

The Impact of Celebrity Designers on the Perception of Sneaker Brands



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Abstract

The utilisation of celebrities for promoting a brand is an often-used strategy in marketing practise. Due to its popularity, scholars have extensively studied the field of celebrity endorsement (Erdogan, 1999; McCracken, 1989). These studies indicate that a celebrity needs to possess a set of characteristics in order for an endorsement to be successful (Shimp, 2007). Moreover, several studies have come to the result that there needs to be a perceived fit between the brand and the celebrity (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Fleck et al., 1992). While the impact of these factors has been validated for the field of celebrity endorsement, no studies have yet explored the impact of celebrity designers on a brand's perception.

In the underlying thesis the impact of celebrity designers on brand perception has been investigated with a focus on sneaker brands. It has been examined whether the same factors that determine success for celebrity endorsers determine success for celebrity designers. Further, it has been investigated whether there are significant differences between these two types of brand-celebrity collaborations in their impact on brand perception. In order to theorise the impact of celebrity designers on the perception of brands, a conceptual model has been developed. The model was tested by conducting an experimental study (n=274). The results indicate that a celebrity designer's trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, likeability and personality significantly impact the consumer's perception of a sneaker brand. However, only the characteristics attractiveness and personality impact brand responses that effect the overall evaluation of the sneaker brand. It was further found that in addition to these two characteristics a perceived fit between brand and celebrity designer also has a positive effect on brand attitude.

Comparing the impact of celebrity designers versus the impact of celebrity endorsers it could be found that celebrity endorsers do not have a significant impact on the social and emotional value of a sneaker brand. In addition, even though both partnership types significantly influence brand personality, it could be found that the impact of the celebrity designer is significantly higher. Hence, it can be inferred that celebrity designers are more effective than celebrity endorsers when it comes to impacting a brand perception change. The findings provide important new insights for marketing research and marketing practise.

Abbreviations

CBBE = Customer-Based Brand Equity

MGA = Multi Group Analysis

PLS = Partial Least Square

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1 Introduction

Encouraged by globalisation, market segmentation and shorter product life cycles, the number of products available across all categories is rising significantly from year to year (Burmam et al., 2003). Due to this increase in product offerings, companies try to differentiate their products through strong marketing and branding. However, the high frequency of advertising exposure, boosted by additional communication channels, such as web pages and social media, in the digital age, leads to an intensified competition for the consumer's attention (Fisher and Clayton, 2012).

One marketing tool used by companies in order to gain consumer's attention and to successfully differentiate their products from the market is celebrity endorsement (Erdogan, 1999). According to McCracken (1989: 311), a celebrity endorser is a publicly known person who "uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement". By recruiting celebrities as endorsers of their product or brand, companies hope to benefit from several advantages that this branding approach can provide. As mentioned above, celebrities are already known by the public and thus are more likely to catch the attention of the consumer than an unknown endorser (Atkin & Block, 1983). A second advantage is that, in contrast to unknown endorsers, people have often formed associations with celebrities. These associations can then be transferred to the brand and ultimately help to improve the brand's image and brand attitude (McCracken, 1989; Erdogan, 1999).

According to Till (1998) celebrity endorsers can be employed by a brand either sporadically or constantly. While some endorsements are limited to one advertising campaign or brand event, other endorsements endure over years. Research shows that companies will benefit more from an endorsement if they maintain the relationship with the celebrity over a longer period, since the repetition of exposure strengthens the associative links of the consumers and further increases the chance that a wide range of people become aware of the endorsement (ibid). One example of a successful long-term endorsement is that of George Clooney as a brand ambassador for Nespresso (Fleck et al., 2012; Brand-Trust.de URL1). Endorsing the brand since 2006, Clooney has

significantly increased Nespresso's exposure and awareness in new markets and helped the brand to develop a high-class brand image (ibid).

In order to achieve a long, effective partnership, companies have to choose the right brand endorser. A great deal of research has been conducted concerning the success factors for celebrity endorsement (Erdogan, 1999; Fleck, Korchia and Le Roy: 2012). According to Shimp (2003) *credibility* and *attractiveness* are the key attributes a celebrity must possess in order to nurture a successful endorsement. Other research stresses that a perceived *match-up*: a fit between the celebrity and the brand in the eyes of the consumer, is necessary for an endorsement to be effective (Baker and Churchill, 1979; McCracken, 1989).

The research described above was conducted throughout different product categories and celebrity types. However, it is restricted to classic advertising where a celebrity appears with a product either passively or actively promoting the product's usefulness or quality. Existing research has not yet considered a new type of brand-celebrity partnership, which is currently primarily used in the fashion industry: the celebrity designer.

Celebrity designers can be defined as a public person famous in a field other than design, designing or co-designing a product in any industry. This definition also includes celebrities that design products for their own created brand as for example Björn Borg for the brand with the same name. However, in the underlying thesis the focus will lie on celebrities designing for other brands than their own.

As mentioned above, an industry where celebrity designers are frequently used is the fashion industry. Here, the celebrities are involved in designing different kinds of apparel. One select area where celebrity designers are progressively active is in the field of sneaker brands (Vogue.com, URL1; Elle.com, URL1, Therichest.com, Popsugar.com, URL1). One of the first, and also most successful, examples of a celebrity designer is Michael Jordan. In 1985, Nike designed the basketball sneaker *Air Jordan* based on the concept developed by Michael Jordan (ibid). The sneaker is still available today, after several new releases, and is one of the most highly sold basketball sneakers in the world (Forbes.com, URL1).

In recent years, sports apparel brands such as Nike and Puma have increasingly engaged artists instead of athletes in their design process. Recent examples include Kanye West

and Rihanna who have designed fashion lines for Adidas and Puma respectively (Adidas.com, URL1; Puma, URL1). This development may be driven by the fact that the big sports apparel brands are looking to expand their sales in the lifestyle sector, promoting the products as fashion items instead of simply sports gear (manager-magazin.de, URL1).

1.1 Problem Statement

The utilisation of celebrities in advertisement is wide spread in marketing practise and has proven to be a potential source of significant financial and reputational success for the brands (Erdogan, 1999). However, given the high costs that the engagement of a celebrity usually entails, it also exposes the brand to several risks. One threat is that the celebrity “overshadows” the brand, meaning that they pull all the attention and as a result consumers do not recognise which brand the celebrity is endorsing (ibid). Another, related, factor is overexposure. Overexposure refers to the circumstances where a celebrity has so many endorsement deals that the consumer gets confused or simply does not believe that the celebrity acts out of commitment to the brand or product but solely for financial gain. A further risk is that after having signed the contract the celebrity might go through a significant image change and be associated with attributes that differ from the ones the brand intentionally hired them for.

In addition to these potential hazards, hiring a celebrity designer presents another risk: by letting celebrities design their sneakers, sports apparel brands have shifted away from an approach where the celebrity endorser is only involved in the promotion of the brand to an approach where the celebrity is actively involved in the creative development of the products. For the companies this change implies less control over the design of the products branded with their logo and therefore a higher risk in the expansive field of celebrity endorsement.

As such risks are present it is essential for companies to understand how a celebrity designer can affect the attitude towards their brand. Existing research concerning celebrity endorsers identified that a match-up between the brand and the celebrity needs to exist and that credibility and attractiveness are the key determents for a successful brand endorsement (Baker and Churchill, 1979; Shimp, 2003). For brands working with celebrity

designers it is important to know whether the principles guiding the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement can also be applied to working with celebrity designers. Finally, companies need to know whether the hiring of a celebrity designer has a significant higher impact on brand responses than simply hiring the same celebrity as an endorser.

In order to fill the research gap identified above, the author of this thesis will examine the following research question:

What is the Impact of Celebrity Designers on the Perception of Sneaker Brands?

1.1.1 Delimitation

In order to generate valid results and stay within the scope of this paper several factors need to be delimited from the thesis' focus. These factors will be explained in the following section.

Culture

Cultural background has a significant impact on how people perceive the world and by which norms they evaluate different things (Malinowski, 1946; McCracken, 1986). Culture can be assumed to influence awareness and perception of brands and celebrities, and therefore the concept of culture needs to be considered in the context of this thesis.

The popularity of celebrities varies between different cultures, depending both on how much the consumers are exposed to the celebrity, and on how much the celebrity fits into the cultural norm of the specific area. In the Western world actors and artists from the United States and Great Britain enjoy high popularity, whereas in other countries, for example China and India, where they have developed their own entertainment culture, different figures enjoy celebrity status (Laroche, 2011). This observation is supported by a comparison between the most popular actors in the USA versus the most popular actors in India. In the United States Leonardo DiCaprio is the most popular actor (Alltoppens.com, URL1), whereas Shah Rukh Khan is the most revered actor in India (Forbesindia.com, URL1). This result is not surprising as the Western world, and especially the US, is heavily exposed to Hollywood productions while in India Bollywood is the dominant film industry.

Even though there are a lot of congruencies within the Western world, differences can still be found across western cultures. As an example it can be stated that in Europe football is the most popular sport and consequently a football player is the highest paid sports professional when considering sponsorship deals (Forbes.com, URL2). In contrast, in the USA it is a golf player who receives the highest earnings from endorsement - football is not as popular in the USA as in Europe and golf carries much more presence and weight in US culture (ibid). For example, in the USA the football player Cristiano Ronaldo would not generate as much public interest as the golfer Tiger Woods would. In Europe this would be the other way around.

It is self-evident that, as with celebrities, there are also differences attributed to the importance of brands in diverging cultures. Even though the rise of globalisation has made it easier for brands to move across borders and across cultures, distinctions can still be made. Not only is there a discrepancy in what kind of brands have successfully been established in different cultures, but also to what extent brands have become an integral part of those cultures.

It can be argued that in most western countries greater wealth allows people to shop for products that stimulate a psychological need, which goes beyond their basic needs. Meanwhile, in developing countries, the majority of people are forced to focus their resources on satisfying their basic needs.

In order to ensure that this study's results are not biased by different cultural values and norms, the study was conducted with participants from one cultural area. Due to the fact that the study was conducted with a German proband sample, theories and measurement scales tested and approved for the Western world were chosen. Further, in the study brands and celebrities known in Germany were selected in order to ensure that participants had a minimum level of knowledge about them which would allow them to make qualified judgements.

Industry

As stated in the introduction, celebrity designers can be utilised in any industry and indeed it can be observed that they are active not only in the fashion industry but in several industries, for example furniture, cosmetics and food (Vogue.com, URL1; dailymail.co.uk, URL1). However, the focus of this thesis will be narrowed to the fashion industry as it is

here that celebrity designers are well established and thus the study participants are less likely to question the fictive information they will be provided with.

Taking into consideration that the fashion industry generates a substantial part of the German GDI and the German fashion industry is one of the largest in Europe (Textilwirtschaft.de, URL1), it seems legitimate to narrow the industry focus of this paper to the fashion industry.

Product Category

Having determined the industry focus to be applied in this paper it further needs to be discussed what kind of product category will be examined. It can be assumed that consumers will take different factors into account when evaluating a brand depending on what kind of need the product should satisfy. For example when buying working clothes, consumers might place higher value on functionality and comfort and thus base their decision on practicality. In contrast they are most likely to value factors such as emotional and social value when evaluating a fashion product bought for styling.

Another way to differentiate between product categories is the degree of involvement consumers have when evaluating a product. Percy and Rosenbaum-Elliott (2011) argue that low involvement consumers do not need to fully accept the message they are exposed to in order to positively change their brand attitude. In cases where the product is in a high involvement product category, the consumers have to accept the message they are exposed to in order to be able to build a positive attitude towards the brand (ibid).

In the underlying paper the probands will be exposed to the information that a celebrity is going to design a sneaker line for a sports apparel brand. Due to the fact that branded sneakers are rather costly and it is assumed that consumers buy these to satisfy higher psychological needs, they can be categorised into the *high involvement affective* product category (Vaughn, 1986) and thus the outcome of the research will be primarily applicable for this product category.

1.2 Structure

In the first part of the thesis, the introduction, the context of this thesis will be explained and the identified problem and derived research question will be introduced. Further, the

reader will be presented to a short explanation of how the research question will be investigated.

In part two existing theories concerning the utilisation of celebrities for branding will be summarised in order to derive a conceptual model for the impact of celebrity designers. Having developed the conceptual model, nine hypotheses will be developed with the purpose to test and confirm the model. In section three the specific methods applied in this thesis to examine the derived hypotheses will be explained.

At the beginning of part four the sample and constructs utilised in this thesis will be tested for validity and reliability. Thereafter the analysis of the hypothesis and results beyond the conceptual model will be introduced. In part five the results of the hypothesis and other tests will be discussed with regards to their meaning and theoretical and practical implications.

In the sixth and final part an overall conclusion will be drawn. Additionally, limitations and suggestions for further research will be discussed.

The picture below illustrates the structure discussed above:



Figure 1: Structure of the underlying Thesis.

2 Theory

In this section the different theoretical models and frameworks applied in this thesis will be introduced.

2.1 The Frame: Balance Theory

In the following part the Balance Theory will be explained and introduced as the fundament for the conceptual model of this thesis.

The Balance Theory, developed by Heider (1958), examines the attitude development and transformation between three parties (ibid). According to the theory, the triadic relationship between person P, person O and object or third person X in the P-O-X model can be either balanced or unbalanced, while the premise of the theory is that people always aim for consistency in their attitudes since inconsistency causes psychological tension. In a balanced state, all relationships are in “harmony” without tension (ibid). In order to achieve this balanced state, the two people must have a positive attitude both towards each other and towards the object. If the people do not have the same attitudes towards the object, systematic tension occurs. The relationship system can only persist, if person P adjusts its attitude towards the attitude of person O, so that the system can reach a state of balance, or if person P denies the relationship between the other person and the object X (Heider, 1958).

In marketing studies, the balance theory is utilised to examine consumer behaviour (Salomon, 1999: 217) and thus can also be applied to the context of this thesis: If the consumer (P) has a positive attitude towards the celebrity designer (O) and both P and O have a positive attitude towards the brand (X), there is balance in the P-O-X model. In the case that the consumer has a positive attitude towards the celebrity designer, but a negative attitude towards the brand, the consumer may positively change his attitude towards the brand, negatively change his attitude towards the celebrity designer or deny the relationship between the celebrity designer and the brand in order to achieve psychological balance.

As explained above, the balance theory and hence the contextually adapted P-O-X model will provide the framework for the conceptual model of the underlying thesis. The constructs on each dyad are derived from the existing literature in the field of celebrity endorsement and will be explained in the following section. First however, the three building blocks of the dyad consumer, celebrity designer, and brand will be defined and elaborated.

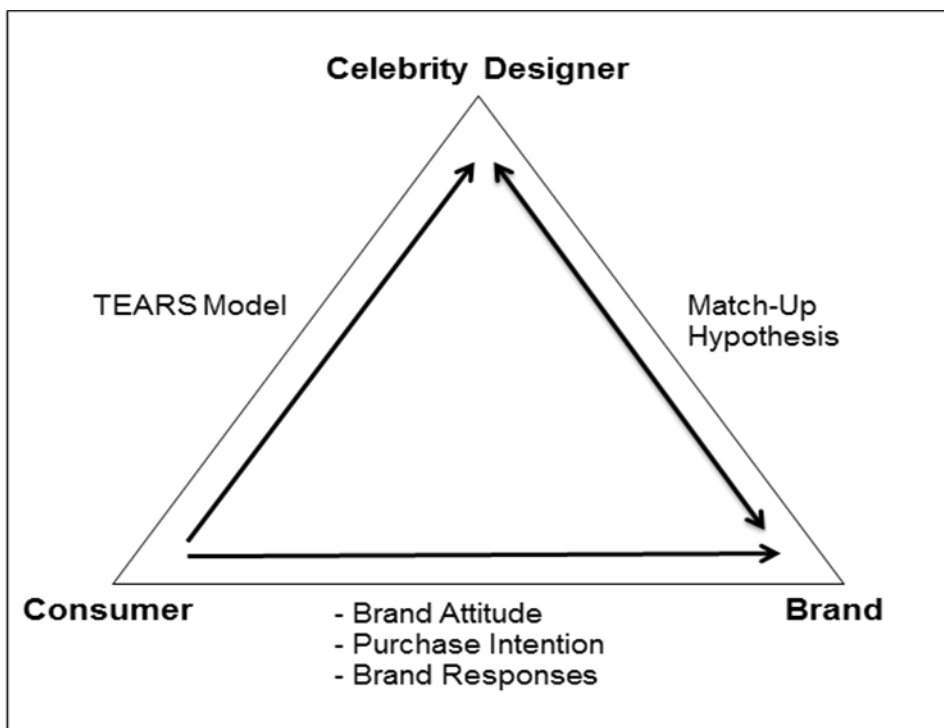


Figure 2: P-O-X Model in the Context of this Thesis (own Creation).

2.2 The Consumer

The first corner point of the conceptual model is the consumer. In the following section it will be explained how the consumer is defined within the explanatory literature and what drives his behaviour and motivation according to different theoretical perspectives. In order to provide a clear understanding of how the consumer is interpreted, the aim of this section is to determine the perspective applied in this thesis.

As the key decider of whether or not to buy a product, the consumer is a central economic actor and as such has been the focus of marketing practices and studies for several

decades. Over time, the perspective on how the consumer is driven by his motives and behaviour has evolved. Østergaard and Jantzen (2002) have identified four different paradigms examining consumer behaviour from different angles.

The first perspective is *Buyer Behaviour* in which the individual is compared to an instinct driven animal thriving to satisfy its primary needs through consumption (ibid). The second perspective is *Consumer Behaviour*. This perspective views the consumer as an individual fully conscious about the consequences of his actions and rationally aiming to maximize his utility. While the first perspective focuses on the buying process itself, the second paradigm looks at the consumer's behaviour before and after the purchasing of products. The third perspective, *Consumer Research*, does not interpret the consuming individual as rational but as emotional and narcissistic, looking for new experiences through consumption. The underlying driver for this behaviour is the desire for meaning in life (ibid).

All three perspectives examine the consumer as an individual. This angle changes with the fourth paradigm, *Consumption Studies*, where the consumer is no longer conceived as a single individual but instead as tribe member "where the product symbolism creates a universe for the tribe" (Østergaard & Jantzen, 2001: p.18). Hence, the individual aims to consume the products with the appropriate symbolic meaning, in order to be identified by his tribe as one of them. The consumer is still emotionally influenced but in comparison to the first three perspectives, he is not a narcissist looking for new experiences isolated from the environment.

Applied to the context of this work, Buyer Behaviour would investigate how a celebrity designer helps a consumer to satisfy their needs while Consumer Behaviour concentrates on the rationally evaluated gain in utility through the presence of a brand designer, measured with questionnaires. From the perspective of Consumer Research, the key question is what kind of emotional experience the celebrity designer can produce for the consumer. Finally, the Consumption Studies angle focuses on how the possession of a sneaker designed by a celebrity supports the consumer's goal to belong to a certain social group.

The investigation of this thesis will focus on the emotional and social utility derived from the celebrity designer and measure these effects on the consumers by conducting a

survey. Hence, the underlying study uses the approach established in Consumer Behaviour.

2.3 The Celebrity Designer

The second protagonist of the triangle is the *celebrity designer*. Due to the fact, that the celebrity designer has not yet been the specific focus of any research, it is necessary to create a definition based on related concepts. Therefore, the construct of a celebrity endorser will be introduced since the celebrity designer can be seen as an extension of this construct, as will be explained in the following.

Companies have collaborated with celebrities in order to create a unique image for their brands and differentiate them from competitors for several decades (Erdogan, 1999). In fact, the first noticed celebrity endorsement goes back to the nineteenth century when queen Victoria promoted Cadbury's Cacao (Sherman, 1985). The use of celebrity endorsers rose significantly from the 1970s due to two developments: firstly, the supply of stars increased dramatically thanks to the expansion of TV, cinema and radio (Thomson, 1979). Secondly, based on the higher level of mobility, celebrities became easier to reach compared to the time where transportation was limited to railroads and cars (ibid).

One of the most widely utilised definitions of 'celebrity endorser' comes from McCracken (1989: p.310) who defined a celebrity endorser as "any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement". This definition implies that the typical celebrity endorsement is restricted to the promotion of a product. Hence, according to this definition the celebrity is not involved in the development and designing of the product.

