Cross-cultural context endorsement in visual e-commerce: A study of Dutch and Indian female consumers

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This study aims to investigate context in advertisements, with a focus on cultural preferences of online consumers. For this, Hall's context model is used that differentiates between high/low context messages and cultures. In this investigation, context adaptation is created through different types of celebrity-product match endorsements. In an experimental survey, Dutch and Indian female consumers judged two versions of an Instagram advertisement in which a celebrity (Mila Kunis) endorses Nike sports shoes. The static display context version of the advertisement co-presented the celebrity. In the dynamic display context version of the advertisement, she was shown to be actively wearing/running in the sports shoes. The data suggest culturally specific contextual preferences that influence the attitudes and purchase intentions of the two cultural groups. For the Dutch consumers, the product match, the celebrity credibility and the purchase intentions were different because of the static-context advertisement when compared with the dynamic display context advertisement. However, this was not observed in case of the Indian consumers.

Introduction

The social media platforms' popularity has changed the way consumers communicate and inform themselves in the purchasing process. As the time spent on these platforms is rising, social commerce has become a new trend in online marketing strategies. Social media provide a good opportunity for products' customized visual marketing, as they connect companies directly with the consumers through photos and videos. Instagram particularly plays an increasingly important role in marketing communications for fashion brands due to the perceived trust and essential facets of the visual elements in promoting products (Djafarova & Bowes 2021). In cyberspace, consumers shop more globally, but they think locally, hence the globalization of e-commerce has implications for online marketers. They need to consider whether standardization of (international) marketing communications is appropriate for different local markets. Cultural adaptation to local preferences can enhance the persuasive effectiveness of the message. Consumers living in common society share behavioral and communication patterns distinctive

from other cultures. Nevertheless, globalization results in amalgamation of traditions and beliefs of different cultures. However, the culture "pre-programming" (Hall 1976, Hofstede 2001) leads to culturally-specific preferences (Choi et al. 2020).

One of the most widespread marketing types is celebrity endorsement. Endorsement of a product through a celebrity is an effective strategy in marketing communications (Muda et al. 2017, Wang et al. 2013). Lately, the impact of celebrities as social influencers is growing in popular culture. They are able to create an intense impact on brands (Schimmelpfenning & Hunt 2020). Therefore, the majority of cross-cultural studies have been conducted in the U.S. However, in Asian countries, celebrity endorsement is considerably more prevalent, compared to Europe and the U.S. (Bergkvist & Zhou 2016). Specifically, in emerging markets, there is a dilemma whether to global standardize or localize the celebrity endorsing. For example, in the Chinese market, Yu and Hu (2020) analyzed 42,121 posts for 32 luxury brands (like Armani and Dior) on Weibo (the Chinese version of Twitter). They found that localized endorsements by female celebrities, like Fan Bingbing (范冰冰) or Wang Fei Fei (王霏霏) could provoke more social media interaction (through liking, commenting, or reposting) than standardized celebrity endorsements, like Nicole Kidman or Anne Hathaway. This endorsement effect was moderated by Chinese patriotism (i.e. in-group favoritism). The actual practice in emerging markets reflects cross-cultural variations and provides useful insights and new contributions. Several studies on specific emerging market countries overview celebrity endorsement strategies in marketing communications, such as Freire et al. (2018) for Brazil, Roy et al. (2019) and Wang et al. (2020) for China, and Nyamakanga et al. (2019) for South Africa. The most influential celebrities are, undoubtedly, those in India, who enjoy a high (almost divine) status while appearing in marketing communications (Parmar et al. 2020). Even though more and more studies are conducted in emerging markets, we still do not know whether the same persuasive processes of Western celebrity endorsements are useful in Asian cultures (Knoll & Matthes 2017). This is the focus of the present study, which is an expansion on an earlier study on visual e-commerce, wherein similar cultural (female) groups participated (Broeder & Rutten 2017, Broeder & Goorden 2019). The aim of this study is to unravel the effects of celebrity endorsements, differentiated by the cultural orientation of online consumers. Through varying the presence of a celebrity in an Instagram shopping context, we intend to create more or less persuasive endorsement.

The paper is structured as follows: First, two most commonly used paradigms in cross-cultural investigations are described, the one by Hofstede (2001) provides culturally-related consumer specifics; and the second one is Hall's contexting theory (1976), in which cultural preferences of consumers can be determined on the basis of the degree to which the persuasiveness is implicitly expressed in the context of Instagram advertisement. Second, three commonly used celebrity endorsement models are described, with endorsement being evoked by the degree to which consumers perceive the celebrity as (1) attractive, (2) credible, or (3) fitting with the endorsed product (Erdogan 1989, McCracken 1989). Several meta-analytic reviews of celebrity endorsement investigations are available, such as Amos et al. (2008), Bergkvist and Zhou (2016), Halder et al. (2021), Knoll and Matthes (2017), and Schimmelpfennig and Hunt (2020). Dealing primarily with Anglo-Saxon investigations of (international) Western celebrities, these meta-analyses are supplemented with a detailed account of recent studies investigating (local) celebrity endorsement strategies in non-Western emerging markets.

