THE INFLUENCE OF SELECTED ANTECEDENTS ON ATHLETE ENDORSER CREDIBILITY, ATTITUDE TOWARDS AN ADVERTISEMENT AND PURCHASE INTENTIONS

by

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DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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The responsibility of implementing the recommended language changes rests with the author of the dissertation.

Yours truly,

Linda Scott
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ABSTRACT

Keywords: celebrity endorsement, athlete-endorser, credibility, attitude, purchase intentions

Given the pervasive use of celebrity endorsements and the high costs involved in this marketing strategy, it is important for marketers to have knowledge of the right set of procedures to follow in selecting an ambassador to market their products. This study draws from the undertones of Ohanian’s (1990:46) Source attributes theory, comprising elements of the Source credibility theory as well as the Source attractiveness theory. Whereas the former (trustworthiness and expertise) influences consumer attitudes and behaviour through a process called internalisation, the latter (attractiveness) influences receivers of marketing communication messages through a process called identification. The theory is useful when applied during the initial phase of selecting which celebrity to use to endorse products, to avoid costly mistakes of choosing celebrities that do not possess the right set of attributes for persuading consumers. The purpose of this study was to apply the Source attributes theory in understanding the key attributes towards consumers’ evaluations of the credibility of an athlete-celebrity endorser. Moreover, the influence of athlete endorser credibility on consumers’ attitudes and purchase intentions towards the celebrity endorsed advertisement.

A quantitative study comprising a non-probability snowball sample of 456 consumers was conducted in 2016, in and around the five major towns of Southern Gauteng province in South Africa. The structured-self administered questionnaire requested participants to indicate their perceptions regarding the attributes of nominated athlete-celebrity, namely, trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness in endorsing the selected product. In addition, the questionnaire related to consumers’ evaluations of the credibility of the selected athlete-celebrity, consumers’ attitude towards the advertisement where the athlete-celebrity appears and purchase intentions towards the endorsed product.

Findings from the study indicated that South African consumers have positive perceptions of the selected athlete-celebrity’s trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness. In addition, the measurement model was verified using statistical accuracy tests, thereby confirming that the purchase intentions model was a six-factor structure comprising trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, endorser credibility, attitude towards the advertisement and purchase intentions. The results of both the confirmatory factor analysis and the structural equation modelling suggest that the three dimensions are valid measures of the overall credibility of the athlete-endorser ($R^2=0.60$). This finding provided support for the scale developed by Ohanian (1990) to be a valid
measure for selecting celebrity endorsers when applied in South Africa. Moreover, the structural model validated the existence of significant, direct impacts of athlete-endorser credibility on attitude towards the advertisement (path estimate=0.704) and attitude towards the advertisement on purchase intentions (path estimate=0.741).

Insights gained from this study will assist both marketing academics and practitioners to understand the perceptions of consumers towards the use of athlete-celebrities in product promotions in the South African market. In this regard, if a determination is made that a celebrity could enhance the marketing campaign, marketers should determine to what extent the celebrity should be used. The correct use of the right celebrity, selected in line with these findings, can help ensure greater consumer persuasion.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ................................................................................................................................. ii
LETTER FROM THE LANGUAGE EDITOR ...................................................................................... iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ................................................................................................................ iv
ABSTRACT ........................................................................................................................................ v
TABLE OF CONTENTS ................................................................................................................... vii
LIST OF TABLES ............................................................................................................................ xv
LIST OF FIGURES ............................................................................................................................ xvi

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY ................................. 1
1.1 INTRODUCTION ....................................................................................................................... 1
1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY ............................................................................................... 2
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT ........................................................................................................... 4
1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES ....................................................................................................... 5
  1.4.1 Primary objective ............................................................................................................... 5
  1.4.2 Theoretical objectives .................................................................................................... 5
  1.4.3 Empirical objectives ...................................................................................................... 5
1.5 HYPOTHESES FOR THE STUDY ........................................................................................... 6
1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY .................................................................... 7
  1.6.1 Literature review ......................................................................................................... 7
  1.6.2 The empirical study ..................................................................................................... 7
    1.6.2.1 Target population .................................................................................................... 7
    1.6.2.2 Sampling frame ....................................................................................................... 8
    1.6.2.3 Sampling method ................................................................................................... 8
    1.6.2.4 Sample size ............................................................................................................ 8
    1.6.2.5 Method of data collection and measuring instrument ........................................... 8
1.7 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS ........................................................................................................ 9
1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS ................................................................. 10
1.9 CLARIFICATION OF TERMINOLOGY .................................................. 10
1.10 GENERAL ............................................................................................ 11
1.11 DISSERTATION OUTLINE ................................................................. 11
1.12 SYNOPSIS ........................................................................................... 12

CHAPTER 2 CELEBRITY ENDORSERS’ CREDIBILITY .................................. 13

2.1 INTRODUCTION ................................................................................... 13
2.2 THE BASIC COMMUNICATION PROCESS .......................................... 14
2.3 THE MARKETING COMMUNICATION PROCESS .............................. 15
  2.3.1 Marketing communication source ................................................ 16
  2.3.2 Marketing communication message ............................................ 16
  2.3.3 Marketing communication channel ............................................ 17
  2.3.4 Marketing communication receiver ............................................ 18
  2.3.5 Marketing communication feedback .......................................... 18
2.4 VARIABLES INFLUENCING PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATION .......... 19
  2.4.1 Source variables ........................................................................... 20
    2.4.1.1 Credibility .............................................................................. 20
    2.4.1.2 Attractiveness ...................................................................... 21
    2.4.1.3 Power .................................................................................. 21
  2.4.2 Message variables ........................................................................ 22
  2.4.3 Channel variables ........................................................................ 22
  2.4.4 Receiver variables ....................................................................... 22
2.5 OVERVIEW OF THE ENDORSEMENT PROCESS ............................. 23
2.6 TYPES OF PRODUCT ENDORSERS .................................................... 24
  2.6.1 Regular consumer endorsers ....................................................... 24
  2.6.2 Expert endorsers .......................................................................... 25
  2.6.3 Celebrity endorsers ...................................................................... 25
3.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY .................................................................58
  3.2.1 Interpretivist research philosophy .............................................58
  3.2.2 Positivist research philosophy ..................................................59
3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH .................................................................59
  3.3.1 Inductive theory building .........................................................59
  3.3.2 Deductive theory building .......................................................60
3.4 RESEARCH STRATEGY .................................................................60
3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN .......................................................................62
  3.5.1 Exploratory research .................................................................62
  3.5.2 Descriptive research .................................................................62
  3.5.3 Causal research .......................................................................63
3.6 SAMPLING DESIGN PROCEDURE .................................................64
  3.6.1 Target population .....................................................................64
  3.6.2 Sampling frame .........................................................................64
  3.6.3 Sampling method .......................................................................65
  3.6.4 Sample size ...............................................................................66
  3.6.5 Selection of the sample elements .................................................67
  3.6.6 Data collection ...........................................................................68
    3.6.6.1 Secondary data collection .....................................................68
    3.6.6.2 Primary data collection .........................................................68
3.7 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN ..............................................................69
  3.7.1 Questionnaire structure .............................................................69
  3.7.2 Questionnaire format and content ..............................................70
  3.7.3 Exploratory phase for the selection of an athlete-celebrity endorser ..................................................................................72
  3.7.4 The selected athlete-celebrity endorser for this study .......................73
  3.7.5 Pre-testing the questionnaire ......................................................75
  3.7.6 Pilot study ..................................................................................75
  3.7.7 Fieldwork administration ............................................................76
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.7.8</td>
<td>Ethical considerations</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7.8.1</td>
<td>Participants should not be harmed</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7.8.2</td>
<td>Participants should not be deceived</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7.8.3</td>
<td>Participants should be willing and informed</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7.8.4</td>
<td>Data should be held in confidence</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7.9</td>
<td>Response rate</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>DATA PREPARATION</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8.1</td>
<td>Data editing</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8.2</td>
<td>Data coding</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8.3</td>
<td>Data capturing</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8.4</td>
<td>Data cleaning</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>STATISTICAL ANALYSIS</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.1</td>
<td>Frequency distributions</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.2</td>
<td>Tabulation</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.3</td>
<td>Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.3.1</td>
<td>Formulate the problem</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.3.2</td>
<td>Construct the correlation matrix</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.3.3</td>
<td>Determine the method of EFA</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.3.4</td>
<td>Determine the number of factors</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.3.5</td>
<td>Rotate the factors</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.3.6</td>
<td>Interpret the factors</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.4</td>
<td>Reliability assessment</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.5</td>
<td>Descriptive statistics</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.5.1</td>
<td>Measures of central tendency</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.5.2</td>
<td>Measures of variability</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.5.3</td>
<td>Measures of shape</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.6</td>
<td>Correlation analysis</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.7</td>
<td>Multicollinearity assessment</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.8</td>
<td>Validity assessment</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.8.1</td>
<td>Face and content validity</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.8.2</td>
<td>Construct validity</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING (SEM)</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10.1</td>
<td>The measurement model</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10.1.1</td>
<td>Model fit criteria</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10.1.2</td>
<td>Confirmatory factor analysis</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10.1.3</td>
<td>Analysis of the statistical accuracy of the measurement model</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10.2</td>
<td>The structural model</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>SYNOPSIS</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>PILOT TEST RESULTS</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>DATA GATHERING PROCESS</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>PRELIMINARY DATA ANALYSIS</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.1</td>
<td>Data editing and cleaning</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.2</td>
<td>Data coding</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.3</td>
<td>Tabulation of variables</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE AND PRODUCT PURCHASE INFORMATION</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.1</td>
<td>Sample composition</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.2</td>
<td>Purchase information for Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS (EFA)</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>RELIABILITY ANALYSIS</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>CORRELATION ANALYSIS AND MULTICOLLINEARITY TESTING</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>MEASUREMENT MODEL ANALYSIS</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.10.1 Fit indices for the measurement model ................................................................. 119
4.10.2 CFA results for the measurement model ............................................................... 120
4.10.3 Measures of the statistical accuracy of the measurement model ......................... 121
  4.10.3.1 Reliability assessment of the measurement model ................................................. 121
  4.10.3.2 Convergent validity assessment of the measurement model ............................... 122
  4.10.3.3 Discriminant validity assessment of the measurement model ............................. 123
  4.10.3.4 Nomological validity assessment of the measurement model ............................. 123
4.11 STRUCTURAL MODEL ANALYSIS ............................................................................. 124
4.12 DISCUSSION ............................................................................................................. 126
4.13 SYNOPSIS ............................................................................................................... 128

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STUDY .......... 131
5.1 INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................ 131
5.2 ACHIEVEMENT OF THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES .............................................. 132
  5.2.1 Evaluation of the theoretical objectives .................................................................. 132
  5.2.2 Evaluation of the empirical objectives .................................................................. 133
5.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY .............................................................................. 138
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STUDY ............................................................... 138
  5.4.1 Emphasise trustworthiness as a core attribute for product endorsers .................... 138
  5.4.2 Emphasise expertise as a core attribute for product endorsers ............................... 139
  5.4.3 Emphasise attractiveness as a core attribute for product endorsers ....................... 139
  5.4.4 Employ celebrity brokers ..................................................................................... 139
  5.4.5 Enforce single-endorsement deals with product endorsers .................................... 140
  5.4.6 Prioritise endorsement contract deals with local product endorsers ....................... 140
  5.4.7 Apply novel ‘touch-points’ to evoke positive and lasting attitudes towards
         celebrity-endorsed products ...................................................................................... 140
5.5 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH .............................................................. 141
5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS ......................................................................................... 142
LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: Top 10 highest-paid athlete endorsers in the world in 2015 (Weber 2015:1) 29
Table 2.2: Studies applying the dimensions of the Source attributes theory .................. 49
Table 3.1: Sample size determination using the historical evidence approach................. 67
Table 3.2: Results of the exploratory phase for the selection of an athlete-celebrity endorser..................................................................................................................72
Table 3.3: Summary of model fit indices (Malhotra 2010:732-733)...............................89
Table 4.1: Summary of the pilot test results........................................................................96
Table 4.2: Data cleaning using SPSS-data sort cases....................................................98
Table 4.3: Data coding at the main survey......................................................................98
Table 4.4: Frequency table of responses.........................................................................100
Table 4.5: Rotation sums of squared loadings..............................................................109
Table 4.6: Rotated component matrix............................................................................110
Table 4.7: Reliability analysis results at the main survey...........................................112
Table 4.8: Descriptive statistical analysis results at the main survey..........................113
Table 4.9: Correlation analysis results...........................................................................116
Table 4.10: Measurement model fit indices...............................................................119
Table 4.11: Standardised coefficients of the measurement model.............................120
Table 4.12: Reliability and validity results for the measurement model......................122
Table 4.13: Structural model fit indices and hypotheses testing results.......................126
| Figure 2.1: | The basic communication process (Schiffman et al. 2014:224) | 14 |
| Figure 2.2: | Variables influencing persuasive communication (Koekemoer 2012:37) | 20 |
| Figure 2.3: | Classification of celebrity endorsement theories | 38 |
| Figure 2.4: | The Elaboration likelihood model (Griffin 2009:194) | 39 |
| Figure 2.5: | The Meaning transfer model (McCracken 1989:315) | 41 |
| Figure 2.6: | Dimensions of the Source attributes theory (Ohanian 1990:46) | 46 |
| Figure 2.7: | Model of consumers’ purchase intentions towards an athlete-celebrity endorsed product | 52 |
| Figure 3.1: | The research onion (Saunders et al. 2009:108) | 57 |
| Figure 3.2: | A.B De Villiers: Product endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips | 73 |
| Figure 4.1: | Participants’ gender | 101 |
| Figure 4.2: | Participants’ age | 102 |
| Figure 4.3: | Participants’ ethnic group | 103 |
| Figure 4.4: | Participants’ language | 103 |
| Figure 4.5: | Participants’ marital status | 104 |
| Figure 4.6: | Participants’ highest educational qualification | 105 |
| Figure 4.7: | Participants’ monthly income | 106 |
| Figure 4.8: | Frequency of product purchase | 107 |
| Figure 4.9: | Preferred media for accessing the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement | 108 |
| Figure 4.10: | Scree plot | 110 |
| Figure 4.11: | Measurement model | 118 |
| Figure 4.12: | Structural model | 125 |
"A celebrity is an advertiser’s canvas”

(Mokokoma Mokhonoana)

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Globally, marketing firms seek different ways to capture their audiences and deliver a positive image in the minds of consumers (Sertoglu, Catli & Korkmaz 2014:68). In this regard, firms use marketing communication to transfer coded messages about their brands to the target consumers (Shimp 2010:98). The notion is to ensure that both prospective and existing consumers are convinced to choose the company’s brand ahead those of competitors. In view of this, paid channels of communication such as advertising are used to communicate various ideas, goods and services to the consumer in a non-personal format (Schiffman et al. 2014:306). While this is so, communication messages are executed in such a way that they capture the audience’s attention and interest. As such, advertising wisdom lies in the ability to find the best approach, tone, style, words and format for executing marketing messages (Kotler & Armstrong 2008:60), for which celebrity endorsement is one such approach.

Ohanian (1991:46) affirms that at least 10 percent of all advertisements in the United States of America featured spokespersons in the late 1980s. This number rose considerably to 20 percent in the mid-1990s (Agrawal & Kamakura 1995:56) and had sharply risen to 25 percent of all advertisements aired in that country by 2000 (Keel & Natarajan 2012:690). Similarly, Doss (2011:2) avers that there has been a proliferation in the number of advertisements utilising different types of celebrities across countries such as the United Kingdom (25 percent), South Korea (57 percent) and Japan (85 percent) since 2000.

Lear, Runyan and Whitaker (2009:308) define a sports celebrity endorser as a well-known personality who uses his or her acquired fame through sports to influence consumers’ purchasing decisions through advertisements. This includes current and retired professionals that are not actively involved in the field of sports. One of the reasons for the increase in celebrity-executed endorsement efforts is that these role models can help an advertisement to stand out because of their influence (Erdogan 1999:295). In addition, their ability to lend their faces to brands sets a trajectory for a marketer’s advertisement ratings (Silvera & Austad 2004:1509). The use of celebrities can also assist consumers in creating a clear point of reference wherein they can imitate
(Muda, Musa & Putit 2010:635). Such a reference point assists in creating positive associations with a brand, while simultaneously aiding brand name recognition (Charbonneau & Garland 2010:102). As such, celebrity endorsers are able to add personality and lifestyle meaning to advertisements in a precise way (McCracken 1989:314).

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Celebrity-based endorsement is a heavily employed strategy in advertising because it is more effective in terms of delivering product sales, when compared with non-celebrity based advertisements (Saeed et al. 2014:154). In particular, celebrities are utilised by marketers to convince the target market to purchase specific products and brands (Das & Phady 2012:83). Nonetheless, Ohanian (1991:46) highlights that if celebrity endorsers maintain credibility by creating a perception that they like and personally use the endorsed products themselves, this has the potential to create a desire from consumers to purchase the endorsed product.

Source credibility is defined as “the extent to which the audience perceives the source of advertising messages to have relevant skills, knowledge or experience about the subject” (Byrne, Whitehead & Breen 2003:291). On the other hand, Schiffman et al. (2014:224) point to the honesty and objectivity of the message source as having a direct bearing on how credible a message source is. In other words, source credibility implies the extent to which the audience trusts the celebrity endorser to deliver messages in an unbiased and objective manner (Sertoglu et al. 2014:68).

Several authors (Ohanian 1990:39-52; Pornpitakpan 2004:55-74; Sertoglu et al. 2014:66-67) have written extensively about how source credibility affects the persuasiveness of messages. In a review of the source credibility literature, Pornpitakpan (2004:57) discovered that perceived source credibility has some degree of influence on communication effectiveness. Specifically, the influential power of a celebrity is manifest when consumers embrace certain attributes and characteristics of that celebrity. In this respect, source credibility is used to draw attention to the endorser’s positive characteristics, which ultimately affects the receiver’s acceptance of a message, leading to changes in attitude and value structures (Sertoglu et al. 2014:68). Nevertheless, the credibility of a celebrity endorser is a very important consideration for advertisers since the celebrity is the main source of marketing information during endorsements.

The literature highlights various attributes that are necessary for a message source to be credible. For example, Hovland, Janis and Kelley (1953:21) define credibility as consisting of two components, namely trustworthiness and expertise. However, a later study by McGuire (1985:233-346) also accepted attractiveness as an influencer of the effectiveness of advertising messages. In
particular, the work by Ohanian (1990:39-52; 1991:46-54) validates the attractiveness variable, as a fundamental attribute in advertising endorsements. Building upon the Source valence theory, the Source attractiveness theory postulates that an attractive message source plays a significant role in making an endorser effective in communicating advertising messages (Ohanian 1990:42). Within this vein, Tripp, Jensen and Carlson (1994:537) contend that celebrities that are liked by consumers in terms of physical attributes are likely to be trusted as product endorsers of sports products or brands. Relatedly, Fink, Cunningham and Kensicki (2004:352) proved that the use of physically attractive endorsers could increase the likelihood of an endorsed product being purchased.

This study echoes similar sentiments with Ohanian (1990:51) by accepting trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness as the key attributes that comprise the credibility of an athlete endorser. In this regard, the purpose of this study is to test the possible existence of relationships between these dimensions with athlete-celebrity endorser credibility and selected outcome variable. Of note, the effect of source credibility on consumers’ attitude, beliefs, purchase behaviour and intentions is debatable (Sertoglu et al. 2014:69).

Celebrity-endorser credibility has been found to have a direct influence on consumers’ attitude towards advertisements in numerous studies (Lafferty, Goldsmith & Newell 2002:2; Ranjbarian, Shekarchizade & Momemi 2010:114; Sallam & Wahid 2012:56). This is because sponsors of advertising messages create cues for their audiences by permitting celebrities to appear with their brands and products in advertisements. In turn, attitudes of consumers are altered in this process. Relatedly, the research by Munnukka, Uusitalo and Toivonen (2016:184) supports the existence of a relationship between celebrity-endorser credibility with consumers’ attitude towards an advertisement. Within this vein, Lafferty et al. (2002:2) as well as Muda et al. (2010:638) also allude to the positive linkage between celebrity-endorser credibility and consumers’ attitudes towards an advertisement wherein a celebrity appears endorsing a product or brand.

Goldsmith, Lafferty and Newell (2000:47) established a path that is not commonly utilised in the literature by exploring the direct relationship between attitude towards advertisement and purchase intentions. The scholars assert that positive attitudes towards an advertisement could be enhanced greatly to deliver favourable intentions to make purchases, which are expressed through repeat purchases. Relatedly, such favourable intentions are indicative of a consumer’s approval of a product or service (Sallam & Wahid 2012:60). The study by Grewal and Levy (2010:97) supports the direct association between attitude towards advertisements and purchase intentions. Relatedly, a study by Durriya and Zahid (1999:61) found that there is a positive relationship between
consumer attitudes towards different advertisements and consumers’ intention to purchase the advertised products or brands. Within this vein, Muda, Musa, Mohamed and Borhan (2014:17) established a direct effect of attitudes towards advertisements featuring favoured celebrities with purchase intentions towards the advertised product.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The persuasive impact of advertisements lies in their believability by use of credible sources (Schiffman et al. 2014:281). Undoubtedly, celebrities deliver a ‘Midas touch’ to advertised products since their faces are easily recognisable in a congested marketplace (Muda et al. 2014:12). This is especially important in the contemporary era where modern media is saturated with marketing communications (Kasana & Chaudhary 2014:320). According to Till and Busler (1998:581), the effectiveness of celebrity endorsers is of importance to academics as evidenced by increasing scholarly interest in the subject. For example, celebrity endorsement research has been conducted in Australia (Dix, Phau & Pougnet 2010:41; Spry, Pappu & Cornwell 2011:889), Finland (Munnukka et al. 2016:184), Germany (Eisend & Langer 2010:534), Malaysia (Muda et al. 2014:15), the United Kingdom (Halonen-Knight & Hurmerinta 2010:455) as well as the United States of America (USA) (Doss 2011:6; Mathys, Burmester & Clement 2016:433), among other countries. Nonetheless, while the aforementioned studies concede that celebrity endorser credibility dimensions are not germane to all contexts, they have not attempted to translate the implications of such attributes on the behaviour of South African consumers.

Limited research has been conducted within the context of South African athlete-celebrity endorsement efforts. The scant scholarship that exists has been driven largely by major sporting events that were hosted by South Africa in the past few years, such as the rugby and soccer world cups (Van Herdeen, Kuiper & Saar 2008:157; Van Der Waldt, Van Loggerenberg & Wehmeyer 2009:108). Moreover, Haefele (2014) as well as Molelekeng (2012) have put forward small-scale research in the form of unpublished academic dissertations. Nonetheless, of late there have been more calls for further research into the identification of celebrity endorsement antecedents (Munnukka et al. 2016:184). In this vein, a gap exists in the knowledge body since no study has attempted to enumerate the source attributes of a local based professional athlete. Such an investigation is important since it has the potential to determine consumer behavioural outcomes, an element that is of paramount importance to both practitioners and the knowledge body. Furthermore, an understanding of the buying intentions of consumers has a diagnostic value as it pinpoints to management whether consumers will remain loyal to the endorsed brands (Schiffman et al. 2014:235). Therefore, the endorsement advertisement of Lay’s™ potato chips by Abraham
Benjamin De Villiers (hereinafter referred to as A.B De Villiers) was nominated as the relevant stimulus seeking to establish path relationships between athlete credibility antecedents with purchase intentions, as moderated by attitude, within a South African context.

1.4 **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The following research objectives were formulated for the study:

1.4.1 **Primary objective**

The primary objective for this study was to examine the influence of selected antecedents on athlete-endorser credibility, attitude towards the advertisement and purchase intentions towards an athlete-celebrity endorsed product.

1.4.2 **Theoretical objectives**

- To theoretically review the marketing communication process
- To conduct a literature review on the variables influencing persuasive marketing communication
- To conduct a literature review on celebrity endorsement
- To review the extant literature on celebrity endorsement theories
- To theoretically establish the influence of selected antecedents on athlete-celebrity credibility, attitude towards the advertisement and purchase intentions.

1.4.3 **Empirical objectives**

- To determine consumers’ perceptions regarding the identified local athlete-celebrity’s trustworthiness as a product endorser
- To determine consumers’ perceptions regarding the identified local athlete-celebrity’s expertise as a product endorser
- To determine consumers’ perceptions regarding the identified local athlete-celebrity’s attractiveness as a product endorser
- To determine consumers’ perceptions regarding the identified local athlete-celebrity’s credibility as a product endorser
- To determine consumers’ attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed advertisement
- To determine consumers’ intentions towards purchasing the athlete-celebrity endorsed product
To test empirically a model of trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, endorser credibility, attitude towards the advertisement and consumers’ purchase intentions towards an athlete-celebrity endorsed product within the South African market.

1.5 HYPOTHESES FOR THE STUDY

Drawing from the aforementioned empirical objectives and the theoretical underpinnings of celebrity endorsement research, the following hypotheses statements were formulated and tested in this work:

\( H_01: \) Sports consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product is not a six-variable structure comprising trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, endorser credibility, attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement and purchase intentions.

\( H_11: \) Sports consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product is a six-variable structure comprising trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, endorser credibility, attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement and purchase intentions.

\( H_02: \) Trustworthiness does not positively influence athlete-endorser credibility.

\( H_12: \) Trustworthiness positively influences athlete-endorser credibility.

\( H_03: \) Expertise does not positively influence athlete-endorser credibility.

\( H_13: \) Expertise positively influences athlete-endorser credibility.

\( H_04: \) Attractiveness does not positively influence athlete-endorser credibility.

\( H_14: \) Attractiveness positively influences athlete-endorser credibility.

\( H_05: \) Athlete-endorser credibility does not positively influence consumers’ attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement.

\( H_15: \) Athlete-endorser credibility positively influences consumers’ attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement.
H₆: Attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement does not positively influence consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product.

H₆: Attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement positively influences consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research design was applied in this study. Specifically, a single cross-sectional descriptive study was undertaken. The study comprised two clear-cut phases, namely a literature review and an empirical study, consistent with Malhotra (2010:105).

1.6.1 Literature review

A detailed theoretical discourse on celebrity endorsement as an approach used by marketing communicators was undertaken in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. The study utilised textbooks, journal articles and conference proceedings as well as sports media analyses to uncover the theoretical underpinnings of celebrity endorsement research.

1.6.2 The empirical study

The metaphor of a research onion was followed in this study, whereby a mono-method quantitative research strategy was pursued during the empirical component of this study. The rationale for employing a quantitative research was that it possesses the rigour, independence and rationality that is necessary for empirical investigations (Zikmund & Babin 2013:99). In addition, quantitative studies make use of statistics to test hypotheses and describe relationships among constructs (Malhotra 2010:171). Therefore, the following sampling technique and design procedure was developed, upon following a quantitative research approach in this study:

1.6.2.1 Target population

The target population for this study comprised sports fans that are based in the Southern Gauteng region of South Africa. Hunt, Bristol and Bashaw (1999:446) defined a sports consumer as “a person with a strong interest or admiration for a particular sports consumptive object”. As such, the unit of analysis for the study included both male and female consumers with a strong admiration for the athlete-celebrity utilised in the stimulus advertisement.
1.6.2.2 Sampling frame

A sampling frame is a “written list or printed record of all sampling units in the targeted population” (Hair, Celsi, Ortinau & Bush 2013:138). No sampling frame could be established for use in this study since there exists no documented list of the entire populous of sports consumers, to date. The implication, therefore, was that it was not possible to afford all the population members equal probability of being selected for inclusion in this study. As such, the study had to be restricted to a non-probability based sampling method.

1.6.2.3 Sampling method

A non-probability sampling method was utilised in this study. In particular, the snowball sampling method was chosen as the sampling technique of choice since it enables a selection of participants based on a series of referrals (Hair et al. 2013:147). Initially, the researcher randomly selected participants that are affiliated with the pre-selected local athlete-celebrity endorser. After being interviewed by the researcher, the participants were asked to identify others with similar characteristics leading to what is referred to as the snowball effect (Malhotra 2010:381). This process was carried out in subsequent stages by obtaining referrals from referrals until the required sampling size of sports consumers was obtained.

1.6.2.4 Sample size

The sample size for the study consisted of 500 sports consumers drawn as guided by a dual-pronged approach. First, the appropriate sample size for the study was nominated based on empirical precedence of other scholars. The selected sample size was in the range of other celebrity endorsement studies of this nature, such as Charbonneau and Garland (2010:104) who used a sample size of 240, McCartney and Pinto (2014:259) who used a sample size of 305 as well as Kwong (2010:56) who used 336 participants in his study. Secondly, the rule of thumb by Crouch (1984:142) was taken into account. In particular, the recommendation is that sample sizes between 300 and 500 are sufficient when dealing with multivariate statistics of consumer-based studies.

1.6.2.5 Method of data collection and measuring instrument

Data were collected by means of a structured and self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire contained three sections. Section A comprised the demographical information about the participants (A1 to A7), while Section B comprised three questions (B1 to B3) relating to consumers’ purchases of the celebrity-endorsed product. Both sections A and B were anchored along dichotomous, interval and multiple-choice questions. Section C comprised questions...
relating to the determinants of consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product.

Section C comprised thirty-two scale items relating to the determinants of consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product. The first fifteen scale items measuring the three main source attributes were adapted from Ohanian (1990:46), namely trustworthiness (C1-C5), expertise (C6-C10) and attractiveness (C11-C15). In addition, six scale items measuring athlete-endorser credibility (C16-C21) were adapted from the general endorsers’ credibility scale developed by Williams and Drolet (2005:350). Moreover, a six-item based scale relating to attitude towards the endorsement advertisement (C22-C27) was adapted from De Pelsmacker, Geuens and Anckaert’s (2002:55) attitude towards an advertisement (in general) scale, while five scale items measuring consumers’ purchase intentions towards the endorsed product (C28-32) were adapted from Baker and Churchill (1977:549).

