How does celebrity endorsement affect consumers' perception on brand image and purchase intention?

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Acknowledgement

This thesis was written during the spring of 2017. After a few intensive weeks, we are proud to have finished our bachelor’s thesis. This study has given us useful insight in how celebrity endorsement affects consumers’ and how companies can utilize celebrity endorsement. The thesis has helped us develop our academic writing- and research skills. Hopefully, this thesis will provide as useful information for other students, researchers or academicians.

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Abstract

Having a celebrity endorse a product has in previous research been shown to increase both sales and brand awareness for companies. Celebrity endorsement can also be used by companies as a marketing communication strategy to build brand image. As a result of this, companies pay millions of dollars to have a celebrity endorse their products. It is therefore a very interesting area to investigate and do further research on.

By using a qualitative research, this thesis explores, describes and analyse how celebrity endorsement affects consumers’ perception on brand image and purchase intention. To answer the research questions, interviews have been made.

The main findings of this thesis are that the image of the celebrity endorser transfers to the brand image. Furthermore, trustworthiness and success has been shown as important factors in a celebrity endorser. Lastly, the research has shown that attributes such as familiarity, likability and similarity in a celebrity endorser affects consumers’ purchase intention.
Sammanfattning

Att använda sig av en kändis i reklam har i tidigare forskning visat sig öka både försäljning och varumärkeskännedom för företag. Kändisreklam kan också användas av företag som en kommunikationsstrategi i sin marknadsföring för att stärka varumärkets image. Som ett resultat av detta spenderar företag miljontals dollar för att ha med kändisar i sin reklam. Det är därför ett mycket intressant område att undersöka och förska i ytterligare.

Genom att använda en kvalitativ metod, beskrivs och analyseras i denna uppsats hur kändisreklam påverkar konsumenters uppfattning om varumärkes image och deras köpavsikt. För att svara på forskningsfrågorna så har intervjuer genomförts.

Dom viktigaste forskningsresultaten av denna uppsats är att kändisens image överförs till varumärkets image. Dessutom har trovärdighet och framgång visat sig vara viktiga faktorer hos en kändis. Slutligen visar forskningsresultaten att egenskaper som att vara bekant, sympatisk och liknande är egenskaper i en kändis som påverkar konsumenters köpavsikt.
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1. Introduction

This chapter will introduce the background of the thesis area. It will continue with explaining the concept of marketing communication, brand image and celebrity endorsement. The problem discussion will narrow the area of research down into the purpose of the thesis. The purpose will then lead into research questions. The chapter will end with an outline of the entire thesis.

1.1 Background

Communication is something that holds a channel of distribution together (Mohr, & Nevin, 1990). It serves as a way of transmitting persuasive information in marketing channels (Frazier, & Summers, 1984). Companies can use marketing communication as a strategy to build brand image (Erdogan 1999; Chan, Leung Ng, & Luk, 2013).

Brand image is “the concept of a brand that is held by the consumer” (Dobni, & Zinkhan, 1990, p. 118) and “is formed through consumer interpretation, whether reasoned or emotional” (Dobni, & Zinkhan, 1990, p. 118) According to Maehle and Supphellen (2013) consumers choose brands based on their expectations and brand image is what builds up the expectations.

Today’s society is said to be excited with celebrities (Schickel 1985). This has led to that more brands are using celebrities to differentiate their brand and to create a competitive advantage (Illicic, & Webster, 2015). The western culture has been obsessed with celebrities and the endorsement of celebrities is not likely to change. This is since the society has been overloaded with illustrations about celebrities from the media that gives them an entertainment function (Choi & Rifon, 2007).

McCracken (1989) defined the celebrity endorser as “any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement” (McCracken, 1989, p. 310). Bergkvist and Zhou (2016) has made an updated definition of celebrity endorsement based on McCracken’s (1989) which is “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” (Bergkvist, & Zhou, 2016, p. 644).

Previous research shows that celebrity endorsement has an impact on advertising effectiveness, brand awareness, brand recall, buying intentions and buying behaviour (Spry, Pappu, & Cornwell, 2011). Companies can use celebrities to create unique ads and generate a positive effect on the consumer’s attitude towards the brand (Ranjbarian, Shekarchizade, & Momeni, 2010). Kok Wei and Li (2013) argue that celebrity endorsement makes a product more noticeable, appealing and more compelling to the consumer.

According to McCracken (1989) the celebrity endorser is a present feature of modern marketing. Celebrity endorsement has been applied in commercials for several years. In the early 80s one in every six commercials used a celebrity in their commercials and in 2001 that percentage grew to 25% (Erdogan, Baker, & Tagg, 2001). The main reason why a celebrity endorser may be particularly useful is that it makes an advertisement stand out (Dean & Biswas, 2001). International recognized celebrities may also ease international market entry, overcoming cultural and language barriers (Erdogan, 1999).
Studies have shown that celebrity endorsers can have a more positive effect on consumers’ buying intention than non-celebrities (Byrne, Whitehead, & Breen, 2003). Furthermore, celebrity endorsement also has a positive effect on companies’ profitability (Byrne et al., 2003). According to a study done by Elberse and Verleun (2012), celebrity endorsement increases sales by an average of 4% during the endorsement period. The study also showed that a big achievement done by the celebrity (e.g., winning a tournament) could increase sales further (Elberse & Verleun, 2012).

The celebrity world has become a powerful source of cultural meaning of the marketing system and the individual consumer. Therefore, most of the consumers care about celebrities and the lives they live (McCracken, 1989)

1.2 Problem Discussion

One of the problems with celebrity endorsement is to choose the most appropriate celebrity endorser for the product. According to McCormick (2016), it is crucial for companies to choose the right celebrity endorser in order to have a successful advertisement campaign. The celebrity personality must align with the product image to attract the most attention to the advertisement. The celebrity has to be recognizable enough to get attention, but not upstage the product itself. The product should be the main attraction, not the celebrity. (McCormick, 2016)

Scholars argue that celebrity endorsement could damage the brand image if the celebrity endorser has a negative reputation, are included in scandals or other types of bad publicity. (White, Goddard, & Wilbur, 2009; Till & Shimp, 1998) The risk of damaging brand image is especially high for new brands or brands that have a strong association with the celebrity endorser (Till & Shimp, 1998).

Furthermore, research has shown that using a celebrity endorser with an attractive public image can decrease consumers’ self-esteem and have a negative impact on buying intentions. On the contrary, having a celebrity endorser with an unattractive public image could potentially increase consumers’ self-esteem and have a positive impact on buying intentions. (Sääksjärvi, Hellén, & Balabanis, 2016).

Other research has proven the opposite. According to Kok Wei and Li (2013), people react more positive towards endorsement if the celebrity is attractive and fascinating. The consumer will have a positive approach towards the endorsement if they have a positive view of the endorser (Kok Wei & Li, 2013).

This area of research is interesting since there are factors that could both benefit and damage a brand image. As discussed above, previous research has ended up in different conclusions about the risks of using certain types of celebrity endorsers. It is important to choose the celebrity with the appropriate attributes in order to promote the product successfully. There is a gap in theory on how consumers relate to celebrities (Sääksjärvi et al., 2016) and what the most important attributes of the celebrity endorser are from the customers’ perspective. The uncertainty and the different conclusions from previous research makes this area a relevant one and worth doing more research on.
1.3 Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to get a better understanding in how celebrity endorsement affects consumers’ perception on brand image and purchase intention.

The purpose of this thesis has lead into following research questions:

1. How do the attributes of the celebrity endorser affect consumers’ perception on brand image?
2. How does celebrity endorsement affect consumers’ purchase intention?

1.4 Thesis Outline

This thesis consists of six chapters: Introduction, Theory, Methodology, Empirical Data, Data Analysis, Findings and Conclusions. The first chapter introduces the research area with a background and problem discussion. It presents the purpose and two following research questions. Chapter two presents relevant theory in the area of research. It ends with a conceptual framework. In chapter three, the chosen research method is described and motivated. The fourth chapter presents all the relevant collected empirical data. The data is then analysed in the fifth chapter with the help of the conceptual framework. The sixth and final chapter describes the main findings and conclusions of the thesis. It takes the thesis back to the beginning by answering the stated research questions from chapter one. The outline of the thesis can be seen in figure 1.1 below.

Figure 1.1: Outline of thesis
Source: Authors own construction
2. Theory

Previous chapter introduced the concept of celebrity endorsement and discussed the problems in the area of research. The problem discussion ended up in a purpose of the thesis and research questions. This chapter will introduce relevant theories about celebrity endorsement. The theories will connect to the purpose and the research questions. The chapter will end with a conceptual framework.

2.1 Celebrity Endorsement

This section will introduce relevant models that explain which necessary attributes a celebrity endorser should have in order to successfully endorse a product. The section will also introduce theories that argue how celebrity endorsement affects consumers.

2.1.1 Meaning Transfer Model

McCracken (1989) has made up a meaning transfer model that applies to celebrity endorsement. The model is divided into three stages as can be seen in figure 2.1. According to McCracken (1989), the celebrity endorser has an impact on all three stages. The celebrities are offering lifestyle meanings and different kind of personalities in the first stage that normal people cannot. In the second stage, companies must choose the right celebrity endorser for their specific product. They also should make an advertising campaign with a goal to transfer the meanings and personality from the celebrity to the product. The third stage is when the meaning and personality of the product transfers to the consumer who has bought the endorsed product. A more extensive description of the model will be presented in figure 2.1.