To this purpose, the method and Instagram advertisement used for the experimental survey are presented. We compare female consumers from the common Asian culture (India) and consumers from a Western-European culture (the Netherlands). Detailed results for testing the four working hypotheses are provided. The article ends with a conclusion and some practical managerial implications.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Forming

Cultural Differentiations

A useful paradigm for unravelling culturally-determined preferences of consumers is the high/low context theory by Hall (1976) and Hall and Hall (1990). In high-context cultures, the message is "one in which most of the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message" (Hall 1976, p. 91). Asian cultures usually prefer high-context messages. Establishing the message's meaning is the minor (needed) activation of the context that consists of pre-programmed, culture-specific cues. Members of these cultures are used to implicit and indirect messages (with visual associations). For example, in a high-context advertisement, the celebrity endorser only wears the sports shirt, thereby suggesting that the shirt feels great and should be bought by the consumer. In social media marketing investigations, there is evidence that high-context messages are generally more focused on facets such as emotion and entertainment (Choi et al. 2020).

In contrast, in low-context cultures, "the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code" (Hall 1976, p 91). Members of these cultures are used to direct and explicit messages (visually and verbally). Western cultures usually prefer low-context messages, where information is expressed more through words. For example, in a low-context advertisement, the celebrity endorser wears the shirt and provides verbal persuasive cues (The best buy to try). Low-context social media messages generally elaborate concrete product-related features, such as price discount (Choi et al. 2020)

Overview studies by Cardon (2008), Kittler et al. (2011), Lamoreaux and Morling (2012), and Baniya (2017) showed that the high/low context construct is more or less successfully applied in a variety of cross-cultural investigations. Therefore, it is remarkable that findings on cultural contexting are blended and diverging, while empirical evidence is often missing (Broeder 2021). Recently, several studies have investigated emerging markets with different high/low context cultures. For example, Patel et al. (2020) found that the green self-identity of American consumers has influenced the attitude more than behavioral control (purchasing green products), while the reverse was true for Indian consumers.

Hall's (1976) cultural contexting paradigm is related to the degree of uncertainty avoidance of consumers. Specifically, Hofstede's (2001) cross-cultural model, replicated by Minkov and Kaasa (2021) is germane for the present study. Cultural differences in uncertainty avoidance refer to "the extent to which the members of institutions and organizations within a society feel threatened by uncertain, unknown, ambiguous, or unstructured situations" (Hofstede 2021). Societies vary regarding consumer innovativeness in adopting and following new technology (such as smartphones and use of internet) (de Mooij 2017). Therefore, more certain and predictable social order should be agreed upon, with rules that limit its members' behavior. By combining the theories by Hall (1976) and Hofstede (2001), the following hypothesis is formulated:

H1. Context type influences the behavioral intentions of consumers from different cultures (differentiated by uncertainty avoidance and high/ low context).

This study compares and investigates the preferences of Indian consumers and Dutch consumers (from the Netherlands). The cultures of India and the Netherlands reveal a contrasting difference in the degree of context used in a persuasive message, according to Hall (1976). At the one end, India is a typically high context culture and, at the other end, the Netherlands is a typically low context culture. Hofstede's (2001) theory of cultural dimensions anticipated a relation between the degree of collectivism/individualism and high/low context in cultures. In collectivistic cultures information is exchanged more implicitly between group, with less need for explicit communication than in individualistic cultures. India is a collectivistic culture with high uncertainty. The Netherlands is a high individualistic culture with low uncertainty avoiding. Indian consumers preferably avoid ambiguous or uncertain (online buying) situations. Accordingly, they might be more effected by adding visual information cues in an Instagram advertisement compared to Dutch consumers.

Source Attractiveness Model

The source attractiveness model assumes that a celebrity is known through exposure (familiarity) and liked because of appearance and behavior (likability), while resembling the consumer (similarity). In their meta-analysis, Bergkvist and Zhou (2016) concluded that using celebrity endorsers in marketing communications had a positive effect on purchases; persuasion increased when celebrity attractiveness was high. The persuasive efficacy is successfully attained through the Halo effect. Thus, in Malaysia, Dom et al. (2016) noted that, when a good-looking celebrity was used in an advertisement, consumers' first impressions were positive even before the products were looked at. In a similar vein, Thomas and Johnson (2016) investigated the emerging market in India (Kotayam), where the celebrity was Mohanlal, an Indian actor, who was endorsing energy conservation in a television advertisement. They found that a higher degree of perceived attractiveness was related to higher purchase intentions, which was mediated by participants' perception of the overall advertisement.

Celebrities' attractivity is not restricted to physical attractiveness, as other characteristics are included, such intellectual skills, personality, or lifestyle (Erdogan 1999, McGuire 1985). Nevertheless, investigations show that physical attractiveness is the most determinant attractivity factor for celebrity endorsers in an advertising context to get the desired attention from online consumers (Agam 2017). For example, in the metropolitan city of Karachi, Pakistan, Khan et al. (2019) found that celebrities that are perceived as attractive, classy, elegant, and beautiful, stimulate purchase intentions. In Nepal, Baniya (2017) surveyed consumers residing in Katmandu Valley. They evaluated a list of advertisements regularly shown in the media, with celebrity names, showing that physical attractiveness and celebrity brand match-up up (see below) were associated with purchase intention. Thus, on the basis of the source attractiveness (context) model, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2. Celebrity attractiveness positively influences the relationship between context type and behavioral intention.

