



**Aalto University**  
School of Business

Mikkeli Campus

## ATHLETE ENDORSEMENTS

The impact of athlete-product congruence and endorser gender on athlete endorsements

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International Business

Bachelor's Thesis

Supervisor: Paurav Shukla

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Bachelor's Program in International Business

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**Title of thesis:** The impact of athlete-product congruence and endorser gender on athlete endorsements

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**Objectives**

The main objectives of this study were to understand the impact of different levels of athlete-product congruence on the effectiveness of athlete endorsements and to understand the effect of the endorser gender on athlete endorsements.

**Summary**

First, a pilot survey was conducted to measure the levels of associations between certain athletes and consumer products. Based on the results of the survey, one male and one female athlete were selected, and also one high-congruence and one low-congruence product were selected. After that, six different surveys were created: two control surveys, two surveys with high-congruence products and two surveys with low congruence products. These surveys were then distributed to respondents through social media.

**Conclusions**

The endorsement with high athlete-product congruence was more effective than the low congruence endorsement or the advertisement without the endorsement. There was no significant difference between the low congruence endorsement and the advertisement without the endorsement. Furthermore, the gender of the endorser did not have a significant impact on the effectiveness of the endorser.

**Key words:** marketing, consumer behaviour, advertising, endorsement, congruence

**Language:** English

**Grade:**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

The use of celebrities and athletes in advertising and marketing products through different forms of media has been a common phenomenon since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Today, the use of athlete endorsements is more popular than ever before (Bergkvist and Zhou, 2016). The first reason for this is the ease of endorsements due to the number of new media through which athletes are able to endorse products or services, e.g. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and other types of social media. This means that athlete endorsements are not only advertisements, but pictures of athletes with the company's products on the athletes Facebook page, or simply mentioning the product in a single tweet. Furthermore, these are only two examples of the nearly endless possibilities. Companies often battle against each other to acquire star athletes to endorse their products, so it is critical for the companies to understand how to efficiently utilize the athletes in advertisements and other types of endorsements.

The second big reason is the increased global recognition of star athletes due to the technological advances around the world (Lee and Koo, 2015). This means that athletes have become more famous and popular around more nations around the world, because sports enthusiasts can follow sports leagues from different nations more easily nowadays than for example 30 years ago. Also, the media focuses even more on global athletes nowadays by writing news stories and broadcasting interviews.

The role of congruence in athlete endorsements has also been a topic of discussion ever since the appearance of the first endorsements. It has been noted that not all athlete endorsements are equally effective, and one reason for this has been found to be the level of athlete-product congruence.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

The use of athletes and other celebrities in endorsements is common. However, this does not mean that simply having an athlete endorse a company's product guarantees increased sales or increased popularity.

This thesis will analyze the impact of the congruence between the athlete and the product on the endorsement, and also the influence of the endorser's gender on the effectiveness of the endorsement.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

The purpose of this thesis is to answer the following questions:

1. Does the perceived athlete-product congruency have an impact on the effectiveness of the endorsement?
2. What are the comparative effects of different levels of athlete-product congruency?
3. Is there a difference in effects of the endorsement between athletes from different sports or different genders?

## **1.4 Research Objectives**

The research objectives of this thesis are:

1. To gauge the impact of athlete-product congruency on the effectiveness of the endorsement.
2. To examine the effects of different levels of athlete-product congruency.
3. To examine possible differences between genders and sports of the athletes in endorsement effectiveness.

## 1.5 Definitions

Athlete – an individual, who plays a sport and who is recognized for their stature and accomplishments within a single sport or the sporting community.

Athlete endorsement - an agreement between an individual who enjoys public recognition (an athlete) and an entity (e.g., a brand) to use the celebrity for the purpose of promoting the entity. (Bergkvist and Zhou, 2016:644)

Athlete-product congruence - the perceived relationship and the similarity of the characteristics between the athlete and the product the athlete endorses.



## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

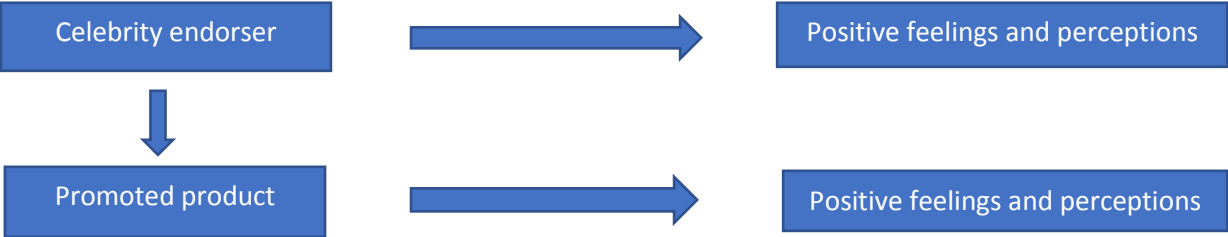
The purpose of this literature review is to critically analyze and compare the previous literature concerning this subject, introduce the most important theories that are prevalent in the previous studies and to locate and distinguish areas that require further research. Since a significant amount of the research has been made concerning celebrity endorsements in general, this article will also be citing them due to the fact that athletes are merely a sub-category of celebrities and the findings about celebrities in general can also be claimed to be applicable to athletes. First this literature review will discuss athlete endorsements in general, then discuss different theories behind endorsement effectiveness. After that it will analyze the influence of gender, and finally offer a conceptual framework on the subject.

### 2.1 Athlete Endorsements

McCracken (1989:310) claimed that a celebrity endorser is: 'any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement.' However, because of the modern global social media environment, where celebrities advertise services and even political parties and where celebrities are paid to merely mention a brand on social media, the previous definition can be described as outdated. Bergkvist and Zhou (2016:644) proposed an updated definition: 'a celebrity endorsement is an agreement between an individual who enjoys public recognition (a celebrity) and an entity (e.g., a brand) to use the celebrity for the purpose of promoting the entity.' This definition is broader and takes into account promotion on blogs, websites and social media. Therefore, this definition of celebrity endorser will be used throughout this article.

Petty, Cacioppo and Schuman (1983) found that celebrity endorsers created more positive attitudes towards advertisements and increased purchased intentions compared to non-celebrity endorsers. On the other hand, Tom et al. (1992) found that created characters generate more effective links to the products compared to celebrity

endorsers. However, the reason could be because created characters are only linked to the product, whereas celebrity endorsers are linked to other things as well, like the field of the celebrity or other products that the celebrity might endorse. After these findings, more studies about the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements (e.g. athletes) have appeared in recent years due to the increased use of celebrities as endorsers (Erdogan, 1999; Arai, Ko and Kaplanidou, 2013; Bergkvist and Zhou, 2016).



Source: Adapted from Erdogan (1999)

**2.2 Source effects**

There has been significant research into the effects of source factors on celebrity endorsements (Erdogan, 1999; Bergkvist and Zhou, 2016). Source factors can be divided into two distinct categories: source credibility and source attractiveness. It is often presumed that celebrities, who have positive source factors also have a positive effect on the endorsement (Simmers, Damron-Martinez and Haytko, 2009).

**2.2.1 The Source Credibility Model**

According to the source credibility model, the trustworthiness and expertise of the endorser determine the effectiveness of the endorsement (Till and Busler, 1998). Expertise can be defined as the extent to which consumers perceive the endorser as a credible source of information (Erdogan, 1999). O’Mahoney and Meenaghan (1997) found that the source expertise greatly influenced the effectiveness of the endorsement. Till and Busler (2000) stated that the congruence between the brand

and the product increased the expertise of the source; the greater the fit, the greater the perceived expertise. This finding leans more towards to the match-up theory. Spry, Pappu and Cornwell (2011) examined credibility as a single variable and found that it had a positive effect on the effectiveness of endorsements. However, Rossiter and Smidts (2012) claimed that the expertise of the source has a positive effect on the endorsement. On the other hand, trustworthiness is seen not to have any positive effect on the endorsement (O'Mahoney and Meenaghan, 1997; Rossiter and Smidts, 2012). Rossiter and Smidts (2012) claimed that the reason for this could be the fact that consumers are aware that the celebrities are paid for the endorsements, thus undermining the effect of the perceived trustworthiness.

