The Impact of the Gender of Celebrity Athlete Endorser on Consumers of Athletic Shoes

Yuko Sawatari
THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

THE IMPACT OF THE GENDER OF CELEBRITY ATHLETE ENDORSER ON
CONSUMERS OF ATHLETIC SHOES

By

YUKO SAWATARI

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The members of the Committee approve the thesis of Yuko Sawatari defended on October 25, 2006.

______________________
Jeffrey James
Professor Directing Thesis

______________________
Aubrey Kent
Committee Member

______________________
Cecile Reynaud
Committee Member

Approved:

Cheryl Beeler, Chairperson, Department of Sport Management, Recreation Management and Physical Education.

The Office of Graduate Studies has verified and approved the above named committee members.
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ABSTRACT

Celebrity endorsement is a popular strategy in advertising. Marketers have spent millions of dollars on contracts with celebrity endorsers. To evaluate the effects of celebrity endorsement, researchers have examined consumers’ perceptions toward source credibility and the interaction between consumers’ perceptions and their attitudes toward advertisements, products, and purchase intentions. The impact of gender has also been studied. The research of celebrity athlete endorsement in the realm of sport management, however, has received little attention despite its high risk and high cost.

The current study examined the possibility of cross-over endorsements based on the idea that male athletes may credibly endorse women’s sports products. The purposes of this study included: 1) examining the influence of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on consumers’ perceptions of the endorser’s credibility (expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness); 2) examining the impact of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on consumers’ attitudes toward advertisement and attitudes toward a product; and 3) assessing the impact of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on consumers’ purchase intentions.

Data was collected from 413 students at the large SE state university during the summer semester in 2006. The data revealed three primary findings. First, male subjects perceived a male tennis endorser as having more expertise than a female tennis endorser, and both male and female subjects perceived a female soccer athlete as having more trustworthiness than a male athlete. Second, male subjects rated female soccer and tennis athletes as more attractive than male soccer and tennis athletes. The male basketball athlete was rated as more attractive than the female basketball athlete by male respondents. Females, on the other hand, rated the male soccer athlete as more attractive than the female soccer athlete. Third, only female subjects showed their intention to purchase the tennis shoes endorsed by the male (opposite sex) athlete more than shoes endorsed by the female (same sex) athlete. As for the rest, endorser’s gender did not influence male and female subjects’ attitudes toward advertisements and products and subjects’ purchase intentions.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Three weeks after David Beckham began endorsing the Sharp GX10 (installed “Vodafone Live!” multimedia service) more than 50,000 Live! phones were sold. After Anna Kournikova started endorsing Berlie’s Shock Absorber sports bra sales increased by 150% (Gray, 2003). Many marketers expect these types of dramatic results when they invest money in celebrity sport endorsers. Reports indicate that Nike had a seven-year, $90 million endorsement deal with Lebron James in 2003, and a five-year, approximately $40 million contract with Serena Williams in 2003 (Kang, 2003). Reebok signed a three-year, $40 million deal with Venus Williams in 2000 (Alexander, 2001). Turner, Bounds, Hauser, Motsinger, Ozmore, and Smith (1995) analyzed 70 viewer hours of TV programs (35 hours sporting and 35 hours non-sporting) in 1993 and found that celebrity sport endorsers were featured in 11% of all television advertisements. Shimp (2000) estimated that commercials including celebrity endorsers constituted around one-quarter of all commercials in the United States.

Advertising and Status

Advertising not only reflects trends but also sets trends and becomes one of the key influences on consumers’ values, attitudes, and behavior. “Advertising is an incidental (i.e., unexpected, unplanned) but significant socialization agent” (Cuneen & Sidwell, 1998, p. 41). People, in general, desire to be valued as members of a particular society and obtain status in society. Many products are promoted through advertising as status symbols; consumers are led to believe that purchasing particular products may enhance their personal status. Using a celebrity (athlete) endorser is a popular strategy in advertising to promote or communicate the status of a product. Celebrity athletes transmit the message that people can attain social status through consumption of a particular product and role models like superstar athletes become “socialization agents” (Bush, Martin, & Bush, 2004).
Advantages of Celebrity Endorsement

Celebrity endorsement is a form of advertising that calls upon famous spokespersons that are well known for their achievements in areas other than that of the endorsed product (Friedman & Friedman, 1979). Celebrity endorsement is used to enhance the image of company, product, or brand (Brooks et al., 1998) and to sell corporate products or services (Ambrose, 1992). According to Erdogan, Baker, and Tagg (2001), associating with celebrities is effective when a company disseminates new brand images, repositions brands, or introduces new ones as well as promotes established brands.

Celebrity endorsers are viewed as highly dynamic with both attractive and likable qualities (Atkin & Block, 1983). The effectiveness of endorsements with emotional ties between consumers and celebrity endorsers has been examined in numerous studies. Research examining the effectiveness of celebrity endorsers has included, 1) drawing attention to advertising (Atkin & Block, 1983; Dyson & Turco, 1998; Ohanian, 1991); 2) enhancing recall of message and advertising (Friedman & Friedman, 1979; Ohanian, 1991); 3) increasing the value to endorsed products by transferring meaning (Dyson & Turco, 1998) and generating credibility of the product (Stone, Joseph, & Jones, 2003); 4) generating brand awareness (Erdogan et al., 2001; Friedman & Friedman, 1979; Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983,); 5) generating a favorable impact on advertising (Atkin & Block, 1983; Goldsmith, Lafferty, & Newell, 2000; Lafferty, Goldsmith, & Newell, 2002); and 6) generating purchase intention (Ohanian, 1991), although Brooks et al., and Walker, Langmeyer, and Langmeyer (1992) insisted that celebrity endorsement does not necessarily result in purchase intentions. According to Friedman and Friedman (1979), Kahle and Homer (1985), Ohanian (1991), O’Mahony and Meenaghan (1997/98), and Walker et al. (1992), a match between product image and celebrity image is necessary in order for there to be a significant impact or effect from celebrity endorsement.

Disadvantages of Celebrity Endorsement

Negative aspects of celebrity endorsement, on the other hand, are 1) high-cost and 2) high-risk (Dyson & Turco, 1998), and 3) multiple endorsements. One example is Kobe Bryant; he was accused of sexual assault (Hein, 2003; Kang, 2005; Tenser, 2004) after
signing a five-year approximately $40 million endorsement deal with Nike. Nike waited at least two years to utilize Bryant as an endorser (Kang, 2005). Hein (2003) mentioned “celebrity athletes who get 80%-90% of the largest endorsement deals keep ending up on the police blotter or suspended by their leagues” (p. 6). Another concern is the risk of injury to athlete endorses (Hein, 2003). Stone et al. (2003) indicated that advertising in *Sports Illustrated* between 1993 and 1998 featured mostly older and retired athletes, compared to the period between 1983 and 1988. Older athletes’ long-term behaviors ensure their future behaviors, and using retired athletes avoids the risk of injury. The third negative aspect is multiple endorsements (Dyson & Turco, 1998). “As the number of products endorsed increases, consumers’ perceptions of celebrity credibility, celebrity likeability and attitude toward the ad become less favorable” (Tripp, Jensen, & Carlson, 1994, p. 535). As celebrity endorsement increases in popularity, finding a celebrity who exclusively represents a product has been getting more difficult for companies (Dyson & Turco, 1998). As noted by Gray (2003), “using a sports star to promote a product is big business. But if the fit is wrong or the star goes astray, it can prove disastrous” (p. 27).

**Celebrity Athlete Endorsement Research**

Previous research examining endorsement may be classified as one of two types: (1) source (endorser’s) credibility, and (2) consumer attitudes and behaviors relative to endorsement, including research in gender distinctions of perceptions. Some researchers have focused on celebrity athlete endorsers (Brooks et al.; Veltri, Kuzma, Stotlor, Uiswanathan, & Miller, 2003). Athlete endorsement is costly and risky, and establishing brand differentiation is difficult because sports brands often try to associate with the same superstars or use a similar strategy involving athlete endorsers. If Nike were the only company using superstars for their products, the marketing tactic would stand out. Currently, however, Nike, Reebok, Adidas, and most other competing brands use a superstar as an endorser of their products; the tactic of associating with sports endorsers is not unique.

Consumer perception of celebrity athlete endorsers has gradually changed. Originally “…a consumer may believe that endorsed sports products contribute to the celebrity athlete’s level of skill because these athletes would not choose equipment that
would cause them to lose” (Brooks et al., p. 42). In the 1980s, however, the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement became less positive because of a high degree of skepticism (Kaikati, 1987). According to Shevack (1998), young consumers know that Shaquille O’Neal wore Reebok products because of a million-dollar contract. Therefore, they do not believe that use of the endorsed products may enhance their own performance skills (Veltri et al., 2003). Smith (1995) even mentioned that in such a market condition, “the best way to be heard is to whisper” (p. 72). That is, the best advertising was no advertising.

Notice should be taken, however, of the results of a brand study by SGB (The SGB 50, 2005), which researched consumer recognition and perceptions of top sports brands over the Internet in 2005. Nike, Adidas, and Reebok were ranked as the top three brands in every category: brand recognition, brand power (incorporation of awareness and perceptions of product quality), brands for serious athletes, brands providing value for the money, and brands worth spending money on. These three brands are competitors with respect to professional sports and events like the Olympics, and are always associated with superstar athletes. Currently, Tiger Woods, LeBron James, Luiz Nazario de Lima Ronaldo, and Venus Williams endorse Nike; Zinedine Zidane and David Beckham are with Adidas; Reebok associates with Allen Iverson, Yao Ming, and Serena Williams. The three brands have established hard-and-fast athletic brand images and held strong positions in the marketplace by supporting many athletes. As noted, celebrity athlete endorsement can influence consumer perceptions, and increasingly it seems that the use of celebrity athlete endorsement is regarded as necessary in order to differentiate between brands.

**Male and Female Celebrity Athlete Endorsers**

In the sporting goods industry, the style of endorsement deal between male and female athlete endorsers seems to be different depending on the sport. In team sports like soccer and basketball, many star male players have individual contracts with sports brands like Nike and Adidas, and they appear on magazines and web sites of the sports brands endorsing male athletic shoes. For example, Kobe Bryant and LeBron James are endorsers of Nike. They appear in magazines like *Slam* and *ESPN* magazine advertising
their personal model of athletic shoes. Approximately 150 male basketball players who wear Nike shoes are listed on Nike’s homepage. The endorsement deals with female players in team sports, on the other hand, seem to be mainly team or league contracts. Nike is an official supplier of United States soccer teams for men and women and a marketing partner of the WNBA (Women’s National Basketball Association). Nike, as well as Adidas, has fewer individual contracts with female team sports’ players than male players, and no female player appears on their soccer and basketball web sites.

In individual sports like tennis and golf female players have individual endorsement deals with sport brands. Maria Sharapova is an endorser of Nike; Venus Williams endorses Reebok. Adidas shows a list of tennis players, including female players, on its web site. In magazines like Tennislife, female players also appear as endorsers just as male players. Daniela Hantuchova advertises Yonex rackets and Amelie Mauresmo appears for Dunlop rackets.

Sports brands seem to use male athlete endorsers for male products, except unisex products like a tennis racket in their advertisings and web sites. Another connection to sport products is usage; athletes often endorse brands of equipment they use and brands of apparel that they wear. It is reasonable to expect that male athletes would endorse male products and female athletes would endorse women’s products. A question of interest is the extent to which male and female athletes may serve as endorsers for products that are not targeted to males and females respectively.

The Potential Impact of Cross-over Endorsements

The number of women participating in sports has grown because of Title IX and the development of women’s professional sports. The demand for women’s sport products has also grown. The value of female athlete endorsement contracts has also dramatically increased. Venus Williams signed the most lucrative endorsement deal ever made for a female athlete in 2000, a deal “reportedly worth at least $40 million” (Alexander, 2001, p. 20). Exploring effective marketing strategies for women’s products is essential for sporting goods companies.

This study will examine the possibility of cross-over endorsements based on the hypothesis that male athletes endorsing women’s sports products will be more
advantageous for a product than using a female athlete as an endorser. The hypothesis is supported by the following three reasons. 1) the depiction of “sport heroism” is indeed still male-dominated (Stevens, Lathrop, & Bradish, 2003); 2) female athletes are less recognizable than male athletes (Peetz et al., 2004); 3) if a product is characterized as masculine, male endorsers provide an advantage because of the consistency between a product’s perceived gender characterization and an endorser’s gender.

The primary research question of this study is, “Can male athletes credibly endorse women’s sports products?” In order to examine the primary question, four secondary questions will be proposed; those will be described in the following chapter. The purpose of the study is twofold. First, to examine the influence of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on consumer perceptions of the endorser’s credibility (expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness). Second, to assess the impact of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on a consumers’ attitudes toward advertising, attitude toward a product, and purchase intention.

Potential Significance of the Study

The influence of male athletes endorsing women’s athletic products, compared with female athletes endorsing women’s athletic products has not been examined in scholarly literature. Moreover, despite the increasing number of female athlete endorsers and the value of contracts, the advantage of female athlete endorsers in sporting goods marketing has not been previously enough studied.

