

POINT, SET, MATCH: EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF ATHLETE
ENDORSER FAMILIARITY AND ENDORSER/PRODUCT CONGRUENCY ON
CONSUMER ATTITUDES, PURCHASE INTENTIONS, AND PERCEIVED
ENDORSER CREDIBILITY

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CONSUMER ATTITUDES, PURCHASE INTENTIONS, AND PERCEIVED
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DEDICATION

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Chapter I: Introduction

The objective of this study is to better understand the use of celebrity athlete endorsers for brands and how the product type affects endorser credibility and consumer purchase intent. The effects of the match-up hypothesis and source credibility model were tested as theoretical groundwork for the research that took place. This study will examine the effects of consumer attitudes, consumer purchase intentions and endorser credibility on professional athlete endorser familiarity and product/endorser congruency.

In the advertising and marketing world, understanding what drives consumers to purchase products or grasping what creates favorable attitudes toward brands in consumers' minds is an invaluable asset. Central to this understanding is choosing the right endorser for a brand or product. Endorsements featuring celebrities are an omnipresent element of marketing in today's society and provide a way to cut through the clutter that is so pervasive in the advertising industry. According to Siemens et al. (2008), approximately 25 per cent of all advertisements feature a celebrity endorser. Research has tried to elucidate the logic of why companies invest so much money in using celebrities to endorse their products (Fleck, Korchia & Le Roy, 2012). Choi and Rifon (2012) assert that celebrities are used to

endorser products due to their stardom and visible presence. Among the many segments of celebrities are professional athletes. Many professional athletes are chosen as endorsers because of their clout in the cultural and entertainment world. According to Braunstein and Zhang (2005), athletes can even have an elevated level of celebrity status due to their star power, which is made up of an athlete's overall ability and personality. Erdogan (1999) believes that celebrity endorsement strategy can be a two-edged sword, which makes the selection of the right celebrity endorser a tough decision. Pornpitakpan (2003) also suggests that selection of a celebrity for an endorsement is a risky, difficult, and crucial decision. Therefore, advertisers need to ensure that the character and credibility of the celebrity match the nature of the product being advertised and the audience being targeted (Pornpitakpan, 2003). This match between endorser and product involves both aligning the character of the athlete with the brand and also aligning the brand category with the athlete's profession.

When the image of the professional athlete endorser in the advertisement matches with the brand category, association with the endorser is immediately applied to the brand category. When a mismatch occurs between the endorser and the brand and is thus inconsistent with the stimulus individual, increased thinking about the

inconsistency results (Sujan, 1985). Thus, an advertisement with an endorser whose image is consistent with consumer expectations of the brand will induce immediate effect; however, if the endorser's image is inconsistent with expectations, increased elaboration will result over the inconsistency. Therefore, the match-up hypothesis suggests that an athlete would ideally be used as an endorser for a sport related brand but not be an ideal candidate for a non-sport related brand.

Till and Busler (1998) studied expertise as the variable underlying endorser credibility. They used a variety of athletes to endorse products related to sports. Till and Busler (1998) found that there was a positive response to the advertisements as the respondents believed that the athlete endorsers matched well with the products due to the expertise of the athletes. The athletes were able to transfer their perceived expertise to the product, resulting in successful transference of meaning. Till and Busler (1998) therefore concluded that expertise is a powerful characteristic and can assist in making the advertisement believable. Choi and Rifon (2012) suggest that the endorser credibility theoretical approach has been criticized because it considers the persuasive nature of a credible celebrity to be autonomous from the product endorsed. For example, any highly rated credible celebrity can persuade consumers, regardless of the product that is endorsed (McCracken, 1989). Thus, one of the objectives of this

study was to explore whether or not credibility and familiarity of a celebrity endorser has an impact on consumers, regardless of endorsed product. This study provides a comprehensive illustration of the celebrity athlete endorsement process by including the dimension of the endorser/product congruence. The combined effects of endorser familiarity and endorser/product congruence will shed light on the context through which celebrity endorsement effectiveness is defined. Endorser, product, and consumer provide a theoretical web by which endorser effectiveness can be studied and examined. Consequently, this research aims to examine the dynamic process of how the celebrity endorser, product and consumer jointly determine endorsement effects. It is hoped that this present research makes theoretical contributions and provide practical and salient guidelines for the appropriate selection of professional athlete endorsers for a wide variety of brands and products. The objective of this study is to extend previous research on professional athlete endorsers and the impact of endorser familiarity, endorser credibility, and product-endorser congruency on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions.

Chapter II: Review of Literature

2.1. Summary of Celebrity Athletes in Advertising

In today's society, it is evident that advertising fills the daily lives of consumers (Dahlén & Edenius, 2007). A challenge for marketing and advertising executives is to present an advertisement that can overcome the characteristics of intangibility, inseparability, perishability, and variability (Clow et al., 2011). With that being said, there is no doubt that consumers are bombarded by many different types of advertising. To stand out amidst this clutter, brands often turn to celebrities to endorse their products or services (Fink et al., 2011). Speck, Schumann, and Thompson (1988) define a celebrity as an individual who is well known to the public. Furthermore, Friedman and Friedman (1979) define a celebrity endorser as "an individual who is known by the public for his or her achievements in areas other than that of the product class endorsed" (p. 63). Similarly, McCracken (1989) refers to a celebrity endorser as "any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement (p. 310). Endorsing everything from soda, beer, milk, fast food, pain relievers, and clothing, celebrity athletes have submerged themselves into the advertising culture (Grau, Roselli, & Taylor, 2007). There are several

significant advantages to the use of celebrities in advertising. Several of these include their ability to draw the audience's attention, generate higher recall rates, penetrate advertising clutter, and facilitated marketing communications (Erdogan, 1999; Miciak & Shanklin, 1994). Amongst the most preferred celebrity endorsers are professional athletes, coaches, and other sport personalities (Bush, Martin, & Bush, 2004). Consequently, professional athletes are accepting endorsement deals for increasingly large sums of money. In 2009, sports sponsorship spending reached \$11.2 billion (Fitch, Ozanian, & Badenhausen, 2010). For example, in 2009, Nike alone spent more than \$4 billion to use celebrity athletes to endorse its products (Kaplan, 2010). In some cases, athletes earn more for their endorsement deals than they do in their entire sport career (Koernig & Boyd, 2009). Despite this inordinate expensive, companies continue to reach out to celebrity athletes to endorse their brands. The selection of the right celebrity athlete endorser is of large concern to marketers, given the sheer cost to secure their involvement. Some notable celebrity athlete endorsers include Tiger Woods for Nike, Maria Sharapova for Canon digital cameras, and Danica Patrick for GoDaddy. Kambitsis, Harahousou, Theodorakis, and Chatzibeis (2002) found that certain sports (and by extension, their participating elite athletes) provide a better fit with certain products than others. Their study was conducted

prior to the 2000 Summer Olympics and involved observations of newspapers and magazines in Sydney, Australia. They sought to discover why athletes were used for product endorsements and specifically the match between athletes and products. The Kambitsis et al. (2002) findings suggest that elite professional athletes are best suited to endorse products that promote a healthy lifestyle or products that increase athletic performance.

However, not all celebrity athlete endorsers are chosen to promote sport related products as demonstrated through the examples above. Given the prevalence and high cost of using celebrity endorsers in our advertising culture, it is vital for a company to research what type of celebrity should be used for a particular brand and when using a celebrity endorser is going to be effective (Koernig & Boyd, 2009). Koernig and Boyd (2009) suggest that "this is particularly true in the case of athletes, whose fame and achievements stem from their sport, but whose private behaviors are increasingly scrutinized by the media" (p. 26). It is essential to the success of an endorsement to enhance the match between the product and the endorser (Braunstein-Minkove, Zhang and Trail, 2011). Ruihley, Runyan, and Lear (2010) suggest that the use of sport celebrities in product advertising has the power to drive sales and positively influence consumer brand choice. Similarly, Keller (1998) asserts that these endorsements can enhance consumer

recognition and increase image awareness of the brands or products that the celebrity athletes are endorsing. It is important for advertising and marketing professionals to be aware of the factors that can have an impact on a consumer's purchase intentions. Thus, when an advertiser selects an athlete to endorse a product, he or she should understand what factors can influence the campaign either positively or negatively.

Advertisements are seen as more effective if their endorsers are considered credible (Ohanian, 1991) or appropriate (Till & Busler, 1998). For example, a professional athlete would be seen as a more credible endorser for a sports drink than a television actor would (Cunningham, Fink, & Kenix, 2007). Past research largely supports these assumptions. Till and Busler (2000) found that actors were far less effective as endorsers of energy bars than athletes were due to the supposed fit between the product and the endorser. They (2000) believe that the effectiveness of the campaign was the result of the athlete's perceived expertise regarding the components of a good energy bar. Similarly, Till (2001) found that the image of the brand or of the athlete can be tainted if the athlete does not endorse an 'appropriate' product. The product-endorser fit is crucial to increased purchase intentions and the formation of positive attitudes toward a product (Cunningham, Fink & Kenix, 2007).

Through the course of past research on celebrity endorsers, several main ideas have been developed and studied. They include the source credibility model (Hovland et al., 1953; McGuire, 1968), the source attractiveness model (McGuire, 1985), and the match-up hypothesis (Kahle & Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1989). When synthesized, these concepts provide a set of factors that can help aid advertisers in their pursuit of the most appropriate and most effective endorser of a product. The source credibility model suggests that a consumer's perception of an endorser's expertise and trustworthiness leads to an effective marketing campaign (Hovland et al., 1953; McGuire, 1968). The source attractiveness model, which is an extension of the source credibility model, stipulates that the likeability and familiarity of an endorser increases his or her credibility (McGuire, 1968). In an effort to consolidate these two conceptual models, Ohanian (1990) resolved that perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness are the most important and influential factors in endorser effectiveness. These concepts extend knowledge on this research and lead to the development of the product match-up hypothesis. The match-up hypothesis essentially states that the most effective endorsement relationships are those in which the product and the endorser are congruent and provide a harmonious perceived fit (Kamins, 1989). Based on these theories and concepts, this study examined the impact

of endorser familiarity and congruency between the endorsed product and the endorser's profession on consumer attitudes and consumer purchase intentions.

2.2. Discussion of Theories

2.2.1 Source Credibility Model

Research regarding celebrity endorsements has typically stemmed from three models: source credibility, source attractiveness, and the match-up hypothesis (Keel & Natarajan, 2012). Source models argue that various characteristics of a perceived communication source may have a positive effect on message receptivity (Erdogan, 1999). Although the source credibility model and the source attractiveness model were originally developed for communication studies, they can be applied to the celebrity endorsement process (Erdogan, 1999). Simply put, source credibility is defined as the believability of the endorser in an advertisement (Clow et al., 2011). The source credibility model supports the notion that a celebrity endorser generally has a greater impact on purchase intention and consumer attitude change than a non-celebrity endorser due to his or her established credibility derived from popular culture and recognition (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Erdogan, 1999; Ohanian, 1991).

Ohanian (1990) contributed to source characteristic literature by providing a concise review of source credibility scales. Ohanian (1990)

has conceptualized source credibility in terms of three clear dimensions: *expertise, attractiveness, and trustworthiness*. These three dimensions can make independent contributions to an endorser's effectiveness (Ohanian, 1990). Research supports these aspects of credibility and has demonstrated a relationship between credibility, purchase intentions, and brand and ad attitudes (Siemens et al., 2008). According to Siemens, Smith, Fisher and Jensen (2008), a consumer's perceived credibility of an endorser plays a vital role in an advertisement's persuasive power. Kahle and Homer (1990) also believe that the perception of the credibility of an endorser can have an impact on attitude towards the brand and attitude towards the advertisement. Pikas, Schied, and Pikas (2012) suggest that it is beneficial for an endorser to possess a high level of all three source credibility characteristics. The source credibility model essentially posits that the effectiveness of a message depends on the perceived level of an endorser's trustworthiness and expertise (Hovland et al., 1953; Ohanian, 1991). Miciak and Shanklin (1994) assert that the most important dimensions of credibility are trustworthiness, expertise, and prowess with regard to the service or product being endorsed. While trustworthiness has been found to be a determinant of source credibility, Ohanian (1991) has found that expertise is the one dimension of endorser credibility that has been linked with purchase

intention. However, it has been suggested that it isn't the level of expertise afforded to the endorser but rather the level of expertise of the endorser that is perceived by the consumer (Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953; Ohanian, 1991). Likewise, Till and Busler (1998) believe that endorser expertise may be more potent in terms of providing for a greater opportunity for fit than physical attractiveness. The dimension of source expertise has been extensively researched and scholars have found that there are several different types of expertise. Erdogan (1999) suggests that expertise can come from experience, knowledge, or training that the endorser acquires in the related field. Similarly, Siemens et al. (2008) observe that the body of research regarding source credibility has "yet to further investigate the possibility of expertise as outlined by Ohanian, having product or profession delineations" (p. 160). This approach posits that the subsequent effects of professional or product expertise that is perceived by consumers may impact endorser effectiveness (Siemens et al., 2008).

Source expertise literature has provided several different explanations about how expertise is defined. According to Hovland, Janis and Kelley (1953) source expertise is "the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions." In other words, the communicator has the perceived ability to know what he or she is talking about (Hovland & Weiss, 1951). For example, using a

doctor to endorse a medical product or using a soccer player to endorse a sport product would be received favorably. McGuire's (1969) definition of expertise refers to a consumer's perceived ability to understand the correct stance on an individual issue. In addition, Alba and Hutchinson (1987) define experts as being able to perform a task related to the product. Some research supports that in order for an endorser to be perceived as an expert, he or she should have product experience. It is clear that in advertising literature, there are several different definitions of endorser expertise but they all are circuitous around the same main idea. McCracken (1989) and Stone et al. (2003) suggest that endorser expertise is a critical element in the success of the endorser process. They assert that the effectiveness of the advertisement's message depends on the source of that message's expertise. Premeaux (2009) argues that for professional athlete endorsers, strong levels of expertise may compensate for poor levels of physical attractiveness and trustworthiness.

Trustworthiness, a component of source credibility, refers to the consumer's belief that the source is willing to make valid assertions about a product or brand (Hovland & Weiss, 1951). Boyd and Shank (2004) define endorser trustworthiness as "the consumer's confidence in the source for providing information in an objective and honest manner" (p. 83). For example, a car salesman may have knowledge

about the product he or she is trying to sell but the trustworthiness of that salesman is rather dubious. Koernig and Boyd (2009) found that perceived trustworthiness is higher for those athletes that endorse an athletic related product versus those who endorse non-athletic related products. According to Stone et al. (2003), the success of celebrity sports endorsers relies on their ability to project a likable and trustworthy image to potential consumers and their athletic prowess. They suggest that the athlete must be at the top level in their sports to create the most effective endorsement relationship.