![Figure 2.1: Meaning transfer model](source: Adapted from McCracken (1989, p. 315))
Stage 1:
According to McCracken (1989) endorsement gives advertisements access to a certain kind of person from the culturally established world. Specific and powerful meanings consist within the endorsers. From this aspect, celebrities can deliver meanings with more depth, competence and distinction to the ad than a non-celebrity endorser can. McCracken (1989) claims that non-celebrity endorsers also bring a meaning transfer to the ad. Non-celebrities are charged with meaning and could be used to a lower cost than a celebrity. The meaning brought from a non-celebrity to the ad is also often enough for most ads. (McCracken, 1989)

Why are the celebrities then chosen as endorsers and how do they add value to the process? The answer lies in what the endorser brings to the process. Non-celebrities bring information such as age, gender and condition. Celebrities bring the same information, only more precise. Celebrities can also deliver a personality and lifestyle meaning that a non-celebrity cannot. Finally, a celebrity can offer a composition of meaning. All celebrities have a special configuration of meaning that cannot be imitated. (McCracken, 1989)

Celebrities are also more effective media than non-celebrities. Celebrities can induce the meanings in their personality with more simplicity and distinctness. While non-celebrities simply act out the meaning brought to the ad, celebrities own them. They own the meanings since they have developed them on the public stage through passionate and repeated performances. Celebrities evoke these powerful meanings from the character that they embrace in their movies, TV-series, athletic, or other careers. These careers can be seen as large ads which can be seen in Stage 1 of figure 2.1. Every role brings the celebrity in touch with different objects, persons and contexts. The celebrity is then getting meanings transferred from all those objects, persons and contexts. When these meanings then are brought to the ad by the celebrity they are simply being passed on further by the celebrity. In a sense, the celebrities are only passing along meanings that were charged to them by another meaning transfer model. The meaning brought to the ad by celebrity endorsement was basically created in movie performances, athletic achievements and other efforts. (McCracken, 1989)

According to McCracken (1989) celebrities that are strongly associated with a certain role are the most effective celebrity endorsers. Without that strong association, endorsers cannot bring clear and unambiguous meanings to the products they endorse.

Stage 2:
McCracken (1989) claims that the ideal choice of celebrity is based on the meaning they represent and on a highly developed marketing plan. The company should start off with determining the symbolic properties sought for the product by the consumer. Then they should explore which celebrities are available and what meaning they bring. They should also make account for budget constraints. When that is done, they should choose the celebrity endorser that brings the most appropriate meaning to their product. (McCracken, 1989)

When the celebrity is chosen, an ad campaign has to identify and deliver the meanings to the product. The campaign has to seize all the desirable meanings it wants to obtain from the celebrity and leave no important meanings unused. However, it should only capture the desired meanings from the celebrity. Every celebrity has some meanings that are irrelevant and undesirable for the product and it is important to avoid these meanings and keep them out of the evoked set. In order to do so, the ad has to be filled with people, objects and contexts that are relevant and has the same meaning as the celebrity. These elements help the
consumer to pick out the right set of meaning that are needed from the celebrity. The ad could sometimes help to transform the celebrity endorser by introducing them to new roles that brings new meaning to their personality. In some cases, celebrities have been known to exploit this by using celebrity endorsement to improve or change their image. It is, however, more common that the ad seeks to transfer the meanings from the celebrity and not trying to transform them. (McCracken, 1989)

McCracken (1989) argues that the ad has to be arranged to suggest the important similarities between the celebrity endorser and the product in order to let the consumer take the last step in the meaning transfer process. Copy testing should then be used to see if the ad has succeeded in this aspect. When that is the case, the second stage is completed and the ad is presented to the consumer. The consumer now recognizes the similarity between the product and the celebrity endorser and accepts that the meanings in the celebrity are in the product. (McCracken, 1989)

**Stage 3:**
Consumers are, according to McCracken (1989), always examining the material world for products that has a useful meaning for them. They use these meanings to supply specific aspects of the self and the world. The material world of consumer goods provides an excessive amount of possible selves and likely worlds.

McCracken (1989) continues by arguing that the third and final stage of the meaning transfer process is complex and sometimes problematic. Consumers do not possess the meaning of a product by simply owning it. Just owning a product is not enough to incorporate its meaning to the self. There is no automatic transfer of meaning between the product and the consumer. There is also no automatic transformation of the self. First, the consumer has to claim the meanings and then they have to work with them. In order to fully achieve the meaning, consumers have to claim, transfer, tend to, and use the product. Consumers have to choose and integrate the meanings in a process of experimentation. (McCracken, 1989)

It is the celebrities that create the self, which makes them play a vital role in the final stage of meaning transfer. The celebrities have created the self in the first stage through their public image forged by their different roles and carriers. The created self is often attractive and gifted. Celebrities are good at building up such selves. This makes celebrities inspirational and ideal in the consumer's eyes. The consumer themselves are continually moving symbolic properties from consumer goods to their own lives to create aspects of self and world. One could say that the consumer is creating their own first stage self by using the accessible meanings they have. The celebrities are being admired by the consumers since they have already been where the consumers are trying to get. They have completed in the first stage what the consumers are trying to achieve in the third and final stage. It is, however, not the only reason to why the consumers admire the celebrities. They also admire the celebrities due to the fact that they have gained different kinds of meanings from the celebrity. When the celebrities enter the process of endorsement, they make these meanings available to the consumers in material form. In a sense, celebrities are providing the consumers with both an example of self-creation and the building blocks to do so. (McCracken, 1989)

The celebrities aid the final stage of meaning transfer because they are a kind of “super consumers”. They are admirable persons since they are seen as someone that has created the clear, meaningful, powerful selves that everyone else seeks to accomplish. They are a
fascinating part of the meaning transfer model since they so clearly display the process by which these meanings can be gathered and put together. (McCracken, 1989)

McCracken (1989) continues with discussing who really needs the meanings that the celebrities create. According to previous studies mentioned by McCracken (1989) everyone that is going through a role change are dependent on meanings they possess. For example, someone that is moving from one age class to another. Another example is someone that is new to a culture. They are much more bind to the meanings in the consumer society and world of celebrities. It is said that the modern western selves are left clear so that everyone has their own choices. The relative collapses of institutions such as faith, community and family that used to provide definitions and meaning have also given consumers more freedom to explore and define matters of age, gender, lifestyle and personalities. This freedom of choice makes us more ambitious consumers of the symbolic meanings that celebrities holds and the products they endorse. This suggests how celebrity endorsement works as a part of the meaning transfer process. (McCracken, 1989)

2.1.2 The Source Credibility Model

The source credibility model argues that the effectiveness of a message is depending on what level of expertise and trustworthiness the endorser has. Information from a source that is seen as credible, for example a celebrity, can influence beliefs, attitudes, behaviour and opinions through a process called internalisation, which happens when a receiver acquires source influence connected to their own personal attitude and structure of values. (Erdogan, 1999)

**Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness refers to “the honesty, integrity and believability of an endorser” (Erdogan, Baker, & Tagg, 2001, p. 40). According to Shimp (1997) companies search for endorsers that are trustful, believable and dependable. Trustworthiness is a crucial factor when it comes to credibility and likability is mentioned as one of the most important aspects of trust (Friedman, 1978). According to Friedman, Santeramo and Traina (1978) when a consumer likes a celebrity the trustworthiness of the brand is increased. Ohanian (1991) argued that the relationship between consumers purchase intentions of a related brand is not affected by the trustworthiness towards the endorser.

**Expertise**

Erdogan (1999, p. 298) defines expertise of celebrity endorsement as “the extent to which an endorser is perceived to be a source of valid assertions”. According to Ohanian (1990) celebrity expertise is not important, it is important to make the consumers believe the endorser has expertise. Celebrity endorsers with expertise in the field are more persuasive when it comes to the product’s quality (Aaker, 1997). According to Ohanian (1991) this generates to more purchase intentions. Consumer got higher brand recognition when the celebrity is an expert in the field, the more expertise a celebrity got the higher the effectiveness (Amos, Holmes, & Strutton, 2008). The expertise of an endorser will affect the believability and credibility among a brand (ibid).

2.1.3 The Source Attractiveness Model

According to previous researches mentioned by Erdogan (1999) consumers tend to have positive stereotypes about physically attractive people. Research has shown that communicators are more likely to change beliefs if they are physically attractive than unattractive. Other research shows that attractive endorsers are better at generating buying
intentions than unattractive endorsers. McGuire (1985) argues that the effectiveness of a message is highly depending on similarity, familiarity and liking for the endorser.

**Similarity**

Similarity can be defined as “a supposed resemblance between the source and the receiver of the message” (Erdogan, 1999, p. 299). Consumers are more influenced by an endorser who is like them. People identifies with the endorser’s common interest or lifestyles and in this way, a better cohesiveness is created (Erdogan, 1999). Companies try to create empathy using celebrities by selecting endorsers that match well with consumers (Belch & Belch, 2001). A bond between the endorser and the consumer increases the persuasiveness.

**Familiarity**

According to Belch and Belch (2001) familiarity is the presumed resemblance as knowledge that a celebrity endorser possesses through exposure. Zajonc (1968) mentions the “mere exposure effect” where consumers, who are familiar with the celebrity endorser and are often exposed to that celebrity, will automatically like that celebrity more. When choosing a celebrity endorser, it is important to know how familiar consumers are with the celebrity (ibid).

**Liking**

McGuire (1985, p. 239) describes likeability as “the affection for the source because of the source’s physical appearance and behavior”. According to McGuire (1985) companies use celebrities in commercials and advertisements because people that like celebrities will also like the endorsed brands. Belch and Belch (2001) argues that a celebrity endorser can influence the consumer’s view of the endorsed brand’s image. Positive celebrity endorsement will influence the image positively.

**Attractiveness**

It is suggested that the physical attractiveness of an endorser affects the effectiveness of persuasive communication. This is done through a process called identification which happens when a consumer accepts the information delivered by the attractive endorser simply because the consumer wants to identify with the endorser (Cohen & Golden, 1972). A study done by Kahle and Homer (1985) on physical attractiveness and likability showed that physically attractive endorsers increased buying intentions more than unattractive endorsers. However, unlikeable endorsers increased buying intention more than likeable ones. Erdogan (1999) argues that the attractiveness does not only entail the physical attractiveness, it entails concepts such as intellectual skills, personality properties, way of living, athletic performances and skills of endorsers. Celebrities with great sport performances can be attractive because consumers have profound respect for their achievement and therefore are attracted to them.