Section C of the questionnaire was anchored along a five-point Likert scale with anchors, strongly agree (=1) to strongly disagree (=5). A five-point Likert scale was preferred as it only provides minimum options, which allows participants to go through all the questions in the questionnaire quicker. Moreover, significant modifications were made to the sub-scales under Section C to fit the context and purpose of the study. In particular, the word celebrity was replaced with A.B De Villiers, consistent with the results of the exploratory study in which A.B De Villiers was the preferred choice (refer to Section 3.7.4) of the local athlete-celebrity endorser in this research.

1.7 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Initially, the data were captured into Microsoft Excel and then transferred to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 23.0) for statistical analysis. The first port of call in the statistical analysis was to perform exploratory factor analysis (EFA) in order to reduce the collected data into meaningful components. Thereafter, descriptive statistical analysis was performed as a way of analysing the sample responses. This comprised measures of central location (mean, mode and median), measures of variability (standard deviation, variance and range), measures of peakedness (skewness and kurtosis), tabulation and frequencies. Thereafter, internal-consistency reliability assessment was conducted. In addition, correlation analysis was employed with a view to test for the direction and strength of relationships within the data set. The correlation analysis was also an indirect indicator of whether there were collinearity problems in the data.
Structural equation modelling (SEM) procedure was conducted using the Analysis for Moment Structures (AMOS Version 23.0) software comprising a two-step approach of analysing the measurement model first, then the structural model. During the SEM procedure, model fit indices, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and statistical measures of model accuracy were employed to test the hypotheses that were formulated in this study, thereby validating the measurement model and first alternative hypothesis, $H_{a1}$. Thereafter, a structural model was evaluated using model fit indices, path regression weights and significance levels, thereby confirming the model developed in this study and subsequent alternative hypotheses $H_{a2}$, $H_{a3}$, $H_{a4}$, $H_{a5}$ and $H_{a6}$.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research ethical standards were taken into consideration before, during and after data collection. The ethical issues that were addressed through the cover letter accompanying the research instrument, as suggested by Tustin et al. (2010:46), included informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation and an opportunity to withdraw from the study at any stage. Since the survey was self-administered, participants were assured that there were no right or wrong answers. This helped to eliminate social desirability bias and thereby ensure that the participants answered every question with sincerity. For confidentiality, the participants’ names remained anonymous at all times. Additionally, all responses were reported on an aggregated basis in the form of an academic dissertation.

1.9 CLARIFICATION OF TERMINOLOGY

The following key concepts within the context of this research are explained:

- **A celebrity** is a well-known individual with qualities that separate him/her from other individuals (Francis & Yazdanifard 2013:35). Generally, celebrities possess a set of unique skills and lifestyle that others admire.

- **An athlete-celebrity endorser** is a famous athlete that uses his or her acquired fame from the field of play to appear in an advertisement declaring his or her approval for endorsed products or brands (Simmers, Damron-Martinez & Haytko 2009:53).

- **Source credibility** refers to consumers’ perceptions regarding believability of the athlete-celebrity, which affect the receiver’s acceptance of a message (Liu 2009:75); by implication, credibility inferred from the personal attributes and characteristics of the athlete-celebrity endorser.
• **Trustworthiness** refers to consumers’ perceptions regarding the honesty and truthfulness of the athlete-celebrity endorser when endorsing marketing messages (Koekemoer 2012:37).

• **Expertise** refers to the extent to which consumers perceive the athlete-celebrity to be an authoritative source, while endorsing the product (Yilmaz & Ersavas 2005:418).

• **Attractiveness** refers to consumers’ perceptions regarding the physical appeal of the athlete-celebrity endorser, including personality and athletic abilities (Koekemoer 2012:38).

• **Attitude towards the advertisement** is defined as the “pre-disposition to respond in a favourable or unfavourable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure situation” (Solomon et al. 2006:254).

• **Purchase intention** refers to sports consumers’ willingness and readiness to purchase and consume athlete-celebrity endorsed products or brands in future encounters.

### 1.10 GENERAL

• The referencing style is based on the Vaal University of Technology referencing guide, namely the adapted Harvard style.

• Tables and figures are placed on the relevant pages, as indicated in the table of contents section of this dissertation. Where no sources have been cited for tables and figures, it denotes the researcher’s own work.

• Annexures are placed at the end of this dissertation.

### 1.11 DISSERTATION OUTLINE

Chapter 1 introduces the entire research. The background theoretical context of the study and problem statement is outlined. The research objectives and hypotheses for the study are highlighted. The design of the research also is alluded to, briefly. This includes a concise description of the sampling design procedures, statistical analysis, reliability, validity and ethical issues pertaining to the study. In addition, important terminology is clarified in this chapter to maintain consistency of understanding.

Chapter 2 provides a theoretical account of celebrity endorsement through the lenses of advertising and communication literature. The chapter elucidates on the benefits, risks and contribution of celebrity endorsement to the triple bottom line. In addition, the chapter examines various theories
of celebrity endorsement, outlined under two categories, namely product or situation theories as well as selection theories. This discussion culminated in the decision to use the Source credibility theory as well as the Source attractiveness theory as underlying theories for this study. In addition, relevant variables influencing the credibility and persuasiveness of athlete-celebrity endorsed messages are reviewed. Subsequently, a conceptual model is developed for empirical testing.

Chapter 3 elaborates on the methodology used in this study. The philosophical underpinnings of the study and the research design choices are explained in this chapter using the metaphor of a research onion. The sampling strategy, method of data collection and instrumentation procedures are examined. The statistical procedures for data analysis are described at length and justified. In addition, reliability and validity assessment measures are explained in detail.

The results of the empirical study are illustrated in Chapter 4 of this study. The chapter interprets and relates the results of the study to the formulated hypotheses and conceptual model. In addition, a discussion of the main statistical results for this research is provided in this chapter.

Conclusions and recommendations emanating from the study are provided in Chapter 5 of this study. An overview of the main research findings is extended in light of the research objectives that were formulated under Section 1.4.3, while the limitations of the study are highlighted. Chapter 5 also suggests avenues for further research. Recommendations for both scholars and practitioners are made in this chapter. Moreover, concluding remarks are drawn for the study.

### 1.12 SYNOPSIS

Some researchers perceive celebrity endorsement to be a latent force in waiting, with promising opportunities for advertisers in the 21st century. With this, much of the rise in advertisements featuring celebrities is attributed to the ability to provide marketers with higher advertisement rankings and helping consumers to differentiate between brands. Bearing this in mind, this study was authored with a view to test a set of hypotheses and model the antecedents of athlete-endorser credibility.

Chapter 2 discusses the communication process in detail, with a view to provide an understanding of how celebrity endorsements could be used as a useful vehicle for persuading consumers to purchase certain products. The importance of celebrity endorsement across global markets is reviewed. Moreover, a plethora of celebrity endorsement theories is examined while linkages are made between celebrity endorsement credibility with other variables, culminating in the formulation of hypotheses and a conceptual model for testing.
“A sign of a celebrity is that his name is often worth more than his services”

(Daniel Boorstin)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Marketers in many countries utilise celebrity endorsement for products in an attempt to promote the products that they sell. By making use of a celebrity or sports figure to appeal to the consumer, marketers have been able to use evaluative conditioning to alter consumers’ attitudes towards selected products and brands (Schiffman et al. 2014:233). Moreover, the rise of celebrity culture and what might be referred to as ‘celebrity obsession’ coupled with the escalation of social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter enhances the ease with which consumers can easily follow every move of a celebrity (Francis & Yazdanifard 2013:36). While yielding many positive results, it is evident that celebrity endorsement is quickly becoming a popular choice in the South African market. This is because many marketers invest large sums of money in using celebrities to endorse their products (Weber 2015:1). Relatedly, major multinational companies have targeted South African consumers by using local celebrities to cut through the cultural divide (refer to Section 2.7). In view of this development, it is important for marketers to exercise caution while choosing a celebrity to endorse their products in order to ensure that they get a good return on their investment.

In order to establish a sound theoretical framework on the subject of celebrity endorsement, it is necessary to conduct a literature synthesis on the aspects that would enable the achievement of the theoretical objectives that were formulated at the beginning of the study. In view of this, Chapter 2 begins with a description of the basic communication model in Section 2.2. Thereafter, Section 2.3 discusses the marketing communication process, while Section 2.4 makes specific reference to source variables as having a pre-eminent influence on the persuasiveness of any marketing communication message as posited by Koekemoer (2014:112). It is within this confluence between source variables and marketing communication, wherein lies an understanding of the credibility of celebrity endorsers as referent groups that help consumers to frame their consumption decisions.
Section 2.5 provides an overview of the endorsement process. Section 2.6 delves into the three types of product endorsers, wherein lies the athletes as a category of celebrity endorsers. Section 2.7 evaluates the contribution of celebrity endorsement deals to both global and local markets at three levels, namely economic, social-cultural and environmental. That discussion is accompanied by an examination of the benefits and risks associated with the use of celebrity endorsement, under sections 2.8 and 2.9, respectively. Section 2.10 provides a theoretical discourse on the relevant theories that are used in celebrity endorsement research. Thereafter, the concept of athlete-celebrity endorser credibility is discussed in Section 2.11. Section 2.12 discusses attitude towards the advertisement as a mediating variable for this study while Section 2.13 discusses purchase intentions towards an athlete-endorsed product, thereby summatng the selected outcome variable of the study. Section 2.14 elucidates on the relationships between celebrity-endorsement credibility dimensions with attitude towards advertisements and purchase intentions culminating in hypotheses development and conceptual modelling. Section 2.15 concludes the chapter and hints at the next chapter.

2.2 THE BASIC COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Communication is defined as “a dynamic process in which people attempt to share their internal states with other people through the use of symbols” (Samovar, Porter & McDaniel 2009:16). The basic communication model consists of five elements, as illustrated in Figure 2.1.

![Figure 2.1: The basic communication process (Schiffman et al. 2014:224)](image)

In its simplest form, the basic communication process entails the encoding of a message from a sender or source of the communication via a communication channel to a receiver (or destination) (Schiffman et al. 2014:224). The sender encodes the message and sends it through a channel or medium while the receiver receives and decodes the relevant message. The sender, as the initiator
of the communication, can be either a formal or an informal source. On the other hand, the channel can be personal or impersonal depending on the type of communication message being encoded. However, the sender’s ability to encode the message successfully depends on his or her knowledge, past experiences, feelings, emotions and attitude (Koekemoer 2014:108). Furthermore, the completion of the communication process is dependent on the receiver decoding the message, which entails transforming the words, symbols or gestures into thoughts. The source of the message can learn about the receiver’s decoding of the message through feedback or response to the message. The feedback sent from the receiver to the sender serves to indicate to the source of the message whether the meaning of that message was interpreted in the manner that was intended (Schiffman et al. 2014:224). The response to the message is the receiver’s reaction to the message, which can be expressed in either a non-verbal manner or behaviourally (purchases).

Klopper and North (2011:183) state that everything a company manufactures, says or does, actually communicates. Put simply, communication refers to the manner in which a product or brand is promoted to the public. In view of such communication practises, marketers anticipate a behavioural response for their marketing efforts, which could lead to the persuasion of the target market to purchase their products. Nonetheless, the challenge lies in how best to remain consistent while integrating the message into the company’s overall marketing strategy. As such, the next section deliberates on the overall marketing communication process.

2.3 THE MARKETING COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Marketing communication is an element of the marketing mix, alongside the product, price and place (Mowen 1993:11). The primary marketing communication process involves the use of various forms of messages designed to enhance customers’ impressions of the product or brand on offer (Koekemoer 2014:10). These consist of non-personal verbal messages such as advertising, sponsorship, publicity and digital media. On the other hand, marketing communication can be achieved through personalised verbal messages that include personal selling and word-of-mouth as well as non-verbal messages such as packaging cues and retailer imagery. While this is so, the aim of any marketing communication activity is to exchange information, news, ideas, brands and features with the intent to persuade consumers to change an attitude or use and buy a product or brand more often (Koekemoer 2012:42). Similarly, Schiffman et al. (2014:226) assert that any company’s marketing communication activity is designed to make the consumer aware of the product or service, induce purchase or commitment, create a positive attitude toward the product, or show how it can solve the consumer’s problem better than a
competitive product (or service). As with the basic communication process discussed in Section 2.2, the marketing communication process also includes the five components of source, message, channel, receiver and feedback as explained in the following sections.

2.3.1 Marketing communication source

The marketing communication process begins when the source of the message transmits the message through a communication channel with the intention of reaching the receiver (target audience) by encoding the message with words, symbols or gestures (Schiffman et al. 2014:224). The marketing communication source, also known as the sender, is “the originator of a message in the communication process”, which can either be a formal or informal source of information (Trehan & Trehan 2011:143). In marketing, a formal source of communication represents either a profit or a non-profit organisation. Conversely, an informal source could be a person whom the message receiver knows personally, such as a parent or friend who gives product information or advice.

Consumers often rely on informal communication sources in making purchase decisions because, unlike formal sources, these sources are perceived as having nothing to gain from the receiver’s subsequent actions. Therefore, marketers should always encourage and even initiate positive word-of-mouth communications about their products and services. On the other hand, organisations utilise various formal (commercial) or paid-for sources of communication. From a marketing perspective, formal sources can either take the form of spokespersons or product endorsers, that serve as frames of reference for individuals in their consumption decisions (Trehan & Trehan 2011:143). However, there is great contention in the literature regarding the credibility of formal sources because of the perception that consumers render them less objective, owing to their profit-orientation (Schiffman et al. 2014:233). As a result, marketers that utilise formal sources are left with one of two options; either to make use of neutral formal sources of communication messages such as consumer reports and newspaper articles, or to utilise celebrity endorsers who possess superior persuasive capabilities. Such persuasive abilities often are viewed as a function of consumers’ awareness and likeability of the endorser, as a person (Koekemoer 2012:42). Hence, when marketers make use of celebrities to endorse their products, they do so after careful consideration of the credibility attributes of that specific celebrity endorser.

2.3.2 Marketing communication message

A marketing communication message refers to the “thought, idea, attitude, image or other information that the sender wishes to convey to the intended audience” (Koekemoer 2012:42). In
particular, the message should be designed (encoded) in a manner that is appropriate to each medium and to each audience. A marketing communication message can be either verbal, non-verbal or a combination of both (Schiffman et al. 2014:246). Verbal messages can be either written or spoken while non-verbal messages usually take the form of photographs, illustrations and symbols.

The sponsor, who could be an individual marketer or an organisation, should first establish the objectives of the message prior to selecting an appropriate medium for sending it (Schiffman et al. 2014:246). According to Koekemoer (2012:35), the objectives of a persuasive message could include creating awareness of a service, promoting sales of a product, encouraging (or discouraging) certain practices, attracting retail patronage, reducing post-purchase dissonance, creating goodwill or a favourable image, or any combination of these among other communications objectives.

The source of the marketing message has a marked bearing on the subsequent interpretation of the encoded message. This is because if the communicator totally misunderstands the market and chooses an ineffective theme, no amount of creative expression can deliver successful communication (Koekemoer 2012:35). As such, in order to persuade the target audience, the message must be relevant to the audience, while being presented in an attractive and logical format (Koekemoer 2014:108-109). At the primary level, messages delivered by attractive and popular sources have been found to achieve higher attention, thereby making plain the reason why marketers communicate their messages through celebrities (Trehan & Trehan 2011:128). However, at the secondary level, the encoded message should be delivered in a clear and meaningful form to ensure that the audience understands its intended meaning. The sender must know exactly what he or she is trying to say and why (i.e. message objectives), while also understanding the target audience’s personal characteristics.

2.3.3 Marketing communication channel

Koekemoer (2014:110) defines a marketing communication channel as the “route or direction in which the message will travel”. This implies the method of message transmission of various marketing messages. The medium, or communications channel, can be either impersonal, such as using mass media or interpersonal as in a formal conversation between a salesperson and a customer that takes place face-to-face, by telephone, by mail or online (Schiffman et al. 2014:241). According to Koekemoer (2012:38), marketers make use of mass media that comprise traditional avenues of advertising that are classified as print (newspapers, magazines and billboards) and broadcast (radio and TV). Alternately, marketers make use of new media (also termed alternative
or non-traditional media) such as social media and Internet advertising. The right choice of a medium for conveying marketing communication messages can be a powerful tool for creating product awareness, retaining customers and acquiring new ones if a great campaign for the product is developed. However, the challenge lies with marketers to develop strategies to deal effectively with possible interferences that can confuse the message or compete against their chosen marketing communication medium.

2.3.4 Marketing communication receiver

The sponsor (initiator) of the message should decide to whom the message should be sent and what meaning it should convey, since receivers are always selective and subjective (Koekemoer 2014:111). The receiver of formal marketing communications is generally a targeted prospect or customer (also referred to as the marketer’s target audience) (Schiffman et al. 2014:236). Nonetheless, intermediary and unintended audiences are also likely to receive marketers’ communications. Examples of intermediary audiences are wholesalers, distributors and retailers, who receive trade advertising from marketers designed to persuade them to order and stock merchandise. On the other hand, unintended audiences include everyone that is exposed to the message such as shareholders, creditors, suppliers, employees and bankers. Nevertheless, Koekemoer (2012:35) attests that while unintended audiences could be important to the marketer, they might not necessarily be targeted. However, the three audience categories are composed of individual receivers, each of whom interprets the message in accordance with his or her perceptions and personal experiences. Nonetheless, this study is concerned with the dissemination of marketing messages by formal communication sources (celebrities) to the intended audience or specific target market, only.

2.3.5 Marketing communication feedback

Since marketing communication messages usually are designed to persuade a target audience to act in a desired way, the ultimate test of the communication’s effectiveness is the receiver’s response. Therefore, the sender must obtain feedback as promptly and as accurately as possible. Only through feedback can the sender determine how well the message has been received (Koekemoer 2012:39). Feedback is an essential component of both interpersonal and impersonal communication because it enables the sender to reinforce or change the message to ensure that it is understood in the intended way (Koekemoer 2014:111). Through interpersonal communication, it is possible to obtain immediate feedback through verbal as well as non-verbal cues. Immediate feedback is the factor that makes personal selling so effective because it enables the salesperson to tailor the sales pitch to the expressed needs and observed reactions of the targeted prospect.
Contrariwise, in impersonal (mass) communication, feedback is rarely direct; it usually is inferred. Senders infer how persuasive their messages are received by the resulting action (or inaction) of the targeted audience. In this case, Koekemoer (2014:111) alludes to the different techniques, which a marketer can use to obtain feedback from customers on a marketing communication message that has been sent through mass media. These techniques include *inter alia*:

- A review of the brand, user or situation image
- A review of the effectiveness of the message by evaluating the extent to which the message has been crystallised in the minds of consumers, namely attitude towards advertising
- A review of the effectiveness of the message by evaluating the extent to which existing beliefs and attitude of consumers have been reinforced
- A review of customer purchase activity before and after the message was delivered
- A review of sales reports to assess if sales have increased after the message was delivered
- A review of customer interest activity after the delivery of the message.

Despite the potential of different forms of marketing communication, marketers need to make certain that they choose the most appropriate strategy that has an impact on optimising their market offerings in order to yield positive results. The decision to select the most persuasive marketing communication strategy is a difficult and yet, most uncertain decision especially where marketers need to nominate specific individuals to represent their products or brands in a formal manner. As such, the next section elucidates on the variables that influence the development of a persuasive marketing communication strategy.

### 2.4 VARIABLES INFLUENCING PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATION

Koekemoer (2012:37) identifies four groups of variables that influence persuasive communication as illustrated in Figure 2.2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source variables</th>
<th>Message variables</th>
<th>Channel variables</th>
<th>Receiver variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Credibility</td>
<td>• Type of appeal</td>
<td>• Experience</td>
<td>• Active versus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attractiveness</td>
<td>• Message style</td>
<td>• Effects of</td>
<td>passive role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Power</td>
<td>• Inclusions and</td>
<td>communication</td>
<td>• Demographics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• omissions</td>
<td>modality</td>
<td>• Personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Order of the</td>
<td>• Media</td>
<td>factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• presentation</td>
<td>effectiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.2: Variables influencing persuasive communication (Koekemoer 2012:37)

2.4.1 Source variables

The source element of the marketing communication process is multi-faceted since a variety of sources can be involved. Examples of sources can include an article in a special interest magazine, a salesperson in a store or an announcer on selected media. As a result, Koekemoer (2012:37) points out that issues relating to the credibility, attractiveness and power of the source often are used to judge the extent to which the source is considered a truthful conveyor of marketing messages. These source variables are discussed next.

2.4.1.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to the extent to which the source is perceived as having knowledge, skills or experience relevant to the communication topic (Koekemoer 2012:37). While prima facie evidence from this definition suggests that expertise is the only vital element in delineating the credibility of a message source, both expertise and trustworthiness are necessary ingredients as either one without the other undermines credibility. This means that both trustworthiness and expertise are important elements in determining the credibility of a message source.

Trustworthiness refers to the honesty, integrity and believability of the source (Koekemoer 2012:37). In view of that, source credibility also delivers trust for the message source. Seemingly, this characteristic is the most important aspect of credibility since expert endorsers cannot be considered credible if they demonstrate dishonest behaviour or biased conduct (Koekemoer 2014:112). A corresponding view is the idea of a source that is honest and dependable, yet possesses limited knowledge of the product or brand being communicated.
The confidence of customers in the message being communicated tends to increase when they can trust the expertise of the source of the marketing message as a provider of accurate information. Griffin (2009:222) as well as O’Keefe (2008:1477) further aver that people who have expertise on the subject matter of interest could have a persuasive impact on changing the attitudes of the recipients of messages. In other words, celebrity endorsers are more effective when they are credible conveyors of information, as determined by both the level to which consumers can trust the messages being communicated as well as have confidence in the dual effects of the celebrity’s expertise regarding both the product being endorsed and their respective field of expertise.

### 2.4.1.2 Attractiveness

Attractiveness refers to the appeal of a source, as a conveyor of communication messages (Koekemoer 2012:38). Source attractiveness includes sub-components such as likeability, similarity and familiarity. When a receiver perceives a source to be attractive, persuasion could occur through a process referred to as ‘identification’ (Koekemoer 2014:112). In view of that, marketers understand that target audiences are likely to identify with people who are similar to themselves. Hence, famous people such as beauty models normally are selected for various advertisements. In this instance, the receiver can identify with the model, situation or emotion portrayed by the communicator.

In this study, the degree of communication persuasiveness is considered to be directly linked to source credibility of which the latter is influenced positively by the audience’s perception of the expertise and trustworthiness of the source of a marketing communication message (Koekemoer 2012:38). In addition, the attractiveness of an endorser is instrumental towards enhancing the persuasiveness of a given marketing message.

### 2.4.1.3 Power

The source of a communication message can have power when it can actually administer rewards and/or punishments to the receiver (Koekemoer 2012:38). In such cases, the influence of the source is enforced through compliance, which emanates when a receiver invariably accepts the influence of the source because of the hope for a favourable response or in avoidance of a particular punishment. While this source characteristic is used scantly among business to consumer interactions, Koekemoer (2014:112) attests that power is a dominant attribute among retailers and distributors who can manipulate their source power to demand support for specific products or brands in the form of push-based advertising and promotions.
2.4.2 Message variables

Message variables include the type of appeal, message style, inclusions and omissions as well as the order of the presentation (Koekemoer 2012:38). First, marketers utilise a combination of rational and irrational (emotional) appeals to influence their target audiences. Secondly, concerted efforts are placed on the delivery of clear messages that are simple and free from clutter. Thirdly, marketers contend with issues surrounding what should be included and what should be omitted from the marketing message. As a rule, persuasive messages are more effective if the source explicitly draws conclusions rather than leaving it to the receiver to interpret the message in more than one way. Fourthly, the order of the message presentation is a very important aspect of the message variable. The research by Schiffman et al. (2014:248) on learning and memory, indicates that the points that are presented first (primacy effect) and last (recency effect) are remembered better than those presented in the middle.

While the aforementioned message variables have been proven to have significant bearing on the persuasiveness of a marketing communication message, there exists no documented research on their association with the credibility of a source. In addition, message variables are generally ill-defined and constantly take many forms. Therefore, owing to their vagueness and subsequent irrelevance towards answering the primary objective of this study, message variables were omitted from further review in this dissertation.

2.4.3 Channel variables

Channel variables include the direct experience with an object rather than communication about it (Koekemoer 2012:38). Depending on the type of product involved, direct experience through product demonstrations could be more effective than communication about it on the media (Koekemoer 2014:114). However, certain sensual products such as perfumes and bath salts lend themselves to mood imagery, which can be created successfully in advertisements. Nonetheless, marketers have to manage the communication modalities that deal with the choice between voice, motion and visuals, thus rendering media effectiveness and channel factors a highly complex issue. As a result, the researcher decided to omit channel variables, owing to the composite nature and the inherent difficulty in ascertaining the superiority of one channel medium over another.

2.4.4 Receiver variables

Receiver variables include the degree of involvement of the target audience, demographic as well as personality factors. Generally, if a receiver is not highly involved, a persuasive message cannot
lead to cognitive change. As a result, attitude and consequent behaviour of the customers are not likely to be altered. On the other hand, factors such as age and gender are related to a receiver’s capacity to be persuaded (Koekemoer 2014:114). Some researchers suggest that maximum suggestibility is possible for younger receivers (below the age of 9 years) as well as female receivers, since the latter are more emotional than men are. However, there is no definitive empirical evidence to support such findings and hence the receiver variables were excluded upon framing the theoretical underpinnings of this study.

The next section provides an overview of celebrity endorsement when used as one of the most persuasive strategies in conveying marketing communication messages.

2.5 OVERVIEW OF THE ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

Product endorsement is a marketing strategy involving the use of selected individuals to advertise a brand with a view to increase product sales and brand awareness by leveraging the popularity of the endorser (Charbonneau & Garland 2010:101). The endorsement process commences when a product endorser agrees (by contractual obligation) to amplify the virtues of a product through either a written or a public statement while recommending its use to the public (Maity 2014:6). In this case, the product endorser acts as a source of marketing messages. The process begins with the brand owners using the profile of celebrities and/or non-celebrities in the hope of getting maximum potential benefits for associating their brand with a particular celebrity (Charbonneau & Garland 2010:101). In other words, product endorsers can either be of a celebrity status or not known to the public. While a product endorsement from an authoritative figure is a key element in business advertising and marketing campaigns, advertisers can also make use of non-public figures to improve the persuasiveness of their marketing communication (Charbonneau & Garland 2010:101). In this regard, the individuals endorsing a brand, product or service can find the endorsement opportunity to be an effective way of either commercially exploiting already existing fame or raising the unknown profile of ordinary individuals.

Marketers are able to utilise different personalities of varied societal status as product endorsers. Examples include the use of politicians, business people and company executives. However, the use of such endorsers largely depends on the type of product being endorsed and the accompanying marketing message (Reidenbach & Pitts 1986:30). In terms of credibility, the position of the individual often forms a useful source for referral to consumers when endorsers appear in an advertisement to endorse a company or product. In view of this, Maity (2014:6) identified five different forms of product endorsers that often are used by marketers.
Testimonials are a recommendation by a celebrity or non-celebrity affirming the performance or quality of a branded product or service, based on personal usage (Schiffman et al. 2014:252). However, it is possible that the celebrity can act as a spokesperson of the brand with which he or she could not necessarily be an expert.

Imported endorsements involve the use of a public figure or a celebrity performing a role, of which the audience has prior knowledge, for example, Melinda Bam, importing her pageant role as the former Miss South Africa during the endorsement of the Veet™ Beauty Secrets shaving cream.

Invented endorsements involve a public figure or a celebrity performing a role that is new and full of originality, for example, Thapelo Mokoena, a renowned actor, portraying the role of a musician during the endorsement of an alcoholic beverage, Hunters’ Dry™.

Observer endorsements involve a public figure or a celebrity commenting on the endorsed product or brand through mere observation only, for example, Sbusiso Leope, a radio and television personality making official commentary while endorsing MO-FI™, an energy drink brand.

Harnessed endorsements involve advertising storyboard and imagery, which is in harmony with the image of a particular celebrity, for example, Bonang Matheba, a South African national television and radio personality, endorses Revlon™ cosmetics. The advertisement storyboard is harnessed to reflect her flawless beauty during the product endorsements.

While the aforementioned discussion has alluded to different forms of product endorsement, marketers cannot underestimate the potential value of other types of product endorsers. The seminal work of Friedman and Friedman (1979:63) stipulates that different types of endorsers play a key role in ensuring believability of an endorsement and ultimate intention to purchase the endorsed product by consumers. In view of this, the next section discusses the types of product endorsers used by marketers.

2.6 TYPES OF PRODUCT ENDORSERS

The classical endorsement literature by Friedman and Friedman (1979:63) distinguishes among regular consumer endorsers, expert endorsers and celebrity endorsers. The distinguishing characteristics of these three categories are explained in the next sections.

2.6.1 Regular consumer endorsers

Regular product endorsers (also referred to as typical consumers) have the characteristic similarity implying that they do not require any special knowledge of the products being advertised since
they already consume them (Meijer 2009:6). In other words, consumer knowledge about the endorsed product stems from regular use of the products and brand consumption (Friedman & Friedman 1979:63).

The role in an advertisement that is endorsed by a typical consumer usually is played in a normal setting, usually in their homes (Friedman, Termini & Washington 1976:22). Shimp (2010:300) highlights that the believability of regular consumers as sources of marketing communication messages lies in that they are real persons with lived experiences regarding the benefits of products and brands, which they themselves have consumed, in essence making these individuals credible sources. Generally, regular endorsers are considered influential since consumers have perceived similarities or they feel an affinity with the endorsed product or brand.

2.6.2 Expert endorsers

Expert endorsers (also referred to as professional endorsers) have much expertise in a specific field or domain. The main characteristic of expert product endorsers is that they have superior knowledge of the product, which could have been gained through experience, study or training (Friedman & Friedman 1979:63). According to Friedman et al. (1976:22), expert endorsers possess recognisable intellectual authority on the product being endorsed. Consequently, this product-related expert knowledge certifies endorsers to make valid assertions about the brand or products that they endorse. It is this knowledge of the endorsed brand or product that makes them experts, thereby increasing their credibility and thus, the likelihood of changing attitudes towards the endorsed product or brand (Chiou, Hsu & Hsieh 2013:912). Such indelible product knowledge is precisely what gives expert endorsers value, when compared to the regular consumers in product endorsement.