The studies conducted by O'Mahoney and Meenaghan (1997) and Rossiter and Smidts (2012) used much smaller samples than the studies conducted by Till and Busler (1998; 2000). In addition, Rossiter and Smidts (2012) had Rossiter's previous articles as a significant portion of their references, which could be deemed to be problematic.

### **2.2.2 The Source Attractiveness Model**

The attractiveness model states that the physical characteristics, such as attractiveness and likability are the key factors in an endorsement (Till and Busler, 2000). Celebrity attractiveness can also be divided into two different variables: physical attractiveness and likability (Erdogan, 1999). The findings for the role of physical attractiveness of the endorser in the effectiveness of the endorsement have been contradicting. Kahle and Homer (1985) concluded that the attractiveness of the endorser has a positive effect on endorsements. On the contrary, physical attractiveness was found to have no overall effect on endorsements (Kamins, 1990). Ohanian (1991) also found that attractiveness had no effect on endorsements. However, Till and Busler (2000) found that attractiveness does have an overall positive effect on the endorsement. However, it should be noted that Till and Busler were cautious about their finding, and stated that further research was needed before any conclusions can be drawn. The level of variation in the results suggests that more

research should be made into the effect of attractiveness before the model can be implemented.

Only a few studies have treated likability as an independent variable. Kahle and Homer (1985) claimed that likability positively affects endorsements. Misra and Beatty (1990) agreed with Kahle and Homer and concluded that likability has a positive effect. Roy, Gammoh and Koh (2012) confirmed the findings in their study. It should be noted that the definition of likability used by Roy, Gammoh and Koh was different from the commonly used definition, since they included credibility into likability. However, Fleck, Korchia and Le Roy (2012) found that likability had no significant effect on the endorsement. Miller and Allen (2012) also found no correlation between likability and endorsement effectiveness. In a later study, it was even claimed that likability could have a negative effect on endorsements (Rossiter and Smidts, 2012). To conclude, the role of celebrity likability is at least as unclear as the role of physical attractiveness.

The study by Kahle and Homer (1985) did not take into account the impact of the endorser's gender, which means that it is uncertain if male respondents rated attractive female endorsers as more effective than attractive male endorsers. Also, the study did not examine purchase intention, but brand recall, which differs from the studies conducted by Fleck, Korchia and Le Roy (2012) and Rossiter and Smidts (2012). The study by Fleck, Korchia and Le Roy (2012) only compared congruence and likability, not taking into account source credibility nor attractiveness. The source attractiveness model, very much like the source credibility model, can also be criticized for merely taking a few personality traits of the endorser into account.

### **2.3 Match-Up Theory**

The match-up theory states that the images of the endorser and the product should be congruent for the advertisement to be effective (Kamins, 1990; Erdogan 1999; Kim and Na, 2007). Match-up theory is broader than the source effects model, since match-up theory also incorporates the brand's personality traits (Bergkvist and Zhou, 2016). Kamins and Gupta (1994) found that the higher the degree of congruence between the

product and the endorser, the greater the believability and the attractiveness of the celebrity endorser. However, this was only found to be true in the case of a celebrity endorser. Kirmani and Shiv (1998) also found that the better the 'fit', the more effective the endorsement. However, this was only found to be true in the case of high-involvement products. Kim and Na (2007) confirmed the findings in their research, stating that high congruence leads to more favorability towards the advertisement than low congruence. It has also been found that a low congruence endorsement is not more effective than an advertisement with no endorsement at all (Kamins and Gupta, 1994; Kim and Na, 2007).

On the other hand, Lee and Thorson (2008) stated that advertisements can be more effective if there is a moderate mismatch between the product and the endorser. Nevertheless, they also found that a 'fit' between the product and the endorser was better than no 'fit'. However, their study did not find any significant difference between moderate mismatch and extreme match for the brand attitude and attitude towards the advertisement. Törn (2012) confirmed that an endorsement with less congruence has a more positive effect on consumer attitude towards the brand than an endorsement with more congruence. Roy, Gammoh and Koh (2012) claimed that high 'fit' leads to higher likability towards endorsement. Mishra (2015) stated that there is a difference in advertisement believability and attitude towards advertisement between high congruence and low congruence, but there is no difference in attitude towards brand and purchase intention.

The studies by Kamins (1990), Kamins and Gupta (1994), Kim and Na (2007) and Roy, Gammoh and Koh (2012) only compare low congruence against high congruence, whereas the study by Lee and Thorson (2008) also took a third possibility, a moderate mismatch, into the study. However, their claim can be argued against, because the difference between the extreme match and moderate mismatch was not statistically significant. Also, their study did not change product categories between celebrities, therefore there is a possibility that the specific product categories caused the result. However, the study by Törn (2012) did find a significant difference between high congruence and medium congruence. It should be noted that the study only used low-involvement products, so the results are not necessarily applicable to higher involvement products. The study by Mishra (2015) did mention moderate mismatch, but did not include it as a category in the research.

### 2.3.1 Source effects on congruence

Match-up theory also analyses the impact of the endorser's attractiveness and credibility on the effectiveness of the endorsement. Kamins (1990) found that the attractiveness of the endorser increased the effectiveness of the endorsement only, if the product was attractiveness-related. Misra and Beatty (1990) found that celebrity liking increases when the perceived congruence is higher. However, Till and Busler (1998) refuted the claim, and found no match-up effect based on the endorser's attractiveness. They did, on the other hand, find a match-up effect based on the expertise of the endorser. Furthermore, congruence has a stronger effect than the likability of the endorser, when considering attitude towards advertisement (Fleck, Korchia and Le Roy, 2012). Till and Busler (2000) found that the attractiveness of the endorser does not have a strong effect on the endorsement as would be expected under the match-up hypothesis. Fink, Cunningham and Kensicki (2004) also found that expertise was significantly more important to congruence than attractiveness. Credibility has also been found to affect the level of congruence between the athlete and the product (Lee and Koo, 2015).

The study by Kamins used a luxury car as the product, so it is debatable if the product indeed is an attractiveness-related product, since a car has a utilitarian purpose as well. Till and Busler (1998), on the other hand, used cologne as the product, which is perceived as more of an attractiveness-related than a luxury car. Till and Busler (2000) used created celebrity endorsers, which can be problematic, since it can be difficult to create a strong image for a celebrity, with whom the respondents are not familiar with. The study by Fink, Cunningham and Kensicki focused more on women's sporting events than products, which could mean that the results are not applicable to product endorsements, since products and events can be seen to require different types of advertising. The study by Lee and Koo (2015) showed high levels of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  in all categories of the findings, which weakens the credibility of the findings, because item redundancy is suggested over item complementarity.

However, it should be noted that no studies have been conducted on the factors of lessening the effects of low congruence, since the majority of the research has been focused on the factors and reasons for high congruence, and the effect it has on

endorsements. Based on the previous literature, the following hypotheses can be drawn:

H1: An endorsement with low athlete-product congruence is not significantly more effective than an advertisement without an endorser.

H2: An endorsement with high athlete-product congruence is significantly more effective than an advertisement without an endorser.

H3: An endorsement with high athlete-product congruence is significantly more effective than an advertisement with low athlete-product congruence.