2.1.4 The Associative Network Memory Model

The Human memory can be explained as “a network consisting of various nodes connected by associative links” (Till & Shimp, 1998, p. 68). These so-called nodes are in fact pieces of information that connects through associative link (Krishnan, 1996). Therefore, when one node is being activated all the connected nodes activate (Spry et al., 2011). The associative network memory model is commonly used to explain the structure of human memory and thus consumers’ brand associations (Spry et al., 2011). Furthermore, associative education principles have been used to express the fundamental process of celebrity endorsement (Till,
Stanley, & Priluck, 2008). Both the celebrity endorser and the brand itself are individual nodes that are connected to each other (Till & Shimp, 1998). Hence, when a consumer thinks of a celebrity endorser, they might unintentionally think of the endorsed brand and vice versa. It is this connection that could prove to be an important and helpful association to the creation of brand equity and image (Till, 1998). The relationship between a celebrity endorser and brand image is seen in figure 2.2.

![Associative network memory model](image-url)

Figure 2.2: Associative network memory model
Source: Adapted from Spry et al. (2011, p. 884)

The variables used in this model are commonly used in celebrity endorsement studies. Some of the definition to each variable and how they are connected will be presented below.

**Consumer-based brand equity**
Brand equity can be defined as “a set of assets consisting of brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality and brand loyalty” (Aaker, 1991, p. 16). Additionally, Keller (1993, p. 2) used the term brand equity as customer-based brand equity and defined it as “the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand”. Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) both focused on a consumer perspective view and aimed attention to memory-based brand associations. Still they had a few differences in their conceptualization of brand equity. Aaker (1991) viewed quality-related brand associations as an independent variable, while Keller (1993) saw all brand associations as brand image. According to Yoo, Donthu, and Lee (2000) it is the first four of Aaker’s (1991) variables (i.e. brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality and brand loyalty) that are considered important from a consumer’s perspective. Yoo and Donthu (2001) expressed consumer-based brand equity as those four brand equity variables. Pappu, Quester and Cooksey (2006, p. 698) has adapted this view of consumer-based brand equity and has defined it as “the value consumers associate with brand, as reflected in the dimensions of brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality and brand loyalty”. Brand awareness describes how strong the brand’s presence is in the mind of the consumer (Aaker, 1991). Without brand awareness consumers cannot have brand associations, perceptions of quality and brand loyalty (Pappu & Quester, 2006). Keller (1993) argues that brand awareness consists of brand recognition and
brand recall whereas brand association refer to different meanings connected to a brand. Perceived quality refers to a consumer’s subjective perception of a brand (Zeithaml, 1988). According to Yoo and Donthu (2001) brand loyalty is when a consumer is loyal to a brand and has the intention to purchase that brand as a primary choice.

**Credibility**

Endorser credibility is “the extent to which the source is perceived as possessing expertise relevant to the communication topic and can be trusted to give an objective opinion on the subject” (Goldsmith, Lafferty, & Newell, 2000, p. 43; Ohanian, 1990). Brand credibility is “the believability of the product position information contained in a brand, which depends on the willingness and ability of firms to deliver what they promise” (Erdem, Swait, & Valenzuela, 2006, p. 34). Hovland and Weiss (1953) argue that expertise and trust are the most important aspects of credibility. Spry et al. (2011) adds attractiveness as an aspect for endorser credibility. Consumers view celebrities as a source of information with high credibility (Goldsmith, Lafferty, & Newell, 2000) Celebrity endorser credibility creates and increases the acceptance of the endorsed brand (Erdogan, 1999). The credibility of a celebrity is especially crucial when the consumer have a negative attitude towards the brand (Belch & Belch, 2001). When a celebrity endorser is credible, they are more persuasive and have a bigger effect on consumers’ perception of the advertisement (ibid).

**Endorser credibility - brand credibility**

Erdem and Swait (1998) argues that a company can build brand credibility by using good quality information as the information transferred through the marketing strategies are associated with brand credibility. The higher credibility a celebrity endorser has, the higher the brand credibility will be, perceived by the consumer. Companies that invest in their brand have also been identified as an indicator of brand credibility since they are seen as more likely to offer the product that is promised (ibid). Therefore, by simply using celebrity endorsement companies could be associated with high levels of brand credibility (Spry et al., 2011).

**Credibility - consumer-based brand equity**

Erdem and Swait (1998) suggest that companies can use credibility to build brand equity. Credible brands benefits from lower perceived risk (Erdem and Swait, 2004). Additionally, higher credibility could increase perceived quality of the products by the consumers. By having a positive impact on perceptions and perceived risks, brand credibility adds value for the consumer. (Spry et al., 2011) Furthermore, the associative network memory model suggests that endorser credibility has a direct relationship with consumer-based brand equity. The celebrity endorser act as an extra node in memory associated to the brand node. A highly credible endorser is likely to become more associated with the endorsed brand in the mind of the consumer (Biswas, Biswas, & Das, 2006). Thus, supporting brand recall and recognition.

2.1.5 The Elaboration Likelihood Model

Petty and Cacioppo (1983) came up with an Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) that explains how the level of involvement affects how the consumer response to advertisements. In other words, how the consumers’ attitudes and behaviour can be changed depending on the advertisement and on the level of involvement. The main principle of the ELM is that different types of methods to cause persuasion may be best used depending on if there is a high or low elaboration likelihood of the communication situation. Petty and Cacioppo (1983) argue that there are two routes to take depending on if the elaboration likelihood is
high or low. The consumer’s ability and motivation is the variables that decide if their elaboration likelihood is high or low (Petty & Cacioppo, 1983). A consumer’s motivation is affected by different factors. For instance, personal relevance in the message and source of the message argument could affect motivation. However, it is not only the level of motivation that plays a part in determining which route will be taken. The consumer’s ability to process a message is also important. The consumer’s ability can be affected by factors such as repeating the message, complexity, the presence of distracting stimuli and what previous experience the consumer has. (Petty & Cacioppo, 1983)

The central route to persuasion are most efficient when there is a high level of involvement and the peripheral route when there is a low level of involvement. The ELM argues that if a product or issue increase in relevance or consequences for the consumer, it becomes more urgent to form a reasoned and concrete opinion. Therefore, consumers have a higher motivation to make an effort to evaluate the product when the involvement is high compared to low. Petty and Cacioppo (1983) continues with arguing that increased involvement leads to an increase in consumers’ thoughts about the products and that manipulations that needs considerable product-relevant thought to be efficient is more effective under high involvement rather than low involvement. Furthermore, manipulations that let a consumer evaluate a product without the need to engage in considerable product-relevant thoughts are more likely to have a bigger effect under a low involvement rather than high involvement. (Petty & Cacioppo, 1983)

According to Petty and Cacioppo (1983) various variables have different impacts on persuasion under low and high involvement circumstances. For instance, good and well thought out arguments in a message have a bigger impact on the persuasion under circumstances of high involvement. On the contrary, peripheral cues like attractiveness and expertise of a message has a bigger impact on persuasion under circumstances of low involvement.

Central route
Information processing occurs through the central route in high involvement circumstances. Thus, when the consumer has a high motivation or high ability they will be persuaded through the central route. The consumer’s attitude formation and change is derived from thorough consideration of the arguments in the message and that will result in a more enduring change of attitude. In the central route, consumers are affected by solid arguments. (Petty & Cacioppo, 1983)

Peripheral route
When there is a low involvement by consumers and the motivation and ability is low, information processing and persuasion occurs through the peripheral route. This route does not need much cognitive effort, instead consumers rely on peripheral cues such as source attractiveness, source credibility and heuristics. Thus, Attitudes that is formed through the peripheral route are less affected by solid and qualitative arguments and will only result in temporary change of attitude. (Petty & Cacioppo, 1983)

The ELM is shown in figure 2.3 on the next page in which the whole process of persuasive information can be seen.
2.1.6 FREDD Principles

The FREDD principles is a model adapted from Young & Rubricum by Miciak and Shanklin (1994) that explains the necessary attributes a celebrity endorser has to have in order to successfully endorse a product. The Celebrity should be familiar to the consumers and they should be esteemed to differentiate from other endorsers. The celebrity also has to be relevant to the product and the consumer. Finally, the celebrity must have an appropriate behaviour. (Miciak & Shanklin, 1994)

**Familiarity**
The most important attribute to have in order to succeed as a celebrity endorser is familiarity. Familiarity consists of norms such as being recognizable, likable and friendly. It is not necessary to be familiar to every single consumer, only to the consumers that is targeted by the company’s celebrity endorsement campaign. (Miciak & Shanklin, 1994)

**Relevance**
Relevance between the celebrity and the endorsed product is also an important factor. The celebrity has to represent a lifestyle, image, reputation and values that are in line with the endorsed product in order to be believable to the consumer. Furthermore, there has to be relevance between the celebrity and the targeted consumers. For instance, the consumers might want to be like the celebrity endorser or can relate to the lifestyle and image of the endorser. (Miciak & Shanklin, 1994)

**Esteem**
A successful celebrity endorsement campaign relies on a credible endorser and esteem is an important factor of credibility. A celebrity that has had a successful career and achieved many things is considered to be held in high regard by the consumers and are therefore more credible than others. For example, winning contributes to esteem for an athletic endorser. (Miciak & Shanklin, 1994)
**Differentiation**
One of the main reasons to why companies use celebrity endorsers is to differentiate their advertisement from competitors. A celebrity endorser is much different from a non-celebrity endorser. However, it is also important that a celebrity is differentiated from other celebrities. The endorser has to be distinct. (Miciak & Shanklin, 1994)

**Deporment**
Even though a celebrity endorser has all the needed attributes, familiarity, relevance, esteem and differentiation, they could still fail on deportment. The personal behaviour of an endorser is a big risk for the company’s image and reputation. The behaviour could, for instance, be offensive to the targeted consumers and cause associations between the celebrity endorser’s scandalous behaviour and the company’s image. (Miciak & Shanklin, 1994)

2.1.7 Effects of Celebrity and Endorsement Factors on Attitudes to a Brand

Many of the older models and theories do not include the consumer’s attitude on endorsement. Instead, they focus on how source and endorsement factors affect attitude towards a brand. Bergkvist, Hjalmarson and Mägi (2016) has come up with a new model that introduces the new variable, attitude towards the endorsement which functions as a mediator between attitude towards a brand and source and endorsement factors. Figure 2.4 shows how attitudes towards endorsement mediate the effects of source and endorsement factors on brand attitude.

