



Survival of The Fittest

A Quantitative Study on the Effect of Celebrity Fit on Swedish
Consumer Attitudes



Abstract:

Much research has been done with the intention to help companies determine how to choose celebrity endorser. One of the most commonly used theories is *source credibility theory*, which states that a celebrity endorser ought to have a high fit with the product endorsed. Regarding the extent to which celebrity endorsers are used, Sweden is on the far lower end compared globally. This study wants to determine whether high fit celebrities have a positive effect on Swedish consumers. This is done by comparing consumer attitudes when exposed to an advertisement featuring a high fit celebrity versus a low fit celebrity. By performing a quantitative study in Sweden I have found that utilizing a high fit celebrity has a more positive effect on consumer attitude. The study implicates that since celebrity endorser are not as common in Sweden, Swedish consumers see high fit celebrity as very trustworthy. Thus concluding that marketers ought to put effort into finding high fit celebrities for their marketing campaigns aimed at Swedish consumers.

Keywords:

Celebrity Endorsement, Source Credibility, Celebrity fit, Sweden, Consumer Marketing

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1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

With this report I aim to determine celebrity fit's effect on Swedish consumer behavior. The term *celebrity fit* refers to whether consumers perceive the endorsers as having knowledge within the field of the advertised product. The most common way consumers would perceive the endorser as knowledgeable is if he or she would normally use such a product in their professional life. In that case the endorser is seen as a *high fit* celebrity. If the opposite is true the endorser is seen as a low fit celebrity.

In this report I am researching the effect on Swedish consumer behavior, depending on whether a high versus a low fit celebrity is featured in an advertisement. More precisely, I have chosen to create a mock advertisement for a fictive sports drink. Two versions of this advertisement was created; one featuring famous Swedish soccer player Zlatan Ibrahimovic and one featuring famous Swedish actor Alexander Skarsgård. The former will be regarded as the high fit celebrity and the latter as the low fit celebrity.

So why is this interesting? Celebrity endorsement is a widely used phenomenon. When marketers look to choose a celebrity to feature in their advertisement often prioritize for high fit celebrities. The idea of *high* and *low* fit celebrities has its foundation in what is called *Source Credibility Model*. The model has its origin in the U.S. and is used all over the world. However, little research and no recent research has been made on Swedish consumers. I wish to determine what the effects celebrity fit has on Swedish consumers attitudes to know if Swedish marketers should or should not put much effort and money into finding a high fit celebrity.

Research question:

"Does high fit celebrities have positive effects on Swedish consumer attitudes?"

1.2. Background

Famous people that are supporting brands and products is not a new phenomenon. Already in the late 19th century Pope Leo XIII was featured in advertisement posters for *Vin Marini*; a wine with cocaine in it. Other examples are former president of Russia Gorbachev who advertised Pizza Hut, former US president Theodor Roosevelt that advertised weapons and not to mention former US senator Bob Dole that advertised everything from Viagra to Pepsi soft drinks (Cracked, 2011).

The phenomenon has only grown stronger by the years. For example UK advertisements featuring celebrities have increased by over 100 percent the recent ten years (Pringle, 2004). As more and more companies feature celebrities in their advertisements, more and more studies have been conducted regarding the topic. Companies have been asking themselves: Do celebrities make a real difference for a campaign? Perhaps surprisingly, research suggests that celebrity endorsements in general barely make any difference when it comes to key performance measurements such as enjoyment and involvement (Millward Brown, 2013). That does not imply that celebrity campaigns are not successful. On the contrary, some are very successful. However, it tells us that it is of great importance for companies to achieve a better understanding of what celebrity to bet their budget on in order to maximize effectiveness. For this reason extensive research has been conducted in the field of celebrity endorsements: In what sectors are celebrities mostly used, use of local versus international celebrities, how celebrities can be used as branding cues and the effect of the celebrity's recognizability, likeability and association.

One of the most frequently used and talked about theories is the so called *Match-up Theory* (Ang and Dubelaar, 2006). It has been written about in many different forms but the general conclusion is that it ought to be a fit between the product advertised and celebrity endorsing it. Two of the most famous and implemented models are: *The Source Attractiveness Model* (McGuire, 1968) and *The Source Credibility Model* (Hovland, Janis, and Kelley, 1953; Hovland and Weiss, 1951). The Source Attractiveness model tries to explain why celebrities can successfully endorse products outside their field of expertise. Its explanation is based upon the ideas of liking, similarity and familiarity. The Source Credibility Model, however, suggests

that the celebrity included in the advertisements should have a certain level of trustworthiness and expertise in the field of the product endorsed in order to maximize effectiveness. This explains why for example tennis stars like Roger Federer are the best celebrity choice for promoting Wilson tennis racquets or why sprint stars like Usain Bolt is the best choice for promoting Puma running shoes.

1.2. Problem Area

However, little research has tested how consumer attitudes are effected by celebrity fit in Sweden. Therefore we do not know how well the Source Credibility Model holds in Sweden 2015.

Models for maximizing effectiveness when choosing celebrity endorser do not work similarly all around the globe. A study from 2013 shows that celebrities were used in circa 40 percent of the advertisements in Turkey and Japan. In Turkey, sometimes that number has even risen to 70 percent, as in Japan (Kilburn, 1998). In 2013 the same number was 10 percent in the US and 12 percent in the UK. Although in contrast, Sweden, Ukraine and Canada had the lowest numbers with merely 5 percent celebrity endorsers featured in advertisements (Şimşek, 2014).

These large differences in numbers for different regions can probably both be explained by general cultural differences and more specific domestic differences in advertisement attitudes. Regardless, it raises questions since much research in the field of celebrity endorsement has been done in the US. Additionally, some of the models that have been developed through these research projects have been widely adopted and used all around the world. However, granted that significant cultural differences in attitudes towards celebrity endorsers persist it would be irrational for e.g. to use a model developed in the US when trying to maximize effectiveness for a advertisement campaign in Sweden. Research has been done where consumers' enjoyment, involvement and branding regarding advertisements featuring celebrity endorser are measured. It has been shown that in countries where celebrity endorsers are very common consumers tend to score lower on these key measurements (Millward Brown, 2013).

This is also the case when it comes to The Source Credibility Model. The model has its roots in 1940s during the World War II, when the US government was trying evaluate how gain public supports for its war efforts. Psychologists who had previously worked at the War Department later continued to develop the model at Yale University (Hovland and Weiss, 1951).