## **2.4 The influence of gender**

The influence of the endorser's gender on the effect of the endorsement has not been widely researched, but a few researches have studied the subject. Boyd and Shank (2004) claimed that male celebrity endorsers are more effective, because they are perceived to have higher credibility and higher attractiveness than female celebrity endorsers. This claim has however been refuted in later studies (Fink, Cunningham and Kensicki, 2004; Klaus and Bailey, 2008; Fink et al., 2012). Fink, Cunningham and Kensicki (2004) stated that attractiveness in female endorsers is higher than in male endorsers. Consumers have also been found to respond more favorably to an advertisement with a female endorser compared to an advertisement with a male endorser (Klaus and Bailey, 2008). However, the differences were marginally significant, and the researchers were reluctant to implicate the results further. Fink et al. (2012) found that female endorsers are perceived to have more expertise than male endorser's, while endorsing sport-related products. Furthermore, they did not find any differences in endorsement effectiveness between the two genders.

From the viewpoint of the match-up theory, Fink, Cunningham and Kensicki (2004) also found that it is important for female endorsers to be famous in a sport that 'fits' a woman for the endorsement to be more effective. Fink et al. (2012) claimed that trustworthiness is significantly more important for female endorsers compared to male endorsers.

It should be noted, that the results in the study conducted by Boyd and Shank (2004) were only marginally significant in many categories. Also, the study found that women overall find athlete endorser's to be less attractive, which could have skewed the results, since the study tried to figure out the best gender match between the endorser and the consumer. The findings from the study by Fink, Cunningham and Kensicki (2004) mainly examine women's sport event endorsement rather than product endorsement, which could also affect the results. Klaus and Bailey (2008) also mainly focused on the impact of the gender of the consumer rather than the gender of the endorser. Fink et al. (2012) examined the reasons for the effectiveness of female endorsers, and very little comparison was made between male endorsers and female endorsers. Because of the contradictions in the findings, more research should be made into the influence of gender in endorsements. Based on the previous literature, the following hypothesis can be drawn:

H4: The gender of the athlete endorser does not affect the effectiveness of the endorsement.

## **2.5 Conceptual Framework**

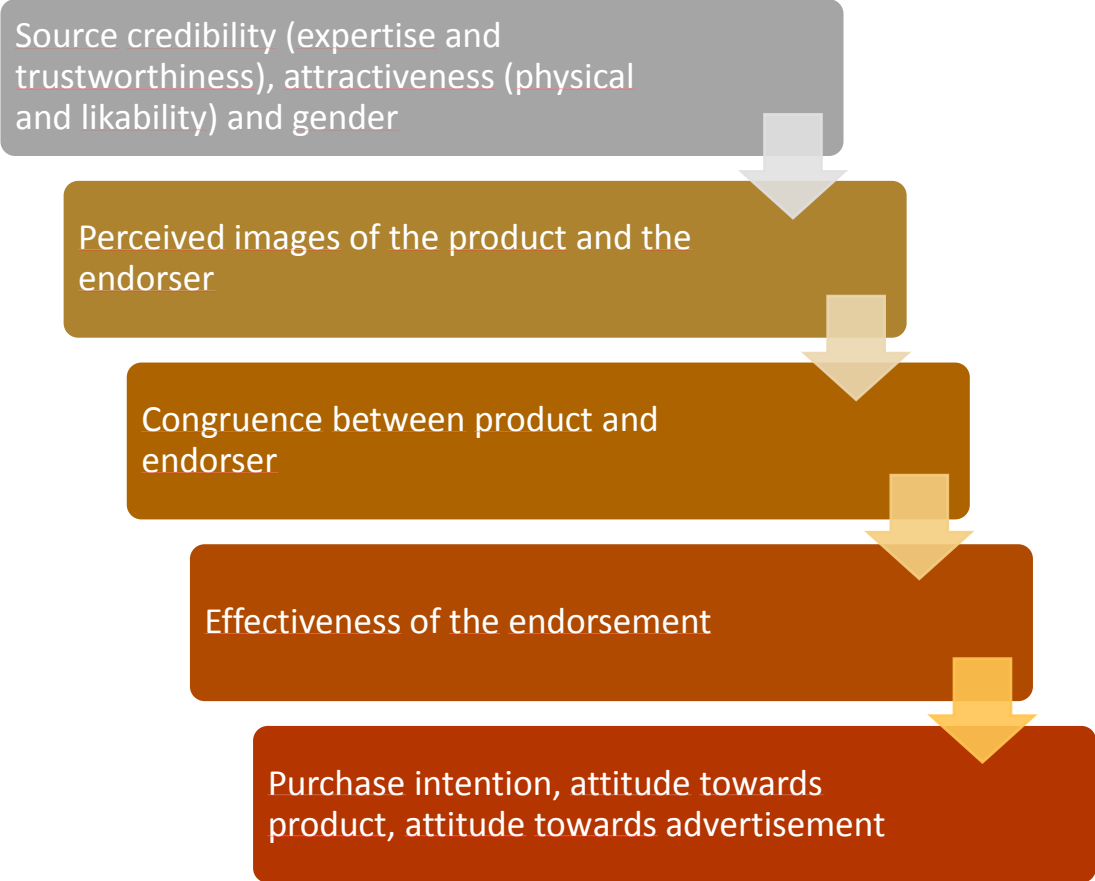
This conceptual framework summarizes the theories and findings introduced and analyzed in this article. It attempts to portray the logical cognitive process that a consumer employs when encountering an athlete endorsement. First the consumer analyzes the characteristics of the athlete, which include variables such as credibility, gender and attractiveness. Then the consumer analyzes the image of the athlete and the image of the product, that they have created throughout the years. The consumer then also evaluates the congruence between the product and the endorser, which in turn affects the changes or lack of changes that occur in the mind of the consumer regarding purchase intention of the brand and product, attitude towards the advertisement and the attitude towards the brand and product.

The main theory used in this conceptual framework is the match-up theory, but since the match-up theory does not take into account the gender of the endorser, it seemed appropriate to add the source gender into the framework due to the literature



that is yet to find significant differences in similar endorsements between athletes of different gender, and due to the hypotheses and research objectives presented in this thesis.

Figure 1.



### 2.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, a significant amount of research has been conducted regarding the use of athlete and celebrity endorsements and about the effectiveness of athlete and celebrity endorsements. This article introduced three major theories: the source credibility model, the source attractiveness model and the match-up theory. These

theories have been criticized for being narrow and excluding important parts of characteristics of the endorsers. This article also suggests that more research should be conducted on the impact of endorser gender on the endorsements and also the differences in reactions between consumers of different gender.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Data Collection**

This paper utilizes both primary and secondary data. In order to understand the theories in the field of athlete endorsements, the literature review views the previous findings and draws conclusions on the basis of the prior research. The secondary data helped format the research questions and research objectives, and also guided the formatting of the surveys, since a significant amount of the earlier studies had used similar survey structure. Furthermore, a conceptual framework was created based on the previous literature, and the framework helped guide the collection of the primary data.

Primary data was collected using an online survey. Convenience sampling was used, since the respondents were reached through social media and also with the help of friends. Students and athletes in the Mikkeli area formed the basis of the sample, and the respondents were informed that the data collected is anonymous and the responses will be used for academic purposes only.

#### **3.2 Questionnaire design**

The design of the questionnaire was created in order to answer the research questions in the best possible way. The purpose was to gather quantitative data on the reactions of consumers on advertisements with athlete endorsers of different gender and of different levels of congruence. As the conceptual framework in Figure 1 shows, the effectiveness of the endorsement can be measured through purchase intention, attitude towards product and attitude towards advertisement, and these measures were eventually used in the surveys.