![Figure 2.4](image.png)

**Figure 2.4:** Effects of celebrity and endorsement factors on brand attitude
Source: Adapted from Bergkvist et al. (2016, p. 172)
Attitude Towards the celebrity
People tend to form a lot of attitudes towards a variety of different objects (Ajzen, 1988), celebrities included (Luo, Chen, Han, & Whan Park, 2010). Attitude towards a celebrity is defined as “someone’s positive or negative evaluation (like or dislike) of the celebrity in question” (Bergkvist et al., 2016, p. 172). In previous studies, attitude towards a celebrity has been described as celebrity likability and celebrity affect. These studies have shown a positive relationship between attitude towards a celebrity and brand attitude (Kahle & Homer, 1985; Silvera & Austad, 2004; Amos et al., 2008).

Celebrity-brand fit
Celebrity and brand fit is also a variable that has been used in numerous previous studies. Fit has in previously studies been called similarity or consistency and refers to how similar or consistent a celebrity endorser and the brand are (Bergkvist et al., 2016). Previous studies have shown a positive relationship between celebrity-brand fit and brand attitudes (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Kinnami & Shiv, 1998) Bergkvist et al. (2016) argues that fit is important since the lack of fit could possibly have a negative impact on brand evaluation (Lafferty 2009; Simonin & Ruth 1998)

Celebrity expertise
Expertise is as previously described a part of source credibility. Bergkvist et al. (2016) argues that expertise is a central part of the model since previous studies has shown that expertise has a positive effect on brand attitude (Eisend & Langner, 2010), on purchase intention (Ohanian, 1991) and evaluations of the product (Rossiter & Smidts, 2012)

Perceived celebrity motive
A factor that could have a big impact on celebrity endorsement is what consumers’ think are the motives behind the celebrity’s endorsement. If consumers see the celebrity’s motives as negative, it could possible affect brand evaluation in a negative way. For instance, negative brand evaluations could be a result of if the celebrity is doing the endorsement for the money and not because of liking the product. (Bergkvist et al., 2016)

Endorsement attitude as a mediator of source and endorsement variables
Attitudes towards endorsement are defined as “the overall positive or negative evaluation of the alliance between the celebrity and the brand in a particular celebrity endorsement relationship” (Bergkvist et al., 2016, p. 175). Older studies of celebrity endorsement have assumed that source factors directly affects brand attitude. However, Bergkvist et al. (2016) argues that consumers might also form attitudes towards endorsement and the celebrity-brand alliance. For example, a consumer could be completely indifferent or even disliking Tiger Woods endorsement of Accenture but very much like his endorsement of Nike’s products. According to Bergkvist et al. (2016) a consumer’s liking of the celebrity endorser combined with the perception of a good celebrity-brand fit, beliefs that the celebrity has expertise and thinking that the celebrity has positive motivations to the endorsement, are positive cognitions that will have a positive effect on endorsement attitude and thus, have a positive effect on brand attitude.
2.2 Conceptual Framework

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), the purpose of a conceptualization is to introduce either by graphics or in writing, the central things that will be studied. This section will use the mentioned theories from previous sections to create a conceptual framework that will be used for the data collection and to answer the research questions.

2.2.1 How do the Attributes of the Celebrity Endorser Affect Consumers’ Perception on Brand Image?

The aim of research question one is to look at what the effect of celebrity endorsement has on brand image. Brand image is as previously mentioned defined as “the concept of a brand that is held by the consumer” (Dobni, & Zinkhan, 1990, p. 118). This research question will therefore focus on answering what the consumers’ perception of the brand is and how it is affected by the attributes of the celebrity endorser. The theory and model made by Bergkvist et al. (2016) focuses on how the attributes of the celebrity endorser affects consumers’ attitude towards endorsement and thereby attitudes towards the brand. It is the most relevant theory connected to the first research question of this thesis and will therefore be used to answer it. Attributes such as credibility and attractiveness will be used to see the consumers’ attitude towards the celebrity endorser. Other factors such as celebrity-brand fit, expertise and celebrity motives will also be explored.

- Effects of celebrity and endorsement factors on brand attitude model

2.4.2 How Does Celebrity Endorsement Affect Consumers’ Purchase Intentions?

The second research question is going to answer how celebrity endorsement affect consumers’ purchase intention. The objective is to explore how and in what circumstances a celebrity endorser can affect consumers’ intention to buy a product in a positive way. The source attractiveness model (Erdogan, 1999) is the most relevant theory connected to the second research question. It introduces attributes such as similarity, familiarity, likability and attractiveness and explores which of the attributes that affects consumers’ purchase intention. It will therefore be used to answer the second research question.

- Source attractiveness model
2.3 Emerged Frame of Reference

The conceptualization of theories in previous section has provided us with a frame of reference. The research questions are connected with each other which are shown in figure 2.5 below.

Celebrity Endorsement

![Diagram](image)

Figure 2.5: Emerged frame of reference
Source: Authors own construction

Celebrity endorsement is the start factor in this frame of reference. In order to answer each research question, there has to be more knowledge about the attributes that are most important as a celebrity endorser. When that is done, the exploration of how those qualities affect consumers’ perception on brand image and their purchase intention can begin. The answer of the two research questions together will provide with a better understanding in how celebrity endorsement affects consumers’ attitudes and behaviours, thus answering the purpose.
3. Methodology

This chapter will describe and motivate the choice of research approach and strategy. It will also describe how the process of gathering empirical data will develop to fulfill the purpose of this thesis. Qualitative approach will be used and the research questions will be studied through interviews. The chapter will end with a short summary.

3.1 Research Purpose

Exploratory research gives the researcher the flexibility to basically “look around” and to develop suggestive ideas (Reynolds, 1971). According to Patel and Tebelius (1987, p. 53) “an exploratory research is to gather as much information as possible concerning a specific problem.” They continue to mention that exploratory research is used when the available knowledge is not certain or when a problem has not been studied clearly. The best suited method for data collecting is interviews when an exploratory research is performed (Ibid).

According to Patel and Tebelius (1987, p. 54) “descriptive research is used to describe various phenomenon connected to individuals, situations or events that occur.” This will lead to an understanding on how consumers’ perception on brand image and purchase intentions gets affected by celebrity endorsement. Since there are no intentions to investigate the cause effect relationships a descriptive research will help to answer the “how” question (Eriksson, & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1999). A normal use of descriptive research is when searching data, often secondary (Aaker & Day, 1990).

As mentioned in the first chapter the purpose of this thesis is to get a better understanding in how celebrity endorsement affects consumers’ perception on brand image and purchase intention. The two research questions are:

1. How do the attributes of the celebrity endorser affect consumers’ perception on brand image?
2. How does celebrity endorsement affect consumers’ purchase intention?

Since the purpose is to get a better understanding in the research area, this thesis is exploratory. Furthermore, the research questions of the thesis are to describe “how” a phenomenon occurs, which also makes it a descriptive research.

3.2 Research Approach

For the collection of empirical data, a qualitative approach has been chosen. The reason for that is that a qualitative approach will provide with a deeper understanding of the phenomenon that is studied (Andersen, 1998). The qualitative method puts few restrictions on the consumer’s response, that is, the method puts emphasis on the details, nuances and specific of each source (Jacobsen 2002). The qualitative approach is also suitable when collecting empirical data for the research questions since it focuses on words instead of numbers (Bryman & Bell, 2005). Since the purpose of this thesis is to gain a deeper understanding of the individual’s perceptions from a consumer perspective and the consumers purchase intention, a qualitative approach is most suitable.
3.3 Research Strategy

The research strategy is the part constituting the frame for the collection of the essay and data and analyse (Jacobsen, 2002). When answering “how” and “why” questions, a case study is the preferred strategy (Yin, 1994) Furthermore, Denscombe (1998) argues that a case study provides with a better understanding of the chosen area of research.

A case study is the most suitable research strategy for this thesis since the purpose is to get a better understanding in how celebrity endorsement affects consumers’ perception on brand image and purchase intentions. The research questions are “how”-questions, which further argue that a case study is the most suitable strategy.

3.4 Data Collection

Jacobsen (2002) argues that primary data is data that is collected for the first time. Primary data can consist of observations, individual interviews and group interviews. The primary data was collected by individual interviews. The individual interview fits well when there are relatively few respondents who participate and when it is interesting to see how individual interprets a specific phenomenon (Ibid), which is in line with the purpose.

Most of the data was collected through primary data. The essay writer is the author of the oral or written information when collected primary data (Eriksson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1997). It was considered that the use of primary sources, where questions could be adapted based on the conceptual framework, would make it easier to achieve the purpose with the interviews (Jacobsen, 2002).