This study will provide marketers with valuable information concerning choices and uses of celebrity athlete endorsers. If this study, for example, indicates advantages of male athlete endorsers in endorsing women’s athletic products, marketers will be able to reduce their budget for female athlete endorsements. In contrast, if female endorsers are appropriate for endorsing women’s products, marketers will need to reassess the importance of using female athlete endorsers in advertisement and web sites for sports products.
Delimitations

This study will have two notable delimitations.

1. Previous research has examined the interaction between source credibility components (expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness) and consumer attitude and behavior to endorsed products. This study, however, will separately examine 1) source credibility components, and 2) consumer attitude and behavior and will not scrutinize the interaction between the two in order to focus on the impact of an endorser’s gender.

2. Although the population of this study is general consumers of athletic shoes, the sample will restricted to college students. Freiden (1984) noted that the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement differed according to the generation. The study of Atkin and Block (1983) indicated that younger consumers were more impressed by celebrity characters in an alcohol brand’s advertisement. It is believed that a younger sample may be influenced more by celebrity endorsers in a sport products’ advertisement, but the proposed study will not be able to assess this idea or to provide information regarding the impact of celebrity endorsers on other generations.

Limitations

This study will have two notable limitations.

1. Some subjects may suspect the advertisements for no-brand athletic shoes, because they are able to identify brands endorsed by celebrity athletes. The results of consumer attitude and behavior in this study, therefore, may be biased.

2. Because the classes in which the survey for this study will be conducted consist of both male and female students, they may notice that they are not receiving the same questionnaire.

Definitions of Terms

- **Celebrity (athlete) endorsement ---** A form of advertising that calls upon famous spokespersons (athletes) that are well known for their achievements in areas other than that of the endorsed product (Friedman & Friedman, 1979).

- **Source credibility ---** Spokesperson’s positive characteristics that affect the persuasion of a message (Ohanian, 1990).
The three source credibility components --- Expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. **Expertise** is “the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions” (Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953, P. 21) and consists of knowledge, skills, and special experience (Shank, 2004). **Trustworthiness** is “the degree of confidence in the communicator’s intent to communicate the assertions he considers most valid” (Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953, P. 21) and includes honesty and believability (Shank, 2004). **Attractiveness** is both physical beauty and nonphysical characteristics such as personality, lifestyle, and intellect (Shank, 2004).

- **Match-up hypothesis** --- Congruity with product image and endorser image (Kahle & Homer, 1985).
- **Product’s gender** --- Four types of products: masculine, feminine, neutral (neither), and androgynous (both) (Iyer & Debevec, 1986).
- **Cross-over endorsements** --- Communicators endorse products for opposite sex. That is, male spokesperson endorses women’s products, or female spokesperson endorses men’s products.

**Overview of Research**

The following chapter (chapter two) will present a review of literature related to research on source credibility, consumer perceptions toward gender of endorsers, and the interaction between 1) consumer’s gender and endorser’s gender, 2) product’s gender and endorser’s gender, and 3) consumer’s gender and a product’s gender. Chapter three will present a detailed discussion of the methodology used to measure consumer perception of source credibility, consumer attitude toward advertisements, consumer attitude toward products, and purchase intention in pre-test and main study, and the chapter will also provide results of a pre-test.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature provides an assessment of the previous research on celebrity endorsement. In order to address the first purpose of this study, examining the influence of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on consumers’ perceptions of the endorser’s credibility, research on source credibility was reviewed to provide an understanding of consumer perceptions of celebrity endorsers. In order to address the second purpose of this study, the impact of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on a consumer’s attitude toward advertising, attitude toward a product, and purchase intention, research examining gender differences in advertisements was reviewed. It provided an understanding of the ideas related to the interaction among three gender factors: consumer’s gender, endorser’s gender, and product’s gender.

Source Credibility

Receivers of advertising sometimes accept a message from a spokesperson and sometimes reject the message. What features of the spokesperson, whether celebrity or not, affect attitudes toward the advertising, brand, and purchase intentions? “The effectiveness of a communication is commonly assumed to depend to a considerable extent upon who delivers it” (Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953, p. 19). According to Patzer (1983), the effectiveness of persuasive communication depends mostly on the credibility of the source. The term source credibility is “commonly used to imply communicator’s positive characteristics that affect the receiver’s acceptance of a message” (Ohanian, 1990, p. 41). Perceptions of source credibility consist of beliefs about the communicator’s knowledge, intelligence, and sincerity (Hovland et al., 1953). Whether a receiver accepts a spokesperson’s message depends on the degree to which a receiver evaluates the spokesperson’s intelligence and how honestly the spokesperson conveys valid statements. Even if a spokesperson’s knowledge is recognized, receivers will reject a message from the spokesperson if they suspect his or her trustworthiness (Hovland et al.).
Hovland et al. divided source credibility into: 1) expertness, which is “the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions” (p. 21); and 2) trustworthiness, which is “the degree of confidence in the communicator’s intent to communicate the assertions he considers most valid” (p. 21). Expertise consists of knowledge, skills, and special experience (Shank, 2004). Trustworthiness includes honesty and believability (Erdogan et al.; Shank, 2004) and integrity (Erdogan et al.). Ambrose (1992), Erdogan et al., and Friedman and Friedman (1979) mentioned that expertise and trustworthiness influenced receivers through internalization, one of Kelman’s social influence processes that occurs when receivers accept the source’s information because characteristics like honesty, sincerity, expertise, and behavior were congruent with the receivers’ value structure (Kelman, 1961).

Although expertise and trustworthiness have consistently been thought of as important components, attractiveness based on the “source valence” model of McGuire (McGuire, 1968) was identified as another dimension of source credibility. The concept of attractiveness is that the source of the information must be familiar, likeable, and similar to the receiver for effective advertising (McGuire, 1985). Shank (2004) mentioned that attractiveness was usually associated with both physical beauty and nonphysical characteristics such as personality, lifestyle, and intellect. The process through which attractiveness influenced receivers was explained by identification, another of Kelman’s social influence processes which occurs when receivers accept the attractive source’s information because of a desire to identify with such endorsers (Ambrose, 1992; Erdogan et al.; Friedman & Friedman, 1979). In previous studies, source credibility was mainly divided into two dimensions: the source credibility model, including expertise and trustworthiness (Hovland et al.) and the source attractiveness model (McGuire, 1968).

High Credibility and Low Credibility

Previous studies divided spokespersons into a high-credibility source and a low-credibility source and compared their persuasiveness. Pornpitakpan (2004) reviewed five decades of articles about the persuasiveness of source credibility. Most of the findings revealed that “…a high-credibility source is more persuasive than is a low-credibility source in both changing attitudes and gaining behavioral compliance”
Some cases, however, indicated the advantage of moderate or low-credibility sources. According to Sternthal, Dholakia, and Leavitt (1978), when the receiver already has a positive feeling toward an issue, a moderately credible source can provoke greater persuasion than can a high-credibility source. Moreover, Johnson and Izzett (1972) found that the interaction of source and audience characteristics such as intelligence and knowledge influenced the effectiveness of high-/low-source credibility.

As indicated by previous research, the effectiveness of high/low source credibility on a receiver’s persuasion is not unanimous, and not all endorsers have high or low credibility in all three components: expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. Some endorsers may have high expertise and attractiveness with low trustworthiness. Thus, the research focusing effectiveness on individual source credibility is essential.

Comparison of Source Credibility Components

Previous research has identified expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness as the components of source credibility. What is not as clear is which components are more important and how do they impact a consumers’ attitude, opinion change, and purchase intention with respect to endorsed products or advertisements? Ohanian (1990) developed a “tri-component measure of credibility” to assess a celebrity endorser’s perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. “The trustworthiness and the expertise dimensions of source credibility might have differential importance in affecting attitude formation and change” (Pornpitakpan, 2004, p. 247), and the three sources of credibility may independently contribute to source effectiveness (Weiner & Mowen, 1985).

Advantage of Expertise

Crisci and Kassinove (1973) contend that a celebrity that is more of an expert is more persuasive. Previous research showed that the source’s perceived expertise has a positive impact on a receivers’ attitude (Crano, 1970; Horai, Naccari, & Fatoullah, 1974). Ohanian (1991) examined the impact of celebrity endorsers’ perceived image on consumers’ purchase intention. The results indicated that while trustworthiness and attractiveness were important factors in persuasive communication, only the celebrities’ perceived expertise significantly influenced respondents’ purchase intentions. O’Mahony and Meenaghan (1997/98) also found that expertise was an important determinant of...
intention to purchase, while trustworthiness and attractiveness were not.

**Advantage of Trustworthiness**

Friedman, Santeramo, and Traina (1978) identified trustworthiness as the major determinant of source credibility. McGinnies and Ward (1980) revealed that although communicators perceived as both expert and trustworthy generated the most opinion change, trustworthy communicators were persuasive, whether they were perceived as experts or not. According to Hovland and Weiss (1951), when a trustworthy source communicated, subjects more often and immediately changed their opinions in the direction advocated by the communicator than when an untrustworthy source did so. Miller and Baseheart (1969) also found that when the communicator was perceived as highly trustworthy, his or her message was more effective in producing attitude change.

**Advantage of Attractiveness**

Baker and Churchill (1977) and Joseph (1982) suggested that physical attractiveness was an important cue in an individual’s first impression and judgment of another person. Kahle and Homer (1985) explained that “…the informational value of attractiveness may have traveled through the central rather than the peripheral route,” (p. 959) and the speed of communication occurs more quickly when pictures appear in advertising than when arguments appear. The effectiveness of source attractiveness has been demonstrated by many researchers. A source’s physical attractiveness enhances brand recall (Kahle & Homer, 1985), has a positive impact on advertising and product evaluation and opinion change (Joseph, 1982; Kahle & Homer, 1985), and generates purchase intentions (Petroshius & Crocker, 1989; Till & Busler, 1998). Caballero, Lumpkin, and Madden (1989), Ohanian (1991), and Stafford (2002), however, suggested that attractiveness might result in positive feelings toward advertising and products, but those feelings did not necessarily translate into cognitive attitudes, actual behavior and purchase intention.

According to the product “match-up” hypothesis research, which is congruent with product image and endorser image (based on attractiveness), (Kahle & Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1990), the importance of specific celebrity characteristics depends on product types (Erdogan et al.) and congruence between product and celebrity image
influence the success of celebrity endorsement (Friedman & Friedman, 1979; Kahle & Homer, 1985; O’Mahony & Meenaghan, 1997, 1998; Walker et al.). Till and Busler (1998) suggested that a source’s expertise might be a stronger match-up factor than attractiveness. For example, although Tiger Woods might be recognized as an attractive source, even if he endorsed basketball shoes, his attractiveness would not be expected to enhance the value of the shoes and generate purchase intention. Erdogan et al. revealed that when advertising agency managers chose a celebrity endorser for a technical/attractiveness-unrelated product like a PC, source trustworthiness and expertise were emphasized more than for a non-technical/attractiveness-related product.

In contrast, for an attractiveness-related product like jeans, source physical attractiveness, familiarity, and likeability were more important than for a technical/attractiveness-unrelated product. This result is in line with Kamins’ (1990) research, which revealed that using an attractive spokesperson was effective for attractive-related products. Baker and Churchill (1977) suggested that the type of product or topic being advocated, the sex of the receiver, and the sex of the source moderated attractiveness effect. Goldsmith et al. (2000) examined the influence of the three source credibility components (expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness) on attitude-toward-the-ad, attitude-toward-the-brand, and purchase intentions. The results indicated that source credibility has a greater impact on attitude-toward-the-ad, but has indirect influence on the other two variables only through the evaluation for its advertising on the other two variables. According to Garretson and Niedrich’s recent research (2004), expertise and nostalgia of source-characters engender source’s trust. The source’s trust favorably influences brand attitudes, while this relationship is significant only when receivers are less experienced with the brand (Garretson & Niedrich, 2004).

In summary, distinguishing the effects of the three source credibility components is not always possible, but the credibility components become cues that significantly affect receivers’ perceptions of the endorsed product or advertising. Thus, the three components of source credibility are important variables for evaluating endorsers’ effects.
Gender in Advertisements

Stereotype of Gender in General Advertisements

All through the ages, advertising has been affected by social and cultural trends. The gender images depicted in advertising outline societal values of “appropriate” roles for men and women (Klassen, Jasper, & Schwarts, 1993). “Female role stereotyping in advertising is nearly a universal phenomenon…” (Lynn, Hardin, & Walsdorf, 2004, p. 338). Advertising has portrayed women at home, uninvolved in important decision-making, dependent on men for protection, and as sex objects (Courtney & Lockertz, 1971). According to Kang (1997), advertisements have portrayed women in “traditional mother”, “home”, or “beauty/sex-oriented” roles. Images of women in advertisements have generally been weak, childish, dependent, domestic, decorative, and subordinate (Ford, Voli, Honeycutt, & Casey, 1998; Kang, 1997).

Stereotype of Gender in Sport Related Advertisements

Sport-related advertising has been especially gender-biased (Poe, 1976; Slatton, 1970), because of the long history of male domination of modern sports and dominant ideas about sexual differences (Hargreaves, 1994). Originally, sports were performed by males, and the images were strong, aggressive, and muscular (Peetz et al.). Additionally, since the primary consumers of sport-products have historically been males, men were overwhelmingly depicted in sport-related advertisements (Cuneen, 2001; Cuneen & Claussen, 1999). Female athletes are often not considered serious athletes since even high-level professional athletes as Martina Navratilova and Chris Everett Lloyd would be beaten by most male tennis professionals (Hilliard, 1984).