First to measure the congruence between different athletes and different products, a pilot survey was created. Four random athletes were chosen for this survey: former boxer Mike Tyson, tennis star Serena Williams, footballer Lionel Messi and figure

skater Kiira Korpi. The respondents were asked to rate on a scale from 1-5, how closely they associate the previously mentioned athletes to different types of consumer products. 31 respondents completed the survey, and the sample was gathered from players of a floorball team from Mikkeli. The survey can be found in the appendices and the results of the survey can be found in Figure 2, with the average score of the level of association between the athlete and the product and the products that were chosen highlighted.

Figure 2.

	Mike Tyson	Serena Williams	Lionel Messi	Kiira Korpi
Protein shake	3.84	3.93	2.60	2.87
Sports car	2.97	2.40	3.13	1.63
Chocolate bar	1.81	2.20	1.93	1.87
Washing machine	1.29	1.93	1.40	2.10
Razor blades	2.55	1.63	2.53	1.60
Body wash	2.65	2.90	3.20	3.47
Corn flakes	1.74	1.73	1.67	1.97
Leather boots	2.19	1.77	1.60	1.87
Fragrance line	1.94	2.37	3.13	3.43
Laptop	1.23	1.67	2.00	2.10

On the basis of the pilot survey, the athletes chosen for the survey were Mike Tyson and Serena Williams and the products chosen were protein shake and corn flakes. Protein shake was chosen to be the high-congruence product, because of the high level of association and the similarity of the scores between the two athletes,

whereas corn flakes were chosen to be the low-congruence product due to the low level of association and also because of the similarity of the scores.

For the second part of the primary data collection, six different surveys were created: two control surveys, one for each product, with an advertisement containing merely the product and four surveys for hypothesis testing, which each contained an advertisement of the product with a picture of the athlete. The brands chosen for the two different products, Schär Corn Flakes and Pure Protein Shakes, cannot be found in stores in Mikkeli. This was done in order to exclude any previous prejudices or connections that the respondents might have with the brands. The survey contained seven statements regarding the advertisements, which the respondents were asked to answer: one statement about brand familiarity, two statements about purchase intention, two statements about attitude towards the product and two statements about attitude towards the advertisement. This was done to ensure the reliability of the data by reducing the possibility of distorted data because of poor statement structure. A Likert Scale 1-7 was used to measure the responses, 1 being “completely disagree” and 7 being “completely agree”. Finally, the respondents were asked to give their age, gender and nationality in order to understand the demographics of the survey sample. All respondents were asked to complete only one survey, in order to eliminate any distortion in the data, which could occur if the respondents were allowed to respond to all of the surveys. For example, if a respondent answered all the surveys, they might start comparing the advertisements with one another, which could lead to more extreme responses and therefore, flawed data. The complete surveys with the advertisements and the statements can be found in the appendices.

### **3.3 Sample Profile**

In total, 252 responses were gathered: 20 for both of the control surveys, 56 for the survey with the male athlete and the low-congruence product, 53 for the survey with the female athlete and the low-congruence product, 52 for the survey with the male athlete and the high-congruence product and 51 for the survey with the female

athlete and the high-congruence product. Since convenience sampling was used, a significant portion of the sample share similar demographics, which could affect the results. However, because of the lack of time and resources available for a bachelor's thesis, convenience sampling is the only viable option to be used, when a large number of respondents are required. All of the surveys were completed, so all the data gathered could be utilized for the analysis. Also, none of the responses had invalid answers.

The responses were used for research purposes only. None of the respondents were forced to complete the surveys or otherwise participate in the research. The responses were anonym and the responses were viewed by the researcher solely.

## **4. FINDINGS**

### **4.1 Sample Demographics**

There were 252 respondents to the six surveys. Out of the 252 respondents, 156 were male and 96 were female. The majority of the respondents were from Finland, with 209 respondents being Finnish. Other nationalities included Vietnamese (16 respondents), Russian (9 respondents) and Austrian, Canadian and Japanese (4 respondents each) with several other nationalities appearing only once. 179 respondents were between the ages 18 to 24, 42 respondents between the ages 25 to 34, 28 respondents between the ages 35 to 44 and 3 respondents were 17 or under.

### **4.2 Reliability Analysis**

Each of the surveys had seven statements in total: one measuring brand familiarity, two measuring purchase intention, two measuring attitude towards the advertisement and two measuring attitude towards the product. To analyze the reliability of the results, the Cronbach's alpha was measured between the two statements measuring each quality for all the six surveys. The Cronbach's alphas can be found in figure 3.

Figure 3.

	Purchase intention	Attitude towards advertisement	Attitude towards product
1. Cereal control	.698	.886	.828
2. Protein shake control	.882	.856	.918
3. Cereal male	.875	.784	.810
4. Cereal female	.797	.836	.722
5. Protein shake male	.937	.892	.806
6. Protein shake female	.922	.894	.809

As seen in figure 3, the Cronbach's alpha for each pair of statements in all the surveys is relatively high (>0.65). This implies that the statements are internally consistent, and the results are fairly reliable.

#### 4.3 Hypotheses testing

To test the hypotheses presented in the literature review section, independent sample t-tests were conducted between the surveys.



### 4.3.1 H1

H1 is as of follows:

H1: An endorsement with low athlete-product congruence is not significantly more effective than an advertisement without an endorser.

The surveys are indicated with numbers, and the indications can be found in figure 3. The surveys that measured the effectiveness of the above-mentioned endorsements were 1,3 and 4. The results of the t-tests between surveys 1 and 3 are presented in figure 4.

Figure 4.

Group Statistics					
	Survey	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I find this advertisement effective.	1	20	3,00	1,522	,340
	3	56	3,09	1,576	,211
This product seems appealing to me.	1	20	3,10	1,586	,355
	3	56	3,13	1,608	,215
I am familiar with this brand	1	20	1,55	,945	,211
	3	56	1,91	1,719	,230
I would consider purchasing this product.	1	20	2,95	1,731	,387
	3	56	2,96	1,584	,212
I think this product is useful.	1	20	3,65	1,843	,412
	3	56	3,75	1,505	,201
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	1	20	3,00	1,522	,340
	3	56	2,89	1,603	,214
My willingness to buy this product is high.	1	20	2,40	1,095	,245
	3	56	2,55	1,374	,184

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
I find this advertisement effective.	Equal variances assumed	,019	,890	-,219	74	,827	-,089	,407	-,900	,721
	Equal variances not assumed			-,223	34,584	,825	-,089	,400	-,902	,723
This product seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	,293	,590	-,060	74	,952	-,025	,417	-,857	,807
	Equal variances not assumed			-,060	33,920	,952	-,025	,415	-,868	,818
I am familiar with this brand	Equal variances assumed	3,028	,086	-,889	74	,377	-,361	,406	-,169	,448
	Equal variances not assumed			-,156	61,040	,252	-,361	,312	-,985	,263
I would consider purchasing this product.	Equal variances assumed	,521	,473	-,034	74	,973	-,014	,423	-,857	,828
	Equal variances not assumed			-,032	31,092	,974	-,014	,441	-,914	,885
I think this product is useful.	Equal variances assumed	4,862	,031	-,240	74	,811	-,100	,416	-,930	,730
	Equal variances not assumed			-,218	28,560	,829	-,100	,459	-,1039	,839
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	,006	,937	,260	74	,796	,107	,412	-,714	,929
	Equal variances not assumed			,266	35,140	,791	,107	,402	-,709	,923
My willingness to buy this product is high.	Equal variances assumed	1,060	,307	-,451	74	,654	-,154	,341	-,833	,525
	Equal variances not assumed			-,502	41,793	,619	-,154	,306	-,771	,464

As the figure shows, the 2-tailed sigma for each statement is  $>.05$ , which indicates that there is no significant difference between the effectiveness of the two advertisements. Also, since the 2-tailed sigma for the statement measuring brand familiarity is  $>.05$ , it can be concluded that the results are not affected by previous perceptions of the brand, because there is no significant difference in brand familiarity between the two surveys.