The third traditional component to the source credibility model is endorser attractiveness. Attractiveness refers to the degree of likability or the degree of physical attractiveness that an endorser possesses (Ohanian, 1991). In advertising research, beauty is typically defined as 'attractiveness' and has been largely measured on a single 'attractive/unattractive' dimension (Langmeyer & Shank, 1994). However, advertising and marketing researchers are starting to expand upon this construct of beauty and attractiveness to include more than just looks. For example, Seno and Lukas (2007) define source attractiveness "to include not only physical beauty, but also non-physical beauty, such as sportsmanship, charm, grace, and intelligence" (p. 126). Solomon, Ashmore, and Longo (1992) found that consumers are able to distinguish between multiple types of

physical attractiveness. They call this phenomenon the beauty match-up hypothesis and it came about as an extension of the celebrity endorser match-up hypothesis (Solomon, Ashmore, & Longo, 1992). However, it digs deep into the source factor of attractiveness as the match-up construct. Pikas, Schied, and Pikas (2012) suggest that due to their peak physical condition, professional athletes are typically found to be physically attractive. Ohanian (1990) combined the source credibility model (McGuire, 1968) with the source attractiveness model (McGuire, 1985) and created a single scale to represent an endorser's perceived trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness.

2.2.2. Source Attractiveness Model

The source attractiveness model is an extension of the source credibility model and addresses several other source characteristics. According to McGuire (1968), the source attractiveness model postulates that the similarity, familiarity, and liking of an endorser can have an impact on the effectiveness of a message. Similarly, McCracken (1989) suggests that familiar endorsers have a greater influence on consumers because of their identifiable persona. According to Erdogan, Baker, and Tagg (2001), familiarity is defined as "knowledge of the source through exposure" (p. 40). Related to all dimensions of source credibility is the notion that congruence or a good fit between product being endorsed and endorser is beneficial to

overall advertising strategy (Boyd & Shank, 2004). Attractiveness in reference to the source attractiveness model does not always mean physical attractiveness. According to Erdogan (1999), attractiveness “includes any number of virtuous characteristics that consumers might perceive in a celebrity endorser: for example, intellectual skills, personality properties, lifestyles, or athletic prowess” (p. 299). Kahle and Homer (1985) found that familiarity and likeability are treated as if they are analogous to source attractiveness. However, other studies have treated endorser familiarity and likeability separately and have investigated their impact on advertising effectiveness (Amos, Holmes, & Strutton, 2008; O’Mahoney & Meenaghan, 1998). Likability is defined as “affection for the source as a result of the source’s physical appearance and behavior” (Erdogan, 1999, p. 299). Similarly, DeSarbo and Harshman (1985) included likability as a dimension of source credibility. Consequently, many researchers have found a high correlation between trustworthiness and likeability. Chaiken (1979) also found that likeability is closely linked to endorser expertise. Specifically, likeable communicators were perceived as possessing higher levels of expertise. Kamins et al. (1989) pointed out that celebrity endorsers tend to be very likable and highly attractive, but are often not believable.

In addition to likeability acting as a construct of source credibility as a part of the source attractiveness model, familiarity is also an impactful construct. Kamins and Gupta (1994) suggest that familiarity of endorser can facilitate the degree to which congruency between product and endorser can be effective. McCracken (1989) also supports that a familiar spokesperson can have a greater impact on consumers due to their identifiable personality and characteristics. It is suggested that endorser familiarity may be more potent than endorser expertise in terms of their perceived credibility (Siemens et al., 2008). Miciak and Shanklin (1994) assert that a celebrity's familiarity is based on all dimensions that constitute celebrity attractiveness. Of all dimensions that make a celebrity attractive, Miciak and Shanklin (1994) suggest that likeability, friendliness, and ability to be recognized are the most important. Dix, Phau, and Pougnet (2010) contend that although the source credibility model and source attractiveness models identify degrees of attractiveness and credibility when it comes to endorsers, these models don't explain the different types of attractiveness and credibility that need to be ascertained by marketers in order to create a successful endorser relationship. The source attractiveness model can help explain how a successful endorsement relationship can be forged and what characteristics make an endorser a desirable candidate.

2.2.3. Match-Up Hypothesis

The discussion of theoretical support is important to this study because it helps explain the motivation behind choosing a celebrity endorser, the benefits of using a celebrity endorser in an advertisement, and how brands can best use endorsers to their advantage. The concept of the match-up hypothesis is ubiquitous to the study of celebrity athlete endorse effectiveness and the selection of appropriate endorsers (Braunstein-Minkove, Zhang and Trail, 2011). According to Kamins (1990), the match-up hypothesis suggests that endorsers are more effective when there is a sense of congruency or fit between the endorsed product and the endorser. Research on the 'match-up' hypothesis has addressed endorser effectiveness as pertaining to the type of product being endorsed (Koernig & Boyd, 2009). More specifically, the match-up hypothesis can help explain "how the congruence between the image of a spokesperson and the image of a brand results in a more positive evaluations of the endorser, the brand, and the advertisement" (Koernig & Boyd, 2009, p. 26). Essentially, McCracken (1989) argues for a 'fit' between the meanings attached to a product and the meanings attached to a celebrity. O'Mahony and Meenaghan (1997) found that the more congruent the celebrity endorser is with the product, the more credible that endorser is perceived to be by consumers. A study by Kanungo and Pang (1973)

coupled non-celebrity male and female models with different types of products and ultimately found that effect of the model varied depending on the type of product that the model was paired with. They used the term "fittingness" to explain their findings regarding the congruency of model to product. Researchers later named this phenomenon the 'match-up hypothesis' (Kahle and Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1990). Erdogan, Baker, and Tagg (2001) state that the emphasis on the match-up hypothesis has been on matching a celebrity and a product based on attractiveness. However, Ohanian (1991) and Till and Busler (1998) concluded that the match-up hypothesis can be explained through not only attractiveness but also through the endorser's perceived expertise. The fit between endorser and product has been explored by looking at endorser characteristics (e.g. expertise, physical appearance) as well as product characteristics (e.g. target audience, associated meanings with the product) (McCracken, 1989).

Many studies on the match-up hypothesis have tested the effects of endorser attractiveness with product attitude and brand credibility. Early research on the product match-up hypothesis focused on the construct of endorser physical attractiveness as related to products that enhance physical attractiveness (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Kahle & Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1990). However, more recent academic

research on this topic has explored expertise as a more salient match-up factor (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Till & Busler, 2000). While existing literature provides a multitude of studies on the celebrity/product relationship, Choi and Rifon (2012) suggest that there should be more focus on the relationship between a consumer and the celebrity endorser. It is important to understand that extant research uses many terms interchangeably to define the fit between endorser and products: congruence (Misra & Beatty, 1990), match-up (Bower & Landreth, 2001), fit, and match-up (Kamins & Gupta, 1994).

According to Koernig and Boyd (2009), athletes provide a great opportunity to examine match-up effects. They (2009) assert that athlete endorsers are an obvious match with brands that are related to fitness or athletics because they presumably have high expertise in these areas. This expertise, according to Koernig and Boyd (2009), provides them with credibility and contributes and ultimately leads to an effective fit. Kamins (1990) says:

This match up hypothesis, which in general suggests that the message conveyed by the image of the celebrity and the image of the product should converge in effective advertisements, implies a need for congruence between product image and celebrity image on an attractiveness basis. (p. 5)

Stone et. al. (2003) asserts that the most successful endorsement relationships are those in which the professional athlete's success can be directly linked to the product, especially when the product is sport related. Consequently, Boyd and Shank (2004) state that athlete endorsers are effective when they are endorsing products that are related to their sport. And, if no congruence exists, some research shows that the consumer will remember the celebrity but not the product advertised (Evans, 1998). DeSarbo and Harshman (1985) proposed a different theory for matching celebrity endorsers with products. Connotative Congruence Analysis (CCA) attempts to match the characteristics of the product, the endorser, and the desired audience. CCA focuses on selecting appropriate endorsers for products. Aligning with the match-up hypothesis, CCA confirms that for an endorsement to be credible, there must be an appropriate and fitting interaction between the product and the endorser. DeSarbo and Harshman (1985) note that the interaction stems from relevance between the product and endorser that provides a sufficient linkage with the product.

However, there has been recent research on the different degrees of congruence between endorser and product. Typically, two extreme cases have been used to describe endorser/product match-up: complete match and extreme mismatch. The match-up hypothesis

is a very prevalent theory in marketing and advertising literature. As a result, this research has examined the impact of the match-up hypothesis on consumer's attitudes and purchase intentions.

2.3. Relevant Current Research

The trend of using sport celebrities has grown considerably in the past few decades (Lear, Runyan, & Whitaker, 2008). Brands are reaching out to sport celebrities to endorse their products because they want to gain optimum benefits from their own brand and from their advertising investments (Lear, Runyan, & Whitaker, 2008). Costanzo and Goodnight (2005) suggest that advertising leaders assume that using a celebrity to endorse their brand or product will result in an increase in consumer recall of that brand or product. However, they (2005) assert that the assumption is relatively untested in marketing and advertising literature. Costanzo and Goodnight (2005) ultimately believe that "the marketing of professional athlete celebrities is a profitable and attractive business" (p. 51). The fact that billions of dollars that are spent in celebrity athlete endorsement deals every year support this hypothesis (Costanzo & Goodnight, 2005). Due to the high costs associated with signing endorsement deals with celebrity athletes, marketers and advertisers rely on rating systems to evaluate the potential value of choosing a celebrity endorser. Marketing Evaluations, Inc. has provided a rating system called Sport

Q-ratings (www.qscores.com). Sport Q ratings are commercially available for the evaluation and rating of a sport celebrity. These Q scores are rankings that have become the industry standard for measuring the appeal of sport celebrities, sport personalities and the familiarity of such potential endorsers (Costanzo & Goodnight, 2005). Advertisers often use a celebrity's Q score to determine the endorsement potential of that celebrity (Miciak & Shanklin, 1994). The Q value is an annual composite calculated from consumer-panel data that combines a celebrity's familiarity and likability (Miciak & Shanklin, 1994). Costanzo and Goodnight's (2005) study looked at the relationship between a celebrity's Q score and consumer ability to recall that celebrity. However, they found while the Q score measured the celebrity's popularity, it did not aid in consumer recall.

Stafford et al. (2003) suggest that effective advertisements connect product benefits, images and words into a cohesive message geared toward a product's targeted audience. Celebrity athlete endorsers are often chosen to be the conduit through which the communicated message is delivered. Regardless of the endorser's role, Stone et. al (2003) reiterate the importance that an advertisement creates an emotional tie to the professional athlete. Therefore, positive attributes of the athlete are transmitted to the brand or product that he or she is endorsing. (Stone et al., 2003; McCracken, 1989). This

idea supports McCracken's 'match-up' hypothesis. For this to work, marketers must select an athlete endorser that has values that are aligned with those of the brand and targeted consumer (Ruihley, Runyan, & Lear, 2010). Several studies have looked at celebrity/product congruence and their overall level of effectiveness (Kamins & Gupta, 1994; Misra & Beatty, 1990). Misra and Beatty's (1990) study found that "the celebrity/product congruence had significant effects on advertisement and brand evaluations; when a high degree of congruence was perceived, more favorable evaluations were produced" (Choi & Rifon, 2012, p. 642). A study by Goldsmith, Lafferty, and Newell (2000) found that endorser credibility had very strong effects on attitudes toward the endorser, while attitudes toward the brand were influenced by corporate credibility.

Much research on the celebrity-product match-up model has focused on the congruency between a product related to users' attractiveness and the attractiveness of an endorser. Many studies support that when a product is not related to a users' attractiveness, there will be minimal influence of celebrity attractiveness on product, brand, and advertisement evaluations (Pornpitakpan, 2003). Evidence from studies conducted by Baker and Churchill (1977), Kahle and Homer (1985), and Friedman and Friedman (1979) are consistent with this hypothesis. Comparably, Kamins (1990) found that for an

attractiveness-related product (a luxury car), the use of an attractive celebrity (Tom Selleck) versus an unattractive celebrity (Telly Savalas) had a positive impact on consumer's attitudes toward the advertisement, and showed enhanced perceived spokesperson credibility. However, Kamins (1990) found that for a product unrelated to user attractiveness (a home computer), the attractive celebrity had no effects on consumer's perceived credibility or consumer's attitudes in comparison to the unattractive celebrity endorser.

Many studies have attempted to uncover the most important aspects to choosing a celebrity endorser. Erdogan, Baker, and Tagg (2001) found that the criteria that should be met when selecting a celebrity to endorse a product include celebrity-product match, celebrity trustworthiness, celebrity familiarity, prior endorsement contracts, celebrity likeability, celebrity expertise, celebrity profession, and celebrity physical attractiveness. Several of these criteria are consistent with the independent and dependent variables cited in this study.

2.4. Expanding on Untapped Areas of Research

Since the 1990's, research on the function and role of celebrities in advertising has increased (Fleck, Korchia, & Le Roy, 2012). However, despite the amount of research that is conducted on celebrity endorsers and their impact on consumer attitudes, many advertisers

and marketers disagree as to which source characteristics are most effective in persuading consumers to purchase the advertised product (O'Mahony & Meenaghan, 1997). Choi and Rifon (2012) also state that prior research has not addressed an important aspect of the endorsement configuration: the consumer/endorser relationship. Essentially, how a celebrity endorsement relationship affects consumers. Likewise, Choi and Rifon (2012) highlight the nature of the match between celebrity and product to be of much importance for further research. They assert that this subject is a fruitful venue for future research.

Several researchers have highlighted the importance of further study on professional athlete endorsers. Koernig and Boyd (2009) explain that athlete endorsers are of particular interest in the arena of celebrity endorsers because they are used to not only endorse sport brands, but also to endorse non-sport related brands and products. They (2009) state that:

Although the match-up hypothesis suggests that using athletes to endorse non-sport related brands may be ill advised, the heavy use of athletes to endorse non-sport products and brands continues; this mismatch between theory and practice warrants empirical exploration and the study of the match-up effect in the context of athlete endorsers is an important omission given the

frequency and high cost of using celebrity athletes as endorsers.

(p. 26)

Since the use of professional athlete endorsers has grown significantly over the past few decades and remains to be a useful and fundamental strategy in the marketing and advertising industries, it is important to continue research on this topic. This topic has been approached from many different angles and this study will explore it from an additional perspective. Although there has been ample research on celebrity endorsers, there is a call for continuing research on celebrity athlete endorsers and their impact on not only brand credibility and endorser effectiveness, but on consumer purchase intent. Previous studies focused on endorser characteristics have aided marketers in their selection of endorsers for products. However, these studies have not fully analyzed all of the peculiar characteristics of professional athlete endorsers. This study intends to fill the void by analyzing the source factors that are deemed relevant between a professional athlete and the product that is endorsed. The objective of this study is to extend previous research on professional athlete endorsers and the impact of endorser familiarity, endorser credibility, and product-endorser congruency on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions.