When using experts as endorsers in advertisements, sometimes in combination with their names, their professions are mentioned as well. Usually, endorsements featuring experts tend to focus on credentials or qualifications of the endorser in an advertisement to make it more believable (Biswas, Biswas & Das 2006:17). A typical example of an expert endorser would be Mark Hughes, a qualified dentist endorsing Sensodyne™ toothpaste brand in a South African broadcast television advertisement.

2.6.3 Celebrity endorsers

In terms of conveying credibility to advertised products or brands, the use of celebrities has been known to be effective in comparison to other types of endorsers such as professional experts and
typical consumers (McCartney & Pinto 2014:256). This is because ordinary consumers look up to celebrities as sources of inspiration and thus, acting as helpers in the decision to purchase certain brands without prior information. Celebrity endorsement is a process whereby a popular figure lends his or her name and face while appearing next to the product or service with which one could not necessarily be an expert (Schiffman et al. 2014:252). Specifically, the celebrity endorsement process involves the use of a celebrity in giving or declaring approval or sanction for a particular product (Masterman 2007:104). Generally, marketers use this style of advertising to appeal to consumers by allowing popular names and individuals to declare publicly their association with the company’s brand. Essentially, consumers base their decision-making on these important reference groups. Generally, the celebrities are well known and respected in their respective fields, while they speak on behalf of their company or brand (Koekemoer 2014:162).

An early definition of a celebrity endorser is provided by Freiden (1984:33) to include those “well-known individuals who are directly associated with the product category being advertised”. McCracken (1989:312) defines a celebrity endorser as “any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition by appearing in an advertisement”. Stafford, Spears and Hsu (2003:17) define a celebrity endorser as “a famous person who uses his or her public recognition to recommend or co-present with a product in an advertisement”. Relatedly, Tantiseneepong, Gorton and White (2012:57) advance the previous definitions and tout that a celebrity endorser is “an individual with a household name or a well-known figure that is paid to represent and appear on behalf of a brand or product in an advertisement”.

Drawing from the aforementioned definitions, celebrity endorsers comprise those individuals that need no further identification since they already enjoy public recognition by a large share of a certain group of people based on their respective occupations. It is clear from the definitions that these individuals are recognised with a certain level of excitement and awe, wherever they go. Whatever they do has publicity value, more so while performing within their professions as entertainers, sports personalities, politicians, business executives, religious personalities, academicians, journalists and the like. More or less continuously and over time, celebrity endorsers are significant material for the media in terms of communication and entertainment.

Upon defining a celebrity, Francis and Yazdanifard (2013:35) point to a known figure with outstanding attributes such as unique skills and lifestyle, which separates them from the rest. In other words, celebrity endorsers are well known for their achievements in an area other than the advertised product, thereby presenting very high characteristic ‘familiarity’ in the endorsement process. These individuals extend their popularity, personality and stature in society by acting as
brand spokespersons to solidify the brand in what is referred to as the celebrity endorsement process. Conversely, Schiffman et al. (2014:252) contend that these individuals do not necessarily have to be formal experts in their respective product or service areas. However, there is agreement in the literature that for endorsement to work as a key point of referral, the endorser needs to be recognisable to the audience and public at large (Stafford et al. 2003:18; Tantiseneepong et al. 2012:58; Francis & Yazdanifard 2013:36).

The literature attests to three categories of celebrity endorsers including, *inter alia* actors, fictitious characters and athletes. These specific categories of celebrity endorsers are discussed in the next section.

### 2.6.3.1 Actors

Actors are celebrity endorsers who gain popularity from various roles that are played in movies, theatre and television drama, which enables the acquisition of celebrity status (Mathys et al. 2016:428). This cohort could also comprise individuals who have acquired fame in their respective roles as television and radio hosts. The popularity of actors as product endorsers stems from different roles played in the entertainment industry, which enables them to attract interest from consumers. As such, actors are a sought out target for companies looking to associate their products and brands with the consumer market. However, Petty and Lindsey-Mullikin (2006:28) state that for the endorsement process to be effective, the celebrity endorser has to connect with consumers or at least interest them in the brand or product that they appear with in an advertisement. This denotes that the choice of which actor to use in the endorsement process generally is determined by similarities between the celebrity-actor and the targeted consumers. Connie Ferguson is an example of a female actor who is paid to endorse Garnier™ beauty care products on South African media.

### 2.6.3.2 Fictitious characters

Fictitious character endorsers can take the form of human created spokes-characters as well as non-human spokes-characters (Bhatt, Jayswal & Jayswal 2012:20). Examples of human created spokes-characters include illustrations of cartoons imitating people in real life such as ‘Tom and Jerry Kids’ endorsing Kellogg’s™ cereals to appeal to children of different age groups (Stafford et al. 2003:18). On the other hand, fictitious character endorsements include non-human spokes-characters such as animals and characters from a variety of literary and folklore traditions.

The use of fictitious characters in celebrity endorsement has given marketers another opportunity to reach out to different markets that were previously untapped. One illustration of such a market
involves the gaming industry, where marketers use gaming characters to endorse an assortment of products and brands (Shelton & Chilliya 2014:261). The emergence of the gaming industry along with its associated characters has risen so much that it has elevated these characters to celebrity status (Shelton & Chilliya 2014:261). For example, Lora Croft, a gaming character endorser from Tomb Raider™ has been a huge success in the endorsement of Lucozade™ energy drinks in the USA (Farrand et al. 2006:12).

2.6.3.3 Athletes

An athlete-celebrity endorser is defined as “a famous athlete who uses his or her public recognition in sports to recommend or appear with a product or a brand in an advertisement” (Simmers et al. 2009:53). Athlete endorsers include sports personalities that have retired from their professions or those who are deceased (Lear et al. 2009:308). The universal popularity of successful sports personalities effectively renders them popular as product endorser for many of the companies looking to associate their products or brands (Boyd & Shank 2004:82). The success of these individuals in their respective fields and the accompanying lifestyle that results from related achievements also allows that they be regarded as role models by their fans (Dix et al. 2010:36). Logically, companies across the world are willing to pay large amounts of money to acquire the services of successful athletes to endorse their products and brands. As such, the sterling performance of athletes on the field makes them heroes and heroines in the marketing communication arena. For example, within the South African context, Teko Modise, a national Premier Soccer League (PSL) player is a typical athlete endorser for MacDonald’s™ fast foods, while Jean De Villiers, a renowned national rugby team player endorses Energade™, a global energy drink on South African media channels.

Since the rules of various sporting disciplines are universally scripted, the power of athlete-celebrity endorsers can be harnessed to reap collective impacts across global countries. Put simply, athlete-celebrity endorsers are the only category that can tell the story of products and brands in a common way, across the globe. More pressingly, it is of particular interest to both researchers and practitioners to estimate the long-term sustainability of celebrity endorsement deals, as this assists to determine the future development of endorsement, as a communication style across marketing and advertising firms. In view of this, the study sought to focus on athlete-celebrity endorsers, henceforth. In particular, an understanding of the importance of athlete-celebrity endorsements to the company’s bottom line presents a remarkable recipe for enhancing social and economic outputs across countries, as outlined in the following section.
Organisations generally are inclined to broaden the basis of their performance evaluation from a short-term financial focus to include long-term economic benefits. The economic contribution of endorsement deals to both athlete endorsers and businesses alike cannot be underestimated. This is because endorsements are a key source of income for sportspeople, over and above regular salaries and winnings. To confirm the contribution of athlete endorsement to the financial returns of both individuals and countries, Table 2.1 illustrates the top ten highest paid athlete endorsers in the world.

Table 2.1: Top 10 highest-paid athlete endorsers in the world in 2015 (Weber 2015:1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World ranking</th>
<th>Athlete</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Endorsement earnings (US dollars)</th>
<th>Product/brand endorsements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Roger Federer</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>58 million</td>
<td>Nike, Gillette, Rolex, Mercedes Benz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tiger Woods</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>50 million</td>
<td>Nike, Rolex, Fathead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Phil Mickelson</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>44 million</td>
<td>KPMG, Rolex, Barclays, Callaway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>LeBron James</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>44 million</td>
<td>Coca Cola, Nike, Kia, Samsung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kevin Durant</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>35 million</td>
<td>Nike, 2K Sport, Degree, Sparling Ice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Rory McIlroy</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>32 million</td>
<td>Nike, Omega, EA Sports, Upper deck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Novak Djokovic</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>31 million</td>
<td>Adidas, Pugeot, Seiko, Mercedes Benz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Rafael Nadal</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>28 million</td>
<td>Kia, Nike, Bacardi, Tommy Hilfiger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Cristiano Ronaldo</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>Football</td>
<td>27 million</td>
<td>Nike, Tag Heuer, Samsung, Herbalife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mahendra Singh Dhoni</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>27 million</td>
<td>Pepsi Co, Reebok, Gulf Oil, MRF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Rankings in terms of endorsement deal amounts for 2015

The Weber (2015:1) online media analyst report suggests that the top most popularly endorsed products are consumer goods, primarily branded sportswear such as Nike™. Interestingly, from the report’s findings, the most favoured athlete endorsers are male, within the tennis and golf disciplines. Furthermore, the endorsement contracts signed by the athlete celebrities ranged between 27 and 58 million (US Dollars) in 2015 alone. The implications, therefore, are that the quality of life and economic standards of living for the product endorsers could generally improve,
while the product sales for the endorsing companies increase, thereby significantly improving national outputs for the respective markets. While this is so, consolidated rankings regarding the economic contribution of endorsement deals to South African athletes could not be found. It could be worthwhile to pursue this avenue with a view to understand the financial contribution of athlete endorsements to South African economy.

Elberse and Verleun (2012:150) established that there are positive financial payoffs that accrue to marketing organisations for enlisting the services of athlete-celebrity endorsers. The researchers posit that celebrity endorsement deals are positively associated with an increase in sales of the endorsing firm’s focal brand. According to the scholars, on average, product sales for the endorsing organisation increase by approximately 2 percent every week after an endorsement contract is signed by an athlete endorser as compared with what was to be expected, based on historical sales.

A noticeable increase in the endorsing company’s stock returns has also been observed from the dual effects of the media announcement of an endorsement deal and the actual performance of the athlete endorser on the field (Elberse & Verleun 2012:150). At the primary level, increases in stock market prices (listed company shares) can be witnessed because of the excitement about partnerships between the athlete endorser and the endorsing company, leading to heightened investor confidence. For example, the announcement of the return of Michael Jordan to professional basketball in 1995 led to a 2 percent increase in stock returns, for the endorsed Nike™ brand, in the USA (Mathur, Mathur & Rangan 1997:69). Similarly, Farrell et al. (2000:8-12) observed that Tiger Woods’ athletic performance was a significant driver of stock returns for the Nike™ brand in 1999. However, Fizel, McNeil and Smaby (2008:248) stress the need for caution when interpreting the observed stock prices on the endorsement deal announcement dates for big name athlete celebrities, termed ‘megastars’ as the findings could be subject to prejudice that is associated with the popularity of the respective celebrity. At the secondary level, the market value of stocks could be influenced by the endorser’s reputation or status in their chosen field. In particular, statistically significant negative impacts are reported when celebrities are involved in undesirable events (Louie, Kulik & Jacobson 2001:19).

### 2.8 BENEFITS OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS

There are a number of advantages to using celebrities in advertising, whether running print, the Internet, radio or television advertisements. The key for companies is to ensure that the endorsing celebrity is relevant and has broad appeal to the public at large. The use of popular celebrities often works best because they naturally generate lots of attention. This section discusses some of
the benefits the celebrity endorsement process presents to both the consumer and the marketing organisation.

2.8.1 Benefits to the consumer

With the vast amount of advertisements consumers are exposed to through different media, it can be difficult for consumers to differentiate between brands. As such, the enlisting of an athlete as an endorser of a company’s brands can help to differentiate a firm’s products from competing ones, in the same market. Since many firms seek to portray themselves as leaders in their markets, the endorsement done by athletes can be vital for the dual role of reinforcing both the athlete and the endorsed brand as a winner (Elberse & Verleun 2012:151).

The use of celebrities in product endorsements helps consumers to remember the message of the advertisement and the relative brand name that is being endorsed (Erdogan 1999:291; White, Goddard & Wilbur 2009:323; Mwendwa & Mberia 2014:183). This is termed brand recall. Similarly, when a brand is paired with a celebrity in an advertisement, positive characteristics of the endorser that are familiar to consumers can be borrowed, thereby forming positive brand associations. Such mutual exchanges between endorsers and consumers have the potential to influence consumers when faced with the decision to choose between different brands (Ilicic & Webster 2011:230).

The association between the celebrity and the brand allows the brand to inherit some of the characteristics possessed by the celebrity. Similarly, Carlson and Donavan (2008:154) advocate that brands benefit from association with endorsers when consumers have a connection with the celebrity endorser in an advertisement. For example, once consumers identify certain traits in a celebrity, such as athletic achievements in the field of play, they are more likely to agree and remember the assertions made by such athletes when a sports related brand or product is advertised. Relevant in this respect is the need for consumers to ‘bask in reflected glory’ by communicating their association with their favourite athlete celebrities.

Silvera and Austad (2004:1509) pinpoint that the use of celebrities in advertising can result in better evaluations of advertised products and brands. By extension, notable achievements by athletes in their field of expertise can provide consumers with the re-assurance about the quality of the endorsed brand (Elberse & Verleun 2012:150). This is because consumers view celebrities as specimens of success; hence, they aspire to be like them. As such, the consumption of those brands that are endorsed by successful athletes is an indirect signal of good product quality. Moreover, Muda et al. (2010:635) assert that purchases of an endorsed brand represent more than
just acquiring a product, but rather the acquisition of a brand used by individuals of a certain class or social standing in community. Thus, the acquisition of the brand endorsed by a celebrity in an advertisement not only means purchasing of quality products but also presents the consumer with the opportunity to fulfil the need for uniqueness by adopting the lifestyle and standards upheld by their favourite athlete-celebrity.

Consumers tend to pay attention to marketing communication sources they have similar characteristics to or with which they are familiar. According to Schiffman et al. (2014:225), celebrities can serve as frames of comparative reference for consumers when faced with decisions to purchase the endorsed brands or products. Celebrities are a good reference group since they enjoy admiration from fans, stemming from the lifestyle and other possessions that might appear to be admirable to consumers. As such, celebrities can serve as both a benchmark and a worthy imitation by consumers. Udo and Nwulu (2015:82) further affirm that the celebrity endorser can influence the evaluation of marketing messages significantly since consumers often look for someone they feel a sense of similarity to. Thus, when a celebrity appears to be using a product or brand in an advertisement, it then becomes easier for consumers to adopt that product or brand since the person they admire is seen to be recommending its usage.

### 2.8.2 Benefits to the marketer

The use of celebrity endorsers is widespread, as marketers believe that using celebrities is worthwhile in terms of gaining attention for the advertised brands (Pornpitakpan 2003:179). According to White et al. (2009:322), the use of celebrities to endorse products or brands assists brands to break through media clutter, thereby affording companies a better chance of communicating their messages to consumers in an effective way. Hollensen and Schimmelpfennig (2012:89) point to the association between a brand and a celebrity as key in ensuring that advertisements stand out from surrounding clutter since the affection consumers have for celebrities is important during brand evaluations. Within the same vein, Charbonneau and Garland (2010:102) assert that celebrity endorsers enable advertisements to stand out from the rest and thereby, improve the persuasive abilities of marketing communications by cutting through media noise.

Celebrity endorsement has the potential to enhance the credibility of brands (Chan, Ng & Luk 2013:168). This is because the credibility of a product endorser can simultaneously enhance consumer confidence in the abilities and features of the endorsed brand (Alam, Arshad & Shabbir 2012:583). Such transferability of celebrity trust elements onto the endorsed brand culminates into enhanced consumer-based equity of the brand, which comprises among other things, brand loyalty,
brand awareness, perceived quality and meaningful memories linked to the brand (Spry et al. 2011:883). Therefore, a positive association exists between credible product endorsers and the relative equity of the endorsed brand.

Celebrity endorsement assists marketers in altering the consequent reactions and behaviours of consumers such as the attitude of consumers towards the endorsed brand. According to Schiffman et al. (2014:204), consumers form a number of feelings and judgements when exposed to an advertisement. These feelings and judgement have the power to influence the attitude of consumers towards an advertisement, which can subsequently lead to positive attitude towards the brand. The resulting brand attitude can also exist because if the consumer likes what the athlete-celebrity does in their field of play, they are likely to also develop affection for the products or brand that the athlete-celebrity uses (Doss 2011:3). As such, an advertisement featuring a favoured celebrity has the potential to induce positive attitudes towards the particular advertisement, culminating in positive attitude towards the endorsed brand.

Celebrity endorsement has proven to increase the sales of endorsed brands. This was clear in the case of Nike™ collaborating with Tiger Woods in 2000. According to Chung, Derdender and Srinivasan (2013:273), Nike™ sales rocketed to 996 000 golf balls per month after the company initiated a partnership with Tiger Woods, which resulted in additional profits of 103 million (US dollars) in the period between 2000 and 2010. As such, an endorsement by an athlete-celebrity at the peak of his or her career can increase consumer intentions to purchase the endorsed brand.

While the benefits of celebrity endorsement are well documented in this section, the possible pitfalls that could be associated with employing the services of celebrity endorsers are equally notable in the marketing literature. With this in mind, the next section discusses the risks associated with celebrity endorsement.

2.9 RISKS OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS

Although celebrity endorsement delivers proven benefits to both consumers and marketers alike, utilising this marketing communication strategy, like any other, is not without inherent drawbacks. This section attempts to document the most striking risks associated with the use of celebrities as product endorsers since such risks have been cited as having deleterious effects on the image of the brand and company and in that way, impacting negatively on product purchases and sales.
2.9.1 Negative publicity of the celebrity endorser

One of the risks associated with celebrity endorsement is the negative publicity surrounding the miscues and scandals of celebrity endorsers. Charbonneau and Garland (2010:102) highlight that public controversy surrounding a celebrity endorser can potentially damage the endorsed brand. This is because if a celebrity is strongly associated with the brand, then any negative publicity about the celebrity can inevitably spill over to the endorsed brand. Francis and Yazdanifard (2013:37) mention that since companies cannot control the private lives of their contracted athlete-celebrity endorsers, there is always a potential for negative publicity. Regrettably, such events can lead to withering of the equity of the endorsing company, especially so with new brands that are looking to make their mark. As such, the image and equity of the endorsed brand are vulnerable in the case of high-profile celebrity scandals.

A plethora of companies have been affected by negative publicity from celebrity misdeeds such as the involvement of celebrity endorsers in the use of illegal or performance enhancing drugs (also termed doping scandals) that inhibit fair play on the field as well as other litigation matters. Related examples of athlete celebrities’ scandals include Maria Sharapova, who tested positive for the use of performance enhancing substances at the 2016 Australian Tennis Open championship as well as Lance Armstrong, an Olympic cyclist who was implicated in an illegal drug use scandal in 2012. Similarly, prominent golfer, Tiger Woods was in the spotlight for misdeeds relating to his publicised extramarital affairs in November 2009. On the local front, in February 2013 the South African Paralympic athlete-celebrity, Oscar Pistorius, procured a great proportion of local and international media publicity after being charged with the murder of his beauty pageant fiancé, Reeva Steenkamp. Interestingly, the collective effects of the reported set of events committed by the four athlete endorsers of the Nike™ brand seemed to be even greater since in all cases, the athletes where perceived by the media as being blameworthy. Subsequently, the media has shone a negative light on the Nike™ brand in response to the actions of the respective athlete endorsers, thereby diminishing the credibility of both the athletes, the brand as well as the endorsing organisation (Johansson & Sparredal 2002:25).

2.9.2 Overshadowing the endorsed brand

Celebrity endorsers have the potential to overshadow the brand during the endorsement process, this being the result of what is referred to as the vampire effect (Mwendwa & Mberia 2014:185). The vampire effect occurs when a celebrity endorser grabs the attention of the target audience to him or herself, rather than to the product or brand, as originally intended (Kuvita & Karlicek 2014:17). This usually occurs if the celebrity endorser has greater star value than the actual brand
being endorsed in an advertisement. Sometimes the effect of megastars can lend itself to advertising messages becoming a promotion for the celebrity rather the brand per se (Francis & Yazdanifard 2013:37). While a clear case of athlete-celebrity overshadowing could not be identified from the literature, Doss (2011:5) cited the celebrity endorsement advertisement by Pepsi™ whereby Beyonce Knowles, a popular music artist inevitably outshone the brand, leading to a discontinuation of the endorsement relationship with the artist since the advertisement was drawing attention away from the brand and more to the endorser.

To resolve the problem of overshadowing, advertisers should choose to use a celebrity endorser who attracts attention and enhances the sales message, yet does not overshadow the brand (Johansson & Sparredal 2002:22). This can be accomplished if a celebrity endorser is not permitted to appear in multiple other stimuli, which all compete to form a link with the celebrity endorser. While the advertiser intends for an associative link to develop between the celebrity and the endorsed brand, overshadowing suggests that the celebrity endorser is most likely to build a link with the most dominating stimulus, which might not necessarily be the featured brand. Therefore, while not sidestepping the other, both the celebrity and the brand should be the two strongest elements in the advertisement.

2.9.3 Overuse of a celebrity endorser

Although many celebrities are contracted by companies to endorse multiple brands and products, such a practise delivers potential risk. Multiple brand endorsements involve a celebrity endorsing different brands or products either for the same or for different organisations. For example, athlete celebrities such as David Beckham and Tiger Woods are known to endorse different brands across the world such as Gillette™, Samsung™, Adidas™ and Rolex™, Upper Deck™ and Tag Heuer™ (Dix et al. 2010:37). According to Tripp et al. (1994:535), multiple endorsements by a celebrity often culminate in consumers questioning the motives of the celebrity. In agreement, Ilicic and Webster (2011:231) point out that consumers often evaluate celebrity endorsements by asking about the causal reasons. One of the questions consumers ask is the reason behind a celebrity endorsing a particular brand, while the other question relates to whether or not the celebrity truly believes in the positive characteristics of the product or brand they are endorsing. Without a doubt, the interrogation is hinged on whether a multiple brand endorser really believes in the brand or they are driven simply by financial indulgence. As a result, a celebrity endorser who endorses multiple brands runs the risk of ruining his or her own reputation, further to that of the endorsed brands.
In order to solve the problem of consumers questioning the motives of celebrities for engaging in multiple endorsements, marketers ought to ensure that the personality of the endorser directly matches that of the brand (Srivastava 2011:103). Nonetheless, it is worth noting that a celebrity endorsing one brand stands a better chance of being believable and not having his or her credibility questioned.

2.9.4 Mismatch with the endorsed brand

According to Till’s (1998:404) study on associative learning, there should be association or linkage between brands and audiences if a celebrity endorsement is to be successful. The scholar’s research showed that celebrity endorsement stands a better chance of being more effective when there is congruence with the endorsed brand. In other words, the fact that a celebrity is famous in his or her field of expertise does not necessarily mean that he or she will fit any brand or that consumers will feel a connection with that particular celebrity. In the absence of best fit between the endorser, the audience and the endorsed brand, the chance of the endorsement process succeeding actually diminishes. This is because when consumers evaluate product advertisements featuring celebrities, they look for similarities between the endorsed brand, themselves and the celebrity endorser. However, it could happen that when there is lack of similarity among this triad, consumers could find it difficult to believe the advertisement or assertions made about the brand.

The seminal work of McCracken (1989:311) suggests that the mismatch between the product and the endorser is the biggest challenge faced by most firms when attempting to select the most suitable celebrity to endorse their brands. In agreement, Srivastava and Arora (2014:172) highlighted the negative effects a mismatch between an endorser and the endorsed brand could have on both the endorser and the brand. First, a mismatch between a product and the celebrity endorser in an advertisement could lead to consumers questioning the motives for such an endorsement message. Secondly, a mismatch has the potential to bring the credibility of the brand and that of the celebrity endorser into questionable disrepute (Simsek 2014:1044). Thirdly, a mismatch could potentially results in financial losses from the endorsement process in addition to damages to the image of the endorsed brand. Furthermore, the mismatch between the endorser and the endorsed brand has the potential to induce a negative attitude towards the advertisement (Srivastava & Arora 2014:172). Therefore, marketers should focus on finding the right fit between the characteristics of the endorser, brand and the audience with a view to increase the likelihood of getting returns on the celebrity endorsement investment.
2.9.5 Financial risk

Schiffman et al. (2014:155) define financial risk as “the perceived uncertainty as to whether the product or brand is worth the cost”. During the endorsement process, financial risk exists with regard to the astronomical costs of launching an endorsement deal, which might not always match the efforts of the celebrity endorser in promoting the brand. The high cost of endorsement deals suggests that marketers expect to get far more value from the endorsement than simply the use of an ingenious executional strategy designed to attract consumer attention. Notwithstanding the popularity, many advertisements utilising celebrity endorsers do not live up to advertisers’ expectations. Interestingly, the endorsers who appear to have the highest potential tend to be the most popular and, therefore, the most expensive to contract for product endorsements. According to the press release from the University of California (2009:1), there was a reported financial loss of 12 billion (US dollars) net profits after tax by the shareholders of Nike™ as well as Gatorade™ among other sponsors as a result of the Tiger Woods’ extramarital affairs’ scandal. Therefore, since companies invest millions of dollars in endorsements involving celebrity athletes, it is important for companies to be cautious regarding their endorser choice decisions because of the inherent financial losses that could be incurred after an unsuccessful endorsement relationship (Agrawal & Kamakura 1995:56).

In summary, celebrity endorsements are inherently unstable, considering the fallibility of product endorsers as human beings. For instance, it is possible that celebrity endorsers can lose popularity over time, pass away or simply change their beliefs about the marketer’s product or brand, resulting in a contradictory image with the endorsed brand. On the other hand, some consumers could become sceptical as to whether celebrity endorsers actually use the endorsed product. Nevertheless, while there are inherent risks in harnessing the services of celebrity endorsers, the continued practice of using celebrities signals that marketers believe the risks are worth taking even though research findings are equivocal about the ability of celebrities to stimulate actual purchase behaviour (Erdogan & Kitchen 1998:17). Therefore, if used appropriately, celebrity endorsers can serve a valuable role in developing brand equity and enhancing a product’s competitive position within the marketplace.

Having deliberated on the nature of celebrity endorsements, it is necessary at this stage to identify the theoretical foundations of this persuasive marketing communication strategy. Therefore, the next section alludes to theories used in celebrity endorsement research with a view to set the undertones for this research.
Chapter 2: Celebrity endorsers' credibility

2.10 CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT THEORIES

The debate around which celebrity endorsement process works best is guided by key endorsement theories. Generally, celebrity endorsement theories can be grouped into two, as shown in Figure 2.3.

![Figure 2.3: Classification of celebrity endorsement theories](image)

In the literature reviewed, the celebrity endorsement theories could be classified into two continuums, explaining the relationship between the brand, the consumer and the celebrity endorser. The two categories include the product or situation theories as well as the celebrity selection theories. The next section examines the constituents of these two groups of theories in detail in view of providing the reader with clarity regarding the underlying theories used in persuasive marketing communication. Ultimately a categorisation of either the product or situation theories as well as the celebrity selection theories facilitated an underlying theory for this study.

2.10.1 Product or situation theories

Product or situation theories deal with situations and circumstances involving a company’s products and target audience (Liu 2009:69). In particular, the elaboration likelihood model as well as the meaning transfer model are significant theories in this category. The two theories are explained next.
2.10.1.1 The elaboration likelihood model (ELM)

Figure 2.4 illustrates the ELM.

![Diagram of the Elaboration Likelihood Model](image)

Figure 2.4: The Elaboration likelihood model (Griffin 2009:194)

According to Schiffman *et al.* (2014:214), a number of strategies have been used in the past to explain the process of attitude change after exposure to a communication message. In particular, Petty and Cacioppo (1986:124-125) shed light on the precincts of the ELM in social psychology research. The ELM emphasises the extent to which a person carefully thinks about issue-relevant arguments contained in a persuasive communication message (Griffin, Ledbetter & Sparks 2015:188). The model suggests that the level of consumer persuasion by marketing communication is highly influenced by factors such as the type of audience, message-processing approach as well as the expected persuasion outcome. The ELM distinguishes between the central route as well as the peripheral route to persuasion.

- **Central route to persuasion**

Under the central route, persuasion results from a person’s careful and thoughtful consideration of the true merits of the information presented in support of a product being advertised (Schiffman *et al.* 2014:183). The central route involves a high level of message elaboration in which the individuals receiving the message generate a great amount of cognition about the arguments.
O’Keefe (2008:1476) states that in the central route to persuasion, the processing of messages depends on the content and quality thereof, such that receivers are willing and able to engage in extensive thinking about what is presented in an advertisement before taking the decision whether to believe it or not.

According to Petty and Cacioppo (1990:367), under the central route to persuasion, the receivers’ ability to review and think about arguments presented in an advertisement culminates in a change in attitudes. Usually, these attitudes tend to last for a long time because of good evidence and sound reasoning that is presented and processed from the advertisement; thereby, forming a positive after-thought and successful persuasion outcome. Thus, the strength of the argument presented determines the likelihood of the change in attitude. For example, when the message content is found to be positive by the recipient, a strong message evaluation results, thereby leading to the formation of favourable attitude change than when the message content is weak (Whittler & Spira 2002:292). Attitude change is likely to occur when the consumer is highly motivated to learn about the product and its related features. According to Griffin et al. (2015:188), under the central route to persuasion, attitude change is likely to be enduring, resistant and predictive of ultimate behaviour because of the scrutiny the audiences place on the message content itself, rather than the credibility of the source.