Primarily within the fashion industry a new type of brand – celebrity collaboration - has risen over the last several years in the form of the Celebrity Designer and while it has not yet been the object of research, the media is aware of this type of branding (Vogue.com, URL1; Elle.com, URL1, Therichest.com, Popsugar.com, URL1).

The celebrity designer is a new form of brand-celebrity partnership because it is not restricted to the post-product development phase like other brand-celebrity collaborations. Rather it involves the celebrity in the designing process of new products and product lines. What differentiates the celebrity designer from common designers is that their fame is based not on their career as a fashion designer but from another artistic field such as singing or acting. Further, in contrast to a professional designer, the celebrity designer's engagement is not limited to the designing of the clothes - they also act as a brand endorser promoting the product line they have designed for the brand. The illustration below visualizes the understanding of a celebrity designer applied for this work:

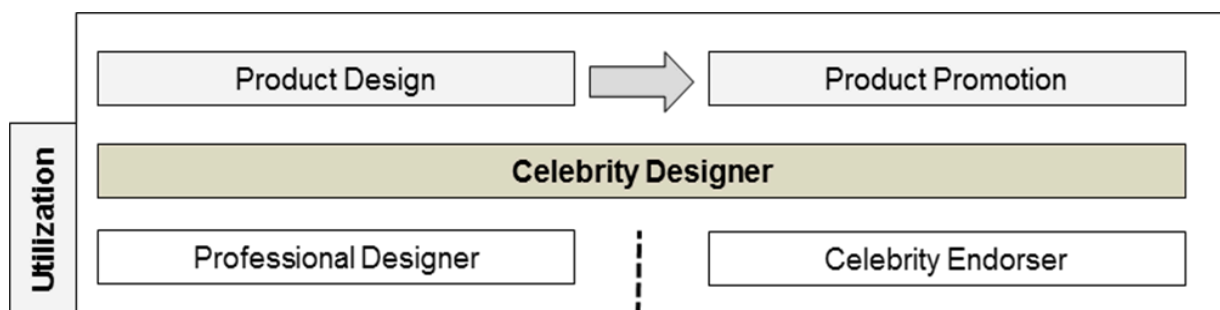


Figure 3: The Celebrity Designer in Comparison to the Celebrity Endorser (own Creation).

2.4 Brand

The third building block of the model is the brand. This chapter will explain the meaning of a brand and the importance of the brand image in the context of Keller's (1993) model of Customer-Based Brand Equity.

According to Ogilvy (1951: p.1) "a brand is the consumer's idea of a product". This definition points out that a brand is determined by the perception of the consumer. Kotler and Keller (2009: p. 276) understand a brand as a product, which differentiates itself in some way in comparison to another product covering the same basic needs. Like Burmann et al. (2005: p.7), they emphasise the fact that the differentiation can be generated through tangible and intangible components of the product.

Therefore, taking into account the perspectives on consumer behaviour utilised for this thesis as explained in 3.1.1, Consumer Research and Consumption Studies, the brand is

a valuable resource for the intangible components of emotional value and symbolic meaning.

Building a strong brand has proved to provide significant financial reward and as a result has become a main priority for many organisations (Keller, 2008). In marketing literature, the concept of brand equity has been established as a measurement for the strength of a brand (Leuthesser, 1988; Maltz, 1991; Aaker and Beel, 1992; Keller, 2008). Keller (2008) explains in his Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model, that it involves four steps to build a strong brand (ibid). In the following, Keller's CBBE model will be introduced and related to the topic of the thesis in order to show how a celebrity designer might influence the consumers' response towards the sneaker brand.

2.4.1 Customer-Based Brand Equity Model

Keller's model views the concept of brand equity from the customers' perspective (Keller, 2008). He defines CBBE as "the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand" (Keller, 2008: p. 48). As explained above, Keller splits the process of creating a strong brand into the four consecutive steps of building *identity*, *brand meaning*, *brand responses* and *brand relationship*. The different steps further consist of different building blocks, which need to be stimulated in order to reach the top of the pyramid:

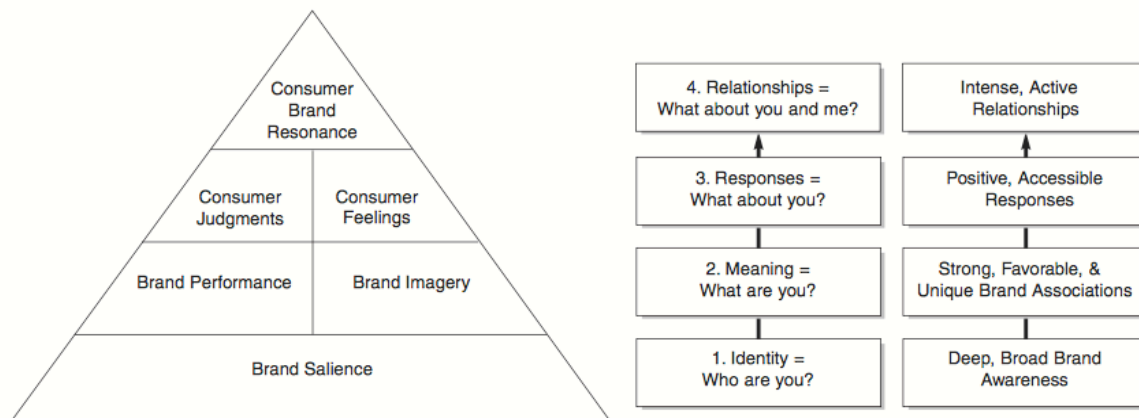


Figure 4: Customer-Based Brand Equity Pyramid (Source: Keller, 2008).

Brand Identity

The fundament of Keller's pyramid is brand identity, which can be achieved through *brand salience* (Keller, 2008). Brand salience refers to brand awareness, which refers to whether the consumer recognises a brand and how easily they can recall the brand (Keller, 1993). It is a prerequisite for customer-based brand equity because if the consumers are not aware of the brand in the first place, they cannot build any associations with the brand and consequently can form no attitude towards it (Heding, Knudtzen and Bjerre: 2009). Hence, brand salience increases the likelihood that the brand will be considered in a purchase situation (Keller, 2008).

With regard to celebrity designers investigated in this thesis, it can be assumed that they positively affect the awareness of the sneaker brands. Studies underline that, based on their fame, celebrities create and maintain attention for brands and can significantly increase recall rates (Croft et al., 1996; Friedman and Friedman, 1979; Ohanian, 1991). Current examples further show that celebrity designers can create additional interest in the brand in comparison to celebrity endorsers by staging the presentation of their new designs in a spectacular way that is geared towards the media (NYT.com, URL1; Vogue.com, URL2).

Brand Meaning

Brand salience is a necessity for the brand in order to start building brand equity, however, salience alone is not sufficient for the creation of a strong brand (Keller, 2008). Instead, customers also take into account what kind of meaning the brand possesses (ibid). According to Keller, brands create meaning by establishing a brand image in the mind of the consumers. In order to be effective the brand meaning needs to be *strong, favourable* and *unique*. The associations connected to the brand can be derived directly through customers' own experience or indirectly through channels such as advertising or word-of-mouth. Keller divides brand related associations into two types: *Brand Performance* and *Brand Imagery*.

Brand performance related associations consider how well the product meets the utilitarian, aesthetic and economic, hence *functional* needs in the mind of the consumer (Keller, 2008). In order to build brand loyalty and resonance, brands need to at least meet the consumers' expectations regarding these aspects (ibid).

Even though this thesis regards the consumer as mainly driven by his emotions and social tribes, the rational side of product evaluation will also be considered as an important factor in the perception of sneaker brands designed by celebrities since several studies prove the significant impact of the perceived brand quality on brand evaluation and ultimately the financial performance (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 2008).

Brand Imagery refers to the way customers perceive the more intangible aspects of the brand - to what extent the brand satisfies customers' psychological or social needs (Keller, 2008). The customers do not focus on the functional aspects of the brand but think about its more abstract value that goes beyond the raw brand performance. Keller differentiates between four main categories of intangibles: *user profiles, purchase and usage situation, personality* and *values and history, heritage and experiences*.

User profiles involve the brand imagery associations related to the user of the brand. It includes demographic and psychographic factors as well the consumers' perception of how many people might use the product and thus how popular it is (Keller, 2008).

Purchase and usage situation concerns the set of associations related to where and how the brand is purchased and where and how it is used (ibid).

Personality and values refers to the fact that consumers tend to attribute human attributes and values to brands. Aaker (1996: p. 141) defines brand personality as “a set of human characteristics associated with a brand”, which is congruent with the definition of other authors (Aaker, 1997: p. 347; Batra et al., 1993).

History, heritage, and experience means that consumers might have associations towards the brand that are related to the brand's past or certain events that took place in the brand's history experienced by themselves or transmitted to them by others (Keller, 2008).

In order to achieve the most positive brand responses, the associations related to the performance and imagery of the brand must be strong, favourable and unique (Keller, 2008). Based on McCracken's theory mentioned earlier, celebrities can help to create the aspired brand image by transferring the associations consumers have to the celebrity themselves towards the brand. For example, if a consumer associates the celebrity designer with coolness and he perceives a fit between the celebrity and the brand, he might infer that the brand is cool as well. Ultimately he might want to transfer this image to himself by purchasing the brand and applying possession rituals (McCracken, 1986).

Brand Responses

The next level in Keller's CBBE model is brand responses. It refers to how customers think and feel about the brand itself and sources of information like the marketing activities of the brand (Keller, 2008). Keller splits brand response into two building blocks *Brand Judgments* and *Brand Feelings*.

Brand Judgments refers to the customers' opinions and evaluations of the brand that are based on the performance and imagery associations developed in the previous step (Keller, 2008). According to Keller (ibid) the most important judgment is the perceived brand quality followed by credibility, consideration and superiority.

Brand Feelings in contrast are the customers' emotional responses to the brand. The Brand Feelings relate to what kind of emotional and social value the customers evoke from

the brand. Keller (2008) identifies six particular brand feelings that he deems to be most important: Warmth, fun, excitement, security, social approval and self-respect.

By transferring meaning that is both performance and imagery related, it can be inferred that the celebrity designer has an impact on both the the consumer's judgement of the brand and their feelings towards the brand. Even though sneaker buyers might be primarily driven by the emotional and social value they obtain from possessing the sneakers, it can be assumed that they also consider the perceived quality and credibility of the brand, since sneakers are an everyday fashion item and thus need to endure constant product use.

Brand Relationships

The final step of the brand equity pyramid is brand relationship based on brand resonance. It reflects how intensely the customer is bonded with the brand and how actively they interact with the brand (Keller, 2008). Keller differentiates between four categories of brand resonance: Behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community and active engagement.

Behavioural loyalty relates to how often consumers buy the brand and how much of it they purchase. Attitudinal attachment needs to build a strong favourability towards the brand that goes beyond a simple positive attitude in order to create brand resonance.

Sense of community refers to the idea that a brand provides the customer with a sense of belonging to a community. The community can persist of the brand, other customers and other representatives like, in the case of this work, the celebrity designer. The final resonance of active engagement expresses how much time, energy, money and other resources customers invest into the brand.

2.5 McCracken: Meaning Transfer

As explained above, brands need to create a strong, favourable and unique meaning in the mind of the consumer in order to generate valuable brand responses and ultimately build brand equity.

In his work "Culture and Consumption: A Theoretical Account of the Structure and Movement of the Cultural Meaning of Consumer Goods" Grant McCracken (1986) argues that in consumer societies meaning is transferred from the culturally constituted world to the brand and finally from the brand to the consumer. According to McCracken, the movement of meaning from the culturally constituted world to the brand is facilitated through advertising and the fashion industry. When the advertiser has decided what kind of meanings the product should obtain, he screens the culturally constituted world for objects, persons and context that already contain the intended meaning. By displaying the product with this meaning loaded element, for example a celebrity endorser, the meaning transfers from the element to the brand (ibid). In a specification of this model, McCracken (1989) argues that celebrities are a valuable vehicle by which to transfer meaning because in contrast to unknown brand endorsers they offer a broader and deeper set of personality and lifestyle meanings. They own their meanings, because they created them under public observation in the roles they play in television, the music industry or sports (ibid).

In the fashion industry, the meaning transfer takes place in a more complex way, since "the process has more sources of meaning, agents of transfer, and media of communication" (McCracken, 1986: p. 76). In addition, complexity is added by the fact that the transfer of meaning in the fashion world works in three possible ways (ibid).

First, the fashion system uses, for example, new clothing designs and styles and associates these with existing cultural categories and principles. This moves the meaning from the culturally constituted world to the brand. The second way in which the fashion system moves meaning is by first creating a new cultural meaning or reshaping an existing one and then initiating the change of established categories and principles (McCracken, 1986). As McCracken states, this change is empowered through opinion leaders, which he defines as "individuals, who by virtue of birth, beauty, or accomplishment are held in high esteem" (McCracken, 1986: p.76). He further identifies celebrities from various backgrounds as a new group of opinion leaders.

The third type of meaning transfer within the fashion industry occurs when radical groups such as hippies and punks break with the present norm and significantly reform the existing cultural meanings (McCracken, 1986). According to McCracken (ibid) these movements put society in a state of permanent change.

With regard to the topic of this thesis it can be argued that the celebrity designer is both a part of the advertisement and the fashion system. While they advertise for the brand as an endorser and as such transfer the meanings associated with themselves to the brand, the celebrity designer also shapes and creates new meaning as an opinion leader who is able to design the sneakers in a way so that they most accurately possess the meaning they intend to give them. Due to that it can be argued that the celebrity designer might be a more efficient tool to transfer meaning than the celebrity endorser because by designing the product they have an additional resource to shape the aspired meaning the brand wants to establish in the consumers' mind.

The last stage of the meaning transfer process occurs, when the consuming individuals take possession of the meaning charged on the brand and exploit them for the construction of their self-perception (McCracken, 1986; McCracken, 1989). McCracken emphasises that it is not enough to just own a product to take possession of its meaning (McCracken, 1989). Possession of meaning is achieved by applying one of four possession rituals encompassing *Exchange*, *Possession*, *Grooming* and *Divestment* rituals.

In the case of sneakers, consumers can transfer the meaning charged to the brand by the celebrity designers to themselves by wearing the sneakers in public and thus express their sense of social belonging and aspired self-conception.

2.6 The Conceptual Model

The theoretical frameworks mentioned above explain the interaction of the three actors consumer, celebrity designer and brand within the triangle. Based on these theories the conceptual model of this thesis has been developed as illustrated below:

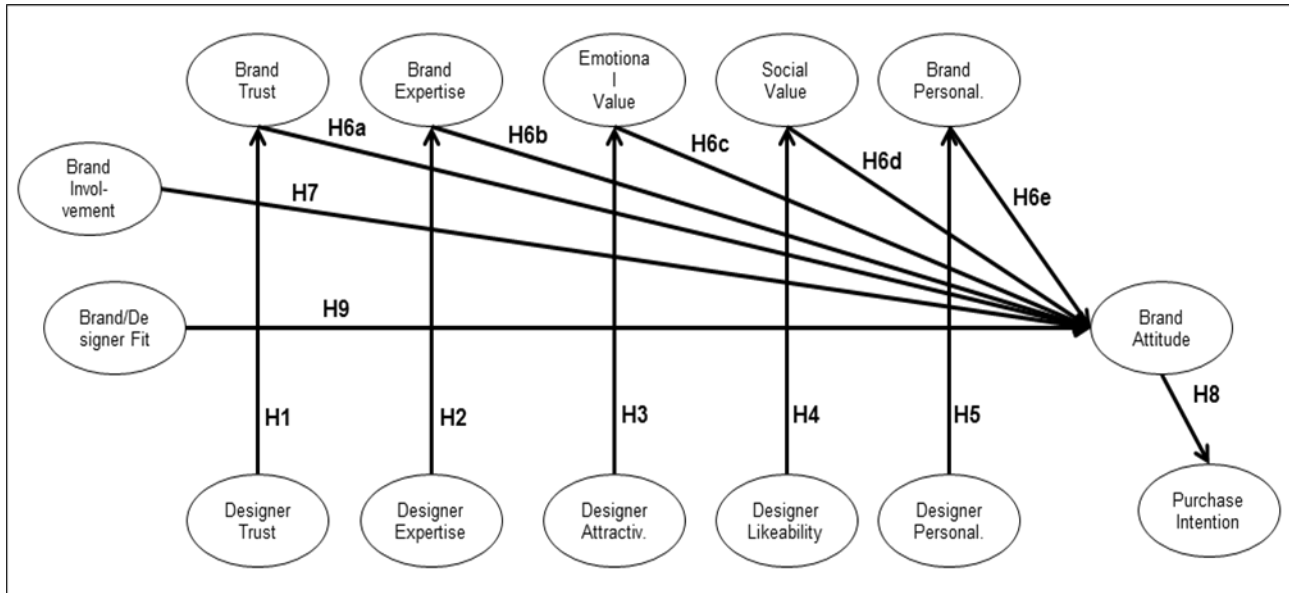


Figure 5: The Conceptual Model (own Creation).

The underlying assumption of the conceptual model is based on McCracken's theory that meaning is transferred from the celebrity designer to the brand and Keller's pyramid brand building theory. In the model it is illustrated that the meaning of the designer is transferred to the brand. When the meaning is transferred to the brand it affects the overall evaluation of the brand, hence the brand attitude. Based on previous research purchase intention is integrated into the model as the dependent variable of brand attitude.

Research also identified the positive effect of fit between the brand and celebrity and of brand involvement on brand attitude (Kamins, 1990; Martensen et al., 2007). Hence, these constructs are included in the conceptual model as well as direct influencers of brand attitude. Based on the conceptual model, nine hypotheses will be derived and explained in the following sections of the thesis.

2.7 Theoretical Concepts between the Model's Dyads

In the previous part of this thesis, the theoretical foundations for the three building blocks and the theory of meaning transfer as the all-embracing assumption of the conceptual model have been illuminated. The theory review shows that the pursued meaning needs to be transferred from the celebrity to the brand and from there to the consumer, if the endorsement should be successful. In the following theoretical frameworks examining the relationship between the consumer and the celebrity designer and between the celebrity designer and the brand the thesis will explore how these relationships can impact the consumer-based brand equity.

Further, hypothesis aiming to investigate the research question of this thesis will be inferred from the existing theories.

2.8 Consumer-Celebrity Designer Dyad

The first relationship that will be theoretically investigated is the one between consumers and celebrity designers.

The impact of the relationship between the consumer and the celebrity endorser has been examined in several studies (Erdogan, 1999). One attribute that researchers found to significantly affect the impact of celebrity endorsement is the perceived *Credibility* of the celebrity (Dholakia and Sternthal, 1977; Hovland et al., 1953; Ohanian, 1991; Salomon, 1996). The studies show that the celebrity's credibility can influence beliefs, opinions, attitudes and behaviour (Erdogan, 1999).

Another important attribute of the celebrity regarding the effectiveness of the collaboration with the brand is his *Attractiveness* (Baker and Churchill, 1977; Debevec and Kerman, 1984).

2.8.1 TEARS Model

Shimp's (2007) TEARS model builds upon these two main attributes of endorsement effectiveness. In the model, the attribute credibility is divided into the two sub-attributes

Trustworthiness and *Expertise* while attractiveness is split in *Physical Attractiveness*, *Respect* and *Similarity*.

2.8.1.1 Credibility

As mentioned above, credibility is conceptualised with the attributes trustworthiness and Expertise. This fragmentation is congruent with other frequently cited models examining credibility (Hovland, Janis and Kelly: 1953; McGuire, 1969).

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness refers to whether the consumers perceive the celebrity as honest, believable and honourable and therefore whether the celebrity can be trusted (Shimp, 2007). The perceived trustworthiness also relates to the assumed motivation of the celebrity. If the celebrity is assumed to collaborate with the brand solely for financial reasons consumers will have less trust than if the celebrity endorses the product solely because of their conviction in its worth (ibid). The celebrity builds trustworthiness during his public life and is thereby strongly dependent on how the media portrays him since the consumers derive most of their information about public figures through the media. However, due to the rise of social media channels like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter the celebrity wins back some of the power over the information spread (Geraghty, 2015).