Chapter III: Hypotheses

This section introduces literature-driven hypotheses about the familiarity of professional athlete endorsers and the products that they endorse. These hypotheses explore the differences between endorsers that are congruent and incongruent with the product, the impact of perceived endorser credibility on consumers, and the effects of endorser familiarity on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions.

Ohanian (1990) proposed that endorser credibility can be measured by the endorser's perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. Based on the previous discussion of endorser credibility, the following hypothesis was constructed:

H1: When an athlete endorser is endorsing a product that is congruent with her profession, the three components of endorser credibility, attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise, will be higher.

H1a: When an athlete endorser is endorsing a product that is congruent with her profession, perceived endorser attractiveness will be higher.

H1b: When an athlete endorser is endorsing a product that is congruent with her profession, perceived endorser trustworthiness will be higher.

H1c: When an athlete endorser is endorsing a product that is congruent with her profession, perceived endorser expertise will be higher.

If the endorser is endorsing a product that he or she should be knowledgeable about, consumers should perceive that endorser to have high credibility throughout all three dimensions. Due to the match-up hypothesis, if the endorser is endorsing a product that is congruent with his or her profession, consumers should view that endorser as having more positive attitudes and higher intent to purchase the product. Consequently, those consumers should also perceive the endorser to have more credibility than an endorser that endorses a product that does not match-up with his or her profession or expertise.

H2: When an athlete endorser is endorsing a product that is congruent with her profession, attitudes toward the brand, attitudes toward the ad, and purchase intent will be higher.

H2a: When the athlete endorser is endorsing a product that is congruent with her profession, consumer attitudes toward the brand will be higher.

H2b: When an athlete endorser is endorsing a product that is congruent with her profession, consumer attitudes toward the ad will be higher.

H2c: When an athlete endorser is endorsing a product that is congruent with her profession, consumer purchase intents will be higher.

In addition to the fit between endorser and product, the familiarity of the endorser should be taken into consideration. Therefore, the following hypothesis was constructed:

H3: When an athlete endorser is familiar rather than unfamiliar, the three components of endorser credibility, attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise, will be higher.

H3a: When an athlete endorser is familiar rather than unfamiliar, perceived endorser attractiveness will be higher.

H3b: When an athlete endorser is familiar rather than unfamiliar, perceived endorser trustworthiness will be higher.

H3c: When an athlete endorser is familiar rather than unfamiliar, perceived endorser expertise will be higher.

If a consumer deems an endorser as familiar, he or she will perceive that endorser to be more credible than if the consumer does not recognize the endorser. Given the previous findings that suggest endorser familiarity can influence consumer attitudes, the following hypothesis was composed:

H4: When an athlete endorser is familiar rather than unfamiliar, attitudes toward the brand, attitudes toward the ad, and purchase intentions will be higher.

H4a: When an athlete endorser is familiar rather than unfamiliar, attitudes toward the brand will be higher.

H4b: When an athlete endorser is familiar rather than unfamiliar, attitudes toward the ad will be higher.

H4c: When an athlete endorser is familiar rather than unfamiliar, purchase intentions will be higher.

Given that advertisements featuring a congruent endorser are expected to induce more favorable ads toward the ad than ads featuring an incongruent endorser, it is hypothesized that these favorable evaluations will also lead to increased consumer purchase intentions.

Chapter IV: Method

This chapter outlines the method by which this experiment was organized. To investigate these research hypotheses, an experimental study was conducted. Among several important advantages, an experiment allows for the control of variables and it is the best method to determine causality. This methods section reviews pretest designs, participant parameters, the main research design, stimulus materials, operationalization of the independent and dependent variables, and description of the data collection procedures.

4.1. Manipulation Check

4.1.1. Endorser Familiarity

A pretest was conducted for endorser familiarity. Thirty-five participants from the same overall population but not included in the main study were recruited for the pre-test. In a survey, respondents answered six 7-point Likert-style questions (e.g. *I recognize Maria Sharapova by name; I recognize Maria Sharapova by picture; I recognize Julia Mancuso by name; I recognize Julia Mancuso by picture; Maria Sharapova is familiar to me; Julia Mancuso is familiar to me*) regarding the familiarity of Maria Sharapova and Julia Mancuso. The results of the pretest was used to ensure that Maria Sharapova was an adequate familiar professional athlete endorser and Julia

Mancuso was an adequate unfamiliar professional athlete endorser for the purposes of this study. The pretest questionnaire is located in Appendix A.

4.2. Manipulation Check

4.2.1. Endorser/Product Congruency

A pretest was conducted for endorser/product congruency to ensure that the stimulus materials provided an adequate representation of endorser/product congruency and endorser/product incongruency. Twenty-six participants from the same overall population but not included in the main study were recruited for the pre-test. In an online survey, respondents answered twelve 7-point Likert-style questions (e.g. *Maria Sharapova is an appropriate endorser of Wilson tennis rackets; Julia Mancuso is an appropriate endorser of Wilson tennis rackets; Maria Sharapova is an appropriate endorser of Salomon snow skis; Julia Mancuso is an appropriate endorser of Salomon snow skis*) regarding the fit between Maria Sharapova, Julia Mancuso, Wilson tennis rackets, and Salomon snow skis. The survey included a short description of Maria Sharapova, Julia Mancuso, Wilson, and Salomon. The participants were asked to read the descriptions and answer the questions that followed. These questionnaire items were selected from past studies that have

examined the congruency of elements in an advertisement (Schmidt & Hitchon, 1999).

This pretest confirmed the congruency of the endorser and product in the four ads. Specifically, the results of the pretest were used to validate that Maria Sharapova endorsing Wilson tennis rackets was seen as congruent, Julia Mancuso endorsing Wilson tennis rackets was perceived as incongruent, that Maria Sharapova endorsing Salomon snow skis was perceived as incongruent and that Julia Mancuso endorsing Salomon snow skis was seen as congruent. This pretest questionnaire is located in Appendix B.

4.3. Participants

Participants were recruited through undergraduate courses in communication studies, journalism, marketing and sociology at the University of Missouri. Undergraduate students are considered suitable subjects for this study because research indicates that young adult consumers are more apt to be influenced by celebrity endorsers (Kaikati, 1987). It is suggested that marketers use athlete endorsers to target those who are highly influenced. Holton (2000) asserts that university students are among the youngest with purchasing power and thus are an appropriate population for this study. Of the 305 emails distributed, 265 submissions were completed ($N = 265$), constituting an overall response rate of 87 percent. Of the respondents,

70 percent were female and 30 percent were male. The average age of respondents was 19 years. The overwhelming majority of respondents were 18 (54 %) and 19 (20 %) years old. Of the 265 respondents, 72 percent of them have attended some college class and 24 percent have graduated from high school. The remaining 3 percent of respondents have graduated from college and completed some post-graduate work. The breakdown of demographic data is presented in Table 1.

With permission from the instructor, a script was read to students explaining the purpose of the research and clarify that student participation is completely voluntary. A sign up sheet was passed around the class, and those students who were willing to participate in the survey were asked to offer an email address where the survey link could be sent via email. Prior to beginning the recruitment of subjects, all aspects of the Institutional Review Board's procedures and policies were followed.

Participants were asked to participate in the study, which involves a questionnaire that will be administered through an online data collection process (SurveyMonkey.com). The potential participants were also told that the study poses no foreseeable risks to them. The students who wrote down their email addresses were sent the link to the survey that they were assigned to by last name. The

link sent the potential respondents directly to the survey, which featured a consent form followed by the actual survey. If the respondents chose not to consent or did not answer all of the questions, their submission was deemed not appropriate for data collection.

4.4. Research Design

According to Bartlett II, Kotrlik, and Higgins (2001), a common goal of survey research is to use information gathered from the survey to generalize findings from a sample to the original population.

Quantitative survey designs attempt to minimize both alpha and beta error. Alpha error occurs when there is a difference that is found that does not exist in the population and beta error occurs when the researcher fails to find a difference that actually exists (Bartlett II, Kotrlik, & Higgins, 2001). It has been suggested that experiments provide the most powerful method for finding answers to research questions regarding cause and effect (Bartlett II, Kotrlik, & Higgins, 2001).

A 2 x 2 between subjects design with four experimental conditions was employed. In the first condition, participants viewed an advertisement featuring a familiar professional athlete endorsing a congruent product with her profession. In the second condition, participants viewed an advertisement featuring the same familiar

professional athlete endorsing an incongruent product with her profession. In the third condition, participants viewed an advertisement featuring an unfamiliar professional athlete endorsing a congruent product with her profession. In the fourth condition, participants viewed an advertisement featuring the same unfamiliar professional athlete endorsing an incongruent product with her profession. Figure 3 represents the four conditions that were viewed by the participants.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions by last name. After viewing the advertisement they were assigned to, they responded to the questions measuring the dependent variables in a questionnaire. The participants also answered demographic questions including age, gender and level of education completed.

At the onset of viewing the survey, the participant read a brief introduction to the survey. The first page of the survey explained the survey and once again informed the participants of their voluntary participation. It also stated that the participants could close out of the survey at any point. That page served as the consent form. The main research survey is located in Appendix C.

4.5. Stimulus Materials

Reflecting the athlete endorsers and product selections and their combinations, four full-page color advertisements were created. To avoid confounds, there were minimal structural differences in each ad. All four ads were similar in layout and format and featured a picture of the endorser in her sport element, a photo of the product, the brand logo, a product claim, and the name and credentials of the endorser. It is noted that the ads were not created by a professional graphic designer and therefore may lack professional quality. All the pairings will be fictive, but real celebrities and real brands are used to strengthen the external validity of this study. Maria Sharapova was chosen to represent the familiar professional athlete endorser because of her prominence in both advertising culture and sports culture. Julia Mancuso was chosen as the unfamiliar (less familiar) professional athlete endorser due to her less known presence in advertising and sport culture. Both Maria Sharapova and Julia Mancuso have experienced success in the world of sports and have demonstrated athletic prowess. They both have also brokered endorsement deals, although Maria Sharapova has established prominence in that category. Pre-tests were conducted to support these selections. The four different ads are located in Appendices D-G.

4.6. Independent Variables

4.6.1. Endorser Familiarity

Endorser familiarity was manipulated by selecting a professional athlete endorser that is more familiar and selecting a professional athlete endorser that is less familiar. The more familiar athlete that was chosen for this study is Maria Sharapova and the less familiar athlete that was chosen for this study is Julia Mancuso. It was decided that two real athletes would be selected to strengthen the external validity of the study. Both athletes that were chosen have demonstrated athletic success. Maria Sharapova was selected as the familiar endorser due to the magnitude of endorsements that she has undertaken and her position in popular culture. Julia Mancuso was chosen as the less familiar endorser because she still demonstrates athletic prowess, but is not positioned in popular culture as a household name. The pretest results support that these manipulations were successful.

4.6.2. Product Congruency (Match-Up)

Product congruency is defined as the fit between an endorsed product and the endorser. Because Maria Sharapova is a professional tennis player, Wilson tennis rackets was chosen as the congruent product. Wilson is a well-known sport brand specializing in tennis equipment. Because Julia Mancuso is a professional skier, Salomon

skis was chosen as the congruent product. Salomon is a leading brand for skiing equipment. So the incongruent match-up appears in the ad with Maria Sharapova endorsing Salomon skis and in the ad with Julia Mancuso endorsing Wilson tennis rackets. The pretest results indicate that this manipulation was successful.

4.7. Dependent Variables

4.7.1 Endorser Credibility

Given the pervasive use of celebrities as endorsers, it is vital to have valid instruments that measure celebrity characteristics to facilitate good celebrity endorser selection (Pornpitakpan, 2003). Endorser credibility included questions measuring the endorser's attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise. Ohanian (1990) believe that a communicator's character has an effect on how persuasive the message is. Therefore, in advertising, the endorser's character is said to have a significant effect on the persuasiveness of the ad (Ohanian, 1990). Participants were asked to rate the credibility of the athlete endorser using a 7-point, semantic differential scale that was developed by Ohanian (1990). It measured perceived attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise. Attractiveness was measured using 5 items with the anchors "attractive/unattractive," "classy/not classy," "beautiful/ ugly," "elegant/plain," and "sexy/not sexy." Trustworthiness was measured with 5 items using the anchors

“sincere/insincere,” “dependable/undependable,” “reliable/unreliable,” “honest/dishonest,” and “trustworthy/untrustworthy.” Expertise was measured with five items with the anchors of “experienced/inexperienced,” “expert/not an expert,” “knowledgeable/unknowledgeable,” “skilled/unskilled,” and “qualified/unqualified.” Ohanian (1990) validated this scale by using participant’s self reported measures of purchase intention and perception of endorser credibility.

4.7.2. Attitude Towards the Brand

Mitchell and Olson (1981) define attitude toward the brand as “an individual’s internal evaluation of the brand” (p. 318). Spears and Singh (2004) take this definition even further and conceptualize attitude towards the brand as “a relatively enduring, uni-dimensional summary evaluation of the brand that presumably energizes behavior” (p. 55). For this study, brand attitude was evaluated and measured on four seven-point semantic differential scales. The anchors were “bad/good,” “dislike /like,” “unpleasant/pleasant,” and “poor quality/good quality.” For analysis, these four items were averaged to represent brand attitude.

4.7.3. Attitude Towards the Ad

Attitude towards the ad is defined as “ a predisposition to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner to a particular

advertising stimulus during a particular exposure situation" (MacKenzie, Lutz, & Belch, 1986, p. 130). Attitude towards the ad was measured on five 7-point semantic differential scales with the anchors "bad/good," "dislike/like," "boring/interesting," "uncreative/creative," and "uninformative/informative."

4.7.4. Purchase Intent

According to Spears and Singh (2004), purchase intent (PI) is distinctively different from attitudes. They define purchase intentions as "an individual's conscious plan to make an effort to purchase a brand" (Spears & Singh, 2004, p. 56). Purchase intent measurement is defined by Mitchell and Olson (1981), and Gill, Grossbart, and Laczniak (1988). For this study, purchase intent was measured using four seven-point semantic differential scales with anchors "very unlikely/very likely," "definitely would not/definitely would," "very improbable/ very probable," and "very unlikely/very likely." These items were then be averaged for analysis.

4.8. Data Collection

Data collection procedures included an email to all potential participants, including an introduction of the researcher, the purpose of the study, a link to the questionnaire (through surveymonkey.com; which serves as the consent form), an explanation that participation is anonymous and completely voluntary, and a welcome statement. The

data that was collected from the questionnaires was downloaded into an excel file and uploaded into SPSS, where it was prepared for detailed statistical analysis. If the respondent failed to answer all of the questions on the questionnaire that he or she was assigned to, the survey was deemed non-responsive and eliminated from the sample.

The data was analyzed in SPSS by using several statistical tests. Independent sample t-tests and one-way ANOVA's (analysis of variance) were used to test the significance of the means of two different groups.