The results of the t-test between surveys 1 and 4 can be found in figure 5.

Figure 5.

Group Statistics					
	Survey	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I find this advertisement effective.	1	20	3,00	1,522	,340
	4	53	3,26	1,375	,189
This product seems appealing to me.	1	20	3,10	1,586	,355
	4	53	3,36	1,360	,187
I am familiar with this brand	1	20	1,55	,945	,211
	4	53	2,08	1,627	,224
I would consider purchasing this product.	1	20	2,95	1,731	,387
	4	53	3,40	1,405	,193
I think this product is useful.	1	20	3,65	1,843	,412
	4	53	3,58	1,447	,199
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	1	20	3,00	1,522	,340
	4	53	3,15	1,420	,195
My willingness to buy this product is high.	1	20	2,40	1,095	,245
	4	53	2,79	1,350	,185

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
I find this advertisement effective.	Equal variances assumed	,721	,399	-,711	71	,479	-,264	,372	-1,005	,477
	Equal variances not assumed			-,679	31,419	,502	-,264	,389	-1,057	,529
This product seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	,705	,404	-,692	71	,491	-,258	,374	-1,004	,487
	Equal variances not assumed			-,645	30,158	,524	-,258	,401	-1,077	,560
I am familiar with this brand	Equal variances assumed	2,535	,116	-1,357	71	,179	-,525	,387	-1,298	,247
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,709	58,558	,093	-,525	,308	-1,141	,090
I would consider purchasing this product.	Equal variances assumed	1,155	,286	-1,134	71	,261	-,446	,393	-1,231	,338
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,032	28,967	,311	-,446	,433	-1,331	,439
I think this product is useful.	Equal variances assumed	5,666	,020	,159	71	,874	,065	,410	-,753	,883
	Equal variances not assumed			,142	28,305	,888	,065	,458	-,872	1,002
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	,237	,628	-,397	71	,692	-,151	,380	-,908	,607
	Equal variances not assumed			-,385	32,257	,703	-,151	,392	-,950	,648
My willingness to buy this product is high.	Equal variances assumed	1,589	,212	-1,162	71	,249	-,392	,338	-1,066	,281
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,278	41,969	,208	-,392	,307	-1,012	,228

As the figure shows, the 2-tailed sigma for each statement is  $>.05$ , which indicates that there is no significant difference in the results between the two surveys. Also, since the 2-tailed sigma for the statement measuring brand familiarity is  $>.05$ , it can be concluded that the results are not affected by previous perceptions of the brand, because there is no significant difference in brand familiarity between the two surveys.

On the basis of these two t-tests, H1 can be confirmed, since no significant difference in the effectiveness of the advertisements was found.

### 4.3.2 H2

H2 is as of follows:

H2: An endorsement with high athlete-product congruence is significantly more effective than an advertisement without an endorser.

The surveys that measured the effectiveness of above-mentioned endorsements were 2, 5 and 6. The results of the t-tests between 2 and 5 are presented in figure 6.

Figure 6.

Group Statistics					
	Survey	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I find this advertisement effective.	2	20	3,15	1,663	,372
	5	52	5,04	1,584	,220
This product seems appealing to me.	2	20	3,30	1,838	,411
	5	52	4,48	1,809	,251
I am familiar with this brand	2	20	1,70	1,261	,282
	5	52	2,29	1,601	,222
I would consider purchasing this product.	2	20	3,45	1,761	,394
	5	52	4,13	2,010	,279
I think this product is useful.	2	20	3,65	1,755	,393
	5	52	4,98	1,488	,206
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	2	20	3,15	1,631	,365
	5	52	4,38	1,972	,273
My willingness to buy this product is high.	2	20	3,00	1,451	,324
	5	52	3,83	1,948	,270

**Independent Samples Test**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
I find this advertisement effective.	Equal variances assumed	1,334	,252	-4,470	70	,000	-1,888	,422	-2,731	-1,046
	Equal variances not assumed			-4,373	33,068	,000	-1,888	,432	-2,767	-1,010
This product seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	,021	,884	-2,469	70	,016	-1,181	,478	-2,134	-,227
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,452	34,040	,019	-1,181	,482	-2,159	-,202
I am familiar with this brand	Equal variances assumed	,879	,352	-1,475	70	,145	-,588	,399	-1,384	,207
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,640	43,617	,108	-,588	,359	-1,312	,135
I would consider purchasing this product.	Equal variances assumed	1,208	,275	-1,337	70	,185	-,685	,512	-1,706	,336
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,419	39,141	,164	-,685	,483	-1,661	,291
I think this product is useful.	Equal variances assumed	2,518	,117	-3,231	70	,002	-1,331	,412	-2,152	-,509
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,001	30,102	,005	-1,331	,443	-2,236	-,425
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	2,302	,134	-2,489	70	,015	-1,235	,496	-2,224	-,245
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,708	41,481	,010	-1,235	,456	-2,155	-,314
My willingness to buy this product is high.	Equal variances assumed	4,422	,039	-1,721	70	,090	-,827	,480	-1,785	,131
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,959	46,192	,056	-,827	,422	-1,677	,023

As seen in the figure above, the means of all the statements in survey 5 are higher than the means of the statements in survey 2. Furthermore, the only statements that have a 2-tailed sigma  $>.05$  are those measuring purchase intention, and for statement number 7 “my willingness to buy this product is high”, the 2-tailed sigma is  $.09$ , which is close to  $.05$ . In all the other statements measuring endorsement effectiveness, the 2-tailed sigma is  $<.05$ , which indicates that there is significant difference in the results between these two surveys. Therefore, it can be concluded that survey number 5 is significantly more effective than survey number 2. Also, since the 2-tailed sigma for the statement measuring brand familiarity is  $>.05$ , it can be concluded that the results are not affected by previous perceptions of the brand, because there is no significant difference in brand familiarity between the two surveys.

The results of the t-test between surveys 2 and 6 are presented in figure 7.

Figure 7.

Group Statistics					
	Survey	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I find this advertisement effective.	2	20	3,15	1,663	,372
	6	51	4,86	1,429	,200
This product seems appealing to me.	2	20	3,30	1,838	,411
	6	51	4,51	1,605	,225
I am familiar with this brand	2	20	1,70	1,261	,282
	6	51	2,00	1,342	,188
I would consider purchasing this product.	2	20	3,45	1,761	,394
	6	51	4,43	1,565	,219
I think this product is useful.	2	20	3,65	1,755	,393
	6	51	4,86	1,281	,179
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	2	20	3,15	1,631	,365
	6	51	4,35	1,683	,236
My willingness to buy this product is high.	2	20	3,00	1,451	,324
	6	51	4,04	1,843	,258

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
I find this advertisement effective.	Equal variances assumed	2,907	,093	-4,337	69	,000	-1,713	,395	-2,501	-,925
	Equal variances not assumed			-4,056	30,613	,000	-1,713	,422	-2,574	-,851
This product seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	1,587	,212	-2,742	69	,008	-1,210	,441	-2,090	-,330
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,583	31,001	,015	-1,210	,468	-2,165	-,254
I am familiar with this brand	Equal variances assumed	,001	,974	-,862	69	,392	-,300	,348	-,995	,395
	Equal variances not assumed			-,886	36,860	,382	-,300	,339	-,987	,387
I would consider purchasing this product.	Equal variances assumed	1,222	,273	-2,294	69	,025	-,981	,428	-1,835	-,128
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,177	31,445	,037	-,981	,451	-1,900	-,063
I think this product is useful.	Equal variances assumed	6,664	,012	-3,220	69	,002	-1,213	,377	-1,964	-,461
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,810	27,310	,009	-1,213	,432	-2,098	-,328
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	,229	,634	-2,732	69	,008	-1,203	,440	-2,081	-,325
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,770	35,808	,009	-1,203	,434	-2,084	-,322
My willingness to buy this product is high.	Equal variances assumed	2,500	,118	-2,258	69	,027	-1,039	,460	-1,957	-,121
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,507	43,973	,016	-1,039	,415	-1,875	-,204

As presented in the figure above, the means of all the statements in survey 6 is higher than the means of the statements in survey 2. Furthermore, the 2-tailed sigma for all the statements measuring endorsement effectiveness is  $<.05$ , which indicated that there is a significant difference in the results between the two surveys. Also, since the 2-tailed sigma for the statement measuring brand familiarity is  $>.05$ , it can be concluded that the results are not affected by previous perceptions of the brand,

because there is no significant difference in brand familiarity between the two surveys.