Expertise

Expertise refers to the knowledge, experience or skills possessed by an endorser concerning the endorsed brand (Shimp, 2007). As other authors do, (Hovland et al. 1953; Ohanian, 1991) Shimp states that it does not matter whether an endorser is an expert but whether the brand's target group perceives him to be one. Applying this insight to the case of celebrity designer it can be stated that it does not really matter whether the celebrity actually has expertise in designing a sneaker but whether the target group believes that they have such expertise.

Several studies show that the perceived credibility of a celebrity endorser has a significant impact on the consumer's attitude towards the brand (Dholakia and Sternthal, 1977; Hovland et al., 1953; Ohanian, 1991; Salomon, 1996). Further, Spry, Pappu and Cornwell

(2009) found a direct positive impact from the endorser's credibility on the brands credibility. This finding can be explained by McCracken's meaning transfer model introduced in section 2.5. If the celebrity is perceived as credible, this meaning will be transferred to the brand. Considering the findings and theoretical models it can be inferred that the credibility of the celebrity designer will positively impact the credibility of the brand they designs a sneaker for.

Taking into account the explained fragmentation of the credibility construct the following hypotheses can be inferred:

H1: The more trustworthy the celebrity designer is perceived to be, the more trustworthy the brand will be perceived to be by the consumer.

H2: The more the celebrity designer is perceived to be an expert concerning sneakers, the more the brand will be perceived to be an expert concerning sneakers.

2.8.1.2 Attractiveness

Shimp argues that attractiveness is not limited to physical attractiveness but can also arise from other characteristics of the celebrity that the consumer perceives in an endorser. In his model Shimp conceptualises attractiveness out of *Physical Attractiveness*, *Respect* and *Similarity*.

Physical Attractiveness

Physical Attractiveness refers to the question of how beautiful the consumers perceive the endorser to be (Shimp, 2007). Several studies have shown that a celebrity's physical attractiveness has a significant impact on the brand perception (Baker and Churchill, 1977; Chaiken, 1979; Debevec and Keman, 1984; Till and Busler, 2000). These findings are confirmed by observations from the real world where the use of attractive endorsers is common practise in most advertisements (Erdogan, 1999).

In his theory of meaning transfer McCracken (1986) argues that the meaning of a celebrity can transfer from the celebrity towards the brand and from the brand to the consumer, when the consumer applies possession rituals. With regard to attractiveness Shimp (2007)

explains that if they perceive him to be attractive, consumers want to identify with the celebrity in order to transfer this meaning towards themselves. By wearing a sneaker that is not only endorsed by the celebrity but also designed by them, they can take possession of this meaning and thus feel attractive themselves.

In his model of CBBE Keller (1993) elucidates that consumer feelings refer to the emotional and social value that consumers gain from the brand. Based on the meaning transfer explained above and due to the fact that feeling attractive can be described as a positive emotional state, the physical attractiveness of the celebrity is assumed to positively affect the emotional value the consumer obtains from the brand. The following hypothesis will be tested:

H3: The more attractive the celebrity designer is perceived to be, the higher the emotional value of the brand will be.

In the context of this thesis emotional value is defined as “the utility derived from the feelings or affective states that a product generates” (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001: p.211). This definition is congruent with the understanding of emotional value given by Newman and Gross (Sheth et al., 1991: p.20).

Respect/ Likeability

Respect expresses how strongly the consumer admires the celebrity for his personal and professional qualities and achievements in publicly recognised fields such as acting, sport events or a music career (Shimp, 2007). According to Shimp (ibid) respect is the fundamental element of the attractiveness construct and can outperform the importance of physical attractiveness in certain cases.

While Shimp considers Respect as a sub-element of attractiveness, other authors instead regard *likeability* as a part of attractiveness (Erdogan, 1999; McGuire, 1985). Considering the perspective of Consumption Studies the consumer chooses brands that contain a symbolic meaning making them identifiable as a member of their tribe. The external confirmation, and hence the likeability for his tribe, is essential to the consumer.

Thus, the individual aims to consume the products with an appropriate symbolic meaning, in order to be identified by his tribe as one of them. Gabbert et al. (2003) state that

consumers tend to conformity and assume that the perception of a larger group of should be correct. Further, Schachter (1951) elaborates that people follow the norms of others because they are afraid of exclusion if they differ from the majority. Based from these findings it can be inferred that consumers like celebrities that they assume their tribe to like as well.

By possessing a branded product that is designed by a popular celebrity designer, the consumer might transfer the association of respect towards himself and secure his position in the desired tribe. As a consequence, he might anticipate a higher social value, meaning “the utility derived from the product’s ability to enhance social self-concept” (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001: p.211), when publicly wearing the sneaker brand. The following hypotheses will be tested:

H4: The more liked the celebrity is by the consumer, the higher the perceived social value of the brand will be for the consumer.

Similarity/Personality

The last sub-attribute of attractiveness is *similarity*. It represents the degree to which the celebrity matches the target audience with regard to characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity and other demographics. Shimp (2007) explains that consumers tend to prefer an endorser, if he matches with the target audience in respect of gender and ethnicity. Choi and Rifon (2012) investigated similarity in regards of the celebrity’s image and the consumer’s ideal self. They found that congruence between the celebrity endorser’s image and the consumer’s ideal self has a positive impact on the brand attitude. Further, Boon and Lomore (2001) found out that especially young consumers borrow the personality of a celebrity to build their own identity.

As explained earlier, consumers derive and move symbolic meaning from the brand towards themselves in order to create the person they aim to be. By purchasing and using a product that is endorsed by favoured celebrity, consumers can adopt the meaning the celebrity transferred to the brand (McCracken, 1989). Considering the research findings of Choi and Rifon, Boon and Lomore and the theory of meaning transfer, it can be inferred that consumers develop a positive attitude towards the brand because they transfer favourable personality traits of the celebrity towards the brand. The brand charged with the

personality meaning of the celebrity then helps the consumer to express his own desired personality (Burmann et al., 2005). Due to the fact that the celebrity designs the branded sneaker, the brand might reflect his personality even more than if he only endorses the product.

In reply to the findings presented above, the following hypotheses will be investigated:

H5: The better the consumer perceives the celebrity personality; the better the brand personality will be perceived.

The hypotheses above consider the impact of several celebrity characteristics on different brand responses. Brand attitude is defined as “consumer’s overall evaluations of a brand” (Keller, 1993: 4). In order to achieve a positive brand attitude, consumers need to positively evaluate different aspects of the brand (Baldinger, 1996; Faircloth et al., 2001). From these statements it can be inferred that the brand responses *brand trust*, *credibility*, *social value*, *emotional value* and *brand personality* as part of the brand evaluation have a positive effect on the overall brand evaluation. Therefore, the following hypothesis will be tested:

H6: Brand Attitude is positively affected by the brand responses a) Brand Trust, b) Brand Credibility, c) Social Value, d) Emotional Value and e) Brand Personality.

Brand Involvement

Zaichkowsky defines involvement as “a person’s perceived relevance of the object based on inherent needs, values and interests” (Zaichkowsky, 1985: p.342). The impact of involvement on the perception of brands has been studied by several authors (Petty et al., 1986; Martensen et al., 2007; Bian & Moutinho, 2011; Rice et al., 2012).

Involvement plays a central role in the Elaboration Likelihood Model by Petty et al. (1986). According to the model, under high involvement a communication message will more likely move through the central route, first affecting cognition, then attitude and then behaviour. Under low involvement, the message is more likely to move through the peripheral route, affecting behaviour before attitude (ibid).

It can be assumed, that consumers are more likely to be involved with a brand if they perceive the brand as interesting and valuable. In their research, Martensen et al. (2007) came to the conclusion that brand involvement positively affects brand attitude.

Based on that finding it can be inferred that this also applies to involvement with the brand in the case of this thesis. Therefore, the following hypothesis will be examined:

H7: Brand involvement has a positive effect on brand attitude.

2.8.2 Purchase Intention

The hypotheses above investigate a change in brand evaluation based on the perception of the celebrity designer. In order to also include an economic factor in this thesis, the purchase intention will be introduced.

The behaviour of customers concerning a brand is based on the brand perception (Biel, 1992). Geus (2004) discovered in his studies that the attitude towards a brand has a positive impact on the purchase intention. Several studies confirmed the positive influence of brand attitude on purchase intention in the context of celebrity endorsement (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Belch & Belch, 1995; Fleck et al., 2012). Based on these findings the following hypothesis will be tested in the context of this thesis:

H8: Brand attitude has a positive effect on purchase intention.

2.9 Celebrity Designer-Brand Dyad

The hypotheses developed above consider the relationship between the consumer and the celebrity designer. However, existing research shows that the relationship between the celebrity and the brand is also important for the success of a celebrity endorser and thus probably for the success of a celebrity designer as well (Erdogan, 1999). Therefore, this relationship will be examined in the following section.

2.9.1 Match-Up Hypothesis

Keller (1989) states that there needs to be a fit between the celebrity and brand in order for the endorsement to be successful. The importance of a match-up/ fit between the image of the celebrity and the brand has been investigated and proven in several studies (Forkan, 1980; Kamins, 1990; Misra and Beatty, 1990; Levy, 1959; Kotler, 1997). The results of the studies show that a fit between celebrity and consumer increases brand attitude and confidence in the brand.

A miss-fit between brand and celebrity can negatively impact the perception of the brand. Erdogan (1999: p. 303) warns that “the absence of connection between celebrity endorser and products endorsed may lead consumers to the belief that the celebrity has been bought i.e. handsomely paid to endorse the product or service”. Further, Evans (1988) notes that if there is no specific fit between the celebrity and the brand, the consumers remember the celebrity but not the product he endorses.

Concerning products/brands enhancing one’s attractiveness, for example sneakers, Kamins (1990) came to the conclusion that attractive celebrity endorsers are more effective than unattractive endorsers. However, several researches highlight that consumer perception of congruence between the celebrity and the endorsed product should be measured on a more general level in order to measure the congruence effect, since several factors might determine the perceived congruence between brand and celebrity (Kamins and Gupta, 1994; Misra and Beatty, 1990). These studies showed that a perceived congruence on an overall level lead to more favourable evaluations of the brand.

Based on the findings summarised above, the following hypotheses will be tested in this thesis:

H9: The higher the perceived fit between the celebrity designer and the brand, the higher the brand attitude.

2.10 Hypotheses Overview

H1: The more trustworthy the celebrity designer is perceived to be, the more trustworthy the brand will be perceived to be by the consumer.

H2: The more the celebrity designer is perceived to be an expert concerning sneakers, the more the brand will be perceived to be an expert concerning sneakers.

H3: The more attractive the celebrity designer is perceived to be, the higher the emotional value of the brand will be.

H4: The more likeable the celebrity designer is perceived to be, the higher the perceived social value of the brand will be.

H5: The better the consumer perceives the celebrity personality; the better the brand personality will be perceived.

H6: Brand attitude is positively affected by

- a) Brand trust
- b) Brand expertise
- c) Emotional value
- d) Social value
- e) Brand personality.

H7: The more involved the consumer is involved with the brand, the better his brand attitude will be.

H8: Brand attitude has a positive effect on purchase intention.

H9: Brand-Celebrity designer fit has a positive effect on brand attitude.

3 Methodology

The following section will state and explain the methods that have been used to investigate the underlying research questions. The goal of the empirical analysis is to examine the impact of celebrity designers on the perception of brands.

In order to do so, a quantitative experimental-economic study design has been chosen. After having explained the research approach in more detail, the author of the thesis will elucidate the structure and procedure of the experiment. After that, the test results will be generated and analysed.

3.1 Research Approach

Due to the fact that the impact of celebrity designers on the perception of fashion brands has not yet been examined, primary data needs to be generated. The underlying research question has been investigated using an experimental-economic analysis. The experiment has been conducted as an online survey, in order to reach as many participants as possible. The quantitative approach allows more general insights to be derived through comparison and correlation of the data (Field, 2011).

In the experiment, a sports apparel brand offering sneakers has been chosen as the brand stimulus due to two main reasons. Firstly, sneakers are a wide spread fashion item worn by men and women and as such are relevant for a large group of consumers. Secondly, there have been several endorser and designer collaborations between sneaker brands and celebrities in the past. This makes the study highly relevant for the practise but also realistic and imaginable for the participants.

When choosing the sneaker brand the decision had to be made as to whether to use a fictitious or real sneaker brand. The advantage of using a fictitious brand is that a possible confounding through brand knowledge and image of existing brands can be reduced. However, due the fact that one factor intended to be analysed is the fit between the brand and the celebrity, a certain amount of brand knowledge is necessary for the participants to judge whether the celebrity and brand match-up. Further, using a real brand and real celebrities increases the ecological validity of the study (Fleck et al., 2012). Therefore a

widely known existing brand has been chosen as the brand stimulus based on a pre-test (See section 3.4).

Since the transfer of the celebrity's image to the brand is at the core of this thesis, it is self-evident that celebrities who are well established in the minds of the participants needed to be selected. In order to eliminate factors outside the focus of the study as much as possible, celebrities from the same profession have been chosen. The selection of the celebrities was intended to create sufficient variation in the probands' perception (Choi & Rifon, 2012: p.643). To find one celebrity who is perceived as rather credible, attractive and fitting with the brand and one celebrity who is not so credible, attractive and not such a good fit with the brand, a pre-test has been conducted (See section 3.3).

Beyond the conceptual model, it is also the aim of this thesis to investigate the potential difference in impact on the consumer between the more common celebrity endorser and a celebrity designer. Therefore, the participants were given either the information that the celebrity is working for the brand as a *designer* or the information that he is working as an *endorser*.

The study has been conducted in a *Between Subject* design. Using a *Within Subject* design, the participants would see four different variations and thus the survey time would rise significantly risking the concentration of each participant being challenged due to repetitive questions. Even though a Between Subject design requires more participants, it reduces the risk of survey breakups due to the shorter time required.

In the chosen design each probrand saw one sneaker brand in combination with one celebrity who was either marked as a designer or an endorser. The brand *Reebok* was chosen since it performed averagely regarding current brand attitude in the pre-test and thus can be considered to not already have too strong a brand image in the mind of the consumer to be affected by the manipulation. The choice of the two celebrities was also based on a pre-test. One celebrity was selected who achieved a high evaluation regarding perceived credibility, attractiveness and fit with Reebok and one celebrity was chosen who received a low evaluation regarding perceived credibility, attractiveness and fit with Reebok.

The assignment of the manipulation occurred based on a random selection each time the survey was retrieved. In the following illustration an example of the mechanism of the random selection is shown.

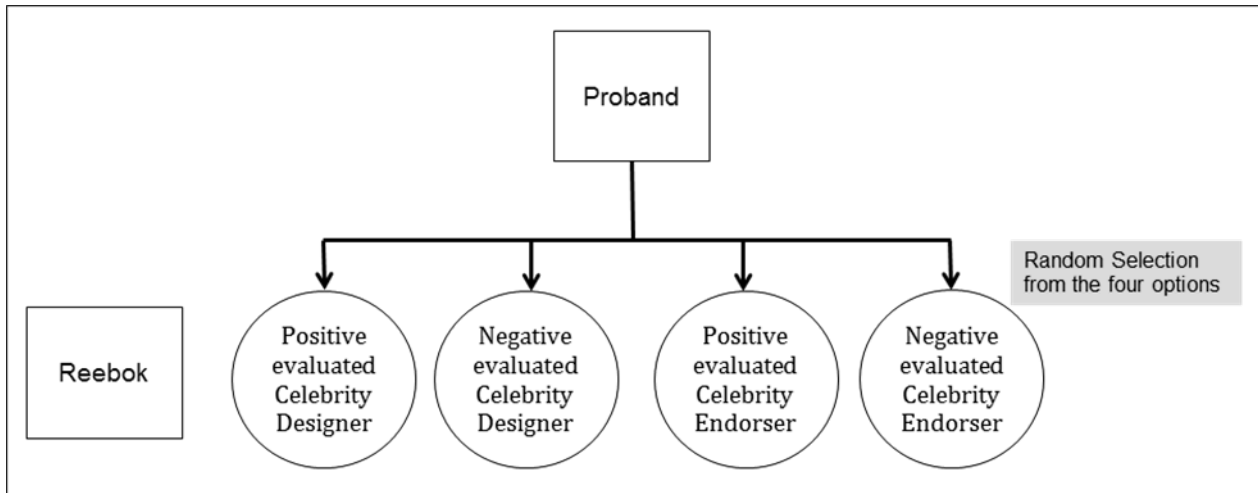


Figure 6: Process of the Experiment with Random Selection of Stimuli (own Creation).

3.2 Operationalization of the Variables

In section two it has been explained which dimension of the celebrity and brand perception will be investigated in this thesis. In order to measure these dimensions, the constructs have been operationalized based on validated scientific papers from widely recognised researchers. Another criteria for the selection of the scales was that they are not specific to the underlying case of this thesis but instead can be applied to other cases as well in order to ensure a high comparability.

The survey questions were measured by the use of nominal, ratio and ordinal scales. While the constructs brand/celebrity fit and brand attitude were measured by use of a seven point semantic scale, all other constructs were measured with a seven point likert scale. All constructs are measured with a 7-likert scale in order to achieve an appropriate level of differentiation for the survey participants. Due to the fact that this scales provide a middle value, which can be used by the participants to express indecisiveness it was decided to not offer an additional option of an “I don’t know” answer button.

In order to guarantee the internal consistence and reliability of the constructs, the measurement *Cronbachs Alpha* will be utilised. To be considered as reliable the Cronbachs Alpha values should not lie below 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978).

The following table shows the operationalizations of the constructs used in this thesis:

Operationalization of the variables

In the Style of

Celebrity Trustworthiness

1. The celebrity is dependable
2. The celebrity is honest
4. The celebrity is sincere
4. The celebrity is trustworthy

Chaudhuri a. Holbrook, 2001: p.87

Brand Trust

1. I trust the brand
2. I can rely on the brand
3. The brand will keep its promise
4. The brand is reliable

Chaudhuri a. Holbrook, 2001: p.87

Celebrity Expertise

1. The celebrity is an expert in sneakers
2. The celebrity is experienced with sneakers
3. The celebrity is knowledgeable about sneakers
4. The celebrity is qualified concerning sneakers
5. The celebrity is skilled concerning sneakers

Ohanian, 1990: p.47

Brand Expertise

1. The brand is an expert in sneakers
2. The brand is experienced with sneakers
3. The brand is knowledgeable about sneakers
4. The brand is qualified concerning sneakers
5. The brand is Skilled concerning sneakers

based on Ohanian, 1990: p.47

Celebrity Attractiveness

1. The celebrity is attractive
2. The celebrity is classy
4. The celebrity is handsome
4. The celebrity is elegant
5. The celebrity is sexy

Ohanian, 1990: p.47

Emotional Brand Value

The brand is one that..

1. I would enjoy
2. would make me want to use it
3. is one that I would feel relaxed about using
4. would make me feel good
5. would give me pleasure

Sweeney & Soutar, 2001: p.212

Likeability of the Celebrity

1. I Like the celebrity
2. I find the celebrity to be likeable
3. I find the celebrity to be overall pleasant
4. I view the celebrity as an overall likeable person

Peetz, 2012: p.53

Social Value

1. This brand would help me, to feel accepted
2. This brand would improve how I am perceived
3. This brand would make a good impression on others
4. This brand would give the owner social approval

Sweeney & Soutar, 2001: p.212

Celebrity Personality

1. This celebrity has a personality
2. This celebrity is interesting
3. I have a clear image of the celebrity

based on Aaker, 1996: p.118

Brand Personality

1. This brand has a personality
2. This brand is interesting
3. I have clear picture of the person using this brand

Aaker, 1996, p: 118

Celebrity/ Brand Fit

The celebrity and the brand are..

1. compatible/not compatible
2. a good fit/bad fit
4. a good match/ bad match

Kamins & Gupta, 1994; Till & Busler, 2000

Brand Attitude

I perceive the brand as..

1. Unpleasant/Pleasant
2. Favorable/Unfavorable
3. I like the Brand/Disklike the brand

Choi & Rifon, 2012: p.644

Purchase Intention

1. I can imagine to buy the brand in the future

Geus, 2005: p.186

Brand Involvement

1. The Brand is important to me
2. The Brand is relevant for me
3. This Brand means a lot to me

Zaichkowski, 1985: p.350

Table 1: Operationalization of Variables.