Source Credibility Model

The assumption underlying the source credibility model is that consumers will perceive a celebrity as a trustworthy expert, making valid assertions (Hovland & Weis 1952). Hence, the endorsement of the product by a celebrity will enhance the positive persuasive effect of the advertisement message, although negative celebrity credibility information could negatively affect advertising efficacy. The source credibility model has dominated the literature on celebrity endorsement (Halder et al. 2021); studies have shown that source credibility has the most persuasive positive influence on purchase intentions and (brand) attitudes, compared to source attractiveness (Amos et al. 2008). For example, Lebanese female jewelry consumers, surveyed by Hani et al. (2018), reported that their purchase decisions were encouraged by credible celebrities (with perceived trust, expertise, and experience), and not the attractive ones (usually with well-known faces and sexy, elegant, and classy). Similarly, Cuomo et al. (2019) suggested that, for consumers in London, celebrity credibility was a strong key in increasing purchase intentions of sustainable luxury goods.

Credibility comprises perceived expertise (knowledge, experience, and skills), and perceived trustworthiness (objectivity, honesty, and integrity) of the endorser. Schimmelpfennig and Hunt's (2020) meta-analyses of fifty years of celebrity endorser research concluded that expertise and trustworthiness contributed to credibility and endorser's effectiveness. They added that the influence of celebrity endorsers depended on specific consumer segments (e.g. consumers that differ in knowledge about the advertised product). Interestingly, Singh and Banerjee (2018) explored the influence of celebrity credibility among Indian consumers in an urban city in West Bengal. In the large-scale two-wheel market (scooter and motorbike), the major brands were endorsed by Indian celebrities (e.g. the brand Hero was promoted by actress Alia Bhatt and actor Ranbir Kapoor). Contrary to common findings, their results demonstrated

the indirect purchase influence of the endorsement. Celebrity credibility directly influenced brand and advertisement attitudes, which was subsequently positively related to purchase intentions. On the basis of the source credibility (context) model, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H3. Celebrity credibility positively influences the relationship between context type and behavioral intention.

Product Match-up Model

The celebrity source models do not account for why specific highly credible or attractive celebrities are effective endorsers for some brands or products but not for others (Koernig & Boyd 2009, McCracken 1989). Investigations of the product match-up model anticipate that the persuasive effect of an advertisement message also depends on the degree to which a specific product matches with the celebrity context in the advertisement. Generally, the match-up refers to the degree of congruency (the fit or the appropriateness) between the product, the celebrity, and the consumer. Congruency relates to perceived relevancy and expectancy of the endorsement message (Schimmelpfennig & Hunt 2020). As an illustration, Parmar et al. (2020) confirmed the match-up hypothesis that celebrities differ in appropriateness for different product categories in Punjab, India. Thus, Virat Kohli, an Indian cricketer, fitted for lifestyle products (such as clothing and footwear). The famous batsman was congruent to endorse soft drinks, but not banking or insurance services. Another celebrity in their study was Sharrukh Khan, an Indian actor, who was found to be an appropriate endorser for electronics (such as cell phones). However, the "King of Bollywood" was not considered as an appropriate choice for beverage and food products, except for chocolate. Also, Gabrielli and Baghi (2020) supported the match-up model as an effective co-branding strategy. In their study, on Italian consumers, they proposed a useful expansion by distinguishing between three types of congruency. Firstly, typicality fit (endorsing through very popular and best performing celebrities), which is the most commonly used congruency between product and celebrity. This type of match-up was less effective in attitudinal and behavioral effects on consumers. Secondly, the imagery fit (the endorser is similar to the brand with regard to values or personality characteristics); this type of match-up had the biggest impact with regard to positive e-WOM and viral communication, activities. Finally, the categorical fit (conceptual similarity, such as a sailor endorsing yacht equipment) had the largest efficacy scope on attitudes and the readiness to pay and purchase.

In their meta-analysis, Knoll and Matthes (2017) concluded that an appropriate match between celebrity and product evoked more favorable attitudes and stronger behavioral intentions of consumers. More specifically, male celebrities (vs. female) and actor celebrities (vs. models, musicians, and TV hosts) are more effective, particularly in implicit (vs. explicit) endorsements for unfamiliar (vs. familiar) products. Implicit endorsing occurred when celebrities used a product or were present in the advertisement without evidently promoting, whereas explicit endorsing refers to celebrities overtly expressing their support for a product (I endorse this product) (Miller & Allen 2012). Implicit endorsements elicit more favorable attitudes and stronger behavioral intentions when compared to explicit ones (Knoll & Matthes 2017). To sum up, several studies have found that consumers evaluated the match between the celebrity and the product, and, the better the perceived product-celebrity match, the better the attitudes and purchase intentions. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H4. Celebrity-product match influences the relationship between context type and behavioral intention.