The advertisements and articles related to female players have tended to not only underestimate their athletic performance, but also evaluate the women in terms of traditional standards of feminine beauty (Hilliard, 1984). Females are not portrayed in action poses as strong and competent athletes using equipment; instead, they are posed passively (Cuneen, 2001; Cuneen, & Sidwell, 1998; Lynn et al., 2004) as spectators, or compared with males who are actively engaged in play (Cuneen & Sidwell, 1998). Studies of sport-related advertising and gender stereotypes have concluded that women were portrayed in leisure-recreational activities rather than in competitive sports; when
portrayed competitively, women tended to be engaged in individual sports such as golf, tennis, and swimming that were publicly accepted as gender-appropriate (Poe, 1976; Slatton, 1970). Boutilier and Saniovanni (1983) explained that media coverage of women’s sports was mostly of traditionally feminine, individual, socially acceptable sports for females such as tennis and figure skating, while women’s team sports were not given attention. Numerous sport-related product advertisements have depicted women in traditional fashion (non-athletic) or even irreverent (sexism or sexual objectification) (Cuneen, 2001) imagery.

Cuneen and Spencer (2003) examined the differences in gender representation in the famous “milk mustache” advertisement. According to the results, “…there were more than twice as many males as females connoted as strong. No males were connoted as weak; when an ad role connotation conveyed weakness, the photos were of women 100% of the time” (p. 146) and “the sport-related milk mustache ads frequently featured more males in athletic roles that displayed or implied athleticism, while women were featured more frequently in sexually suggestive roles” (Cuneen & Spencer, 2003, p. 147). Kafka (2005) reported that while Maria Sharapova, with a WTA ranking of four on February 13, 2006, a Wimbledon champion in 2004, focused on being a number one tennis player, she appreciated that others perceived her as “beauty sells” and looks were as important as winning.

Women’s Participation in Sports

The opportunities for women to engage in sports and purchase sports products have gradually increased. Warner (2002) mentioned that the NPD Group reported women's sports apparel sales were over $15 billion in 2001, almost $3 billion more than men's apparel. Lords (1999), Russell (1994), and Suggs (2000) noted that because of the effects of Title IX, the Education Amendments of 1972, the number of women participating in intercollegiate athletics has tremendously increased since the mid 1980s. The NCAA Sports Sponsorship and Participation Data of 2000 showed the numerical and percentage changes for all NCAA member institutions from 1981-82 to 2000-01. Compared with the number of male participants increasing 23.6% from 167,055 to 206,573, the number of female participants sharply increased 131.6% from 64,390 to
Walzer (2005) reported that the remarkable growth in women’s basketball at the AAU Youth level was revealed in the SGMA’s U.S. Trends in Team Sports Report (2004 Edition). More than 128,952 women participated in 2004, while 93,225 participated in 1997. According to Levin (1990), females participate in five of seven major fitness activities (except running and weight training) than do males. In 1994, women spent more money on athletic footwear than men, and it was forecasted that the women’s market share would enlarge while the men’s share would stagnate (Mallory, McGraw, Sieder & Fischer, 1995).

Women who participate in sports prefer to be pictured as strong and athletic (Levin, 1990), because sport frequently requires strength and physical competence in its execution (Cuneen & Spencer, 2003). In order to capture the women’s market share, it is necessary for sporting goods companies to treat women as competent (Cuneen & Spencer, 2003) and serious athletes (Cuneen, 2001), not merely as feminine, physically attractive (Cuneen & Spencer, 2003), and “trivial dilettantes” (Cuneen, 2001). Sutton and Watlington (1994) and Cuneen et al. (1999) also insisted that sports products companies wishing to capture the women’s market share should directly target women and depict women as performing meaningful activities in their advertising. Many companies started to focus heavily on female athletes and portray women as strong and athletic (Levin, 1990; Mallory et al., 1995). Klassen et al. (1993) divided the advertisements of “Ms,” “Newsweek,” “Playboy” into three types of depictions of men and women: traditional pose, reverse-sex, and equality pose, defined as a neutral pose without bias or stereotype. They showed that traditional depictions (stereotypes) of women had been decreasing since the early 1980s, and that the equality pose was on the rise.

Ford et al. (1998) researched gender role portrayals in Japanese advertising. They suggested that traditional “hard-line stereotyping” had softened considerably since the early 1980s. Peetz et al. noted that the Women’s National Basketball Association, Women’s United Soccer Association, and Women’s World Cup have increased the media exposure of women. As female professional sports have become more commonplace in the media, the number of endorsement contracts for female athletes has increased. Stone et al. indicated that the number of ads featuring female athletes as celebrity endorsers in
Sport Illustrated had significantly increased over the two periods; 21 between 1983-1988, and 50 between 1993-1998. According to a study by Stevens et al. (2003), however, the depiction of the “sport heroism” was still dominantly male. They asked individuals born after 1978 about their favorite heroes and found that only one of five top sport heroes was a female athlete, Mia Hamm. The percentage in which male athletes were chosen as heroes was 78%, compared with 22% of female athletes. The results indicated that female athletes were still behind male athletes despite the increase in women’s sport participation and media exposure.

The Research of Gender in Endorsement

![Diagram of gender research]

Figure 2.1 Three types of gender research

Consumer Perception toward Gender of Endorsers

Previous research has examined consumers’ perception of endorser’s gender and the endorsed products. According to the study by Stotlar, Veltri, and Viswanathan (1998), “…male athletes and their products were generally more often recognized than were the female athletes and the products they endorsed” (p. 55). Furthermore, male respondents were more likely to recognize both sport played and athletic products endorsed than were females” (p. 54). However, recognition of sport played by the female athletes was lower than that played by the male athletes by similar rates among male and female respondents. Peetz et al. explored the role of gender in the transfer of meaning from athlete endorser to product and purchase intentions. They found that respondents correctly identified male athletes by almost four times over female athletes, and male respondents would identify
all the endorsers by 2.5 times over female respondents. Moreover, men recognized that male athletes (more famous and less famous) were more expert than female endorsers (more famous and less famous). Women, in contrast, recognized that a more famous male athlete was more expert than female endorsers (more famous and less famous), and a less famous male athlete was considered the lowest expert.

Interaction between Gender of Endorser and Gender of Consumer

Researchers have examined consumers’ perception, attitude, and purchase intention relative to products that have an image (masculine or feminine) influenced by the endorser’s gender (Alreck, Settle & Belch, 1982; Tom, Clark, Elmer, Grech, Masetti, & Sandhar, 1992). Previous studies that explored the relationship between gender of endorser and gender of consumer resulted in two opposing ideas: endorser’s gender does not significantly influence consumer attitudes toward products (Freiden, 1984); and endorser’s gender significantly influences consumer attitudes toward products (Lafferty et al., 2002; Peetz et al.).

Carsky and Zuckerman (1991) examined the relationship of three non-gendered (neutral) products, Tylenol, Bailey’s Irish Cream, and Club Med vacations, and male and female endorsers. They found that there was no interaction between the gender of the endorser and the gender of the respondent in credibility, persuasiveness, likelihood of use/purchase, and attitude toward the ads. Freiden (1984) studied the influence of the endorser’s gender on consumers’ attitude to television advertisements (a durable and neutral product). The result was that gender of the endorser did not significantly influence consumer (226 adults and students) attitudes.

Tom et al. (1992), on the other hand, asked TV viewers of an average of over 20 hours weekly to identify the brands of products (dish-washing product, beer, toilet tissue) associated with the spokesperson broadcasting television commercials. The result was that “Female spokespersons were more effective for female audiences and male spokespersons for the males. It may be that female spokespersons have more referent power for female consumers while male spokespersons have more for male consumers” (p. 49-50). Peetz et al. found that although female respondents did not demonstrate a preference for female endorsers or male endorsers, male respondents would be affected
by male endorsers by 2.51 times more than by female endorsers in purchase intention. Lafferty et al. found that same sex endorsers were more realistic than opposite sex endorsers; especially that women were not effective as endorsers of athletic shoes for men in their pretest for examining the endorser credibility condition. Bellizzi and Milner (1991) made radio commercials explicitly appealing to male, female, and both sexes and examined the influence on gender of receivers. The conclusion was that female-explicit commercials would have particular success with female audiences but would not antagonize male audiences. Male-explicit commercials would be quite similarly received by both male and female. Cuneen et al. (2003) mentioned that female consumers would respond more positively to female athlete endorsers who actually looked proficient at their sports. Bush et al. (2004) explored the influence of sports celebrities on individuals whom born between 1977 and 1994. They found that although the gender of the endorser was not asked in the study, females might spread more positive word-of-mouth about a product or brand endorsed by their favorite sport celebrity than males. Further, females might be more affected by athlete endorsers in purchase intention than males.

**Interaction between Gender of Product and Gender of Endorser**

Products are divided into four types: masculine, feminine, neutral (neither), and androgynous (both) (Golden, Allison, & Clee, 1979; Iyer & Debevec, 1986; Kanungo & Pang, 1973). Kanungo and Pang (1973) studied the interaction of gender of a product and gender of an endorser and found that when the product’s gender and endorser’s gender were consistent, the perceived product quality was enhanced and favorable attitudes toward a product increased. Their instance was that a car (sofa) was more positively perceived by both men and women when promoted by a male (female) model than by a female (male) model. Debevec and Iyer (1986) found that “…a spokesperson’s gender is an effective promotional cue in influencing respondents’ perceptions of the gender image of products” (p. 18). The dishwashing liquid brand (beer brand) was perceived as more masculine (feminine) when endorsed by a male (female) spokesperson than by a female (male). The results of the study suggested that “…using a spokesperson to alter a product’s gender image is a feasible and potentially effective strategy” (p. 19) and “…it is more difficult to ‘genderize’ a neutral product using a spokesperson than to alter the
gender of a masculine or feminine product” (p. 18).

**Interaction between Gender of Product and Gender of Consumer**

Alreck et al. (1982), on the other hand, examined the consumers’ perception and the likelihood of trial and use of the two brands of soap named “Tiger” and “Rainbow” to provide impressions of masculine and feminine brands. They found that “…men are significantly more likely to try and to use the masculine brand and women are more likely to try and to use the feminine brand” (“same sex” bias.) (p. 29). Moreover, females also accept masculine brands, but males highlight the differences in gender symbols and do not readily accept feminine brands.

**Summary of the Literature Review**

Previous research of celebrity endorsement examined which attributes of endorsers result in persuasive communication, and how those factors influence consumer attitude and behavior. These factors are called “source credibility,” and are mainly divided into two dimensions: the source credibility model, including expertise and trustworthiness (McGuire, 1985) and the source attractiveness model (Hovland & Weiss, 1951).

Many researchers examined which components of source credibility had the most impact on consumer attitude and behavior toward an endorsed product or advertising. From the results, it can be said that distinguishing the effects of the three source credibility components is not always possible, but the credibility components become cues that significantly affect receivers’ perceptions of the endorsed product or advertising. Thus, the three components of source credibility are important variables for evaluating endorsers’ effects.

In the research related to the gender of celebrity endorsement, there are three types of researches: 1) interaction between consumer’s gender and endorser’s gender, 2) interaction between product’s gender and endorser’s gender, and 3) interaction between consumer’s gender and product’s gender. As regarding 1), some researchers denied the interaction (Carsky & Zuckerman, 1991). In other work, the interaction was recognized (Tom et al.). Therefore, results of previous research were not consistent. In the research of 2), previous researchers found that consistency of a product’s gender and an endorser’s
gender enhanced perceived product quality and consumers’ favorable attitude toward a product (Kanungo & Pang, 1973). This result may be supported by match-up hypothesis. In the research of 3), Alreck and his colleagues (1982) found that men were more likely to try and use the masculine brand, and that women were more likely to try and use the feminine brand. Moreover, females also accepted masculine brands, while males did not accept feminine brands. In summary, although these three types of research were not enough to make a conclusion, product’s gender and endorser’s gender may be influential factors on consumer attitude and behavior toward the product.

In the research of celebrity athlete endorsement in sport marketing, previous research revealed that male athletes were more identified than female athletes (Peetz et al.; Stotlar et al., 1998) Moreover, famous male athletes were recognized as more expert than female endorsers (famous and less famous) by men and women subjects (Peetz et al.). Regarding purchase intention to products endorsed by athletes, while women subjects did not demonstrate a preference for female or male endorsers, male subjects were more likely to purchase products endorsed by male endorsers by 2.51 times over female endorsers. Considering the previous research, male athlete endorsers may have an advantage compared with female athlete endorsers. Research of celebrity endorsement in the sport area, however, has had little attention, and the interaction between source credibility of celebrity athlete endorsers and consumer attitude and behavior toward endorsed sport products and advertising has not been clarified. Thus, previous research is not enough to determine the superiority of male athlete endorsers.