- **Peripheral route to persuasion**

When a consumer’s motivation and product assessment skills are low, learning and attitude change tend to occur through the peripheral route (Schiffman et al. 2014:183). According to Petty and Cacioppo (1990:368), when individuals make decisions to either accept or reject an idea, the characteristics of the individual who is delivering the message take pre-eminence towards the acceptance of the communication message. In this case, the positive characteristics of the source can have a favourable effect when the recipient of the persuasion message is unable or not motivated to learn about the marketing communication message. A consistent theme emerging in advertising theory is that both cognitive and behavioural responses under low-involvement situations can be facilitated by source cues with which the consumer identifies. Priester and Petty (2003:409) emphasise that in a situation where an individual does not relate to the message presented or does not enjoy thinking (low cognition), factors such as credibility play a key role in changing attitudes of the recipients. O’Keefe (2008:1477) affirms that under such circumstances, the receiver of the message uses factors such as credibility of the source to judge the message being presented.
The peripheral route suggests that the perceived expertise of the sender or endorser of the message guides the receivers. Put simply, a positive source is able to enhance audience persuasion regardless of the strength of the argument (Pornpitakpan & Francis 2001:79). In short, the views of the endorser become those of the audience in the peripheral route to persuasion, especially in the case of low-involvement products or brands. Therefore, marketers take advantage of this strategy by using celebrities to appeal to consumers in the form of celebrity endorsement. Nevertheless, the ELM has been difficult to replicate across studies owing to the inconclusiveness with regard to the use of terms and the logical aspects relating to either the central and peripheral arguments in persuasive messages (Kitchen et al. 2014:2043). In light of this, alternative theories have been developed to aid the understanding of celebrity endorsement research.

### 2.10.1.2 The meaning transfer model

The meaning transfer model developed by McCracken (1989) explains how culture influences the way consumers view the world and ultimately themselves (Fleck, Korchia & Le Roy 2009:2). The theory advocates that for endorsement to work, celebrities should carry with them associations and meanings to the process, which come from the roles they play as actors or achievers in their respective fields of play as sporting personalities (Halonen-Knight & Hurmerinta 2010:453). McCracken (1989:315) identifies three stages in the model, which explain how meaning is transferred during the celebrity endorsement process as illustrated in Figure 2.5.

![Diagram of the Meaning Transfer Model](image_url)

**Figure 2.5:** The Meaning transfer model (McCracken 1989:315)

The senders of marketing communication messages hire celebrities or athletes assuming that people first “consume” the images of celebrities and then “consume” products associated with
those celebrities (Charbonneau & Garland 2010:108). McCracken (1989:314) highlights three stages that express the important role that celebrities play in the endorsement process to make it effective. These stages help researchers to understand how the meanings that celebrities possess are acquired and transferred during the endorsement process. The three stages of the meaning transfer model are discussed next.

Stage 1 of the Meaning transfer model begins with a firm identifying and choosing a celebrity with powerful meanings to associate with a product or brand (Grossman 1997:191). The nominated celebrity acquires meanings from their own culturally constituted environment. McCracken (1989:317) suggests that a celebrity aids the endorsement process by carrying with them meanings that in turn work as reference points of association for audiences in an advertisement. Ideally, the celebrity endorser attains an association from outside the endorsement and carries these associations with him or her to the endorsement process, thereby transferring this association to a product or a brand (Halonen-Knight & Hurmerinta 2010:453).

The rationale for using celebrities instead of unpopular individuals would be that celebrities are able to deliver meanings in a subtle, yet powerful way owing to the roles they play in their respective careers of popularity. According to Choi, Lee and Kim (2005:86), celebrities such as athletes exemplify a collection of culturally relevant images, symbols and values. Such symbolic artefacts represent unique sets of cultural meanings, which are contained in celebrities such as status, lifestyle, personality, gender, class and age (McCracken 1989:312). An athlete-celebrity is able to transfer meaning through his or her achievements on the sporting field by consistently producing winning performances, thereby enabling the borrowing of those achievements to a product or brand, through association. Therefore, these cultural meanings are transferred from an athlete to a product and ending off with the consumers. Thus, it is important for the sender of a marketing communication message to create a tie between an athlete and a product and this is achieved when the attributes of the athlete can be directly transferred to the product (Lear et al. 2009:310).

Stage 2 of the Meaning transfer model involves a marketing or advertising firm identifying symbolic properties in their product to match with symbolic meaning that has been transferred from an identified celebrity (McCracken 1989:316). It is important at this stage that there is no mismatch between an endorser and the properties of the brand or product because related endorsements have a greater brand meaning than unrelated endorsements (Chan et al. 2013:168). For example, sports shoes, at best, are endorsed by a sportsman or sportswoman rather than by a celebrity musician. This stage also involves active participation of the sender of marketing
communication messages in discarding the meanings that are not sought after, from the celebrity with a view to illuminate only those celebrity meanings that are shared and understood to be of cultural significance in the eyes of consumers (Fleck et al. 2009:2).

Stage 3 of the Meaning transfer model describes the meanings transferred from a product to the consumer. Consumers are constantly looking for meanings in the object world of goods to create complete mental images for themselves (McCracken 1989:316). This world of everyday experiences presents itself to individuals shaped and constituted by the beliefs and assumptions of culture (Schlecht 2003:4). The process is completed when the consumer purchases a product or a brand, thus resulting in the consumer acquiring the transferred image of the celebrity endorsing the product or brand. Replication of the meaning transfer model in previous works have followed a case-study analysis approach, while also yielding conflicting results (Halonen-Knight & Hurmerinta 2010:452-460; Fleck et al. 2009:2; Choi et al. 2005:85-98). Moreover, the theory fell short in that it failed to provide insight into which specific attributes render a celebrity to be a successful endorser of products and brands.

The next section delves into a different set of theories, which explain the characteristics consumers look for when evaluating advertisements featuring celebrity endorsers. An understanding of the celebrity selection theories is useful since it is tied directly to the effectiveness of a marketing communication message. As such, the next section discusses the celebrity endorsement selection theories.

2.10.2 Celebrity selection theories

Celebrity endorsers have been found to produce positive responses towards advertising and greater purchase intentions than non-celebrity endorsers (Charbonneau & Garland 2010:103). Drawing from this, numerous scholars have attempted to provide baseline criteria for consideration upon choosing the best candidate for endorsing products and brands. The most commonly cited criterion include trustworthiness (Spry et al. 2011:889), recognisability and affordability (Charbonneau & Garland 2005a:3), ability to generate minimal risk of collapse of the advertising campaign (Mwendwa & Mberia 2014:181) as well as best match with target audiences (Charbonneau & Garland 2010:103). In view of this, a plethora of celebrity endorsement theories have been generated to assist the decision-making concerning selecting the celebrity with the best set of attributes to endorse a particular product or brand. At best, the theories that have been put forward suggest that the endorser’s credibility should be examined first, before selecting a typical celebrity endorser. In particular, the product match-up hypothesis as well as the Source attributes theory are discussed next.
2.10.2.1 The product match-up hypothesis

The product match-up hypothesis (also termed the Celebrity-product fit theory) was put forward by Kamins (1990) in view of expounding on the harmonious match between an athlete-celebrity endorser and the product being endorsed (Liu 2009:78). To establish effective marketing communication messages, advertisers are expected to match the product or company’s image with the characteristics of the target market as well as the attributes of the celebrity. In addition, the foundation of the product match-up hypothesis is based on the idea that the physical attractiveness of the endorser or the image thereof should align with the product. Much of the literature on the match between the endorser and the endorsed product has focused on the physical attractiveness of the endorser. This is based on the idea that attractive celebrities are best suited for endorsing those products used to enhance physical beauty (Till & Busler 1998:576). Nevertheless, the product match-up hypothesis posits that the effectiveness of a spokesperson or endorser not only rests upon the attractiveness of the celebrity endorser, but also the likability of the endorser when endorsing a product (Kamins & Gupta 1994:571).

From a theoretical point of view, celebrities are the most appropriate reference group to consumers (Trehan & Trehan 2011:143). According to McCracken (1989:312), consumers generally aspire to be like their favourite celebrities and as such, a celebrity perceived to be attractive by consumers is likely to be a good point of referral for these consumers when evaluating products enhancing beauty. In agreement, Kamins (1990:5) suggests that the physical attractiveness of a celebrity endorser can play a key role in swaying consumers’ attitudes towards the endorsed product or brand, that is if the characteristics of the product matches with the image of the celebrity. Choi et al. (2005:86) further contend that regardless of how expensive it could be to select the appropriate spokesperson or endorser, it is important to have a celebrity that best represents the symbolic properties of the actual product being endorsed. This view highlights the importance of matching the image of the celebrity with that of the endorsed product in order to create an association between the product and endorser in the consumers’ minds.

Till and Busler (1998:576) point to evidence of celebrity endorsement that did not work out as a result of a mismatch between a celebrity and their endorsed products by using the example of George Scott, a stage and film celebrity actor from the USA to endorse various products within the Renault™ Motors range. Although the cited celebrity was well liked by the audience, the endorsement contract failed because of the absence of a match between the celebrity endorser and the endorsed product. In this vein, Kamins (1990:5) highlights that the visual imagery contained in an advertisement is as important as the verbal arguments put forward in an advertisement. A
case example to justify the match-up hypothesis is a situation when a celebrity is featured in an advertisement about a facial cream. Inclusion of the celebrity in that particular advertisement could suggest to some consumers that the use of the product could also enhance their physical attractiveness.

While the product match-up hypothesis was propounded originally as a comprehensive theory, it has not been found universally effective. This is because only the study by Kahle and Homer (1985:956) yielded a significant result out of the five foundational studies that applied the product match-up hypotheses while modelling purchase intention as the dependent variable (Kamins 1990; Kamins & Gupta 1994; McDaniel 1999; Koernig & Page 2002). In addition, what was manipulated in the majority of the cited research was the congruence between different product categories (e.g. typewriter versus sports car) and the endorsing celebrities, instead of specific brands per se. Worse still, nearly all product categories manipulated in previous research were of unknown or fictitious brands. Therefore, owing to such inherent lack of validity, Ang and Dubelaar (2006:378) highlight that the product match-up hypothesis does not constitute a strong test of endorsement theory and does not offer ecological validity since in the real world, the focus of the advertiser is on the existing brand. In view of this shortcoming, the source attributes theory is examined next and thereby nominated as the underlying theory for this study.

2.10.2.2 The Source attributes theory

Johansson and Sparredal (2002:20) put forward elements of source attributes based on the Source credibility theory, Source attractiveness theory and the Source power theory. Each category influences the recipients’ attitude or behavioural response in different ways.

- The Source credibility theory

Ohanian (1990:46) illustrates trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness as the three predictors of a source’s credibility as illustrated in Figure 2.6.
Figure 2.6: Dimensions of the Source attributes theory (Ohanian 1990:46)

The Source credibility theory is the result of a landmark study by Hovland et al. (1953:355) in the field of social psychology. The theory helps to determine the conditions under which the endorser, as a source of a communication message can be persuasive. The Source credibility theory advocates that for a source to be effective, one key variable needed is credibility. Source credibility is defined as the perceived honesty and objectivity of the sponsor of communication by the receiver (Schiffman et al. 2014:224). Furthermore, the term is used to imply the communicator’s positive characteristics that affect the receiver’s acceptance of the message (Ohanian 1990:41; Liu 2009:75).

The Source credibility theory contends that the effectiveness of a message depends upon the perceived level of expertise and trustworthiness associated with an endorser or communicator (Ohanian 1990:46). Seno and Lukas (2007:125) affirm that both expertise and trustworthiness are the key attributes that form the basis of the Source credibility theory. Generally, celebrities are generally viewed by consumers as credible sources of information about the products or brands they endorse. As such, marketing communication information from a credible source influences beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and behaviour through a process known as internalisation. This occurs when the receiver adopts the opinions of a credible source since customers believe information from such a source is accurate. Therefore, it could be asserted that the communicator of the
marketing communication, which for the purpose of the study is a celebrity, needs to possess a certain level of expertise and trustworthiness.

Trustworthiness refers to the consumer’s confidence in the source for providing information in an objective and honest manner (Ohanian 1991:47). This dimension therefore, insinuates that the honesty and integrity of the spokesperson are invaluable, during the endorsement process (Till & Busler 1998:577). If a company wishes for the celebrity endorsers to be viewed as credible, then the consumers must perceive them to be trustworthy. Marketers capitalise on this by choosing athlete-celebrity endorsers that are perceived by consumers to be likable, honest and believable (Erdogan 1999:297). If the communicator is perceived as highly trustworthy, the opinionated message is also considered as being more persuasive and effective in producing both attitudinal and behavioural changes as shown in various studies (Pornpitakpan 2004:58; Silvera & Austad 2004:1516). As such, a highly trustworthy communicator produces an effective attitude change, while non-trusted communicators’ impact is proven to be immaterial. Nonetheless, of the two elements, perceptions of the communicator’s trustworthiness have been shown to produce a greater attitudinal change than expertise, in a majority of studies where Likert scales have been utilised (Ohanian 1990:47; Bhatt et al. 2012:22; Fink et al. 2012:18).

Yilmaz and Ersavas (2005:418) define expertise as “the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions”. The expertise dimension represents the authoritativeness, competence or qualifications of the source to endorse a product (Sertoglu et al. 2014:69). In the field of sport, expertise manifests itself through the performance of an athlete. If an athlete is excelling consistently on the field, this can result in alteration of consumers’ perceptions regarding that particular athlete in a positive manner. Ultimately, the athlete can be viewed as an expert in their particular domain (Koo, Ruihley & Dittmore 2012:148), thereby increasing the likelihood of consumers agreeing with the recommendations made by such athletes (Eisend & Langer 2010:529). As such, the choice of an athlete-celebrity based on his or her expertise in the sporting field enables them to be in a unique position to help a potential consumer to evaluate the products or services being promoted in an advertisement (Sertoglu et al. 2014:69).

- **The Source attractiveness theory**

The Source attractiveness theory is an extension of the Source credibility theory (McCracken 1989:310). While the Source attractiveness theory was formulated for early studies in communication, it was later applied in celebrity endorsement studies. Source attractiveness leads to persuasion through a process of identification (Koekemoer 2014:112), whereby the receiver is motivated to seek some type of relationship with the message source and thus adopts similar
beliefs, attitudes, preferences or behaviour (Johansson & Sparredal 2002:22). Advertisers have chosen celebrity endorsers based on the endorsers’ physical attractiveness with a view to gain from the dual effects of celebrity status and physical appeal. In the case of athlete-celebrity endorsers, attractiveness also covers not only the physical or facial beauty of the celebrity but also other embodiments of beauty such as sportsmanship, charm, grace and intelligence.

The attractiveness variable is multi-dimensional, implying that there are a myriad of definitions used to operationalise attractiveness. For example, the construct has been defined in terms of facial and physical attractiveness by scholars such as Baker and Churchill (1977:540), who utilised a semantic differential scale (attractive-unattractive) in their study. Relatedly, other scholars have operationalised the attractiveness dimension as widely encompassing similarity, familiarity and likeability traits (Friedman & Friedman 1979:64; Roy 2006:141; Gaied & Rached 2010:3). Similarity is the supposed resemblance between the source and the receiver while familiarity arises through knowledge of the source via repeated exposure (Liu 2009:77). On the other hand, likability occurs as a result of affection for the source due to the physical appearance, behaviour or other personal characteristics (Byrne et al. 2003:292).

The exhaustive literature review by Joseph (1982:18) summarises the experimental evidence in advertising and related disciplines regarding the impact of physically attractive communicators on opinion change, product evaluation and other dependent measures. The scholar concludes that physically attractive (rather than unattractive) communicators consistently are liked more and have a positive impact on products with which they are associated. There is no doubt that attractive celebrity endorsers enhance attitude towards advertising and brands.

- The Source power theory

The final category of source attributes is source power. Belch and Belch (2003:177-179) suggest that power can be used to induce communication receivers to respond to product advertisements using rewards and/or punishments. In other words, the source of marketing communication is able to use persuasive advocacy influence to acquire compliance from receivers. As explained under Section 2.4.1.3, source power is very difficult to apply in business to consumer based advertising, although this attribute could be used for spokespersons in personal selling scenarios (Byrne et al. 2003:292). Upon considering the nature of athlete-celebrity endorsements, source power was not considered to have a significant bearing in evoking the persuasiveness of marketing communication messages since celebrities are not able to administer rewards and punishments to consumers directly. As a result, this research does not test the influence of source power in celebrity endorsement; hence, this variable was excluded from further study.
2.11 ATHLETE-ENDORSER CREDIBILITY

An athlete-celebrity endorser is defined as “a famous athlete that uses his or her acquired fame from the field of play to appear with a product in an advertisement” (Simmers et al. 2009:53). In other words, athlete-celebrity endorsers use the recognition from their professional achievements to bolster the image of specific goods and services. It is noteworthy that not all the celebrities prove to be successful endorsers, thus making the selection process more difficult. As a result, marketing organisations carefully select celebrities based on their overall credibility in the public domain. Table 2.2 provides a summary of studies that have applied the different elements of the source attributes theory albeit utilising different categories of celebrity endorsers.

Table 2.2: Studies applying the dimensions of the Source attributes theory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/s</th>
<th>Source attribute/s</th>
<th>Outcome variable/s</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White et al. (2009:330)</td>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>Celebrity image, Product image, Compatibility of celebrity and product</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>University students</td>
<td>Male athlete-celebrity endorsing athletic shoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spry et al. (2011:889)</td>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>Brand loyalty</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>University graduates</td>
<td>Male actor-celebrity endorsing Panasonic™ television and USB brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilicic and Webster (2011:233)</td>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td>Consumer-celebrity attachment, Attitude towards the brand, Attitude towards the advertisement, Purchase intentions</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Undergraduate Marketing students</td>
<td>Male actor-celebrity endorsing multiple brands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fink et al. (2012:16)</td>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>Athlete-product fit, Purchase intentions</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Undergraduate students</td>
<td>Male athlete-celebrities endorsers Gatorade™, an energy drink brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim, Lee and Prideaux (2014:136)</td>
<td>Trustworthiness的那个</td>
<td>Corporate image, Corporate credibility, Corporate loyalty, Attitude towards the brand, Attitude towards the advertisement, Purchase intentions</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Hotel guests</td>
<td>Male actor-celebrity endorsers Lotte Hotel &amp; Resort™, a hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muda et al. (2014:16)</td>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Undergraduate students</td>
<td>Female actor-celebrity endorsing SimplySiti™, skin care products</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The three dimensions, namely trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness were elected as the core attributes for the specific athlete-celebrity choice used in this study. This is because the
comprehensive Source attributes theory by Ohanian (1990:46) affirms that both source credibility (comprising trustworthiness and expertise) as well as attractiveness are important in explaining attitudinal change and the intention to purchase (Agrawal & Kamakura 1995:56). The implications for this study are that an understanding of the characteristics of the athlete endorser can be useful in providing a holistic conceptualisation of their credibility in terms of the advertising and marketing communication context. Sallam (2011:65) identifies an endorser’s credibility as an antecedent of attitude towards the advertisement and purchase intention. In view of this, the next section discusses attitude towards the celebrity-endorsed advertisement.

2.12 ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ADVERTISEMENT

Ranjbarian et al. (2010:114) assert that celebrities such as athletes, are often used as endorsers or spokespeople for companies to endorse products and brands in order to affect consumer attitudes. According to Sallam and Wahid (2012:56), an attitude is “a permanent, general assessment of people’s objects, issues or advertisements”. Moreover, attitude towards an advertisement can be defined as the “pre-disposition to respond in a favourable or unfavourable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure situation” (Solomon et al. 2006:254). According to Schiffman et al. (2014:204), an advertisement can contain both affective reactions (feelings of happiness created by an advertisement) and evaluations (an advertisement’s credibility or informativeness). Nevertheless, attitudes are permanent because they tend to last over time. Therefore, the idea is to create a favourable attitude towards a specific endorsement advertisement in order to leave consumers with a positive feeling after processing the advertisement.

Since athlete celebrities around the world are seen as role models, they bring with them the admiration from fans, which in turn translate into feeling good about the advertisement in which they appear (Muda et al. 2010:638). This in turn could lead to consumers finding the marketing communication message credible. As such, when a credible athlete endorses a product or service in an advertisement, this produces a ripple effect on the attention given towards the endorsement advertisement. Ohanian (1990:47) asserts that when a celebrity is perceived to be credible, their recommendations have the power to generate changes in consumers’ opinions and attitudes. In addition, Lafferty et al. (2002:2) affirm that when consumers evaluate an advertisement, one of the key variables they use to make these judgements is by way of inspecting the credibility of the endorser. This in turn, determines the level of persuasiveness in the advertisements.

This study focuses on explaining the relationship between athlete-endorser credibility with attitude towards the advertisement and purchase intention, with the latter being the outcome variable for this study. The rationale for electing purchase intentions as the dependent variable in this study
lies in that intentions to purchase are a prime determinant of the actual purchase behaviour (Ajzen 1989:243). The next section delves into an examination of consumers’ purchase intentions towards the consumptions of athlete-celebrity endorsed products.

### 2.13 PURCHASE INTENTIONS

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975:307) define behavioural intentions as the degree to which a person has formulated conscious plans to perform or not perform some futuristic behaviour, such as purchasing a product or brand. Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman (1996:32) interpret behavioural intentions as either favourable or unfavourable, based on the customer’s perceptions. Favourable behavioural intentions are always desirable since they lead to positive outcome measures such as the forging of bonds with the company (Schiffman et al. 2014:202). In consumer behaviour terms, this factor is commonly measured by consumers’ inclination to buy and to return for additional purchases, which also contributes to re-patronage intentions as well as loyalty. This study concurs with several researchers who use intentions as a proxy for actual purchase behaviour (Ilicic & Webster 2011:234; Wahid & Sallam 2011:24; Muda et al. 2014:15). This is because the intentions construct is a decent indicator of behaviour as it expresses the effort that the individuals are prepared to make in order to develop a particular action.

The construct purchase intentions refers to users’ willingness and readiness to purchase and consume the endorsed products or brand in future encounters (Balabanis, Reynolds & Simintiras 2006:218). Purchase inclinations are formed because of psychological influences as well as normative or external influences. The stronger the intention a person has to engage in a particular behaviour, the higher the possibility that he/she could actually perform that behaviour. This implies that purchase intention is carefully reasoned and transformed into buying activity based on an individual’s needs and experiences at a given time (Malhotra & McCort 2001:241). Therefore, when marketers understand how customers evaluate product decisions and the consequences of such evaluations on future purchase intentions, they can better allocate resources to increase loyalty towards the endorsed product. Interestingly, Solomon et al. (2006:157) note that consumers who are asked to respond to an intention to purchase scale appear to make use of those positively evaluated products and/or services as contrasted to consumers who are not asked similar questions.

The next section elaborates on how selected hypotheses statements were formulated for this study, culminating in the development of a research model for testing.
2.14 RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Figure 2.7 is posited as the conceptual model that was tested in this study.

![Conceptual Model Image]

Figure 2.7: Model of consumers’ purchase intentions towards an athlete-celebrity endorsed product

According to the research model, endorser credibility can be addressed in more than one way, namely through evaluating the trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness of the endorser. While this is so, the study emulates the notion that endorser credibility positively influences attitude towards the specific advertisement where the athlete-celebrity appears endorsing the product. Effectually, once a consumer demonstrates favourable attitudes towards the endorsement advertisement, favourable intentions towards purchasing the athlete-endorsed product could result. As such, the following one-tailed hypotheses statements were formulated as the foundational anchor for testing the research model developed in this study:

\[ H_0: \text{Sports consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product is not a six-variable structure comprising trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, endorser credibility, attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement and purchase intentions.} \]

\[ H_1: \text{Sports consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product is a six-variable structure comprising trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, endorser credibility, attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement and purchase intentions.} \]
Consistent with the linkages shown on the research model in Figure 2.7 and the initial null and alternative hypotheses, the study went further to explain the linkages among the variables leading to a development of five one-tailed hypotheses for testing.

According to Erdogan (1999:297), the trustworthiness of a celebrity is key when making a choice regarding the most appropriate endorser for products and brands. Essentially, this is because honesty, dependability and believability are important qualities consumers look for when evaluating claims and messages from celebrities. Without trust, there is a very high possibility that consumers could find it impossible to believe the claims made by celebrity endorsers. As such, Priester and Petty (2003:409) emphasise that when consumers have confidence in messages delivered by trusted celebrities, they are likely to believe the information provided, accept their conclusions and thereby avoid the tedious process of scrutinising marketing communication messages. In other words, trustworthiness is an important factor that adds both validity and credibility to the claims of the product endorser. Ohanian (1990:41) further states that trustworthy endorsers add psychological safety to the overall evaluations of consumers. As such, a trustworthy endorser can result in consumers having greater willingness to accept messages and further take a favourable disposition towards the athlete endorser and his or her endorsed product. Therefore, it is against this background that the following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

\[ Ho_2: \text{Trustworthiness does not positively influence athlete-endorser credibility.} \]

\[ Ha_2: \text{Trustworthiness positively influences athlete-endorser credibility.} \]

Scholars have been known to delineate the credibility celebrity endorsers based on their successes in a specialised field (Samat, Hashim and Yusoff 2014:147). Van der Waldt et al. (2009:104) argue that the perceived expertise of an endorser is the most important component in the endorsement process. In addition, Amos, Holmes and Strutton (2008:219) highlight that endorser credibility is influenced by the receiver's perceptions of the source’s expertise. When consumers are exposed to a source, they are inclined to concur unquestionably with the recommendations of an expert endorser since expert endorsers are believed to hold valid assertions about the endorsed product. As such, the use of celebrity athletes in endorsement puts them in a better position to serve as spokespersons for products or brands because of their perceived expertise in their field of sports. Therefore, consumers’ perceptions of the athlete-celebrity’s expertise are expected to predict directly the credibility of the endorser. As such, it is against this background that the following hypotheses were formulated for the study:
Ho3:  Expertise does not positively influence athlete-endorser credibility.

Ha3:  Expertise positively influences athlete-endorser credibility.

The seminal work conducted by Ohanian (1990:42) asserts that attractiveness is the single attribute that helps consumers to form an association between the endorsed brand, the endorser and the advertisement. According to McCracken (1989:311), when consumers are exposed to an endorser through advertisements, they tend to look for similarities with the endorsers in terms of likeability and familiar features. As such, message receivers are inclined to like product endorsers because they possess some resemblance, making them attractive and to a certain extent, persuasive. According to Sertoglu et al. (2014:69), physically attractive endorsers are likely to be persuasive when delivering their messages or appearing on behalf of a product. This implies that the physical attributes of a celebrity endorser also play a pivotal role when consumers try to identify with the endorser. As such, athlete celebrities that are preferred, liked and believed are considered more credible product endorsers, than those who are not. Therefore, it is against this background that the following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

Ho4:  Attractiveness does not positively influence athlete-endorser credibility.

Ha4:  Attractiveness positively influences athlete-endorser credibility.

Lafferty et al. (2002:2) posit that when consumers evaluate an advertisement, one of the key variables they use to make such judgements is by way of inspecting the endorsers’ credibility. This in turn, determines the level of persuasiveness in the advertisements. Relatedly, Ohanian (1990:47) notes that when a celebrity is perceived to be credible, their recommendations have the power to generate changes in consumers’ opinions and attitudes. Oftentimes, the veneration that consumers hold for athlete celebrities translates into feeling good about the advertisements they endorse (Muda et al. 2010:638). This, in turn, could lead to consumers finding the marketing communication message credible. Put simply, when a credible athlete endorses a product or brand in an advertisement, this presents an affirmative, multiplier effect on the attention given towards that particular advertisement. Therefore, it is expected that athlete-endorser credibility could influence the attitude of consumers towards the endorsed advertisement as hypothesised below:

Ho5:  Athlete-endorser credibility does not positively influence consumers’ attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement.

Ha5:  Athlete-endorser credibility positively influences consumers’ attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement.
There is long-standing evidence around the attitude construct linking cognitive, affective and conative evaluations, with the latter incorporating behavioural intentions (Grewal & Levy 2010:97). Therefore, where positive attitudes are achieved, there is potential for fulfilled consumers to re-purchase and subject to context, pay higher prices for the endorsed brands. The study of Durriya and Zahid (1999:61) found a positive relationship between consumer attitudes towards different advertisements with purchase intentions. This view is shared by Muda et al. (2014:17), who established that there is a positive relationship between consumer attitudes towards advertisements being endorsed by their favourite celebrities with purchase intentions. As such, the following hypothesised relationships are investigated in this study:

\[ H_06: \] Attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement does not positively influence consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product.

\[ H_{a6}: \] Attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement positively influences consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product.

2.15 SYNOPSIS

This chapter provides an appropriate frame of reference for understanding the credibility of celebrity endorsers. The chapter begins with an outline of the basic communication process as well as the marketing communication process since they are key tools for explaining how audiences could be persuaded to believe the message and the source of those messages. An overview of the endorsement process is provided, explaining the use of different personalities that are utilised as product endorsers. Regular consumer endorsers, expert and celebrity endorsers are discussed as the three pre-eminent types of product endorsers. Moreover, a discussion on the different categories of celebrity endorsers is provided, which includes actors, fictitious characters as well as athletes.

The role of athlete endorsements to the triple bottom line as measured by financial, social and technological dimensions is elaborated on in this chapter bearing in mind the notion of sustainable business practices. In this synthesis, athlete-celebrity endorsement was found to be significant towards global economic growth through its contribution towards increased income for the product endorsers, sales revenue of the sponsoring organisations as well as a rise in stock market prices. In addition, athlete-celebrity endorsement contributes significantly towards the socio-
cultural and technological development of economies through employment creation and advances in manufacturing processes.

This chapter identified brand differentiation, brand recall, product quality signalling, referencing as well as brand association opportunities as the most plausible benefits of celebrity endorsement advertising to consumers. On the other hand, marketers reap rewards in terms of brand attention, brand credibility, positive attitude towards the endorsement advertisement, positive attitude towards the endorsed brand, purchase intentions as well as actual product sales. While numerous benefits were identified in this chapter, the review of the literature also revealed that celebrity endorsement is not immune to risks. Some of the risks associated with the endorsement process include overshadowing, financial loss and product mismatch. In addition, the chapter identifies two categories of celebrity endorsement theories, namely product or situation theories as well as the celebrity endorsement selection theories. Product or situation theories relate to the circumstance or type of products being endorsed whilst celebrity selection theories relate to the specific traits and characteristics of the product endorser. Based on a synthesis of these theories, the Source attributes theory was elected as the underlying theory for this study, comprising elements of both the Source credibility theory and the Source attractiveness theory. Moreover, hypotheses are formulated in tandem with the conceptual model for testing.