Methodology

A two by two between-subjects design was used with visual display type as independent variable (static display context vs. dynamic display context) and purchase intention as the dependent variable. The

cultural background (Dutch vs. Indian), celebrity attractiveness, celebrity credibility, and the product match were supposed to influence the effect of the display type. The controlled demographic variables were age and highest completed education level. The study participants were restricted to those from Western Europe (the Netherlands) and India. A total of 308 respondents participated, of which 41 were excluded as they failed to meet the requirements (such as age range, female, or large amounts of missing data). The remaining 267 participants completed an online survey with Qualtrics. The sample comprised 153 Dutch women and 114 Indian women. The cultural background was established through self-identification ("To what ethnic group do you belong?"). This was checked with participants' birth-country ("What country were you born"), country-of-living ("In what country do you live at the moment"), and home language use ("What languages do you mostly use at home?"). All participants were born and living in India, or in the Netherlands. The most often mentioned Indian language identifications were: Hindu (53), Gujarati (28), Marwadi (3), Kannada (3), and Tamil (3). The descriptive statistics on demographic variables are given in Table 1. The Dutch and Indian sub-samples had the same composition in terms of age, $\chi^2(18)=17.33$, $p=.50$, and education level ($\chi^2(4)=2.14$, $p=.71$). The mean age was 22 years (age range 16-35 years). The highest completed education level was mostly middle/higher education or university level.

Table 1. Sample Characteristics: Dutch and Indian

	Dutch (n=153)		Indian (n=114)	
Age				
16–20	21	14%	96	85%
21–25	93	60%	15	13%
26–30	30	20%	2	1%
31-35	9	6%	1	1%
Education				
Elementary school	1	1%	1	1%
High school	18	12%	43	38%
Middle/Higher education	74	48%	39	34%
University	60	39%	31	27%

Questionnaire

The participants were asked "to imagine that you are scrolling through your Instagram timeline and see this advertisement. You are searching for a new pair of shoes". Next, they were asked some questions. The terms of the questionnaire are available in the Appendix.

- *Purchase intention* was measured with one statement ("I would like to buy this product") with a 5-point Likert-type scale ($M=2.99$, $SD=1.12$).
- *The celebrity attractiveness* scale consisted of six items: three adjective pairs for physical appearance (e.g. *ugly* vs. *good-looking*) and three adjective pairs for personal characteristics (e.g. *closed* vs. *open*) with a 5-point scale ($M=3.71$, $SD=.95$).
- *The celebrity credibility* scale consisted of six items: three adjective pairs for expertise (e.g. *incompetent* vs. *competent*) and three adjective pairs for trustworthiness (e.g. *unreliable* vs. *reliable*) with a 5-point scale ($M=3.04$, $SD=.83$).
- *Product match* was measured with one statement ("I think the match between the product and the celebrity is inappropriate/appropriate") with a 5-point scale ($M=3.25$, $SD=1.01$).
- *Brand attitude* was checked with one question ("How do you feel about the brand Nike?"; *negative* vs. *positive*) with a 5-point scale ($M=4.43$, $SD=.83$).

- Uncertainty avoidance was measured with six items adapted from Jung and Kellaris (2004) (e.g. "I prefer structured situations to unstructured situations") with a 5-point scale (*M*=3.33, *SD*=.65).
- Celebrity recognition was check with one question ("I noticed that the celebrity was Mila Kunis") with "yes - no" answers.
- There were two manipulation check questions ("I noticed that the celebrity was wearing the shoes" and "I noticed that the celebrity was running with the shoes") with "yes - no" answers.

The celebrity scales were used in an earlier study by Broeder and Goorden (2019). For scales with more than one item, the internal consistency was checked with Cronbach's α. For attractiveness *α*=.90, for credibility *α*=.79, and for uncertainty avoidance *α*=.79. These scales had good reliability with Cronbach's α higher than .70.