3.3 Pre-test Stimuli

As elaborated in part 3.1, the experiment was conducted in a between subject design, requiring one sneaker brand and two celebrities. In order to find celebrities that could potentially design or endorse for a sneaker brand, a brainstorming method was used involving five participants. The participants were asked to name potential celebrities that were either *credible* and *attractive* or *not credible* and *unattractive*. The participants came up with eight celebrities. With regards to the factors above five were evaluated positively and three negatively:

Positive evaluated Celebrity	Negative evaluated Celebrities
David Beckham (Former Football Player)	The Game (Musician)
Jay Z (Musician)	Pete Doherty (Musician)
Drake (Musician)	Flavor Flave (Musician)
Justin Timberlake (Musician)	
Justin Bieber (Musician)	

Table 2: Result of the Brainstorming regarding potential Celebrity Designers/Endorsers.

The participants agreed that *The Game* and *Flavor Flave* might not be famous enough to be widely known. For that reason they were excluded. A further pre-test was conducted, with eight participants, in order to test the suggestions regarding perceived credibility (trustworthiness and expertise) and attractiveness (physical attractiveness, likeability, personality). The results of the test are summarised in the table below:





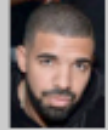

						
	Beckham	Bieber	Jay Z	Doherty	Drake	Timberlake
Trustworthiness	4,91	4,22	5,19	2,59	5,00	4,72
Expertise	4,22	5,95	6,18	2,28	6,00	3,58
Physical Attractiveness	5,43	5,05	3,88	2,43	3,45	5,13
Likeability	5,66	5,34	5,63	3,22	5,34	5,25
Personality	5,00	5,83	5,67	4,54	5,54	5,00
Overall Average	5,04	5,28	5,31	3,01	5,07	4,73

Table 3: Results of the Pre-test Celebrity Evaluation.

The results in table 3 show that Jay Z achieved the overall highest score, while Pete Doherty received the overall lowest score.

In the same pre-test, participants were also asked to evaluate the five biggest sports apparel brands Nike, Adidas, Puma, Reebok and New Balance with regard to their brand attitude:


					
	Nike	Adidas	Puma	Reebok	New Balance
Brand Attitude	6,42	6,25	4,75	4,38	4,38

Table 4: Results of the Pre-test Brand Evaluation.

The results show that Nike and Adidas already have very high values when it comes to brand attitude. Due to their strong brand image, it can be inferred that a change in attitude towards these two brands might be hard to achieve. Therefore they were not considered appropriate as stimuli for the main survey. Puma, Reebok and New Balance all got slightly above average evaluations. Finally, it was tested how well the celebrities were perceived to fit with the brands.







						
	Beckham	Bieber	Jay Z	Doherty	Drake	Timberlake
Fit Puma	3,00	2,88	3,63	1,38	4,25	3,00
Fit Adidas	6,13	4,50	5,63	1,63	4,38	4,38
Fit Nike	5,38	5,25	4,75	1,50	5,63	4,50
Fit Reebok	4,50	3,63	5,00	1,75	4,38	3,63
Fit New Balance	3,63	4,00	3,38	1,75	3,88	3,88

Table 5: Results of the Pretest Celebrity/Brand Fit.

Due to the fact that Jay Z has a better fit with Reebok compared to Puma and New Balance and Pete Doherty shows a low value for brand fit with Reebok, Reebok was

chosen as the brand stimulus in the survey. The illustration below displays the two chosen celebrities and the brand logo of Reebok:



Figure 7: Final choice of Celebrities and Brand shown in the Survey.

3.3.1 Background Information Brand and Celebrities

Reebok, founded in 1895 in England, is a global footwear and apparel company. It is the oldest athletic footwear company in the world (referenceforbusiness.com, URL1). In 2015, the brand owned by the Adidas Group reported a net sales volume of 1.7 billion Euro of which 347 million Euro were earned in Western Europe, the area Germany is part of (adidas-group, 2016: p. 138).

Operating in Europe exclusively in Europe for a long time, the Reebok expanded to the USA in 1979 when businessman Paul B. Fireman bought the North American licence and founded Reebok USA. The acquisition of the North American market contributed significantly to Reebok's growth.

Another key point in the history of the company and brand of the same name is the introduction of aerobic exercise shoes in 1982 and the attached inclusion of women in the target group (Grimm, 1992). As the first brand, Reebok produced exercise shoes in a modern design making them wearable not only at sports practise but also in the street (referenceforbusiness.com, URL1). When Cybill Shepherd wore Reebok sneakers on the red carpet of the Golden Globe in 1985, the sneakers became more and more a fashion item attracting young style oriented customers (ibd).

In the late 80s, Reebok diversified its product portfolio by starting to offer apparel and accessories in addition to its footwear segment. In this context the company changed its structure by dividing it up into two areas, one focusing on athletic products and one on fashion products (referenceforbusiness.com, URL1). In the 1990s Reebok collaborated with famous athletes as for example the basketball player Shaquille O'Neil in developing athletic shoes with mixed success.

In the early 2000s Reebok started to engage non-athletes like the rapper 50 Cent or the actress Scarlett Johanson for endorser and designer collaborations (athletepromotions.com, URL1). These collaborations helped the brand to regain sales share after it suffered from a crisis in the 1990s, which was mainly due to the increased competition as Nike and Adidas significantly increased their marketing spending (ibid).

Since 2005 Reebok belongs to the Adidas Group but it continued operations under its own brand name (USAtoday.com, URL1). In its annual report, the Adidas-Group claimed that Reebok was not only positioned as a fitness but also as a lifestyle brand and will strengthen this image by partnering with influential celebrities that share the brand's values (Adidas-Group, 2015: p. 67). Currently, the brand has endorser deals with the musician Kendrick Lamar and actress Ronda Rousey in addition to several sports sponsorships (ibid).

Due to Reebok's reoccurring collaborations with celebrities it can be assumed that the participants of the experimental study are likely to believe that Reebok will in fact collaborate with the celebrities presented as future designers respectively endorsers in the experiment.

Jay Z is a 45 years old American rapper, who is one of the world's most successful musicians of all time when considering numbers of records sold, financial revenue and awards received (Forbes.com, URL1). In addition to his success as an artist, Jay Z is also known for his fortune as a businessman (ibid). Due to his high levels of coverage in German media (Gala.de, URL1; Bild.de, URL1; Boerse.ard.de, URL1) it can be inferred that Jay Z is widely known in the German population. This assumption is supported by the fact that all participants in the pre-test claimed to know Jay Z. Jay Z has already been active as a brand designer in the past. In 2010 he designed a sneaker for Nike (nike.com, URL1). However, due to the fact this collaboration was more than six years ago, at the

time the survey was conducted it was assumed that this fact should not confound the results. Also, due to the fact that all of the positively evaluated celebrities have had collaborations with one or more fashion brands in the past, selecting a celebrity with previous collaborations could not be avoided.

Pete Doherty, born in 1979, is a British musician and actor who won several British awards for his music performances (mne.com, URL1). Pete Doherty is known for his bad behaviour, rather unsophisticated looks and drug problems (reuters.co.uk, URL1). In addition to his existing image, he became well known to a broader audience through his relationships with the internationally successful model Kate Moss and the singer Amy Winehouse (telegraph.co.uk, URL1). All eight pre-test participants declared to know Pete Doherty. In contrast to Jay Z, Doherty did not have any previous designer collaborations with fashion brands. His only appearance in the fashion industry was as a campaign testimonial for Roberto Cavalli in 2007 (telegraph.co.uk, URL2).

3.4 Manipulation of the Stimuli

During the survey, two sorts of information were presented to the participants. According to the dual-code theory by Paivio (1971) they were provided with visual and written information.

The visual information contained a photo of one of the two celebrities and the Reebok brand logo. The verbal information included the brand name and a short information text that explained the kind of collaboration between the brand and the celebrity.

In order to answer the research question in more detail four manipulation variations were produced. The texts explained the collaboration between Reebok and one of the two celebrities where they were either working as a designer for the brand or as an endorser. The structure of the information is based on Toulmin's argumentation schema (Riedl et al., 2010: 11; Toulmin, 1958).

In the thesis, the components data, claim and warrant were chosen from this argumentation schema. In the *Data* part it was mentioned when the collaboration will take place and what kind of product will be designed. In the *Claim* part, the information text

explains what kind of collaboration is planned. In the *Warrant* part the form of collaboration is confirmed again:



Figure 8: Information structure based on Toulmin (1958).

The illustration below shows two manipulations, one with Jay Z as a celebrity designer and one with Pete Doherty as a celebrity endorser. All variations can be found in Appendix A.

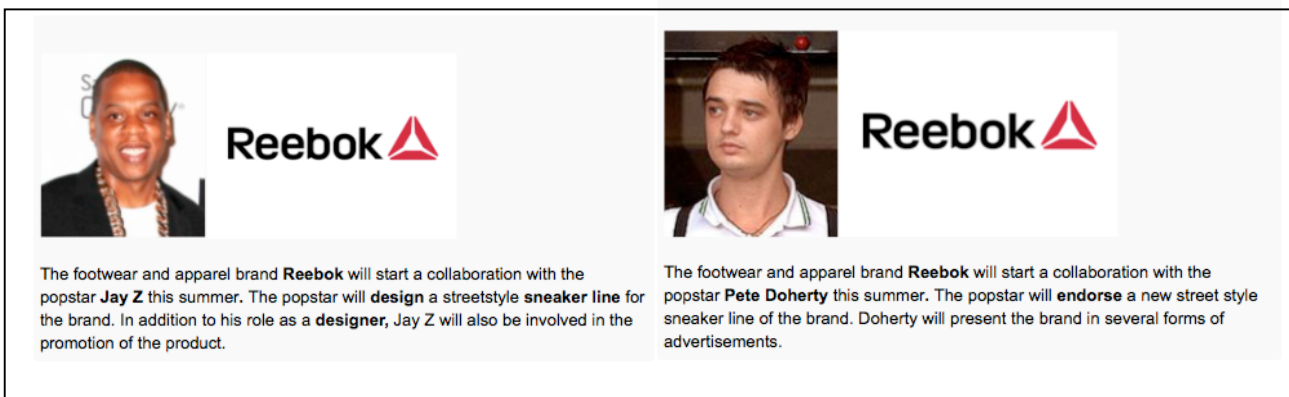


Figure 9: Example Illustration of two different Information Texts within the Experiment.

3.5 Testing the Understanding of the Information

In order to verify the comprehensibility and clearness of the information concerning the celebrity collaboration provided for the participants, a pre-test was conducted. Selecting the sample (12 persons), probands from different educational background were chosen in order to ensure that less educated participants will also understand the survey information.

The probands were exposed to the information Reebok + Jay Z + Designer and Reebok + Pete Doherty + Endorser and each time were asked to answer a question. The question tested whether the probands were aware of the relevant notes in the information text.

Which of the following statements are true concerning Reebok and Jay Z?

- ☐ Jay Z will work for Reebok as a designer.
- ☐ Jay Z will work for Reebok as a model.
- ☐ Reebok will release a new sneaker line.
- ☐ Reebok will release a new soccer shoe.

The test shows that more than 90% of the participants were able to answer both questions correctly. Hence, the comprehensibility was assumed to be sufficient.

3.6 Pre-test Main Survey

Another pre-test was conducted with the actual main survey. In the pre-test 5 students from the Copenhagen Business School were asked to evaluate the main survey in regards of comprehensibility and consistency. Based on the feedback of the participants, the important parts of each information text were highlighted in bold. Further, an additional page was included in the survey, before the last page, assuring participants that they were almost done. The pre-test probands assumed that this might motivate the participants to continue and thereby reduce the number of survey dropouts.

3.7 The Main Survey

The experiment itself was conducted as an online survey in order to reach as many participants as possible since a larger sample increases the findings' validity (Nielsen, 2011). Further, conducting the survey online improves the convenience for the participants compared to paper survey (ibid). The online format enables the participants to complete the survey when it suits them best and also simplifies the hand-in.

The survey was conducted in German as the majority of the people the author of this thesis could reach speak German as their mother language. This approach would ensure that all participants would fully understand the questions asked.

The survey was fully structured and contained solely close-ended questions in order to generate quantifiable data for the analysis of the research question and inferred hypothesis.

The survey contained 5 different parts: exposure to the stimuli, perception of the shown celebrity, brand involvement, brand perception after the exposure to the stimuli and finally demographics.

In the first part the participants were exposed to one of the random selection scenarios explaining the collaboration between Reebok and one of the celebrities. In the next part the probands were asked to first evaluate the celebrity and secondly asked how they perceived the brand and about their purchase intention. Finally, in the last part the participants were asked to give information regarding their demographics. The online survey was built and operated with Unipark.com.

4 Results

In the following part the results of the online study will be presented. Initially, how the survey data has been processed will be explained. Afterwards, the validity of the sample will be investigated by comparing the data sets' descriptive measures with the population of the country the survey has been conducted in, Germany. Afterwards, the results regarding the conceptual models of this thesis will be presented in three stages: first, the measurement model will be evaluated, then the structural model and lastly the relationships in the structural model will be tested and the estimated model provided. Finally, results beyond the conceptual model will be presented.

4.1 Data Processing

Before the analysis of the study data was conducted, the data was processed in order to reduce misrepresentation. The online study ran from 3th to 14th April 2016. Afterwards, the data was exported from unipark.com to SPSS in order to clean the dataset.

In total, 646 persons started the survey, while 301 actually finished it. The average processing time was 8.06min. In addition to the people who did not finish the survey, participants who claimed to not know the brand Reebok or the shown celebrity were excluded from the dataset as well. Further, two probands were removed who clicked the same value on all scales and thus can be assumed to not have answered the survey seriously. After the exclusions, 274 valid participants were left.

The cleaned dataset was examined with descriptive statistical tests in order to check the validity of the data. Next, the data from all participants who were exposed to a celebrity designer dimension was manually separated from the data concerning the celebrity endorser in order to be able to first analyse the data relevant for the conceptual model in the statistics analysis software SmartPLS. In SmartPLS, the latent variables were constructed by the associated items and the conceptual model visualised graphically. Afterwards, the constructed model was tested by applying a Partial Least Squares (PLS) regression to generate an estimated model and to confirm or deny the derived hypotheses. The advantage of the PLS method is that it is distribution free, robust and

applicable to small samples as in the underlying thesis (Martensen et al., 2007: p. 287; Chin, 1998).

As it should also be tested whether there are significant differences between male and female respondents regarding their perception of celebrity designers, a Multi-Group Analysis (MGA) was conducted with SmartPLS between the two subgroups *male* and *female* participants. Another MGA was applied in order to examine differences between the results of the group exposed to the celebrity designer and the group exposed to the celebrity endorser in order to examine whether there are significant differences in the perception of these two collaboration types.

4.2 Sample Validity

The goal of the sample validity tests is to examine whether the proband sample accurately represents the whole population, in the case of this thesis - of Germany. Therefore, the demographic factors gender, age and income will be compared in the following.

4.2.1 Gender Distribution

57,3% (157 people) of all participants who adequately finished the survey were females. Hence, the gender distribution of the survey slightly misrepresents the actual gender distribution of Germany, were only 51.25% of all habitants are females (Statista.de, URL1), as can be seen from the table below:

Sample		Population Germany	
Females	Males	Females	Males
57,3% (157)	42,7% (117)	51,2% (41mio)	48,8% (39mio)

Table 6: Gender Distribution of the sample versus sample distribution in Germany (own illustration).

4.2.2 Age Distribution

The average age of the survey participants was 24.63 years compared to an average age of 46.2 years for the whole German population (Statista.de, URL1). While most of the participants were between 20-25, most of the Germans in the total population are between

40-59 years old. Considering these differences it must be stated that the age distribution of the sample is not representative for Germany.

4.2.3 Net Income distribution

Looking at the net income distribution of the sample in comparison to the whole German population in table 7, it can be seen that the sample has a higher distribution within the lower income sectors. Therefore it must be stated that the sample does not represent the German population with regards to income distribution.

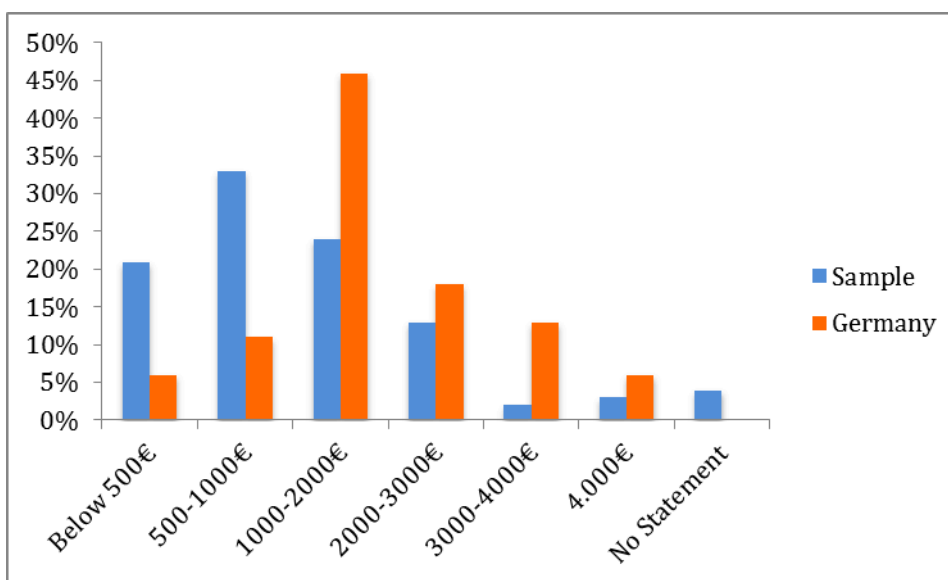


Figure 10: Income Distribution Survey Sample versus German Population.

Summarising the evaluation of the demographic measurements it can be concluded that due to the differences in gender, age and net income distribution the sample is not representative of the whole German population. However, since it can be assumed that sneakers are more likely to be worn by younger consumers with a lower income, the sample might be representative for the target group of sneaker brands.

4.3 Results of the Conceptual Model

In the following part the results concerning the conceptual model will be presented in three steps: First, evaluation of the measurement model, second evaluation of the structural

model and finally the relationships in the structural model will be tested and the estimated model provided.

4.3.1 Results of the Measurement Model

The purpose of evaluating the measurement model is to ensure that the model provides a satisfactory level of reliability and validity (Martensen et al., 2007: p.287; Fornell & Larcker, 1981: p.45). To test the internal consistency reliability, Cronbach's coefficient alpha was calculated for the items of each latent variable. A cronbach's alpha value above 0.7 is generally accepted as sufficient (Field, 2009; Hair et al., 2006). All items in the measurement model fulfil this reliability criterion, in fact, none of the values are below 0.8 (See Appendix B).

In contrast to Cronbach's alpha, the internal consistency measure *Composite Reliability Coefficient* does not assume that all indicators are equally weighted and is therefore argued to be a more adequate indicator for internal consistency reliability (Martensen et al., 2007: p. 287; Chin, 1998: p. 320; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As when measuring Cronbach's alpha, a composite reliability measure above 0.7 is accepted as sufficient composite reliability (Hulland, 1999; Nunnally, 1978). In the table below it can be observed that all latent variables show a very good composite reliability, providing values above 0.8:

	Composite Reliability
Brand Attitude	0.946
Brand Expertise	0.982
Brand Involvement	0.964
Brand Personality	0.897
Brand Trust	0.978
Designer Attractivity	0.909
Designer Expertise	0.981
Designer Likeability	0.969
Designer Personality	0.870
Designer Trust	0.953
Emotional Value	0.972
Fit between Brand/Celebrity	0.978
Purchase Intention	1.000
Social Value	0.957

Table 7: Composite Reliability Results (Note: Purchase Intent consists of only one variable, therefore Composite Reliability=1.00).