Research Ideas

Can male athletes credibly endorse women’s sports products? This study will focus on athletic shoes. As mentioned in the literature review, male athlete endorsers may tend to be more identified and recognized as experts, and male athlete endorsers may have an advantage in influencing consumer purchase intention. Moreover, some images of sports are considered to be strong, aggressive, and muscular; thus, if athletic shoes will be categorized as masculine, consistency between product’s gender and endorser’s gender may enhance consumer’s favorable attitudes. Therefore, this research will first examine source credibility (expertise and trustworthiness) and source attractiveness of male and
female endorsers and compare consumer perception of same-sex endorser and opposite-sex endorser. Next, in order to explore the impact of cross-over endorsements, which is a type of interaction between consumer’s gender and endorser’s gender, consumer attitude toward advertising, attitude toward product, and purchase intention to the products endorsed by each (gender) endorser will be examined.

Before proceeding with the main study it was important to first identify the gender characterization of the product to be tested. A pre-test was conducted to ascertain the gender characterization of athletic shoes, and also to identify male and female athletes that consumers (students) recognize for various sports. A pre-test was conducted to answer the following two questions:

Pre-test Research Questions
- Which category (masculine, feminine, or neutral) do athletic shoes (shoes for casual wear and for playing sports) fit into?
- What athletes come to mind when you think about different professional sports?

The results of the pre-test are presented in the following chapter.

Purposes of the Study
The purposes of the main study will be to examine the influence of celebrity athlete endorsers’ gender on consumers’ perceptions of celebrity athlete endorsers’ credibility (expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness), and the impact of celebrity athlete endorsers’ gender on consumer’s attitude toward advertising, attitude toward a product, and purchase intention. The primary research question directing the proposed study is, “Can male athletes credibly endorse women’s sports products?” Based on the primary question the following set of secondary questions are proposed for examination in the main study:

1. What is the difference, if any, in male subjects’ perceptions (expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness) of male (same sex) athlete endorsers and female (opposite sex) athlete endorsers?
2. What is the difference, if any, in female subjects’ perceptions (expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness) of male (opposite sex) athlete endorsers and female (same sex) athlete endorsers?
3. What is the difference, if any, in male subjects’ attitude toward advertising, attitude toward the product, and purchase intention when they view a male (same sex) athlete endorser’s advertisement compared to viewing a female (opposite sex) athlete endorser’s advertisement?

4. What is the difference, if any, in female subjects’ attitude toward advertising, attitude toward the product, and purchase intention when they view a male (opposite sex) athlete endorser’s advertisement compared to viewing a female (same sex) athlete endorser’s advertisement?

The following chapter will provide an overview of the research design to measure consumer perception of source credibility, consumer attitude toward advertisements, consumer attitude toward products, and purchase intention in pre-test and main study, and will show the results of the pre-test.
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

The previous chapter provided a review of research examining source credibility and gender differences of endorsers and consumers. Building from previous research, the purposes of this study were to examine (1) the influence of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on consumers’ perceptions of the endorser’s credibility (expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness), (2) the impact of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on consumers’ attitudes toward advertising and attitudes toward a product, and (3) the impact of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on consumers’ purchase intentions. This chapter provides information about the pre-test, research design, research subjects, instrumentation, research procedures, and data analysis procedures.

Pre-test

The purposes of the pre-test were 1) to confirm whether athletic shoes are generally regarded as more masculine or feminine, 2) to confirm whether consumers perceive athletic shoes worn for participation as more masculine or feminine compared to athletic shoes worn for casual wear, and 3) to identify celebrity athlete endorsers to include in the main study. For the pre-test, 45 surveys were distributed among undergraduate (27) and graduate students (18) completing sport management courses at a large Southeastern (SE) state university. The pre-test was conducted in classroom settings after obtaining the permission of instructors.

Categorization of Sports Products

In order to understand the general perception of a product’s gender, the pretest included an evaluation of respondents’ gender perceptions of athletic shoes (masculine, feminine, and neutral). The participants were asked to indicate whether athletic shoes for participation and casual wear were considered masculine, feminine, or neutral. Distinguishing between a shoe worn for participation and one for casual wear was important because the usage may influence an individual’s perceptions of an endorsers’ expertise. Moreover, ascertaining whether a product is viewed as more masculine,
feminine, or neutral provides an initial indicator as to whether a male athlete, for example, could credibly endorse a women’s athletic shoe. The measurement scale was developed for the pre-test by the author (see Appendix A). Subjects were asked their perceptions of how masculine or feminine a product was using a 7-point scale (1-extremely feminine, 2-moderately feminine, 3-slightly feminine, 4-neutral, 5-slightly masculine, 6-moderately masculine, and 7-extremely masculine).

**Celebrity Selection**

In order to determine which celebrity athlete endorsers to include in the main study, pre-test subjects were asked to list the names of male and female athletes, including retired athletes, they could think of in relation to three professional sports, basketball, tennis, and soccer (see Appendix A). These three sports were chosen for two reasons: 1) all three sports are played by each gender; and 2) the three represent a mix of team and individual sports. The athlete’s names were ranked based on their frequency of inclusion.

**Results of the Pre-test**

**Categorization of Sports Products**

As indicated in Table 3.1, while some subjects identified casual shoes as more than slightly feminine, all of the subjects categorized sports shoes as neutral or more than slightly masculine with the mean of 4.91 (see Table 3.2). These results provided initial support for the idea that male athletes may credibly endorse women’s sports products due to consistency between a product’s gender and an endorser’s gender. Moreover, the gender perception of sports shoes was significantly different than the perception of casual shoes, $t=-2.231, p =< .031$ (see Table 3.3).
The most frequently mentioned basketball players were Michael Jordan and Sheryl Swoopes; tennis players were Andre Agassi and Anna Kournikova; soccer players were David Beckham and Mia Hamm (see Table 3.4). While both Sheryl Swoopes and Lisa Leslie were listed with the same frequency, Swoopes was ranked first because the order in which she was listed was generally before Lisa Leslie.
Table 3.4  Male and female athletes listed by sport

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male athlete</th>
<th>Female athlete</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Jordan</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kobe Bryant</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>68.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaquille O'Neal</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male athlete</th>
<th>Female athlete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andre Agassi</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pete Sampras</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>64.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy Roddick</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>64.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male athlete</th>
<th>Female athlete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Beckham</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pele</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>37.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronaldo</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Percentage = Frequency / 45 (subjects)

Conclusion of the Pre-test

An athletic shoe for participation was identified as neutral or more than slightly masculine. This result provides some support for the idea that male athletes credibly endorse women’s sports products (athletic shoes) because of consistency between a product’s gender and an endorser’s gender.

For celebrity selection, Michael Jordan, Sheryl Swoopes, Andre Agassi, David Beckham, and Mia Hamm were the most frequently mentioned athletes in each sports category. Therefore, those athletes were used as endorsers who advertise athletic shoes in the main study. Regarding female tennis players, the difference in frequency between Kournikova and Sharapova was just one. Sharapova’s actual achievements in tennis, including a former ranking as the number one female tennis player in the world, however, exceed those of Kournikova. Sharapova’s success may be more appropriate in
comparison with Andre Agassi. Thus, Maria Sharapova was used as the female tennis player in the main study.

Main Study

Research Design

The study was a non-probability cross-sectional quantitative study. Convenience sampling was used for the study. Dempsey and Dempsey (2000) defined cross-sectional research design as collecting data from a sample at one point in time. For this study, surveys were conducted at one point in time from university students at the SE state university during the summer semester in 2006. Instruments used for this study were four 7-point bi-polar adjective scales. The collected data were classified by the kinds of sports, subjects’ gender, and endorsers’ gender (independent variables) and compared the impact the celebrity athlete endorsers’ gender on subjects’ perceptions of the endorser’s credibility (expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness), subjects’ attitudes toward advertisements, attitudes toward products, and purchase intentions (dependent variables).

Research Subjects

To determine an appropriate sample size for the main study a power analysis was conducted. A power analysis is defined as a statistical procedure for estimating a sample size “in order to determine the likelihood of accepting a null hypothesis that should actually be rejected or determining that a relationship does not exist between variables when a relationship actually does exist” (Dempsey & Dempsey, 2000, p. 112). For this study, Lachin’s sample size calculation was used, and a level of .05 was set for providing confidence for the results. Lachin’s formula utilizes standard deviations and mean scores which may be derived from the scales used in a study. A small study (described below) was conducted to generate the figures needed to utilize Lachin’s formula.

Twenty surveys were distributed to 10 male and 10 female students at the same SE state university. The students were conveniently chosen. The questionnaire included a soccer shoe advertisement and 24 questions, the same content that would be included in the main study. Five male students were given advertisements featuring David Beckham with male soccer shoes. The other five male students received advertisements featuring
Mia Hamm with male soccer shoes. Female students were also divided into two groups and given advertisements featuring Beckham or Hamm with female soccer shoes. Then, standard deviations and means were calculated from the data in those four groups, respectively. The data from groups producing the biggest standard deviations were inputted into the formula in order to learn minimum requisite sample size. As a result, it was determined that usable respondents of 300 subjects were appropriate for the main study.

Questionnaires for the main study were distributed to undergraduate students (322) enrolled in Life-time Activity Program (LAP) classes, undergraduate (21) and graduate students (22) attending sport management courses at the university during the summer semester, and students (48) working out the university’s recreation facility (N=413). There were 192 male subjects and 216 female subjects; 5 subjects did not report their sex.

Instrumentation

In order to measure endorsers’ perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness, Ohanian’s (1990) 15-item source credibility scale (7-point bi-polar adjective scales) was used. The measurement for each credibility factor consisted of five items. The scale has been shown to be reliable in previous research (Ohanian, 1990; Ohanian, 1991) (see Appendix B). Lafferty and Goldsmith (1999) and Lafferty et al. (2002) measured source credibility in their study by picking three out of five adjective scales from each credibility dimension originated by Ohanian (1990). Pornpitakpan (2003) discarded *sincere* (an adjective scale rating trustworthiness) from Ohanian’s (1990) original scale and measured source credibility with 14 adjective items. These researchers, however, did not provide a rationale for changing from the Ohanian (1990) scale. In this study, all 15 adjective items of the original source credibility scale were used because those items were deemed appropriate as adjectives for evaluating celebrity athlete endorsers.

To measure attitude toward the advertisement, attitude toward the product, and purchase intention, the study followed Lafferty and Goldsmith’s research methods (1999) with some modifications as noted below. First, subjects were asked to evaluate their...
overall impression of advertisements using three 7-point, bipolar adjective scales: good/bad, favorable/unfavorable, and pleasant/unpleasant (Mackenzie & Lutz, 1989) (see Appendix B). Next, subjects were asked to rate their overall impression of the advertised product on three 7-point, bipolar adjective scales: good/bad, favorable/unfavorable, and pleasant/unpleasant (Mackenzie & Lutz, 1989) (see Appendix B). Finally, purchase intentions were assessed by having subjects rate the likelihood of 1) trying the advertised product, 2) buying the advertised product if they happened to see it in a store, and 3) actively seeking out the advertised product in a store in order to purchase it for personal reasons. Intentions were measured using a 7-point, semantic differential scale: Yes, definitely/No, definitely not (Baker and Churchill, 1977) (see Appendix B). In order to measure purchase intention, Lafferty et al. (1999) simply asked subjects the degree (likelihood) to which they would consider buying the brand the next time they purchased athletic shoes using three 7-point, bipolar adjective scales anchored by very likely/very unlikely, probable/improbable, and possible/impossible. The interrogative sentences used by Baker and Churchill (1977), however, more logically express consumer purchase intention in the order described above: 1) likelihood of trying; 2) likelihood of purchasing; and 3) likelihood of inquiring. Consequently, the measures of purchase intention in the current study included the sentences used by Baker and Churchill.

Regarding the order of questions, Lafferty et al. (2002) first asked attitude toward brand (product) and then attitude toward advertising. Although their study examined the influences of both credibility of endorser and corporation, this study focused on the effects of endorsers. Thus, questions should first assess subjects’ attention to the advertising showing a certain endorser, and then the impression toward the product promoted. This procedure may allow researchers to examine the attitude toward the product supported by the advertising. That is, subjects would evaluate a product endorsed by an athlete in an advertisement rather than assess the product based on their preconceived ideas. Consequently, in the current study the order of questions was altered from that used by Lafferty et al.
Data Collection Procedures

Twelve versions of the booklet (A to L) were prepared. Each booklet included two advertisements (see Table 3.5).

Table 3.5  Twelve versions of the booklet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advertisement for men's shoes</th>
<th>Booklet</th>
<th>Endorser</th>
<th>Same sex endorsers as subjects</th>
<th>Opposite sex endorsers as subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Agassi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Agassi</td>
<td>Beckham</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Beckham</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Swoopes</td>
<td>Sharapova</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Sharapova</td>
<td>Hamm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Hamm</td>
<td>Swoopes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Swoopes</td>
<td>Sharapova</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Sharapova</td>
<td>Hamm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Hamm</td>
<td>Swoopes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Agassi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Agassi</td>
<td>Beckham</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Beckham</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Jordan & Swoopes endorsed basketball shoes  
Agassi & Sharapova endorsed tennis shoes  
Beckham & Hamm endorsed soccer shoes

Each booklet consisted of 8 pages. The front page was a cover letter. The second page included a question as to whether subjects recognized the celebrity athletes and items assessing demographic information. The third page showed the advertisement for one of three types of athletic shoes: basketball, tennis, or soccer shoes. The fourth page included the items assessing the credibility of the athlete shown in the advertisement on the third page. The fifth page included the items assessing attitude toward the advertisement, attitude toward the product, and purchase intention. The sixth page showed the advertisement for one of the other two types of athletic shoes. The seventh page included the items assessing the credibility of the athlete shown on page six. The final page included the items assessing attitude toward the advertisement, attitude toward the product, and purchase intention. Each advertisement included an athlete profile, a catch phrase for the product, and product name. The products were fictional and not recognized as a particular brand of shoe. The pictures of advertisements were
downloaded off the Internet. The layout for advertisement was identical in order to eliminate the possibility of confusion (see Appendix B).