Instagram Advertisement
The same sports shoe was displayed in two variations (conditions) of an Instagram advertisement (see Figure 1). In the static display context condition the sports shoe was displayed next to the celebrity. The celebrity was co-present, merely appearing with the sports shoe. In the dynamic display context condition Mila Kunis was explicitly wearing, running with the sports shoes. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two Instagram conditions.
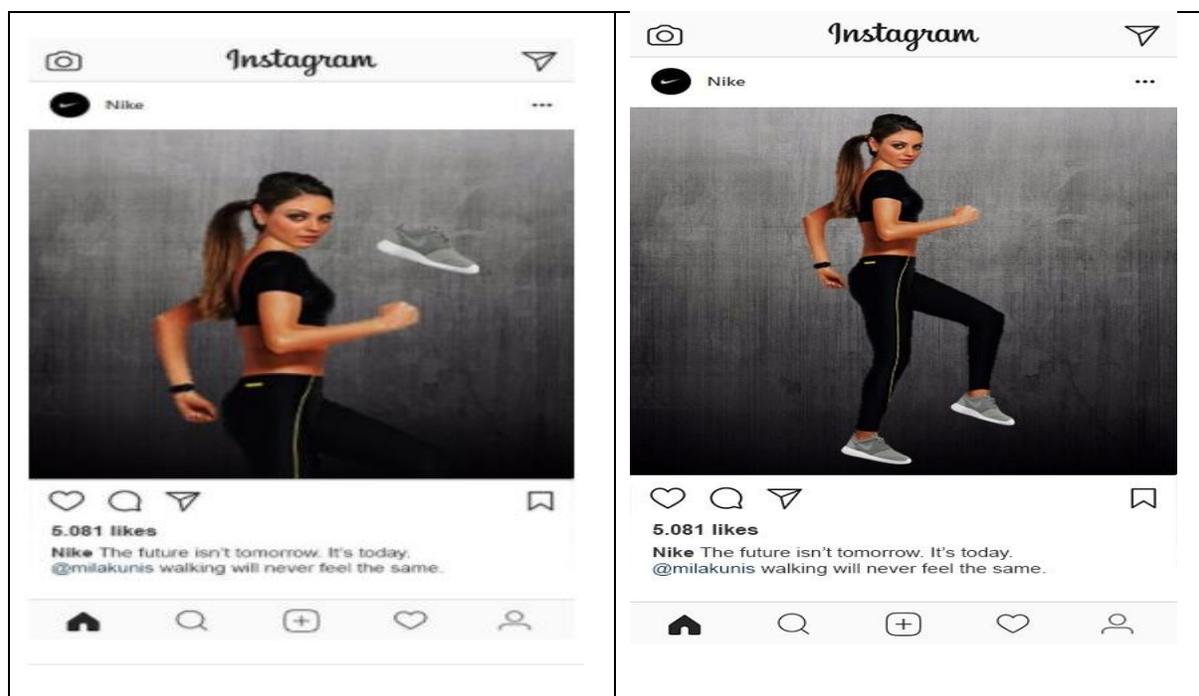

Figure 1. Sports Shoe with a Static Visual Display Context (left) and with a Dynamic Visual Display Context (right)

Manipulation Check
The condition specific display type was noticed correctly by most of the participants. With the dynamic display context 96 per cent of the participants noticed correctly that the celebrity was wearing/running with the sports shoes. With the static display context 76 per cent noticed correctly that she was not using

the shoes. Most of the participants recognized the celebrity as Mila Kunis: 87 percent of the Dutch women, and 55 percent of the Indian women.

Results

Some preliminary analyses were performed for the cultural subsamples. On an average, the participants felt very positive about the brand Nike. The Indian participants had higher positive attitudes towards the brand Nike (M_{Ind} 4.51, SD_{Ind}=.76) than the Dutch participants (M_{Dut}=4.22, SD_{Dut}=.86). This difference, M_{diff}=.29, was significant ($t(1,265)$=-2.90, p=.00), and represented a small effect of Cohen's d=.36. Additionally, a cultural difference surfaced in the degree of uncertainty avoidance. The Indians (with M_{Ind}=3.42 and SD_{Ind}=.62) reported higher uncertainty avoidance than the Dutch (with M_{Dut}=3.26 and SD_{Dut}=.67). This difference, M_{diff}=.16, reached statistical significance, $t(253,819)$=-2.03, p=.04, and represented a small effect of Cohen's d=.25.

The Effect of Context on Purchase Intention

The average purchase intentions in both conditions, with the two display types, for the Dutch and Indian participants are visualized in Figure 2.
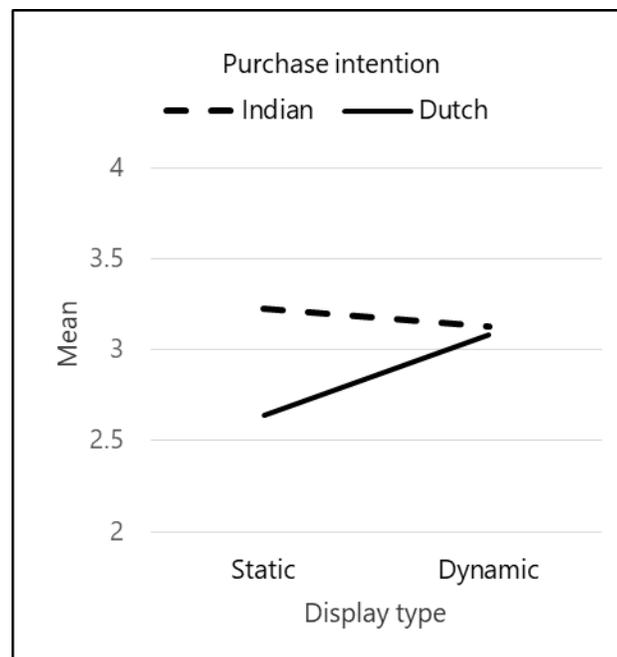

Figure 2. Relationship between the Display Context and the Purchase Intention per Cultural Group (Means on a 5-point Scale; Min.=1, Max.=5)

In the ANOVA the interaction between culture and the display type reached statistical significance ($F(1, 263)$=3.89, p=.05). This interaction effect indicates that the purchase intentions of the Indian and Dutch groups were affected differently by the display type.