The next chapter is a discussion of the research design and methodology followed in this work. This comprised an elaboration on the research philosophy, approach, design, sampling methods, data collection procedures as well as the data analysis strategy utilised in this research.
“There is no celebrity quite as powerful as the local, home-grown celebrity”

(Tony Wilson)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Research methodology refers to the various sequential steps adopted by a researcher in studying the problem with certain objectives in mind (Zikmund et al. 2013:618). It is the methodical or systematic investigation into an identified subject of study. The methods used in this study are consistent with Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill’s (2009:108) research onion as illustrated in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: The research onion (Saunders et al. 2009:108)

The research onion is useful in guiding a researcher regarding the stages to be covered in the development of a research strategy. The layers of the research onion comprise the research philosophy in Section 3.2, followed by research approach (Section 3.3) and research strategy...
(Section 3.4). In addition, the methodological choice to use a survey design within a single time horizon, termed the single cross-sectional survey is explained in Section 3.5 of this study. The techniques and procedures of data collection and analysis, which are at the heart of the onion are elaborated on between sections 3.6 and 3.10 of this study. An explanation of each of these elements of the research onion provided the required knowledge to conduct this study. Accordingly, every layer provides a detailed description of the research process and the different ways the research methodology can be designed, as well as the different contexts that particular research methodology could be applied (Saunders & Tosey 2012:59).

3.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

One of the most critical challenges confronting researchers is the selection and justification of the research philosophy (Neuman 2011:94). In theory, a research paradigm (also termed the research philosophy) refers to “a set of philosophical worldviews, assumptions, beliefs, values and methods within which research studies are conducted” (Creswell 2014:6). In other words, a research philosophy is a set of worldviews or a set of assumptions about how things work (Saunders et al. 2009:108). Since research philosophy is the first layer of the research onion (refer to Figure 3.1), implications are that, the way one researches the world is shaped primarily by how one views the world. Factors such as the nature and discipline area of the research, the beliefs of mentors and experts in a particular field of research or past research experience shape these worldviews. However, Saunders et al. (2009:109) states that the choice of which research philosophy to follow is influenced primarily by the way the researcher thinks. As such, two major research philosophies have been identified in the Western tradition of science, namely interpretivist (also termed anti-positivist) and positivist (also termed scientific).

3.2.1 Interpretivist research philosophy

The interpretivist research philosophy (also termed anti-positivist or the phenomenological paradigm) seeks to understand people (Wisker 2008:69). Interpretivism focuses on exploring the complexity of social phenomena with a view to gaining understanding. The purpose of research from the viewpoints of interpretivists is to understand and interpret everyday happenings (events), experiences and social structures as well as the values people attach to these phenomena (Collis & Hussey 2009:56-57). Interpretivists contend that only through the subjective interpretation of reality and intervention in the same, can that reality be fully understood (Saunders et al. 2009:108). According to Wisker (2008:69), in interpretivism the social world is constructed and given meaning by people, in a subjective manner. In addition, the researcher is part of what is observed and research is driven by personal interests.
3.2.2 Positivist research philosophy

According to Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004:17), positivism entails a belief that valid knowledge can only be produced based on direct observation by the senses and this would include the ability to measure and record what would be seen as knowledge. During empirical measurement, positivists maintain that it is possible to adopt a distant, detached, neutral and non-interactive position (Morris 2006:3). Such a position would enable the researcher to assume the role of an objective analyst by making detached interpretations about data. As such, the research approach followed by positivists most likely results in a study that is reliable, valid and representative. For the same reason, positivists prefer an analytical interpretation of quantifiable data, leading to the declaration by Saunders et al. (2009:114) that positivists are mainly concerned with providing research facts, rather than impressions.

This study is premised within the positivist paradigm since it sought to test and extract specific theory-based propositions from general accounts of empirical reality. The next section alludes to the specific frames of reasoning pursued in research.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

According to Zikmund et al. (2013:43) research approaches explain the logical process of deriving conclusion about a specific instance, based on a known, general premise or something known to be true. In particular, Kerlinger (1979:64) alludes to the use of theory to present a systematic view of relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining natural phenomena. Consequently, theory building plays a key role in providing a framework for analysis and the facilitation of efficient development of a particular field, as well as providing applicability to practical real world problems (Creswell 2014:59). While the research onion refers to the research approach as the second of its layers (refer to Figure 3.1), it is clear that inductive and deductive forms of theory building are the two frames of reference for approaching theory building in research.

3.3.1 Inductive theory building

Zikmund et al. (2013:44) emphasise that the starting point of inductive theory building is to make empirical observations, which is achieved by looking at the patterns in the collected data. This means that the inductive frame of reference requires the researcher to build theory, using data collected from participants. Usually, vast amounts of data are collected through open-ended questioning techniques. The process of collecting data does not follow any conceptual framework, implying that the focus of inductive research is formed only after the data has been collected (Hair
et al. 2013:217). Drawing from those observations, data are examined with a view to establishing meaningful themes or categories (Creswell 2014:65). Broad patterns then emerge from the themed or categorised data, thereby enabling the researcher to make generalisations or develop theory.

### 3.3.2 Deductive theory building

Deductive theory building requires the development of hypotheses at the beginning of a proposed study, based on pre-existing theory (Creswell 2014:59). Therefore, researchers guided by deductive research always look to test or verify theory, as opposed to developing it. As such, deductive theory building can be viewed as a movement from the general to the particular (Creswell 2014:60). In this instance, a researcher begins by developing the general theory and knowledge base, which is tested later against the specific knowledge that is gained empirically, from the research process. Effectively, a researcher is able to apply quantitative measurements to determine accepted levels of probability, using statistical significance measures of hypotheses testing (Saunders et al. 2009:125).

In this study, celebrity endorsement theories were identified and a research model was developed based on the reviewed literature. The theory enabled the formulation of hypotheses by grouping variables together using a series of logical relationships. Thereafter, a research instrument was developed whereby the study variables were operationalised and later subjected to empirical observation and measurement, with a view to either confirm or refute the stated hypothetical statements.

The following section describes the research strategy implemented in this study.

### 3.4 RESEARCH STRATEGY

The third layer of the research onion alludes to strategies (refer to Figure 3.1), which Malhotra (2010:170) classifies as the two strategies used in research, namely qualitative and quantitative research. Whereas qualitative research clarifies the vision and understanding of the marketing problem, quantitative research looks to quantify data by using some form of statistical analysis (Zikmund et al. 2013:134). Nonetheless, there is debate surrounding which strategy is superior to the other when conducting research.

Qualitative research provides insight and understanding of the problem setting. It is a useful strategy for clarifying a research problem since it provides vast amounts of data on possible causes, reasons, motivations and ways to address the problem (Malhotra 2010:171). Zikmund et al. (2013:132) suggest that qualitative researches address the objectives of a particular study through
techniques that allow the researcher to provide elaborate interpretations of the market phenomena without depending on numerical measurement. Therefore, it can be said that the qualitative research strategy focuses on discovering insights into decision problems and opportunities without including scientific-based facts or elements. The focus of qualitative research is on collecting large amounts of data from small loosely-defined samples through techniques such as case studies and in-depth interviews, without necessarily generalising the findings (Yilmaz 2013:314). As such, the sample is chosen purposefully such that it produces a description of events and phenomenon based on individual and personal experiences.

Quantitative research is formal and structured, meaning the information needed for the study is clearly defined (Malhotra 2010:106). Quantitative research allows for generalisations by means of measuring the responses of a large number of participants to a limited set of questions, thereby making it possible to facilitate comparisons and aggregated data (Yilmaz 2013:313; Malhotra 2010:171). Quantitative research can be defined as a strategy that makes use of numbers to measure and analyse empirical research objectives (Zikmund et al. 2013:134). In other words, statistical techniques are employed to make sense of data that have been collected, empirically. The use of quantitative research enables a clear mathematical count of data and allows for representation of the entire population through the collection of data from a chosen population. This is achieved by assigning direct or indirect numerical values to scales, which can be used for statistical computations and hypotheses testing (Zikmund et al. 2013:134).

In this study, a mono-method following a quantitative strategy was adopted since it utilises objective information to test the possible existence of relationships between variables (Hair et al. 2013:154) Quantitative research draw upon the undertones of a positivistic research philosophy, leaning towards deductive reasoning since hypotheses are tested by linking the empirical findings with existing theory. Moreover, the rationale for choosing a quantitative research strategy was based on its ability to improve the accuracy of results by addressing the research objectives through empirical assessments that involve numeral measurements and statistical analysis (Zikmund & Babin 2013:98). In addition, a specified outcome is recommended to both marketing practitioners as well as researchers.

The next section describes the research design, which was used to ensure that the study draws on reliable procedures and methods of enquiry.
3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a detailed guide that directs researchers as how to go about undertaking a research project (Hair et al. 2013:36). Therefore, a research design provides an action plan needed to gather and scrutinise relevant information in the process of structuring and solving marketing research problems. According to Iacobucci and Churchill (2010:60), there are three categories of research designs. These comprise exploratory research, descriptive research and causal research.

3.5.1 Exploratory research

Exploratory research primarily is qualitative in nature and very helpful in providing insight into a research problem (Hair et al. 2013:36). As such, exploratory research can be very helpful in formulating a problem more precisely by providing different ways of addressing a research problem and formulating research questions for a study (Malhotra 2010:104). Furthermore, exploratory research is useful in clarifying situations that are not clear when one is conducting a research project (Zikmund et al. 2013:52). Exploratory research is usually the first step in conducting any research and typically is conducted with the expectation that further research will be undertaken to provide conclusive evidence (Zikmund & Babin 2013:58). Logically, this is accomplished when exploratory research narrows down the scope of research through investigating any existing studies on the subject and engaging industry experts. Literature searches, experience surveys, focus groups, interviews, projective tests and ethnographies are some of the methods of explorative data collection.

3.5.2 Descriptive research

Iacobucci and Churchill (2010:84) suggest that descriptive research could be utilised for three specific research objectives. The aim of descriptive research is to address the questions of who, what, where, when and how surrounding a given sample. Zikmund et al. (2013:53) hint that such elements could be established easily by describing the characteristics of a chosen population (Zikmund et al. 2013:53). This may include simple demographic elements, location and other characteristics. Moreover, descriptive research is useful for describing the attitude, beliefs and opinions of research participants, rather than providing detailed explanations (Malhotra 2010:106).

In this study, a descriptive research design was followed, by way of a sample survey. A descriptive study was preferred since it enables a researcher to describe the elemental characteristics of sports consumers in a numerical manner. In addition, pursuing a descriptive study empowered the
researcher to make frequency estimations and tabulations, thereby showing the number of population members with similar beliefs, attitudes and/or reactions such as purchase intent towards the celebrity endorsed brand. Furthermore, the choice of a descriptive research design was considered essential for predicting the existence of relationships within the marketing phenomena. More precisely, the relationships between selected antecedents of athlete-celebrity credibility with consumers’ attitudes towards advertisements as well as purchase intentions towards the celebrity-endorsed brand could be predicated easily upon following a descriptive design. A report is provided in Chapter 4 of this study, regarding the established path relationships.

Malhotra (2010:108) classifies descriptive research designs into either cross-sectional or longitudinal categories. Under longitudinal research, measurement of the same sampling units of a population is undertaken repeatedly, over a period of time (Burns & Bush 2014:105). In other words, longitudinal studies require multiple measurements of the same variables at different intervals using the same sample population elements. This means that in a longitudinal study, the population participants are questioned at multiple points in time, as is the case in cohort analysis or panels. On the other hand, cross-sectional research designs involve survey-based data collection from a given sample of a specified population. Although cross-sectional studies can be based on either a large or small sample, they are prevalent in marketing research as they provide either a single snapshot (termed single cross-sectional research) or multiple representations (termed multiple cross-sectional research) of a given sample (Iacobucci & Churchill 2010:86). This study is positioned as a single cross-sectional study since it only provides a once-off representation of the characteristics of sports fans based in the Southern Gauteng province of South Africa.

### 3.5.3 Causal research

Causal research is conclusive in nature since its sole mandate is to determine the direct influence of one event on the occurrence of another (Iacobucci & Churchill 2010:59). Causal research, therefore, seeks to ascertain cause-and-effect relationships between variables under study (Zikmund & Babin 2013:52). The testing of cause-and-effect relationships in marketing research is useful when one needs to make educated predictions about phenomena being studied. Causal research makes use of simulations and experiments to make inference about causal relationships (Saunders et al. 2009:142). According to Tustin et al. (2010:292), experiments are focused on establishing the link between two variables, the extent to which variables might change and the relative importance of two or more variables in a particular study.

The next section describes the sampling design procedure that was followed in this study.
3.6 SAMPLING DESIGN PROCEDURE

According to Wiid and Diggines (2011:196), the sampling process involves defining the target population from which the sample was drawn, sampling frame, sampling method, sample size, selection of the sample elements as well as specification of the data collection process.

3.6.1 Target population

While a population comprises the complete elements needed to obtain data, the target population entails “specific groups drawn from the universe of people by the researcher” (Hair et al. 2013:137). Zikmund et al. (2013:67) define a target population (also termed a sample) as a “subset of the larger population”. Therefore, a target population may be defined as “the sum of all cases with matching requirements sought after by a researcher in the collection of information related to a marketing research issue” (Iacobucci & Churchill 2010:282). Malhotra (2010:372) emphasises the importance of drawing a well-defined target population, as it minimises the risk of undertaking a research project that produces misleading results. On the other hand, Tustin et al. (2010:340) pinpoint that a well-defined target population can help alleviate population specification errors. The target population for this study comprised male and female sports consumers, aged between 18 and older than 50 years, situated in the Southern Gauteng region of South Africa.

The Southern Gauteng region comprises three major towns, namely Meyerton, Vereeniging and Vanderbijlpark as well as two residential estates, namely De Deur and Mulbarton. Collectively the five towns are referred to as the Southern Gauteng region, mainly due to their geographic location within the southern part of the Gauteng province of South Africa. Nonetheless, in and around these five towns are a number of townships, namely Evaton and Sebokeng, which complete the demarcation of this region. Issues such as cost motivated the choice of the Southern Gauteng region as the sample location for this study. This is because the close proximity of the towns made it cheaper for the researcher to travel and thereby access the participants, faster. Moreover, collecting data from five major towns allowed for the collection of data from a large number of participants within a comparatively short space of time, as compared to targeting the entire province as a whole.

3.6.2 Sampling frame

The sampling frame provides elements, which could be used for eventual analysis in research (McDaniel & Gates 2013:281; Zikmund & Babin 2013:317). Customer lists from magazine publishers and lists of registered voters or credit card companies and telephone directories are
some of the sampling frame sources that are commonly used in marketing research (Hair et al. 2013:138). Nevertheless, Tustin et al. (2010:343) advocate for the use of an accurate and complete sampling frame in order to minimise sampling frame error. In other words, an ideal sampling frame should provide the researcher with every element of the population of interest, thereby eliminating the likelihood of having elements outside the population of interest.

The aforementioned requirements usually make the task of finding a representative sampling frame very tedious for researchers. In this study, no sampling frame could be established owing to the lack of a complete, documented list of all South African sports consumers. As such, the absence of a sampling frame rendered this study amenable to other methods of sampling which are non-probabilistic in nature.

3.6.3 Sampling method

The sampling method (also termed the sampling technique) refers to the way the participants are selected from the population of interest (Malhotra 2010:374). Hair et al. (2013:141) categorise sampling methods into two, namely probability and non-probability based sampling methods.

In probability sampling, a researcher is able to generalise the findings and minimise sample error using statistical significance measures (Hair et al. 2013:140). This entails establishing the difference between sample findings (sample mean) and the population (population mean). Probability sampling methods comprise simple random, systematic, stratified and cluster sampling (Iacobucci & Churchill 2010:285). Simple random sampling ensures that every sample element has a known and equal chance of being selected (Malhotra 2010:382). Systematic sampling involves presenting a complete list of the entire population elements and selecting the sample members systematically from a given list (Wiid & Diggines 2011:195). On the other hand, stratified sampling involves dividing the population into sub-groups, subsequent to a random selection of sub-samples from each sub-group (Hair et al. 2013:143). Cluster sampling involves two steps. First it requires dividing the population into mutually exclusive and exhaustive sub-groups, which are called clusters and thereafter, applying a probability sampling technique such as simple random sampling to select clusters (Hair et al. 2013:143). Residential zones where the population resides are used often as the premise for developing clusters.

Non-probability sampling methods comprise convenience, judgemental, quota and snowball sampling (Malhotra 2010:376). Convenience sampling is executed by obtaining sample units that are readily available to a researcher (Zikmund et al. 2013:392). The sample for convenience sampling generally is generated by intercepting possible participants at a high-traffic location such
as a mall and qualifying them to be part of a study (Burns & Bush 2014:255). This renders the method very quick, easy and cheap. Judgemental sampling refers to the deliberate and subjective selection of sample elements that are considered most appropriate for the study (McDaniel & Gates 2013:389). The researcher’s experience and intuition are evoked in this regard. The implications, therefore, are that, the degree of sampling error cannot be determined, since there are no statistical procedures in place for measuring sampling error (Tustin et al. 2010:345). Nonetheless, quota sampling involves a selection of sample elements based on a set of pre-determined criteria, such as demographic characteristics, in order to ensure that the sample is representative of the required sub-groups of the population (Hair et al. 2013:146).

Snowball sampling is described as the process of drawing out a sample by identifying participants with certain characteristics sought from the target population and asking those participants to refer others with similar characteristics, to partake in the study (Hair et al. 2013:146). Snowball sampling was elected since an accurate sampling frame could not be identified in this research. Malhotra (2010:381) and Iacobucci and Churchill (2010:287) affirm that there is increased likelihood of locating the desired characteristics of unique or not-so-easily identifiable sample elements if referrals are used. In this case, referrals could be the best technique for identifying South African consumers who are both sports followers and faithful fanatics for inclusion in the actual sample of individuals who have followed the advertising endorsements of athlete celebrities.

3.6.4 Sample size

Sample size refers to the number of subjects carefully chosen for inclusion in a study (Kumar 2014:233). Bernard (2011:177) stresses that no single sample size formula is applicable when employing non-probability samples. As such, the determination of the sample size can be placed upon the researcher. In this study, rule of thumb and empirical studies by previous scholars were considered.

First, a consideration of the rule of thumb by Roscoe (1975:163) that the sample size used in multivariate research should be at least ten times larger than the number of variables was made. Since the instrument in this study comprised 32 scale indicators, the minimum sample size was set at 320. Nevertheless, Roscoe (1975:163) alleges that a sample of 500 elements assures that sample error does not exceed 10 percent of standard deviations, about 98 percent of the time. To a point, the more data collected the better, since statistical power is improved by increasing the sample size. This recommendation is consistent with that proffered by Crouch (1984:142) who
suggests that sample sizes between 300 and 500 are sufficient when dealing with multivariate statistics in consumer research.

Secondly, previous empirical precedence was considered upon determining the sample size for this study. Consistent with Zikmund et al. (2013:69), the researcher reviewed related studies on celebrity endorsement to determine the appropriate sample size. This culminated in Table 3.1, which provides a comparative assessment of sample sizes used by scholars in previous related research.

Table 3.1: Sample size determination using the historical evidence approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/s</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Summary of the study</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Van der Waldt et al. (2009:105)</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Celebrity endorsements among created spokespersons</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fink et al. (2012:16)</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Female athlete endorsements</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiou et al. (2013:918)</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Brand attachment and celebrity endorsement credibility</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muda et al. (2014:16)</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Celebrity entrepreneurial endorsement</td>
<td>542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simsek (2014:1045)</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Celebrity endorsement fit with the brand</td>
<td>682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathys et al. (2016:433)</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>A longitudinal analysis of consumer interest in film stars</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drawing upon the aforementioned twofold set of considerations, a sample size of 500 sports consumers was deemed appropriate for this study. Moreover, the choice of a large sample size was reinforced based on the variability expected in the data set, thereby enhancing the overall reliability of the research.

3.6.5 Selection of the sample elements

Selection of the sample elements entails specifying how the entire sampling design decisions with respect to the target population, sampling frame, sampling technique and sample size were implemented (Malhotra 2010:372). The following sampling plan guided this research:

Table 3.2: Summary of the sample elements selection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target population</th>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Extent</th>
<th>Sampling frame</th>
<th>Sampling method</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sports consumers associated with the athlete endorser by watching the endorsement advertisement</td>
<td>18 years and older than 50 years, both male and female</td>
<td>Southern Gauteng (South Africa)</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>Snowball</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.6.6 Data collection

Zikmund et al. (2013:20) highlight the importance of employing appropriate data collection methods in order to obtain accurate, valid and reliable information that could be used to address the research objectives. The data collection process for this study was conducted in two phases. First, secondary data were collected through a comprehensive review of the celebrity endorsement literature in Chapter 2. Secondly, an empirical study was conducted through fieldwork, wherein the results were analysed and presented in Chapter 4 of this study. The next sections elaborate on the two phases of data collection that were employed in this research.

3.6.6.1 Secondary data collection

Secondary data (also termed desk research) is “information that has already been collected for some other problem or issue by other researchers” (Hair et al. 2013:50). In other words, secondary data refers to existing information that is stored from previous projects and is readily available to address current problems or opportunities. According to Iacobucci and Churchill (2010:143), secondary data is helpful in reducing the costs and time associated with marketing research projects. As such, if the required information is readily available, the researcher simply needs to access it and in doing so, saves time which would have been spent on collecting primary data coupled with the costs associated with executing such a prolonged process. Furthermore, secondary data can play a significant role in providing researchers with preliminary insight, which is needed in the exploratory phase of a research project, especially in cases when additional research is expected to provide conclusive evidence.

In this study, the collection of secondary data culminated in a review of the literature sources in Chapter 2. This phase was considered vital for addressing the theoretical objectives that were set under Section 1.4.2 of this study. Secondary data sources such as textbooks, journal articles, conference proceedings and sports’ media reports were employed to complete this review process. While secondary data sources were utilised in the previous chapter, the collection of primary data was still considered necessary to complete the research. This is consistent with the assertion by Iacobucci and Churchill (2010:142) that primary data is important for addressing the empirical objectives of a study.

3.6.6.2 Primary data collection

Primary data refers to “information gathered to address current and specific research needs” (Iacobucci & Churchill 2010:31; Hair et al. 2013:26). The nature of research procedures employed in descriptive research design are structured and quantitative. In this study, a self-administered
survey was regarded as the most appropriated primary data collection method. The survey undertaken in this study utilised a questionnaire as the main instrument for data collection. The design of the survey research questionnaire is discussed in the next section.

3.7 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

Hair et al. (2013:188) define a questionnaire as a “document consisting of a set of questions and scales designed to gather primary data”. Put simply, a questionnaire is a formal research tool with a set of questions, used to obtain information from participants in order to achieve the objectives of a study. Iacobucci and Churchill (2010:221) suggest that the physical appearance of a questionnaire plays an important role in influencing participants’ willingness to complete the questionnaire. As such, the following sections elucidate on the aspects of the questionnaire structure, format, content, pilot testing and final administration.

3.7.1 Questionnaire structure

Hair et al. (2013:190) note that questionnaires can be classified as either structured or unstructured. A structured questionnaire consists of a set of closed-end questions requiring the selection of a choice answer among pre-determined possible responses (Zikmund & Babin 2013:282). The fact that the researcher determines the possible responses in advance lends to the ease of administering structured questionnaires in research (Hair et al. 2013:190). As a result, participants are required to engage limited cognitive effort when completing structured questionnaires, whereas the researcher can so easily capture the responses after data collection. Contrastingly, an unstructured questionnaire comprises loosely structured and open-ended questions that allow participants to reply in their own words (Struwig & Stead 2010:92). Unstructured questionnaires are considered useful where it is not possible to provide a pre-determined set of responses in a questionnaire (Pallant 2011:8). Nevertheless, open-ended questions are perceived to be time consuming for both participants and researchers in terms of the level of thinking required to complete the responses as well as in the capturing of data by the researcher (Malhotra 2010:343). Furthermore, the results obtained using open-ended questions cannot be generalised to a larger population since participants are free to answer with whatever is foremost in their minds (Zikmund et al. 2013:337).

The research questionnaire used in this study comprised structured questions, only. Structured questionnaires are the most commonly used instruments in marketing since they present questions to all participants in the same order, using the same wording (Hair et al. 2013:190). In agreement,
Iacobucci and Churchill (2010:118) affirm that structured questionnaires are standardised to ensure that all participants respond to the same question.

### 3.7.2 Questionnaire format and content

Development of the study questionnaire requires making a decision regarding whether to formulate a completely new set of questions, adopt an already existing scale in its entirety or adapting questions as they have been operationalised for a study (Saunders et al. 2009:374). First, the formulation of a new set of questionnaire scale items is useful during the exploratory phase of a research. Secondly, adopting scale items from previous studies can be used if a holistic instrument already exists. Thirdly, adapting scale items can be beneficial to contextualise a study by modifying variables from previous studies based on their sound psychometric properties (Saunders et al. 2009:374). To save time, this study adapted scale items from previous studies. Adaptation also helped the researcher to make reliability comparisons with variables used in previous empirical research.

The questionnaire format refers to the amount of freedom assigned to the participants in providing responses (Aaker et al. 2011:277). This was considered vital in this structured study, since the determination of the number and type of possible responses was left to the discretion of the researcher. Furthermore, Malhotra (2010:352) pinpoints that attention should be given to the questionnaire format because the format of questions can play an important role in ascertaining the willingness of participants to take part in a study. The questionnaire used in this study was formatted along dichotomous, multiple-choice and scaled-responses.

The study made use of a survey questionnaire comprising three sections as shown in Appendix B of this study.

Section A was designed to collect demographic data in this study. The scaled items included questions on participants’ gender (A1), age (A2), ethnic group (A3), language (A4), marital status (A5), highest educational qualification (A6) and monthly income before tax (A7). The question relating to the participants’ gender (A1) was anchored along a dichotomous scale with only two possible options, yes or no. The remaining questions (A2, A3, A4, A5, A6 and A7) were anchored along a multiple-choice scaled form of response.

Section B comprised questions relating to the consumers’ purchases of the athlete-celebrity endorsed product. The questions requested the participants to answer whether they had previously made a purchase of the Lay’s™ potato chips within the past 12 months (B1). This question was
anchored along a dichotomous scale and only those participants that affirmed their responses with
yes to B1, were permitted to proceed with completing the questionnaire. Additionally, Section B
comprised two questions anchored along a multiple-choice scale, relating to the frequency with
which consumers had made purchases of Lay’s™ potato chips (B2) as well as the most preferred
media for accessing the athlete-celebrity endorsed advertisement of Lay’s™ potato chips (B3).
The choice decisions as to which celebrity as well as what product of interest to focus on are
explained under Section 3.7.4 of this study.

Section C comprised questions relating to the determinants of consumers’ purchase intentions
towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product. A Likert scale of agreement comprises a set of
statements that express the degree of participants’ agreement with the object being measured
(McDaniel & Gates 2013:315). With that in mind, this study utilised a five-point Likert scale of
agreement. The choice of a five-point Likert scale is consistent with the guidelines suggested by
Malhotra (2010:312) who asserts that scale categories should range between five and nine. The
author stresses that fewer categories should be employed when participants are not knowledgeable
or involved in a task, whereas larger category options may be employed when participants are
knowledgeable or interested in the study.

In particular, Section C included statements relating to the participants’ perceptions of the
attributes borne by the athlete-celebrity. In this instance, Ohanian’s (1990:46) 15-item scale was
adapted and used to measure the athlete-celebrity endorser’s trustworthiness (C1-C5), expertise
(C6-C10) and attractiveness (C11-C15). The participants were asked to indicate their perceptions
regarding the aforementioned source attributes on a five-point Likert scale where 1=strongly
disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree.

Williams and Drolet’s (2005:350) general endorsers’ credibility scale (C16 to C21) was used to
measure the credibility of the selected athlete endorser. The participants were asked to indicate
their perceptions regarding the credibility of the nominated athlete endorser using a five-point
Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree and
5=strongly agree.

De Pelsmacker et al. (2002:55) attitude towards an advertisement (in general) scale was used to
measure consumers’ attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed advertisement (C22 to C27).
The participants were asked to document their attitude towards the nominated endorsement
advertisement using a five-point Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither
agree nor disagree, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree.
Baker and Churchill’s (1977:549) scale was used to measure consumers’ intentions towards purchasing the athlete-celebrity endorsed product (C28 to C32). Participants were asked to indicate their intentions to purchase Lay’s™ potato chips using a five-point Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree.

### 3.7.3 Exploratory phase for the selection of an athlete-celebrity endorser

When conducting empirical investigations on celebrity endorsement, it is necessary to identify an athlete endorser that possesses the right set of characteristics that could produce the most favourable response from consumers. This is because when the focus is on only one professional athlete who is endorsing a specified brand or product category, data are not cluttered by perceptions of consumers towards the endorsement of other unrelated brands. The aim of conducting such an exercise is to prevent contaminating the study with perceptions of unrelated celebrity endorsements. In this regard, the exploratory phase served to de-limit the confines of this research.

A preliminary survey was conducted on a conveniently selected sample of 60 participants, drawn from a list of students at a Higher Education Institution. Initially, three minutes of unaided recall was given for the participants to cite favourite South African athlete-celebrity who is also involved in endorsing regular products or brands. Thereafter, the participants were asked to identify their favourite advertisement, which features their favourite athlete as an endorser. The preliminary questionnaire used during this process is attached as Appendix A of this study. The responses were aggregated to establish the most familiar athlete-endorser based on modal responses in Table 3.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Athlete name</th>
<th>Field of expertise</th>
<th>Brand/s endorsed</th>
<th>Product category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bryan Habana</td>
<td>Rugby</td>
<td>Land Rover™</td>
<td>Premium motor vehicle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor Khumalo</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>Status™</td>
<td>Men’s deodorant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itumeleng Khune</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>Nivea™</td>
<td>Men’s body lotion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tendai</td>
<td>Rugby</td>
<td>Shield™</td>
<td>Men’s deodorant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutawarira</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oscar Pistorius</td>
<td>Paralympic athletics</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nike™  Unisex sportswear</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teko Modise</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>McDonald’s™</td>
<td>Fast foods</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean De Villiers</td>
<td>Rugby</td>
<td>Powerade™</td>
<td>Energy drink</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itumeleng Khune</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>Vaseline™</td>
<td>Men’s body lotion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad Le Clos</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>Futurelife™</td>
<td>Food supplement</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernard Parker</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>Futurelife™</td>
<td>Food supplement</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>Lay’s™</td>
<td>Potato chips</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin De Villiers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 %</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.2 reveals that the least familiar athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisements identified by only 1.7 percent of the sample (n=1), comprise the endorsement advertisements by Bryan Habana, endorsing the Land Rover™ motor vehicle brand, Doctor Khumalo endorsing Status™ deodorant, Itumeleng Khune, endorsing Nivea™ body lotion, Tendai Mutawarira, endorsing Shield™ deodorant as well as Oscar Pistorius endorsing the Nike™ sportswear brand.