As a third measure to verify internal consistency reliability, researches have established the *Average Variance Extracted* (AVE) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Chin, 1998: p. 321). The AVE measures the amount of variance captured by the associated indicators relative to the amount of measurement errors (Dillon & Goldstein, 1984; Martensen et al., 2007: p. 287). The AVE value of the latent variable should be higher than 0.5 (Lowry & Gaskin, 2014). This value fulfils the criterion that a latent variable should exceed 50 percent to ensure more variance explained than error in its measurement (Chin, 1998: p. 321; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As shown in the table below, all latent variables show excellent values of at least above 0.6:

	AVE
Brand Attitude	0.855
Brand Expertise	0.918
Brand Involvement	0.900
Brand Personality	0.746
Brand Trust	0.917
Designer Attractivity	0.666
Designer Expertise	0.914
Designer Likeability	0.887
Designer Personality	0.696
Designer Trust	0.836
Emotional Value	0.873
Fit between Brand/Celebrity	0.937
Purchase Intention	1.000
Social Value	0.848

Table 8: AVE for the latent variables (Note: Purchase Intent consists of only one variable, therefore AVE=1.00).

In addition to the internal consistency reliability, the discriminant validity needs to be tested (Lowry & Gaskin, 2014). Discriminant validity refers to which extent a latent variable is distinct (Martensen et al., 2007: p. 287). Discriminant validity can be determined by comparing the square roots of AVE with the correlation coefficients among the latent variables (ibid). Scholars propose that the square root of AVE of a latent variable should be higher than the correlations between the latent variable and any other variable within the measurement model (Chin, 1998; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). It is shown in table 8 below, that the square roots of each latent variable is greater than the correlation between

it and all other latent variables. Therefore, all latent variables in this study are distinct from each other and discriminant validity is confirmed:

	Brand Attitude	Brand Expertise	Brand Involvement	Brand Personality	Brand Trust	Designer Attractivity	Designer Expertise	Designer Likeability	Designer Personality	Designer Trust	Emotional Value	Fit between Brand/Celebrity	Purchase Intention	Social Value
Brand Attitude	0.924													
Brand Expertise	0.580	0.958												
Brand Involvement	0.554	0.304	0.949											
Brand Personality	0.744	0.608	0.531	0.863										
Brand Trust	0.635	0.613	0.577	0.695	0.958									
Designer Attractivity	0.257	0.203	0.329	0.398	0.282	0.816								
Designer Expertise	0.343	0.380	0.193	0.430	0.336	0.399	0.956							
Designer Likeability	0.304	0.310	0.266	0.326	0.338	0.498	0.573	0.942						
Designer Personality	0.377	0.440	0.231	0.472	0.411	0.505	0.483	0.644	0.834					
Designer Trust	0.314	0.335	0.199	0.322	0.382	0.483	0.626	0.738	0.509	0.914				
Emotional Value	0.785	0.530	0.665	0.727	0.678	0.346	0.347	0.391	0.379	0.326	0.934			
Fit between Brand/Celebrity	0.684	0.443	0.374	0.576	0.486	0.224	0.253	0.289	0.352	0.229	0.478	0.968		
Purchase Intention	0.687	0.397	0.619	0.530	0.546	0.171	0.219	0.306	0.216	0.235	0.794	0.424	1.000	
Social Value	0.580	0.369	0.548	0.631	0.599	0.324	0.313	0.281	0.323	0.203	0.658	0.471	0.547	0.921

Table 9: Diagonal numbers are square roots of the average variance extracted (AVE). Off-diagonal numbers are the correlations between the latent variables.

4.4 Structural Model

As is the usual procedure by researchers (Hulland, 1999: p. 202; Chin, 1998: p. 316; Martensen et al. 2007: p. 288), the Partial Least Squares model constructed in this thesis are evaluated with regards to the model goodness of fit by examining the R^2 values for the dependent latent variables. In the underlying work, the R^2 of the dependent constructs *brand attitude* and *purchase intention* are examined. By explaining 76% of what drives brand attitude ($R^2 = 0.76$) and 47% of what drives purchase intention ($R^2 = 0.47$) the model has comparable high explanation power and overall fit as previous studies have shown explanatory power for low-involvement products between 30 and 40 percent (Martensen et al., 2007: p. 288). Thus, the findings provide a good support for the underlying model.

4.5 Hypothesis Tests and the Estimated Model

In the following the results of the hypothesis tests and the estimated model will be presented.

The hypotheses developed in this thesis assume that there is a significant positive correlation between the independent and dependent variables in the structural model. In order to verify the hypotheses a one tailed test was conducted with the statistic program

SmartPLS. As a criteria for significance a 0.05 significance level was preconditioned. This level of significance is achieved if the t-value is greater than 1.65 (Field, 2009). The table below summarises the results of the hypotheses tests, showing the hypotheses, the path coefficient correlation values, the t-values and the conclusion of each test:

Hypotheses	Correlation	t-value	Conclusion
H1: The more trustworthy the celebrity designer is perceived to be, the more trustworthy will the brand be perceived.	0.382	4.396	Supported
H2: The more the celebrity designer is perceived to be an expert concerning sneakers, the more will the brand be perceived to be an expert in sneakers.	0.380	4.489	Supported
H3: The more the celebrity designer is perceived to be attractive, the higher will be the emotional value of the brand for the consumer.	0.346	5.253	Supported
H4: The more liked the celebrity is by the consumer, the higher will be the perceived social value of the brand for the consumer.	0.281	3.479	Supported
H5: The better the consumer perceives the celebrity personality, the better will he perceive the brand personality.	0.472	6.642	Supported
H6: Brand Attitude is positively affected by			
a) Brand Trust	-0.018	0.212	Denied
b) Brand Expertise	0.094	1.430	Denied
c) Emotional Value	0.463	5.029	Supported
d) Social Value	-0.032	0.541	Denied
e) Brand Personality	0.178	2.216	Supported
H7: Brand Involvement has a positive effect on brand attitude.	0.027	0.519	Denied
H8: Brand Attitude has a positive effect on purchase intention.	0.687	14.346	Supported
H9: Brand-Celebrity Designer fit has positive effect on brand attitude.	0.333	6.150	Supported

Table 10: Summary of Hypotheses, Correlations, t-Values and Conclusion (Source: Estimated Model, see Appendix D1).

In the table it can be seen that Hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6d, e, H8 and H9 show positive correlations. Further, the t-values indicate the significance of the results so that

the hypotheses are confirmed. Hypotheses H6a, b, d and H7 are denied due to insignificant results.

Based on these findings, the estimated model was built:

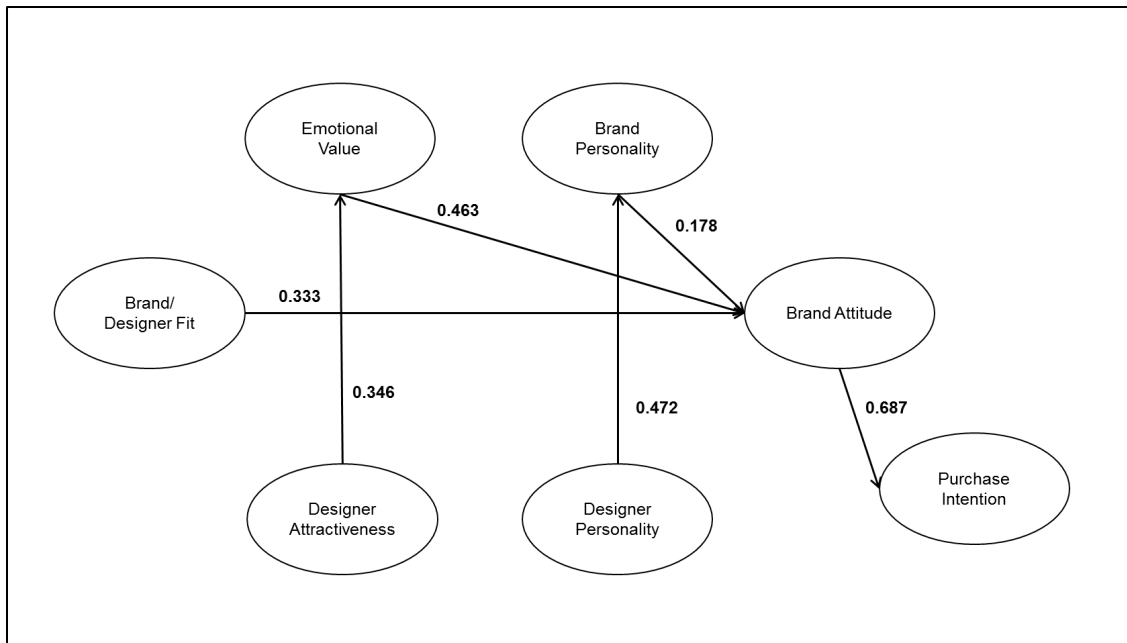


Figure 11: Estimated Model (own Creation). Numbers on arrows show path coefficient values (Source: Estimated Model, see Appendix D2).

The numbers on the arrows show the correlations between the constructs. Due to the fact that brand involvement did not have any significant effect on brand attitude, the construct has been removed. Further, since brand trust, expertise and emotional value did not show any significant impact on brand attitude, the connections between these constructs and brand attitude have been removed as well.

4.6 Total Effects on Brand Attitude and Purchase Intention

The *total effects* equal the sum of the direct and indirect effects an independent variable has on a dependent variable (Hancock & Mueller, 2006: p. 64).

In the table below, it can be seen that emotional value has the highest significant total effect on brand attitude (0.463) followed by fit between the brand and the celebrity designer (0.333).

Regarding total effects on purchase intention, it can be observed that brand attitude has by far the highest significant total effect on purchase intention (0.687). The second highest significant total effect on purchase intention is achieved by emotional value with a value of 0.318.

Determinant	Effect on Brand Attitude		Effect on Purchase Intention	
		t-Value		t-Value
Brand Attitude	-		0.687	14.346
Brand Expertise	0.094	1.430	0.065	1.426
Brand Involvement	0.027	0.519	0.018	0.516
Brand Personality	0.178	2.216	0.122	2.173
Brand Trust	-0.018	0.212	-0.013	0.211
Designer Attractivity	0.160	3.619	0.110	3.334
Designer Expertise	0.036	1.287	0.025	1.296
Designer Likeability	-0.009	0.484	-0.006	0.482
Designer Personality	0.084	2.205	0.058	2.174
Designer Trust	-0.007	0.203	-0.005	0.201
Emotional Value	0.463	5.029	0.318	4.443
Fit Brand/Celebrity Designer	0.333	6.150	0.229	6.537
Social Value	-0.032	0.541	-0.022	0.543

Table 11: Total effects on the dependent variables brand attitude and purchase intention.

4.7 Gender Differences

Despite the fact that sneakers are a fashion item worn by men and women, there might still be differences in the evaluation of the sneaker brands and also in the impact a celebrity designer might have. Especially since the experimental study was conducted with two male celebrities as designer stimuli and thus might have been perceived as primarily targeted towards men, a more detailed examination is needed. Therefore, the model was further tested separately for male and female participants. From the 134 participants exposed to the celebrity designer information, 71 were male and 63 female probands. In order to conduct separate reliability and validity test for each groups the sample was split further. The results in table 13 below prove that composite reliability and AVE are sufficient for all constructs in both groups.

Further, tests also confirmed sufficient Cronbach's Alpha values and discriminant validity (See Appendix E).

	Composite Reliability		AVE	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Brand Attitude	0.934	0.952	0.826	0.869
Brand Expertise	0.977	0.986	0.897	0.935
Brand Personality	0.875	0.915	0.706	0.783
Brand Trust	0.979	0.976	0.922	0.909
Designer Attractiveness	0.883	0.919	0.602	0.695
Designer Expertise	0.976	0.987	0.890	0.940
Designer Likeability	0.968	0.969	0.884	0.888
Designer Personality	0.852	0.891	0.668	0.734
Designer Trust	0.951	0.954	0.828	0.839
Emotional Value	0.971	0.973	0.869	0.877
Fit Brand/Celebrity	0.984	0.970	0.954	0.914
Purchase Intention	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Social Value	0.951	0.965	0.830	0.872

Table 12: Composite Reliability and AVE for Female and Male model variations.

Having tested the reliability and validity of the two separate models, bootstrapping was applied in order to generate the estimated models:

	Path Coefficients Men	t-Values Men	Path Coefficients Women	t-Values Women
Brand Attitude -> Purchase Intention	0.574	6.059	0.767	17.498
Brand Expertise -> Brand Attitude	0.146	1.294	0.010	0.078
Brand Personality -> Brand Attitude	0.453	4.953	0.118	1.033
Brand Trust -> Brand Attitude	-0.079	1.030	0.068	0.381
Designer Attractiveness -> Emotional Value	0.430	4.882	0.377	4.210
Designer Expertise -> Brand Expertise	0.270	2.341	0.516	4.888
Designer Likeability -> Social Value	0.212	1.728	0.396	3.575
Designer Personality -> Brand Personality	0.451	4.779	0.510	5.776
Designer Trust -> Brand Trust	0.448	4.880	0.371	3.029
Emotional Value -> Brand Attitude	0.337	2.659	0.610	4.261
Fit Brand/Celebrity Designer -> Brand Attitude	0.240	2.678	0.114	1.677
Social Value -> Brand Attitude	-0.043	0.377	0.046	0.492

Table 13: Path Coefficients and t-Values for male and female Subgroups.

The results illustrate that in both groups brand trust, brand expertise and social value do not significantly correlate with brand attitude. Further, while in the male sample brand personality significantly correlates with brand attitude, it does not do so in the female sample. In addition to these dissimilarities there can be observed differences in the path coefficient values between the two groups. However, in order to determine whether these variations are statistically significant, a significance test was conducted as can be seen in table 15:

	Path Coefficients Men	Path Coefficients Women	Path Coefficients-differences	p-Value
Brand Attitude -> Purchase Intention	0.574	0.767	0.192	0.975
Brand Personality -> Brand Attitude	0.453	0.118	0.335	0.009
Designer Attractiveness -> Emotional Value	0.430	0.377	0.053	0.334
Designer Expertise -> Brand Expertise	0.270	0.516	0.246	0.940
Designer Likeability -> Social Value	0.212	0.396	0.227	0.922
Designer Personality -> Brand Personality	0.451	0.510	0.059	0.674
Designer Trust -> Brand Trust	0.448	0.371	0.076	0.308
Emotional Value -> Brand Attitude	0.337	0.610	0.273	0.925
Fit Brand/Celebrity Designer -> Brand Attitude	0.240	0.114	0.126	0.130

Table 14: Path Coefficients-Differences between Gender Groups and p-Values.

The results show that only the difference between the path coefficients in the relationship between brand personality and brand attitude are significant, while all other pairs do not provide statistically sufficient distinctions. The interpretation of these results will be presented in section 5.3.

4.8 The Estimated Model with the Celebrity Endorser

One purpose of this thesis is to find out how the impact of the celebrities differ when they are either working for the brand as a designer or an endorser. The tests above investigated the relationships within the structural model when the participants were presented with the information that the celebrity will work as a designer for the brand.

In order to gain insights into how the impacts differ when the participants were provided with the information that the celebrity will work together with Reebok as an endorser representing the brand in different advertising formats, the structural model was rebuilt for

the group that was exposed to the endorser information. In total, 140 participants from the whole sample were randomly selected to see either Jay Z or Pete Doherty as celebrity endorsers for Reebok.

Before the correlation could be analysed, construct reliability had to be tested. Therefore, as in the cases above, Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability and AVE were measured. All Cronbach's alpha values were above 0.7 (see Appendix F) and therefore indicate sufficient internal consistency reliability. The composite reliability coefficients and AVE values confirmed the quality of the measurement model as well, as can be seen in table 16 below:

	Composite Reliability	AVE
Brand Attitude	0.937	0.831
Brand Expertise	0.978	0.899
Brand Involvement	0.972	0.921
Brand Personality	0.889	0.732
Brand Trust	0.979	0.920
Brand/Celebrity Fit	0.956	0.879
Emotional Value	0.976	0.891
Endorser Attractiveness	0.930	0.726
Endorser Expertise	0.969	0.864
Endorser Likeability	0.962	0.862
Endorser Personality	0.913	0.778
Endorser Trust	0.955	0.841
Purchase Intention	1.000	1.000
Social Value	0.967	0.879

Table 15: Composite Reliability and AVE results for the Celebrity Endorser Group.

	Brand Attitude	Brand Expertise	Brand Involvement	Brand Personality	Brand Trust	Brand/Celebrity Fit	Emotional Value	Endorser Attractiveness	Endorser Expertise	Endorser Likeability	Endorser Personality	Endorser Trust	Purchase Intention	Social Value
Brand Attitude	0.912													
Brand Expertise	0.551	0.948												
Brand Involvement	0.083	0.123	0.960											
Brand Personality	0.711	0.558	0.162	0.855										
Brand Trust	0.669	0.649	0.101	0.671	0.959									
Brand/Celebrity Fit	0.709	0.417	0.131	0.570	0.526	0.937								
Emotional Value	0.794	0.564	0.024	0.741	0.670	0.547	0.944							
Endorser Attractiveness	0.168	0.212	0.635	0.256	0.163	0.154	0.145	0.852						
Endorser Expertise	0.214	0.276	0.485	0.235	0.207	0.228	0.130	0.531	0.929					
Endorser Likeability	0.234	0.237	0.599	0.274	0.205	0.213	0.128	0.682	0.663	0.929				
Endorser Personality	0.158	0.231	0.578	0.303	0.200	0.190	0.079	0.577	0.487	0.631	0.882			
Endorser Trustworthiness	0.258	0.261	0.540	0.208	0.255	0.192	0.127	0.544	0.645	0.771	0.460	0.917		
Purchase Intention	0.806	0.490	0.022	0.651	0.627	0.519	0.857	0.072	0.164	0.109	0.057	0.167	1.000	
Social Value	0.683	0.459	0.134	0.646	0.572	0.519	0.742	0.212	0.200	0.098	0.117	0.171	0.686	0.938

Table 16: Discriminant Validity of the Constructs.

To further assess the validity of the constructs, a Discriminant Validity test was conducted. The results in the table above show that all constructs provide sufficient validity.

Having confirmed the reliability and validity of the data, bootstrapping was applied in order to find out whether there are significant impacts within the structural model and how these differ from the group exposed to the celebrity designer.

The table 16 below shows the path coefficients and t-values for the relevant relationships in comparison to the celebrity designer results:

	Path Coefficients Celebrity Designer	t-Values	Path Coefficients Celebrity Endorser	t-Values
Brand Attitude -> Purchase Intention	0.687	13.391	0.806	30.859
Brand Expertise -> Brand Attitude	0.089	1.312	0.038	0.621
Brand Personality -> Brand Attitude	0.178	2.257	0.165	1.765
Brand Trust -> Brand Attitude	-0.011	0.121	0.097	1.426
Celebrity Designer/Endorser Attractiveness -> Emotional Value	0.346	5.606	0.145	1.148
Celebrity Designer/Endorser Expertise -> Brand Expertise	0.380	4.761	0.276	3.987
Celebrity Designer/Endorser Likeability -> Social Value	0.281	3.616	0.098	0.834
Celebrity Designer/Endorser Personality -> Brand Personality	0.472	6.689	0.301	3.645
Celebrity Designer/Endorser Trust -> Brand Trust	0.382	4.664	0.255	2.906
Emotional Value -> Brand Attitude	0.475	5.368	0.398	5.526
Fit between Celebrity/Brand -> Brand Attitude	0.334	5.850	0.331	6.607
Social Value -> Brand Attitude	-0.029	0.477	0.088	1.384

Table 17: Path Coefficients and t-Values for the Celebrity Designer and Endorser Stimulus Groups.

In the table it can be seen that in both groups the correlation between brand expertise and brand attitude, brand trust and brand attitude and social value and brand attitude is statistically not significant. Above that, in the celebrity endorser group the relationships between brand personality and brand attitude, endorser attractiveness and emotional value and endorser likeability and social value are not significant. The correlations of the other constructs were tested in order to find out whether the differences in path coefficient values are significant:

	Path Coefficients Celebrity Designer	Path Coefficients Celebrity Endorser	Path Coefficients- differences	p-Values
Brand Attitude -> Purchase Intention	0.687	0.806	0.119	0.989
Brand Personality -> Brand Attitude	0.178	0.165	0.013	0.191
Celebrity Designer/Endorser Expertise -> Brand Expertise	0.380	0.276	0.104	0.165
Celebrity Designer/Endorser Personality -> Brand Personality	0.472	0.301	0.169	0.047
Celebrity Designer/Endorser Trust -> Brand Trust	0.382	0.255	0.127	0.133
Emotional Value -> Brand Attitude	0.475	0.398	0.093	0.201
Fit between Celebrity/Brand -> Brand Attitude	0.334	0.331	0.003	0.490

Table 18: Path Coefficients Differences and p-Values.