1.4. Purpose

The purpose with this report is to help Swedish marketers determine whether they ought to put time, effort and money into finding high fit celebrities to endorse their products. Simply put; I wish help make Swedish marketing to become more effective.

The purpose is reached by testing the effects of high versus low fit celebrity endorsers on Swedish consumer attitudes.

1.5. Delimitations

I have delimited my research in a number of ways. Mostly, because of limitations regarding the scope of a Bachelor Thesis but also in regards to the time limit set by Stockholm School of Economics.

Firstly, I have only chosen to include two celebrities in my questionnaire: one with high product fit and one with low. The two celebrities are football player Zlatan Ibrahimovic and actor Alexander Skarsgård. Furthermore, I have only research one type of product. The product is a fictive sports drink. To include more celebrities and more product types I simply would have needed more time.

Secondly, I have focused on the following measurements: Perceived quality and purchase intention. The reason is that I believe it is of interest to the companies to maximize sales. Thus I do not only find these measurements the most relevant, there is also a clear linkage between them.

Thirdly, I have limited my research to only include Swedish consumers. The reason is that little previous research has been done here even though celebrity endorsement marketing differs from rest of the world.

Lastly, I have chosen a random sample of respondents. Thus I have not taken into account that the results may differ depending on age, interest or other factors.

1.6. Expected Contribution

With this report I wish to determine how consumer attitudes are affected by celebrity fit in Sweden. Recent studies within this specific field of celebrity endorsement have not been made in Sweden. Recent foreign studies have not determined consumer attitudes, but rather to which degree consumers remember the advertisements.

2. Theories & Hypothesis

2.1. Rationale behind Chosen Theories

I wish to determine whether it is beneficial to use a celebrity endorser that is knowledgeable and trustworthy within the same field as the product advertised. Therefore, I use the Source Credibility Model as a basis for my analysis. However, since my research is done in Sweden I will shortly discuss the unique of Sweden that may have an impact on the Source Credibility Model and subsequently my hypothesis.

Furthermore, as the fundamental purpose with this research is to help guide Swedish companies in order for them to maximize marketing effectiveness, I have chosen to include theories regarding *perceived quality* and *purchase intention*. These theories will help me determine what type of celebrity will lead to highest gross sales.

2.2. Celebrity Endorsement Theory

Celebrity endorsements have been proven to have a clear positive effect on consumers' purchase intention (Agrawal and Kamura, 1995). Generally because campaigns that include celebrities have a higher tendency to catch the attention of the consumer. More specifically because of a number of factors: increased attention, image polishing brand introduction, brand repositioning and underpin global campaigns (Erdogan, 1999).

However, using celebrity endorsers are not risk-free as the negative publicity for the endorser can have negative effect on the brand and product endorsed, which is especially true for athlete endorsers. As marketers usually have to pay large sums of money to secure the biggest celebrities to endorse their brand and product, minimizing risks ought to be a major concern. A star athlete like Zlatan Ibrahimovic could potentially lead to increased risk, as the brand as to take into account that scandals and negative sports performance dramatically could decrease the trustworthiness and thus advertisement effectiveness (Koo, Ruihley and Dittmore, 2012).

2.3. Source Credibility

Credibility is widely seen as one of the most important fundamentals of celebrity endorsement (Erdogan, 1999). Even though Aristotle already spoke of *logos* in Ancient Greece and research on source credibility begun in the 1930s, little has been said regarding what determines whether a celebrity is a good fit or not. The issue has especially been returning research in the US. Dr. Roobina Ohanian of University of Texas at Austin developed an index measuring the impact of celebrity credibility on purchase intentions (Ohanian, Roobina (1990). "Construction and Validation of a Scale to Measure Celebrity Endorsers' Perceived Expertise, Trustworthiness, and Attractiveness". *Journal of Advertising*). Dr. Ohanian's scale is widely used in the US and measures 15 factors divided into three components: attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise. Dr. Ohanian's scale consists of the following factors:

Table 1: Ohanian's Scale

Attractiveness	Trustworthiness	Expertise
Unattractive – Attractive	Undependable – Dependable	Not an expert - Expert
Not classy – Classy	Dishonest – Honest	Inexperienced – experienced
Ugly – Beautiful	Unreliable – Reliable	Un - Knowledgeable
Plain – Elegant	Insincere – Sincere	Unqualified - Qualified
Not sexy – Sexy	Untrustworthy – Trustworthy	Unskilled – Skilled

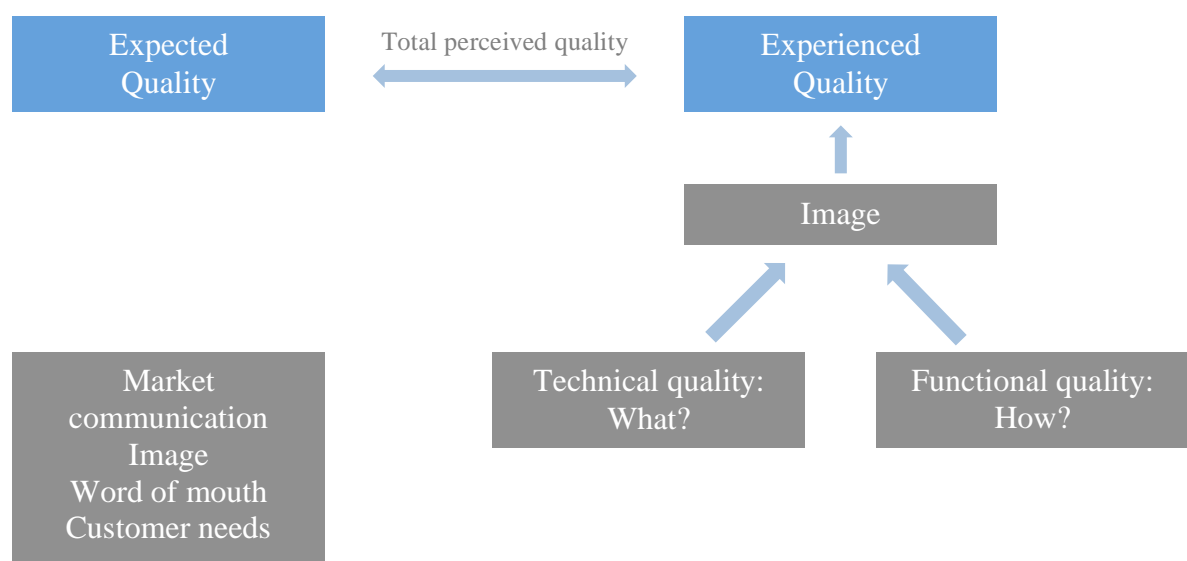
Moreover, as Ohanian's scale tells us trustworthiness and expertise are fundamental keystones when it comes to celebrity endorsements, a theory that is well supported from other parts of the research community. If an endorser is believed to be an expert in the field of the advertised product, purchase intention is generally increased (Erdogan, 1999; Kamins, 1989). It is important to stress the word *believe* in this case. That is to say, the celebrity endorser does not actually have to be an expert. Rather, what is important is whether the consumer perceives the endorser to be knowledge within a given field.