Male subjects were given Booklet A, B, C, D, E, or F; Booklet A, B, and C were same sex endorsers’ advertisements for the subjects; Booklet D, E, and F were opposite sex endorsers’ advertisements. Booklets G, H, I, J, K, or L were distributed to female subjects; Booklets G, H, and I were same sex endorsers’ advertisements for the subjects; Booklets J, K, and L were opposite sex endorsers’ advertisements. In order to avoid subjects guessing the purpose of this study and biasing their responses, the advertisements featuring male endorsers and female endorsers were not mixed. Each subject saw either advertisements with male endorsers or advertisements with female endorsers.

The survey was approved by the Human Subjects Committee’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) and conducted during the summer semester in 2006. The survey was conducted at three different settings. First, the researcher contacted a supervisor of the LAP program to inform him of the purpose of the study, questionnaire items, and sampling procedures. After approval was granted from the supervisor, a survey schedule was set up; 41 classes were surveyed. Second, in order to gain approval for conducting a survey in classes provided by a sport management program, the researcher contacted professors in charge of those classes; two classes were surveyed. The survey was administrated at the beginning of the classes. Third, the survey was conducted on campus. The researcher was positioned outside the university’s recreation facility. Subjects entering and leaving the facility were randomly asked to participate (convenience sampling). Some subjects answered the questionnaires before working out; others completed a questionnaire after working out.

The subjects were informed that this survey was conducted as a part of the researcher’s thesis work and participation was voluntary. The researcher distributed the booklets in the form of handouts, told subjects that the purpose of the study was to assess reactions to advertising, and asked them to evaluate the advertisements as if they were published in a sports magazine (Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999). In order to keep subjects
from knowing the actual purpose of this study, questionnaires were distributed without revealing to the participants that there were different forms of the questionnaire.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data were examined using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software program. First, in order to assess differences in consumer perceptions toward a same sex athlete endorser versus an opposite sex endorser, the individual item scores in each of the three categories (expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness) in the source credibility scale were summed for each endorser advertising male or female shoes. Then, the mean of those data were compared using the t-test for independent samples with same sport endorsers. For example, Jordan’s expertise and Swoopes’ expertise for advertising male basketball shoes were compared. Second, in order to assess differences in consumer attitudes and behavior when same sex endorser appears in an advertisement or opposite sex endorser advertises a product, the individual item scores for each of the three categories (advertisements, products, and purchase intention) were summed up in each endorser advertising male or female shoes. Then, the mean of those data were compared using the t-test for independent samples with each endorser. In the process of data analysis, four research questions were broken into the following twelve questions.

Question 1.1. Is there a significant difference in male subjects’ perceptions of expertise for same sex and opposite sex athlete endorsers?

Question 1.2. Is there a significant difference in male subjects’ perceptions of trustworthiness for same sex and opposite sex athlete endorsers?

Question 1.3. Is there a significant difference in male subjects’ perceptions of attractiveness for same sex and opposite sex athlete endorsers?

Question 2.1. Is there a significant difference in female subjects’ perceptions of expertise for same sex and opposite sex athlete endorsers?
Question 2.2. Is there a significant difference in female subjects’ perceptions of trustworthiness for same sex and opposite sex athlete endorsers?

Question 2.3. Is there a significant difference in female subjects’ perceptions of attractiveness for same sex and opposite sex athlete endorsers?

Question 3.1. Is there a significant different in male subjects’ attitude toward an advertisement endorsed by same sex versus opposite sex athletes?

Question 3.2. Is there a significant difference in male subjects’ attitude toward a product endorsed by same sex versus opposite sex athletes?

Question 3.3. Is there a significant difference in male subjects’ intentions to purchase a product endorsed by same sex versus opposite sex athletes?

Question 4.1. Is there a significant different in female subjects’ attitude toward an advertisement endorsed by same sex versus opposite sex athletes?

Question 4.2. Is there a significant difference in female subjects’ attitude toward a product endorsed by same sex versus opposite sex athletes?

Question 4.3. Is there a significant difference in female subjects’ intentions to purchase a product endorsed by same sex versus opposite sex athletes?

The following chapter provides the results of the study. Moreover, subjects’ perceptions of source credibility were compared across subjects’ gender.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purposes of this study were to examine (1) the influence of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on consumers’ perceptions of the endorser’s credibility (expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness), (2) the impact of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on consumers’ attitudes toward advertising, attitudes toward a product, and (3) the impact of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on consumers’ purchase intentions. This chapter presents the results of the study.

Sample Characteristics

The subjects were undergraduate students enrolled in LAP classes, undergraduate and graduate students attending sport management courses at the SE university during the summer semester in 2006, and students working out the university’s recreation center in the same period (N=413). The 413 subjects ranged in age from 17 to 51, with a mean of 21.9. Their ethnicity fell into the following categories: Caucasian=255(61.7%), African American=66(16.0%), American Indian=1(.2%), Hispanic=47(11.4%), Asian/Pacific Islander=11(2.7%), Another ethnicity group=27(6.5%), and Unknown=6(1.5%). Subjects’ mean days of participating in sports in an average week were 3. The most frequently played sports for males were basketball (84), golf (46), and football (40) respectively. The most frequently played sports for female subjects were tennis (37), running (32), and bowling (22) respectively (see Table 4.1).
Table 4.1  The sports which subjects currently play

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>subjects</th>
<th>order</th>
<th>sports</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>basketball</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>golf</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>football</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>soccer</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>tennis</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>tennis</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>running</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>bowling</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>soccer</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>basketball</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 show the distribution of the 12 types of questionnaires to 413 subjects. Of the 413 questionnaires, 379 were usable; incomplete questionnaires were considered as unusable. Additionally, when subjects failed to recognize the endorsers included in the questionnaires, their data were eliminated. Thus, the number of usable questionnaires was 315 (76.3%) (see Table 4.2). Regarding recognition rates of male athletes versus female athletes, the male athletes’ recognition rates were higher than female athletes’ recognition rates in all three sports: Jordan 97.3%, Beckham 87.8%, Agassi 86.9%, Ham 83.7%, Sharapova 67.9%, and Swoopes 62.2%.
Table 4.2 Distribution of the 12 types of questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Endorser</th>
<th>Number of collection</th>
<th>Unusable</th>
<th>Usable</th>
<th>Recognition</th>
<th>Both usable and recognizable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement for men's shoes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agassi</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beckham</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swoopes</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharapova</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamm</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement for women's shoes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swoopes</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharapova</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamm</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agassi</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beckham</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>826</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>758</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Each subject viewed two advertisements.

Reliability Test

The Cronbach’s Alpha scores were used to assess the reliability of the four scales. Consistent with previous studies (Ohanian, 1990; Ohanian, 1991; Mackenzie & Lutz, 1989; Kilbourne, 1986; Kilbourne, Painton, and Ridley, 1985), the value for each scale exceeded the recommended level of .70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 Reliability Test for the Four Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source Credibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td>.828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>.880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td>.861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude Toward the Advertisement</td>
<td>.937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude Toward the Product/Brand</td>
<td>.950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase Intention</td>
<td>.881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N = 630</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results for Research Question One

Question 1.1. Is there a significant difference in male subjects’ perceptions of expertise for same sex and opposite sex athlete endorsers? The 15-item source credibility scale was analyzed with t-tests to determine if there were significant differences. The results indicated there was a significant difference in subjects’ perceptions of expertise for a male athlete endorser versus a female endorser in tennis. The mean score for a male tennis endorser’s expertise was 32.6; the score for the female tennis endorser’s expertise was 30.5 (p=< .002). There were no significant differences in subjects’ perceptions of expertise for male versus female athlete endorsers for basketball or soccer (p=< .258 and p=< .223 respectively) (see Table 4.4 and Figure 4.1).

Table 4.4  Male subjects’ perceptions of athlete endorser expertise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Endorser</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>32.85</td>
<td>3.814</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>32.04</td>
<td>3.531</td>
<td>.258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>32.16</td>
<td>3.683</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>32.94</td>
<td>2.704</td>
<td>.223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>32.62</td>
<td>3.568</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>30.46</td>
<td>3.805</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M is male athlete, F is female athlete.
Mean was derived from five questions relating to endorser’s expertise on a seven point scale; maximum possible score was 35, minimum possible score was 5.
Figure 4.1 Comparison of male subjects’ perceptions of expertise

Question 1.2. Is there a significant difference in male subjects’ perceptions of trustworthiness for same sex and opposite sex athlete endorsers? The 15-item source credibility scale was analyzed with t-tests to determine if there were significant differences. The results indicated there was a significant difference in perceptions of trustworthiness of a male athlete endorser versus a female endorser in soccer. The trustworthiness score for the female soccer athlete was 28.9; the male soccer athlete’s trustworthiness score was 26.5 (p=< .007). With basketball and tennis there were no significant differences in perceptions of trustworthiness toward male versus female athlete endorsers (p=< .203 and p=< .095 respectively) (see Table 4.5 and Figure 4.2).
Table 4.5  Male subjects’ perceptions of athlete endorser trustworthiness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Endorser</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>29.15</td>
<td>5.093</td>
<td>.203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27.98</td>
<td>4.231</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>26.46</td>
<td>4.829</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>28.92</td>
<td>4.115</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>27.48</td>
<td>5.048</td>
<td>.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>25.91</td>
<td>4.822</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M is male athlete, F is female athlete.
Mean was derived from five questions relating to endorser’s trustworthiness on a seven point scale; maximum possible score was 35, minimum possible score was 5.

Figure 4.2  Comparison of male subjects’ perceptions of trustworthiness
Question 1.3. Is there a significant difference in male subjects’ perceptions of attractiveness for same sex and opposite sex athlete endorsers? The 15-item source credibility scale was analyzed with t-tests to determine if there were significant differences. The results indicated there were significant differences in perceptions of attractiveness toward a male versus a female athlete endorser with all three sports. The mean scores for the female soccer and tennis athletes were higher than the scores for the male athletes (see Table 4.7). For basketball, the male athlete had a higher attractiveness score than the female athlete (M=26.22 and M=22.5 respectively) (see Table 4.6 and Figure 4.3).

Table 4.6  Male subjects’ perceptions of athlete endorser attractiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Endorser</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>26.22</td>
<td>5.351</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>22.52</td>
<td>5.843</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>25.76</td>
<td>5.644</td>
<td>.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27.85</td>
<td>4.916</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>24.41</td>
<td>5.335</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>31.19</td>
<td>3.842</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M is male athlete, F is female athlete.
Mean was derived from five questions relating to endorser’s attractiveness on a seven point scale; maximum possible score was 35, minimum possible score was 5.
Results for Research Question Two

Question 2.1. Is there a significant difference in female subjects’ perceptions of expertise for same sex and opposite sex athlete endorsers? The 15-item source credibility scale was analyzed with t-tests to determine if there were significant differences. The results indicated there were no significant differences in the female subjects’ perceptions of expertise toward female versus male athlete endorsers across all three sports (basketball, \( p < .464 \), soccer, \( p < .093 \), and tennis, \( p < .661 \)) (see Table 4.7 and Figure 4.4).
Table 4.7  Female subjects’ perceptions of athlete endorser expertise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Endorser</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>33.04</td>
<td>3.168</td>
<td>.464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>32.58</td>
<td>3.208</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>32.42</td>
<td>2.992</td>
<td>.093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>33.34</td>
<td>2.526</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>32.02</td>
<td>4.174</td>
<td>.661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>31.67</td>
<td>3.928</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M is male athlete, F is female athlete.
Mean was derived from five questions relating to endorser’s expertise on a seven point scale; maximum possible score was 35, minimum possible score was 5.

Figure 4.4  Comparison of female subjects’ perceptions of expertise
Question 2.2. Is there a significant difference in female subjects’ perceptions of trustworthiness for same sex and opposite sex athlete endorsers? The 15-item source credibility scale was analyzed with t-tests to determine if there were significant differences. The results indicated there was a significant difference in subjects’ perceptions of trustworthiness toward a female versus a male athlete endorser in soccer. The mean for female soccer athlete’s trustworthiness was 28.9; the male soccer athlete’s trustworthiness was 26.6 (p=< .020). For basketball and tennis, there were no significant differences in perceptions of endorser attractiveness (p=< .682 and p=< .938 respectively) (see Table 4.8 and Figure 4.5).