Only two participants (3.3% of the sample) nominated the endorsement advertisement of MacDonald’s fast foods by Teko Modise. On the other hand, the endorsement advertisements of Powerade™ energy drink by Jean De Villers, Vaseline™ body lotion by Itumeleng Khune, as well as the endorsement of Futurelife™ food supplement by Chad Le Clos were selected by only three participants (5% of the sample). Bernard Parker was nominated by 13 participants (21.7% of the sample) as a favourite endorser in his endorsement advertisement of Futurelife™ food supplement. Moreover, the majority of the participants (n=31; 51.7% of the sample) nominated A.B De Villiers as their favourite athlete endorser, in his endorsement of Lay’s™ potato chips. As such, A.B De Villiers was selected as the athlete-celebrity endorser for further analysis in this particular study.

3.7.4 The selected athlete-celebrity endorser for this study

Figure 3.2 is a photograph of A.B De Villiers, the athlete-celebrity endorser who was nominated for this study.
A.B De Villiers is a professional athlete who is currently at the peak of his career in the field of South African cricket. He was born in Bela-Bela, a small town in Limpopo, South Africa on 17 February 1984. He currently is regarded as the best batsman in the world and one of the best of all times in professional cricket. A.B De Villiers is the former captain of the South African national cricket team, better known as the Proteas™ and current captain for the One Day International (ODI) series events. He holds numerous batting records such as the fastest 50, 100 and 150 runs in ODI cricket series, alongside the world record for fastest Test century as well as the fastest T20 international by a South African batsman. Apart from playing for the Proteas™, A.B De Villiers is also involved in the Indian Premier League (IPL) as wicket-keeper batsman for Royal Challengers Bangalore.

In addition to his professional career in cricket, A.B De Villiers has been nominated by various marketing organisations for the endorsement of their respective brands. Among some of the endorsement contracts that A.B De Villiers has entered into over the years, the Lay’s™ potato chips’ contract is by far the biggest. Lay’s™ is a known, real (not fictitious) global brand of potato chips that is owned by Pepsi company, based in the USA and was established in 1932.

Wheeler (2003:18) suggests that before picking an endorser, marketers must ensure that the celebrity has qualities that fit the image suitable for the organisation. It is also important to find someone with a logical connection to the organisation, someone who is familiar with the target group or constituency. Put simply, the chosen athlete-celebrity should be someone who has a story and can tell it well. A.B De Villiers appeared for the first time in a television advertisement endorsement, flighted from 13 February 2015, in true Lay’s™ style. The advertisement portrays the extent to which Lay’s™ fans will go to sample Lay’s™ potato chips whenever there is a bag nearby. A.B De Villiers currently appears in television, magazine, newspaper, billboard and YouTube advertisements, among other advertising media platforms in South Africa, through his endorsement of Lay’s™ potato chips.

Categorised as a fast moving consumer good (FMCG), Lay’s™ potato chips is a thin, light and crispy brand that is rated one of the most popular chips in South Africa because they are made from specially selected potatoes and produced with the highest quality standards. According to The Gazette Review (2016) a global sports media reviewer, A.B De Villiers is the seventh highest paid cricketer in the world as of 2016, earning approximately 2 million dollars (US) from endorsement deals and netting approximately 5.5 million dollars (US) in annual income. As such, this study is based on the attributes of A.B De Villiers as the sample-selected athlete endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips.
3.7.5 Pre-testing the questionnaire

McDaniel and Gates (2013:360) state that pre-testing of a questionnaire is vital in determining how a questionnaire will perform in real situations, when collecting primary data. In agreement, Burns and Bush (2014:109) allude to the pre-testing of a measuring instrument as being vital during questionnaire development, in order to detect any problematic issues that may be associated with the questionnaire. In addition, pre-testing a questionnaire can be helpful in resolving all the problems relating to terminology use, language as well as the layout of the questionnaire (Malhotra 2010:354). Furthermore, Berndt and Petzer (2011:147) affirm that pre-testing of the questionnaire can assist in determining the time spent on completing the questionnaire and resolving any questions that may arise from the study.

In this study, a de-briefing exercise was conducted with five sports marketing specialists as part of the pre-test exercise, in relation to the wording, order and layout of the questions. During this process, negatively worded and double-barrelled questions were eliminated to avoid bias. The pre-test also assisted in terms of acquiring confirmation from the de-brief panel of experts regarding the suitability and fitness of A.B De Villiers as the pre-selected athlete endorser for the study at hand.

3.7.6 Pilot study

A pilot study is a small-scale research project that is undertaken on participants that are similar to the ones that could be used in the main survey (Zikmund et al. 2013:63). Iacobucci and Churchill (2010:224) recommend that a pilot study should be undertaken after pre-testing the questionnaire in order to perform a preliminary test analysis of the reliability of the instrument. As such, the participants for the pilot study should resemble, yet not comprise the target population elements used during the main survey (Zikmund & Babin 2013:59). A pilot study was conducted in this research using 60 undergraduate students from the Department of Marketing and Sport Management (3rd year class), at the Vaal University of Technology. The pilot sample conceded that they knew A.B De Villiers and had followed his career on the field as well as in product endorsements, alongside purchasing the Lay’s™ potato chips. The reliable results of the pilot study are presented under Section 4.2 of this study, proving that the participants did not encounter difficulties in understanding and answering the questionnaire. Nonetheless, the participants that took part in the pilot survey were excluded from the main survey.
3.7.7 Fieldwork administration

In this study, a questionnaire was used to collect data required from the participants. The questionnaire is included under Appendix B of this dissertation, comprising the questions included during the main survey that was conducted between 1 June 2016 and 30 August 2016. The researcher personally carried out the data collection task, in order to avoid bias and the high costs associated with hiring fieldworkers. In order to ensure randomisation, data were collected at different times and days of the week across the five towns within Southern Gauteng. Furthermore, the participants were informed that participation in the study was voluntary. Questionnaire completion time did not exceed 15 minutes.

3.7.8 Ethical considerations

As in all human interaction, ethical considerations exist in research (Zikmund et al. 2013:87). That means conforming to certain norms and values is acceptable in research. Ethics are there to protect the well-being of the research participants by covering areas such as misconduct of researchers, which can include the wrongful use of others’ work without giving credit (Hair et al. 2013:11). Tustin et al. (2010:45) concur that moral fairness and self-preservation dictate that researchers develop an identifiable ethical compass. Therefore, it is important that every researcher fulfils his or her ethical obligations to participants when undertaking a research project. The four marketing research obligations that were considered in this research are discussed in the next section, as alluded by Tustin et al. (2010:46).

3.7.8.1 Participants should not be harmed

Tustin et al. (2010:47) emphasise that it is the obligation of the researcher to ensure that participants in the study are not harmed in any way through physical means. Such unethical maleficence includes subjecting the participants to discomfort or embarrassment in the process of undertaking a research project. This research steered clear from asking personal, sensitive or embarrassing questions.

3.7.8.2 Participants should not be deceived

Kimmel (2001:658) state that deception in marketing research can result in participants’ unwillingness to participate in a study. This is a challenge especially in cases where large companies use numerous approaches to disguise sales purposes, while conducting research projects. In agreement, Tustin et al. (2010:48) suggest that marketers sometimes pretend to do surveys, when they actually have no interest in obtaining information for marketing research.
purposes. In view of this, a cover letter was attached to the questionnaire used in this study. The cover letter clearly specified that this research was purely for academic purposes and the results would be reported in the form of a MTech dissertation. In addition, the university logo was inscribed on the questionnaire together with the purpose of the research and names of the research supervisors, with a view to emphasise the legitimacy of the study (refer to Appendix B).

3.7.8.3 Participants should be willing and informed

Ethical guidelines necessitate that participants should be informed and their consent obtained prior to participating in a research project (Malhotra 2010:200). Informed consent is a voluntary agreement from the participants to get involved in a research project. As such, the researcher must provide the potential participants with information on the potential risks associated with completing the questionnaire as well as the potential benefits of taking part in the study. Moreover, the researcher should provide assurance that participation in the study is voluntary (Tustin et al. 2010:48). The cover letter stipulates that participation in the research was strictly voluntary and, therefore, the participants were free to withdraw at any time.

3.7.8.4 Data should be held in confidence

According to Tustin et al. (2010:48), the identity of participant is to be protected during the data collection process. This is done by not asking or forcing participants to disclose their names before, during and after completing the questionnaire. In addition, Hair et al. (2013:14) advocate for the privacy of participants during survey interviews. Moreover, the researcher should not at any point videotape the participants during an interview as this has the potential of compromising the identity of the participants. Confidentiality of participants as well as their identity were protected by using random numbers to identify the completed survey questionnaires. In addition, the cover letter assured the participants that their identity would remain anonymous at all times.

3.7.9 Response rate

Response rate may be defined as the percentage of the total participants that are able to return questionnaires that are deemed satisfactory for analysis (Malhotra 2010:225). Of the 500 questionnaires that were distributed, 25 questionnaires were considered unusable owing to too many missing responses while 19 had inconsistent information that could not be reliably assembled for inclusion in this study. This means 44 responses were discarded while 456 were usable, giving a 91.2 percent response rate.

The way data were prepared after fieldwork administration is described in the next section.
3.8 DATA PREPARATION

Data preparation refers to the inspection of data quality after the questionnaire administration process, subsequent to converting it into usable coded data for analysis (Hair et al. 2013:242). Zikmund and Babin (2013:64) pinpoint that data preparation is vital for the detection of possible fieldwork errors. As such, Malhotra (2010:452) outlines a four-step approach to data preparation, which includes data editing, coding, capturing and cleaning. The next section discusses these four steps of the data preparation process.

3.8.1 Data editing

Data editing is the physical review of each completed questionnaire. This involves searching for any mistakes that might have been caused by the researcher (termed researcher errors) or the participants (termed respondents’ errors) during the data collection process (Malhotra 2010:453). The data were checked visually for out of the ordinary cases and duplications, but these were not detected.

3.8.2 Data coding

Data coding involves converting participants’ answers into numbers that can be computed for subsequent analysis (Hair et al. 2013:249). The coding process requires assigning of numerical value to each response for each question on the questionnaire. According to Zikmund and Babin (2013:363), coding of data should be done immediately after editing (post-coding) in order to simplify the data capturing process and, thereby, summarise the collected data. In Section 4.4.2 of this study, data were coded in preparation for the statistical analysis.

3.8.3 Data capturing

Subsequent to data editing and coding, data were captured onto a Microsoft Excel™ spreadsheet in order to prepare for statistical analysis. Data capturing involved transferring coded data from a questionnaire directly into a computer by means of key-punching (Malhotra 2010:459). This involves manipulation and transformation of data by the researcher into useful information for data analysis (Hair et al. 2013:252).

3.8.4 Data cleaning

Data cleaning involves computational methods to automatically or semi-automatically identify and when possible, correct errors in large data sets. It includes consistency checks and treatment
of missing responses (Malhotra 2010:461). Consistency checks normally involve the detection of errors that may arise from data that falls outside of range (Zikmund et al. 2013:476). In contrast, treatment of missing responses deals with data that may be missing due to the participants not providing an answer to a question, which leads to a missing data situation (Hair et al. 2013:253).

One of the most common problems encountered during data cleaning includes that of incomplete questionnaires (McDaniel & Gates 2013:437). Generally, researchers are advised to go back into the field to acquire the missing information. However, where this is not possible, Malhotra (2010:461-462) alludes to using several technical means to account for the missing values. For example, a researcher can either substitute missing values with a neutral value, substitute an imputed response, perform case-wise deletion or pair-wise deletion. Case-wise deletion could be afforded in this research (refer to Section 4.4.2) until a sufficient number of completed questionnaires was availed for subsequent statistical analysis.

The next section provides a discussion on the statistical analysis procedures that were applied on the data set.

### 3.9 Statistical Analysis

The captured data from the survey were statistically analysed using the SPSS (Version 23.0). The following section outlines the statistical analysis techniques that were applied in this study. Note that the order in which the statistical procedures are explained in this chapter is consistent with the manner in which the empirical results are presented in Chapter 4 of this study.

#### 3.9.1 Frequency distributions

A frequency distribution is a total count of the number of replies from participants for each value of a variable (Hair et al. 2013:170). It is useful in describing categorical variables such as the demographic profile of the sample (Pallant 2011:55). Malhotra (2010:484) denotes that the main objective of a frequency distribution is to gather an overall count of all the responses associated with different values of the variables and then convert them into percentages. Section 4.5 shows the frequency distribution charts that were developed in this study.

#### 3.9.2 Tabulation

Tabulation refers to arranging and summarising collected data in an orderly manner using a table format (Zikmund & Babin 2013:365). Tabulation can either be in the form of simple table, also referred to as one-way tabulation, or cross-tabulation (Iacobucci & Churchill 2010:352). In simple
tabulation, each variable is counted separately, by means of counting the number of responses given by individual participants to each possible answer in the questionnaire. Contrastingly, cross-tabulation involves the treatment of two or more variables simultaneously, in a study (Hair et al. 2013:254). In other words, cross-sectional tabulation involves categorising the number of responses into two or more questions in order to establish the link between the variables of a study. This study utilised simple tabulation, only.

3.9.3 Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

EFA refers to statistical techniques employed to reduce and summarise collected data (Malhotra 2010:636). It primarily focuses on reducing and summarising a large set of variables into a smaller set of factors. EFA does this by actively seeking inter-correlations that group together in a set of variables (Pallant 2011:181). In addition, Malhotra (2010:637) suggests different reasons for using EFA, which include the identification of the determinants of consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product. The steps involved in conducting EFA are explained next in accordance with Malhotra (2010:638-645).

3.9.3.1 Formulate the problem

The first stage in EFA is to identify the objective for conducting the procedure. In this study, EFA was conducted in order to reduce the data set into identifiable factors. The observed variables in this study were specified based on theory and adaptation from previous researchers. Therefore, EFA would produce a small number of factors, which are capable of explaining the observed variance of the larger number of variables (Tustin et al. 2010:668).

3.9.3.2 Construct the correlation matrix

For EFA to be appropriate the variables must be correlated, thereby drawing a correlation matrix (McDaniel & Gates 2010:448). Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy is the index that compares the magnitudes of the observed correlation coefficients to the magnitudes of the partial correlations. Small values of KMO indicate that the correlations between pairs of variables cannot be explained by other variables and that EFA may not be appropriate. Generally, high values between 0.50 and 1.0 are desirable (Malhotra 2010:641).

3.9.3.3 Determine the method of EFA

Upon determining that factor analysis is suitable for analysing data, an appropriate method must be selected. In this study, Principal Components Analysis (PCA) was chosen as the appropriate method of factor extraction since the concern was to determine the minimum number of factors
that would account for maximum variance in the data. Malhotra (2010:643) states that in PCA, the factors are called components and the total maximum variance is considered by plotting the percentage of variance accounted for by each factor on the factor matrix.

### 3.9.3.4 Determine the number of factors

In order to condense the information that is contained in the original variables, a small number of factors should be extracted. In this study, six factors were extracted after considering five different aspects. First, *a priori* determination was made based on the researcher’s knowledge of theory and prescribed specification of how many factors should be extracted. Secondly, the eigenvalues criterion was employed, whereby only factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 were retained, while other factors were excluded from the model (Malhotra 2010:643). Eigenvalues represent the amount of variance associated with a factor. Therefore, the total percentage variance explained by the factors was the fourth consideration with a cut-off threshold of 60 percent or greater. Fifthly, the scree plot was inspected physically to determine at what level the scree began, as this denotes the true number of factors. All five criteria were met as reported in Section 4.6 of this study.

### 3.9.3.5 Rotate the factors

The EFA output produces a factor matrix with coefficients that are used to express the standardised variables in terms of the factors. These coefficients are termed “factor loadings” (Iacobucci & Churchill 2010:496). The unrotated factor matrix seldom results in factors that can be interpreted because the factors are correlated with many variables. Nonetheless, rotation transforms the factor matrix into a simpler one that is easy to interpret. In rotation, the aim is to have non-zero loadings, significant loadings, as well as loadings that are significant on only one factor. That is, rotation cleans the factor structure by eliminating weak loadings (below 0.50) and cross-loadings. Rotation does not affect the communalities and percentage of total variance explained. However, the percentage of variance accounted for by each factor does change. Rotation methods include orthogonal and oblique rotation (Brown 2015:27). In orthogonal rotation, the axes are at the right angles and minimises the number of variables in factors that are uncorrelated, for example, VARIMAX. On the other hand, axes in oblique rotation are not maintained at the right angle. In addition, factors are correlated with a view of simplifying the factor pattern matrix. Furthermore, oblique rotation is useful where factors are likely to be strongly correlated (Malhotra 2010:645).

### 3.9.3.6 Interpret the factors

Interpretation is facilitated by identifying the variables that have loadings on the same factors. Each factor can then be interpreted and labelled in terms of the variables that load on it. The
researcher can check the high loading variables on each factor and give a name or that can closely describe that factor (Malhotra 2010:645).

3.9.4 Reliability assessment

Reliability in research refers to the ability of the scale to produce similar results subsequent to the initial measurement (Zikmund & Babin 2013:257). Accordingly, reliability explains the consistency of a measurement instrument (Iacobucci & Churchill 2010:258). That is, the measurement of the same concepts using the same instrument should yield similar results when the measurement is repeated (Malhotra 2010:318). Since this study was a single-cross sectional research, only internal consistency reliability was tested.

According to Zikmund and Babin (2013:257), internal consistency reliability represents the measure of how well a scale or scale items come together to measure a variable under study. Internal consistency reliability requires adding up the items of a scale measuring a certain aspect of the variable in order to come up with a total score that represents the construct measured by the entire scale (Hair et al. 2013:166). The two commonly used methods of assessing internal consistency reliability are split-half tests and Cronbach’s alpha.

In split-half tests, the scale questions are split into two halves comprising odd versus even numbers or random numbers while that which is left of the two halves scores is correlated against one another (Hair et al. 2013:166). High internal consistency is ascertained by high correlation between the halves, which implies that the variables under the investigation are reliable to provide consistent results (Malhotra 2010:319). On the other hand, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (also referred to as Coefficient alpha) represents internal consistency by calculating the mean of all possible split-half measures emanating from various ways of dividing the scale questions (Zikmund et al. 2013:302). Malhotra (2010:319) states that Cronbach’s alpha coefficient values range between zero and one, whereby values of 0.60 or less indicate low internal consistency reliability. In this study, internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient whereby values of 0.70 and above were deemed acceptable. This is consistent with Nunnally (1978:245) who denotes that Cronbach’s alpha coefficient values between 0.70 and 1.00 are preferred.

3.9.5 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics were applied in order to examine the sample composition of this study. Descriptive statistics are used to summarise captured data (Malhotra 2010:486). In this study, the
descriptive statistics that were applied include measures of central tendency, measures of variability as well as measures of shape. These measures are discussed next.

### 3.9.5.1 Measures of central tendency

According to Hair et al. (2013:170), measures of central tendency (also referred to as measures of location) are the most basic summary statistics, used to locate the central distribution of responses. In other words, measures of central tendency are used to explain or describe the centre of a data set. In this study, the measures of central tendency that were applied include the mean, median and mode.

The mean (also referred to as the arithmetic average), calculates the average scores of all the data (Zikmund & Babin 2013:339). Hair et al. (2013:268) describe the mean as the average value in a data distribution. The mean value is calculated by adding up all the values of the distribution responses and dividing them by the total number of responses (Malhotra 2010:486). In this study, the mean value for the five-point Likert scale responses was set at 3.0 \([(1+2+3+4+5) \text{ divided by } 5 = 3.0]\).

The median is the value in the middle of variables set, when data are arranged from either largest to smallest number or smallest to largest number (Hair et al. 2013:269). Zikmund and Babin (2013:340) emphasise that the median is the value below which half the values in the sample falls. In agreement, Malhotra (2010:486) denotes that the median represents the 50th percentile and in cases where data observations are even, the median value can be calculated by adding the two middle values and dividing the total by 2. The non-categorical responses in this study were anchored on an odd-numbered Likert scale and the median value, therefore, was established as 3.0 (1, 2, 3, 4 and 5).

The mode describes the number that appears most frequently in the variable set (Malhotra 2010:486). When distribution graphs are used to observe data, the mode is used to denote the highest peak on such a graph (Hair et al. 2013:269). The mode identifies the value that appears the most in a variable set (Zikmund & Babin 2013:341). Modal values representing the sample composition are presented in Section 4.4.3 of this study.

### 3.9.5.2 Measures of variability

Measures of variability (also referred to as measure of dispersion) comprise the range, standard deviation and variance (Malhotra 2010:487).
The range is used to measure the distance between the smallest and the largest values of the variable data set (Hair et al. 2013:271). In this study, the lowest value on the Likert scale was set at one (minimum) whereas the highest value was set at five (maximum). Any values beyond this range are considered outliers and, therefore, are not desirable in this research.

Standard deviation describes the average distance of the distribution values from the mean, it represents the gap between the values on average from the mean (Malhotra 2010:487), whilst variance is the square root of standard deviation (Hair et al. 2013:272). The computed standard deviation values for this research are shown in Section 4.8 of this study.

3.9.5.3 Measures of shape

Measures of shape are necessary in order to understand the nature of the data distribution (Tustin et al. 2010:554). These measures are important when a researcher intends to conduct advanced statistical techniques since they could be used to interpret whether or not a data set is normally distributed (Malhotra 2010:488).

Skewness signifies the valuation of the symmetry of a data distribution (Tustin et al. 2010:554). It is the degree of deviation, from either the left or right of the mean of a data distribution (Pallant 2011:57). Malhotra (2010:488) asserts that data distributions can be either skewed or symmetrical. In symmetrical distributions, the mean, mode and median are equal on either half of a data distribution (mean=median=mode). On the other hand, skewness represents the tendency of deviations from the mean to be smaller on either side, to the left or right.

Kurtosis measures the relative peakedness or flatness of the frequency distribution curve (Pallant 2011:57). A zero kurtosis value represents a normally distributed data set (Malhotra 2010:488). As such, positive kurtosis values signify the peakedness of the data distribution compared to normal distributions while negative kurtosis values imply that the distribution is flat relative to normal distribution. Tustin et al. (2010:554) postulate that it is usually unlikely for the skewness or kurtosis statistics to be exactly zero, therefore, a threshold between the range of -2 and +2 is an acceptable indicator that a data set is distributed normally, as was met in this study.

3.9.6 Correlation analysis

Correlation analysis is applied to measure the strength of linear relationships between variables (Churchill, Brown & Suter 2010:467). McDaniel and Gates (2010:448) add that correlation analysis seeks to determine the degree to which changes in one variable are directly associated with changes of another variable. When evaluating the relationship between two variables, it is
important to determine how the variables are related. Linear relationships are most common, but variables can also have a non-linear or monotonic relationship. It is also possible that there is no relationship between the variables. Malhotra (2010:562) denotes that researchers can employ one of three statistical tools upon conducting correlation analysis.

First, the product moment correlation coefficient \( r \) or bivariate correlation developed by Karl Pearson can be used if both variables being correlated are metric (interval or ratio data) and normally distributed (Statistics Solutions 2016:1). Other assumptions for bivariate correlations include linearity and homoscedasticity. Linearity assumes a straight-line relationship between the variables while homoscedasticity assumes that data is normally distributed about the regression line. Secondly, the partial correlation coefficient (\( \phi \)) measures the association between variables after controlling for, or adjusting for the effects of one or more additional variables (Malhotra 2010:566). Thirdly, non-metric variables can be correlated using either Spearman’s \( \rho \) \( (r_s) \) or Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficient (\( \tau \)), which are both non-parametric tests that do not assume a normal distribution. Generally, Spearman’s \( \rho \) \( (r_s) \) yields a closer approximation to the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient \( r \) if a large number of cases in the dataset fall into a relatively large number of categories (Malhotra 2010:568). On the other hand, Kendall’s Tau correlation \( (\tau) \) is renowned for measuring the dependence between variables.

In this study, Spearman’s \( \rho \) \( (r_s) \) was computed since the variables on the non-categorical data were measured on an ordinal scale, namely a five-point Likert scale (Prion & Haerling 2014:536). Moreover, Spearman’s \( \rho \) \( (r_s) \) was preferred since the data set in this study was not subjected to rigorous testing for normality such as Lilliefors tests and Shapiro-Wilk’s tests. In addition, linearity could not be assumed entirely in this research.

Spearman’s \( \rho \) \( (r_s) \) involves both descriptive and inferential elements (Statistics Solutions 2016:1). The descriptive element implies calculation of Spearman’s \( \rho \) coefficient \( (r_s) \) values and then describing the nature of relationships between the variables being correlated. The inferential element seeks to test the significance of the relationship between the variables, at either the 95 percent \( (p=0.05) \) or 99 percent \( (p=0.01) \) level of confidence. The Spearman \( \rho \) \( (r_s) \) returns a value between -1.00 indicating a perfect negative relationship, whereas coefficient values of +1.00 indicate a perfect positive relationship (Statistics Solutions 2016:1). Nonetheless, if \( r_s \) equals zero or lies relatively close to zero it implies that no relationship exists between the variables. The higher the absolute value of \( r_s \), the stronger the relationship between the variables. According to Prion and Haerling (2014:536), the rule of thumb for interpreting Spearman \( \rho \) \( (r_s) \) results are as follows:
Spearman \( r_s \) 0 to 0.20 = Negligible relationship
Spearman \( r_s \) 0.21 to 0.40 = Weak relationship
Spearman \( r_s \) 0.41 to 0.60 = Moderate relationship
Spearman \( r_s \) 0.61 to 0.80 = Strong relationship
Spearman \( r_s \) 0.81 to 1.00 = Very strong relationship

The positive and significant results of the correlation analysis computed for this study are presented under Section 4.9.

### 3.9.7 Multicollinearity assessment

An important consideration when applying multivariate statistical analysis to a data set is multicollinearity (Hair et al. 2010:21). Multicollinearity refers to a state where the inter-item correlation between the independent variables is excessively high (Malhotra 2010:586), thereby making it difficult to assess the relative strength of a predictor variable when explaining the variation on a dependent variable. Assessing multicollinearity was considered necessary in this research, since the SEM technique were to be employed. Of note, multicollinearity is a concern because SEM researchers use related measures as indicators of a construct and sometimes measures are too highly related for certain statistical operations to function properly.

In this study, the correlation matrix was examined for the existence of multicollinearity, consistent with the demands of applying a SEM procedure. Field (2009:349) suggests that if the predictor variables correlate too highly as evidenced by a correlation coefficient value greater than 0.90, then collinearity is a serious cause for concern. On the other hand, Costello and Osborne (2005:6) pointed out that correlation coefficient values higher than 0.70 signal collinearity problems. No multicollinearity problems were reported in Section 4.9 of this study.

### 3.9.8 Validity assessment

Validity is the extent to which a scale measures what it is intended to measure (Hair et al. 2010:166). In other words, validity is the degree of precision in a measurement instrument. In agreement, Zikmund and Babin (2013:258) aver that validity is the accuracy of a measure or the extent to which a concept is represented truthfully by a score. In assessing validity, Malhotra (2010:320) contends that there should be no measurement errors in acquiring perfect validity. Therefore, in pursuit of such perfect validity, this study evaluated both face validity and construct validity of the research instrument.
3.9.8.1 **Face and content validity**

Face validity measures the adequacy with which a scale captures the entire domain of the theoretical constructs under investigation (Iacobucci & Churchill 2010:258). Zikmund and Babin (2013:258) contend that face validity refers to the degree to which the measuring instrument appears to be valid. This usually requires the use of expert judges to review how well the scale items used in a study represent the constructs being measured (Hair et al. 2013:167). In order to assess face validity, the questionnaire used in this study was developed initially by the researcher, after which a pre-test was conducted with a panel of five experts in the sports marketing discipline. The comments made by the panel of specialists led to the subsequent re-wording and final layout of the questionnaire. In addition, consultations were made with the study supervisor as well as a statistician in order to evaluate the characteristics of the scale used and thereby confirm the face validity of this study.

As an additional measure, content validity was also assessed in this study. Hair et al. (2013:167) define content validity as “a measure of the extent to which a construct represents all the relevant dimensions”. In order to assess the content validity for this study, a pilot study was conducted on a conveniently selected sample of 60 sports consumers drawn from the Vaal University of Technology. The reliable results of the pilot study are presented in Section 4.2 of this study.

3.9.8.2 **Construct validity**

Construct validity measures the degree of association between the measurement items and the constructs they represent (Iacobucci & Churchill 2010:257). Zikmund and Babin (2013:259) suggest that construct validity involves a determination of how well the measuring instrument truly represents the theoretical context of the topic under investigation. Malhotra (2010:321) points out that the construct validity of a study can be confirmed by assessing convergent, discriminant as well as nomological validity.

An initial assessment of the item-to-total correlation values was useful in determining the specific items that could potentially be a problematic compromise on the scale reliability. In this regard, Field (2009:678) advises that items with item to total correlations that fall below 0.30 should be deleted while those above 0.50 are preferable when attempting to assemble a scale with internally consistent items. Secondly, the researcher checked if all item loadings along their respective constructs were greater than 0.50, as suggested by (Hair et al. 2013:167). Thirdly, the rule of thumb with the average inter-item correlation coefficient is to have values falling within the range
of 0.15 and 0.50 (Clark & Watson 1995:316). All three requirements were met as shown in sections 4.6 and 4.7 of this study.

Discriminant validity refers to “the extent to which a construct being studied is not theoretically related to others” (Malhotra 2010:321). Hair et al. (2013:167) affirm that discriminate validity represents the uniqueness of a construct in a study. As such, low correlation coefficient values between measurements, which are theoretically different from the construct under study, signify discriminant validity.