2.4. Transferring Theory to Swedish Market

When talking about source credibility an aspect that sometimes does not get mentioned as much is when a celebrity is associated with many different brands. In the mind of the consumer this phenomenon could be perceived as what is colloquially referred to as *selling out* (Erdogan, 1999). Even if, for example, not mentioned in Dr Ohanian's scale it ought to be taken into account in greater extent when companies choose celebrity endorser. The risk of selling out should also be discussed in the context of geographical differences when it comes to celebrities endorsement. As previously mentioned, Research has been done where consumers' enjoyment, involvement and branding regarding advertisements featuring celebrity endorser are measured. It has been shown that in countries where celebrity endorsers are very common consumers tend to score lower on these key measurements (Millward Brown, 2013). Thus the subsequent question is how would consumers in a country like Sweden score on these measurements? Well, Sweden is the precise opposite of the countries like Japan and Turkey when it comes to the extent that celebrity endorsers are utilized. Therefore, the obvious hypothesis would be that Swedes is to find celebrity endorsers more trustworthy.

2.5. Perceived Quality

Figure 1: Perceived Quality Model



Quality is known to have a major impact on customer satisfaction as well as brand value. When trying to create a sustaining business it is of great importance to incorporate perceived quality as a measurement and exceed competitors perceived quality. Thus, companies want to use its marketing money wisely in order to maximize perceived quality.

To evaluate this factor *The Perceived Quality Model* (Figure 1) can be used (Grönroos 1993). By using this model we can see that consumers experience quality as the difference between *expected quality* and *experienced quality*. Expected quality consists of *marketing communication*, *image*, *word of mouth* and *customer needs*. As seen these factors are both such that are controlled by an organization itself (e.g. marketing communication) and such that are out of the control realm of the organization (e.g. customer needs). Furthermore, experienced quality can be referred to as *image*. However, image in this case is more tangible and consists of *what* the product does (technical quality) and *how* it does it (functional quality). Since marketing concerns expected quality, we are going to focus on that part of the model. Moreover, we are going to focus on the aspects of expected quality that an organization can actually control, i.e. market communication. In the area of market communication a trustworthy celebrity endorser would increase expected quality. Since my hypothesis is that Zlatan Ibrahimovic will be seen as the more trustworthy endorser, he will score higher on expected quality and thus perceived quality.

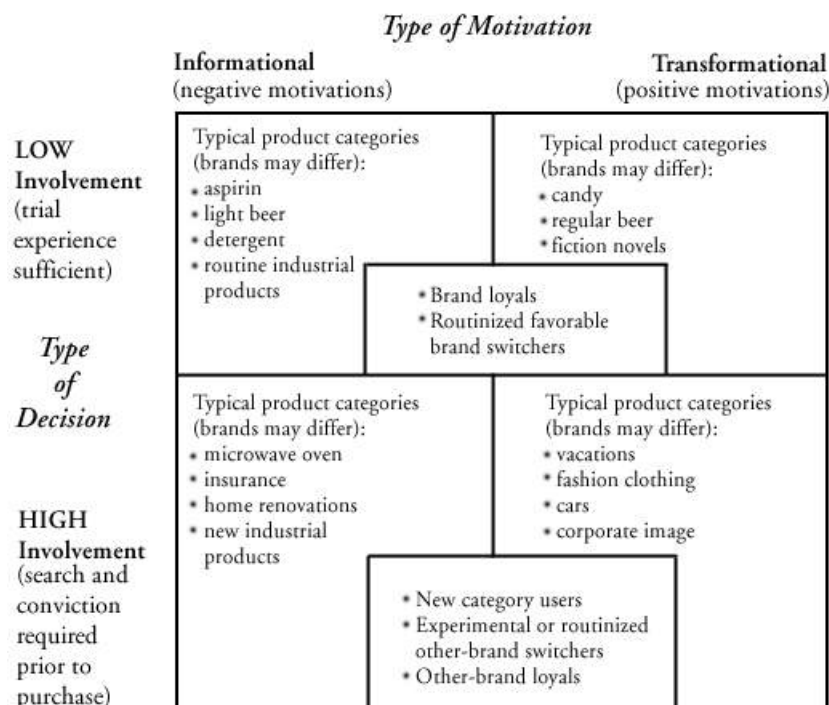
2.6. Purchase intention

Moreover it is important to determine what type of celebrity will in the end benefit a companies sales the most. That is to say; will celebrity that is associated with the product advertisement result in more consumers actually deciding to purchase the product.

Here I will thus measure *purchase intention*. It is important to notice that a respondent stating a high purchase intention in a questionnaire is not the same as that person actually purchasing the item in question. What is measured is rather a form of loyalty that often is hoped to have some sort of correlation with actual purchase, even though that has been hard to prove.

However, the degree to which purchase intention is linked to marketing and how intention then is formed into actual behavior is much dependent on the type of product. According to the *Rossiter-Percy Grid* (Figure 2), a sports drink would be seen as a *low-involvement* and *transformational* product. The level of involvement is determined by how quick a customer can determine whether he or she wish to purchase the product or not. Furthermore, a transformational product takes the consumers to a more positive state of mind. Thus, when forming a marketing communication for a sports drink it is of importance to have emotional authenticity, to have likeability and elicit link correctly elicited emotional response to the drink. Both likeability and authenticity can be linked to Ohanian's scale and also trustworthiness. One would expect Zlatan Ibrahimovic, as an endorser would to a higher degree elicit correct emotions that are linked to the product and thus score better on purchase intention.

Figure 2: Rossiter-Percy Grid



Hypothesis 1

The following variables will have a higher mean when there is a high celebrity fit:

- a) Respondents' probability to purchase will be higher.
- b) Respondents' probability to recommend the product will be higher.
- c) Respondents' belief of others' opinion will be higher.
- d) Respondents' perception of product quality will be higher.
- e) Respondents' belief of usage frequency will be higher.
- f) Respondents' perception of celebrity's fitness to recommend a sports drink will be higher
- g) Respondents' perception of celebrity's trustworthiness will be higher.
- h) Respondents' perception of celebrity's sincerity will be higher.
- i) Respondents' perception of celebrity's reliability will be higher.
- j) Respondents' perception of celebrity's knowledgeability regarding sports drinks will be higher.