Table 4.8  Female subjects’ perceptions of athlete endorser trustworthiness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Endorser</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>27.92</td>
<td>4.745</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27.52</td>
<td>5.170</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>26.57</td>
<td>4.502</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>28.92</td>
<td>5.229</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>26.65</td>
<td>4.778</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>26.73</td>
<td>5.378</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M is male athlete, F is female athlete.

Mean was derived from five questions relating to endorser’s trustworthiness on a seven point scale; maximum possible score was 35, minimum possible score was 5.
Question 2.3. Is there a significant difference in female subjects’ perceptions of attractiveness for same sex and opposite sex athlete endorsers? The 15-item source credibility scale was analyzed with t-tests to determine if there were significant differences. The results indicated there was a significant difference in subjects’ perceptions of attractiveness toward a female versus a male endorser in soccer. The mean score for the male soccer athlete’s attractiveness was 31.1; the female soccer athlete’s attractiveness was 26.9 (p=< .000). For basketball and tennis, there were no significant differences in subjects’ perceptions of endorser attractiveness (p=< .099 and p=< .148 respectively) (see Table 4.9 and Figure 4.6).
Table 4.9  Female subjects’ perceptions of athlete endorser attractiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Endorser</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>25.75</td>
<td>5.813</td>
<td>.099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>23.81</td>
<td>6.007</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>31.12</td>
<td>3.347</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>26.91</td>
<td>4.908</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>27.20</td>
<td>5.227</td>
<td>.148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>28.67</td>
<td>4.946</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M is male athlete, F is female athlete. Mean was derived from five questions relating to endorser’s attractiveness on a seven point scale; maximum possible score was 35, minimum possible score was 5.

Figure 4.6  Comparison of female subjects’ perceptions of attractiveness
Results for Research Question Three

Question 3.1. Is there a significant different in male subjects’ attitude toward an advertisement endorsed by same sex versus opposite sex athletes? The three-item scale assessing attitude toward the advertisement was analyzed with t-tests to determine if there were significant differences. The results indicated there were no significant differences in subjects’ attitude toward advertisements, regardless of whether the sport product was endorsed by a male or female athlete. There was no difference in any of the three sports (basketball, \( p = .101 \), soccer, \( p = .569 \), and tennis, \( p = .605 \)) (see Table 4.10 and Figure 4.7).

Table 4.10  Male subjects’ attitude toward an advertisement based on gender of athlete endorser.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Endorser</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>15.46</td>
<td>4.513</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>14.12</td>
<td>3.818</td>
<td>.101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>16.28</td>
<td>3.482</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>15.88</td>
<td>3.502</td>
<td>.569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>15.53</td>
<td>3.988</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>15.13</td>
<td>4.283</td>
<td>.605</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M is male athlete, F is female athlete.

Mean was derived from three items relating to subjects’ attitude toward an advertisement on a seven point scale; maximum possible score was 21, minimum possible score was 3.
Question 3.2. Is there a significant difference in male subjects’ attitude toward a product endorsed by same sex versus opposite sex athletes? The three-item scale examining attitude toward the product/brand was analyzed using t-tests to determine if there were significant differences. The results indicated there were no significant differences in subjects’ attitude toward a product endorsed by male versus female athletes across the three sports (basketball, p=< .299, soccer, p=< .533, and tennis, p=< .419) (see Table 4.11 and Figure 4.8).
Table 4.11  Male subjects’ attitude toward a product based on gender of athlete endorser.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Endorser</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>14.35</td>
<td>4.715</td>
<td>.299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>13.42</td>
<td>4.434</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>15.96</td>
<td>3.785</td>
<td>.533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>15.50</td>
<td>3.643</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>13.78</td>
<td>4.630</td>
<td>.419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>14.44</td>
<td>4.045</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M is male athlete, F is female athlete.
Mean was derived from three questions relating to subjects’ attitude toward a product on a seven point scale; maximum possible score was 21, minimum possible score was 3.

Figure 4.8  Comparison of male subjects’ attitude toward a product based on endorser gender
Question 3.3. Is there a significant difference in male subjects’ intentions to purchase a product endorsed by same sex versus opposite sex athletes? The three-item scale assessing purchase intention was analyzed with t-tests to determine if there were significant differences. The results indicated there were no significant differences in subjects’ purchase intentions toward products endorsed by male versus female athletes across the three sports (basketball, \( p < .304 \), soccer, \( p < .780 \), and tennis, \( p < .085 \)) (see Table 4.12 and Figure 4.9).

Table 4.12  Male subjects’ purchase intentions based on gender of athlete endorser.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Endorser</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>10.61</td>
<td>5.695</td>
<td>.304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>9.60</td>
<td>4.290</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>5.264</td>
<td>.780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>11.73</td>
<td>4.424</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>10.64</td>
<td>4.851</td>
<td>.085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>9.06</td>
<td>4.760</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M is male athlete, F is female athlete.
Mean was derived from three items relating to subjects’ purchase intentions on a seven point scale; maximum possible score was 21, minimum possible score was 3.
Results for Research Question Four

Question 4.1. Is there a significant difference in female subjects’ attitude toward an advertisement endorsed by same sex versus opposite sex athletes? The three-item scale assessing attitude toward the advertisement was analyzed with t-tests to determine if there were significant differences. The results indicated there were no significant differences in subjects’ attitude toward advertisements, regardless of whether the sport product was endorsed by a female or male athlete. There was no difference in any of the three sports (basketball, p=< .228, soccer, p=< .760, and tennis, p=< .855). (see Table 4.13 and Figure 4.10).
Table 4.13  Female subjects’ attitude toward an advertisement based on gender of athlete endorser.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Endorser</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>15.63</td>
<td>3.878</td>
<td>.228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>16.48</td>
<td>3.245</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>16.35</td>
<td>4.507</td>
<td>.760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>16.58</td>
<td>3.411</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>15.80</td>
<td>4.176</td>
<td>.855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>15.67</td>
<td>3.321</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M is male athlete, F is female athlete.
Mean was derived from three items relating to subjects’ attitude toward an advertisement on a seven point scale; maximum possible score was 21, minimum possible score was 3.

Figure 4.10  Comparison of female subjects’ attitude toward an advertisement based on endorser gender.
Question 4.2. Is there a significant difference in female subjects’ attitude toward a product endorsed by same sex versus opposite sex athletes? The three-item scale examining attitude toward the product/brand was analyzed using t-tests to determine if there were significant differences. The results indicated there were no significant differences in subjects’ attitude toward a product endorsed by female versus male athletes across the three sports (basketball, p=< .280, soccer, p=< .549, and tennis, p=< .659) (see Table 4.14 and Figure 4.11).

Table 4.14  Female subjects’ attitude toward a product based on gender of athlete Endorser

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Endorser</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>15.96</td>
<td>3.693</td>
<td>.280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>15.10</td>
<td>4.358</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>16.31</td>
<td>4.305</td>
<td>.549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>16.75</td>
<td>3.252</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>15.65</td>
<td>4.520</td>
<td>.659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>15.27</td>
<td>3.970</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M is male athlete, F is female athlete.

Mean was derived from three items relating to subjects’ attitude toward a product on a seven point scale; maximum possible score was 21, minimum possible score was 3.
Question 4.3. Is there a significant difference in female subjects’ intentions to purchase a product endorsed by same sex versus opposite sex athletes. The three-item scale assessing purchase intention was analyzed with t-tests to determine if there were significant differences. The results indicated there was a significant difference in the subjects’ intentions to purchase products endorsed by male versus female athlete in tennis. The purchase intention score for the male tennis athlete’s product was 11.8; the score for female tennis athlete’s product was 9.4 (p< .013). With basketball and soccer, there were no significant differences in purchase intentions (basketball, p< .218 and tennis, p< .144 respectively) (see Table 4.15 and Figure 4.12).
Table 4.15  Female subjects’ purchase intentions based on gender of athlete endorser

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Endorser</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>5.029</td>
<td>.218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>9.88</td>
<td>4.906</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>13.10</td>
<td>5.337</td>
<td>.144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>11.66</td>
<td>4.645</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>11.75</td>
<td>4.955</td>
<td>.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>9.39</td>
<td>4.378</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M is male athlete, F is female athlete.

Mean was derived from three items relating to subjects’ purchase intentions on a seven point scale; maximum possible score was 21, minimum possible score was 3.

Figure 4.12  Comparison of female subjects’ purchase intentions based on endorser gender
Source Credibility Across Subjects’ Gender

The preceding sections examined the results based on the respondent groups. The results were reported based on male subjects responding to questions about male and female athlete endorsers, and female subjects responding to questions about male and female athlete endorsers. To this point in the results, the male and female responses have not been examined comparatively. In this section the responses of male subjects and female subjects looking at the same Michael Jordan advertisement, the same Sheryl Swoopes advertisement, etc. are examined for each sport and each athlete. In other words, the endorsers’ credibility was compared across subjects’ gender.

Expertise. The results indicated there were no significant differences between male and female subjects’ perceptions of expertise for all six endorsers (see Table 4.16). In other words, men and women viewing a David Beckham ad had comparable ratings of expertise. There were no significant differences for any of the athlete endorsers relative to expertise.

Table 4.16 Subjects’ perceptions of athlete endorser expertise across subjects’ gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Athlete</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>32.85</td>
<td>3.814</td>
<td>.785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>33.04</td>
<td>3.168</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beckham</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>32.16</td>
<td>3.683</td>
<td>.692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>32.42</td>
<td>2.992</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agassi</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>32.62</td>
<td>3.568</td>
<td>.419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>32.02</td>
<td>4.174</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swoopes</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>32.04</td>
<td>3.531</td>
<td>.418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>32.58</td>
<td>3.208</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamm</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>32.94</td>
<td>2.704</td>
<td>.438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>33.34</td>
<td>2.526</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharapova</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>30.46</td>
<td>3.805</td>
<td>.114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>31.67</td>
<td>3.928</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M is male subject, F is female subject.

Mean was derived from five items relating to endorser’s expertise on a seven point scale; maximum possible score was 35, minimum possible score was 5.
Trustworthiness. The results indicated there were no significant differences between male and female subjects’ perceptions of trustworthiness for all six endorsers (see Table 4.17).

Table 4.17  Subjects’ perceptions of athlete endorser trustworthiness across subjects’ gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Athlete</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>29.15</td>
<td>5.093</td>
<td>.205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27.92</td>
<td>4.745</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beckham</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>26.46</td>
<td>4.829</td>
<td>.818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>26.57</td>
<td>4.502</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agassi</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>27.48</td>
<td>5.048</td>
<td>.379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>26.65</td>
<td>4.778</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swoopes</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>27.98</td>
<td>4.231</td>
<td>.619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27.52</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamm</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>28.92</td>
<td>4.115</td>
<td>.999</td>
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<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>28.92</td>
<td>5.229</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharapova</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>25.91</td>
<td>4.822</td>
<td>.413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>26.73</td>
<td>5.378</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M is male subject, F is female subject.

Mean was derived from five items relating to endorser’s trustworthiness on a seven point scale; maximum possible score was 35, minimum possible score was 5.

Attractiveness. The results indicated there was a significant difference between male and female subjects’ perceptions of attractiveness toward Beckham, Agassi, and Sharapova. Female subjects’ mean score for Beckham’s attractiveness was 31.12; male subjects’ mean score for Beckham was 25.76 (p=< .000). Female subjects’ mean score for Agassi’s attractiveness was 27.20; male subjects’ mean score for Agassi was 24.41 (p=< .007). With Sharapova’s attractiveness, male subjects’ mean score was 31.19; female subjects’ mean was 28.67 (p=< .004). For Jordan, Swoopes, and Hamm, there were no significant differences between male and female subjects’ perceptions of attractiveness (see Table 4.18).
Table 4.18  Subjects’ perceptions of athlete endorser attractiveness across subjects’ gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Athlete</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>26.22</td>
<td>5.351</td>
<td>.662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>25.75</td>
<td>5.813</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Beckham</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>25.76</td>
<td>5.644</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>31.12</td>
<td>3.347</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agassi</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>24.41</td>
<td>5.335</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27.20</td>
<td>5.227</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swoopes</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>22.52</td>
<td>5.843</td>
<td>.270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>23.81</td>
<td>6.007</td>
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<td>Hamm</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>27.85</td>
<td>4.916</td>
<td>.329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>26.91</td>
<td>4.908</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharapova</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>31.19</td>
<td>3.842</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>28.67</td>
<td>4.946</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M is male subject, F is female subject.

Mean was derived from five items relating to endorser’s purchase intention on a seven point scale; maximum possible score was 35, minimum possible score was 5.

The following chapter provides a discussion of the results and future research.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purposes of this study were to examine (1) the influence of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on consumers’ perceptions of the endorser’s credibility (expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness), (2) the impact of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on consumers’ attitude toward advertising, attitude toward a product; and (3) the impact of a celebrity athlete endorser’s gender on consumers’ purchase intentions. This chapter discusses the results, provides recommendations for future research, and presents limitations of the current investigation.

