as jewelry or automobiles.

**Limitations and Future Research**

Like all research, these studies have limitations that should be taken into consideration when interpreting the results. The time and resources available to this project were limited to include a target population of undergraduate marketing students during the 2020-2021 academic year at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. We only tested one dependent variable—attractiveness, limiting the scope of potential effects. We also tested an effect on the mediating variable, identification. This research was conducted across two studies; ideally, both studies would have been conducted with the same sample, testing John Legend and Chris Blue together. Additionally, the subjects tested in each survey was limited to two different people, similar in style and musical flair, potentially impacting survey results.

Each advertisement displayed in Survey 1 was not visually consistent with one another, while each advertisement in Survey 2 was. Survey 2 presented participants with a single photo of the artist with a different logo in each advertisement, while Survey 1’s advertisements mimicked the look and feel of each brand’s true advertisements. This limits the comparison results by potentially incorporating
advertising bias based on advertisement appearance and design. Additionally, it is important to consider that the entirety of this research project was conducted between August 2020 and March 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

While the surveys tested a variety of attitudes and actions toward artists as a result of the brand pairing, many variables that are yet to be tested remain. In future research, it would be interesting to test additional dependent variables such as likelihood to stream or download the artist’s music. In order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the effect found in this study, future research should focus on a wide variety of subjects and scenarios, such as a more diverse range of artists (ex. female, rock, Latinx) and brands (ex. technology, auto, cosmetics). This topic could potentially also be tested outside of music, such as studying actors, businesspeople, or influencers to discover whether the effect is robust. Lasty, this study could be tested using data compiled from social media to understand how the effect plays out in real-life. One instance of testing how this effect operates in real life is to examine streaming data post brand collaboration to see if the artists received a benefit through that.
References


Appendix

Appendix 1: Study 1 Stimuli

Figure 2a

Figure 2b
Appendix 2: Study 2 Stimuli
Appendix 3: Study Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ohanian’s Source-Credibility Scale (1990)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attractiveness</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Attractive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Classy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Beautiful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Elegant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Sexy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trustworthiness</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Dependable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Honest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Sincere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Trustworthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expertise</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Expert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Experienced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Knowledgeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Qualified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1= Skilled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ilicic and Webster’s Celebrity Brand Authenticity Scale (2016)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>{Insert celebrity name} tries to act in a manner that is consistent with his held values, even if others criticize or reject him for doing so. (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>{Insert celebrity name} cares about openness and honesty in close relationships with others. (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In general, {insert celebrity name} places a good deal of importance on others understanding who he truly is. (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
People can count on \{insert celebrity name\} being who he is regardless of the situation. (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dubois and Duquesne (1993), Heine’s (2010) Luxury Consumption Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel attracted by luxury brands and products. (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't like luxury brands and products. (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important to me to consume products from luxury brands in the future. (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I regularly consume products from luxury brands. (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to consume products from luxury brands also in the future. (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Auter and Palmgreen’s Audience-Persona Interaction Scale (2000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>{Insert celebrity name} reminds me of myself. (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I seem to have the same qualities as {insert celebrity name}. (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the same problems as {insert celebrity name}. (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can imagine myself as {insert celebrity name}. (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can identify with {insert celebrity name}. (1= strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: UTK IRB Study Approval Letter

August 12, 2020

Isabel Soldner

UTK - Marketing

Re: UTK IRB-20-05987-XM

Study Title: An analysis on artist-brand partnerships and the benefits associated with the artist party involved

Dear Isabel Soldner:

The Human Research Protections Program (HRPP) reviewed your application for the above referenced project and determined that your application is eligible for exempt review under 45 CFR 46.101. Category 3: i. Research involving benign behavioral interventions in conjunction with the collection of information from an adult subject through verbal or written responses (including data entry) or audiovisual recording if the subject prospectively agrees to the intervention and information collection and at least one of the following criteria is met: A. The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; B. Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or C. The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by .111(a)(7). ii. For the purpose of this provision, benign behavioral interventions are brief in duration, harmless, painless, not physically invasive, not likely to have a significant adverse lasting impact on the subjects, and the investigator has no
reason to think the subjects will find the interventions offensive or embarrassing. Provided all such criteria are met, examples of such benign behavioral interventions would include having the subjects play an online game, having them solve puzzles under various noise conditions, or having them decide how to allocate a nominal amount of received cash between themselves and someone else. iii. If the research involves deceiving the subjects regarding the nature or purposes of the research, this exemption is not applicable unless the subject authorizes the deception through a prospective agreement to participate in research in circumstances in which the subject is informed that he or she will be unaware of or misled regarding the nature or purposes of the research.

Your application has been determined to comply with proper consideration for the rights and welfare of human subjects and the regulatory requirements for the protection of human subjects. This letter constitutes full approval of your application (Version 1.0).

Approval Information:

Category 3
250 participants
Will see consent cover statement at beginning of online survey

Approved Documents:
Application version 1.0
Consent Form Brand Partnerships - Version 1.0
Sona Recruitment Partnerships - Version 1.0
Survey Qualtrics - Version 1.0
Stimuli - Version 1.0

In the event that volunteers are to be recruited using solicitation materials, such as brochures, posters, web-based advertisements, etc., these materials must receive prior approval of the IRB.

Please note that restrictions are in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and all in-person contact with research participants is on hold until further notice.

- Newly-approved studies with in-person interactions may not begin enrollment until further notice from the IRB/HRPP.
- Newly-approved studies with no in-person participant interaction may begin after receiving IRB approval.

Please monitor the COVID-19 Updates at https://www.utk.edu/coronavirus/faq/ for the latest information. Human Subjects Research updates are being filed under Information for Instructors/Research.

Any alterations (revisions) in the protocol must be promptly submitted to and approved by the UTK Institutional Review Board prior to implementation of these revisions.

You have individual responsibility for reporting to the Board in the event of unanticipated or serious adverse events and subject deaths.
Sincerely,

Colleen P. Gilrane, Ph.D.

Chair
Appendix 5: UTK IRB Study Revision Approval

September 15, 2020

Isabel Soldner,
UTK - Comm & Mkt Grp

Re: UTK IRB-20-05987-XM

Study Title: An analysis on artist-brand partnerships and the benefits associated with the artist party involved

Dear Isabel Soldner:
The UTK Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed your application for revision of your previously approved project, referenced above. The IRB determined that your revision application is eligible for expedited review under 45 CFR 46.110(b), and that your study remains eligible for exempt status. The following revisions to your project were approved as complying with proper consideration of the rights and welfare of human subjects:

- Revised the questionnaire to include a new stimulus ad
- Increased the population to N=400
- Application v. 1.1
- ChrisBInstaPosts v. 1.0

In the event that subjects are to be recruited using solicitation materials, such as brochures, posters, web-based advertisements, etc., these materials must receive prior approval of the IRB. Any alterations (revisions) in the research project must be submitted to and approved by the UTK Institutional Review Board prior to implementation of these revisions. In addition, you are responsible for reporting any unanticipated serious adverse events or other problems involving risks to subjects or others in the manner required by the local IRB policy.

Sincerely,

Colleen P. Gilrane, Ph.D.
Chair