3. Methodology

3.1. Chosen approach

After discussing with my instructor Jonas Colliander I have chosen a deductive approach for this report. Thus I have begun with choosing a number of theories that helps me answer my question, then I have framed hypotheses for each theory and finally test these hypotheses through empirical research.

3.2. Design of Study

In order for my report to represent the opinions and reactions of the larger population I have chosen a quantitative research. I wish to determine the effects on Swedish consumers, which is a pretty large group of people. Since a quantitative method is based on numbers and statistics it is suitable when one wish to draw conclusions about a large group of people even if one only have resources to research a smaller group (Eliasson, 2006).

3.3. Design of Experiment

My respondents were divided into two groups, where each group got to answer different questionnaires. The questionnaires both included the same questions, which tried to evaluate purchase intention, perceived quality, brand attitude and perceived trustworthiness (level of expertise) of the featured celebrity. What differed between the two groups was the advertisement they were exposed to.

Both ads depicted a generic sports drink poster. However, one ad included famous Swedish football player Zlatan Ibrahimovic and the other famous Swedish actor Alexander Skarsgård. The two celebrities were chosen with the intention to have one that fitted the advertised product well and one that did not, i.e. one high fit celebrity and one low fit. It is common to conduct two pilot study before settling on a final layout of a questionnaire (Eljertsson, 2005). This would have been beneficial in this particular study since I then could have delegated a pilot study to determine whether Ibrahimovic is seen as a high fit celebrity and Skarsgård as a low fit in regards to

sports drink advertisements. However, no pilot study was conducted due to the time limit.

In total I asked eighty people. The respondents were divided into two separate groups, thus with forty in each. The reason for this particular number of respondents was that I intended to conduct a t-test which requires 30 answers to be adequate (Eljertsson, 2005). In order to achieve highest possible diversity in terms of dwelling, age and types of people I decided to conduct my research at the Central Station at Vasagatan, Stockholm. I chose to distribute the questionnaires by hand in a closed physical setting as it results in a higher response rate, thus takes less time, and I can control that the respondents do not interact when answering (Eljertsson, 2005).

3.4. Design of Experiment Questions

The two questionnaire groups were handed the same questions. The only exception was when a question stated the name of the celebrity. I had three types of questions: ordinal, nominal and range.

The majority of the questions were ordinal and aimed to research the respondents' purchase intention, perceived quality, brand attitude and perceived trustworthiness (level of expertise) of the featured celebrity. These ordinal questions were answered in a scale of one to seven, where seven always indicated the most positive answer in accordance with the *Likert Scale* (Eljertsson, 2005). However, typical Likert Scale questions include a statement which follows with a scale from *I strongly disagree* to *I strongly agree*. The questionnaire would benefit from better formulated questions.

The nominal questions were typically profiling questions, e.g. dwelling. There was only one range question asking about respondents' age. Lastly, I always included zero as an alternative for when the respondents did not know what to answer alternatively if he or she chose not to answer for whatever reason. However, I wrote the questions myself using the theories regarding perceived quality, purchase intention and perceived trustworthiness (level of expertise). It would have been beneficial to instead find suitable indexes, which are groups of designed questions for a specific factor (Eljertsson, 2005).

Regarding the layout of the questionnaire, it can have an impact on test results. A better, more serious looking questionnaire for example makes a better impression. Moreover, in which order questions are positioned can have an impact as well. I tried for example to have easier questions that are direct linked to the study in the beginning. Whereas more personal questions, e.g. age and exercise questions were positioned in the back of the questionnaire. The idea is that the respondent is unwilling to throw away a questionnaire if he or she is already almost finished. However, questions that make him or her uncomfortable are found in the beginning they may be more willing to deny participation in the study (Eljertsson, 2005).

3.5. Variables of Investigation

3.5.1. Independent Variables

The independent variables were the advertisements for a generic sports drink; one depicting Zlatan Ibrahimovic and one Alexander Skarsgård. The sports drink advertisement was fictive and included no real life logotype. The intent was to exclude any respondent preconceptions. Lastly, the two advertisements were exactly the same and differed only in which celebrity that was included next to the sports drink.

3.5.2. Dependent Variables

Probability to Buy this Sports Drink (Purchase intention)

I asked the respondent how likely it was that they were going to buy the sports drink included in the advertisement next time they bought a sports drink. Respondent answered on a scale from one to seven. One meaning not likely at all and seven meaning very likely. Zero was also included as an alternative for when the respondents did not know.

Probability to Recommend a friend to Buy the Sports Drink (Purchase intention)

I asked the respondent how likely it was that they were going to recommend the sports drink included in the advertisement to a friend. Respondent answered on a scale from one to seven. One meaning not likely at all and seven meaning very likely. Zero was also included as an alternative for when the respondents did not know.

Others' Opinion of This Sports Drink (Perceived quality)

I asked the respondents what they thought about others' opinion of the sports drink included in the advertisement. Respondent answered on a scale from one to seven. One meaning *very positive* and seven meaning *very negative*. Zero was also included as an alternative for when the respondents did not know.

Perceived Quality of Sports Drink (Perceived quality)

I asked the respondents what they thought about the quality of the sports drink included in the advertisement. Respondent answered on a scale from one to seven. One meaning *very positive* and seven meaning *very negative*. Zero was also included as an alternative for when the respondents did not know.

Trustworthiness of This Sports Drink Producer (Perceived quality)

I asked the respondents what they thought about the trustworthiness of the sports drink included in the advertisement. Respondent answered on a scale from one to seven. One meaning *very positive* and seven meaning *very negative*. Zero was also included as an alternative for when the respondents did not know.

Estimated Frequency of Usage (Purchase intention)

I asked the respondent how often they thought that they were going to buy the sports drink included in the advertisement next time they bought a sports drink. Respondent answered on a scale from one to seven. One meaning *never* and seven meaning three or more times a week. Zero was also included as an alternative for when the respondents did not know.

How Fit to Recommend a Sports Drink Do You Find the Celebrity?
(Trustworthiness/Expert)

I asked the respondent how fit they thought the celebrity featured in the advertisement was to recommend a sports drink. Respondent answered on a scale from one to seven. One meaning *very positive* and seven meaning *very negative*. Zero was also included as an alternative for when the respondents did not know.