Bogdan and Biklen (1982, p. 135) described an interview as a “purposeful conversation”. They mention that interviews as research strategy are used in several contexts, either as the dominant method of data collection or to combine it with other methods. They define document analysis as a completion for an interview and they describe the purpose of the interview thus: “The interview is used to gather descriptive data in the subject's own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 96)

Interviews can be divided into three classes: structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Carruthers, 1990). Borg and Gall (1983, p. 443) mention an issue concerning unstructured interviews: "The graduate student can very seldom employ the unstructured interview in his research because skilled use of the technique requires a great deal of training and expertise". Bogdan and Biklen (1982) mention a misuse of qualitative methods. This insight is relevant because a structured interview is formed to use quantitative methods a qualitative study is preferred when generating concepts and understanding rather than understanding how many people do this and that. The semi structured interviews must contain a certain degree of structure in their implementation (Carruthers, 1990). To achieve a certain structure an interview guide is constructed so that all the participants in the interviews do receive some questions in common the interview guide brings flexibility to the interviewer to make maximum use of the opportunities offered to enrich the data. Although there may be some changes in the method of collecting data, the focus of the study must never be changed (Ibid).

Borg and Gall (1983, p. 442) have written: The semi-structured interview, therefore, has the advantage of being reasonably objective while still permitting a more thorough understanding of the respondent’s opinions and the reason behind them than would be possible using the
mailed questionnaire”. Bogdan and Biklen (1982, p. 136) wrote that "with semi structured interviews you are confident of getting comparable data across subjects, but you lose the opportunity to understand how the subjects themselves structure the topic at hand". Bugher (1980) argues for the proved benefits to the researcher of face-to-face interviewing and mentions that face to face interview is the best method for obtaining in-depth opinions. Earlier researches have shown that people are remarkably honest and frank when their opinions are asked within a properly structured context. Researchers follow three conditions when obtaining a person-to- person interview and those are:

- The respondent need to be aware of the purpose of the interview
- The questions need to be properly worded
- Anonymity is guaranteed with respect to the interviewee’s responses.

To reach these conditions personal contact is preferred. Therefore, a semi structured interview is the most suitable data collection method for this thesis and will result in valuable answers. An interview guide was constructed based on the conceptual framework in chapter two of this thesis before the data collection began. The interview guide was constructed to help answer questions connected to the purpose while still letting the interviewees express their own opinions about the subject.

3.4.1 Implementation of Interviews

Jacobsen (2002) mentions the context effect which means that the interviewer can get disturbed by the environment in which the interview takes place in. He continues mentioning that if the interviewer feels uncomfortable in the environment, it may affect the answers in an undesirable manner and give less reliable answers. Therefore, a well-known and calm environment was chosen. Furthermore, all the electronic devices were disabled during the interview to prevent the interviewer of getting disturbed. These factors should have minimized the context effect.

Andersen (1994) mention that the interviewer effect can occur during the interviews. Holme and Solvang (1997) argue that things like time, environment, clothing choice and climate can affect the interview negatively. The authors also mention that the interviewer effect can be reduced if the interviewer is aware of the factors and trying to prevent its origin. Therefore, the interview guide was formed and the interview sessions were constructed so that time and environment was not a disturbing factor.

During the interview the interviewer should talk as clearly as possible to ensure that the interviewees understand the questions. Ghauri and Grönhaug (2005) mention that the language should be easy and understandable and that the language should be adapted to the interviewee. The relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee made it easy to adapt the language after the situation. Furthermore, some interviews were held in Swedish and thereafter translated by the interviewer.

The interview guide was constructed with questions that covered the three different areas of investigation, celebrity endorsement, consumer purchase intention and brand image. The interview questions were made as clear and well-designed as possible, and there was little room for misunderstanding. Before the interview were conducted, the interview guide was reviewed by the supervisor for this thesis, Mana Farshid, to get her views on whether the questions were easy to understand or if something needed to be changed. When she did not see any problems with the questions, the interview guide was considered complete.
Holme and Solvang (1997) argue that the interviewer does not have to follow the interview guide instead should be flexible and adapt to the situation. The interview was constructed in a flexible way to allow follow-up questions. Before the data collection, the interviewees were informed about the purpose and the structure of the interview and that they would be anonymous in the study. There was a connection between the interviewer and interviewees, some were closer friends while others were study colleagues. The relationship helped the interviewees to dare to express their views and gave in-depth answers. According to Ghauri and Grønhaug (2005) the better the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee, the better answers and more useful information will be received. The relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee can also be a disadvantage since the interview becomes more informal. However, the experiences from previous conversations were positive and it is considered as a good method in this study.

The interviews were calculated to take at least half an hour so there for people were chosen from the authors social networks as respondents. It was seen as more appropriate and possible to interview persons with a previous relationship due to the length of the interviews. Therefore, it was considered inappropriate to interview randomly selected persons. This made it possible for the interviewer to plan the interview carefully and that the interview could take place in a calm environment. Another reason why respondent was chosen from the social networks of the interviewers was that it was expected to provide deeper and more honest answers, as respondents and interviewers know each other in the past. Furthermore, these people could be contacted after the interview to get supplementary answers if needed.

According to Grennes (2005) the amount of respondent is not of the greatest importance, instead it is the level of seriousness among the respondents that are most important. It is important that the respondents are representative of the selected population. If there are certain factors and a set of certain criteria, it gives a better selection than when people are randomly selected.

A common question according to Strauss and Corbin (1998) is how long a researcher must continue with the data collection. The data collection process will continue until theoretical saturation is reached. When no additional information appears the data collection is considered saturated. Although, Strauss and Corbin (1998) argues that the reality is different, because if you look at a specific phenomenon for a long time, there will always appear new or more information. Data saturation is reached when the newly discovered information is not currently adding so much more to the explanation of the phenomenon. The saturation criteria were used in this study to determine when no more interviews were needed.

3.5 Chosen Endorsement

This thesis has chosen to use the company Vitamin Well as the sample in this research. The case study will be based Zlatan Ibrahimović endorsement of the product Vitamin Well+.

Vitamin Well AB is a Swedish company and all their production and development takes place in Sweden, the company was founded 2006 with the vision to develop a drink that was completely new. In May 2008, nearly two years after starting out, they finally launched their first three products in Swedish pharmacies. Vitamin Well got their inspiration from the US and Asian markets where there where many drinks that were healthier and less sweet than soft drinks. (swedcham.org, 2013)
Today they are established in over 28 countries and their products are sold at more than 6000 retailers in Sweden only. Some of their export countries are Denmark, Norway, Italy, Netherlands and Finland. (ibid)

Vitamin Well is a leading Swedish company that markets and sells their products under the brand names, Vitamin Well, Vitamin Well Free, NOBE aloe vera, NOCCO and the sports drink Vitamin Well+. (ibid)

In the end of 2016, Bridgepoint development capital started to invest in Vitamin Well AB with the ambition to accelerate the growth of the company. Vitamin Wells CEO Jonas Petterson said “We are excited to welcome Bridgepoint as the new main owner of Vitamin Well. In addition to providing expertise in developing international companies that are in a strong growth phase, they also have access to an established European network and financial resources. With Bridgepoint as the main owner, we have the opportunity to increase the pace of our internationalization and continue to develop new and exciting drinks” (mynewsdesk.com, 2016)

Bridgepoint Development Capital (BDC) invests and develops and helps successful company, they have several offices in Frankfurt, Istanbul, London, Luxemburg, Madrid, Milano, New York, Paris, Shanghai, Stockholm and Warszawa. (ibid)

3.6 Sample Selection

This study will result in a more depth knowledge about how celebrity endorsement affects consumers’ perception on brand image and purchase intentions, which according to Greenes (2005) is typical of a qualitative study. When the interviewees are chosen, it is important for the researcher to consider that people have different experiences, views and perspectives, which depend on different circumstances such as gender, age, education and type of job. Grennes (2005) claims that random selection is not appropriate in a qualitative study. He argues that in a qualitative study the researcher should use strategic selection or theoretical selection, where the selection has been made based on an assessment of what is most appropriate and that can be motivated by either theory or the purpose. The researcher should make individual assessments, which have been used in this study. The purpose of the interviews was to a create a basis for a deeper and complete understanding of a specific phenomenon, so the selection was neither randomly nor temporarily made. According to Grennes (2005) the selection of respondents for the interviews is very important although statistical generalizations and representativeness are not the primary purpose of qualitative methods.

Sampling techniques can be categorized in two groups, probability or non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is used when the researchers make statistical conclusion from the sample about characteristics of a population. When researchers want to rather generalize about theory and not population a non-probability sampling is then preferred. (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012) A non-probability sample was applied for this study and since it is preferred for a qualitative research (ibid).

Purposive sampling was used for this study, according to Merriam (2009) it depends of the researcher’s judgment to choose participants who will best answer the research questions. Therefore, selection criteria were made so that the correct respondents would be chosen. The criteria where age, gender and lifestyle. The respondents were people born between 1990-1999, the purpose was to try to gain perspectives from both men and women therefore an
equal balance between the genders were pursued. The main criteria were that the respondents should be active in everyday training. The reasons for the three criterions are:

- **Lifestyle:** All the interviewees need to be active in everyday training because they are more likely to have previous knowledge about Vitamin Well, since it is a sports drink. Therefore, they can provide us with more detailed answers about their perception of the brand.
- **Gender:** Vitamin well wants to target both males and females therefore an even distribution between the gender is sought.
- **Age:** The interviewees are born within 1990-1999 since that is the age span that the researchers’ social network is within.

3.7 Data Analysis

When the data collection was done, the analysing of data began. Miles & Huberman (1994) argues that most of the analysis when using a qualitative approach is done with words. The collected words are then going to be processed. The authors continue with arguing that analysis consists of data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing and verification.

Data reduction is the process of analysing that sort out and sharpen data, which makes it possible to draw conclusions. Data display is when the reduction is done and when the data is displayed in an organized way to make it easier to draw conclusions. Finally, conclusion drawing and verification is when the researcher describes the meanings, patterns and explanations of the study. (Miles & Huberman, 1994)

This thesis has followed the three steps by having the data reduction and display presented in chapter four. Furthermore, the conclusion drawing and verification has been used in chapter six.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

There are two concepts that must stand in a certain relation to each other, validity (credibility) and reliability (accuracy). Credibility and accuracy must be linked to each other for the study to give the desired result. The greater coherence there is between the validity and reliability, the better results and more clearly the answers to the questions will be (Patel & Davidson, 2003).