In research related to the gender of celebrity endorsers, there are three types: 1) interaction between consumer’s gender and endorser’s gender; 2) interaction between product’s gender and endorser’s gender; and 3) interaction between consumer’s gender and product’s gender. Regarding 1) interaction between consumer’s gender and endorser’s gender, Freiden (1984) and Carsky & Zuckerman (1991) found that endorser’s gender did not significantly influence consumer attitudes toward products. According to Tom et al. (1992), on the other hand, female spokespersons have more referent power for female consumers while male spokespersons have more referent power for male consumers. Peetz et al. (2004) also noted that although female respondents did not demonstrate a preference for female endorsers or male endorsers, male respondents’ purchase intentions were affected by male endorsers 2.51 times more than by female endorsers. In the research of 2) interaction between product’s gender and endorser’s gender, Kanungo and Pang (1973) found that consistency of a product’s gender and an endorser’s gender enhanced perceived product quality and consumers’ favorable attitude toward a product. In the research of 3) interaction between consumer’s gender and product’s gender, Alreck et al. (1982) mentioned that men were more likely to try and use a masculine brand, and women were more likely to try and use a feminine brand. They also explained that females accepted masculine brands, while males did not accept feminine brands. In summary, research in these areas has found a product’s gender and
endorser’s gender may be influential factors on consumer attitude and behavior toward a product.

This study focused on the primary research question as to whether male athletes can credibly endorse women’s sports products (athletic shoes). Previous research revealed that male athletes were more identified than female athletes (Peetz et al., 2004; Stotlar et al., 1998). Moreover, famous male athletes were recognized as more expert than female endorsers (famous and less famous) by men and women subjects (Peetz et al., 2004). Regarding intentions to purchase products endorsed by athletes, women subjects did not demonstrate a preference for female or male endorsers, but male subjects were more likely to purchase products endorsed by male endorsers 2.51 times over female endorsers (Peetz et al., 2004). Based on these findings, it was considered that male athlete endorsers might have an advantage compared with female athlete endorsers.

**Discussion of findings**

**Perceptions toward Male versus Female Endorsers’ Expertise in Male and Female Subjects Groups, Respectively**

The findings revealed that male subjects recognized the male tennis endorser as having more expertise than the female tennis endorser. There were no significant differences for basketball and soccer. Andre Agassi’s expertise score was comparable to the expertise scores of the other endorsers, while Maria Sharapova’s expertise score was notably lower compared to the other female athlete endorsers. Considering Ms. Sharapova’s attractiveness score among male respondents, and based on existing endorsement opportunities, it seems that Ms. Sharapova is sought after to represent products not necessarily in relation to her tennis expertise but because of her beauty. Considering that there was no significant difference in perceptions of the male and female endorsers’ expertise among female subjects, there is a question as to whether a female tennis athlete’s attractiveness reduces her perceived expertise among males. It is possible that female tennis athletes must overcome a type of “Kournikova effect.” Anna Kournikova was a top female tennis player; in 2000 she was ranked No. 8 in the Women’s Tennis Association (WTA). She is remembered more, however, for her
long-blonde hair and physical beauty. Ms. Kournikova experienced more success off the court through endorsement work than she did on the court. A question for future research is whether female tennis athletes that are attractive must work even harder to be regarded as experts, even when they have had professional success, because of previous players that have been noted more for beauty than expertise.

These results contradict the findings of Peetz and his colleagues (2004) who found that famous male athletes were recognized as more expert than female endorsers (famous and less famous) by male and female subjects, with the exception of female tennis endorsers. One possible reason for this contradiction may be that in the current study each endorser’s expertise was highlighted in the respective advertisements, and each endorser was arguably a recognized star. All of the endorsers included in this study have outstanding abilities and achievements in their field. Therefore, the endorsers might obtain relatively high scores regardless of their gender.

**Perceptions toward Male versus Female Endorsers’ Trustworthiness in Male and Female Subjects Groups, Respectively**

The results indicated that male subjects perceived the female soccer athlete as having more trustworthiness than the male athlete. There were no significant differences for basketball or tennis endorsers among male respondents. Female subjects also perceived the female soccer athlete as having more trustworthiness than the male athlete. There were no significant differences for basketball or tennis endorsers among female respondents. With female subjects in particular, Mia Hamm’s trustworthiness score was extremely high compared to the other male and female endorsers’ scores. Female subjects also rated Ms. Hamm’s expertise higher than other endorsers. The female soccer endorser seems special to female subjects. One reason for this may be that Ms. Hamm is a top world female athlete of whom America is proud. On the other hand, David Beckham’s trustworthiness score, along with the scores for the tennis male and female endorsers, was low. This result may be influenced by Mr. Beckham’s nationality, gossips about the private life of him, or due to a general lack of interest in soccer in the U.S.
Perceptions toward Male versus Female Endorsers’ Attractiveness in Male and Female Subjects Groups, Respectively

The findings revealed that male subjects rated female soccer and tennis athletes as more attractive than male soccer and tennis athletes. The male basketball athlete was rated as more attractive than the female basketball athlete by male respondents. Females, on the other hand, rated the male soccer athlete as more attractive than the female soccer athlete. For basketball and tennis, there were no significant differences in female subjects’ attractiveness ratings. These results showed that whenever subjects differently assessed male and female subjects’ attractiveness, opposite sex endorsers were more attractive than same sex endorsers for both male and female subjects. One possible reason that Michael Jordan was rated as more attractive than Sheryl Swoopes may be Ms. Swoopes’s sexuality. Her attractiveness score was indeed notably low compared to the other five athletes across male and female subjects. With tennis athletes, although female subjects highly assessed Mr. Agassi’s attractiveness, they recognized Ms. Sharapova as being more attractive than Mr. Agassi.

Attitude toward Advertisements, Products, and Purchase Intentions in Male Subjects Group

Male subjects did not show any significant differences in their attitudes toward advertisements and products endorsed by male versus female athletes, and there were no significant differences in their intentions to purchase those products. That is, endorser’s gender did not influence male subjects’ attitudes toward an advertisement and product, and purchase intention.

These results were in line with Carsky and Zuckerman’s research (1991), which found no differences in the believability, persuasiveness, likelihood of use/purchase, or attitude toward the ad associated with the gender of the endorser (products were non-gendered products), and Freiden’s research (1984) finding that the endorser’s gender did not affect consumers’ attitude toward advertisement (non-gendered durable product). The results of the current study, however, contradicted previous findings of research examining the endorsement of sports-related products by athlete endorsers. Peetz and his colleagues (2004) found that male respondents were influenced 2.51 times more by male
athlete endorsers compared to female athlete endorsers with respect to intention to purchase sports related products. This contradiction might be due to three factors. In Peetz et al.’s research (2004), first, the female athlete endorsers’ recognition was lower than those of male endorsers. Second, the female endorsers were not perceived as more expert than male endorsers because expertise was not manipulated. Third, products endorsed by the athletes were different depending on the athletes. That is, subjects’ purchase intentions may vary according to the product. In the current study, subjects who failed to recognize the endorsers included in the questionnaires were eliminated, and endorsers’ expertise was manipulated by highlighting endorser’s expertise in the respective advertisement. Thus, because of recognition and respect toward female endorsers, male subjects in this study may have showed their intention to purchase female athlete endorsers’ products as well as male endorsers’ products.

**Attitude toward Advertisements, Products, and Purchase Intentions in Female Subjects Group**

Female subjects did not show any significant differences in their attitude toward advertisements and products endorsed by male versus female athletes. That is, endorser’s gender did not influence female subjects’ attitude toward an advertisement and product.

These results were in line with Carsky and Zuckerman (1991) and Freiden’s (1984) research that there were no differences in the believability, persuasiveness, likelihood of use/purchase, or attitude toward the ad associated with the gender of the endorser. Tom et al. (1992), on the other hand, found that female endorsers influenced female (same sex) TV audiences. Kanungo and Pang (1973) found that the consistency between a product’s gender and an endorser’s gender enhanced perceived product quality and consumers’ favorable attitude toward a product. If their findings were applied to this study, the products endorsed by male endorsers would have had higher scores in subjects’ attitude than the products endorsed by female endorsers, because athletic shoes were recognized as masculine products in the pre-test. The reason for these contradictions in the current study’s results may be explained by the match-up effect between the product’s attribute and the endorser’s expertise. If subjects qualify an athlete as an endorser of athletic shoes regardless of the endorser’s gender, the match-up may more strongly
influence subjects’ attitudes toward an advertisement and product than the consistency between endorser and consumer gender or product and endorser gender.

Regarding purchase intention, female subjects reported their intention to purchase the tennis shoes endorsed by the male (opposite sex) athlete more than shoes endorsed by the female (same sex) athlete. In basketball and soccer, there were no significant differences between the male and female athlete.

Alreck et al. (1982) explained that although women were likely to try and use feminine brands, they also accepted masculine brands. The results of this study, however, indicated that the product endorsed by a male tennis athlete fueled female subjects’ buying intention more than a product endorsed by a female tennis athlete. For tennis endorsers, there were no endorsers’ gender differences in the other five factors (expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness, advertisement, and product). In order to appreciate the reason why the product endorsed by the male athlete had an advantage, analyzing a correlation to the other factors will be needed. With basketball and soccer, endorsers’ gender did not influence female subjects’ purchase intentions. The results were in line with Peetz et al.’s finding (2004) that female participants did not show different purchase intentions toward the products endorsed by male or female athletes.

**Male versus Female Subjects’ Perceptions toward Endorsers’ Expertise**

Male and female subjects’ perceptions of the athlete endorsers’ expertise were not significantly different. For example, Mr. Jordan’s expertise was not differently evaluated by male and female subjects. That is, male and female subjects have the same criterion in assessing an athlete’s expertise, when they recognize and appreciate athlete’s achievement in her or his field.

**Male versus Female Subjects’ Perceptions toward Endorsers’ Trustworthiness**

Male and female subjects’ perceptions of the athlete endorsers’ trustworthiness were not significantly different. The average perception of Ms. Hamm’s trustworthiness was, however, considerably higher for both male and female subjects than their perception of Mr. Beckham’s trustworthiness.
Male versus Female Subjects’ Perceptions toward Endorsers’ Attractiveness

Male subjects rated Ms. Sharapova as more attractive than did female subjects. Female subjects, on the other hand, rated Mr. Beckham and Mr. Agassi as more attractive than did male subjects. Male and female subjects did not differently perceive endorsers’ attractiveness of Mr. Jordan, Ms. Swoopes, and Ms. Hamm. Considering these data, the endorser’s attractiveness may tend to be highly evaluated by opposite sex subjects. Further, if an endorser’s attractiveness is not highly assessed by an opposite sex subject, her or his attractiveness may be equally evaluated by both sex subjects.

Recommendations for Future Research

The interesting finding of this study was that female subjects had stronger purchase intentions toward the tennis shoes endorsed by a male athlete than shoes endorsed by a female athlete. Female subjects, however, did not demonstrate any meaningful differences in their attitudes toward advertisements and products endorsed by female (same sex) versus male (opposite sex) endorsers.

Future research should focus on how an advertisement for sports products impacts consumer purchase intentions. Lafferty et al. (2002) found that consumer attitudes toward an advertisement positively and directly influence purchase intention. For future research, scales measuring attitude toward an advertisement and product should incorporate other factors in addition to the scales used by this study and the research of Lafferty et al’ (2002) in order to examine advertisement’s impact. This study used three bipolar adjective scales: good/bad, favorable/unfavorable, and pleasant/unpleasant. All of them were affective factors. Adding cognitive factors to those affective factors such as high quality/poor quality, informative/uninformative, and believable/unbelievable may be helpful in understanding the interaction between an advertisement and a purchase intention, and the reason why male endorsers’ endorsements were scored higher than female endorsers’ endorsements in female subjects’ purchase intentions for tennis shoes.

The other interesting finding was that, unlike Peetz et al.’s study (2004), an endorser’s gender did not influence male subjects’ attitude toward an advertisement and product, and purchase intention. Degree of subjects’ recognition to endorsers and degree
of subjects’ perception of expertise toward female subjects were considered as reasons for this contradiction. Therefore, in order to examine the influence of subjects’ recognition of an endorser and the impact of the endorser’s profile included in advertisement, future studies should include persons who do not know the endorser in an advertisement and should use advertisement without the endorser’s profile. Further, correlation to those factors should be analyzed.

This study should also be replicated by using another sample. All the subjects of this study were not necessarily target consumers for basketball, soccer, and tennis shoes. Of the total number of people who answered the questionnaire, 34.9% played the sport which was the subject of the questionnaire. Thus, the remaining of 65.1% of subjects had to hypothetically answer the questions of whether they would purchase the shoes if they played the sport. For future research, actual consumers playing the sport related to an advertised product should be set as subjects.

Another recommendation includes replicating this study using multiple advertising mediums such as TV commercials, magazine advertisements, and radio ads. Leong, Huang, and Stanners (1998) showed the perceptual mapping of marketing media and their attributes. The map categorized TV as emotional long-term objective, magazine as rational long-term objective, and radio as emotional short-term objective. Those media attributes (especially emotional or rational factors) may influence a study examining impact of endorser’s gender. In addition, advertising mediums may be compared by either visual advertisements (TV commercial and magazine advertisement) or only auditory advertisement (radio).