How Trustworthy Do You Perceive the Celebrity? (Trustworthiness/Expert)

I asked the respondent how trustworthy they thought the celebrity featured in the advertisement was. Respondent answered on a scale from one to seven One meaning *very positive* and seven meaning *very negative*. Zero was also included as an alternative for when the respondents did not know.

How Sincere Do You Perceive the Celebrity? (Trustworthiness/Expert)

I asked the respondent how sincere they thought the celebrity featured in the advertisement was. Respondent answered on a scale from one to seven One meaning *very positive* and seven meaning *very negative*. Zero was also included as an alternative for when the respondents did not know.

How Reliable Do You Perceive the Celebrity? (Trustworthiness/Expert)

I asked the respondent how reliable they thought the celebrity featured in the advertisement was. Respondent answered on a scale from one to seven One meaning *very positive* and seven meaning *very negative*. Zero was also included as an alternative for when the respondents did not know.

How Knowledgeable Do You Think the Celebrity is When it Comes to Sports Drinks?
(Trustworthiness/Expert)

I asked the respondent how knowledgeable they thought the celebrity featured in the advertisement was when it came to sports drink. Respondent answered on a scale from one to seven One meaning *very positive* and seven meaning *very negative*. Zero was also included as an alternative for when the respondents did not know.

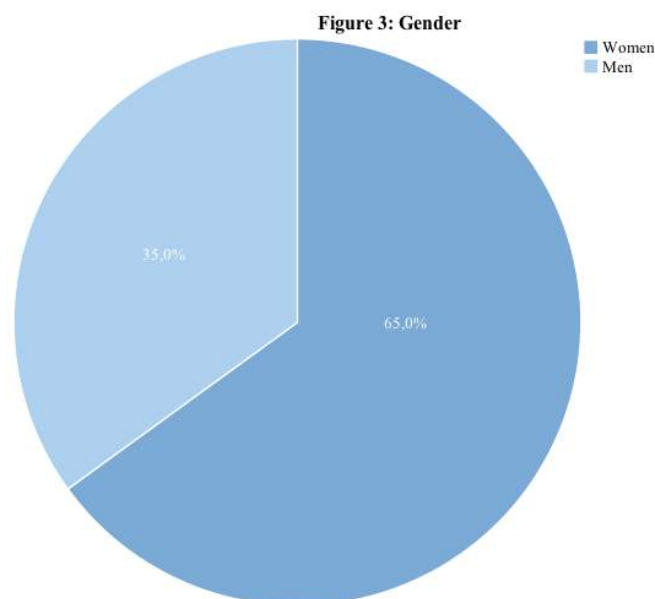
3.6. Collection of Data

As previous stated, I made the choice of distributing the questionnaires by hand mainly because it results in a higher response rate, thus takes less time, and I can control that the respondents do not interact when answering (Eljertsson, 2005).

The main alternative would have been to distribute the questionnaires online. However, I choose to do a physical study over an online study for a number of reasons. Firstly, with an online study it is usually hard to obtain a sufficient number of

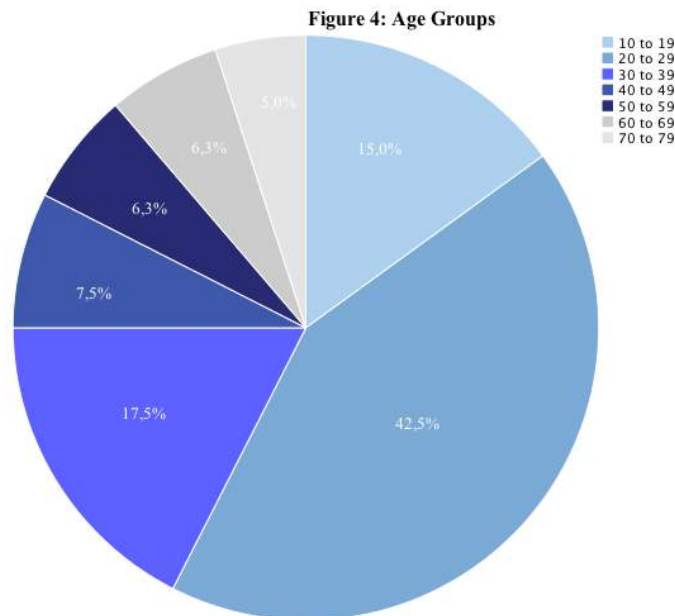
answers. Of course you can use incentives but I never saw that as a real alternative as it requires a budget. Secondly, even the answers you obtain with an online questionnaire can be of less quality. Respondents usually care less of they study when sitting behind their computer at home and there is a risk of respondents rushing through the questionnaire. When performing a study on the field you are actually meeting the respondents thus mitigating the risk of erroneously filled out questionnaires (Eljertsson, 2005). Thirdly, I would have had obtained a much more skewed sample if performing an online questionnaire as the most of the respondents would have been friends from school.

Therefore, I printed out my questionnaire and asked people in real life. My sample consists of merely eighty people as questioning in real life is quite time demanding. However, I had beforehand concluded that forty people in each group of respondents would be a sufficient number in order for me to draw adequate conclusions. I printed forty questionnaires with an advertisement including Zlatan Ibrahimovic and forty questionnaires with an advertisement including Alexander Skarsgård. I choose to ask people waiting for their trains at the Central Station in Stockholm. My choice was based on the reasoning that it is difficult to ask people walking on the streets as they are most likely in a rush. However, I could not disturb people who are spending time at a coffeehouse as it would be intruding both to their personal life and to the business