Chapter V: Results of Manipulation Checks

5.1. Manipulation Check- Endorser Familiarity

A pre-test was conducted to ensure that the endorser familiarity manipulation was successful. Because assumptions of normality (e.g. skewness and kurtosis $< \pm 1.00$) normal Q-Q plots, homoscedasticity (e.g. scatter plots) and homogeneity of variance (Levene's test not significant) were found to be satisfactory, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the perceived familiarity means of the familiar endorser (Maria Sharapova) and the perceived familiarity means of the unfamiliar endorser (Julia Mancuso). The results indicate a statistically significant difference in higher means for the familiar endorser (Maria Sharapova) ($M = 5.67, SD = 1.54$) than for the unfamiliar endorser (Julia Mancuso) ($M = 1.84, SD = 1.16$), $F(1, 64) = 129.90, p < .05$. Thus, the endorser familiarity manipulation was successful. Results are displayed in Table 2.

5.2. Manipulation Check- Endorser/Product Congruency

A second pretest was conducted to ensure that the endorser/product congruency manipulation was successful. Because assumptions of normality (e.g. skewness and kurtosis $< \pm 1.00$) normal Q-Q plots, homoscedasticity (e.g. scatter plots) and

homogeneity of variance (Levene's test not significant) were found to be satisfactory, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the means of perceived endorser/product congruency and the means of perceived endorser/product incongruency. The results indicate a statistically significant difference in higher means for the endorser/product congruent ads ($M = 6.50, SD = .49$) than for the endorser/product incongruent ads ($M = 1.44, SD = .45$), $F(1, 50) = 1489.43, p < .05$. Thus, the endorser/product congruency manipulation was successful. Results are displayed in Table 3.

Chapter VI: Results of Main Study

6.1. Reliability Analysis

A reliability analysis was conducted for all scaled measures. Cronbach's alpha was run to assess the degree of internal consistency between the questionnaire items. Generally, Cronbach's alpha will increase as the intercorrelation between test items increases. The range of coefficient alpha is between 0 and 1, where 1 is a completely reliable test and 0 is a completely unreliable test (Ohanian, 1990). For purposes of this study, an alpha of .7 or higher will be deemed suitable as a reliable construct.

Cronbach's alpha was performed to determine the reliability between questionnaire items for each of the following categories for all four surveys: attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise, attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, purchase intention, endorser familiarity, and endorser/product congruency. All reliability scores were above the accepted criterion of .70, with the lowest being $\alpha = .80$ and the highest being $\alpha = .97$ (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

For survey one (Maria Sharapova endorsing Wilson tennis rackets), the highest score was $\alpha = .958$ for expertise and the lowest score was $\alpha = .85$ for endorser familiarity. For survey two (Maria Sharapova endorsing Salomon snow skis), the highest Cronbach's

alpha score was $\alpha = .96$ for product congruency and the lowest score was $\alpha = .84$ for attitude towards the ad. For survey three (Julia Mancuso endorsing Wilson tennis rackets), the highest Cronbach's alpha score was $\alpha = .97$ for endorser/product congruency and the lowest score was $\alpha = .82$ for endorser familiarity. For survey four (Julia Mancuso endorsing Salomon snow skis), the highest Cronbach's alpha score was $\alpha = .96$ for expertise and the lowest score was $\alpha = .80$ for attractiveness. All scores are presented in Table 4.

6.2. Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis has three components involving endorser/product congruency and perceived endorser credibility. The first component (H1a) predicts that when the endorser is endorsing a congruent product versus an incongruent product, perceived endorser attractiveness will be higher. The second component of hypothesis one (H1b) predicts that when an athlete endorser is endorsing a congruent product versus an incongruent product, perceived endorser trustworthiness will be higher. The final component of the first hypothesis (H1c) predicts that when an athlete endorser is endorsing a congruent product versus an incongruent product, perceived endorser expertise will be higher. Hypothesis 1 means and standard deviations are summarized in Table 5.

6.2.1. Hypothesis 1a

Because assumptions of normality (e.g. skewness and kurtosis $< \pm 1.00$) normal Q-Q plots, homoscedasticity (e.g. scatter plots) and homogeneity of variance (Levene's test not significant) were found to be satisfactory, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare means of perceived endorser attractiveness in the endorser/product congruent condition and the endorser/product incongruent condition. Results do not indicate a statistically significant difference in the means of perceived endorser attractiveness for the endorser/product congruent condition ($M = 4.58, SD = 1.10$) and the means of perceived endorser attractiveness for the endorser/product incongruent condition ($M = 4.46, SD = 1.13$), $F(1, 263) = .76, p > .05$. Thus, hypothesis H1a was not supported. Results are summarized in Table 6.

6.2.2. Hypothesis 1b

Because assumptions of normality (e.g. skewness and kurtosis $< \pm 1.00$) normal Q-Q plots, homoscedasticity (e.g. scatter plots) and homogeneity of variance (Levene's test not significant) were found to be satisfactory, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare means of perceived endorser trustworthiness in the endorser/product congruent condition and the endorser/product incongruent condition. Perceived endorser trustworthiness for the endorser/product congruent

condition was significantly higher ($M = 4.97, SD = 1.21$) than perceived endorser trustworthiness for the endorser/product incongruent condition ($M = 4.25, SD = 1.35$), $F(1, 263) = 20.89, p < .05$. Thus, hypothesis H1b is supported. Results are summarized in Table 7.

6.2.3. Hypothesis 1c

Because homogeneity of variance (Levene's test not significant) was not found to be satisfactory as an assumption of an ANOVA, an independent samples t-test (equal variances not assumed) was conducted to compare means of perceived endorser expertise in the endorser/product congruent condition and endorser/product incongruent condition. Perceived endorser expertise for the endorser/product congruent condition was significantly higher ($M = 6.19, SD = 1.11$) than perceived endorser expertise for the endorser/product incongruent condition ($M = 4.72, SD = 1.64$), $t(233.89) = 8.52, p < .05$. Thus, hypothesis H1c is supported. Results are summarized in Table 8.

6.3. Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis has three components involving endorser/product congruency and consumer attitudes and purchase intent. The first component of hypothesis two (H2a) predicts that when the endorser is endorsing a congruent product versus an incongruent

product, consumer attitudes toward the brand will be higher. The second component of hypothesis two (H2b) predicts that when the endorser is endorsing a congruent product versus an incongruent product, consumer attitudes toward the ad will be higher. The final component of hypothesis two (H2c) predicts that when the endorser is endorsing a congruent product versus an incongruent product, consumer purchase intentions will be higher. Hypothesis 2 means and standard deviations are summarized in Table 9.

6.3.1. Hypothesis 2a

Because homogeneity of variance (Levene's test not significant) was not found to be satisfactory as an assumption of an ANOVA, an independent samples t-test (equal variances not assumed) was conducted to compare means of consumer attitude toward the brand in endorser/product congruent and endorser/product incongruent conditions. Attitudes toward the brand for endorser/product congruent condition were significantly higher ($M = 4.89$, $SD = 1.07$) than attitudes toward the brand for the endorser/product incongruent condition ($M = 4.42$, $SD = 1.46$), $t(244.46) = 3.00$, $p < .05$. Thus, hypothesis 2a is supported. Results are summarized in Table 10.

6.3.2. Hypothesis 2b

Because assumptions of normality (e.g. skewness and kurtosis $< \pm 1.00$) normal Q-Q plots, homoscedasticity (e.g. scatter plots) and

homogeneity of variance (Levene's test not significant) were found to be satisfactory, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare means of consumer attitude toward the ad in endorser/product congruent and endorser/product incongruent conditions. Attitude toward the ad for the endorser/product congruent condition was significantly higher ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 1.17$) than attitude toward the ad for the endorser/product incongruent condition ($M = 3.01$, $SD = 1.25$), $F(1, 263) = 10.32$, $p < .05$. Thus, hypothesis H2b is supported. Results are summarized in Table 11.

6.3.3. Hypothesis 2c

Because assumptions of normality (e.g. skewness and kurtosis $< \pm 1.00$) normal Q-Q plots, homoscedasticity (e.g. scatter plots) and homogeneity of variance (Levene's test not significant) were found to be satisfactory, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare means of consumer purchase intentions in endorser/product congruent and endorser/product incongruent conditions. Consumer purchase intent for the endorser/product congruent condition was significantly higher ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 1.64$) than consumer purchase intent for the endorser/product incongruent condition ($M = 2.84$, $SD = 1.58$), $F(1, 263) = 5.80$, $p < .05$. Thus, hypothesis H2c is supported. Results are summarized in Table 12.

6.4. Hypothesis 3

The third hypothesis has three components involving endorser familiarity and perceived endorser credibility. The first component (H3a) predicts that for the familiar endorser versus the unfamiliar endorser, perceived endorser attractiveness will be higher. The second component of hypothesis three (H3b) predicts that for the familiar endorser versus the unfamiliar endorser, perceived endorser trustworthiness will be higher. The final component of hypothesis three (H3c) predicts that for the familiar endorser versus the unfamiliar endorser, perceived endorser expertise will be higher. Hypothesis 3 means and standard deviations are summarized in Table 13.

6.4.1. Hypothesis 3a

Because homogeneity of variance (Levene's test not significant) was not found to be satisfactory as an assumption of an ANOVA, an independent samples t-test (equal variances not assumed) was conducted to compare means of perceived endorser attractiveness in familiar endorser and unfamiliar endorser conditions. Results do not indicate a statistically significant difference in the means of perceived endorser attractiveness for the unfamiliar endorser condition ($M = 4.59, SD = .09$) and the means of perceived endorser attractiveness for the familiar endorser ($M = 4.45, SD = .11$), $t(255.45) = -.99, p$

> .05. Thus, hypothesis H3a was not supported. Results are summarized in Table 14.

6.4.2. Hypothesis 3b

Because homogeneity of variance (Levene's test not significant) was not found to be satisfactory as an assumption of an ANOVA, an independent samples t-test (equal variances not assumed) was conducted to compare means of perceived endorser trustworthiness in familiar endorser and unfamiliar endorser conditions. Perceived endorser trustworthiness for the unfamiliar endorser condition was significantly higher ($M = 4.87, SD = 1.27$) than perceived endorser trustworthiness for the familiar endorser condition ($M = 4.33, SD = 1.34$), $t(262.45) = -3.46, p < .05$. Thus, hypothesis H3b was not supported as the means were found to be in the opposite direction. Results are summarized in Table 15.

6.4.3. Hypothesis 3c

Because homogeneity of variance (Levene's test not significant) was not found to be satisfactory as an assumption of an ANOVA, an independent samples t-test (equal variances not assumed) was conducted to compare means of perceived endorser expertise in familiar endorser and unfamiliar endorser conditions. Perceived endorser expertise for the unfamiliar endorser condition were significantly higher ($M = 5.66, SD = 1.40$) than perceived endorser

expertise for the familiar endorser condition ($M = 5.24$, $SD = 1.73$), $t(252.91) = -2.17$, $p < .05$. Thus, hypothesis H3c was not supported as the means were found to be in the opposite direction. Results are summarized in Table 16.

6.5. Hypothesis 4

The fourth hypothesis has three components involving endorser familiarity and consumer attitudes and purchase intent. The first component (H4a) predicts that for the familiar endorser versus the unfamiliar endorser, attitudes toward the brand will be higher. The second component of hypothesis four (H4b) predicts that for the familiar endorser, attitudes toward the ad will be higher. The final component of hypothesis four (H4c) predicts that for the familiar endorser, purchase intentions will be higher. Hypothesis 4 means and standard deviations are displayed in Table 17.

6.5.1. Hypothesis 4a

Because homogeneity of variance (Levene's test not significant) was not found to be satisfactory as an assumption of an ANOVA, an independent samples t-test (equal variances not assumed) was conducted to compare means of consumer attitude toward the brand in familiar endorser and unfamiliar endorser conditions. Attitudes toward the brand for the unfamiliar endorser condition were significantly higher ($M = 4.87$, $SD = 1.12$) than attitudes toward the

brand for the familiar endorser condition ($M = 4.42, SD = 1.42$), $t(250.43) = -2.96, p < .05$. Thus, hypothesis H4a was not supported as the means were found to be in the opposite direction. Results are summarized in Table 18.

6.5.2 Hypothesis 4b

Because assumptions of normality (e.g. skewness and kurtosis $< \pm 1.00$) normal Q-Q plots, homoscedasticity (e.g. scatter plots) and homogeneity of variance (Levene's test not significant) were found to be satisfactory, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare means of consumer attitude toward the ad in familiar endorser and unfamiliar endorser conditions. Results indicate that attitudes toward the ad for the unfamiliar endorser were significantly higher ($M = 3.41, SD = 1.25$) than attitudes toward the ad for the familiar endorser condition ($M = 3.09, SD = 1.20$), $F(1, 263) = 4.53, p < .05$. Thus, hypothesis H4b was not supported as the means were found to be in the opposite direction. Results are displayed in Table 19.

6.5.3. Hypothesis 4c

Because homogeneity of variance (Levene's test not significant) was not found to be satisfactory, an independent samples t-test (equal variances not assumed) was conducted to compare means of consumer purchase intent in familiar endorser and unfamiliar endorser conditions. Results do not indicate a statistically significant difference

in the means of purchase intent for the unfamiliar endorser condition ($M = 3.10, SD = 1.54$) and the means of purchase intent for the familiar endorser ($M = 3.06, SD = 1.72$), $t(260.48) = -.15, p > .05$. Thus, hypothesis H4c was not supported. Results are summarized in Table 20.