Based on the results of these t-tests, H2 can be confirmed, since the means of the statements in survey 5 and survey 6 were higher than in survey 2, and there was significant difference in the results in most of the statements.

### 4.3.3 H3

H3 is as follows:

H3: An endorsement with high athlete-product congruence is significantly more effective than an advertisement with low athlete-product congruence.

The surveys that measured this were 3,4,5 and 6. 3 and 5 included the male endorser and 4 and 6 included the female endorser. To test this hypothesis, the surveys with the endorsements with the male endorser were tested together and the surveys with the endorsements with the female endorser were tested together. The results of the t-test between surveys 3 and 5 can be found in figure 8.

Figure 8.

Group Statistics					
	Survey	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I find this advertisement effective.	3	56	3,09	1,576	,211
	5	52	5,04	1,584	,220
This product seems appealing to me.	3	56	3,13	1,608	,215
	5	52	4,48	1,809	,251
I am familiar with this brand	3	56	1,91	1,719	,230
	5	52	2,29	1,601	,222
I would consider purchasing this product.	3	56	2,96	1,584	,212
	5	52	4,13	2,010	,279
I think this product is useful.	3	56	3,75	1,505	,201
	5	52	4,98	1,488	,206
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	3	56	2,89	1,603	,214
	5	52	4,38	1,972	,273
My willingness to buy this product is high.	3	56	2,55	1,374	,184
	5	52	3,83	1,948	,270

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-Test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
I find this advertisement effective.	Equal variances assumed	,583	,447	-6,408	106	,000	-1,949	,304	-2,552	-1,346
	Equal variances not assumed			-6,406	105,327	,000	-1,949	,304	-2,552	-1,346
This product seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	1,289	,259	-4,123	106	,000	-1,356	,329	-2,008	-,704
	Equal variances not assumed			-4,104	102,230	,000	-1,356	,330	-2,011	-,701
I am familiar with this brand	Equal variances assumed	,001	,974	-1,179	106	,241	-,378	,320	-1,013	,257
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,182	105,999	,240	-,378	,319	-1,011	,256
I would consider purchasing this product.	Equal variances assumed	8,765	,004	-3,373	106	,001	-1,170	,347	-1,858	-,483
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,344	96,886	,001	-1,170	,350	-1,865	-,476
I think this product is useful.	Equal variances assumed	,175	,677	-4,270	106	,000	-1,231	,288	-1,802	-,659
	Equal variances not assumed			-4,271	105,567	,000	-1,231	,288	-1,802	-,659
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	5,403	,022	-4,327	106	,000	-1,492	,345	-2,175	-,808
	Equal variances not assumed			-4,294	98,433	,000	-1,492	,347	-2,181	-,802
My willingness to buy this product is high.	Equal variances assumed	12,754	,001	-3,948	106	,000	-1,273	,323	-1,913	-,634
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,899	91,011	,000	-1,273	,327	-1,922	-,625

As the figure shows, the means of the statements measuring endorsement effectiveness in survey 5 are higher than the means of the statements in survey 3. Furthermore the 2-tailed sigma for all the statements measuring endorsement effectiveness is  $<.05$ , which indicates that there is a significant difference between the results of these two surveys. Also, since the 2-tailed sigma for the statement measuring brand familiarity is  $>.05$ , it can be concluded that the results are not affected by previous perceptions of the brand, because there is no significant difference in brand familiarity between the two surveys. Therefore, it can be concluded that the endorsement in survey 5 is significantly more effective than the endorsement in survey 3.

The results for the t-test between survey 4 and survey 6 is presented in figure 9.



Figure 9.

**Group Statistics**

	Survey	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I find this advertisement effective.	4	53	3,26	1,375	,189
	6	51	4,86	1,429	,200
This product seems appealing to me.	4	53	3,36	1,360	,187
	6	51	4,51	1,605	,225
I am familiar with this brand	4	53	2,08	1,627	,224
	6	51	2,00	1,342	,188
I would consider purchasing this product.	4	53	3,40	1,405	,193
	6	51	4,43	1,565	,219
I think this product is useful.	4	53	3,58	1,447	,199
	6	51	4,86	1,281	,179
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	4	53	3,15	1,420	,195
	6	51	4,35	1,683	,236
My willingness to buy this product is high.	4	53	2,79	1,350	,185
	6	51	4,04	1,843	,258

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
I find this advertisement effective.	Equal variances assumed	,034	,853	-5,815	102	,000	-1,599	,275	-2,144	-1,053
	Equal variances not assumed			-5,811	101,398	,000	-1,599	,275	-2,144	-1,053
This product seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	1,598	,209	-3,953	102	,000	-1,151	,291	-1,729	-,574
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,940	97,994	,000	-1,151	,292	-1,731	-,571
I am familiar with this brand	Equal variances assumed	,914	,341	,258	102	,797	,075	,293	-,506	,657
	Equal variances not assumed			,258	99,682	,797	,075	,292	-,504	,655
I would consider purchasing this product.	Equal variances assumed	,124	,726	-3,552	102	,001	-1,035	,291	-1,613	-,457
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,544	99,869	,001	-1,035	,292	-1,615	-,456
I think this product is useful.	Equal variances assumed	5,170	,025	-4,762	102	,000	-1,278	,268	-1,810	-,746
	Equal variances not assumed			-4,773	101,308	,000	-1,278	,268	-1,809	-,747
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	3,020	,085	-3,942	102	,000	-1,202	,305	-1,807	-,597
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,929	97,812	,000	-1,202	,306	-1,809	-,595
My willingness to buy this product is high.	Equal variances assumed	7,623	,007	-3,946	102	,000	-1,247	,316	-1,873	-,620
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,923	91,478	,000	-1,247	,318	-1,878	-,616

As seen in the figure above, the means of all the statements measuring endorsement effectiveness in survey 6 are higher than the means of the statements in survey 4. Furthermore, the 2-tailed sigma for all the statements measuring endorsement effectiveness is  $<.05$ , which indicates that there is a significant difference between the results in the two surveys. Also, since the 2-tailed sigma for the statement measuring brand familiarity is  $>.05$ , it can be concluded that the results are not affected by

previous perceptions of the brand, because there is no significant difference in brand familiarity between the two surveys.

Based on these t-tests, H3 can be confirmed, since the means of the statements measuring endorsement effectiveness in surveys 5 and 6 were higher than in 3 and 4 and the difference of the means was significant.

#### 4.3.4 H4

H4 is as follows:

H4: The gender of the athlete endorser does not affect the effectiveness of the endorsement.