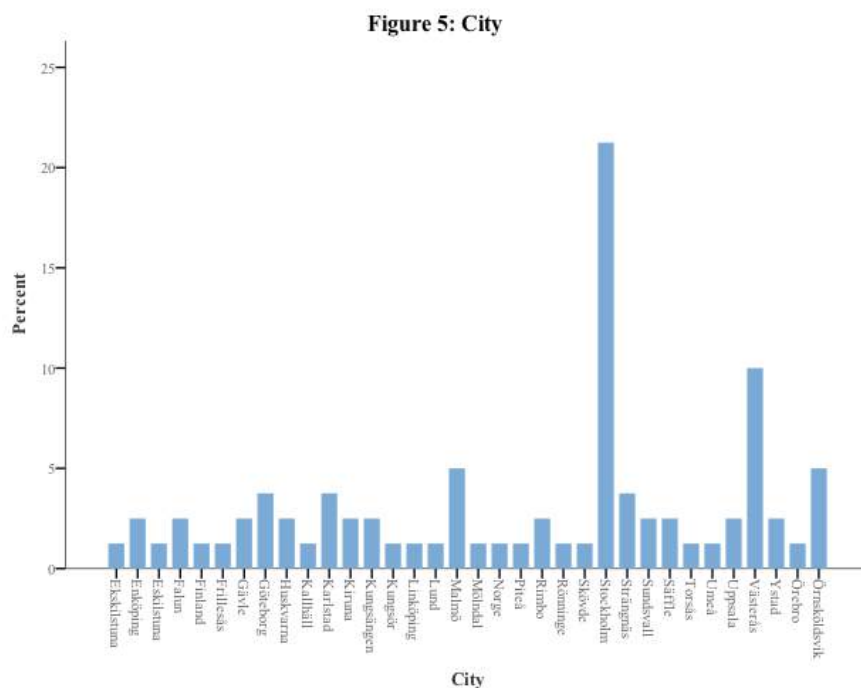


as such. Therefore, the Central Station was the best location I could think of where people were sitting down but had nothing really to do.

Out of 80 respondents 65 were women and 27 were men. Thus there were 65 percent women and 33.8 percent men.



Out of 80 people 12 were between age 10 and 19, 34 were between age 20 and 29, 14 were between age 30 and 39, 6 were between age 40 and 49, 5 were between age 50 and 59, 5 were between age 60 and 69 and 4 were between age 70 and 79. Respondents between age 10 and 39 made up 75 percent with people between age 20 and 29 being the largest group (43.5 percent).



17 of 80 respondents stated Stockholm as their place of living, thus making up 21.3 percent of respondents. Except for Stockholm the place of living was pretty evenly mixed.

3.7. Credibility of Study

3.7.1. Reliability

Reliability determines if the research could be redone and still achieve the same results. One way to increase reliability is to perform the research multiple times. Unfortunately, I have not done that, thus decreasing my research's reliability (Eljertsson, 2005).

3.7.2. Validity

In order to know to which degree general conclusions can be drawn from the research results I have to conclude the level of validity. That is to say, is the research measuring what it is suppose to measure. Validity can be divided into four subcategories:

Internal Validity

Internal validity concerns the design of the questionnaire itself. The aim is to exclude as many other factors as possible that could have an impact on results.

I wrote the questions myself without conducting any pilot study (Eliasson, 2006) nor using existing indexes, i.e. groups of questions that are designed to determine a specific factor (e.g. purchase intention). This can have a negative impact on validity (Eljertsson, 2005).

Moreover, the celebrities I have chosen could have an impact on internal validity. I tried to choose celebrities of equal age, gender and that people knew about to a similar degree. People can, however, have personal opinions regarding the celebrities. Unfortunately, Zlatan Ibrahimovic was very often negatively featured in media at the time I performed my research. However, one could argue that people in general have a more positive image of Zlatan Ibrahimovic than Alexander Skarsgård. To include that factor in my research I asked respondents if they knew about the celebrity in the

picture and in a separate question they thought about the celebrity on a scale from one to seven.

External Validity

In order to determine whether general conclusions on the larger population of Sweden can be drawn from my sample, one has to determine level of external validity. Since I performed my research at the Central Station in Stockholm my sample consists of people from all around the country. However, one could argue that the sample size could be increased. Furthermore, I could have performed my research over a greater period of time.

Measurement Validity

I have used multi-item measures to maximize measurement validity. A seven graded Likert Scale was used. However, the questions could have been stated more as statements, which is the norm (Eljertsson, 2005).

Ecological Validity

Firstly, respondents did not view the advertisement in an environment that they would normally view such a poster. Secondly, the sports drink depicted in the advertisement was not real.

4. Results

Using a series of t-tests I have tested hypothesis 1. I have made the assumption to accept a hypothesis at a p-value (significance) under 5 percent (0.05). The probability to reject a hypothesis is thus lower than 5 percent.

I have used an answering scale between 1 and 7, where 7 always has been the most positive or alternatively the highest answer. The results of the research are the following:

4.1. Processing of Data

Through independent t-tests I have tried to determine whether there were any differences in mean. The two groups of independent variables that we compared were one with Zlatan Ibrahimovic and one with Alexander Skarsgård as the endorser of a commercial for a generic sports drink. Furthermore, I tested a number of dependent variables, which aimed to measure purchase intention, perceived quality, brand attitude and trustworthiness. Lastly, there were a couple of questions to profile the respondents.

4.2. Summary of Data

Table 2: Probability to Buy this Sports Drink (*Purchase intention*)

	Celebrity Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Probability to Buy	Alexander Skarsgård	40	2,33	1,745	,276
	Zlatan Ibrahimovic	40	5,18	1,615	,255

The high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) scored a higher mean than the low fit celebrity (Alexander Skarsgård).

Table 3: Probability to Recommend a Friend to Buy the Sports Drink (*Purchase intention*)

	Celebrity Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Probability to Recommend	Alexander Skarsgård	40	2,53	1,754	,277
	Zlatan Ibrahimovic	40	5,48	1,601	,253

The high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) scored a higher mean than the low fit celebrity (Alexander Skarsgård).

Table 4: Others' Opinion of This Sports Drink (*Perceived quality*)

	Celebrity Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Other's Opinion	Alexander Skarsgård	40	3,23	1,349	,213
	Zlatan Ibrahimovic	40	5,68	1,023	,162

The high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) scored a higher mean than the low fit celebrity (Alexander Skarsgård).

Table 5: Perceived Quality of Sports Drink (*Perceived quality*)

	Celebrity Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Perceived Quality	Alexander Skarsgård	40	2,98	1,544	,244
	Zlatan Ibrahimovic	40	5,75	1,171	,185

The high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) scored a higher mean than the low fit celebrity (Alexander Skarsgård).

Table 6: Trustworthiness of This Sports Drink Producer (*Perceived quality*)

	Celebrity Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Trustworthiness of Sports Drink Producer	Alexander Skarsgård	40	2,78	1,493	,236
	Zlatan Ibrahimovic	40	5,65	1,075	,170

The high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) scored a higher mean than the low fit celebrity (Alexander Skarsgård).

Table 7: Estimated Frequency of Usage (*Purchase intention*)

	Celebrity Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Estimated Usage	Alexander Skarsgård	40	1,73	1,037	,164
	Zlatan Ibrahimovic	40	2,73	1,739	,275

The high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) scored a higher mean than the low fit celebrity (Alexander Skarsgård).