The data from the table above indicates that the path coefficients-difference between brand attitude and purchase intention, celebrity expertise and brand expertise, celebrity trust and brand trust, emotional value and brand attitude and fit between celebrity/brand and brand attitude are not significant. The discussion of these results will be presented in section 5.3 of this thesis.

5 Discussion – Theoretical and Practical Implications

In the following section all results of the thesis will be summarised and discussed. In addition to the discussion concerning the estimated models, results beyond the model will be explained in order to gain deeper insights regarding the functioning of celebrity designers. Additionally, the results will be interpreted with regards to their practical implications.

5.1 The Estimated Model

In the next part of this thesis the tested hypotheses will be discussed with regards to their practical and theoretical implications.

H1: The more trustworthy the celebrity designer is perceived to be, the more trustworthy the brand will be perceived to be by the consumer.

The results of the structural model analysis show a significant positive correlation (path coefficient = 0.382; t-value = 4.936) between celebrity trustworthiness and brand trust. Hence, celebrity trustworthiness has a significant impact on brand trust. The higher the trustworthiness of the celebrity, the higher the trust towards the brand.

This result gives support for the assumption developed in 3.2 that the trustworthiness of the celebrity designer can be transferred towards the brand. The trustworthiness of the celebrity designer in the eyes of consumers could be dependent on the celebrity's perceived intentions in designing for the brand but also can be based on the perception of their general trustworthiness, which consumers ascribe to the celebrity based on information they collect through media channels and friends' opinions.

Even though there is a healthy correlation of 0.382, the result indicates that there are also other factors determining the perceived trustworthiness of the brand. Due to the fact that Reebok is a well-known brand, previous experiences with the reliability of the brand promise or media reports about the brand might influence how the consumers judge the brands' trustworthiness. This could mean that brand trust cannot be changed substantially by employing one trustworthy celebrity designer. However, the result indicates that a trustworthy celebrity designer can contribute to a more trustworthy brand perception and

therefore is a tool marketing managers in the apparel industry can use in order to increase brand trust.

H2: The more the celebrity designer is perceived to be an expert concerning sneakers, the more the brand will be perceived to be an expert concerning sneakers.

The second hypothesis assumes that the perceived sneaker expertise of the celebrity designer has a positive impact on the perceived sneaker expertise of the brand producing sneakers. Based on the results from this study the hypothesis is confirmed since there is a positive and statistically significant correlation between the perceived celebrity expertise and the perceived brand expertise (path coefficient = 0.380; t-value = 4.489).

Consumers will transfer a part of the perceived expertise from the celebrity towards the brand so that the brand benefits from the perceived expertise of the celebrity designer.

However, as in the case of trustworthiness, the correlation value signifies that perceived celebrity designer expertise is not the only factor influencing the consumers' judgment about the brand expertise but that other factors are also relevant. Even though Reebok may not be the brand at the top of a consumer's mind in the category, many participants are likely to already have built a picture about Reebok's expertise in sneaker design based on the product designs they see when shopping for sneakers or through their exposure to Reebok on the street - which is not as prevalent as other sneaker brands like Adidas and Puma.

Apparel brands can thus use a celebrity designer as a tool by which to improve the perceived brand expertise in a certain product category. However, they must also improve on other factors such as awareness and the actual product design and quality.

H3: The more attractive the celebrity designer is perceived to be, the higher the emotional value of the brand will be.

Several previous studies have proved the impact of the attractiveness of a celebrity endorser on the consumer's perception of brands (Baker & Churchill, 1977; Chaiken, 1979; Debevec & Keman, 1984; Erdogan, 1999). In this paper, the relationship can be

confirmed for celebrity designers. The investigation shows that there is a significant positive impact of the celebrity designer's perceived attractiveness on the emotional value of the brand (path coefficient = 0.346; t-value = 5.253). If the consumers perceive the celebrity designer to be attractive, they will derive a higher emotional value from the brand than if they perceive the celebrity designer to be unattractive.

The consumer might assume that he can transfer the attractiveness of the celebrity towards himself by possessing the sneaker designed by the attractive celebrity. This projected image provides the consumer with the emotional value he expects to gain from the brand. Hence, the more attractive the celebrity designer is perceived to be, the more emotional value will be ascribed to the brand. The correlation value shows that other factors play a role as well. One factor that might impact the emotional value of the sneaker brand could be the actual design of the product, since a beautiful design can transfer attractiveness even more obviously than a celebrity designer.

For the marketing managers this finding provides the insight that as already recognised with celebrity endorsers, attractiveness needs to be considered when choosing a celebrity designer.

H4: The more likeable the celebrity designer is perceived to be, the higher the perceived social value of the brand will be.

As expected, there is a significant positive correlation between the perceived likeability of the celebrity and the social value of the brand for the consumer (path coefficient = 0.281; t-value = 3.79). Hence, the celebrity designer's likeability has a positive impact on the social value of the brand. In regards to the theory discussed 3.4.1.2 it can be inferred that the likeability of the celebrity will be transferred through the brand to the consumer and will ultimately provide the consumer with more social acceptance from their tribe. As in the cases above, the correlation is significant but not extraordinarily strong, so that there are other factors influencing the social value as well. Since social value reflects the level of acceptance from other tribe members, it may also be influenced by whether those tribe members already wear Reebok.

In the practise, even though it does not seem to play an overwhelmingly important role, marketers do need to be aware of the role of designer likeability.

H5: The better the consumer perceives the celebrity personality; the better the brand personality will be perceived.

Hypothesis 5 assumes a positive impact of the perceived celebrity personality on the perceived brand personality. Indeed, the hypotheses test confirms this assumption, showing a significant positive correlation between the celebrity designer personality and the brand personality (path coefficient = 0.472; t-value = 6.642).

This result indicates that the participants move the positive character from the celebrity designer towards the brand. As a designer, the celebrity becomes part of the brand and therefore his personality can be transferred to the brand. It is clear therefore, that marketers should study the personality of the celebrities they consider to collaborate with the brand as a celebrity designer as the personality evaluation will partially be transferred towards the brand.

H6: Brand Attitude is positively affected by

a) Brand Trust

Hypothesis 6a) assumed a positive effect of brand trust on brand attitude. However, there is no statistically significant result for this hypothesis (path coefficient = -0.018; t-value = 0.212), as a result the hypothesis needs to be rejected.

From this result it can be inferred that consumers do not consider brand trust as important when building their overall brand attitude for a sneaker brand. This might be the case because buying a street style sneaker is connected to comparable low risk compared to, for example, technical or intangible products, where brand trust plays a more important role for the consumer.

b) Brand Expertise

As in the case of brand trust, no significant correlation was found between brand expertise and brand attitude (path coefficient = 0.094; t-value = 0.212) and as a result the hypotheses needs to be rejected. This outcome also indicates that brand expertise is not relevant for consumers when creating their overall impression of the sneaker brand.

c) Emotional Value

As stated in table 10, emotional value has a significant positive influence on brand attitude (path coefficient = 0.463; t-value = 5.029). This result confirms the importance of emotional value for the overall evaluation of brands found by Sweeney & Soutar (2011) for the category of sneaker brands. The higher the emotional value provided by the brand, the higher the brand attitude of the consumer will be. Thus, if the consumer is emotionally satisfied by the brand, he is more likely to build a positive brand attitude.

d) Social Value

Against the expectation formulated in the hypothesis, there is no significant correlation between social value and brand attitude (path coefficient = -0.032; t-value = 0.541). Hence, consumers do not seem to consider their social value when forming a brand attitude about Reebok.

This result is counter-intuitive considering that sneakers are a publicly consumed product. As such one could assume that users would reflect on the social value and hence perception of others when assessing their attitude towards the brand.

e) Brand Personality

As assumed, brand personality has a significant positive effect on brand attitude (path coefficient = 0.178; t-value = 2.216). Thus, brand personality contributes to the consumers overall evaluation of the sneaker brand. Anyhow, the low path coefficient value of 0.178 indicates that the perceived brand personality needs to be improved strongly in order to affect brand attitude substantially.

H7: Brand Involvement has a positive effect on brand attitude.

Hypothesis 7 assumed a positive effect of brand involvement on brand attitude. However, the hypothesis needs to be denied due to the statistically insignificant correlation (path coefficient = 0.027; t-value = 0.519). The result contradicts previous research that identified a positive impact of brand involvement on brand attitude (Martensen et al., 2007). Since the study was conducted with participants who knew Reebok but were not necessarily consumers of Reebok products, the majority might not have been involved enough to establish any strong positive attitude towards the brand.

H8) Brand Attitude has a positive effect on Purchase Intention

Testing hypothesis 8 showed that brand attitude does indeed have a positive effect on purchase intention (path coefficient = 0.687; t-value = 14.346). The higher the brand attitude towards the sneaker brand, the higher the purchase intention of the consumers will be. This result confirms the finding of former studies, proving a correlation between brand attitude and purchase intention in other product categories (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Belch & Belch, 1995; Fleck et al., 2012). The strong correlation shows that a positive brand attitude is essential for sneaker brands to achieve a high level of purchase intention and thus ultimately drive sales.

H9) Brand/Celebrity Designer Fit has a positive effect on Brand Attitude.

This hypothesis assumed that brand attitude is positively affecting brand/celebrity designer fits. The results of the hypothesis test confirm this pattern, showing a statistically significant correlation (path coefficient = 0.333; t-value = 6.150). It is clear that the better the consumers perceive the fit to be between the brand and the celebrity designer, the better their brand attitude will be. This confirms the discoveries of several researchers, when looking at the relationship between brands and brand endorsers (Forkan, 1980; Kamins, 1990; Misra and Beatty, 1990; Levy, 1959; Kotler, 1997). If the brand chooses a celebrity designer who coexists well with the brand, the consumers respond by raising their brand attitude.

These findings of the estimated models provide essential information about the importance of the different constructs measured in this thesis. Taking into account the total effects investigated in 4.6, further feedback can be assumed.

From the discussion of the estimated model it can be stated that the brand/celebrity designer fit, emotional value and brand personality proved to be the significant drivers of the brand attitude. Furthermore, upon examining the total effects it can be seen that these constructs also significantly impact purchase intention. Therefore, fit between brand and celebrity designer, emotional value and brand personality are essential to build brand equity for sneaker brands.

Looking at the celebrity designer dimensions, all tested constructs showed positive correlations with the assumed brand responses. However, as only the emotional value and

brand personality impact the overall evaluation of the brand and the purchase intention significantly, it can be inferred that attractiveness and personality are the two most important factors of the celebrity designer since those are the constructs influencing emotional value and brand personality, respectively. Above that, the total effect test demonstrates that celebrity designer attractiveness and personality also indirectly influence brand attitude and purchase intention. Even though these correlations are less important, as can be seen in table 10, it still gives further support for the relevance of attractiveness and personality in the underlying model.

For marketing managers of apparel brands the sum of these findings delivers important insights for their choice of celebrity designers as they work under budget constraints and therefore need to make efficient choices when selecting a celebrity designer. Based on the analysis, marketers should select a celebrity designer who fits with the brand, has a positively evaluated personality and is perceived as attractive by the consumers - these are the characteristics that positively influence the drivers of brand attitude and purchase intention. Despite celebrity designer trustworthiness, expertise and likeability also impacting brand responses, these components of brand perception turned out to neither significantly impact the overall evaluation of the brand nor the purchase intention and therefore can be deprioritised when choosing a celebrity designer.

5.2 Gender Differences

In 4.7 the estimated model was tested for both the female and the male participants separately. The results show that there are differences in the strength of correlations between male and female participants, however only the relationship between brand personality and brand attitude were statistically significant.

One difference could be observed in the impact of celebrity trustworthiness on brand trust between the female (coefficient value = 0.371) and male (coefficient value = 0.448) group. However, due to the fact that the difference between the correlations is not significant ($p = 0.308$), it can be interpreted that the celebrity trustworthiness needs to be considered equally regardless of which gender is targeted by the brand. The result also indicates that women do not transfer any less expertise from the celebrity designer to the brand despite

the designer presented belonging to the opposite sex. Therefore it can be concluded that using a male celebrity designer does not create any disadvantage in the female target group when it comes to trustworthiness. However, since previous studies have found that men tend to trust more easily than women (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2002; Buchan et al., 2008), marketers should be aware of the fact that it might be less complicated for them to find a celebrity designer who men trust than it might be to find a designer who women trust.

The study results show that the perceived correlation between celebrity expertise and brand expertise in the female group (path coefficient = 0.516) is higher than in the male group (path coefficient = 0.70). Looking at the significance test however, the difference turns out to be negligible (p -value = 0.940). Hence, as in the case of trust transfer above, marketers should not assume that there are differences between men and women's perception of celebrity designer expertise being transferred to the brand.

As in the overall results, both female (path coefficient = 0.377) and male (path coefficient = 0.430) show positive correlations between designer attractiveness and emotional value, which lie close together. The significance test confirms that there is no significant divergence (p = 0.334) between the groups and thus designer attractiveness needs to be considered as equally important regarding its impact on emotional value in both gender groups.

The same holds true for designer personality having an effect on brand personality – this is almost equal in the female (path coefficient = 0.510) and male (path coefficient = 0.451) participant groups and does not show a significant difference in the path coefficients values (p = 0.6.74).

In contrast to the whole sample though, the only significant positive correlation can be observed between brand personality and brand attitude in the male sample (path coefficient = 0.453; t -value = 4.725) while the female sample did not provide a significant correlation (path coefficient = 0.118; t -value = 1.024). This can be interpreted to show that

male consumers consider brand personality when building their overall evaluation of the brand while female consumers do not take it into account.

The analysis above shows that the personality of the celebrity designer is transferred to the brand without any significant differences in both gender groups. However, based on the findings regarding the importance of brand personality, it can be concluded that when targeting male consumers marketing managers of fashion brands need to devote more attention to the consumers' perception of the designer's personality as in the male group it indirectly influences brand attitude and purchase intention (see Appendix for total effects per gender group).

Even though the measured correlation between emotional value and brand attitude is noticeable higher in the female group (path coefficient = 0.610) than in the male participants group (path coefficient = 0.337), the significance of this difference could not be detected ($p = 0.925$). As a result, fashion brand marketing managers should consider the importance of a celebrity designer's ability to increase emotional value to be equal whether they are targeting female, male or both gender groups. The finding is contradicting Bakshi's (2014) research results describing that women tend to base their evaluation on emotions more than men.

The fit between brand and celebrity designer significantly effects brand attitude in both the female (path coefficient = 0.412; t -value = 1.659) and male groups (path coefficient = 0.240; t -value = 2.270). The divergence between the strength of impact detectable in table 14 is not statistically significant ($p = 0.130$). Therefore, no conclusion can be derived as to whether the fit between brand and celebrity designer is more important in one of the two subgroups. Marketers should therefore be aware of the fit when targeting both gender groups.

Finally, in both subsamples brand attitude strongly effects purchase intention. Both results confirm that brand attitude is an important indicator for purchase intention and therefore needs to be a target for marketers independent of whether they aim to persuade women or men. This conclusion is supported by the fact that the difference between the path coefficient values is statistically insignificant ($p = 0.975$).

Summarising the analysis regarding gender differences it can be stated that, when targeting men, marketers should be more aware of picking a celebrity designer with a positively evaluated personality. The results show that in both gender groups the personality of the designer is transferred to the brand, but only in the male group does brand personality have a significant impact on brand attitude.

All other constructs did not provide a significant difference in the impact on their dependent variables. Therefore practitioners do not need to make distinctions with regards to these attributes when targeting male or female consumers.

5.3 Comparison between Celebrity Designer and Endorser Impact

In section 4.8 of this thesis the results of the structural model concerning a celebrity endorser were presented in order to compare them with the outcomes involving the celebrity designer. The results show that as in the celebrity designer group brand trust (path coefficient = 0.096; t-value = 1.482), expertise (path coefficient = 0.039; t-value = 0.680), social value (path coefficient = 0.090; t-value = 1.436) and brand involvement (path coefficient = -0.011; t-value = 0.229) do not significantly correlate with the brand attitude and therefore reconfirm that when building the overall evaluation of sneaker brands consumers do not consider these factors.

Another interesting observation when looking at the comparison is that in the sample considering a celebrity endorser the celebrity's attractiveness does not have a significant impact on the emotional value of the brand while in the sample considering a celebrity designer their attractiveness does have a significant effect. For marketing practitioners this result means that when choosing a celebrity designer rather than an endorser, they can positively influence the perceived emotional value of the brand by selecting a celebrity designer who is deemed to be attractive by consumers.

Comparing the results regarding the impact of the celebrity's likeability on social value, it can be concluded that while a more likeable celebrity designer will increase social value, no such correlation could be found with the celebrity endorser. The conclusion of this outcome is similar to that explained above considering celebrity attractiveness: a brand's

perceived social value will benefit from choosing a likeable celebrity designer, but selecting a likeable brand endorser will not have an impact on social value.

Looking at the impact of trust in the celebrity on trust in the brand and celebrity expertise on brand expertise, both endorsers and designers have a significant impact. Due to the fact that the differences in the path coefficient values are not significant it can be concluded that there whether a celebrity designer or a celebrity endorser is hired there will not be much difference on the perceived brand trustworthiness.

Table 16 shows that both the celebrity designer (path coefficient = 0.472) and the celebrity endorser (path coefficient = 0.303) positively transfer their personality to the brand. For both types of collaboration it is true that the more positively the consumers perceive the celebrity's personality, the more positively the brand's personality will be perceived. The path coefficient values show that a celebrity designer's personality has a greater impact on the brand's personality than that of a celebrity endorser. Table 17 shows that this is a significant difference and it can be inferred that the personality of the celebrity is transferred more efficiently when he is working as a designer than when he is hired as an endorser. Brand managers can conclude from this finding that the perceived brand personality will be more positive with a strong character as celebrity designer rather than with a strong character as celebrity endorser.

The constructs brand personality, the fit between celebrity and brand and emotional value all significantly impacted brand attitude when the brand was presented to participants with either a celebrity designer or with a celebrity endorser. No significant differences are detected between the correlations of the two groups. This implies that the impact these brand responses have on a consumer's brand attitude do not significantly differ when the brand is employing a celebrity designer over a celebrity endorser.

Finally, for the sample presented with a celebrity endorser a significant correlation could be seen between a positive brand attitude and purchase intention. This result gives further support to the importance of the relationship between brand attitude and purchase intention, as identified in several scientific papers (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Belch & Belch,

1995; Fleck et al., 2012). Due to the fact that it is only the celebrity collaboration type that is different between the groups, not the product, it is logical to assume that there is no significant difference in the impact of brand attitude on purchase intention.

Summarising the analysis above and applying McCracken's theory of meaning transfer, it can be stated that celebrity likeability, attractiveness and personality are transferred more efficiently if the celebrity works for the brand as a designer than if he is hired as an endorser.

The reason for this difference could be that due to their active involvement in creating the product the celebrity designer is connected more strongly to the brand. It can be argued that through their engagement they become a part of the brand. Hence, for the consumer the line between celebrity designer and brand becomes blurred, making it less difficult for the meaning to transfer from the celebrity towards the brand. In contrast, if the celebrity works only as an endorser they are not a part of the product itself and can only claim to identify with the brand.

For marketing managers the findings indicate that having the celebrity involved as a designer will increase the likelihood that the brand perception will be influenced as intended by collaborating with a celebrity.

6 Conclusion

In the increasingly globalised and therefore competitive business world, companies explore new opportunities to load their brands with a unique and superior meaning in order to differentiate themselves from the market. One approach brands frequently utilise in order to improve their perception in the consumers' mind is to collaborate with celebrities.

The tool of celebrity endorsement has been studied by marketing researchers over several decades and scholars mostly agreed that the celebrity's credibility, attractiveness and his fit with the brand are the most important factors determining the success of an endorsement (Erdogan, 1999; Shimp, 2007; Choi & Rifon, 2011).