Nomological validity refers to “the extent to which a scale measurement correlates in theoretically predicted ways with measures of different but related constructs” (Malhotra 2010:321). The correlation matrix was computed with a view to ascertain the nomological validity of this research.

In the next section, the SEM procedure is discussed as the anchor statistical technique for testing the conceptual model that was developed in this research.

3.10 STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING (SEM)

SEM was employed in this study for the purpose of analysing data using AMOS (Version 23.0). According to Malhotra (2010:725), SEM is carried out as a two-stage approach to provide evidence of systematic co-variation. Put simply, SEM is used in this research to determine whether the conceptual model that was specified in Chapter 2 of this study is indeed valid. The first phase in SEM is to evaluate the satisfactoriness of the measurement model while the second phase comprises the validation of a structural (path) model (Martinez-Lòpez, Gázquez-Abad & Sousa 2013:116). The next sections allude to the components of these two phases of SEM.

3.10.1 The measurement model

In SEM, the measurement model allows the researcher to evaluate the degree to which observed variables combine to identify the latent constructs (Weston & Gore 2006:724). In other words, the measurement model seeks to define the underlying relationships between the unobserved and observed variables (Byrne 2010:12). The measurement model is estimated through confirmatory factor analysis (Weston & Gore 2006:724; Babin & Svensson 2012:325). In addition, the measurement model provides an assessment of the overall model fit and indicates the amount of variance that is explained by the measured items. Reisinger and Mavondo (2007:44-45) caution that the measurement model must be specified correctly first, in order for the structural model to have meaning.
In SEM, each latent construct comprises indicators that represent the observed variables (Malhotra 2010:726). Observed paths or indicators for each latent construct must be specified. However, because the latent construct cannot be observed, one factor loading is then fixed, usually at a value of one (Byrne 2010:307; Malhotra 2010:730). This study applied the maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) technique consistent with Shiu et al. (2009:626) who recommends the use of the iterative technique as it possesses desirable asymptotic properties such as absence of bias and minimum variance (Blunch 2008:81). In this regard, the consistency of a measurement model was evaluated through model-data fit indices, CFA as well as statistical measures of model accuracy (Schumacker & Lomax 2010:7). These three procedures are outlined next.

3.10.1.1 Model fit criteria

SEM utilises a number of fit indices that provide an indication of how well or true the model actually fits the data (Malhotra 2010:730). It is necessary to assess the model fit indices along both the measurement model as well as the structural model. In the case of inadequate measurement model fit, this needs to be addressed before moving on to the structural model (Hair et al. 2010:738). Determining the extent to which the model best represents the research data depends on several model fit criteria. Hooper, Coughlan and Mullen (2008:56) concur and stipulate that the following indices are the most commonly used indices, namely the chi-square, degrees of freedom and significance value, SRMR, RMSEA, NFI, IFI, TLI and CFI. The indices that were used in this research are summarised in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3: Summary of model fit indices (Malhotra 2010:732-733)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Model Fit Indice</th>
<th>Acceptable Level</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Absolute fit</strong></td>
<td>CMIN/DF Standardised Root Mean Residual</td>
<td>less than 3.0</td>
<td>An attempt to adjust for sample size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(SRMR) Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)</td>
<td>Less than or equal to 0.05</td>
<td>Has a known distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Less than or equal to 0.08</td>
<td>Favours parsimony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Has a known distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Favours parsimony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Values less than 0.05 is considered excellent fit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incremental fit</strong></td>
<td>Incremental fit index (IFI) and Normed fit index (NFI) or Trucker-Lewis Index (TLI)</td>
<td>Value equal to or greater than 0.90 is acceptable</td>
<td>Values range between 0 and 1, with 1 implying perfect fit. NFI, IFI and TLI indices assume zero population co-variances (no co-variances) among the observed variables. Values range between 0 and 1, with 1 implying perfect fit. CFI compares the existing model fit or sample co-variance matrix with a null model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comparative fit index (CFI)</td>
<td>Value equal to or greater than 0.90 is acceptable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Malhotra (2010:731) classifies the model fit measures into either, absolute fit, incremental fit or parsimonious fit. The scholar suggests that the absolute fit indices measure the extent to which the
hypothesised model coincides with the empirical data in the study. Typically, the chi-square statistic is regarded as a null hypothesis significance test and is used to assert whether the model under consideration fits the data (Byrne 2010:77). Reisinger and Mavondo (2007:57) state that a non-significant chi-square value is indicative of good model fit whilst a significant chi-square value indicates poor model fit. However, Malhotra (2010:732) as well as Byrne (2010:77) note that utilising the chi-square alone as a model fit indice is awash with a plethora of limitations. Primarily, chi-square is highly sensitive to larger sample sizes, while secondarily, chi-square increases with large sample sizes and large numbers of observed variables, thereby introducing a bias in the model fit. In light of the limitations pertaining to the chi-square statistic, several other model-fit indices have been developed to confirm the appropriateness of the measurement model fit (Byrne 2010:77).

Incremental fit indices assess the performance of the proposed model against baseline or null models (Malhotra 2010:732-733). On the other hand, parsimony fit indices are utilised to measure fit in relation to the complexity of the model when compared with other alternative models. However, Hair et al. (2010:672) postulate that the reporting on all goodness-of-fit indices is not needed as they are often redundant. However, researchers ought to report on at least one incremental fit index and one absolute fit index in addition to the chi-square value.

The measurement model evaluated in this study was subjected to a model fit assessment. This study utilised the absolute fit indices of the chi-square, SRMR and the RMSEA. First, to reduce the sensitivity of chi-square to sample size, the chi-square value is divided by the degrees of freedom (CMIN/DF), which generally results in a lower value called the normed chi-square. However, the criteria for CMIN/DF acceptance still varies across researchers, with values ranging from 2.0 to 3.0 having been recommended as tolerable when accounting for the influence of sample size (Schumacker & Lomax 2010:82-83; Hooper et al. 2008:55).

The root mean square residual (RMSR) is an average residual covariance that is a function of the units used to measure the observed variables (Malhotra 2010:732). Therefore, it is problematic to compare RMSR alone, unless standardisation is done. As such, the SRMR was evaluated, which is the standardised value of the RMSR and helps when comparing fit across models. Furthermore, the RMSEA was evaluated since it helps to examine the difference between actual and the predicted co-variance (square root of the mean of the squared residuals). As such, RMSEA helps to adjust the chi-square value by factoring in the degrees of freedom and the sample size used in the study (Byrne 2010:77). As a rule, like RMSR, lower values of SRMR and RMSEA indicate
better model fit and values below 0.08 or those less than 0.05 are considered desirable (Blunch 2008:114).

In this study, incremental fit indices were also examined. In particular, the NFI was examined since it is a ratio of the difference in the chi-square value for the proposed model and the null model divided by the chi-square value of the null model. In addition, the CFI was also examined, although it is related to NFI although it factors in the degrees of freedom for complexity (Blunch 2008:114). Moreover, the TLI was evaluated since it is conceptually similar to CFI, although TLI is not normed implying that TLI values can fall outside of the zero to one range. According to Malhotra (2010:733), NFI, TLI and CFI values range between zero and one, whereas values closer to one or those larger than 0.90 are considered acceptable indicators of good model fit. Section 4.10 reports on the model-fit results for the measurement model that was specified in this study.

### 3.10.1.2 Confirmatory factor analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a complex technique used to test hypotheses in this study because it requires an *a priori* proposed model in which the number of the measuring variables is already specified (Byrne 2010:77). CFA is used appropriately when the researcher has knowledge of some underlying latent variable structure. Based on the knowledge of endorsement theory and empirical research, the researcher proposed relationships between the observed measures and their underlying factors. The hypothesised relationships between the measures were then tested statistically (Byrne 2010:73). Thus, in CFA the researcher specifies a certain number of factors, which are correlated and for which observed variables measure each factor. While in exploratory factor analysis (EFA), the researcher explores how many factors there are, whether the factors are correlated and which observed variables appear to best measure each factor (Malhotra 2010:639), in CFA the researcher follows a specified theoretical model.

This study used a CFA model with standardised estimates since the measures are derived theoretically from the literature. When assessing the measurement model, Lei and Wu (2007:37) suggest that the standardised factor loadings could range between zero and one, where higher values are indicative of better observed variables along each latent variable. Based on the CFA results, the quality of a measurement model can be assessed by checking weak regression weights (factor loadings below 0.50), consistent with the specifications of Hair *et al.* (2010:706). In addition, scale indicators reporting standardised factor loadings above 1.0 or below -1.0 (termed Heywood cases) should be eliminated. If such problematic estimates are concluded, the measurement model may be subject to sample size error, model-implied matrices or model specification error.
3.10.1.3 Analysis of the statistical accuracy of the measurement model

It is imperative for a measurement model to be specified correctly in order for the structural model to be of any accurate value or meaning. As such, the strength of any study is influenced by the measurement items that are employed as decoded in the study’s reliability and

In SEM, reliability is assessed by considering composite reliability (CR), of which is CR is defined by Malhotra (2010:733) as “the total amount of true score variance in relation to the total score variance”. Composite reliability is computed from the square of the summation of the factor loadings divided by the square of the summation of the factor loadings, plus the summation of error variances. The CR formula is as follows:

$$CR = \frac{\left(\sum_{i=1}^{n} \lambda_i \right)^2}{\left(\sum_{i=1}^{n} \lambda_i \right)^2 + \left(\sum_{i=1}^{n} \delta_i \right)}$$

Malhotra (2010:734) explains that a measurement model is deemed reliable when the CR values for each of the latent factors exceed 0.70, with an estimate range between 0.60 and 0.70, being considered as acceptable. This threshold was met in this study (refer to Section 4.10.3), implying that the specified measurement model for this study was reliable.

As indicated in Section 3.9.8, construct validity includes convergent validity, discriminant validity and nomological validity. Convergent validity of the measurement model was assessed using two measures, namely the factor loadings or standardised regression weights and the average variance extracted (AVE) values. The statistically significant and high factor loadings (above 0.50) observed in Table 4.11 of this study suggest that the observed variables converged well on their respective constructs. At a minimum, all factor loadings should be statistically significant and higher than 0.50, ideally higher than 0.70 (Malhotra 2010:734).

AVE refers to the overall amount of variance in the indicators accounted for by the latent construct in relation to the variance due to random measurement error (Malhotra 2010:734). The formula below was used to calculate the AVE values in this study:

$$V\eta = \Sigma \lambda y_i^2 / (\Sigma \lambda y_i^2 + \Sigma \varepsilon)$$

$$AVE = \frac{\text{summation of the squared of factor loadings}}{\text{summation of the squared of factor loadings} + \text{summation of error variances}}$$
AVE values range from zero to one, whereby values of 0.50 and above indicate satisfactory convergent validity implying that the latent constructs account for 50 percent or more of the variance in the observed variables (Malhotra 2010:734). However, if the AVE value is less than 0.50, the variance due to measurement error is larger than the variance captured by the construct, hence the validity of the indicators and the represented latent construct remain questionable. In this study, the computed AVE values ranged between 0.523 and 0.640 (refer to Section 4.10.3), implying that the measurement model has adequate convergent validity.

Discriminant validity represents the distinctiveness or uniqueness of a measure or measures and the aim of this form of validity is to prove the lack of correlation amongst constructs or measures that are theoretically dissimilar (Malhotra 2010:321; Zikmund & Babin 2013:260). To assess discriminant validity of the measurement model, two measures were used. First, the square roots of the AVE values were calculated for each construct. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981:46), discriminant validity is evidenced when the square roots of all AVE values are greater than the largest correlation coefficient values between the constructs in the model. Second, the maximum Shared Variance (SV) values were computed. In this study, all the computed square roots of the AVE values were greater than the highest inter-construct correlation coefficient value ($r=0.695$). In addition, all AVE value estimations in this study were larger than the highest computed SV values (refer to Section 4.10.3), thereby demonstrating discriminant validity of the measurement model.

According to Hair et al. (2010:710), constructing a correlation matrix is a useful tool in assessing the nomological validity of a proposed measurement model. For the purpose of this study, Pearson’s Product-Moment correlation coefficient values were computed. The positive moderate to strong, yet significant correlation results denote the nomological validity of this study as explained in Section 4.10.3 of this study.

3.10.2 The structural model

Path analysis is a unique addition of SEM that involves simultaneously estimating multiple regression models or equations (Lei & Wu 2007:34). A comparison is computed between the correlation matrix and the regression weights in the specified model, after which model fit indices are calculated (refer to Table 3.3), similar to the procedure in the measurement model data fitting procedure. Furthermore, path analysis estimates the strength of each individual relationship using only a co-variance or correlation matrix as input (Malhotra 2010:748-749). The structural model tested in this study relates to the relationships among all latent variables, namely trustworthiness,
expertise, attractiveness, athlete-endorser credibility, attitude towards the advertisement and purchase intentions as specified on the research model.

In order to perform path analysis two main requirements must be met, namely all causal relationships between variables must flow in one direction only and the variables must have a clear time-ordering as one variable cannot cause another, unless it precedes it in time (Blunch 2008:10). Path analysis is advantageous as it allows for the analysis of complex structures, diagrams or models and aids in the determination of hypothesised models, which could best fit the data. In addition, Malhotra (2010:735) adds that it is wise to interpret the squared multiple correlations (SMC) of a data set. This is the name given to the statistic depicting the extent to which “the variance of an observed variable is explained by the associated latent construct”.

3.11 SYNOPSIS

In this chapter, the research methodology that was followed in achieving the empirical objectives for this study is described, consistent with the metaphor of the research onion. The chapter begins by outlining the positivism research paradigm, which was chosen in order to provide a guideline for the entire study. In addition, deductive theory building was deemed appropriate as is consistent with the positivist stance followed in this study. Furthermore, a quantitative research strategy was chosen since it allows for the objective testing of possible existence of relationships between variables as per the empirical objectives outlined in this study. Given the nature of the study, a descriptive research design was followed by making use of a single cross-sectional research design. Moreover, a non-probability snowball sample of 500 sports consumers who are familiar with the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement were drawn from the Southern Gauteng region.

Data were collected by means of a survey utilising a structured questionnaire that comprises dichotomous, multiple-choice and Likert scale based questions. Moreover, the procedures pertaining to the data preparation for this study, comprising data editing, coding, capturing and cleaning are re-visited. In addition, the chapter alludes to the statistical techniques that would necessarily be applied to the data set in this research. In particular, the chapter devoted time to explaining the SEM procedure by elaborating on components of both the measurement model as well as the structural model. The statistical analysis results of both the pilot and main study are presented in Chapter 4 of this study.
CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

“Good statistical inference never strays very far from the data”
Brian Yandell

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the research method, sampling design procedures, data collection method as well as the overview of the statistical analysis techniques that were used to analyse the data. This chapter presents the data results and discussion of the results with a view to draw closer towards the achievement of the empirical research objectives and hypotheses that were formulated at the beginning of this study.

Within this chapter, the analysis and interpretation of the empirical findings are reported and discussed. Section 4.2 discusses the results of the pilot testing of the questionnaire while Section 4.3 summarises the data gathering process, consistent with the procedures outlined in Chapter 3. Furthermore, the preliminary data analysis procedure is discussed in Section 4.4, comprising data coding, cleaning and tabulation. Section 4.5 provides a discussion on the demographic information of the sample, as well as a summary of the purchase information, which was outlined in the form of frequencies and charts. Section 4.6 reports on the EFA procedure, which culminated in the extraction of six components and a corresponding item reduction process after a consideration of several item statistics. The reliability of the main study as well as the descriptive statistical analysis are presented in Section 4.7 and 4.8, respectively. Section 4.9 reports on the correlation analysis and multicollinearity testing. Thereafter, the SEM results are presented, comprising the measurement model analysis (Section 4.10) as well as the structural model analysis (Section 4.11), concluding with Section 4.12.

4.2 PILOT TEST RESULTS

The questionnaire that was used in this study was initially pre-tested by five sports marketing specialists prior to conducting the pilot testing in order to ascertain face and content validity. The results obtained from the pre-test were used to refine the questionnaire that was used in the pilot study. The refined questionnaire comprised 15 items on trustworthiness, expertise as well as attractiveness. In addition, the questionnaire comprised six items on athlete-celebrity endorser credibility, six items on consumers’ attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement
advertisement as well as five items on purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product. Following the pre-test and prior to conducting the main study, pilot testing was undertaken on a student sample of 60 participants, with a view to assess the reliability of the scales within the questionnaire, as suggested by Iacobucci and Churchill (2010:224). Table 4.1 reports on the pilot test results.

Table 4.1: Summary of the pilot test results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha coefficient</th>
<th>Average inter-item correlation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1-C5</td>
<td>0.763</td>
<td>0.387</td>
<td>3.493</td>
<td>0.793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C6-C10</td>
<td>0.800</td>
<td>0.442</td>
<td>3.423</td>
<td>0.888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C11-C15</td>
<td>0.831</td>
<td>0.496</td>
<td>3.520</td>
<td>0.868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C16-C21</td>
<td>0.860</td>
<td>0.510</td>
<td>3.664</td>
<td>0.815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C22-C27</td>
<td>0.736</td>
<td>0.324</td>
<td>3.964</td>
<td>0.680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C28-C32</td>
<td>0.853</td>
<td>0.544</td>
<td>3.923</td>
<td>0.909</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach’s alpha coefficient values were calculated to determine the internal-consistency reliability of the study during the pilot phase. The trustworthiness scale (C1-C5) returned a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient value of 0.763, while the expertise scale (C6-C10) returned a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient value of 0.800 and the attractiveness scale (C11-C15) returned a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient value of 0.831. In addition, the endorser credibility scale (C16-C21) returned a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient value of 0.860, whilst the attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement scale (C22-C27) returned a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient value of 0.736, and the purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product scale (C28-C32) returned a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient value of 0.853. The computed values exceeded the threshold value of 0.70, thereby suggesting that the instrument scale items had adequate internal consistency (Malhotra 2010:319).

In order to assess the convergent validity of the scales, the average inter-item correlation was utilised for all the six sub-scales used in this study. The average inter-item correlation values for all the scales fell within the recommended range of 0.15 and 0.50 (Clark & Watson 1995:316). Therefore, there was no need to delete any of the items that were included in the pilot survey. Based on this, the 32 items were used to prepare a questionnaire for the main survey, which was administered to a larger sample during the main survey.

The following section discusses the data gathering process that was undertaken in this study.
4.3 DATA GATHERING PROCESS

In accordance with specified sample size, 500 questionnaires were distributed. A twelve-week period was granted for the distribution of questionnaires after which the assembled surveys were collated for analysis.

The next section addresses the preliminary data analysis that was undertaken in this study.

4.4 PRELIMINARY DATA ANALYSIS

Coding, cleaning and tabulation of data were carried out during the preliminary data analysis. The next section provides an overview of the cleaning, coding and tabulation of the collected data set.

4.4.1 Data editing and cleaning

In order to ensure consistency of treatment, the checking and editing of completed questionnaires was conducted immediately after the fieldwork. First, 25 of the questionnaires had too many missing values (more than 20 percent) leading to the decision to discard them completely owing to the incomputable blanks. Secondly, there was a major inconsistency on 19 of the questionnaires relating to some of the participants indicating that they had not seen the stimulus advertisement of AB De Villiers within the past 12 months, thereby responding with no to Question B1. This was considered a serious flaw that could not be confirmed in this research, considering that the participants were drawn up using a completely reliable snowball sample. All 19 cases were discarded, as it was not possible to return to the field to confirm if the participants truly comprised the target population. Thereafter, the data pertaining to only 456 usable questionnaires were captured onto Ms Excel and a spreadsheet was drawn up using the respective case numbers. Table 4.2 explains how the researcher cleaned the data to resolve the problematic issues without making any further deletions.
### Table 4.2: Data cleaning using SPSS-data sort cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Number</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Problem/issue</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>C5</td>
<td>Capturing error Value was captured as 12 whereas the codes only range between 1 and 5</td>
<td>Referred back to the actual questionnaire Imputed 1 to replace the erroneously captured value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>C7</td>
<td>Capturing error Value was captured as 33 whereas the codes only range between 1 and 5</td>
<td>Referred back to the actual questionnaire Imputed 3 to replace the erroneously captured value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>272</td>
<td>C3</td>
<td>Missing value (blank on questionnaire)</td>
<td>Imputed modal response value of 3 on the scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119</td>
<td>C30</td>
<td>Capturing error since value was captured as 23 whereas the codes only range between 1 and 5</td>
<td>Referred back to the actual questionnaire Imputed 3 to replace the erroneously captured value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>318</td>
<td>C18</td>
<td>Missing value (blank on questionnaire)</td>
<td>Imputed modal response value of 4 on the scale</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of cleaning the data, the Ms Excel spreadsheet comprising 456 responses was loaded onto SPSS where the data-sort case files was run with a view to check any errors or missing values within the data set. However, some of the responses had problematic issues and needed to be handled properly. According to Pallant (2010:53), it is very important to scrutinise the data file for errors and mistakes in order to rectify any missing values and data that are not within the minimum and maximum range of the coded data. In this study, imputing of rectified values was made for case numbers 97 (item C5), 116 (item C7) and 119 (item C30) after referring back to the actual completed questionnaires. Conversely, modal response values were imputed for case numbers 272 (item C3) and 318 (item C18) in accordance with Hair et al. (2013:246) who assert that missing values of less than 10 percent can be estimated based on the mode.

### 4.4.2 Data coding

Table 4.3 presents the variable codes and assigned values on the main survey questionnaire.

### Table 4.3: Data coding at the main survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Value assigned to responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 1</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male (1), Female (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 2</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>18-20 years (1), 21-30 years (2), 31-40 years (3), 41-50 years (4), Older than 50 years (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 3</td>
<td>A3</td>
<td>Ethnic group</td>
<td>Black African (1), Coloured (2), Indian/Asian (3), White (4), Other (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 4</td>
<td>A4</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Afrikaans (1), English (2), IsiNdebele (3), isiXhosa (4), IsiZulu (5), SePedi (6), SeSotho (7), SeTswana (8), SiSwati (9), Tshivenda (10), XiTsonga (11), Other (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 5</td>
<td>A5</td>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>Single/Never been married (1), Married (2), Separated (3), Divorced (4), Widowed (5), Other (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 6</td>
<td>A6</td>
<td>Highest educational qualification</td>
<td>Grade 12/Matric (1), Diploma (2), Degree (3), Masters/PhD (4), Other (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 7</td>
<td>A7</td>
<td>Monthly income (before tax)</td>
<td>Less than R5000 (1), R5000-R10000 (2), R10001-R20000 (3), R20001-R30000 (4), More than R30000 (5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3: Data coding at the main survey (continued …)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Value assigned to responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section B: Athlete-celebrity endorsed product purchase information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 1</td>
<td>B1</td>
<td>Purchases of Lay’s™ potato chips within the last 12 months</td>
<td>Yes (1), No (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 2</td>
<td>B2</td>
<td>Frequency of purchase of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Once a year (1), at least twice a year (2), at least four times a year (3), at least 12 times a year (4), at least 52 times a year (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 3</td>
<td>B3</td>
<td>Preferred media for accessing athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement</td>
<td>Television (1), Newspaper (2), Magazine (3), Social media (4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section C: Determinants of consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Value assigned to responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Items 1-5</td>
<td>C1</td>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither agree nor disagree (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>C3</td>
<td>C4</td>
<td>C5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items 6-10</td>
<td>C6</td>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td>Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither agree nor disagree (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C7</td>
<td>C8</td>
<td>C9</td>
<td>C10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items 11-15</td>
<td>C11</td>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td>Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither agree nor disagree (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C12</td>
<td>C13</td>
<td>C14</td>
<td>C15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items 16-21</td>
<td>C16</td>
<td>Athlete-celebrity endorser credibility</td>
<td>Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither agree nor disagree (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C17</td>
<td>C18</td>
<td>C19</td>
<td>C20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items 22-27</td>
<td>C22</td>
<td>Attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement</td>
<td>Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither agree nor disagree (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C23</td>
<td>C24</td>
<td>C25</td>
<td>C26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items 28-32</td>
<td>C28</td>
<td>Purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product</td>
<td>Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither agree nor disagree (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C29</td>
<td>C30</td>
<td>C31</td>
<td>C32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.3 Tabulation of variables

Table 4.4 presents the frequencies obtained for Section C of the questionnaire.
Table 4.4: Frequency table of responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale item</th>
<th>Strongly disagree (1)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Neither disagree nor agree (3)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Strongly agree (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C6</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C7</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
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<td>138</td>
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<tr>
<td>C9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>123</td>
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<td>36</td>
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<td>158</td>
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<tr>
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<td>67</td>
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<td>120</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>88</td>
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<td>C14</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C15</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>42</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>17</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
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<td>144</td>
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<td>C20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>36</td>
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<td>145</td>
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<tr>
<td>C21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C24</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>112</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>140</td>
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<tr>
<td>C25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C26</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C27</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C28</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>185</td>
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<tr>
<td>C29</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>C31</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C32</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequency tabulation was possible for the data that was anchored on a five-point Likert scale, namely Section C of the questionnaire (Items C1-C32), which aimed at measuring the determinants of consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product. The next section reports on the frequencies along the categorical data (Section A and B) in the form of charts and percentages.

### 4.5 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE AND PRODUCT PURCHASE INFORMATION

This section provides a description of the sample, with reference to their demographics, as well as the purchase information. Pie charts and bar graphs were used for representing the information acquired from the participants.
4.5.1 Sample composition

For the purpose of presenting a general overview of the sample that took part in this study, a description of the sample with regards to their gender, age, ethnic group, language, marital status, highest educational qualifications, monthly income, the frequency of potato chips purchase and media preferred for accessing athlete-celebrity endorsed product advertisement follows.

Figure 4.1 presents a summary of the participants’ gender profile pertaining to Question A1.

![Gender Pie Chart]

**Figure 4.1: Participants’ gender**

According to Figure 4.1, the majority of the participants were male, representing 54.6 percent of the sample (n=249), while only 45.4 percent of the sample (n=207) were female.

Figure 4.2 presents a summary of the distribution of the participants’ age distribution pertaining to Question A2.
Figure 4.2: Participants’ age

Figure 4.2 indicates the demographical information pertaining to the participants’ age. In part, the age of the participants were used as a screening question to ensure that only those participants 18 years and older, would form part of the sample are included in the study, which is in accordance with the focus of the study as defined under target population in Chapter 3 (refer to Section 3.6.1). According to Figure 4.2, the majority of participants indicated being between the age of 21-30 (n=264; 57.9% of the sample), followed by those who indicated being between 18 to 20 years of age (n=157; 34.4% of the sample) and between 31-40 years of age (n=32; 7% of the sample). The remaining participants (n=2; 0.4% of the sample) were between the age of 41-50 years of age while only one participant (0.2% of the sample) reported to be older than 50 years.

Participants’ ethnic group, pertaining to Question A3 is reported in Figure 4.3.
Figure 4.3: Participants’ ethnic group

According to Figure 4.3, majority of the participants were Black African (n=413; 90.6% of the sample), followed by those who indicated being Coloured (n=29; 6.3% of the sample). The remaining participants were either White (n=13; 2.9% of the sample) or Indian/Asian (n=1; 0.2% of the sample).

The participants’ language, pertaining to Question A4 is reported in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4: Participants’ language
Most of the participants indicated their conversational language is SeSotho (n=162; 35.5% of the sample). This result was followed by IsiZulu (n=77; 16.9% of the sample), IsiXhosa (n=51; 11.2% of the sample), SeTswana (n=35; 7.7% of the sample), SePedi (n=34; 7.5% of the sample), Afrikaans (n=25; 5.5% of the sample) and Tshivenda (n=23; 5% of the sample) speaking individuals. Of the remaining participants, 4.4 percent highlighted that they were SiSwati speaking (n=20), while 2.9 percent of the sample were English speaking (n=13) and 1.97 percent of the sample were IsiNdebele speaking (n=9). The smallest portion of the sample (n=7; 1.5% of the sample) was represented by participants that indicated XiTsonga to be their language.

Figure 4.5 presents summary of the participants’ marital status as pertaining to Question A5.

![Marital status diagram]

**Figure 4.5: Participants’ marital status**

In terms of participants’ marital status, Figure 4.5 shows that majority of the participants indicated being married (n=239; 52.4% of the sample), followed by those that indicated being single and never been married (n=207; 45.5% of the sample). Additionally, 1.3 percent of the sample indicated being separated (n=6). The remaining 0.8 percent of the sample was divided equally between those that are divorced (n=2; 0.4% of the sample) and widowed (n=2; 0.4% of the sample).

Figure 4.6 provides a summary of participants’ highest educational qualification, pertaining to Question A6.
Figure 4.6: Participants’ highest educational qualification

Figure 4.6 indicates that majority of the participants’ highest educational qualification is Grade 12 or Matric (n=233; 51.2% of the sample), followed by Diploma (n=149; 32.7% of the sample). The remaining participants indicated that a university Degree (n=62; 13.6% of the sample) and masters/PhD (n=6; 1.3% of the sample) was their highest educational qualification. The ‘other’ category, which made provision for specifying other educational qualifications that are not listed among the options provided in the questionnaire, was marked by six participants only, comprising 1.3 percent of the sample (n=6). Of these, four indicated that they had Artisan trades qualifications while two participants indicated Grade 11 as their highest educational qualification.

Participants’ monthly income distribution pertaining to Question A7 is reported in Figure 4.7.
Figure 4.7: Participants’ monthly income

According to Figure 4.7, approximately 57.9 percent of the sample (n=264) indicated monthly income ranging between R5000 and R10 000, followed by those that indicated earning less than R5000 (n=147; 32.2% of the sample) and between R10 001 to R20 000 (n=18; 3.9% of the sample). The remaining participants (n=16; 3.5% of the sample) indicated that they received monthly income of above R30 000 before taxation while 2.4 percent of the sample (n=11) earn between R20 001 and R30 000.

4.5.2 Purchase information for Lay’s™ potato chips

Frequency distribution charts were used to determine consumers’ purchases of Lay’s™ potato chips, the athlete-celebrity endorsed product of choice for this study. Therefore, in addition to the demographic questions in Section A of the questionnaire, Section B included three questions requesting information on participants’ purchases of Lay’s™ potato chips in the past 12 months, frequency of purchases made as well as the preferred media for accessing the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement.