Table 8: How Fit to Recommend a Sports Drink Do You Find the Celebrity? (*Trustworthiness/Expert*)

	Celebrity Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Is the Celebrity Fit to Recommend?	Alexander	40	3,03	1,405	,222
	Skarsgård				
	Zlatan Ibrahimovic	40	5,88	,992	,157

The high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) scored a higher mean than the low fit celebrity (Alexander Skarsgård).

Table 9: How Trustworthy Do You Perceive the Celebrity?
(*Trustworthiness/Expert*)

	Celebrity Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Is the Celebrity Trustworthy?	Alexander	40	2,35	1,388	,219
	Skarsgård				
	Zlatan Ibrahimovic	40	5,75	1,214	,192

The high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) scored a higher mean than the low fit celebrity (Alexander Skarsgård).

Table 10: How Sincere Do You Perceive the Celebrity? (*Trustworthiness/Expert*)

	Celebrity Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Is the Celebrity Sincere?	Alexander	40	2,35	1,477	,234
	Skarsgård				
	Zlatan Ibrahimovic	40	4,95	1,449	,229

The high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) scored a higher mean than the low fit celebrity (Alexander Skarsgård).

Table 11: How Reliable Do You Perceive the Celebrity? (*Trustworthiness/Expert*)

	Celebrity Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Is the Celebrity Reliable?	Alexander	40	2,80	1,572	,249
	Skarsgård				
	Zlatan Ibrahimovic	40	4,53	1,601	,253

The high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) scored a higher mean than the low fit celebrity (Alexander Skarsgård).

Table 12: How Knowledgeable Do You Think the Celebrity is When it Comes to Sports Drinks? (*Trustworthiness/Expert*)

	Celebrity Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Is the Celebrity Knowledgeable?	Alexander				
	Skarsgård	40	1,98	1,250	,198
	Zlatan Ibrahimovic	40	5,93	1,023	,162

The high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) scored a higher mean than the low fit celebrity (Alexander Skarsgård).

4.3. Individually Reported Results

Respondents' probability to purchase was higher when a high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) was featured in the advertisement. Thus I do not reject my hypothesis 1a.

Respondents' probability to recommend the product was higher when a high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) was featured in the advertisement. Thus I do not reject my hypothesis 1b.

Respondents' belief of others' opinion was higher when a high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) was featured in the advertisement. Thus I do not reject my hypothesis 1c.

Respondents' perception of product quality was higher when a high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) was featured in the advertisement. Thus I do not reject my hypothesis 1d

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Respondents' belief of usage frequency was higher when a high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) was featured in the advertisement. Thus I do not reject my hypothesis 1e.

Respondents' perception of celebrity's fitness to recommend a sports drink was higher when a high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) was featured in the advertisement. Thus I do not reject my hypothesis 1f.

Respondents' perception of celebrity's trustworthiness was higher when a high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) was featured in the advertisement. Thus I do not reject my hypothesis 1g.

Respondents' perception of celebrity's sincerity was higher when a high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) was featured in the advertisement. Thus I do not reject my hypothesis 1h.

Respondents' perception of celebrity's reliability was higher when a high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) was featured in the advertisement. Thus I do not reject my hypothesis 1i.

Respondents' perception of celebrity's knowledgeability regarding sports drinks was higher when a high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) was featured in the advertisement. Thus I do not reject my hypothesis 1j.

5. Discussion & Implications

5.1. Discussion

The fundamental purpose with my research has been to illustrate how the geographical and cultural differences can have implications on well-known marketing models. In this study specifically I have tried to show how Sweden's marketing cultural affects celebrity endorsers trustworthiness. Since the factor of trustworthiness is seen as a keystone when it comes to creating a successfully utilizing a celebrity endorser, I wanted to use the American models and apply them on the Swedish market. Is it worthwhile for Swedish companies to find a celebrity with highest possible fit?

The result from my study shows that it is beneficial to use a celebrity endorser with high fit. The advertisements featuring football star Zlatan Ibrahimovic next to a sports drink, score higher means on all dependent variables: *Probability to Buy this Sports Drink*, *Probability to Recommend a friend to Buy the Sports Drink*, *Others' Opinion of This Sports Drink*, *Perceived Quality of Sports Drink*, *Trustworthiness of This Sports Drink Producer*, *Estimated Frequency of Usage*, *How Fit to Recommend a Sports Drink Do You Find the Celebrity?*, *How Trustworthy Do You Perceive the Celebrity?*, *How Sincere Do You Perceive the Celebrity?*, *How Reliable Do You Perceive the Celebrity?* and *How Knowledgeable Do You Think the Celebrity is When it Comes to Sports Drinks?*. Thus, when celebrity endorser has high consumers have higher purchase intention and perceived quality is higher. Lastly, an unintended finding was that negative media exposure of the athlete (high fit celebrity) did not seem to have any effect on purchase intention and perceived quality nor trustworthiness of the celebrity.

5.2. Source Credibility

The factors used in Dr Ohanian's scale for trustworthiness I meant to determine whether a certain celebrity is well-fitted to endorse a product according to consumers. My hypothesis was that respondents exposed to the advertisement featuring the high

fit celebrity would score higher means on all factors, compared to those exposed to the low fit celebrity.

Using the factors for trustworthiness in Ohanian's scale, we see that the high fit celebrity (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) scores higher on all five factors: dependable, honest, unreliable, sincere and trustworthy. Thus consumers clearly see a high fit celebrity as a more trustworthy endorser. This conclusion is well aligned with the theory of importance of finding a fit between product and endorser (Dahlén & Lange, 2009). Thus, I do not reject my hypothesis.

5.3. Perceived Quality

According to the Perceived Quality Model, perceived quality is composed of the difference between expected quality and experienced quality. Since the latter implies that the respondent actually has used the product, it was not included as a factor in the study. However, regarding the former, expected quality, organizations have the possibility to control two parameters: market communication and image. I believed a high fit celebrity would have a positive effect on these parameters. Thus, my hypothesis was that respondents exposed to the advertisement featuring Zlatan Ibrahimovic would score higher means on perceived quality.

To measure perceived quality, I separately exposed the two groups to different versions of the mock advertisement and afterwards asked them to scale the quality of the sports drink. I subsequently compared the means of the two groups.

The results showed that the group exposed to the advertisement featuring the high fit celebrity scored a higher mean on perceived quality.

5.4. Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is an important measurement in order to determine whether a specific marketing campaign actually will lead to an actual purchase. Increasing sales must be seen as the ultimate goal of any marketing and thus is of greatest interest to measure.