While celebrity endorsement has been examined extensively, no research has been conducted concerning the impact of a younger type of brand-celebrity collaboration: the celebrity designer. In the underlying thesis a new model for the impact of celebrity designers on the perception of brands has been developed. In the experimental study, the impact has been investigated in the category of sneaker brands. In order to gain a differentiated how customers transfer meaning from the celebrity to the brand, the impact on several brand responses as well as the overall brand evaluation and purchase intention has been researched.

It has been evidenced that celebrity designers can positively influence the perception of sneaker brands by a transfer of meaning from the celebrity towards the brand. From the results it can be concluded that *physical attractiveness* and *personality* are the two most important attributes of the celebrity designer as they significantly affect the brand responses *emotional value* and *brand personality*, which turned out to be the two key drivers for a positive brand attitude and, indirectly, purchase intention. Brand trust, expertise and social value do not significantly contribute to the overall evaluation of the brand, and as such they have been removed from the conceptual model. Consequently, celebrity designer trustworthiness, expertise and likeability were removed as well as they were identified as drivers of these brand responses. Brand involvement did not show any significant impact on brand attitude, thus it was no longer included in the model.

A more detailed look, aiming to identify gender differences, provided the conclusion that when explaining brand attitude in the female sample, brand personality and therefore

celebrity personality did not significantly influence brand attitude so these needed to be removed from the model as well.

Another important investigation was conducted when comparing the impact of celebrity designers versus celebrity endorsers. From the results of this comparison it can be concluded that the meaning of the celebrity is transferred more efficiently if they are working as a designer than if they are simply working as an endorser. The inclusion of the sample exposed to a celebrity endorser also gave further evidence supporting the fact that brand trust, expertise and social value do not contribute to the overall evaluation of a sneaker brand.

Combining the results of the different examinations, important conclusion for the marketing industry can be derived.

Firstly, as the study showed that celebrity designers are more effective than celebrity endorsers, marketing manager should increasingly consider to involve celebrities in the designing process rather than only involving them to endorse the fashion product. This creates a significantly stronger transfer of meaning from the celebrity to the brand.

Secondly, the key criteria when choosing a celebrity designer should be their perceived personality and attractiveness since these are the attributes that indirectly drive brand attitude and purchase intention.

Thirdly, when only targeting women, marketers should focus on the attractiveness of the celebrity as this is the only factor that showed significant indirect impact on brand attitude in the female sample.

Finally, it can be concluded that regardless of the type of celebrity collaboration, marketing managers of sneaker brands can lose sight of the brand responses brand trust, expertise and social value as these factors did not impact the overall evaluation of the sneaker brand. Instead it can be stated that they should focus on creating a sense of emotional value and brand personality as these significantly affect the overall evaluation of the brand and, indirectly, purchase intention. In doing so, they can improve the overall perception of the brand, increase the likelihood of a consumer making a purchase and thereby ultimately build brand equity.

From a marketing communication point of view it can be concluded that brands should place emphasis on the fact that the celebrity was involved in the designing process in their communications with consumers. Only if they can make the consumer aware of the fact that the celebrity designed the product can brands fully benefit from the advantage attached to the utilisation of celebrity designers.

6.1 Limitations

The thesis' results are restricted by several limitations, which will be discussed in the following.

In section 1.3 the delimitations of the thesis have been explained. One delimitation is the focus on the German market. Even though the culture dominant in Germany might be comparable to other Western cultures, there might be general differences in the way celebrities and brands are perceived and therefore the results cannot be directly applied to other markets. Also, the validity test sample in section 4.2 indicated that the sample distribution concerning age, gender and income is not representative of the whole German market. The average age and income of the study participants was below the overall German average. Above that, the gender distribution of the participants was more heavily women. Since the comparison between male and female respondents showed significant differences in some measurements, it can be inferred that the overall outcome would be different if the gender sample distribution was equal to the actual distribution of gender in Germany.

The divergence in age, income and gender thus indicates that the sample is not representative for the whole German population. This derivation is further supported by the fact that the author of this thesis mainly recruited participants from his direct environment. Applying Granovetter's theory of strong and weak ties (1973) it can be assumed that the strong ties, hence, direct connections of the author, are alike in many characteristics and attitudes and therefore do not show the same variation in their attitude as the whole population. One specific example of a shared characteristic is that the majority of the participants were students and thus might be able to apply a higher level of reflection when answering the survey questions compared to the average consumer.

In general, the sample size of 274 participants needs to be considered when judging the generalisation of the results, especially since the size was further reduced when comparing different subgroups.

Another limitation arises from the focus on one specific industry. The survey was conducted using a brand from the fashion/sports apparel industry. It can be assumed that brands in this industry look to stimulate different factors in the consumers' mind than in other industries. For example, in the banking industry brand attitude might be significantly impacted by brand trust while the emotional value of the brand is less important. Hence, the interpretability of the study results is limited to the fashion industry.

As with industry, the results of this thesis are also constrained by the chosen product category. In section 1.3 sneakers have been identified as a high involvement effective product category. Thus, the findings are linked solely to this product category.

The questions in the survey were selected from papers reviewed in recognised journals. However, it needs to be mentioned that in this thesis the questions were translated into German in order to ensure the comprehensibility regardless of the English skills of the study participants. Even though a German, native in both English and German language, revised the translation, some of the meanings may have been changed slightly in the translation process as some of the words might be defined and interpreted differently across cultures.

A further limitation needs to be mentioned with regards to the scales of construction. Especially for the construct *brand attitude*, there are several different scales used in the literature and therefore the results might differ when using another brand attitude scale. However, due to the large amount of studies examining brand attitude this limitation must be made for all research studies and cannot be completely avoided.

The scale used to measure brand involvement was reduced from its original volume of 20 questions applied in Zaichkowsky's work (1985) down to three questions to lower the perception of burden and avoid a loss of concentration. Therefore it can be considered that the results related to brand involvement might have differed if the whole construct was applied.

The R^2 values for brand attitude and purchase intention of the model developed in this thesis indicated a high level of explanatory power. Still, the values also indicate that brand attitude and purchase intention are influenced by other factors that were not included in the model.

6.2 Further Research

In the underlying thesis an important first step was undertaken to examine the effect of celebrity designers on brands. The results indicate that by utilising celebrity designers in the category of sneaker brands meaning can indeed be transferred from the celebrity to the brand and thereby improve brand attitude. Further it was found that celebrity designers achieve this more efficiently than celebrity endorsers.

The findings provide important insights for marketing managers that they need to consider when making strategic decisions about celebrity collaboration. However, taking into account the limitations of this study as presented in section 6.1 it can be inferred that further research in the field of celebrity designers is needed. In the following suggestions for further research will be discussed.

In order to further validate the findings of this thesis and increase its generalizability, the study should be conducted with a sample more precisely representing the actual population of Germany. In addition, to infer valid implications for other markets, it should be conducted with participants from a specific area. Since the comparison between male and female participants showed partly significant differences, it is necessary to conduct the study with a sample representing the actual gender distribution of Germany in order to improve the overall validity of the results.

With regards to gender it would also be interesting to see how results differ if the participants are exposed to a female celebrity designer.

In general, it is suggested that in further research a bigger sample is used in order to reduce the risk of invalid results.

As the study showed that brand trust, expertise and social value do not impact the attitude towards sneaker brands, other factors, which determine the overall perception of sneaker

brands, should be investigated in addition to emotional value and brand personality. In this context research should also be conducted to discover which attributes of a celebrity designer could affect these factors.

In addition to the examination of other factors affecting brand attitude, it should also be investigated how the utilisation of celebrity designers can affect different stages in the brand equity pyramid discussed in 2.4.1. Here, one approach could be to test how specific image items are transferred from the celebrity designer to the brand. It would also be recommended to examine how celebrity designers can contribute to the highest state in the CBBE-model: brand resonance.

In part 6.1 of this paper it was been mentioned that there are several different brand attitude scales utilised in marketing research. To validate the findings with regards to brand attitude future research should be conducted with different brand attitude scales.

As was also discussed in the limitation section of the thesis, the brand involvement scale was reduced down to three questions. Previous research has shown a significant impact from brand involvement on brand attitude when using the whole brand involvement scale (Martensen et al., 2007), therefore further research should replicate the study applying the whole scale in order to examine whether this change had any effect on the outcome.

The underlying study was conducted with a sneaker brand from the high involvement affective product category. To further test the impact of celebrity designers on brands, future research should study the impact of celebrity designers in different product categories. Additionally, researchers should conduct research in other industries where celebrity designers are employed, for example cosmetics or fitness products. It can be assumed that in other product categories and industries the importance of the celebrity designer's attributes will be weighted differently.

In the fashion industry it can be observed that some designers, as for example Karl Lagerfeld, have been so successful that they became celebrities and even brands on their own. From a research and practical perspective it would be interesting to examine whether these professional designers differ in their impact from celebrity designers with no professional designing background.

Lastly, it is recommended to examine the financial impact of celebrity designers. Previous studies showed that celebrity endorsers could have a positive effect on sales and market share (Elberse & Verleun, 2012; Farrell et al., 2000). Other studies found that celebrity endorsers positively affected the stock value of the company utilizing the celebrity (Ding et al., 2010; Mathur et al., 1997). For the companies that collaborate with celebrity designers the financial value of this partnership would be of interest in order to gain insights about its feasibility and to explain this strategic marketing decision towards their shareholders.

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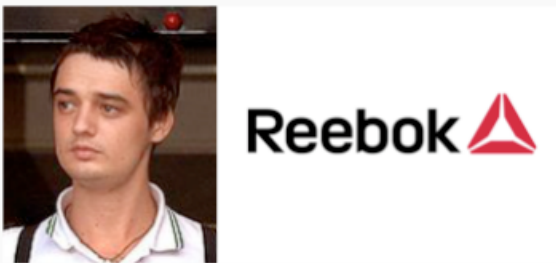
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Appendix A: The four Variations of Stimuli shown in the Survey by Random Selection



The footwear and apparel brand **Reebok** will start a collaboration with the popstar **Jay Z** this summer. The popstar will **design** a streetstyle **sneaker** line for the brand. In addition to his role as a **designer**, Jay Z will also be involved in the promotion of the product.



The footwear and apparel brand **Reebok** will start a collaboration with the popstar **Pete Doherty** this summer. The popstar will **endorse** a new street style sneaker line of the brand. Doherty will present the brand in several forms of advertisements.



The footwear and apparel brand **Reebok** will start a collaboration with the popstar **Jay Z** this summer. The popstar will **endorse** a new street style sneaker line of the brand. Jay Z will present the brand in several forms of advertisements.



The footwear and apparel brand **Reebok** will start a collaboration with the popstar **Pete Doherty** this summer. The popstar will **endorse** a new street style sneaker line of the brand. Doherty will present the brand in several forms of advertisements.

	Cronbach's Alpha
Brand Attitude	0.915
Brand Expertise	0.978
Brand Involvement	0.945
Brand Personality	0.831
Brand Trust	0.970
Designer Attractivity	0.876
Designer Expertise	0.977
Designer Likeability	0.957
Designer Personality	0.774
Designer Trust	0.934
Emotional Value	0.963
Fit between Brand/Celebrity	0.966
Purchase Intention	1.000
Social Value	0.940

Appendix B: Main Survey

Below the main survey is presented with the random selection Jay Z as a designer. The survey was conducted in German, however below it can be seen the English translation.


Page 1

9%

Dear Participants,

Welcome to our survey concerning the future collaboration between a footwear brand and a celebrity. The survey is part of my master thesis at the Copenhagen Business School.

The survey will take about 5-6min. All participants have the chance to win a 30€ amazon giftcard.





I would like to thank you in advance for your participation!

Sincerely,
Martin Cordes

Data privacy statement: The participation is voluntary. The survey follows the laws of data protection. In case you participate in the giftcard lottery, your e-mail address will be saved temporary and not passed on to others.

Page 2

10%



The footwear and apparel brand **Reebok** will start a collaboration with the popstar **Jay Z** this summer. The popstar will **design** a streetstyle **sneaker line** for the brand. In addition to his role as a **designer**, Jay Z will also be involved in the promotion of the product.

Page 3

Jay Z is..

	Completely disagree						Completely agree
dependable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
honest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
sincere	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
trustworthy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Jay Z is..

	Completely disagree						Completely agree
an expert in sneakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
experienced with sneakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
knowledgeable about sneakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
qualified concerning sneakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
skilled concerning sneakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Jay Z is..

	Completely disagree						Completely agree
attractive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
classy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
handsome	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
elegant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
sexy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Completely disagree						Completely agree
I like Jay Z	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich find Jay Z to be likeable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich find Jay Z to be over all pleasant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich view Jay Z as an overall likeable person	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Completely disagree						Completely agree
Jay Z has personality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jay Z is interesting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a clear image of Jay Z	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Did You know Jay Z before?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Reebok..

	Completely disagree						Completely agree
is important to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
is relevant for me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
means a lot to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Reebok

	Completely disagree						Completely agree
I trust Reebok	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can rely on Reebok	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reebok will keep its promise	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reebok is reliable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Reebok is..

	Completely disagree						Completely agree
an expert in sneakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
experienced with sneakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
knowledgeable about sneakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
qualified concerning sneakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
skilled concerning sneakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Reebok is a brand...

	Completely disagree						Completely agree
I would enjoy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
would make me want to use it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
is one that I would feel relaxed about using	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
would make me feel good	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
would give me pleasure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Reebok is a brand...

	Completely disagree						Completely agree
that would help me, to feel accepted	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
that would improve how I am perceived	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
that would make a good impression on others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
that would give the owner social approval	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Reebok..

	Completely disagree						Completely agree
has personality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
is interesting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a clear image of the person using Reebok	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I perceive the brand Reebok as..

Bad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Good
Favorable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Unfavorable
I dislike the brand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I like the brand

	Completely disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Completely agree
I can imagine, to buy the brand Reebok in the future								

Reebok and Jay Z..

are not compatible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	are compatible
a bad fit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	a good fit
a bad match	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	a good match

Page 5

13%

You are almost done!

Page 6

13%

What is your gender?

male
☐

female
☐

How old are You?

What is your monthly net income?

below 500€

Page 7

13%

In case you want to participate in the giftcard lottery, please fill in your e-mail address below.

Page 8

13%

Thanks a lot for your participation!

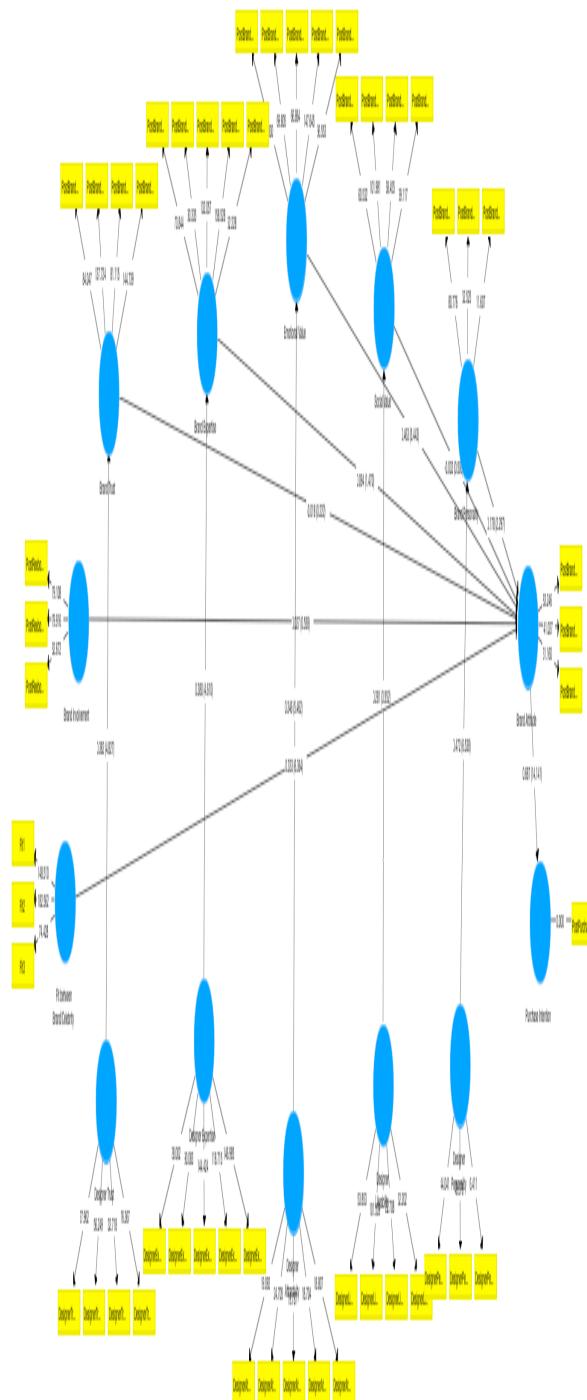
You contributed an important part to my studies. Since I need as many participants as possible, I would appreciate if you could share the survey link with friends and family.

Your

Martin Cordes

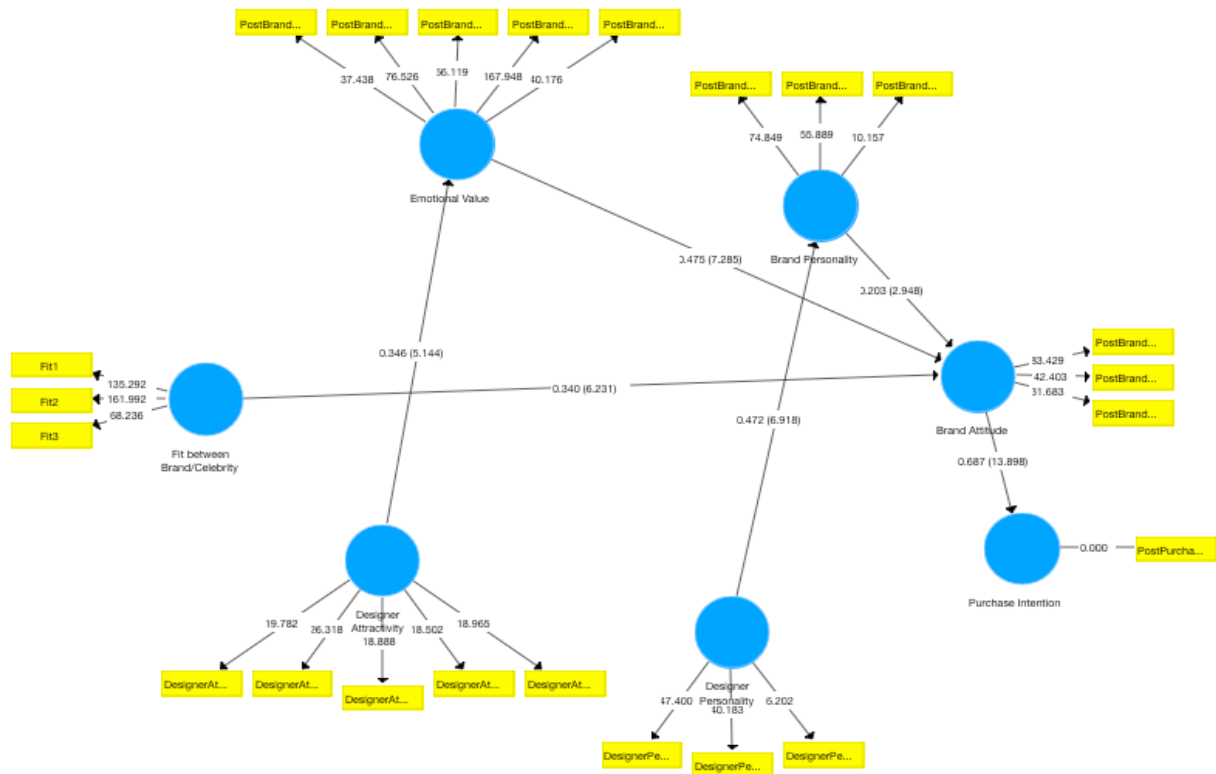
Appendix C: Results

D1: Estimated Model (No items removed)