The surveys that are relevant to this hypothesis are 3,4,5 and 6. In order to test this hypothesis, survey 3 and survey 4 were tested together and survey 5 and survey 6 were tested together. The results of the t-test between surveys 3 and 4 are presented in figure 10.

Figure 10.

Group Statistics					
	Survey	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I find this advertisement effective.	3	56	3,09	1,576	,211
	4	53	3,26	1,375	,189
This product seems appealing to me.	3	56	3,13	1,608	,215
	4	53	3,36	1,360	,187
I am familiar with this brand	3	56	1,91	1,719	,230
	4	53	2,08	1,627	,224
I would consider purchasing this product.	3	56	2,96	1,584	,212
	4	53	3,40	1,405	,193
I think this product is useful.	3	56	3,75	1,505	,201
	4	53	3,58	1,447	,199
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	3	56	2,89	1,603	,214
	4	53	3,15	1,420	,195
My willingness to buy this product is high.	3	56	2,55	1,374	,184
	4	53	2,79	1,350	,185

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
I find this advertisement effective.	Equal variances assumed	1,673	,199	-,616	107	,539	-,175	,284	-,738	,388
	Equal variances not assumed			-,618	106,314	,538	-,175	,283	-,736	,386
This product seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	3,888	,051	-,816	107	,416	-,233	,286	-,800	,333
	Equal variances not assumed			-,820	105,704	,414	-,233	,285	-,798	,331
I am familiar with this brand	Equal variances assumed	,076	,783	-,513	107	,609	-,165	,321	-,801	,472
	Equal variances not assumed			-,514	107,000	,608	-,165	,321	-,800	,471
I would consider purchasing this product.	Equal variances assumed	,022	,882	-1,503	107	,136	-,432	,287	-1,002	,138
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,508	106,567	,135	-,432	,286	-1,000	,136
I think this product is useful.	Equal variances assumed	,226	,635	,583	107	,561	,165	,283	-,396	,726
	Equal variances not assumed			,584	106,971	,560	,165	,283	-,395	,726
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	,498	,482	-,888	107	,377	-,258	,291	-,834	,318
	Equal variances not assumed			-,891	106,539	,375	-,258	,290	-,832	,316
My willingness to buy this product is high.	Equal variances assumed	,032	,858	-,915	107	,362	-,239	,261	-,756	,279
	Equal variances not assumed			-,916	106,849	,362	-,239	,261	-,756	,278

As seen in the figure above, the 2-tailed sigma for all the statements measuring endorsement effectiveness are  $>.05$ , which indicated that there is no significant difference in the results between the two surveys. Also, since the 2-tailed sigma for the statement measuring brand familiarity is  $>.05$ , it can be concluded that the results are not affected by previous perceptions of the brand, because there is no significant difference in brand familiarity between the two surveys.

The results for the t-test between surveys 5 and 6 are presented in figure 11.

Figure 11.

Group Statistics					
	Survey	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I find this advertisement effective.	5	52	5,04	1,584	,220
	6	51	4,86	1,429	,200
This product seems appealing to me.	5	52	4,48	1,809	,251
	6	51	4,51	1,605	,225
I am familiar with this brand	5	52	2,29	1,601	,222
	6	51	2,00	1,342	,188
I would consider purchasing this product.	5	52	4,13	2,010	,279
	6	51	4,43	1,565	,219
I think this product is useful.	5	52	4,98	1,488	,206
	6	51	4,86	1,281	,179
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	5	52	4,38	1,972	,273
	6	51	4,35	1,683	,236
My willingness to buy this product is high.	5	52	3,83	1,948	,270
	6	51	4,04	1,843	,258

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
I find this advertisement effective.	Equal variances assumed	,230	,633	,591	101	,556	,176	,297	-,414	,766
	Equal variances not assumed			,591	100,305	,556	,176	,297	-,414	,765
This product seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	2,170	,144	-,086	101	,932	-,029	,337	-,698	,640
	Equal variances not assumed			-,086	99,999	,931	-,029	,337	-,697	,639
I am familiar with this brand	Equal variances assumed	1,635	,204	,990	101	,324	,288	,291	-,289	,866
	Equal variances not assumed			,992	98,618	,324	,288	,291	-,289	,866
I would consider purchasing this product.	Equal variances assumed	8,183	,005	-,835	101	,406	-,297	,355	-1,002	,408
	Equal variances not assumed			-,837	96,094	,405	-,297	,355	-1,001	,407
I think this product is useful.	Equal variances assumed	1,175	,281	,431	101	,667	,118	,274	-,425	,661
	Equal variances not assumed			,432	99,332	,667	,118	,273	-,425	,661
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	Equal variances assumed	2,289	,133	,088	101	,930	,032	,362	-,686	,749
	Equal variances not assumed			,088	99,122	,930	,032	,361	-,685	,748
My willingness to buy this product is high.	Equal variances assumed	,429	,514	-,568	101	,571	-,212	,374	-,954	,529
	Equal variances not assumed			-,568	100,874	,571	-,212	,374	-,953	,529

As seen in the figure above, the 2-tailed sigma for all the statements measuring endorsement effectiveness are  $>.05$ , which indicates that there is no significant difference in the results between the two surveys. Also, since the 2-tailed sigma for the statement measuring brand familiarity is  $>.05$ , it can be concluded that the results are not affected by previous perceptions of the brand, because there is no significant difference in brand familiarity between the two surveys.

Based on these t-tests, H4 can be confirmed, since there was no significant difference in endorsement effectiveness between the endorsements including athletes of different gender.

Figure 12.

H1	Confirmed
H2	Confirmed
H3	Confirmed
H4	Confirmed

## 5. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

### 5.1 Match-up theory

The findings from this research are in line with the previous literature, especially regarding the match-up theory. The findings implied that an endorsement with high athlete-product congruence is more effective than an endorsement with low-athlete product congruence, when purchase intention, attitude towards the advertisement and attitude towards the product are used as the measures. Previous literature (Kamins, 1990; Kamins and Gupta, 1994; Kirmani and Shiv, 1998; Till and Busler, 2000; Kim and Na, 2007) have also found a high congruence to be more effective than a low congruence. The similarity of the findings of this study and of the previous literature can be explained by the match-up theory. Consumers might be perplexed if an athlete endorser is used in an advertisement for a product that shares very different characteristics than the athlete, and this often affects the effectiveness of the endorsement. It has been found in numerous studies that high congruence is significantly more effective than low congruence, and the findings of this study seem to further verify the theory.

The findings from this research also implied that an endorsement with low athlete-product congruence is not more effective than an advertisement without an endorsement. This has also been found to be the case in previous literature (Kamins and Gupta, 1994; Kim and Na, 2007). Like stated in the paragraph above, the confusion of consumers when seeing a low congruence endorsement seems to override the benefits of having an athlete endorse the product, and the overall effectiveness is very similar than if the advertisement would have no endorser at all.

The last finding regarding the match-up theory from this research is that an endorsement with high athlete-product congruence is more effective than an advertisement with no endorsement at all. The previous literature regarding the subject have also found this to be true (Kamins, 1990; Kamins and Gupta, 1994; Kirmani and Shiv, 1998; Till and Busler, 2000; Kim and Na, 2007). The reason for the use of athlete endorsements is to create more effective advertisements, and as mentioned above the match-up theory explains the causes for the effectiveness of

high congruence endorsements. Consumers relate the product and the athlete, and often this makes the advertisement more appealing to them.

All of these findings further confirm the match-up theory, which has been the leading theory in the field of celebrity endorsement for the last 20 years (Bergkvist and Zhou, 2016). The consumers' perceptions of the endorsement are very much affected by the athlete-product congruence, and high congruence has been proven to be more effective than low congruence.

