

# Is Gossip Always Bad for Human Branding? Unexpected Consequences of Celebrity Gossip

**Gaia Giambastiani**

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

**Andrea Ordanini**

Bocconi University

**Joseph C. Nunes**

University of Southern California

Cite as:

Giambastiani Gaia, Ordanini Andrea, Nunes Joseph C. (2022), Is Gossip Always Bad for Human Branding? Unexpected Consequences of Celebrity Gossip. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 51st, (106981)

Paper from the 51st Annual EMAC Conference, Budapest, May 24-27, 2022



# Is Gossip Always Bad for Human Branding? Unexpected Consequences of Celebrity Gossip

## **Abstract**

This research investigates the gossip market by focusing on celebrities, key actors in this large business. Gossip is foundational in the relationships that famous individuals build with their fans, as it is one of the primary sources of information that consumers use to build their image of a celebrity and relate to the human brand. Focusing on personal content from celebrities, we look at the impact of gossip (vs. self-disclosure) on consumers' evaluation of messages and celebrities, especially as endorsers. Across three studies, we find that self-disclosed information can be evaluated as more valuable and interesting. Despite this, and somewhat unexpectedly, negative information delivered via gossip (vs. self-disclosed) increases consumers' liking and appreciation of the celebrity, especially as an endorser. We aim at offering useful managerial insights to human brands and their managers on how to deal with personal information sharing and gossip.

**Keywords:** *Gossip; Celebrities; Human-Brand*

**Track:** Consumer Behaviour