Chapter VII: Discussion

7.1. Summary

This study looked at how product type and endorser familiarity affects consumer's perceptions of endorser credibility and their attitudes towards the brand, ad, and purchase intention. Specifically, this research examined the effects of endorser familiarity and endorser/product congruency on consumer's attitudes, purchase intentions and perceived endorser credibility. Based on the theoretical support of the source credibility model, source attractiveness model, and match-up hypothesis, several hypotheses were tested and the results are discussed in this chapter. Key findings from this study are summarized below:

- Endorser/product congruency effects on perceived endorser attractiveness: *not statistically significant*
- Endorser/product congruency effects on perceived endorser trustworthiness: *statistically significant*
- Endorser/product congruency effects on perceived endorser expertise: *statistically significant*
- Endorser/product congruency effects on consumer attitude towards the brand: *statistically significant*

- Endorser/product congruency effects on consumer attitude towards the ad: *statistically significant*
- Endorser/product congruency effects on consumer purchase intent: *statistically significant*
- Endorser familiarity effects on perceived endorser attractiveness: *not statistically significant*
- Endorser familiarity effects on perceived endorser trustworthiness: *statistically significant (means in opposite direction)*
- Endorser familiarity effects on perceived endorser expertise: *statistically significant (means in opposite direction)*
- Endorser familiarity effects on consumer attitude towards the brand: *statistically significant (means in opposite direction)*
- Endorser familiarity effects on consumer attitude towards the ad: *statistically significant (means in opposite direction)*
- Endorser familiarity effects on consumer purchase intent: *not statistically significant*

The first hypothesis tested the effects of endorser/product congruency on endorser credibility. In terms of endorser/product congruency on consumer perceptions of endorser credibility, several interesting results were found. The congruent ads featured Maria Sharapova endorsing Wilson tennis rackets and Julia Mancuso

endorsing Salomon snow skis. The incongruent ads featured Maria Sharapova endorsing Salomon snow skis and Julia Mancuso endorsing Wilson tennis rackets. The perceived endorser trustworthiness was rated significantly higher for the endorser/product congruent condition than for the endorser/product incongruent condition. Fundamentally, participants viewed the endorsers that endorsed a product congruent with her profession to be more trustworthy than the endorsers that endorsed a product that was not congruent with her profession. The last component of endorser credibility is expertise. Participants that viewed the endorser endorsing a congruent product perceived the endorser as having a higher level of expertise than the endorsers endorsing a product that was incongruent. These results support Till and Busler's (1998) conclusion that the match-up hypothesis can be explained through the endorser's perceived expertise. Similarly, Choi and Rifon (2012) believe that expertise is a salient match-up factor. DeSarbo and Harshman's (1985) Connotative Congruence Analysis (CCA) focuses on selecting appropriate endorsers for products based on the perceived credibility that the endorser is found to have. It is evident that endorser credibility as an effect of endorser/product congruence is a vital factor in a successful endorsement relationship. Overall, in this study, participants rated the endorsers that endorsed a congruent product (Maria Sharapova; Wilson & Julia Mancuso;

Salomon) as more trustworthy and as having more expertise than the endorsers that endorsed an incongruent product (Maria Sharapova; Salomon & Julia Mancuso; Wilson). Attractiveness was the only component of endorser credibility that was not affected by endorser/product congruency. Pikas, Schied, and Pikas (2012) assert that an endorser must possess high levels of attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise in order to facilitate a successful endorsement. This study found that consumers perceived the endorser of the congruent condition to possess high levels of trustworthiness and expertise, but not attractiveness. Therefore, according to Pikas, Schied, and Pikas (2012), the endorsement relationship featuring the congruent endorser/product would not provide the best opportunity for the most flourishing endorsement relationship. O'Mahony and Meenaghan's (1997) study found that the more congruent the endorser and the product are, the more credible that endorser is perceived to be. For two out of three components of endorser credibility (trustworthiness and expertise), it was concluded that higher endorser/product congruency led to higher perceptions of endorser credibility, which partially supports O'Mahony and Meenaghan's (1997) findings.

The second hypothesis tested endorser/product congruency on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. It was found that

attitudes toward the brand were significantly higher when the endorser was endorsing a congruent product. Essentially, participants had higher attitudes toward Wilson tennis rackets when they were endorsed by Maria Sharapova and toward Salomon snow skis when they were endorsed by Julie Mancuso. Similarly, consumer attitudes toward the ad were rated higher when the endorser and the product were congruent rather than incongruent. Therefore, the ads featuring Maria Sharapova with Wilson and Julia Mancuso with Salomon were rated more positively than the ads with Maria Sharapova with Salomon and Julia Mancuso with Wilson. These results support Kamins' (1990) study, which found that matching the endorser with the product had a positive impact on consumer attitudes towards the ad. In addition, Misra and Beatty's (1990) study found that when a high degree of congruence was apparent, more favorable attitudes were produced. The effect of endorser/product congruency on purchase intent was tested next. Just like attitudes toward the brand and attitudes toward the ad, results showed that participants had higher intentions to purchase the product when it was endorsed by a congruent endorser. More specifically, participants had higher purchase intent for Wilson when it was endorsed by Maria Sharapova than when it was endorsed by Julie Mancuso and higher purchase intent for Salomon when it was endorsed by Julie Mancuso than when it was endorsed by Maria

Sharapova. Koernig and Boyd (2009) found that high degrees of congruence between the spokesperson and the brand result in more positive evaluations of the ad and the brand. This component of the current study supports these findings.

The third hypothesis tested the effects of endorser familiarity on perceived endorser credibility. Perhaps the most surprising results of this study involved the effects of endorser familiarity. Results indicated that perceived endorser trustworthiness was significantly higher in the unfamiliar endorser condition than in the familiar endorser condition. These surprising results essentially mean that participants viewed Julia Mancuso as more trustworthy than Maria Sharapova, regardless of the product that was being endorsed. Likewise, perceived endorser expertise was found to be higher in the unfamiliar condition than in the familiar condition. These findings are possibly the most unexpected in the study. This is perhaps due to the overexposure of celebrity endorsements.

In many situations, celebrities are sought as endorsers for several brands within several product categories at the same time (Illicic & Webster, 2011). Till (1998) suggests that overexposure of endorsements by a single celebrity may be potentially detrimental. Past studies have shown that consumers actually perceive celebrities who endorse multiple products as less credible than celebrities who

only endorse one (Tripp et al., 1994). This could help explain why the results of this study indicated that consumers rated the unfamiliar endorser as more credible than the familiar endorser. Mowen and Brown's (1981) study used attribution theory to explain that subjects react more favorably to a brand and a celebrity endorser when he or she is endorsing a single product rather than multiple. Similarly, Tripp et al.'s (1994) results draw from the source credibility model and suggest that a celebrity is seen as more trustworthy if he or she is only endorsing one product or brand. They also found that the perceived expertise of a celebrity significantly lessens when the celebrity is endorsing multiple products at the same time.

The source attractiveness model (Ohanian, 1990) suggests that familiarity is an important factor that contributes to overall perceived endorser credibility. However, this study did not support the tenets of the source attractiveness model. Erdogan, Baker, and Tagg (2001) found celebrity familiarity to be a high determinant of a successful endorsement relationship. However, the results of this study did not support their discovery. Likewise, Kamins and Gupta (1994) assert that endorser familiarity acts as a facilitator for a fruitful endorsement relationship. The results of this study regarding endorser familiarity effects on attitudes, purchase intent and perceived endorser credibility did not support Kamins and Gupta (1994) and Erdogan, Baker, and

Tagg's (2001) findings. Since the means were actually shown to be in the opposite direction of what was predicted for endorser familiarity effects, it is conjectured that an unfamiliar endorser may lead to higher attitudes, purchase intent and perceived endorser credibility.

The last hypothesis tested the effects of endorser familiarity on consumer attitudes and purchase intent. Interestingly, it was found that attitudes toward the brand were significantly higher in the unfamiliar endorser condition than in the familiar endorser condition. Essentially, participants had higher attitudes toward the brand when the endorser was Julia Mancuso, regardless of the product that was endorsed. Likewise, consumer attitudes toward the ad showed the same results. Attitudes toward the ad featuring the unfamiliar endorser were higher than attitudes toward the ad featuring the familiar endorser. These findings refute a multitude of scholarly literature that suggests that endorser familiarity can lead to higher evaluations of the brand, ad and purchase intent (Erdogan, Baker, & Tagg, 2001; Kamins & Gupta, 1994). Ruihley, Runyan, and Lear (2010) suggest that the use of sport celebrities in product advertising has the power to drive sales and positively influence consumer brand choice. However, the current study suggests that sport celebrity familiarity does not play a role in impacting consumer attitudes, purchase intentions, and perceived endorser credibility.

7.2. Limitations and Future Research

Regarding the current study, several potential limitations exist that lead to various opportunities for future research. The majority of limitations relate to generalizability in terms of the stimulus materials. The current study uses existing brands and if respondents have had previous positive or negative experience with the product, it could contribute to their attitudes and purchase intentions. Future research could benefit from using fictitious brands to add to the internal validity of the experiment. Similarly, this study used two real female athletes; one from the sport of tennis and one from the sport of downhill skiing. Participants could have pre-existing biases toward either one of the sports leading to pre-determined attitudes toward the brand and perceptions of endorser credibility. Future research could select two different endorsers from different sports. Regarding the use of real athletes also has limitations. The use of real athletes was done to increase external validity of the experiment. However, respondents may have pre-existing positive or negative thoughts about the real endorsers used and this could have an impact on the data collected. It would be beneficial for future research to address this issue and create fictional endorsers. Tom et al. (1992) posits that using a created endorser allows for companies to control the image of the endorser

and project certain desirable characteristics onto them that align with the target audience.

Another limitation of the current research that can impair generalizability is that the participants were primarily students. Although research shows that consumers in this age demographic are a good indicator of purchase power (Kaikati, 1987; Holton, 2000), future research should look at data from participants in all adult age ranges. It would be desirable to replicate a similar study using a more representative adult sample. In terms of participants, future research could determine if the participants were in the market for purchasing the particular brand or product that was being studied. This could add depth to the results and give a more representative sample that fits with the findings regarding purchase intent. Another generalizability issue stems from the advertisements that were created as the stimulus materials. The ads were made to look similar to each other to limit confounding variables but were not designed by a professional graphic designer and therefore lacked professional quality. It would be advantageous for future research to do an experiment testing similar variables using professionally created advertisements. Additionally, prospective research could analyze gender as a variable or explore these effects using male athlete endorsers. Gender could also be studied from a participant context as well. Analyzing results by

separating female and male participants could lead to potentially interesting findings that could lend itself to gender studies research.

There are several directions for further research that can add to the extant literature on the subject of celebrity endorsers. Subsequent research could test the celebrity/product congruence by employing different kinds of celebrities (e. g. musicians, politicians, actors). Future research could also examine endorser/product congruence beyond just responses and attitudes to brands and advertisements. In addition, it would be noteworthy for future researchers to look at varying levels of endorser/product congruency and familiarity. Due to the ubiquitous nature of celebrities in advertising, it would be useful for future research to focus on the various modes in which celebrities endorse products. These include the explicit mode ("I recommend this product") or the implicit mode ("I use this product") (McCracken, 1989).

This study could be analyzed from a qualitative context in future research as well. Focus groups, content analysis and in-depth interviews are just a few ways that could dissect consumer's complex thoughts and attitudes towards a specific brand or advertisement. Future research also could benefit from more focus on McCracken's (1989) meaning transfer model. This model explains the effectiveness of celebrity endorsers by assessing the meanings that consumers

associate with the celebrity endorser and eventually transfer to the brand or product. Similarly, schema theory could also be explored as an explanation for the success or failure of celebrity athlete endorsement relationships. These limitations and directions for further research will aid in future studies regarding this topic.

7.3. Implications

Understanding the impact of professional athlete endorsers is an important issue for both academic scholars and marketing and advertising practitioners. Central to this issue is knowing what aspects of a celebrity athlete make them conducive to an endorsement relationship. Agrawal and Kamakura (1995) suggest that celebrity endorsements are an omnipresent feature of today's marketing world. The literature and research conducted on celebrity endorsements generally support that it is beneficial to use celebrities to endorse products (Erdogan, 1999; Kahle & Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1994; Till & Busler, 2000). However, the degree by which the celebrity endorsement relationship is successful varies based on a number of endorser characteristics. The success of an endorsement also is loosely based on the type of product that the endorser endorses. Based on the match-up hypothesis (Kahle & Homer, 1985; Till & Busler, 2000), it is suggested that the endorser should be congruent with the product that is being endorsed. For example, an ad featuring an athlete endorsing a

sport related product would be more successful than an ad featuring an athlete endorsing a home improvement related product. The source credibility model (Ohanian, 1990) suggests that the most important characteristics that make a celebrity a desirable candidate for an endorsement relationship lie in their ability to be perceived as attractive, trustworthy, and an expert (Ohanian, 1990). The source attractiveness model (Ohanian, 1990) introduces familiarity and likeability as components of source credibility. Endorser familiarity was manipulated and tested in this experiment.

As predicted, the advertisements featuring the congruent endorser/product produced higher perceived endorser trustworthiness and expertise, which supports past research on source characteristics that can lead to successful endorsement relationships. Similarly, ads featuring the congruent endorser/product produced significantly higher attitudes and purchase intents as compared to the ads featuring the incongruent endorser/product. Thus, it is vital for advertisers and marketers to take into account endorser/product congruency and understand that matching an endorser with the product may lead to higher attitudes, purchase intent and higher perceived endorser trustworthiness and expertise.

The familiarity of the endorser is an important factor in an endorsement relationship, but this research finds that it does not

necessarily product higher attitudes toward the brand, ad and purchase intent and doesn't necessarily product higher perceptions of endorser credibility either. While taking the familiarity of the endorser into account is important for marketers, it may be more advantageous to focus on the endorser/product match-up instead of endorser familiarity. Due to the sheer volume of ads that feature professional athletes and the expense that goes along with celebrity endorsers, it is vital for practitioners in the marketing and advertising world to take these important factors into account.

A multitude of source credibility literature focuses on how the different dimensions of credibility have effects on the success or failure of an endorsement relationship. However, this research examines how congruency and endorser familiarity may affect credibility, thus introducing a counterflow effect. Essentially, congruency accords certain attributes to an endorser. These effects of congruency and familiarity on endorser credibility are what makes this research unique and what adds intriguing findings to the extant current literature. The search for what constitutes the most compatible endorser is still underway and this research can help extricate several factors that maybe of particular interest including endorser familiarity and endorser/product congruence.

7.4. Conclusion

Celebrity endorsements represent a multi-million dollar industry. It is vital for marketers and advertisers to comprehend what impact they have on advertising objectives and brand profitability. In other words, from a business standpoint, marketers need to know if celebrity athlete endorsements are worth the investment. Understanding the impact that professional athlete endorsers have on consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions not only has business implications but also has practical implications as well. Celebrity athlete endorsement relationships can be a great asset to advertisers but effectively matching the endorser with the product or brand is vital. This study focused on professional athlete endorsers and sought to understand the impact of endorser/product congruency and endorser familiarity on consumer attitudes, purchase intentions, and perceived endorser credibility. It was found that endorser familiarity did not have effects on perceived endorser credibility or consumer attitudes and purchase intentions suggesting that it is a less important factor in selecting the right professional athlete endorser. In addition, it was found that endorser/product congruency led to higher perceptions of endorser trustworthiness and expertise and also led to higher attitudes toward the brand, ad, and purchase intentions. Therefore, it is vital to find an endorser that strategically matches up with the product that is

being endorsed. This study contributed to the extant literature on celebrity endorsements by focusing on athletes as celebrity endorsers and introducing the aspect of endorser familiarity as an important construct for choosing the most appropriate endorser. Since endorsement strategy is a high risk and high reward strategy, it is vital to determine the factors and constructs that can best explain endorsement success.