## **5.2 The influence of gender**

The findings from this study seem to imply that the gender of the endorser has no effect on the effectiveness of the endorsement. Fink et al. (2012) came to the same conclusion in their research. However, not all of the previous literature is in line with the findings from this study. Klaus and Bailey (2008) found that an endorsement with a female endorser is more effective than an endorsement with a male endorser. However, their study did not use athletes as endorsers. This could possibly explain the differences, since athletes are viewed to have the same types of characteristics regardless of the gender, whereas for example male actors are perceived to have relatively different characteristics compared to actresses, e.g. masculinity and ruggedness (Simmers, Damron-Martinez and Haytko, 2009). The findings of this study might also be explained by the fact that the athletes used in this study have highly similar characteristics, which would lead to the consumers to perceive a similar level of affiliation between the athletes and the products.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

### **6.1 Main Findings**

This research was conducted to further understand the world of athlete endorsements and the perceptions that consumers have of the endorsements. The main theory applied for this research was the match-up theory, which states that the athlete-product congruence is a significant factor, when analyzing the effectiveness of the athlete endorsement. The findings from this study confirm this theory, since the findings imply that a high athlete-product congruence is significantly more effective than a low athlete-product congruence or an advertisement with no endorsement at all. It was also found that there is no difference in the effectiveness between a low congruence endorsement and an advertisement with no endorsement at all.

This study also analyzed the effect of the gender of the endorser on the endorsement. This study did not find a significant difference between the effectiveness of the endorsement with a male athlete endorser and an endorsement with a female athlete endorser.

### **6.2 Implications for International Business**

As mentioned in the introduction, athlete endorsements are extremely common in the modern world and a significant portion of the companies around the world have athletes endorsing and advertising their products. Because there is a high demand for athlete endorsers, signing athletes to endorse products is not cheap for a company. This means that it is vital for the companies to understand, which athletes are effective endorsers for their products and how to fully utilize the athletes they have signed. This study provides further insight into the world of the athlete endorsements, and especially interesting is the fact that the gender of the endorser seems to have no effect on the perceptions of the consumers. This allows the companies to choose both male and female athletes to endorse their product, however keeping in mind that the congruence needs to be high or moderate.



So, according to the findings of this study and the previous research, managers should carefully assess the perceived characteristics of their brand before choosing to use an athlete endorsement and before choosing an athlete to endorse the brand. An athlete with similar characteristics is the safest choice to ensure the maximum effectiveness of the endorsements. Managers should also keep in mind that the gender of the endorser seems to be unimportant. Therefore, they shouldn't exclude female athletes on the basis of their gender.

### **6.3 Limitations and Future Research**

However, this research does not come without limitations. The sample used in this study consisted mainly of students, and individuals with a high level of education. This has also been the case with most of the previous studies. Future research should be made with using samples with different demographics, so the effects of education and age can truly be understood.

Also, the athletes used in this study are both perceived to have fairly similar characteristics. Further research could be made using athletes from completely different sports and completely different backgrounds to further analyze the match-up theory and the effects of the endorser gender.

This study used only a high congruence product and a low congruence product. Previous literature has presented interesting findings regarding medium congruence products, so further research should be conducted using athletes of different gender and products with three levels of congruence.

Also, all of the brands used in this research were products and especially consumer goods. Further research should be conducted using different types of products or services as the brands used.

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## Appendices

### Pilot survey 1

The purpose of this survey is to examine how closely different athletes are associated with different products.

How closely do you associate former boxer Mike Tyson with these products?

	Not closely at all	A little closely	Somewhat closely	Closely	Extremely closely
Protein shake	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sports car	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chocolate bar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Washing machine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Razor blades	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Body wash	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corn flakes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leather boots	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fragrance line	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Laptop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How closely do you associate footballer Lionel Messi with these products?

	Not closely at all	A little closely	Somewhat closely	Closely	Extremely closely
Protein shake	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sports car	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chocolate bar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Washing machine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Razor blades	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Body wash	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corn flakes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leather boots	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fragrance line	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Laptop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How closely do you associate tennis star Serena Williams with these products?

	Not closely at all	A little closely	Somewhat closely	Closely	Extremely closely
Protein shake	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sports car	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chocolate bar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Washing machine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Razor blades	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Body wash	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corn flakes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leather boots	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fragrance line	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Laptop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How closely do you associate figure skater Kiira Korpi with these products?

	Not closely at all	A little closely	Somewhat closely	Closely	Extremely closely
Protein shake	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sports car	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chocolate bar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Washing machine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Razor blades	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Body wash	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corn flakes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leather boots	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fragrance line	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Laptop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What is your age?

17 or under

18 to 24

25 to 34

35 to 44

45 or over

What is your gender?

Male

Female

What is your nationality?

## Survey 1

The purpose of this survey is to measure consumers' reactions to this advertisement.



**Start your day with Schär**

Please answer these following statements:

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Completely agree
I am familiar with this brand.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find this advertisement effective.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This product seems appealing to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would consider purchasing this product.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think this product is useful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My willingness to buy this product is high.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What is your age?

17 or under

18 to 24

25 to 34

35 to 44

45 or over

What is your gender?



Male

Female

What is your nationality?

## Survey 2

The purpose of this survey is to measure consumers' reactions to this advertisement.

Get your gains



from Pure Protein shakes

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Please answer these following statements:

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Completely agree
I am familiar with this brand.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find this advertisement effective.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This product seems appealing to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would consider purchasing this product.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think this product is useful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My willingness to buy this product is high.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What is your age?

17 or under

18 to 24

25 to 34

35 to 44

45 or over

What is your gender?

Male

Female

What is your nationality?

### Survey 3

The purpose of this survey is to measure consumers' reactions to this advertisement by Schär Corn Flakes featuring former boxing champion Mike Tyson.



**Start your day with Schär**

Please answer these following statements:

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Completely agree
I am familiar with this brand.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find this advertisement effective.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This product seems appealing to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would consider purchasing this product.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think this product is useful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My willingness to buy this product is high.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What is your age?

17 or under

18 to 24

25 to 34

35 to 44

45 or over

What is your gender?

Male

Female

What is your nationality?

#### Survey 4

The purpose of this survey is to measure consumers' reactions to this advertisement by Schär Corn Flakes featuring tennis star Serena Williams.



**Start your day with Schär**

Please answer these following statements:

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Completely agree
I am familiar with this brand.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find this advertisement effective.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This product seems appealing to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would consider purchasing this product.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think this product is useful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My willingness to buy this product is high.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What is your age?

17 or under

18 to 24

25 to 34

35 to 44

45 or over

What is your gender?

Male

Female

What is your nationality?

## Survey 5

The purpose of this survey is to measure consumers' reactions to this advertisement by Pure Protein protein shakes featuring former boxing champion Mike Tyson.

Get your gains



from Pure Protein shakes

Please answer these following statements:

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Completely agree
I am familiar with this brand.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find this advertisement effective.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This product seems appealing to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would consider purchasing this product.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think this product is useful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My willingness to buy this product is high.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What is your age?

17 or under

18 to 24

25 to 34

35 to 44

45 or over

What is your gender?

Male

Female

What is your nationality?

## Survey 6

The purpose of this survey is to measure consumers' reactions to this advertisement by Pure Protein protein shakes featuring tennis star Serena Williams.

Get your gains



from Pure Protein shakes

Please answer these following statements:

	Completely disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Completely agree
I am familiar with this brand.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find this advertisement effective.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This product seems appealing to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would consider purchasing this product.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think this product is useful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This advertisement seems appealing to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My willingness to buy this product is high.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What is your age?

17 or under

18 to 24

25 to 34

35 to 44

45 or over

What is your gender?

Male

Female

What is your nationality?