Each qualitative research process is unique in such a way that it is impossible to establish special rules to achieve validity. Instead, it requires that the researcher with good logic and good analytical skills interprets the results and put it into a meaningful context (Patel & Davidson, 2003)

According to Jacobsen (2002) validity means that the measurement really measures what it intends to measure. He also mentions that it is easier to get high validity in a qualitative approach with help of interviews. There the questions can be explained and answers are developed more than in a quantitative approach, such as a survey. The data collection for this study began with fifteen respondents and after the initial data collection, five more respondents were interviewed to make sure that no additional information that would matter for the thesis would appear.

Yin (2003) argues that having more than one observer making observations will increase the reliability. Since the interviews were done by both researchers, one that was doing the
interview and the other that was taking notes, the reliability and validity of this study has been increased. Furthermore, Yin (1994) states that to construct validity, there is a process of establishing correct operational measures for the concepts that have been studied. To construct validity in this study, the notes from the interview were used to ask the respondent if the answers were misunderstood or if they were correct.

3.9 Summary

This study is an exploratory and descriptive research that has a qualitative approach. A case study was chosen as the research strategy. The data collection method has been semi structured interviews. Furthermore, the data has been analysed by doing a within case analysis which can all be seen in figure 3.1.

![Figure 3.1: Overview of research method](image)

Source: Authors own construction
4. Empirical Data

The objective of this chapter is to present data and keywords from the interviews made. It also aims to present all important observations and conclusions made during the data collection. The chapter will start off with presenting factors related to research question one and then research question two. The chapter will end with a short summary of the keywords used.

4.1 Attitude to Celebrity

The interviews started off with showing a picture and/or a promotional video of Zlatan endorsing a Vitamin Well product. After that, the interviewees were asked to describe how they perceived Zlatan in the ad. The attitude towards Zlatan in the ad was pretty similar between the interviewees. The most common description of Zlatan was that he is a powerful, confident person and that he was looking happy with the endorsed Vitamin Well product in the ad. One interviewee said that he sometimes could be too self-sufficient and could be humbler. Another interviewee had the same opinion but thought that he looked more humble in the ad than usual.

4.2 Celebrity-Brand Fit

The interview continued with questions such as “how well do Zlatan’s personality, lifestyle and image fit in with Vitamin Well’s”. There were different opinions in how well Zlatan’s personality fits in with Vitamin Well’s. Many argued that he fits in well since he is a modern, sporty and healthy person.

“He is confident and wants to signal others that it is a healthy product, that you can combine with training” (Male, 20)

Another interviewee said that “he only wants to represent the best, since he thinks the best of himself. Therefore, his personality to be better than the rest fits with Vitamin Wells”. Other interviewees argued that they fit in “quite well in one aspect (being sporty and modern) but not in another aspect (Zlatan is cocky and the brand is laid back and bland)”. Does who did not agree with the fit argued that Zlatan and Vitamin Well seemed to have different values and norms. However, they still saw Zlatan as a good endorser since “Zlatan is Zlatan, it turns out great anyway”.

The question about the fit between images also caused a few disagreements. A few argued that Zlatan’s image was reduced by appearing as Vitamin Well’s endorser. They agreed that the endorsement boosts Vitamin Well’s image but the opposite for Zlatan’s. One interviewee said that “Vitamin Well does not seem to be a brand that has the same kind of attitude as Zlatan” another had the same thought and said that “Vitamin Well has a softer image than Zlatan”. Others saw the image as a good fit since “Zlatan image is that he is athletic, physically fit and healthy person. An image that Vitamin Well aims to achieve” and that “Zlatan exude self-confidence which fits in with Vitamin Well”.

Even though there were some disagreements in the personality and image fit, everyone agreed that Zlatan’s lifestyle fits in perfectly with Vitamin Well since he is a professional athlete. One interviewee argued that he was a way better endorser for the product than for instance an actor would have been, since they do not have the same sporty and healthy
lifestyle as a professional athlete. One interviewee argued that they fit well since Zlatan is promoting a sports drink as a substitute to soft drinks. However, sports drinks as a substitute for water still contains sugar or sweeteners which would impair the health, so he saw it as a moral dilemma.

4.3 Celebrity Expertise

The knowledge Zlatan has about sports drinks and Vitamin Well was a part of the interview. Many thought that he lacked knowledge about sports drinks. One interviewee argued that he might have a personal dietician telling him what to eat and drink. Others argued that he should have plenty of knowledge since he is a professional athlete and diet and recovery plays an important role in his professional life.

There was also a disagreement in whether Zlatan had much knowledge about Vitamin Well as a brand or not. Many argued that he “might not have known much before the endorsement” and has “gain a bit more knowledge after the endorsement started”. One interviewee argued that he probably had knowledge before the endorsement, since he would not endorse bad products. Others said that he might not even have the time to get knowledge about the brand since “he spends most of his time playing soccer”.

4.4 Motives

Another question in the interview was to see what the interviewees thought was the motive behind Zlatan being the endorser. Many thought that money was the driving force for Zlatan. However, some argued that “it is a way to market himself” and that “he might do it to rebrand himself”. Others argued that since he rarely endorses products and he has endorsed another Swedish brand Volvo, he might really believe in Vitamin Well and wants to represent Swedish companies. They saw the endorsement as a way to increase brand awareness for Vitamin Well and increase sales.

The most commonly used explanation to why Vitamin Well chose Zlatan to endorse their products was that he is well known and liked in Sweden which would increase brand awareness and sales. One interviewee argued that it was a way to “increase the target group”. Another argued that “Zlatan helps the consumers to associate the sports drink with someone. Zlatan reminds the consumer of the drink and vice versa”.

4.5 Attitude to the Endorsement

After asking the interviewees about the celebrity, the interview continued with asking how they perceived the endorsement. The most frequently used description to explain the interviewees’ attitude towards the endorsement is that Zlatan was good for the brand. Some keywords used to describe the endorsement were persuasiveness and quality. They saw Zlatan as a good endorser since he has a lot of fans that he could attract to the brand and that he brings a sense of quality.

“Zlatan would never agree to endorse a bad product” (Female, 18)

Other definitions such as awareness and recognition were used to describe the influence Zlatan has on the brand. One interviewee said that the endorsement was “mighty, since Zlatan has one of the most recognized faces in Sweden”. All interviewees except one saw Zlatan as
a good endorser for Vitamin Well. The opposing interviewee argued that Zlatan’s appearance and attitude was not in line with the appearance and attitude of the brand.

“Zlatan is not as clean and elegant as I perceive the brand, Zlatan has his tattoos and his opinions, which he is not shy about expressing” (Male, 25)

Another question asked was how the interviewees perceived the ad itself. Many agreed that the ad was simple but still well thought out. One interviewee pointed out that the ad clearly wanted to focus on exposing Zlatan and not having the product at the centre of attention. Others said that the ad was a good way to increase awareness of the products since Zlatan is a well-known person.

4.6 Attitude to Brand

The following questions asked the interviewees how they perceived Vitamin Well as a brand. The majority thought of Vitamin Well as a sporty and modern brand. Some said that they saw Vitamin Well as a reliable brand since Zlatan has chosen to endorse them. Everyone had a positive attitude towards the brand and only two interviewees had not tried the products, but both knew that it was popular products. Keywords that was commonly used to describe Vitamin Well was tasty, healthy and clean products. However, some interviewees agreed that it was Zlatan that really made the brand. One interviewee said that Vitamin Well is a big brand thanks to Zlatan. Another one said that “All I think is Zlatan”. A third said that “Zlatan is the one that sells the product, without him the product is not as appealing”. A fourth interviewee went all out and said that “I see Zlatan as the brand here, not the actual product’s brand”.

The overall feelings about the brand image were similar to the feelings about the brand. Almost everyone had a positive attitude to the brand image. Furthermore, two interviewees said that they had a pretty boring image, but the fact that Zlatan endorses their products was a huge boost. Others saw Vitamin Well as a creative, up and coming brand.

“They seem young in a way, serious in their marketing. They always seem to come up with new and healthy products” (Male, 24)

4.7 Consumers Behaviour

Influence
The interview continued and we asked the interviewees, if an endorser can influence them to buy their product. Most of the respondents answered that, if they like the endorser they would get influenced. One interviewee said that “Yes, I bought it when it was new just to test Zlatan's new drink.” Another one said “I would say that it is a bigger chance that you buy Zlatan’s drink than any other Vitamin Well product.” This strengthen our theory that, if there is a connection between the endorser and the consumer the stronger the impact. We can see that most the interviewees said that since the endorser (Zlatan) is such a huge celebrity the effect is stronger on the consumers.

Celebrity attributes
We continued the interview with asking, what attributes of the celebrity endorser they value the most? Almost all the interviewee answered that credibility and expertise is the two most valued attributes. One said that “When Zlatan talks about something, you immediately think
that he got some kind of expertise about the subject.” Another one said “Zlatan always says what he wants, if the product would not be good he would not endorse it.” The overall answer was that a celebrity endorser needs credibility and expertise when endorsing a product. “Zlatan will only join a winning team, if he thought Vitamin Well was a sinking ship he would not endorse it.” Zlatan have always played for teams that are in the top leagues of football, therefore, he would not endorse a brand without the same ambitions.

Similarity
Most the respondents said that they can somehow relate to either Zlatan’s interest or lifestyle. Since one of the criteria when choosing interviewees was that they had to be involved in everyday training, all the respondents could relate to the interest in training and sports. One of the interviewee said that “I cannot relate to his lifestyle, I do not think there are many out there who can relate to that. His interest, yes” meaning that it is easy to relate to the interest of Zlatan when it comes to sports but it is difficult to relate to the lifestyle of him as a professional athlete since he has reached a lot of remarkable achievements.