Scoring high on purchase intention can obviously not be seen as the same thing as the consumer actually making a purchase. However, it gives us a decent indication of the respondents' short-run intentions. Relatively speaking, the correlation between purchase intention and actual purchase can be seen as high because of sports drinks being a low-involvement product according to the Rossiter-Percy Grid. Purchase intention also gives an indication of consumer loyalty.

In order to determine purchase intention respondents were asked two questions after being exposed to separate advertisements featuring high and low fit celebrities. The first question asked the respondent to scale how likely it would be that they purchased the product displayed in the advertisement. The second question asked how likely it would be that the respondent recommended the product to a friend. My hypothesis was that the high fit celebrity would score a higher mean on both questions regarding purchase intention.

The results showed that respondents exposed to the advertisement featuring Zlatan Ibrahimovic (high fit celebrity) scored higher means on both purchase intention questions compared to the other group. Thus I do not reject my hypothesis.

5.5. Limitations

Preconceptions of the chosen celebrities can have a major impact on advertisement. As previously mentioned, Zlatan Ibrahimovic was during the research frequently mentioned in the media in a negative manner. This can of course have an impact on results that really has nothing to do with the degree of celebrity fit.

On the other hand, one can argue that Zlatan Ibrahimovic is viewed as a hero in many Swedish households. More clearly: Zlatan Ibrahimovic is more famous and generally more liked than Alexander Skarsgård. Likeability is also a concern that could possibly explain research results between genders and age groups.

Also, Ibrahimovic and Skarsgård are depicted in very different ways in their respective pictures featured in the advertisement. Ibrahimovic wears a football outfit and is in movement as he is celebrating a goal. Skarsgård, on the other hand, wears a

casual outfit and stands still as he his more actively posing for the camera. The study would have benefited from having two celebrities in more similar outfits and stances.

Moreover, this research does not cover the possible differences with having an unknown person featured in the sports drink advertisement. Even though the research does not directly aim at comparing the results between featuring celebrities versus featuring non-celebrities in advertisement, one could have wished to include a non-celebrity as a sort of control group.

A further concern might be that the test result are very specific for sports drinks. A sports drink would probably be considered as a *transformational* and *low-involvement* product according to the *Rossiter-Percy Grid*. Perhaps more informational and high-involvement products would render very different research results.

Furthermore, sports drink is a very suitable product for this kind of research since it is very clear if a celebrity is a high fit or a low fit. However, when drawing general conclusions from this kind of research one should keep in mind that there are oftentimes many products that do not have such a clear fit. Take a soft drink like Pepsi for example. Pepsi have the last decade many times released advertisements featuring famous singers and football players. Are singers and football players high fit? If not, who is?

It should be noted that a made-up mock brand was used in the fictive advertisements created for this research. The reason was of course to not include any respondent preconception in the results. However, one can argue that the majority of the time when consumer would be exposed to such an advertisement, they would have had some previous knowledge about the brand and perhaps the product as well.

As discussed in the paragraphs above, the research could have greatly benefited from having had advertisements including a range of combinations. Mock brands versus real brands, different types of celebrities and different types of products.

Not only could one discuss the product and celebrity featured in the advertisement, but also the media in which the advertisement is featured should be taken into account. The mock advertisement was presented to the respondents as a poster or banner. Although advertisements can also be presented in media such as TV or radio. Possibly the result would differ between these different media.

Equally important, what was supposed to resemble a poster or banner was actually a small picture enclosed in a questionnaire on a piece of paper. However, a real poster is usually seen in a city environment and a banner on a webpage in ones browser. Therefore this could be seen as a limitation that could negatively impact the adequacy of the results.

In addition, I did not conduct a pilot study, whereas the recommendation is to conduct at least two in order to make sure that the questionnaire is well designed and easy to understand. This study in particular would have benefited from a pilot study to determine whether Ibrahimovic and Skarsgård really are seen as high and low fit celebrities in connection to sports drinks.

Lastly, it is important to highlight that this report only aims to research how celebrity fit impact customer intentions. However, there are many other factors contributing to customers' purchase intention and action.

5.6. Implications

5.6.1. Further Research

Suggestions to further research would be to first and foremost make the environment more realistic. With a larger budget than mine, one could create more real size posters, mock TV-commercials and radio commercials. Radio would be especially interesting to research since it separate itself so much from other forms of commercial. Is a celebrity's voice as powerful of a marketing tool as its appearance?

Secondly, it would be very interesting to perform a more extensive and thus lengthy research. If so, one could test whole set of combinations; different types of celebrities, different types of products, different demographics and, as stated above, different

types of media. As a result, one could map what factor determines what and to which degree.

Thirdly, as discussed in the limitations part it would be very interesting to perform similar research but for products that have no clear celebrity fit. One way to approach this matter is to not see whether the particular celebrity has a high or low fit with the product, but with the brand instead. The recent critically acclaimed Volvo commercials for example do not feature celebrities that have any particular association with cars. However, with Volvo's latest slogan "Made by Sweden" the car producer has clearly tried to associate its brand with Sweden. Thus all the celebrities featured in there advertisements all are successful Swedes.

My research is solely based in Sweden with only Swedish respondents reacting to Swedish celebrities. Therefore, it would be very interesting to research celebrity endorsements in different countries to determine if there are differences in the research results. Moreover, it would be interesting to research whether a foreign celebrity with higher celebrity fit would obtain more positive results than a domestic celebrity with lower celebrity fit.

5.6.2. Managerial and Practical Implications

The managerial implications that can be drawn from this study are clear: Swedish Marketers ought to put time, effort and money into finding high fit celebrities to endorse there products.

This study aimed at determining to which degree source credibility theory holds in Sweden. The experiment shows that Swedish consumers find high fit celebrities much more credible as endorsers than low fit celebrities. The high fit celebrity used in the experiment was even exposed to negative media attention that occurred during the study. Thus Swedish marketers can rely on source credibility theory even more when choosing celebrity endorsers in marketing in order to achieve effectiveness.

The research result could possibly be linked to the fact that celebrity endorsers are, compared globally, used to such a low extent in Sweden. If so, however, the recommendation for marketers to use high fit celebrities more could become

paradoxical. The trust Swedish consumers have towards high fit celebrity endorsers depends on the fact that they generally do not "sell out" as much as for example Japanese celebrities. Thus, one could draw the conclusion that this trust would fade if high fit celebrities were to endorse more products.

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7. Appendix

Appendix 1: Mock Advertisements

High fit Celebrity (Featuring Zlatan Ibrahimovic)



Low Fit Celebrity (Featuring Alexander Skarsgård)