Table 1

Demographic Data

	N	%
Gender		
Male	79	29.81
Female	186	70.19
Total	265	100.00
Age		
18	143	53.96
19	52	19.62
20	32	12.08
21	21	7.92
22	6	2.26
23	4	1.51
24	4	1.51
26	3	1.13
Total	265	100.00
Education Completed		
High School Graduate	64	24.15
Some College	191	72.08
College Graduate	5	1.89
Post Graduate Work	3	1.13
Post Graduate Degree	2	.08
Total	265	100.00

Table 2

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Familiarity Manipulation

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Familiar Endorser (<i>M</i> = 5.67, <i>SD</i> = 1.54) Unfamiliar Endorser (<i>M</i> = 1.84, <i>SD</i> = 1.16)	241.82	1	241.82	129.90	.000*

* *p* < .05

Table 3

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Endorser/Product Congruency Manipulation

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Congruent (<i>M</i> = 6.50, <i>SD</i> = .49) Incongruent (<i>M</i> = 1.44, <i>SD</i> = .45)	332.54	1	332.54	1489.43	.000*

* *p* < .05

Table 4

Cronbach's Alpha Scores (α)

Measure	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3	Survey 4
Attractiveness				
5 Items	.89	.89	.84	.80
Trustworthiness				
5 Items	.93	.93	.93	.93
Expertise				
5 Items	.96	.95	.95	.96
Attitude Toward the Ad				
5 Items	.88	.84	.90	.87
Attitude Toward the Brand				
4 Items	.90	.92	.86	.90
Purchase Intent				
4 Items	.90	.93	.92	.93
Endorser Familiarity				
3 Items	.85	.95	.82	.89
Product Congruency				
4 Items	.95	.96	.97	.95

Study 1- Maria Sharapova/Wilson

Study 2- Maria Sharapova/Salomon

Study 3- Julia Mancuso/Wilson

Study 4- Julia Mancuso/Salomon

Table 5

Perceived Endorser Credibility Means and Standard Deviations for Endorser/Product Congruent vs. Endorser/Product Incongruent Conditions

Measure	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Attractiveness		
Congruent	4.58	1.10
Incongruent	4.46	1.13
Trustworthiness		
Congruent	4.97	1.21
Incongruent	4.25	1.35
Expertise		
Congruent	6.19	1.11
Incongruent	4.72	1.64

Table 6

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Endorser/Product Congruence Effects on Perceived Endorser Attractiveness

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Attractiveness	.94	1	.94	.76	.386

* $p < .05$

Table 7

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Endorser/Product Congruence Effects on Perceived Endorser Trustworthiness

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Trustworthiness	34.37	1	34.37	20.89	.000*

* $p < .05$

Table 8

Independent Samples T-Test: Endorser/Product Congruence Effects on Perceived Endorser Expertise

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p (2-tailed)</i>
Expertise	8.52	233.89	.000*

* $p < .05$

Table 9

Attitude Towards Brand, Attitude Towards Ad, and Purchase Intention Means and Standard Deviations for Endorser/Product Congruent vs. Endorser/Product Incongruent Conditions

Measure	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Attitude Toward Brand		
Congruent	4.89	1.07
Incongruent	4.42	1.46
Attitude Toward Ad		
Congruent	3.49	1.17
Incongruent	3.01	1.25
Purchase Intentions		
Congruent	3.32	1.64
Incongruent	2.84	1.58

Table 10

Independent Samples T-Test: Endorser/Product Congruence Effects on Attitude Towards the Brand

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p (2-tailed)</i>
Attitude Toward Brand	3.00	244.46	.003*

* $p < .05$

Table 11

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Endorser/Product Congruence Effects on Attitude Towards the Ad

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Attitude Towards Ad	15.15	1	15.15	10.32	.001*

* $p < .05$

Table 12

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Endorser/Product Congruence Effects on Purchase Intent

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Purchase Intent	15.10	1	15.10	5.80	.017*

* $p < .05$

Table 13

Perceived Endorser Credibility Means and Standard Deviations for Familiar Endorser/Unfamiliar Endorser Conditions

Measure	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Attractiveness		
Familiar	4.45	.11
Unfamiliar	4.59	.09
Trustworthiness		
Familiar	4.33	1.34
Unfamiliar	4.87	1.27
Expertise		
Familiar	5.24	1.73
Unfamiliar	5.66	1.40

Table 14

Independent Samples T-Test: Endorser Familiarity Effects on Perceived Endorser Attractiveness

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p (2-tailed)</i>
Attractiveness	-0.99	255.45	.323

* $p < .05$

Table 15

Independent Samples T-Test: Endorser Familiarity Effects on Perceived Endorser Trustworthiness

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p (2-tailed)</i>
Trustworthiness	-3.46	262.45	.001*

* $p < .05$

Table 16

Independent Samples T-Test: Endorser Familiarity Effects on Perceived Endorser Expertise

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p (2-tailed)</i>
Expertise	-2.17	252.91	.031*

* $p < .05$

Table 17

Attitude Towards Brand, Attitude Towards Ad, and Purchase Intentions Means and Standard Deviations for Familiar Endorser/Unfamiliar Endorser Conditions

Measure	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Attitude Toward Brand		
Familiar	4.42	1.42
Unfamiliar	4.87	1.12
Attitude Toward Ad		
Familiar	3.09	1.20
Unfamiliar	3.41	1.25
Purchase Intentions		
Familiar	3.06	1.72
Unfamiliar	3.10	1.54

Table 18

Independent Samples T-Test: Endorser Familiarity Effects on Attitude Towards the Brand

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p (2-tailed)</i>
Attitude Toward Brand	-3.00	250.43	.003*

* $p < .05$

Table 19

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Endorser Familiarity Effects on Attitude Towards the Ad

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Attitude Toward Ad	6.80	1	6.80	4.53	.034*

* $p < .05$

Table 20

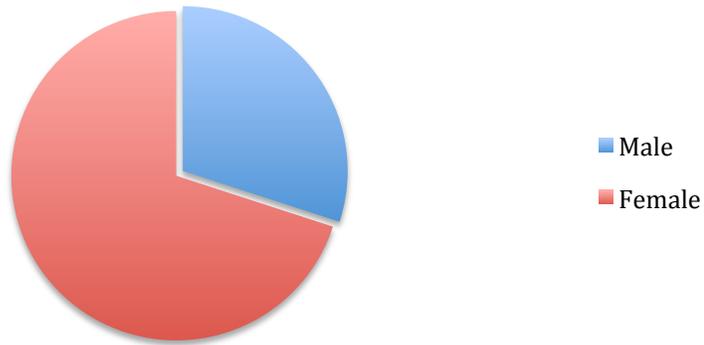
Independent Samples T-Test: Endorser Familiarity Effects on Purchase Intent

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p (2-tailed)</i>
Purchase Intent	-.15	260.48	.878

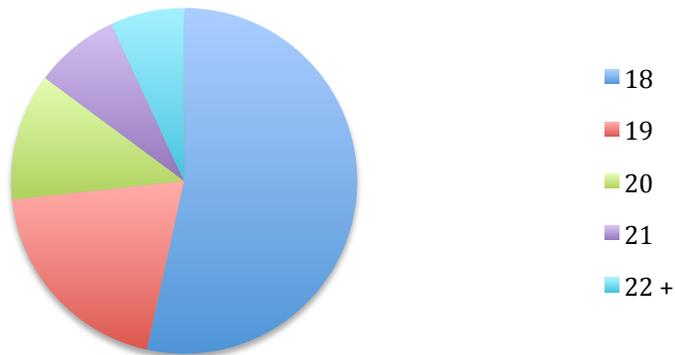
* $p < .05$

Figure 1. Pie charts representing participation demographic data.

Gender



Age



Education Completed

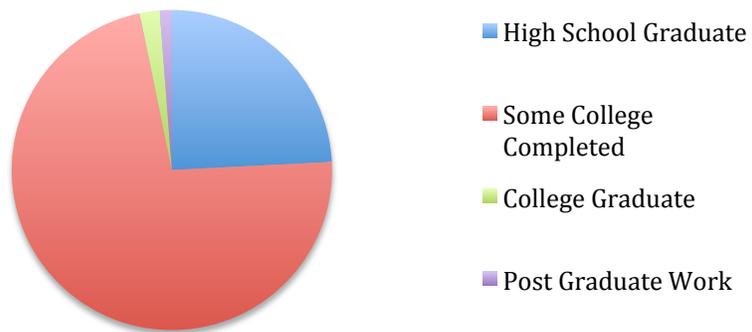


Figure 2. Measurement model for the celebrity endorser's credibility scale (Ohanian, 1990).

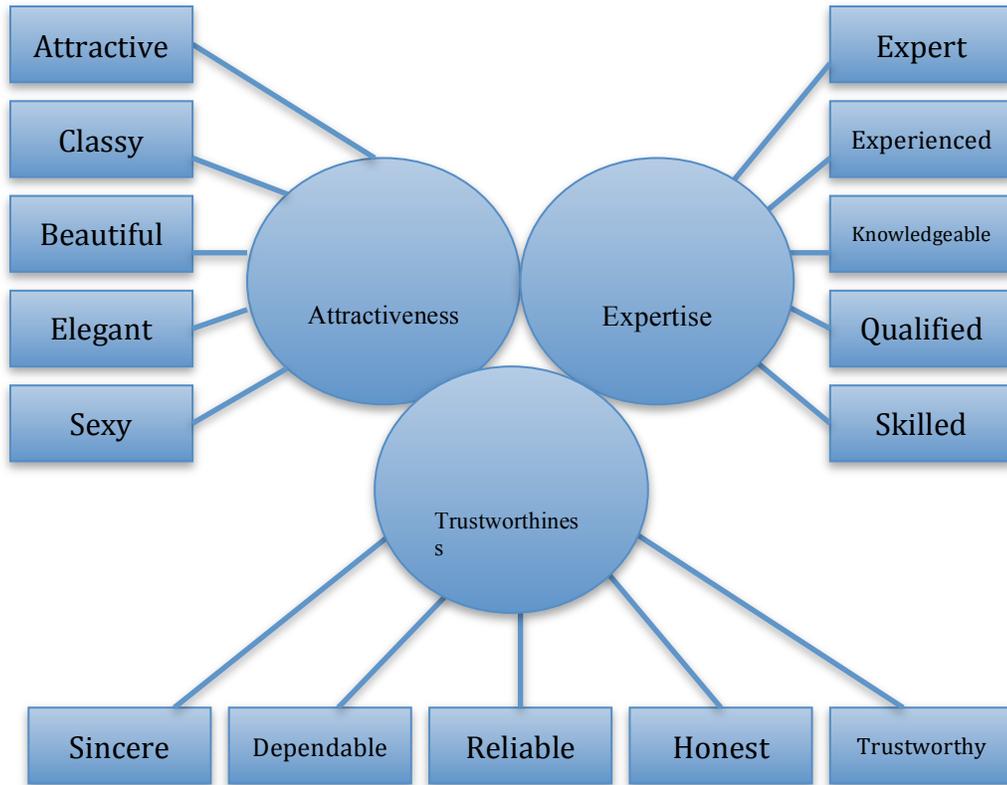


Figure 3. Endorser/product pairs for 2x2 factorial design.

	FAMILIAR ENDORSER	UNFAMILIAR ENDORSER
CONGRUENT PRODUCT	Maria Sharapova/ Wilson Tennis Rackets	Julia Mancuso/ Salomon Skis
INCONGRUENT PRODUCT	Maria Sharapova/ Salomon Skis	Julia Mancuso/ Wilson Tennis Rackets

Figure 4. Q-Q plot of normality for perceived endorser attractiveness.

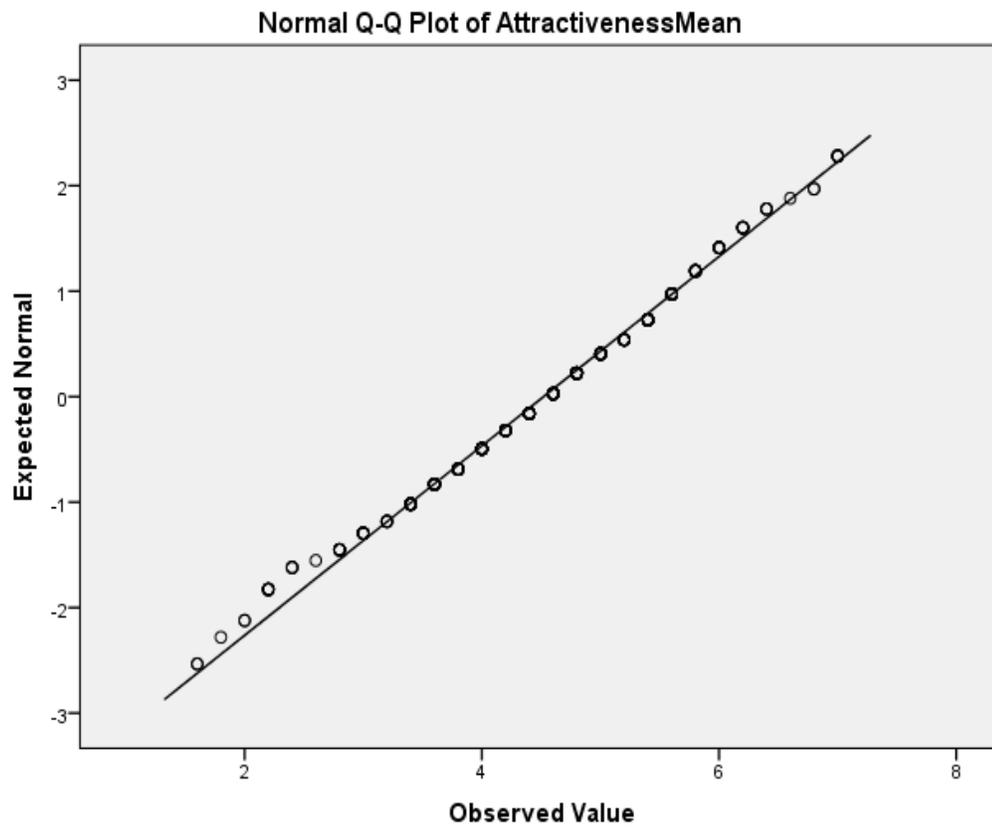


Figure 5. Q-Q plot of normality for perceived endorser trustworthiness.