Familiarity
The interview went on with a question about whether they have considered buying a new product because of the presence of a celebrity they are familiar with. The response was that if the product were not too expensive and if they liked the celebrity they had considered to buy the product. Someone said, “I think so, if Zlatan drinks, I drink.” There were only three respondents that answered that they had not considered buying the product. “Yes, if I have a positive attitude towards the celebrity. If I dislike the endorser, I’ll concisely avoid buying the product.” If the attitude towards the endorser is positive and the price of the product is within their radius they would consider buying the product.

Likability
The interview continued with a similar question as previous but this time we asked if they already liked the celebrity (physically or behavioural) would they consider purchasing a new product. Most of the interviewees answered like the earlier question, if the price is within their radius and the product is something that interest them, then they would consider buying the product.

Attractiveness
We asked the interviewees if attractiveness towards a celebrity endorser could make them consider purchasing a new product. Most of the interviewee answered that when it comes to fashion and clothes they could maybe consider purchasing the endorsed product. In this case where the product is a Vitamin drink their attractiveness towards the endorser would not be a factor for purchasing the product.

“If a celebrity got attractive outfit I could consider purchasing the clothes but I would not consider purchasing a drink based on their attractiveness.”

 Characteristics
Most the respondent could only describe Zlatan in a positively way, some of the characteristics that appeared multiple times were: Honest, focused, serious, cocky and a mighty person. One of the interviewee said that “Zlatan would have not achieved the same goals without his characteristics.” The continued to mention that Zlatan seem serious in what he does which bring credibility to the brand. One interviewee ended his answer with “Zlatan is simply the king of everything he does.”

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“He is a powerful person. You show respect to everything he does, there is only one Zlatan and he can do this and that because of the awesome self-confidence he got”

*Have you bought any normal Vitamin Well products?*
There were in total twenty respondents in this interview and sixteen out of them had bought one of Vitamin Wells product. A follow up question were if they knew if it was before or after that they had seen Zlatan as an endorser for the brand. Nine out of sixteen had tried the product before they knew that Zlatan was their endorser, the other eight had either seen different ads on social media or heard from someone that Zlatan is the endorser and therefore tried one of their products.

*Have you bought any Vitamin Well+ (Zlatan’s product)?*
The last question during the interview was if they ever had purchased Vitamin Well+ which is Zlatan’s product, and the response was that thirteen had purchased the product while seven had not.

### 4.8 Summary

Some of the most common keywords used by the interviewees to describe Zlatan and Vitamin Well during the interviews can be seen in figure 4.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keywords to describe Zlatan:</th>
<th>Keywords to describe Vitamin Well:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Powerful</td>
<td>• Creative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Confident</td>
<td>• Sporty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Successful</td>
<td>• Modern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sporty</td>
<td>• Tasty Products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trustworthy</td>
<td>• Healthy Products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Professional</td>
<td>• Clean Products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Happy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.1: Common keywords of the empirical data  
Source: Authors own construction
5. Data Analysis

The previous chapter presented the empirical data which were collected through interviews. This chapter will present an analysis of the collected empirical data. An interview analysis will be made by a comparison between the collected empirical data in previous chapter with the conceptual framework in chapter two. The analysis will be presented in a way that is relevant to the research questions. The analysis will in the following chapter be used to draw a conclusion of this thesis.

5.1 Consumers Perception of Brand Image

According to Bergkvist et al. (2016) attitudes towards a brand are affected by consumers’ attitude towards endorsement. Furthermore, the attitude towards the endorsement is affected by the consumers’ attitude towards the celebrity, which in this thesis have been narrowed down to the consumers’ perception of the credibility and attractiveness (Erdogan, 1999) of the endorser. The attitude towards endorsement is also affected by the consumers’ attitude towards the brand. It is also affected by celebrity-brand fit, celebrity motives and celebrity expertise. (Bergkvist et al., 2016)

This thesis will analyse each factor step by step in order to get a deeper understanding in how celebrity endorsement really affects the consumer’s perception of the brand image.

5.1.1 Attitude to Celebrity

The source models (Erdogan, 1999), credibility and attractiveness, was used in this thesis to see what the consumer thought of Zlatan as the endorser for Vitamin Well. Credibility which can be divided into trustworthiness and expertise (Erdogan, 1999) was one of the most important attribute of a celebrity endorser according to the interviewees. Many of the interviewees saw Zlatan as a trustworthy endorser, arguing that Zlatan only endorses products of good quality. On the other hand, there were some different opinions whether Zlatan had expertise in the field or not. Some argued that since he was a professional athlete, he had expertise about sports drinks. However, he might not have expertise about the brand itself. Aaker (1997) argued that if the celebrity endorser had expertise in the field they were more persuasive when it came to the quality of the product, which is in line with what the interviewees said. They believed that the products had high quality because Zlatan is a professional athlete and he endorsed the product. In the end, all agreed that he was an expert athlete and therefore the overall perception of Zlatan is that he is trustworthy and have expertise. Thus, being a credible endorser.

Attractiveness is according to Erdogan (1999) not only connected to physical attractiveness. It does also mean the endorsers way of living, intellectual skills, personal properties, athletic performances and skills of the endorser. In the case of Zlatan, the majority saw him as a role model that has achieved many great successes in his life. None of the interviewees said that they found him physically attractive and that might be because the majority of the interviewees ended up being males. However, they did agree that he exudes self-confidence and poise. Because of Zlatan’s great successes in his career and his skills, he is seen as an attractiveness endorser.

In summary, the interviewees’ attitude towards Zlatan is good. They see him as both being trustworthy and being an expert in what he does. They also see him as skilful and successful.
Hence, the overall attitude towards Zlatan is that he is both a credible and an attractive endorser for Vitamin Well.

5.1.2 Celebrity-Brand Fit

The fit between the celebrity endorser and the brand is important. If there is a lack of fit, the attitude towards the brand could be affected negatively (Bergkvist et al., 2016). Almost all of the interviewees agreed that Zlatan and Vitamin Well is a good matchup.

However, the interviewees saw some of the aspects of Zlatan that did not seem to fit in very well with Vitamin Well. For instance, there were a few interviewees that did not see a fit between Zlatan’s personality and the brand personality, arguing that they have different opinions and norms. Zlatan is seen as a very cocky and sometimes self-sufficient person which does not really fit in with Vitamin Well in the same sense. Furthermore, the same interviewees had a hard time to see the fit between Zlatan’s image and the brand image. They argued that the brand lacks the same kind of attitude that Zlatan has. Some said that Vitamin Well’s image got a huge boost from having Zlatan while the image of Zlatan himself had the opposite effect. On the other hand, Zlatan’s lifestyle being a healthy professional athlete goes hand in hand with the brand.

In Summary, there were some disagreements of the actual celebrity-brand fit. Some attributes of Zlatan do not fit in with Vitamin Well at all. However, one of the most crucial attributes, his lifestyle, did fit in well with the brand. In the end, the majority agreed that Vitamin Well benefits from using him as an endorser anyway. The only one that might hurt his image from this endorsement is Zlatan himself.

5.1.3 Celebrity Expertise

According to Eisend and Langner (2010), celebrity expertise has a positive effect on brand attitude. As mentioned in earlier sections the interviewees did see Zlatan as an expert in his field. They did see the products as of high quality since a top professional athlete endorsed them and they did see the brand as reliable. Thus, confirming that celebrity expertise has a positive effect on brand attitude.

5.1.4 Motives

Bergkvist et al. (2016) argues that the motives for doing the endorsement could possibly affect the attitude towards the brand negatively if the motives are money and not actually liking of the endorsed product. There were many interviewees that saw Zlatan’s motives as monetary. Others said that he used Vitamin Well to brand himself. A few argued that he really liked the product and wanted to represent a good Swedish brand.

Even though there are many different opinions to what Zlatan’s motives are the end result is still the same. Those who did see the motives as monetary still have a positive perception of the brand. Therefore, this study does not support that the celebrity motives could have a negative impact on brand attitude.

5.1.5 Attitude to the Endorsement

Bergkvist et al. (2016) argues that the consumers’ attitude towards the brand also is affected by the consumers’ attitude towards the endorsement, the brand-celebrity alliance. The attitude
towards the alliance between Zlatan and Vitamin Well is very good. Many argued that Zlatan is a very good endorser for Vitamin Well and no one questioned why Zlatan, a professional athlete, was endorsing a sports drink. Bergkvist et al. (2016) gave an example, that a consumer might dislike or be indifferent with Tiger Woods endorsement Accenture but might like his endorsement of Nike’s products. One of our interviewees confirmed that example. She said that Zlatan was a much more credible and persuasive endorser to Vitamin Well than, for instance, an actor would have been. She argued that since Zlatan is living a healthy and active life he is much more credible than an actor, which might not live as healthy, would have been. The overall attitude to the endorsement was that it was good for both parties, although one interviewee argued that Zlatan is selling himself out and reduces himself.

5.1.6 Attitude to Brand

Everyone was familiar with Vitamin Well and almost everyone had bought one of their products. The overall feelings were that they were a sporty brand that offered healthy sports drinks as a substitute for soft drinks. According to Amos et al. (2008) the expertise of the celebrity endorser affects the believability and credibility of the brand. It is very clear in this study that so is the case. Since Vitamin Well uses a professional athlete as an endorser for their sports drinks, they are seen as both trustworthy and experts in their field. By having Zlatan endorse their products, they were seen as reliable and to have high quality products.

5.2 Consumers Purchase Intentions

As mentioned in the theory chapter, consumers tend to have positive stereotypes about physically attractive people (Erdogan, 1999). Earlier researches have shown that if the consumer finds the endorser attractive it generates in a higher buying intention than unattractive endorsers. If the consumer got similarity, familiarity or liking for the endorser the effectiveness of the message will be better (McGuire, 1985).