Specifically, with the static display context the average purchase intention of the sports shoe was higher for the Indian participants (M_{Ind}=3.23, SD_{Ind}=1.19) compared with the Dutch participants (M_{Dut}=2.64, SD_{Dut}=1.05). With the dynamic display context, the Dutch and Indians did not differ in purchase intentions.

Simple effects analysis showed that the purchase intentions of the Dutch participants were significantly higher with the dynamic display context than with the static display context ($F(1,263)$=6.06, p=.01). In the Indian group, the display type differences had no significant effect on purchase intentions ($F(1,263)$=0.23, p=.63). So, these results partly supported Hypothesis 1, only for the Dutch participants.

The Effect of Attractiveness and Credibility of the Celebrity

On average (see Figure 3), the Dutch participants (M_{Dut}=3.83, SD_{Dut}=.71) rated the attractivity of the celebrity higher than the Indian participants (M_{Ind}=3.56, SD_{Ind}=.99), both with the static display context and the dynamic display context ($F(1,263)$=6.802, p=.01).
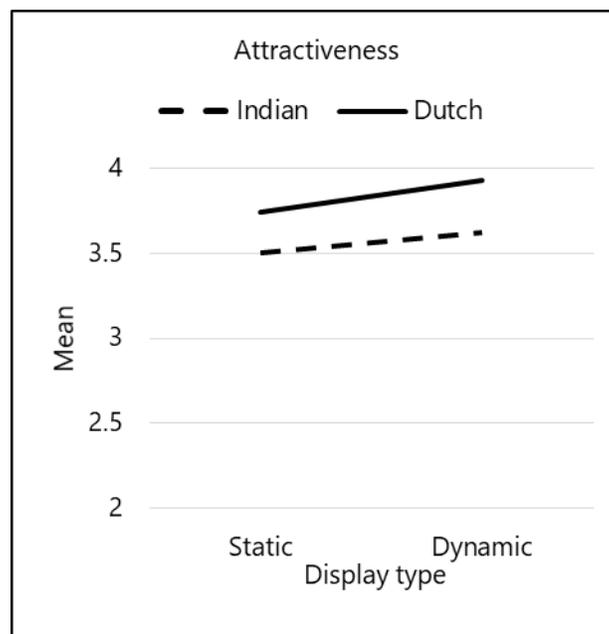

Figure 3. Relationship between the Display Context and the Celebrity Attractiveness per Cultural Group (Means on a 5-point Scale; Min.=1, Max.=5)

A different pattern emerged for the credibility ratings of the celebrity (see Figure 4). With the static display context, the Dutch participants (M_{Dut}=2.87, SD_{Dut}=.80) rated the credibility of the celebrity lower than Indian participants (M_{Ind}=3.23, SD_{Ind}=.92). With the dynamic display context, the celebrity credibility ratings by the two cultural groups were almost the same. The Dutch credibility ratings increased (M_{Dut}= 3.06, SD_{Dut}=.75) and the Indian credibility ratings decreased (M_{Ind}=3.05, SD_{Ind}=.85), compared to the static display context.
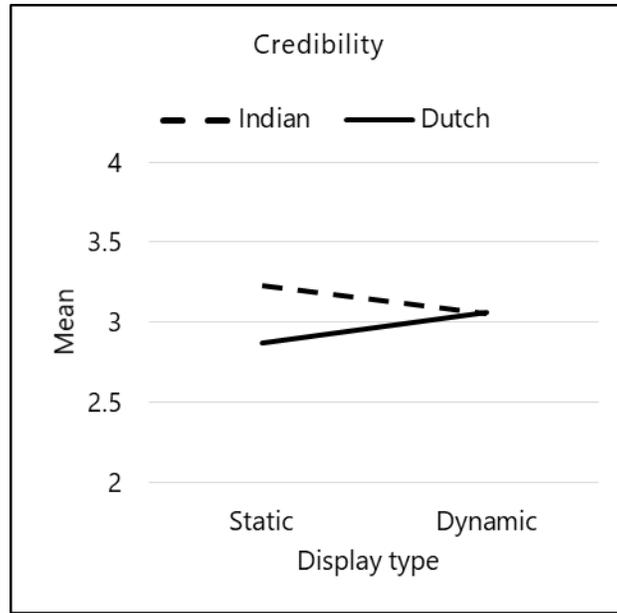
Figure 4. Relationship between the Display Context and the Celebrity Credibility per Cultural Group (Means on a 5-point Scale; Min.= 1, Max.= 5)

To examine further whether the purchase intentions can be explained by characteristics of the celebrity, a regression analysis was performed using PROCESS procedures developed by Hayes (2018). In the parallel multiple mediator model display type was the predictor. The two mediators were attractiveness and credibility. The outcomes of this regression are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Regression Coefficients, Standard Errors (SE) and Model Summary Information (based on 5000 bootstrap samples) for the Influence of the Display Type Parallel Multiple Mediator Model depicted in Figure 5