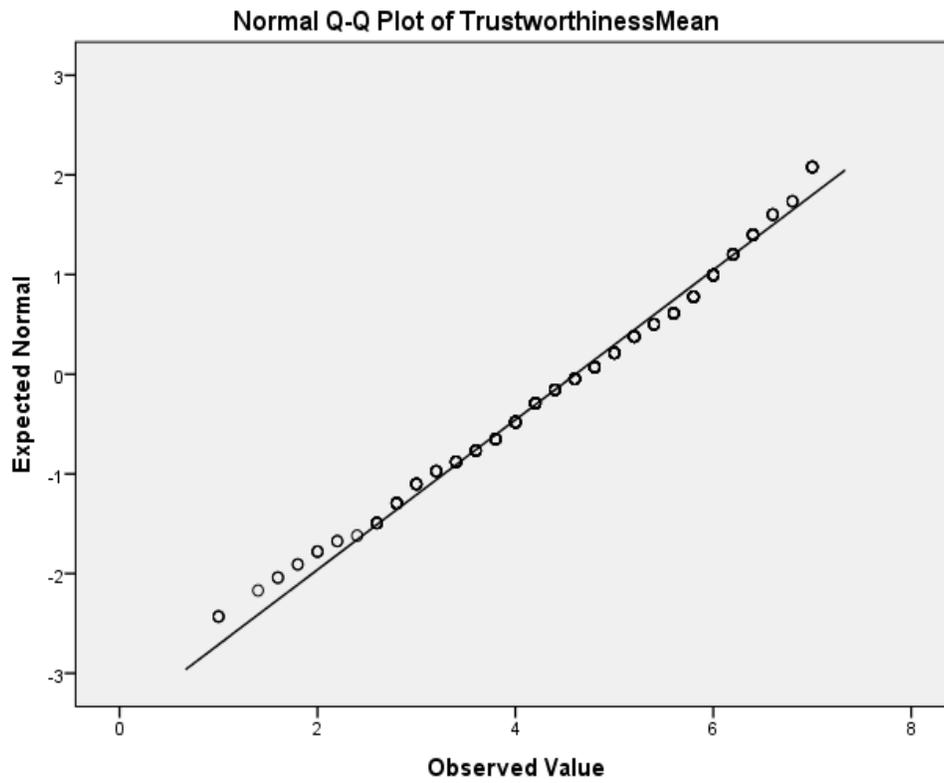


Figure 6. Q-Q plot of normality for perceived endorser expertise.

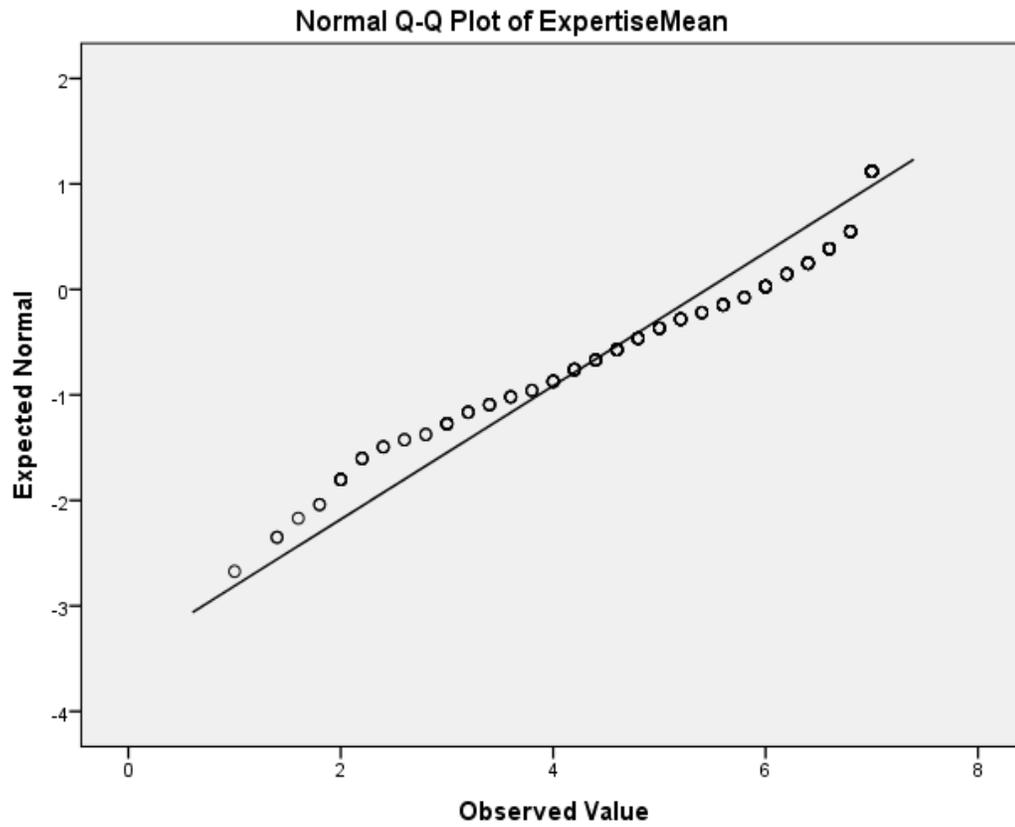


Figure 7. Q-Q plot of normality for consumer attitude towards the ad.

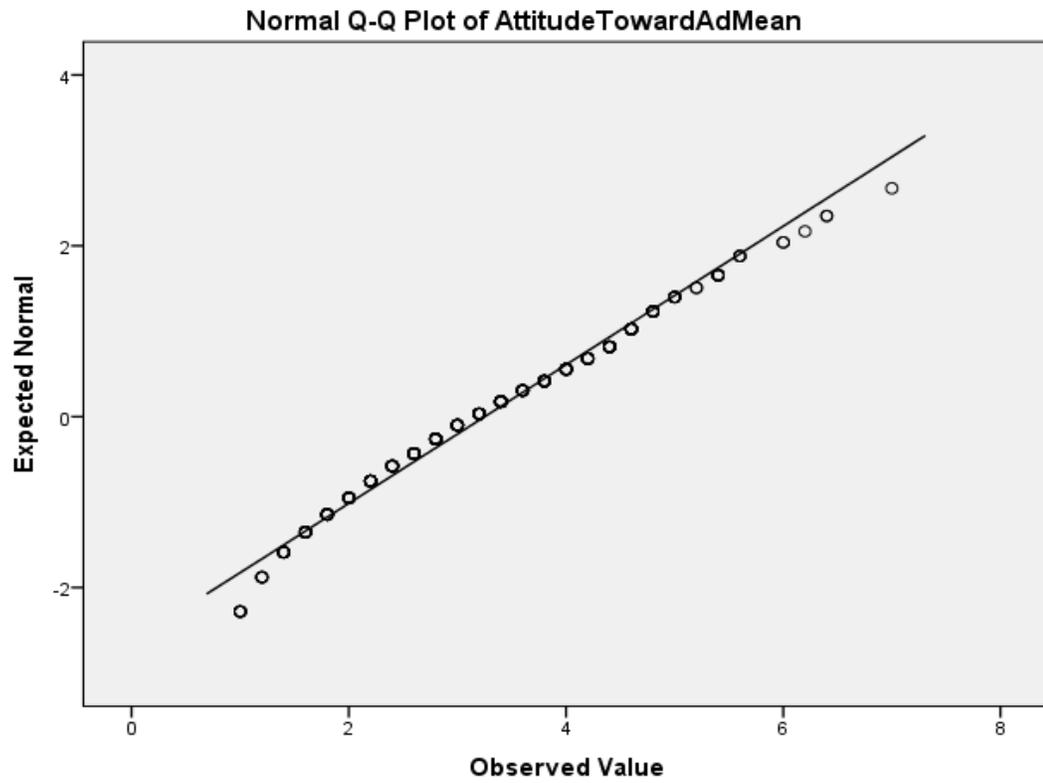


Figure 8. Q-Q plot of normality for consumer attitude toward the brand.

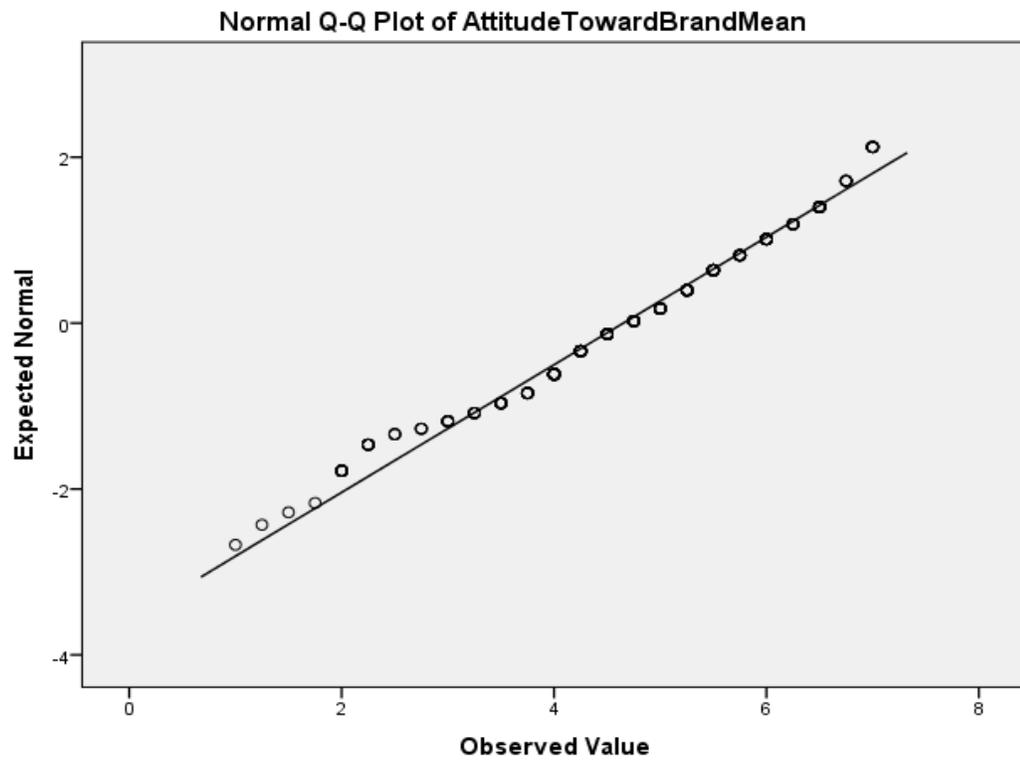
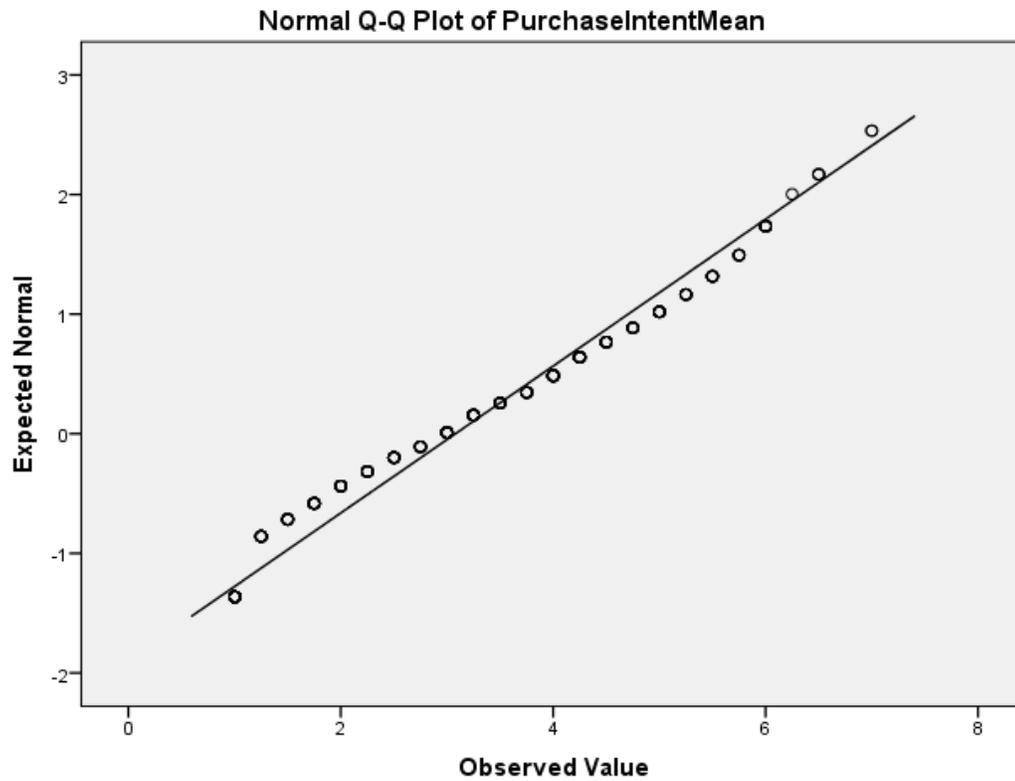


Figure 9. Q-Q plot of normality for consumer purchase intent.



APPENDIX 1

Pre-Test: Manipulation check for endorser familiarity

Page 1

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research survey. You will be asked a series of questions regarding two endorsers.

Your answers to these questions are completely anonymous and you will not be asked any personal questions.

There are no foreseeable risks to you in participating in this survey and it will take 5 minutes to complete.

1. I consent to participate in this survey
 - Yes
 - No (*If no is chosen, they will be prompted to the end of the survey*)

Page 2

2. I recognize Maria Sharapova by name.
 - 1- Strongly Disagree
 - 7- Strongly Agree
3. I recognize Julia Mancuso by name.
 - 1- Strongly Disagree
 - 7- Strongly Agree

Page 3



4. I recognize Maria Sharapova by picture.
1- Strongly Disagree
7- Strongly Agree

Page 4



5. I recognize Julia Mancuso by picture.
1- Strongly Disagree
7- Strongly Agree

Page 5

6. Maria Sharapova is familiar to me.
1- Strongly Disagree
7- Strongly Agree
7. Julia Mancuso is familiar to me.
1- Strongly Disagree
7- Strongly Agree

Thank you for your participation in this research survey. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Paula Pritzen, University of Missouri, pdpc68@mail.missouri.edu.

APPENDIX 2

Pre-test 2: Manipulation check for endorser/product congruency

Page 1

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research survey. You will be asked a series of questions regarding the congruency between endorser and the endorsed product.

Your answers to these questions are completely anonymous and you will not be asked any personal questions.

There are no foreseeable risks to you in participating in this survey and it will take 5 minutes to complete.

1: I consent to participate in this survey

-Yes

-No (*If no is chosen, they will be prompted to the end of the survey*)

Page 2

Please read the following summary of the endorsers and products and answer the questions.

Maria Sharapova is a world-class female tennis player. She is the winner of 27 Women's Tennis Association singles titles, including four Grand Slam singles titles. The Women's Tennis Association has ranked Maria Sharapova World No. 1 in singles on five separate occasions.

Julia Mancuso is a world-class alpine ski racer for the U.S. Ski Team. She was the gold medalist in the giant slalom at the 2006 Winter Olympics and was the silver medalist in both downhill and combined skiing at the 2010 Winter Olympics. Mancuso has also won four medals at the World Championships.

Wilson is a sporting goods company that is well known for its tennis equipment, including tennis rackets.

Salomon is a sporting goods company that is well known for its winter sports equipment, including snow skis.

2. Maria Sharapova is an appropriate endorser of Wilson tennis rackets.
1- Strongly Disagree
7- Strongly Agree
3. Maria Sharapova is an appropriate endorser of Salomon snow skis.
1- Strongly Disagree
7- Strongly Agree
4. Julia Mancuso is an appropriate endorser of Salomon snow skis.
1- Strongly Disagree
7- Strongly Agree
5. Julia Mancuso is an appropriate endorser of Wilson tennis rackets.
1- Strongly Disagree
7- Strongly Agree

Page 3

Please read the following summary of the endorsers and products and answer the questions.