In this study, we found that famous people in advertising get more attention than unknown people. It was difficult to get clear answers to whether respondent was affected by celebrities in advertising. The interviewees argued that they pay more attention to advertising that reach their interests and needs. This strengthens Evans, Jamal & Foxall (2006) theory that people pay more attention on advertisement that reaches their needs, desires, wills and attitudes.

Erdogan (1999) define similarity as hypothetical similarity between the celebrity and the consumer, familiarity is defined as the understanding of the message towards the receiver and likability is defined as the attraction towards a celebrity based on the celebrity’s physical appearance and behaviour. He continues to mention that if the consumer somehow can relate to the endorser’s lifestyle or interest a better cohesiveness will be created then. The interviewees could relate to either Zlatan’s interests or lifestyle since all the respondents were active in everyday training. The collected empirical data showed that since the respondents could somehow feel similarity towards the endorser they paid more attention and the impact were stronger. Zlatan is a well-known in Sweden and all around the world. Therefore, it is easier for the consumers to feel some familiarity towards him.
Statt (1997) and Pooler (2003) mentions that consumers today no longer buys stuffs based on their basic needs without addressing psychological needs and expressing their personality, they mean that the consumers today instead have an emotional buying behaviour. The interviewee mentioned that the shopping nowadays is based on the fact if they need something new, if they see something that is neat or if they want to keep up with the different trends.
6. Findings and Conclusions

This final chapter will present all the main findings in this study and provide with conclusions based on our research. It will start off with all main findings and conclusions related to the first research question and then move on to the second. The chapter will end with implications for companies and theory. Further it will provide with useful information for future research. The chapter will end with stating the limitations of this thesis.

6.1 How Do the Attributes of the Celebrity Endorser Affect Consumers’ Perception on Brand Image?

This research shows that having a celebrity that is seen as trustworthy and expert in his field do have a positive impact on the attitude to the celebrity, thus, a positive impact on brand attitude. Even though the celebrity is not seen as an expert in the endorsed product, they still have a positive impact as long as they are experts in their own field. Expertise and trustworthiness in the celebrity endorser gives the brand a sense of believability and credibility. Having a successful celebrity endorser gives the brand an image of being of high quality. Furthermore, the attractiveness of the celebrity endorser brings even more reliability to the brand. The research shows that the attractiveness attribute is more than just physical attractiveness, it also includes athletic performances, success and way of living.

Our research also shows that having a well-known celebrity endorser could lead to that the image and brand of the endorser is transmitted to the endorsed brand. In this case, Zlatan’s image was transferred to Vitamin Well. Many thought of Zlatan when they saw Vitamin Well. This confirms our beliefs that celebrity endorsement affects consumers’ perception on brand image. It does also raise a question on what the risks are of using celebrity endorsement. In our research, the majority had a good attitude towards Zlatan which transferred into a good view of Vitamin Well. If the majority would have a negative attitude towards Zlatan, what would then the results have been?

Our research confirms that it is important for companies to use a relevant celebrity to endorse their product. Since Zlatan is relevant in the field of sports drinks, he is a good choice as endorser for Vitamin Well. Furthermore, the majority saw a fit between Zlatan’s lifestyle and Vitamin Well but not a fit between his personality and the brand. It shows that there is no need for a fit between personalities as long as there is a fit in the most relevant areas of the endorsement. In this case, sports.

Our Research did not support the theories about celebrity motives. Even though Zlatan’s motives were seen as monetary, it did not affect the perceived brand image.

6.2 How Does Celebrity Endorsement Affect Consumers’ Purchase Intentions?

Our research showed that famous celebrities got more attention in advertising than non-celebrities. Furthermore, people tended to pay more attention to advertisement that was relevant to their own interests and needs. Since all of our interviewees were active in everyday training and the majority could relate to Zlatan, we can conclude that Zlatan did raise the attention of Vitamin Well. The research also showed that Zlatan was seen as more persuasive than a non-celebrity endorser would have been.
Our research showed that having a familiar and likable celebrity endorser increases consumers' purchase intention when the product is a low involvement product. However, attractiveness did not increase consumers’ purchase intentions when it comes to edible products. It contradicts the theories and provides with implications for further research.

In summary, the research shows that familiarity and likability in a celebrity endorser raises brand attention and persuasiveness to buy the product when there is a connection between the endorser and the consumer and the product is a low involvement product. In other words, factors such as similarity, familiarity and likability does affect consumers’ purchase intentions on low involvement edible products, whereas attractiveness does not.

6.3 Implications for Theory

The area of research in this thesis is about how celebrity endorsement affects consumers’. The purpose of this thesis has been to get a better understanding in how celebrity endorsement affects consumers’ perception on brand image and purchase intention. The purpose has led to the research questions of how it affects brand image and purchase intention. It is therefore, an exploratory, descriptive research with a qualitative method from the consumers’ perspective.

We have described the main findings of our research and based on them made the conclusions for the thesis. This thesis contributes to theory with an empirical analysis that investigates whether or not the previous theories are valid in this type of research. Many previous researches have been from the companies’ perspective while ours is from the consumers’ perspective. Furthermore, our research provides with findings that contradicts the theories and raises new questions for further research.

6.4 Implications for Companies

The research concluded a few important attributes that companies can utilize in order to make a successful celebrity endorsement campaign.

- Use a trustworthy endorser that is expert in his/her field
- Use an endorser with a successful career and attractive way of living
- Do not simply focus on a physically attractive celebrity endorser
- Use a well-known celebrity with a positive image, since his/her image is likely to be transmitted into the brands image
- Have a celebrity-brand fit in the most relevant areas. It is not necessary to seek a fit in all areas
- Be sure to use a celebrity endorser that your targeted group can relate to
- Use celebrity endorsement in your international marketing by using a nationally known celebrity in the country you are expanding to

6.5 Implications for Further Research

Celebrity endorsement is a very relevant and interesting area of research. This research is done from the consumers’ perspective, however further research could be done from the
companies perspective or even the celebrity endorsers perspective. Some questions that has come up during this research are

- What are the risks of using a celebrity endorser with a negative image?
- How does the brand image affect the image of the celebrity endorser?
- What type of endorsed products benefits from an attractive celebrity endorser?

Furthermore, our research was done with people that exercise regularly. Further research could make a comparison by interviewing people that does not exercise regularly.

### 6.6 Limitations

There are some limitations to this research that must be kept in mind.

- The interview guide was sent out to the respondents before the interview. This could lead to that the respondents thought out answers that they felt we wanted to hear, instead of their own spontaneous thoughts.

- Our research only included respondents that were exercising regularly. This factor might have affected the answers so that they were more in favour of liking the endorsement, since they had a natural connection to the product and the endorser.

- The Interviewer knew the respondents which could lead to a more informal interview. This could have led to less serious and thought out answers by the respondents.

- The respondents only saw one advertisement with Zlatan and Vitamin Well. It is possible that there would have been more accurate conclusions made if the respondents also saw a picture of a non-endorsed product and asked the same questions.

- There was not a total gender equality of the respondents which could have affected the answers.

- The chosen celebrity endorser could have a different effect on the consumers’ than another celebrity endorser would have had. Zlatan is commonly seen as a very respected and successful person in Sweden, which could affect the respondents in their answers.

- The age criteria for the respondents were people born 1990-1999. This could have affected the answers and thus the result of this study.

- The interviews were not recorded and could therefore not be listened to after they were made to ease the coding and analysis. This could have affected the empirical data and analysis since parts of the interviews might not be in the notes and important answers and opinions might be missing.
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8. Appendix

Appendix 1: Interview Guide

RQ1:
Attitude to Celebrity:
• When you see the ad, what do you think about Zlatan?
• When you see the ad, what image do you get of the brand?
  Adapted from Bergkvist & Rossiter (2007)

Attitude to Brand:
• What are your overall feelings about the brand?
• What are your overall feelings about the brand image?
  Adapted from Bergkvist & Rossiter (2007)

Attitude to Endorsement:
• What do you think about Zlatan appearing in the advertisement of Vitamin Well?
• How would you describe your perception of the ad?
• How would you describe your perception of the brand?
  Adapted from Bergkvist & Rossiter (2007); Bergkvist et al. (2016)

Celebrity-brand fit
• How well do you think Zlatan’s personality fits in with Vitamin Well?
• How well do you think Zlatan’s lifestyle fits in with Vitamin Well?
• How well do you think Zlatan’s image fits in with Vitamin Well’s image?
  Adapted from Bergkvist et al. (2016)
Celebrity motives:
- Why do you think Zlatan appears in advertisement from Vitamin Well?
- What motives do you think Zlatan has?
- What motives do you think Vitamin Well has for using Zlatan?
Adapted from Bergkvist et al. (2016)

Expertise:
- How great knowledge do you think Zlatan has about Sports drinks?
- How great expertise do you think Zlatan has about Sports drinks?
- How great knowledge do you think Zlatan has about Vitamin Well?
Adapted from Rossiter & Smidt (2012)

RQ2:
- Are you easily influenced by the celebrity endorser when you purchase a celebrity-endorsed brand?
- What attributes of the celebrity endorser do you value the most?
- Have you ever considered purchasing a new product just because of the presence of a celebrity you are familiar with?
- Have you ever considered purchasing a new product just because of the presence of a celebrity you liked (physically or behavioural)?
- Have you ever considered purchasing a new product just because of the presence of a celebrity you find attractive?
Adapted from Malik & Guptha (2014)

- Can you relate to Zlatan’s interests and lifestyle?
- How would you describe Zlatan’s characteristics?
Adapted from Erdogan (1999)

- Have you bought any Vitamin Well?
- Have you bought any Vitamin Well+ (Zlatan’s product)?