			Dependent								
		M_1 (Attractiveness)				M_2 (Credibility)				Y (Purchase intention)		
Independent		Coeff.	SE	p		Coeff.	SE	p		Coeff.	SE	p
X (Display)	a_1	-.15	.10	.15	a_2	-.03	.10	.75	c'	-.23	.13	.08
M_1 (Attractiveness)		---	---	---		---	---	---	b_1	-.18	.09	.03
M_2 (Credibility)		---	---	---		---	---	---	b_2	.57	.09	.00
Constant	i_{M_1}	3.94	.17	.00	i_{M_2}	3.09	.16	.00	i_y	2.34	.38	.00
		$R^2=0$				$R^2=0$				$R^2=.14$		
		$F(1,265)=2.13, p=.15$				$F(1,265)=.11, p=.71$				$F(3,263) = 14.22, p=.00$		

In the regression analysis bias corrected and accelerated (BCa) confidence intervals (CI) were based on 5000 bootstrap samples. The confidence intervals should be entirely above or below zero. As can be seen in Table 2, display type had no effect on the attractiveness (a_1) and credibility (a_2) of the celebrity. In

addition, attractiveness seems to negatively contribute to purchase intention (b_1). This should be interpreted with some caution, because the bootstrapping did not firmly confirm this (BCa CI [.53, 0]). Nevertheless, because a positive effect of attractiveness was assumed, these findings would not support hypothesis 2. In contrast, credibility was found to positively contribute to purchase intention (b_2, BCa CI [.38, .75]). Finally, there was no statistically evidence that display type directly negatively influenced purchase intention independent of the effects of attractiveness and credibility (c', BCa CI [-.49, .04]). These findings supported hypothesis 3.
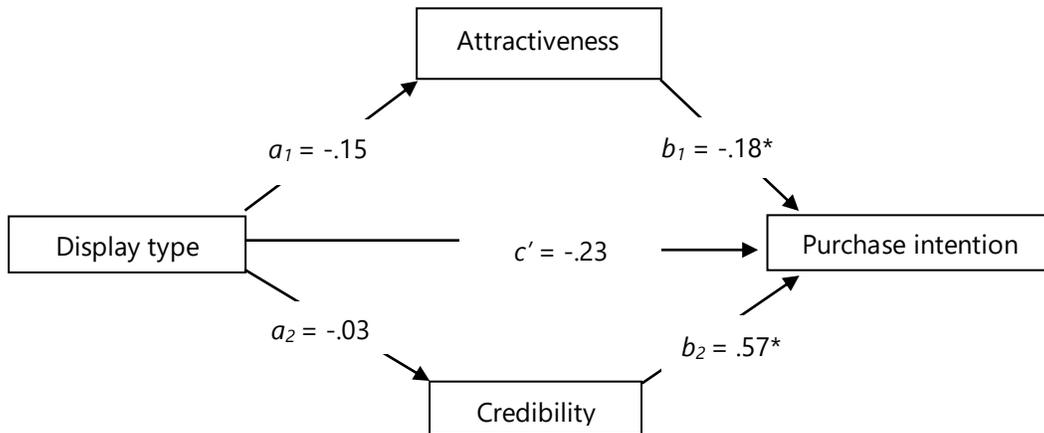

Figure 5. A Statistical Diagram of the Parallel Multiple Mediator Model for the Presumed Influence of the Static Display Context and the Dynamic Display Context.
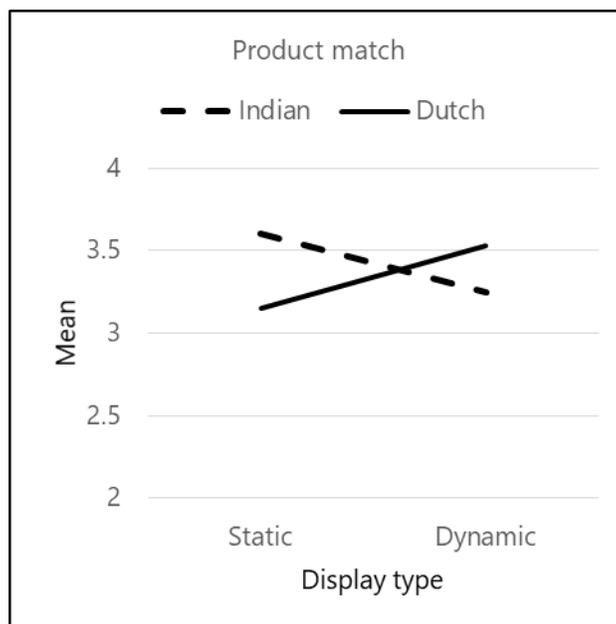

Figure 6. Relationship between the Display Context and the Perceived Product Match per Cultural Group (Means on a 5-point scale; Min.=1, Max.=5)

Product Match

The relationship between the display and the product match per condition for both cultural groups visualized is in Figure 6. Remarkably, there was a significant interaction between display type and culture for the product match ratings ($F(1, 263)=6.85$, $p=.00$). This interaction indicates that the ratings of the appropriateness of the match between the celebrity and the product were affected differently by display type. As Figure 6 shows, with the dynamic display context the Dutch product match ratings increased, whereas the Indian product match ratings decreased. Simple effects analysis revealed that the product match ratings were statistically significant different with the static display context than with the dynamic display context in the Dutch group ($F(1,263)=4.29$, $p=.04$), but not in the Indian group ($F(1,263)=2,781$, $p=.09$). These findings supported hypothesis 4.