Limitations of the current investigation

Limitations of the current study included restricting the sample to the students at the SE state university. Thus, this study cannot be generalized beyond the university students who participated in the survey during the summer semester. Atkin and Block (1983) found that while older subjects did not show a significant difference in product image when a celebrity versus non-celebrity endorsed a product, younger subjects evaluated significantly more positively to the product endorsed by the celebrity.
Especially regarding celebrity athlete endorsers, young consumers could be expected to highly recognize professional athletes. Thus, marketers have tried to promote athletic products toward young consumers by athlete endorsements (Stotlar et al., 1998). Veltri et al. (2003), however, found that although the 10 to 14-year-old consumer group was more likely to be influenced by an athlete endorser for purchasing athletic products, the 15 to 18 and 19 to 34-year-old consumer groups were not influenced in their purchase decision process by athlete endorsers; that is, the impact of celebrity athlete endorsement seems to differ even among the young generation.

A second limitation was the nature of products used by the survey questionnaires. The products were fictional and made just for this study. It is not clear how the subjects’ attitudes and purchase intentions were influenced by factors not related to the celebrity athlete endorsers such as their taste in athletic shoes.

A third limitation was the influence of multiple product endorsements. Tripp et al. (1994) found that “As the number of products endorsed increases, consumers’ perceptions of celebrity credibility, celebrity likeability and attitude toward the ad become less favorable” (p. 535). Each endorser shown in the survey questionnaires have endorsement deals with many companies. Thus, male endorsers’ advertisements and their credibility may be more poorly influenced by multiple product endorsements than female endorsers.

The final limitation was deficiency of previous research related to celebrity athlete endorsement in the sports realm. Celebrity athlete endorsement of sports-related products may be different from other celebrities, such as actors and actresses, and from other non-gendered products’ research, because celebrity athletes are not only celebrity but have expertise with sports-related products. In addition, those products seem to be gendered products, and sports has a male-dominated history. Thus, future research may be needed to support this study.
Conclusion

This study examined the impact of the gender of celebrity athlete endorsers on consumers of athletic shoes. The primary research question was whether male athletes can credibly endorse women’s sports products. The author hypothesized that male athletes endorsing women’s sports products would be more advantageous for a product than using a female athlete as an endorser. The findings related subjects’ perceptions toward endorsers’ credibility showed that 1) male subjects recognized the male tennis endorser as having more expertise than the female tennis endorser; 2) both male and female subjects perceived the female soccer athlete as having more trustworthiness than the male athlete; and 3) male subjects rated female soccer and tennis athletes as more attractive than male soccer and tennis athletes. The male basketball athlete was rated as more attractive than the female basketball athlete by male respondents. Females, on the other hand, rated the male soccer athlete as more attractive than the female soccer athlete. In addition, comparing male and female subjects’ perception toward endorsers’ credibility revealed that male and female subjects might have the same criterion in assessing athlete’s expertise and trustworthiness, when they recognize and appreciate the athlete’s achievement in her or his field. Regarding attractiveness, it revealed that the endorser’s attractiveness might tend to be highly evaluated by opposite sex subjects. Further, if an endorser’s attractiveness is not highly assessed by an opposite sex subject, her or his attractiveness may be equally evaluated by both sex subjects.

The findings related to subjects’ attitudes toward advertisements and products and consumers’ purchase intentions from the current study showed that only female subjects expressed their intention to purchase the tennis shoes endorsed by the male (opposite sex) athlete more than shoes endorsed by the female (same sex) athlete. As for the rest, endorser’s gender did not influence male and female subjects’ attitudes toward advertisements and products and subjects’ purchases.

In conclusion, regarding advertisement of athletic shoes (basketball, soccer, and tennis shoes), athlete endorser’s gender did not have an impact on subjects’ attitudes except for female tennis shoes. That is, although there was an exception, both male and female athletes showed the ability to be able to endorse male and female athletic shoes
(same and opposite sex products). In the current study, subjects’ recognition of the endorsers and endorsers’ expertise were manipulated. Also, only three types of shoes and some endorsers were examined. Thus, a future study which does not manipulate any factors and which uses many types of shoes and endorsers may help to appreciate the impact of gender of athlete endorsers. The current study is a fundamental study for examining the gender impact of celebrity athlete endorsers.
APPENDIX A

Survey Questionnaire for Pre-Test

Pre-test

Questionnaire for categorization of sports products and celebrity selection
by Yuko Sawatari

The following survey is a pre-test for a larger study examining consumers’ perceptions of celebrity athlete endorsers’ credibility (expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness), and the impact of an endorser’s credibility on a consumer’s attitude toward advertising, attitude toward a product, and on purchase intention.

The purpose of the pre-test is to develop a list of celebrity endorsers from respective sports, and to ascertain how particular products are perceived by consumers.

All responses will be kept confidential by the researcher and no individual’s name will be associated with any particular survey form.

Thank you for participating.

Directions
Please read each question carefully and respond to all of the items.
We are interested in what athletes come to mind when you think about different professional sports. For each sport listed below, write in the name(s) of the male and female athletes (incl. retired) you associate with each sport. If you cannot think of an athlete (male or female) for a particular sport, leave the lines blank.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Male athlete</th>
<th>Female athlete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>1.  1.  2.  2.  3.  3.  4.  4.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>1.  1.  2.  2.  3.  3.  4.  4.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>1.  1.  2.  2.  3.  3.  4.  4.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Categorization of sports products

Please read the following statements and rate the extent to which you associate gender with athletic shoes. Think of each statement beginning with the following phrase.

I think athletic shoes…
1. **used primarily for casual wear are**...  
   | Extremely masculine | Moderately masculine | Slightly masculine | Neutral | Slightly feminine | Moderately feminine | Extremely feminine |
   | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
2. **worn primarily for playing sports are**...  
   | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Demographic information

Please check or write in the appropriate response for each of the following items.

1. Sex: _____ Male  _____ Female
2. Age: _____
3. Race: _____ Caucasian  _____ African American  _____ Hispanic  _____ Native American  _____ Asian/Pacific Island  _____ Other
4. How often do you participate in sports in an average week? _____ / a week
5. What sports do you currently play? ________________________________
6. What organized sports (e.g., community league, high school, college) have you played in the past? ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
APPENDIX B

Human Subjects Approval Letter
APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 6/14/2006

To: Yuko Sawatari
535 A West Carolina Street
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Dept.: SPORT MANAGEMENT/PHYSICAL ED.

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research
The Impacts of Gender of Celebrity Athlete Endorser on Consumers of Athletic Shoes

The forms that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Secretary, the Chair, and two members of the Human Subjects Committee. Your project is determined to be Exempt per 45 CFR § 46.101(b) 2 and has been approved by an accelerated review process.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be required.

If the project has not been completed by 6/13/2007 you must request renewed approval for continuation of the project.

You are advised that any change in protocol in this project must be approved by resubmission of the project to the Committee for approval. Also, the principal investigator must promptly report, in writing, any unexpected problems causing risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the chairman of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols of such investigations as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Protection from Research Risks. The Assurance Number is IRB00000446.

Cc: Jeffrey James
HSC No. 2006.0494
Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Jeffrey James in the Department of Sport Management, Recreation Management, and Physical Education at Florida State University. As part of my thesis, I am conducting a research study to examine the influences of celebrity athlete endorsers on consumers’ attitude toward advertisings and attitude toward products, and on purchase intention.

This letter is a request for your participation, which will involve filling out a questionnaire. You will be asked to rate your agreement or disagreement with a variety of statements. Please respond to each item. It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time there will be no penalty, it will not affect your grade in this class. The questionnaire is anonymous. The results of the study may be published but your name will not be known.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please call Dr. James at (850) 644-9214 or email him at james@coe.fsu.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research to, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Committee, Institutional Review Board, through the Vice President for the Office of Research at (850) 644-8633.

Return of the questionnaire will be considered your consent to participate. Thank you for your assistance. Your cooperation helps my study of celebrity athlete endorsement.

Sincerely,

Yuko Sawatari

Sincerely,

Jeffrey D. James
Associate Professor
**Demographics:**

Please check or write in the appropriate response for each of the following items.

1. Sex: _____ Male _____ Female

2. Race: _____ Caucasian _____ African-American _____ American Indian _____ Hispanic _____ Asian/Pacific Islander _____ Other (specify) ____________________________

3. Age: _____

4. How many days do you participate in sports in an average week? _____ / a week

5. What sports do your currently play? ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________

6. What organized sports have you played in the past?
   . College:________________________________________________________________
   . High school: _________________________________________________________
   Community league: _____________________________________________________
   Others: _________________________________________________________________

Please check in the appropriate response for each of the following items.

1. I know who Michael Jordan is. _____ Yes / _____ No

2. I know who Andre Agassi is. _____ Yes / _____ No

Please read the following advertisement as if you are seeing them in a magazine, then respond to the questions on the pages following the advertisement.
Michael Jordan is a former basketball player. He ended an NBA career of 15 seasons with a regular-season scoring average of 30.12 points per game, the highest in NBA history. He won six NBA Finals MVP awards, 10 scoring titles, and was league MVP five times.
Questions related to the advertising on previous page:

For each pair of terms listed below, please an “X” on the line between each set of terms that best reflects your thoughts about Michael Jordan. Feel free to look back at the advertisement.

**Michael Jordan is:**

1. Not expert :: Expert
2. Not dependable :: Dependable
3. Unattractive :: Attractive
4. Not experienced :: Experienced
5. Dishonest :: Honest
6. Not classy :: Classy
7. Unknowledgeable :: Knowledgeable
8. Unreliable :: Reliable
9. Ugly :: Beautiful
10. Unqualified :: Qualified
11. Insincere :: Sincere
12. Plain :: Elegant
13. Unskilled :: Skilled
14. Not trustworthy :: Trustworthy
15. Not sexy :: Sexy
Thinking about the advertisement you just saw, please place an “X” on the appropriate line between each set of terms below that best reflect your thoughts. Feel free to look back at the advertisement.

**The advertisement is:**

16. Bad  
    
    
    
    Good

17. Unpleasant  
    
    
    
    Pleasant

18. Unfavorable  
    
    
    
    Favorable

Thinking about the specific basketball shoes endorsed by Michael Jordan in the advertisement you just saw, please place an “X” on the appropriate line between each set of terms below that best reflect your thoughts about the shoes. Feel free to look back at the advertisement.

**The product is:**

19. Bad  
    
    
    
    Good

20. Unpleasant  
    
    
    
    Pleasant

21. Unfavorable  
    
    
    
    Favorable

For each item below, please place an “X” on the appropriate line that best reflects your intentions. Feel free to look back at the advertisement.

**As a basketball player, …**

22. Would you like to try a pair of “Challenge shoes”?
    No, definitely not  
    Yes, definitely

23. Would you buy a pair of “Challenge shoes” if you saw them in a store?
    No, definitely not  
    Yes, definitely

24. Would you actively seek out “Challenge shoes” in a store in order to purchase a pair of basketball shoes?
    No, definitely not  
    Yes, definitely
Andre Agassi is a former World No. 1 professional tennis player. He has played on the professional tour for 20 years. He has won eight Grand Slam singles titles and is one of only five players to have won all four Grand Slam events.
Questions related to the advertising on previous page:

For each pair of terms listed below, please an “X” on the line between each set of terms that best reflects your thoughts about Andre Agassi. Feel free to look back at the advertisement.

Andre Agassi is:

1. Not expert : Expert
2. Not dependable : Dependable
3. Unattractive : Attractive
4. Not experienced : Experienced
5. Dishonest : Honest
6. Not classy : Classy
7. Unknowledgeable : Knowledgeable
8. Unreliable : Reliable
9. Ugly : Beautiful
10. Unqualified : Qualified
11. Insincere : Sincere
12. Plain : Elegant
13. Unskilled : Skilled
14. Not trustworthy : Trustworthy
15. Not sexy : Sexy
Thinking about the advertisement you just saw, please place an “X” on the appropriate line between each set of terms below that best reflect your thoughts. Feel free to look back at the advertisement.

**The advertisement is:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bad</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16. Bad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Unpleasant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Unfavorable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thinking about the specific tennis shoes endorsed by Andre Agassi in the advertisement you just saw, please place an “X” on the appropriate line between each set of terms below that best reflect your thoughts about the shoes. Feel free to look back at the advertisement.

**The product is:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bad</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19. Bad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Unpleasant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Unfavorable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each item below, please place an “X” on the appropriate line that best reflects your intentions. Feel free to look back at the advertisement.

**As a tennis player, ...**

22. Would you like to try a pair of “Challenge shoes”?
   - No, definitely not   |   |
   - Yes, definitely   |   |

23. Would you buy a pair of “Challenge shoes” if you saw them in a store?
   - No, definitely not   |   |
   - Yes, definitely   |   |

24. Would you actively seek out “Challenge shoes” in a store in order to purchase a pair of tennis shoes?
   - No, definitely not   |   |
   - Yes, definitely   |   |
REFERENCES


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Yuko Sawatari was born and raised in Tokyo, Japan. She received her Bachelor’s degree in physical education from Tamagawa University. Prior to beginning the Master’s program in Sport Management at Florida State University in 2004, she worked as a Customer Service Representative and subsequently engaged in business planning for footwear sales at Reebok Japan Inc. for three years. She then joined Salomon & TaylorMade Co., Ltd. and worked in the marketing department for two years. Yuko hopes to pursue a Doctoral degree in Sport Administration at Florida State University.