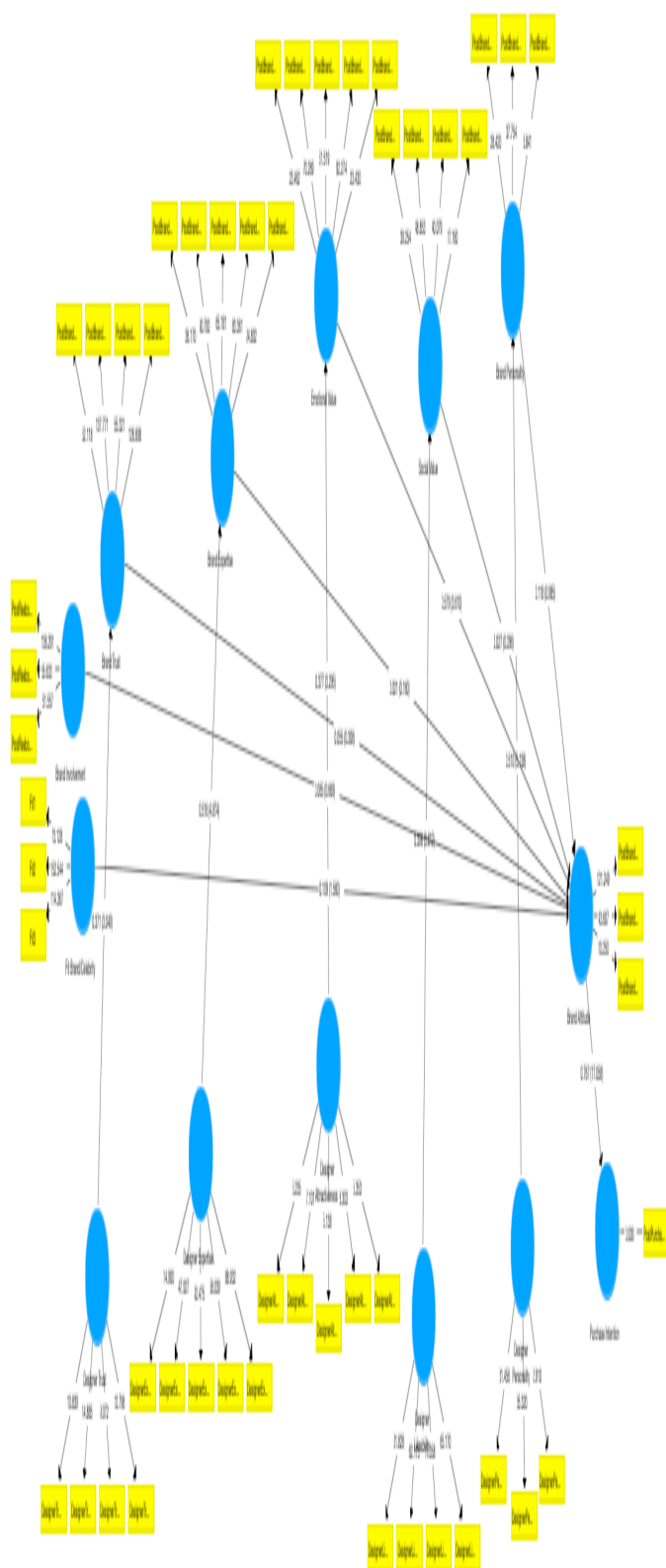
Numbers on the arrows show path coefficients. Numbers in brackets show t-values.

D2: Estimated Model (Non-significant relationships removed).



Numbers on the arrows show path coefficients. Numbers in brackets show t-values.

D3: Estimated Models Female Sample (No items removed)



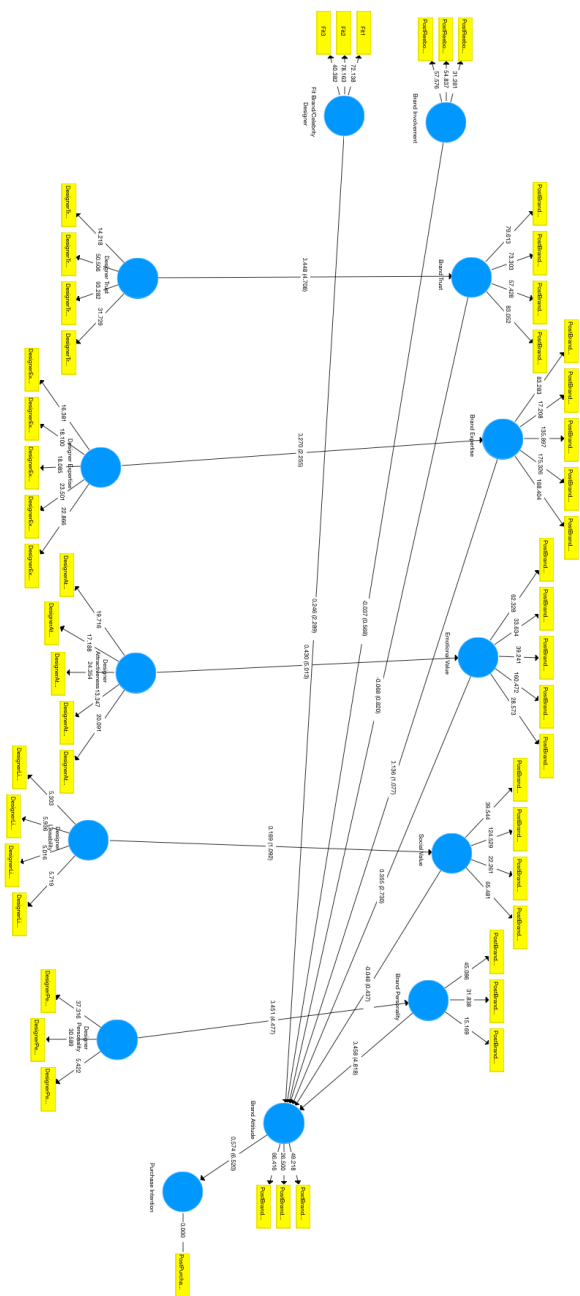
Numbers on the arrows show path coefficients. Numbers in brackets show t-values.

D4: Estimated Model Females (Non-significant relationships removed).



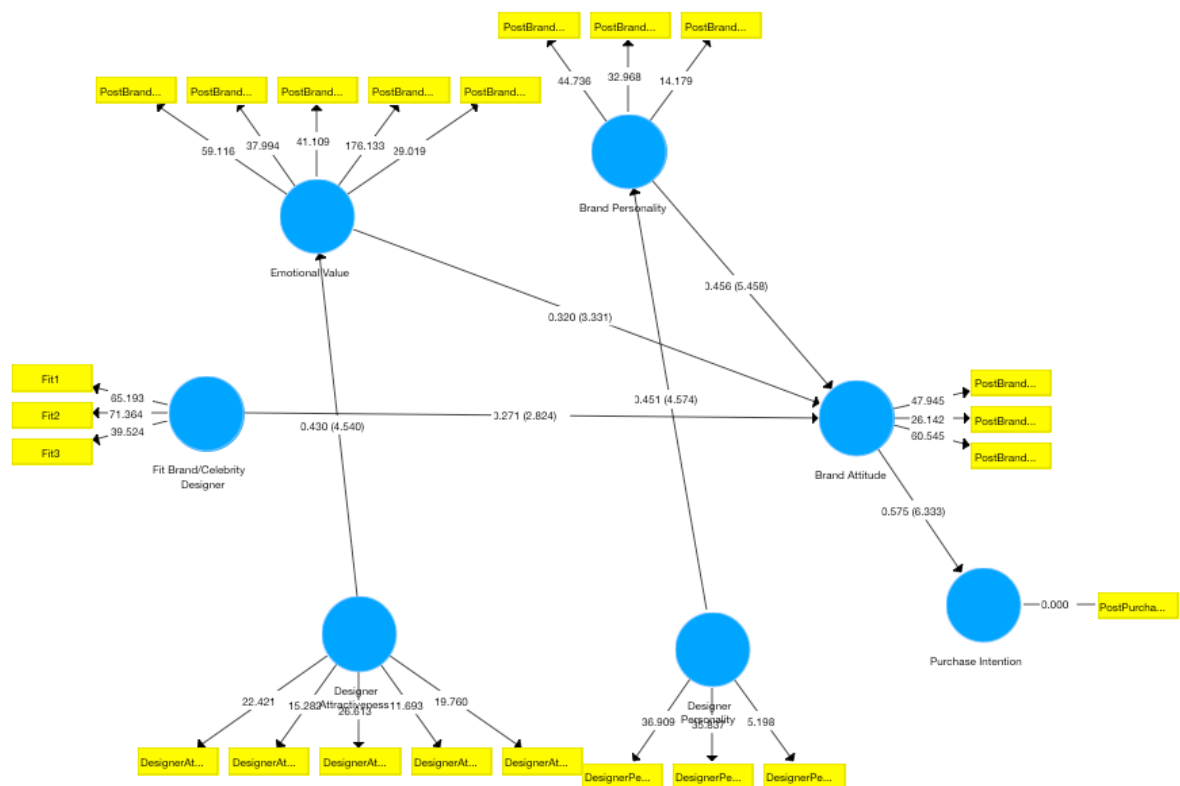
Numbers on the arrows show path coefficients. Numbers in brackets show t-values.

D5: Estimated Model Males (No items removed)



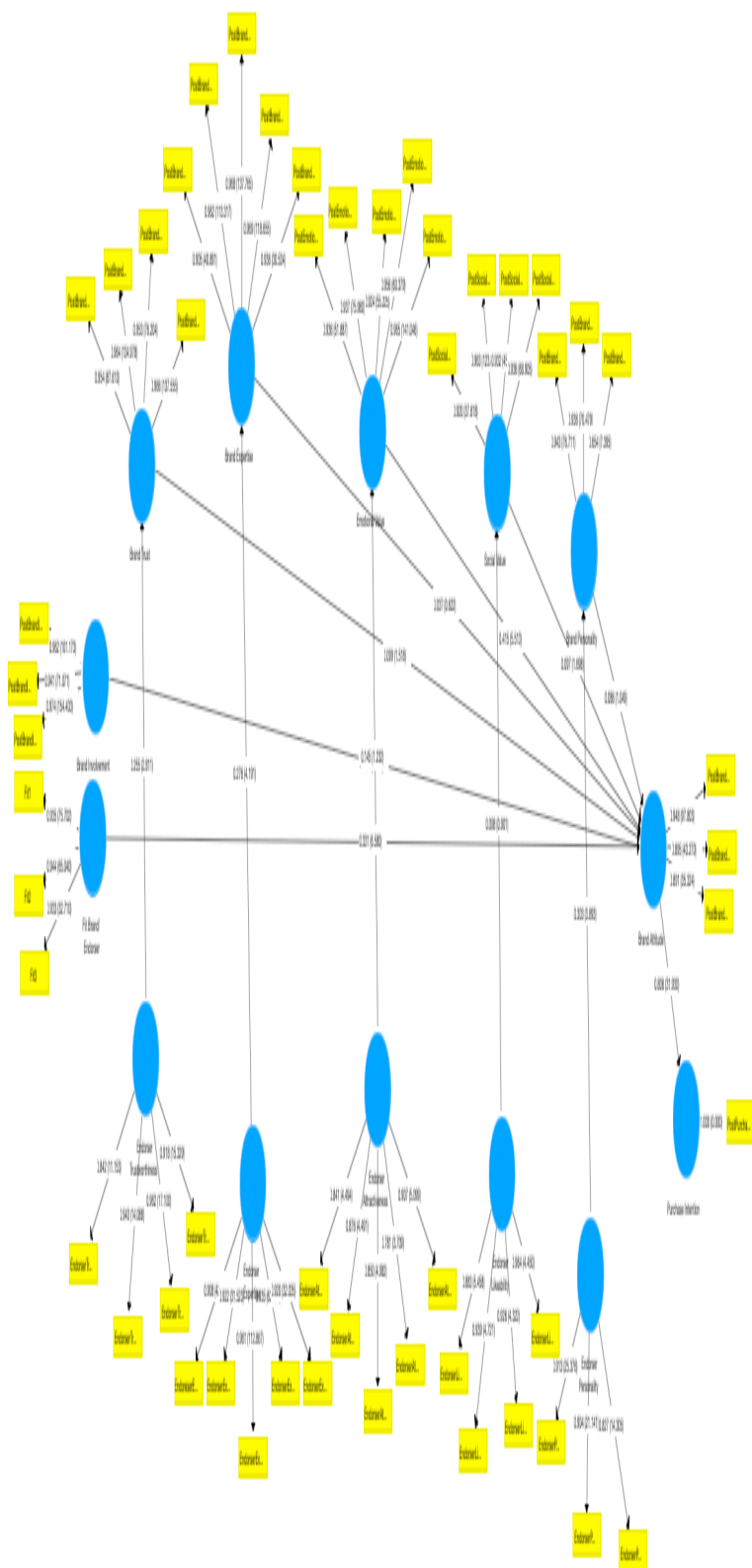
Numbers on the arrows show path coefficients. Numbers in brackets show t-values.

D6: Estimated Model Males (Non-significant relationships removed)



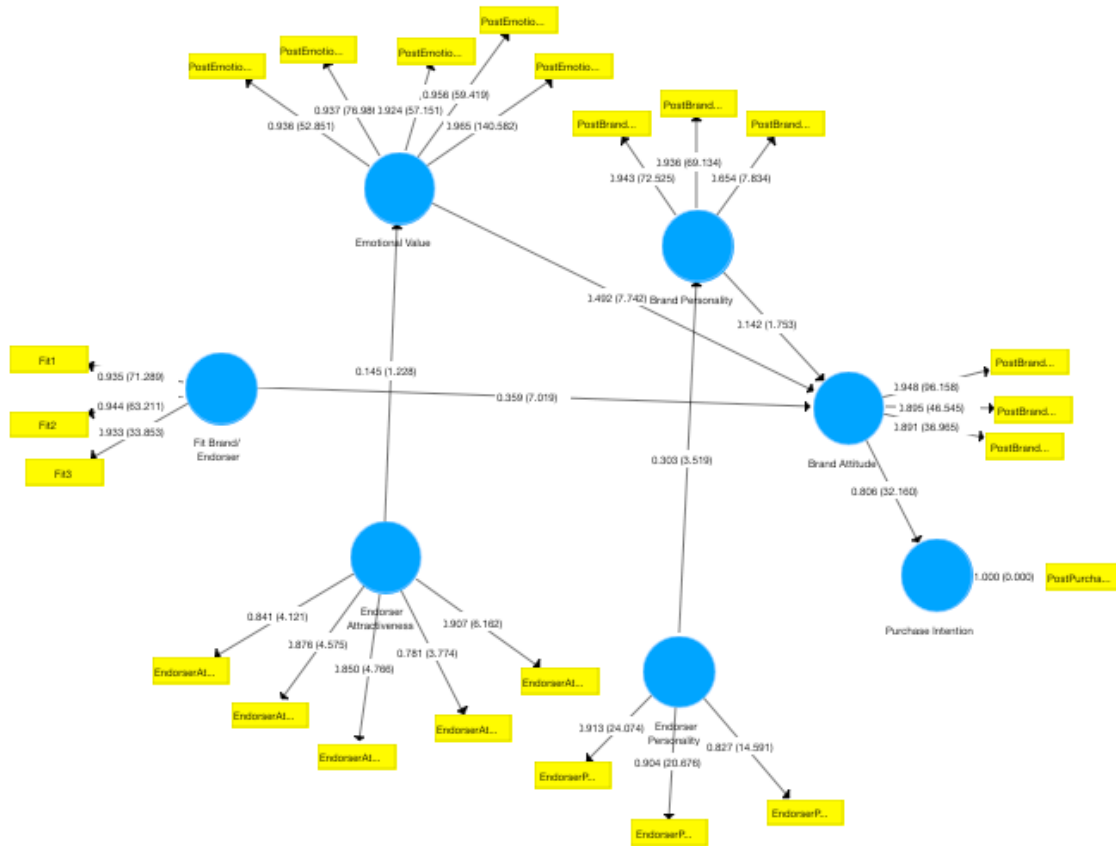
Numbers on the arrows show path coefficients. Numbers in brackets show t-values.

D7: Estimated Model Endorser Stimuli (No items removed).



Numbers on the arrows show path coefficients. Numbers in brackets show t-values.

D8: Estimated Model Endorser Stimuli (Non-significant relationships removed).



Appendix E: Cronbach's Alpha Male and Female Samples exposed to Celebrity Designer

	Cronbach's Alpha Male Group	Cronbach's Alpha Female Group
Brand Attitude	0.924	0.894
Brand Expertise	0.983	0.971
Brand Personality	0.862	0.796
Brand Trust	0.967	0.972
Designer Attractiveness	0.890	0.843
Designer Expertise	0.984	0.969
Designer Likeability	0.960	0.956
Designer Personality	0.819	0.735
Designer Trust	0.938	0.933
Emotional Value	0.965	0.962
Fit Brand/Celebrity Designer	0.953	0.976
Purchase Intention	1.000	1.000
Social Value	0.951	0.931

Appendix F: Discriminant Validity Male Sample

	Brand Attitude	Brand Expertise	Brand Personality	Brand Trust	Designer Attractivity	Designer Expertise	Designer Likeability	Designer Personality	Designer Trust	Emotional Value	Fit between Brand/Celebrity	Purchase Intention	Social Value
Brand Attitude	0.932												
Brand Expertise	0.640	0.967											
Brand Personality	0.781	0.582	0.885										
Brand Trust	0.580	0.582	0.686	0.954									
Designer Attractivity	0.363	0.184	0.486	0.410	0.833								
Designer Expertise	0.392	0.270	0.392	0.222	0.370	0.970							
Designer Likeability	0.255	0.220	0.277	0.194	0.514	0.516	0.942						
Designer Personality	0.364	0.451	0.451	0.411	0.502	0.422	0.609	0.857					
Designer Trust	0.333	0.410	0.403	0.448	0.470	0.558	0.755	0.542	0.916				
Emotional Value	0.735	0.520	0.673	0.630	0.430	0.266	0.291	0.338	0.320	0.936			
Fit between Brand/Celebrity	0.584	0.471	0.405	0.307	0.260	0.195	0.165	0.269	0.191	0.403	0.956		
Purchase Intention	0.574	0.382	0.480	0.415	0.205	0.057	0.065	0.040	0.084	0.733	0.381	1.000	
Social Value	0.599	0.286	0.652	0.534	0.361	0.314	0.169	0.327	0.195	0.695	0.466	0.528	0.934

Appendix G: Discriminant Validity Female Sample

	Brand Attitude	Brand Expertise	Brand Personality	Brand Trust	Designer Attractivity	Designer Expertise	Designer Likeability	Designer Personality	Designer Trust	Emotional Value	Fit between Brand/Celebrity	Purchase Intention	Social Value
Brand Attitude	0.909												
Brand Expertise	0.520	0.947											
Brand Personality	0.718	0.643	0.841										
Brand Trust	0.674	0.656	0.708	0.960									
Designer Attractivity	0.300	0.293	0.402	0.272	0.776								
Designer Expertise	0.293	0.516	0.446	0.436	0.492	0.943							
Designer Likeability	0.405	0.426	0.377	0.478	0.502	0.630	0.940						
Designer Personality	0.440	0.439	0.510	0.424	0.528	0.546	0.685	0.817					
Designer Trust	0.350	0.295	0.275	0.371	0.544	0.711	0.729	0.501	0.910				
Emotional Value	0.841	0.551	0.774	0.709	0.377	0.413	0.492	0.432	0.363	0.932			
Fit between Brand/Celebrity	0.518	0.282	0.409	0.468	0.281	0.031	0.323	0.213	0.105	0.502	0.977		
Purchase Intention	0.767	0.412	0.565	0.632	0.297	0.352	0.538	0.396	0.417	0.840	0.485	1.000	
Social Value	0.586	0.468	0.598	0.658	0.341	0.309	0.396	0.320	0.225	0.628	0.324	0.573	0.911

Appendix H: Cronbach's Alpha group exposed to celebrity endorsers

	Cronbach's Alpha
Brand Attitude	0.899
Brand Expertise	0.972
Brand Involvement	0.957
Brand Personality	0.813
Brand Trust	0.971
Emotional Value	0.969
Endorser Attractiveness	0.913
Endorser Expertise	0.960
Endorser Likeability	0.948
Endorser Personality	0.856
Endorser Trustworthiness	0.941
Fit Brand/Endorser	0.931
Purchase Intention	1.000
Social Value	0.954