Maria Sharapova is a world-class female tennis player. She is the winner of 27 Women's Tennis Association singles titles, including four Grand Slam singles titles. The Women's Tennis Association has ranked Maria Sharapova World No. 1 in singles on five separate occasions.

Julia Mancuso is a world-class alpine ski racer for the U.S. Ski Team. She was the gold medalist in the giant slalom at the 2006 Winter Olympics and was the silver medalist in both downhill and combined skiing at the 2010 Winter Olympics. Mancuso has also won four medals at the World Championships.

Wilson is a sporting goods company that is well known for its tennis equipment, including tennis rackets.

Salomon is a sporting goods company that is well known for its winter sports equipment, including snow skis.

6. It makes sense that Maria Sharapova is the endorser of Wilson tennis rackets.

1- Strongly Disagree

7- Strongly Agree

7. It makes sense that Maria Sharapova is the endorser of Salomon snow skis.

1- Strongly Disagree

7- Strongly Agree

8. It makes sense that Julia Mancuso is the endorser for Salomon snow skis.

1- Strongly Disagree

7- Strongly Agree

9. It makes sense that Julia Mancuso is the endorser for Wilson tennis rackets.

1- Strongly Disagree

7- Strongly Agree

Page 4

Please read the following summary of the endorsers and products and answer the questions.

Maria Sharapova is a world-class female tennis player. She is the winner of 27 Women's Tennis Association singles titles, including four Grand Slam singles titles. The Women's Tennis Association has ranked Maria Sharapova World No. 1 in singles on five separate occasions.

Julia Mancuso is a world-class alpine ski racer for the U.S. Ski Team. She was the gold medalist in the giant slalom at the 2006 Winter Olympics and was the silver medalist in both downhill and combined skiing at the 2010 Winter Olympics. Mancuso has also won four medals at the World Championships.

Wilson is a sporting goods company that is well known for its tennis equipment, including tennis rackets.

Salomon is a sporting goods company that is well known for its winter sports equipment, including snow skis.

10. Maria Sharapova is connected to Wilson tennis rackets.
1- Strongly Disagree
7- Strongly Agree

11. Maria Sharapova is connected to Salomon snow skis.
1- Strongly Disagree
7- Strongly Agree

12. Julia Mancuso is connected to Salomon snow skis.
1- Strongly Disagree
7- Strongly Agree

13. Julia Mancuso is connected to Wilson tennis rackets.
1- Strongly Disagree
7- Strongly Agree

Page 5

Thank you for your participation in this research survey. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Paula Pritzen, University of Missouri, pdpc68@mail.missouri.edu.

APPENDIX 3

Main Survey Questionnaire

(Note: There will be four different questionnaires. The only difference between the four questionnaires is the addition of one of the four ads.)

(see Appendices D-G for specific advertisements)

Questionnaire 1- Maria Sharapova/ Wilson Tennis Rackets (D)

Questionnaire 2- Maria Sharapova/ Salomon Skis (E)

Questionnaire 3- Julia Mancuso/ Wilson Tennis Rackets (F)

Questionnaire 4- Julia Mancuso/ Salomon Skis (G)

Page 1

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. If you choose to participate, you will be asked view an advertisement. After you view the advertisement, you will be asked a series of questions about the ad.

Your answers to these questions are anonymous and you will not be asked any personal information other than your gender, age, and education completed.

There are no foreseeable risks to you in participating in this research project. It takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

(NOTE: When these questions are entered into the Survey Monkey template, they will look like this:)

Q1

*** 1. How likely is it that you would consider purchasing the product being advertised?**

Very Unlikely Likely

Choose one:

1. How attractive do you perceive the endorser to be?

- 1-Unattractive
- 7-Attractive

2. How classy do you perceive the endorser to be?

- 1-Not Classy
- 7-Classy

3. How beautiful do you perceive the endorser to be?

- 1-Ugly
- 7-Beautiful

4. How elegant do you perceive the endorser to be?

- 1-Plain
- 7-Elegant

5. How sexy do you perceive the endorser to be?

- 1-Not Sexy
- 7-Sexy

6. How sincere do you perceive the endorser to be?

- 1-Insincere
- 7-Sincere

7. How dependable do you perceive the endorser to be?

- 1-Undependable
- 7-Dependable

8. How reliable do you perceive the endorser to be?

- 1-Unreliable
- 7-Reliable

9. How honest do you perceive the endorser to be?

- 1-Dishonest
- 7-Honest

10. How trustworthy do you perceive the endorser to be?

1-Untrustworthy

7-Trustworthy

Page 4

Insert Advertisement Here

11. How experienced do you perceive the endorser to be?

1-Inexperienced

7-Experienced

12. How much of an expert do you perceive the endorser to be?

1-Not an Expert

7-Expert

13. How knowledgeable do you perceive the endorser to be?

1-Unknowledgeable

7-Knowledgeable

14. How skilled do you perceive the endorser to be?

1-Unskilled

7-Skilled

15. How qualified do you perceive the endorser to be?

1-Unqualified

7-Qualified

Page 5

Insert Advertisement Here

16. How familiar do you perceive the endorser to be?

1-Unfamiliar

7-Familiar

17. How likable do you perceive the endorser to be?

1-Not Likeable

7-Likeable

Page 6

Insert Advertisement Here

18. How good do you perceive this ad to be?

- 1-Bad
- 7-Good

19. How much do you like this ad?

- 1-Dislike
- 7-Like

20. How interesting do you find this ad to be?

- 1-Boring
- 7-Interesting

21. How creative do you find this ad to be?

- 1-Uncreative
- 7-Creative

22. How informative do you find this ad to be?

- 1-Uninformative
- 7-Informative

Page 7

Insert Advertisement Here

23. How good do you perceive this brand to be?

- 1-Bad
- 7-Good

24. How much do you like this brand?

- 1-Dislike
- 7-Like

25. How pleasant do you find this brand to be?

- 1-Unpleasant
- 7-Pleasant

26. Of how much quality do you find this brand to be?

- 1-Poor Quality
- 7-Good Quality

Page 8

Insert Advertisement Here

27. How likely is it that you would consider purchasing the product being advertised?

- 1- Very Unlikely
- 7- Very Likely

28. Would you consider purchasing the product being advertised?

- 1-Definitely Would Not
- 7-Definitely Would

29. How probable is it that you would purchase the product being advertised in the future?

- 1-Very Improbable
- 7-Very Probable

30. To what degree do you believe that you would buy this product?

- 1- Very Unlikely
- 7- Very Likely

Page 9

Insert Advertisement Here

31. How recognizable do you find this endorser to be?

- 1- Not Recognizable at all
- 7- Very Recognizable

32. How familiar do you think this endorser is?

- 1- Very Unfamiliar
- 7-Very Familiar

33. How well known do you perceive this endorser to be?

- 1-Not well known
- 7-Very well known

34. How appropriate is the fit between the product being advertised and the endorser?

- 1-Not Appropriate at all
- 7-Very Appropriate

35. How congruent do you find the product being advertised and the endorser?

- 1-Not congruent at all
- 7-Very congruent

36. How well do you think the product and the endorser match-up?

1-Not well at all

7- Very well

37. How do you feel about the choice of this endorser for the product being advertised?

1- Very Negatively

7-Very Positively

Page 10

Please answer the following demographic information that best describes you.

38. Are you male or female?

Male

Female

39. What is your age?

Age (in years): _____

40. What is the highest level of education have you completed? (Check one)

Some high school

High school grad

Some college

College grad

Post graduate work

Post graduate degree

Thank you very much for participating in this study.

If you have any questions regarding this survey, please contact Paula Pritzen, University of Missouri, pdpc68@mail.missouri.edu

APPENDIX 4

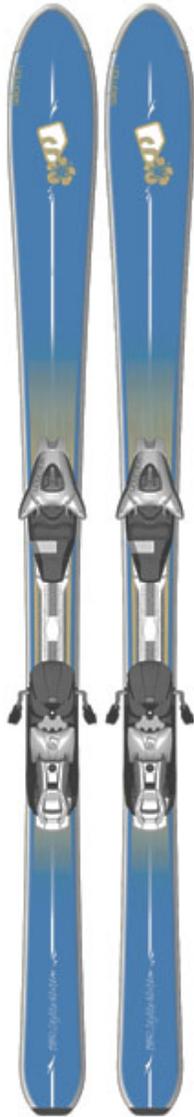


*Maria Sharapova wins using
Wilson rackets.*

Maria Sharapova
World Class Tennis Player &
Winner of 27 Women's Tennis Association Single Titles



APPENDIX 5



*When Maria's not on the court,
she's on the slopes using
Salomon skis.*



Maria Sharapova
World Class Tennis Player &
Winner of 27 Women's Tennis Association Single Titles

APPENDIX 6



*When Julia isn't on
the slopes, she's on the court
using a Wilson racket.*



Julia Mancuso

World Class Skier and 3-time Olympic Medalist

APPENDIX 7

Julia Mancuso

World Class Skier and 3-time Olympic Medalist



*Julia wins using
Salomon skis.*



APPENDIX 8

Questionnaire Measurement Items

1. Endorser Credibility- Attractiveness
2. Endorser Credibility- Attractiveness
3. Endorser Credibility- Attractiveness
4. Endorser Credibility- Attractiveness
5. Endorser Credibility- Attractiveness
6. Endorser Credibility- Trustworthiness
7. Endorser Credibility- Trustworthiness
8. Endorser Credibility- Trustworthiness
9. Endorser Credibility- Trustworthiness
10. Endorser Credibility- Trustworthiness
11. Endorser Credibility- Expertise
12. Endorser Credibility- Expertise
13. Endorser Credibility- Expertise
14. Endorser Credibility- Expertise
15. Endorser Credibility- Expertise
16. Endorser Attractiveness-Familiarity
17. Endorser Attractiveness- Likeability
18. Attitude Toward the Ad
19. Attitude Toward the Ad
20. Attitude Toward the Ad
21. Attitude Toward the Ad
22. Attitude Toward the Ad
23. Attitude Toward the Brand
24. Attitude Toward the Brand
25. Attitude Toward the Brand
26. Attitude Toward the Brand
27. Purchase Intent
28. Purchase Intent
29. Purchase Intent
30. Purchase Intent
31. Manipulation Check- Familiarity
32. Manipulation Check- Familiarity
33. Manipulation Check- Familiarity
34. Manipulation Check- Endorser/Product Congruency (Fit)
35. Manipulation Check- Endorser/Product Congruency (Fit)
36. Manipulation Check- Endorser/Product Congruency (Fit)
37. Manipulation Check- Endorser/Product Congruency (Fit)
38. Demographic
39. Demographic
40. Demographic

APPENDIX 8

Definition of Relevant Terms

The following definitions will allow for a better understanding of the concepts of this study:

- 1. Attitude-** "an individual's internal evaluation of an object" (Mitchell & Olson, 1981, p. 318).
- 2. Brand-** "a distinguishing name and/or symbol (such as a logo, trademark or package design) intended to identify the goods or services of either one seller or a group of sellers and to differentiate those goods or services from those of competitors" (Aaker, 1991, p. 7).
- 3. Celebrity-** "an individual who is known to the public (actor, sports figure, entertainer, etc.) for his or her achievements in areas other than that of the product class endorsed" (Friedman & Friedman, 1979, p. 63).
- 4. Celebrity Attractiveness-** "includes not only physical beauty, but also non-physical beauty, such as sportsmanship, charm, grace, and intelligence" (Langmeyer & Shank, 1994; Seno & Lukas, 2007).
- 5. Celebrity Credibility-** "the extent to which a celebrity is perceived as possessing expertise relevant to the communication topic and can be trusted to give an objective opinion on the subject" (Goldsmith et al., 2000).
- 6. Celebrity Endorser-** "any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement (McCracken, 1989, p. 310).
- 7. Expertise-** "the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions" (Erdogan, Baker & Tagg, 2001, p. 40).
- 8. Likeability-** "affection for the source as a result of the source's physical appearance and behavior" (Erdogan, 1999, p. 299).
- 9. Match-Up Hypothesis (athlete/product congruency)-** "generally suggests that the message conveyed by the image of the celebrity and the image of the product should converge in effective advertisements, implies a need for congruence between product image and celebrity image on an attractiveness basis" (Kamins, 1990, p. 5).
- 10. Purchase Intentions-** "type of judgments about how in the present context, a consumer will behave towards a particular brand" (Biehal et al., 1992, p. 25).
- 11. Source Attractiveness Model-** stands on the belief that one's acceptance of a message relies on the similarity, familiarity and liking of an endorser (McGuire, 1985).

12. Star Familiarity- how familiar the consumer is with the athlete; are they a fan of the sport they play and watch he/she play abundantly (Braunstein & Zhang, 2005).

13. Trustworthiness- “the honesty, integrity and believability of an endorser as perceived by the target audience” (Erdogan et al., 2001, p. 40); “the consumer"s confidence in the source for providing info in an objective and honest manner”(Ohanian, 1991, p. 47).

14. Value Enhancement- the positive image the consumer has on the athlete; how much of an impact does the athlete have on the sport he/she plays (Braunstein & Zhang, 2005).

APPENDIX 10

Recruitment Script

This is the script that will be read to undergraduate courses at the University of Missouri. This script will be read by the researcher. A sign-up sheet will then be passed around the class or the researchers email address will be written on the chalkboard, and those students that are willing to participate will be asked to write down an email address where the survey link can be sent electronically.

Script:

Hi everyone,

My name is Paula Pritzen and I am a graduate student at the Missouri School of Journalism and I am conducting research for my master's thesis. It is titled: Point, Set, Match: Examining the impact of athlete endorser familiarity and endorser/product congruency on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. I am here to ask you to participate in my survey. It will be a short survey that can be done online through [surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com). It is completely voluntary, and there are no foreseeable risks in taking this survey. You will be asked to view an ad and answer some questions. The survey responses will be completely anonymous. It will not take longer than 10 minutes and your help would be greatly appreciated!

Thank you!

APPENDIX 11

Email Recruitment Script

Subject Line: Pritzen Thesis Survey Link

Hi everyone,

My name is Paula Pritzen and I am a graduate student at the Missouri School of Journalism and I am conducting research for my master's thesis. It is titled: Point, Set, Match: Examining the impact of athlete endorser familiarity and endorser/product congruency on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions.

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to view an advertisement. After you view the ad, you will be asked a series of questions. Your answers to these questions are anonymous and you will not be asked any personal information other than your gender, age, and education completed. There are no foreseeable risks to you in participating in this research project. It takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

Please click on the following link that corresponds with your **last name**:

A-F: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2LWZZKV>

G-M: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2LWX5TC>

N-S: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2LQRNQM>

T-Z: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2LJTHMD>

Thank you so much for your help!! Have a great day ☺

Paula Pritzen
Pdpc68@mail.missouri.edu

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