Conclusions

This study investigated the effects of implicit context of an Instagram advertisement and asks the following questions: Do different implicit display types have different effects on consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions? And what is the influence of the cultural background of consumers?

The purchase intentions of the Indian and Dutch female consumers were affected differently by the differences in the display type. Specifically, with the static display context, the average purchase intention of the sports shoe was higher among the Indian participants when compared with the Dutch participants. With the dynamic display context, the Dutch and Indians did not differ in purchase intentions. The purchase intentions of the Dutch participants were higher with the dynamic display context than with the static display context. In the Indian group, the display type differences had no effect on purchase intention (Hypothesis 1). Celebrity attractiveness seemed to have a negative effect on purchase intentions (rejecting Hypothesis 2), whereas celebrity credibility had a positive effect on purchase intentions (confirming Hypothesis 3). Product match differences influenced the relationship between context type and purchase intention. Here, a remarkable cultural preference was found. With the dynamic display context, the Dutch product match ratings increased, whereas the Indian product match ratings decreased. The Dutch female consumers rejected the static display context (with the co-presence of the celebrity and the "flying" sports shoe) as an inappropriate match of celebrity and product (Hypothesis 4).

Discussion and Limitations

Building on Hall's (1976) high context cultures, this study specified two different, more implicit (i.e. static display context) or less implicit (i.e. dynamic display context), contexts of an Instagram advertisement. For the Dutch female consumers, the assumed culturally specific context preference was found. Celebrity endorsers in India enjoy a high (almost divine) status (Parmar et al. 2020). This might explain why the female consumers in this study did not differentiate between the two types of implicit contexts. This study has limitations that provide some suggestions for further research.

The first limitation is that the questionnaire of the survey was in English. One can only speculate about the degree to which the proficiency in the non-native language of the participants must have affected the findings. On the basis of Harzing's (2005) cross-country comparison, one could assume that the cultural differences found in this study would have been larger with questionnaires in their native languages.

Second, some limitations refer to attributes of the celebrity endorser. In this study, a female celebrity and female consumers participated. Future studies could also include a male celebrity and male consumers. Knoll and Matthes (2017) noted that male celebrity endorsers cause stronger endorsements effect than female celebrity endorsers. In addition, the brand specifics and personality congruence are interesting topics for further research (Broeder & Rutten 2017, Mishra et al. 2015).

Third, some limitations of this study refer to the product that was being used in the Instagram advertisement. Product aspects such as price, availability (e.g. in stores) or beneficial features of the sports shoes were left out. This information could have influenced someone's purchase intention. Adding these product attributes to the advertisement might make the shopping environment more realistic. In addition, investigations of the match-up hypothesis could compare universal and product specific associations (Parmar et al. 2020) of different products categories, such as search and experience product (Huang et al. 2013), or high and low involvement products (Hameed et al. 2020).

Implication for Marketers

In general, the results of this study support a global managerial strategy for persuasive online marketing communication that is fine-tuned for cultural differences. Visual context has started to play a major role in e-commerce (due to the growth of platforms like Instagram and Pinterest), so marketing communication should respond by integrating these visual endorsement, which are already widely available, into their marketing strategies (Broeder & Crijns 2018, Broeder & Remers 2018). The recommendation is to take into account local cultural context adaptations in advertisements. A well-balanced consideration of adapting (or standardizing) the content and the design of an advertisement will enhance the persuasive effect of the message.

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Appendix

Operationalisation of the Constructs
The participants responded to the questionnaire items using a 5-point scale for the adjective pairs and a 5-point Likert-type scale for the statements (from 1="Strongly disagree" to 5="Strongly agree").

The control questions were answered with a "yes" or "no".

Cultural background. What country were you born in?, In what country do you live at the moment?, To what ethnic group do you belong?, What languages do you mostly use at home?

Purchase intention. I would like to buy this product

Celebrity Attractiveness. I think the celebrity is ...
    Physical appearance: unattractive – attractive, ugly – good-looking, dull – exciting,
    Personal characteristic: unfavorable – favorable, unlikable – likable, closed – open

Celebrity credibility. I think the celebrity is ...
    Expertise: not an expert – an expert, inexperienced – experienced, incompetent – competent
    Trustworthiness: unreliable – reliable, subjective – objective, unfamiliar – familiar

Product match. I think the match between the product and the celebrity is ... inappropriate – appropriate

Uncertainty avoidance. I prefer structured situations to unstructured situations. I prefer specific instructions to broad guidelines. I tend to get anxious easily when I don't know an outcome. I feel stressed when I cannot predict consequences. I would not take risks when an outcome cannot be predicted. I believe that rules should not be broken for merely pragmatic reasons. I don't like ambiguous situations.

Brand attitude. I think the brand Nike is ... negative - positive

Celebrity recognition. I noticed that the celebrity was Mila Kunis

Manipulation check. I noticed that the celebrity ... was wearing the shoes, was running with the shoes

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