Consistent with the target population requirements specified in the sampling plan outlined in Section 3.6.5 of this study, all the participants in the main survey needed to have made a purchase in the last 12 months prior to the main survey. This information was reflected in Question B1, whereby after the data cleaning exercise reported in Section 4.4, all the participants (n=476; 100% of the sample) indicated that they have indeed made a purchase in the last 12 months. Furthermore, the results of frequency of purchase and preferred media for accessing the advertisement are presented in Figure 4.8 and Figure 4.9, respectively.
Participants’ recollection of the frequency with which they make purchases of Lay’s™ potato chips as pertaining to Question B2 is reported in Figure 4.8.

![Frequency of purchase chart]

**Figure 4.8: Frequency of product purchase**

Figure 4.8 reveals that majority of participants (n=213; 46.7% of the sample) make a purchase of Lay’s™ potato chips at least 12 times a year or on a monthly basis. This result is followed by those that indicated that they purchase potato chips four time a year (n=77; 16.9% of the sample) while 15.6 percent of the sample (n=71) alluded to making purchases of Lay’s™ potato chips at least 52 times a year or on a weekly basis. Of the remaining participants, 10.7 percent of the sample (n=49) could only recall purchasing the potato chips only twice in 2016, while 10.1 percent of the sample (n=46) professed to have done so only once within the year (annually).

The participants’ preferred media for accessing the advertisement wherein the athlete-celebrity appears endorsing Lay’s™ potato chips is reported in Figure 4.9 as it pertains to Question B3 of the questionnaire.
Figure 4.9: Preferred media for accessing the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement

Figure 4.9 reveals that the most popular media for accessing advertisement by participants is the traditional television, represented by 62.5 percent of the sample (n=285). The second most popular media for accessing the advertisement is social media, represented by 23.7 percent of the sample (n=108). Furthermore, representing 7.5 percent of the sample (n=34), newspaper access to the athlete-celebrity endorsed advertisement was rated the third most popular media, followed by those that indicated magazines (n=29; 6.4% of the sample) to be the preferred media choice for accessing the advertisement.

The following section reports on the EFA procedure, as it was the first step in applying inferential statistics to reduce the data set on the Likert scale questions into meaningful components for the subsequent answering of the empirical research objectives.

4.6 EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS (EFA)

An EFA procedure was the preliminary inferential statistical technique conducted in Section C of the dataset. The objective for conducting the EFA was to reduce the data measured along the ordinal scale into easily identifiable components or factors for further analysis. Initially, the correlation matrix among the items was observed and all the variables were correlated. Thereafter, the KMO test and the Bartlett’s test of sphericity were performed with a view to assess the factorability of the data. Malhotra (2010:638) advises that high KMO values between 0.5 and 1.0 indicate that EFA is appropriate. Both tests returned satisfactory values with KMO=0.851, chi
square Bartlett test = 8785.438 (df = 496) at the 5 percent level of significance (p = 0.000). These results confirm that the correlations between the pairs of variables can be explained fully by the variables measured in the study and, therefore, EFA is appropriate.

Once the factorability of the data was established, the EFA procedure applied the PCA factor extraction method that considers the total variance brought into the factor matrix. PCA was favoured since it is used primarily to determine the minimum number of factors that account for the maximum variance in the data, for use in subsequent multivariate analysis (Malhotra 2010:641). In line with Tustin et al. (2010:671), as set out in Section 3.9.3 of this study, the default measure was to use the Eigen values greater than one criteria while the 60 percent threshold for total variance contribution suggested by Malhotra (2010:644) was maintained. Table 4.5 reports on the eigenvalues, percentage of variance and cumulative variance of the six factors extracted.

Table 4.5: Rotation sums of squared loadings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Eigen Value</th>
<th>% of Variance</th>
<th>Cumulative %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.619</td>
<td>8.436</td>
<td>8.436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.936</td>
<td>9.330</td>
<td>17.766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.036</td>
<td>10.635</td>
<td>28.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.498</td>
<td>10.883</td>
<td>39.284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.483</td>
<td>12.299</td>
<td>51.583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.181</td>
<td>13.119</td>
<td>64.702</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factor extraction in this study also required a consideration of the scree plot. According to the scree plotted on SPSS (Version 23.0), the line seems to level off after six factors as illustrated in Figure 4.10. This further proves the adequacy of the six-factor solution for the variables utilised in the study.
Figure 4.10: Scree plot

The EFA procedure applied Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization, converged in nine iterations, to produce a cleaner and easy to interpret factor solution. The examination of the rotated component matrix required that observations be made along the factor loadings, communalities and corrected item to total correlation values whereby a cut-off point of 0.50 was maintained across the three statistics. All of the factors aligned well with the specified scales whereas four items were dropped from further analysis since they failed to meet the requisite criteria. The rotated factors from the pattern matrix are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Rotated component matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
<th>Factor 4</th>
<th>Factor 5</th>
<th>Factor 6</th>
<th>Communalities</th>
<th>Corrected item to total correlations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>0.585</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.793</td>
<td>0.702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>0.593</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.607</td>
<td>0.646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3</td>
<td>0.600</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.726</td>
<td>0.612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4</td>
<td>0.630</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.673</td>
<td>0.669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C5</td>
<td>0.549</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.629</td>
<td>0.637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C6*</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>0.490</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.516</td>
<td>0.635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C7*</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>-0.588</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.574</td>
<td><strong>0.388</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.653</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.592</td>
<td>0.629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.724</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>0.609</td>
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<tr>
<td>C10</td>
<td>0.712</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.676</td>
<td>0.662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>0.761</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.543</td>
<td>0.658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C12</td>
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<td><strong>0.622</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.620</td>
<td>0.712</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first factor labelled trustworthiness, explained 8.4 percent variance with an extracted eigenvalue of 4.619. This factor consists of five items (C1-C5), which loaded satisfactorily on this factor, with extracted communalities values ranging between 0.607 and 0.793. The second factor was named expertise, explaining 9.3 percent variance with an extracted eigenvalue of 3.936. Items C8, C9 and C10 were the only three factors that loaded satisfactorily along this factor. The third factor was labelled attractiveness, with 10.6 percent variance with an extracted eigenvalue of 3.036. This factor consists of five items (C11-C15), which loaded satisfactorily on this factor, with extracted communalities values ranging between 0.543 and 0.678. Endorser credibility was the label given after interpreting the six items loading under factor four. These comprised items C16 to C21, explaining 10.9 percent variance with an extracted eigenvalue of 1.498. The six items loaded satisfactorily on this factor, with extracted communalities values ranging between 0.625 and 0.698. The fifth factor was labelled attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement, explaining 12.2 percent variance with an extracted eigenvalue of 1.483. This factor consists of six items (C22-C27), which loaded satisfactorily on this factor, with extracted communalities values ranging between 0.504 and 0.684. Finally, factor six was labelled purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product, comprising only three items, which loaded adequately along this factor, namely C28, C29 and C32. This factor explained 13.1 percent variance with an extracted eigenvalue of 1.181.
During scale purification and item reduction it was noted that C6 had unacceptable factor loadings of 0.490 (below 0.50), although the item-to-total correlation value (0.635) and the communalities value (0.516) for that item were both high. On the other hand, C7 had a high yet negative and undesirable factor loading (-0.588). Furthermore, the item-to-total correlation value for item C7 was low as it was reported at 0.388 (below 0.50). Item C30 had a factor loading greater than 0.50 (0.528), yet the item-to-total correlation value for that item was low (0.387). This suggests that C30 did not load fairly well with other items along the respective factor. In addition, item C31 had a low factor loading of 0.480 (less than 0.50).

Drawing from the aforementioned scale examination, items C6, C7, C30 and C31 were targeted as potential candidates for deletion. Thereafter, subsequent consultation with the research supervisor affirmed that the intended item reduction would not alter the original constructs’ conceptualisation in any way. Therefore, the four items were deleted and excluded from further analysis.

The next section reports on the reliability analysis based on the data set comprising only 28 scale items, after item reduction and EFA.

4.7 RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

This section deals with the measurements of the psychometric properties relating to the measurement instrument. This is essential to this study since the measurement scales were modified to suit the particular athlete-celebrity context. Therefore, to ascertain the reliability of the study, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient and average inter-item correlation values in this study were calculated in accordance with the factors that emerged in Section 4.5 as shown in Table 4.7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha coefficient</th>
<th>Inter-item correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>C1, C2, C3, C4 and C5</td>
<td>0.879</td>
<td>0.402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>C8, C9 and C10</td>
<td>0.791</td>
<td>0.303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>C11, C12, C13, C14 and C15</td>
<td>0.874</td>
<td>0.482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorser credibility</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>C16, C17, C18, C19, C20 and C21</td>
<td>0.893</td>
<td>0.407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>C22, C23, C24, C25, C26 and C27</td>
<td>0.865</td>
<td>0.507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>C28, C29 and C32</td>
<td>0.842</td>
<td>0.440</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.7 illustrates that the endorser credibility scale (C16-C21) had the highest Cronbach’s alpha coefficient value (α=0.893), which was closely followed by the trustworthiness (C1-C5), attractiveness (C11-C15) and attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement (C22-C27) sub-scales, reporting Cronbach’s alpha coefficient values of 0.879, 0.874 and 0.865 respectively. However, in this study, purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product (C28, C28 and C32) and expertise (C8, C9 and C10) reported the lowest Cronbach’s alpha coefficient values at 0.842 and 0.791, respectively. Nevertheless, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient values calculated on each construct exceeded the acceptable level of 0.70, thereby indicating satisfactory internal consistency reliability in the study. Moreover, the calculated average inter-item correlation values fell within the recommended range of 0.15 to 0.50, except along the attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement scale, which was reported at 0.507, thereby indicating high internal-consistency among the items along this construct.

4.8 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The results of the descriptive statistical analysis are set out in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Descriptive statistical analysis results at the main survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.574</td>
<td>0.969</td>
<td>-0.504</td>
<td>0.294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.551</td>
<td>1.076</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.532</td>
<td>1.058</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.584</td>
<td>1.082</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.560</td>
<td>1.042</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C5</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.641</td>
<td>1.039</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.576</td>
<td>0.919</td>
<td>-0.527</td>
<td>-0.231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C8</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.514</td>
<td>1.111</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C9</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.622</td>
<td>1.079</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C10</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.591</td>
<td>1.094</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.440</td>
<td>1.163</td>
<td>-0.485</td>
<td>-0.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C11</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.433</td>
<td>1.231</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C12</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.534</td>
<td>1.136</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C13</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.271</td>
<td>1.294</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C14</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.484</td>
<td>1.211</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C15</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.480</td>
<td>1.123</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorser Credibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.645</td>
<td>0.995</td>
<td>-0.483</td>
<td>0.317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C16</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.641</td>
<td>1.045</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C17</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.689</td>
<td>1.048</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C18</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.622</td>
<td>1.029</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C19</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.624</td>
<td>1.058</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C20</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.660</td>
<td>1.085</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C21</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.635</td>
<td>1.071</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.8: Descriptive statistical analysis results (continued …)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.799</td>
<td>0.954</td>
<td>-0.815</td>
<td>1.479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C22</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.664</td>
<td>1.052</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C23</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.794</td>
<td>1.023</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C24</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.892</td>
<td>0.992</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C25</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.686</td>
<td>0.995</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C26</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.880</td>
<td>1.053</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C27</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.881</td>
<td>1.062</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed advertisement | 456 | 1       | 1       | 3.984 | 1.112              |          |          |
| C28                                        | 456 | 1       | 1       | 3.984 | 1.112              |          |          |
| C29                                        | 456 | 1       | 1       | 3.925 | 1.049              |          |          |
| C32                                        | 456 | 1       | 5       | 3.980 | 1.055              |          |          |

Valid N (Listwise) = 456
Items deleted during EFA (C6, C7, C30 and C31)

Mean values were computed as the measures of central tendency for this study. Therefore, higher mean values (greater than 3.0) are desirable in this study since they are associated with agreement. The scale measuring purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed advertisement had the highest mean score of 3.963, followed by the attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement scale with a mean rating of 3.799. On the other hand, the endorser credibility scale reported a mean rating of 3.645. In addition, trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness reported mean values of 3.574, 3.576 and 3.440, respectively. As such, the results of this study were considered acceptable since the mean values were higher than the predeterminable value of 3.0. These findings reflect greater agreement by participants with regard to the determinants of athlete-celebrity endorsement credibility.

In terms of the computed individual item mean values, items C1-C5 on the trustworthiness scale reported mean values ranging between 3.532 and 3.641 whereas the three items that were computed on the expertise scale (C8, C9 and C10) reported mean values ranging between 3.514 and 3.622. In addition, items on the attractiveness scale (C11-C15) also reported acceptable mean values ranging between 3.271 and 3.534. Items C16 to C21 measuring endorser credibility reported mean values ranging between 3.622 and 3.689. On the other hand, items C22 to C27 measuring attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement reported mean values ranging between 3.664 and 3.892 while items C28, C29 and C32 measuring purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed advertisement ranged between 3.925 and 3.984. The scale items are included in the annexed questionnaire (refer to annexure A) explaining the nature of survey questions used in this study.
Standard deviation values were computed to measure the variance of responses on each variable. Table 4.8 reveals that the trustworthiness scale had the highest standard deviation value reported at 0.969 indicating a greater dispersion with regard to the distance of interpretations from the measurement of the arithmetic mean, for that variable. This was followed closely by the attractiveness (std. dev=1.163) as well as the expertise (std. dev=0.919) scales. In addition, purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product, endorser credibility as well as the attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement scales reported standard deviation values of 0.934, 0.995 and 0.954, respectively. The reported sample standard deviations (close to +1.0) provide an acceptable measure of the tolerable variation in responses along the Likert scale based questions.

The skewness and kurtosis statistics were computed to evaluate the level of dispersion in the data set. The results demonstrate computed skewness statistics ranging between -0.483 and -1.093 while the kurtosis statistics range between -0.177 and 1.479 as shown in Table 4.8. The reported skewness and kurtosis statistics in this study suggest that the data for this study appears to be distributed normally since none of the skewness values fell outside the -2 to +2 range. Moreover, the reported kurtosis values generally suggest that the data set is relatively flat.

The next section presents the correlation analysis results and multicollinearity testing.

4.9 CORRELATION ANALYSIS AND MULTICOLLINEARITY TESTING

In this study, the Spearman correlation test was applied and $r_s$ values were computed. The test was subjected to a two-tailed test at a highly significant level ($p<0.01$). The results of the correlation analysis are shown in Table 4.9.
### Table 4.9: Correlation analysis results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Trustworthiness</th>
<th>Expertise</th>
<th>Attractiveness</th>
<th>Endorser credibility</th>
<th>Attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement</th>
<th>Purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td>0.695**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td>0.651**</td>
<td>0.569**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorser credibility</td>
<td>0.693**</td>
<td>0.589**</td>
<td>0.612**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement</td>
<td>0.564**</td>
<td>0.514**</td>
<td>0.574**</td>
<td>0.600**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product</td>
<td>0.444**</td>
<td>0.340**</td>
<td>0.289**</td>
<td>0.409**</td>
<td>0.583**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)**

Consistent with the rule of thumb by Prion and Haerling (2014:536) presented in Section 3.9.6 of this study, the strongest (highest) correlation coefficient value was computed between trustworthiness and expertise ($r_s=0.695; p=0.01$). This result suggests that perceived expertise evaluations of the athlete-celebrity by the sports consumers is positively related to consumers’ perceptions of how trustworthy A.B De Villiers is, as the selected athlete-celebrity for the product choice in this study. Other strong, positive correlation coefficient values were reported between endorser credibility when correlated with trustworthiness ($r_s=0.693; p=0.01$), attractiveness ($r_s=0.612; p=0.01$) and attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement ($r_s=0.600; p=0.01$). Relatedly, a strong, positive linear relationship was observed between attractiveness and trustworthiness ($r_s=0.651; p=0.01$).

Moderate, positive linear relationships were reported after correlating endorser credibility with both expertise ($r_s=0.589; p=0.01$), as well as purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product ($r_s=0.409; p=0.01$). Trustworthiness ($r_s=0.564; p=0.01$), expertise ($r_s=0.514; p=0.01$), attractiveness ($r_s=0.574; p=0.01$) and purchase intentions ($r_s=0.583; p=0.01$) also reported moderate and positive coefficient values when correlated against attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement. Moreover, moderate, positive relationships were reported between trustworthiness ($r_s=0.444; p=0.01$) when correlated against purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product as well as between attractiveness and expertise ($r_s=0.569; p=0.01$).
Weak, positive linear relationships were reported between expertise ($r_s=0.340; p=0.01$) and attractiveness ($r_s=0.289; p=0.01$) when correlated against purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product. While this is so, the significant and positive correlation coefficient values reported between each pair of constructs in this study suggests that the proposed measurement model exhibits nomological validity.

As a preliminary procedure to multivariate statistical analysis, multicollinearity was investigated. Costello and Osborne (2005:6) point out that correlation coefficient values ($r_s$) higher than 0.70 can signal potential problems with multicollinearity. Drawing upon the aforementioned threshold, no multicollinearity problems were presented in this study. Specifically, the maximum correlation coefficient value was reported between trustworthiness and expertise ($r_s=0.695; p=0.01$). Furthermore, the inter-correlation coefficient values for all paired latent variables are less than one and significant across all pairs of constructs.

The next section discusses the measurement model that was specified as a first step towards applying a SEM procedure in this study, in light of the hypotheses testing phase.

### 4.10 MEASUREMENT MODEL ANALYSIS

In accordance with the theoretic-based constructs discussed in chapter 2, the measurement model for this study was specified as a preliminary step for SEM analysis on AMOS (Version 23.0). The model includes six latent variables and 28 observed variables anchored along trustworthiness (5 indicators), expertise (3 indicators), attractiveness (5 indicators), endorser credibility (6 indicators), attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement (6 indicators) and purchase intentions towards the athlete celebrity endorsed product (3 indicators). The specified measurement model is presented in Figure 4.11.
Shortened terminology for SEM analysis:
Trustworthiness = Trustworthiness (F1); Expertise = Expertise (F2); Attractiveness = Attractiveness (F3); Endorser Credibility = Endorser credibility (F4); AttAdvert = Attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement (F5); Intentions = Purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product (F6).

Figure 4.11: Measurement model

Specification of the measurement model led to testing of the first set of one-tailed hypotheses that were specified in sections 1.5 and 2.14 of this study:
**H₀I:**  Sports consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product is not a six-variable structure comprising trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, endorser credibility, attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement and purchase intentions.

**H₁I:**  Sports consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product is a six-variable structure comprising trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, endorser credibility, attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement and purchase intentions.

For model identification purposes, the first loading on each of the factors was set at 1.0. Consequently, there were 434 distinct sample moments and 99 parameters to be estimated, resulting in 335 degrees of freedom based on an over-identified model and a chi-square value of 812.923 with a probability level equal to 0.000. After the model identification and specification procedure, using Amos (Version 23.0), the assessment of the proposed conceptual model proceeded using the same dataset. Model fit assessment was conducted for determining how well the measurement model is represented by the sampled data. Model fit indices, CFA results and statistical accuracy measures are the three categories of observations that were made during the assessment of the measurement model.

### 4.10.1 Fit indices for the measurement model

The measurement model was assessed for model fit using the indices explained under Section 3.10.1.1 of this study, namely the chi-square, the IFI, the TLI, the CFI, the SRMR and the RMSEA. Table 4.10 summarises the measurement model fit indices that were computed for this study, including their recommended thresholds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Recommended level</th>
<th>Default model value</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td>Low values</td>
<td>812.923</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square/DF</td>
<td>$2.0 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 5.0$ is tolerable yet values less than 3.0 are ideal</td>
<td>2.427</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>$\geq 0.90$</td>
<td>0.900</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFI</td>
<td>$\geq 0.90$</td>
<td>0.939</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLI</td>
<td>$\geq 0.90$</td>
<td>0.931</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFI</td>
<td>$\geq 0.90$</td>
<td>0.939</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRMR</td>
<td>$\leq 0.05$</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMSEA</td>
<td>$\leq 0.08$</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although the model’s significant chi-square value is an indication of questionable model fit, typically this value cannot be used as a conclusive result to suggest that a model should not be accepted since they are sensitive to large sample sizes (Byrne 2010:76). Chi-square statistic is in essence, a statistical significance test that is sensitive to sample size, yet nearly always rejects the model when large samples are used (Jöreskog & Sörbom 1993:45). Owing to the restrictiveness of the model chi-square, researchers have sought alternative indices to assess model fit. One example of a statistic that minimises the impact of sample sizes on the model Chi-square is Wheaton et al. (1977:89) normed chi-square (\( \chi^2/df \)), which was reported at 2.427 in this study. The chi square test, therefore, should not be used in isolation to quantify the degree of measurement model fit due to its sensitivity to sample size. In addition, the other fit indices, namely IFI=0.939, TLI=0.931, CFI=0.939, SRMR=0.050 and RMSEA=0.056, demonstrate a satisfactory fit between the measurement model and the data.

### 4.10.2 CFA results for the measurement model

MLE was utilised during the CFA procedure as it is the most common estimation procedure in both CFA and path modelling since it is relatively unbiased (Weston & Gore 2006:738). Prior to testing the research hypotheses, CFA is performed to confirm accuracy of the multiple-item measure as suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988:7). Following the advice of Hair et al. (2010:706), the specified measurement model was evaluated for any problematic estimates during the CFA procedure. Common problems include negative error variances, Heywood cases (standardised factor loadings greater than 1.0 or below -1.0) as well as weak factor loadings (\( \leq 0.50 \)). Table 4.11 reveals the absence of problematic estimates with regard to the specified measurement model.

**Table 4.11: Standardised coefficients of the measurement model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latent variable</th>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Factor loadings</th>
<th>Error variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>F1</strong></td>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>C1</td>
<td>0.710</td>
<td>0.573 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C2</td>
<td>0.774</td>
<td>0.449 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C3</td>
<td>0.740</td>
<td>0.529 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C4</td>
<td>0.803</td>
<td>0.385 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C5</td>
<td>0.827</td>
<td>0.341 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F2</strong></td>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td>C8</td>
<td>0.727</td>
<td>0.580 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C9</td>
<td>0.732</td>
<td>0.539 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C10</td>
<td>0.779</td>
<td>0.470 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F3</strong></td>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td>C11</td>
<td>0.834</td>
<td>0.460 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C12</td>
<td>0.732</td>
<td>0.598 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C13</td>
<td>0.769</td>
<td>0.681 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C14</td>
<td>0.772</td>
<td>0.498 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C15</td>
<td>0.715</td>
<td>0.613 (+)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.11: Standardised coefficients of the measurement model (continued …)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latent variable</th>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Factor loadings</th>
<th>Error variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>F4</strong></td>
<td>Endorser credibility</td>
<td>C16</td>
<td>0.782</td>
<td>0.424 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C17</td>
<td>0.785</td>
<td>0.420 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C18</td>
<td>0.713</td>
<td>0.520 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C19</td>
<td>0.778</td>
<td>0.441 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C20</td>
<td>0.748</td>
<td>0.518 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C21</td>
<td>0.772</td>
<td>0.463 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F5</strong></td>
<td>AttAdvert</td>
<td>C22</td>
<td>0.738</td>
<td>0.503 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C23</td>
<td>0.799</td>
<td>0.377 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C24</td>
<td>0.746</td>
<td>0.436 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C25</td>
<td>0.698</td>
<td>0.507 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C26</td>
<td>0.635</td>
<td>0.660 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C27</td>
<td>0.700</td>
<td>0.574 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F6</strong></td>
<td>Intentions</td>
<td>C28</td>
<td>0.845</td>
<td>0.353 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C29</td>
<td>0.804</td>
<td>0.387 (+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C32</td>
<td>0.755</td>
<td>0.479 (+)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All factor loadings reported for the measurement model were statistically significant and ideally higher than 0.70 across all the captured indicators, except for indicator C26 reporting a loading of 0.635. This means that all measurement items are loading well on their respective variables and that they are measuring more than 60 percent of their respective variables. In addition, Heywood cases were not identified in this study, since all error variances were positive (+) and none of the factor loadings was above 1.0 or below -1.0. Based on the CFA results, initial specification suggests that no deletions should be made since all the items factored into the measurement model infer an acceptable fit and scale accuracy.

In the following section, the measurement model is assessed by evaluating various statistics that confer the measurement model’s reliability and validity.

4.10.3 Measures of the statistical accuracy of the measurement model

The reliability and validity of the measurement model is explained next.

4.10.3.1 Reliability assessment of the measurement model

Table 4.12 shows the reliability and validity results for the measurement model.
Table 4.12: Reliability and validity results for the measurement model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha coefficient</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>√AVE</th>
<th>SV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>0.879</td>
<td>0.880</td>
<td>0.601</td>
<td>0.774</td>
<td>0.235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td>0.791</td>
<td>0.794</td>
<td>0.562</td>
<td>0.748</td>
<td>0.321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td>0.874</td>
<td>0.882</td>
<td>0.593</td>
<td>0.768</td>
<td>0.289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorser credibility</td>
<td>0.893</td>
<td>0.891</td>
<td>0.584</td>
<td>0.761</td>
<td>0.357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AttAdvert</td>
<td>0.865</td>
<td>0.870</td>
<td>0.523</td>
<td>0.721</td>
<td>0.220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentions</td>
<td>0.842</td>
<td>0.843</td>
<td>0.640</td>
<td>0.800</td>
<td>0.356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommended threshold</strong></td>
<td><strong>≥0.70</strong></td>
<td><strong>≥0.70</strong></td>
<td><strong>≥0.50</strong></td>
<td><strong>Greater than the highest computed correlation coefficient</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lower than the AVE values</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR: Composite reliability; AVE: Average Variance Extracted; √AVE: Square root of AVE</td>
<td>SV: Shared variance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reliability was calculated by computing the Cronbach alpha coefficient values. The computed values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, ranging between 0.791 and 0.893 suggesting that all the items factored into the measurement scale fully tap into the same underlying constructs. While this measure may suffice, it is common practice among marketing researchers to report on more than one statistical measure of a scale’s reliability. Hence, CR values also were computed in this study. The formulae that was applied in calculating CR is presented in Section 3.10.1.3 of this study. A measurement model can be deemed reliable when the CR values for each of the latent factors exceed 0.70 (Malhotra 2010:734). The results of this study yielded CR values between 0.794 and 0.891. According to Table 4.12, the computed CR levels in this study exceeded the estimate criteria of greater than 0.70 which is recommended as adequate for internal consistency of the constructs (Nunnally 1978:247), thus finding support for satisfactory composite reliability of the study.

### 4.10.3.2 Convergent validity assessment of the measurement model

Two statistical techniques were applied to ascertain the convergent validity of the measurement model, namely the standardised factor loadings and AVE values. As shown in Table 4.11 and Figure 4.11, the standardised factor loadings on the measurement model ranged between 0.635 and 0.845 implying that the indicators are converging well on the constructs that they intend to measure. Items on the trustworthiness construct reported factor loadings between 0.710 and 0.827. Expertise reported factor loadings between 0.727 and 0.779 while the factor loadings on the attractiveness construct ranged between 0.715 and 0.834. Moreover, the factor loadings on the endorser credibility construct ranged between 0.713 and 0.785. The loadings for the attitude towards the advertisement construct ranged between 0.635 and 0.799 whereas the factor loadings on the intentions construct ranged between 0.755 and 0.845. This result was an indirect indicator
of convergent validity in this work since all the indicators (save for C26) reported ideal factor loadings (Malhotra 2010:734).

The formulae that was applied in calculating AVE is presented in Section 3.10.1.3 of this study. According to Malhotra (2010:734), AVE values of 0.50 and greater are considered acceptable when assessing the convergent validity of a study. The reported AVE values in this study ranged between 0.523 and 0.640 as shown in Table 4.12. The results indicate an acceptable individual item convergent validity since more than 50 percent of each item’s variance is shared with its respective construct.

4.10.3.3 Discriminant validity assessment of the measurement model

Three statistical techniques were applied to ascertain the discriminant validity of the measurement model. First, the Spearman correlation matrix was the first method used to check the discriminant validity of the constructs used in the measurement model. This was done by assessing whether the component correlation matrix among the construct was less than 1.0. As indicated in Table 4.9, the inter-correlation values for all paired latent variables are less than 1.0 and, therefore, indicate the existence of discriminant validity in the measurement model.

Secondly, Fornell and Larcker’s (1981:46) criterion of assessing discriminant validity was applied by examining the size of the correlation coefficients vis a vis the square roots of the respective AVE values. Discriminant validity is achieved if the square root estimates of the computed AVE values are larger than the highest computed correlation coefficient. According to Table 4.12, the square root estimates of the computed AVE values in this study ranged between 0.721 and 0.800, which is higher than the highest computed rs value of 0.695.

Thirdly, discriminant validity requires that the computed AVE values should be larger than the SV values as suggested by Nunnally (1978:246) and Malhotra (2010:320). Table 4.12 shows that all the AVE values ranging between (0.523 and 0.640) are greater than all the computed SV values (ranging between 0.220 and 0.357), thereby confirming the existence of discriminant validity in this study.

4.10.3.4 Nomological validity assessment of the measurement model

With regard to nomological validity of the measurement model, the latent variables were correlated against each along the Spearman correlation matrix. The rule of thumb by Hair et al. (2010:710) is to have correlation coefficients of less than 0.70 between the research constructs. The reported statistics in this study yielded positive, significant correlation coefficients ranging
between 0.289 and 0.695, which is considered acceptable evidence to confer uniqueness of each construct in the measurement model.

Based on the aforementioned assessment, it can be inferred that the recommended guidelines for reliability and construct validity were met in the study. Moreover, since acceptable measurement model fit was secured, including the validation of the reliability and validity of the measurement model, there is insufficient evidence to reject $H_{a1}$. Therefore, a decision was made to:

*reject the null hypothesis ($H_{o1}$) and conclude the alternative hypothesis ($H_{a1}$) instead, which stipulates that Sports consumers’ purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product is a six-variable structure comprising trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, endorser credibility, attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement and purchase intentions.*

The next section examines the second phase of the SEM procedure, comprising the structural model analysis culminating in the final hypotheses testing for this study.

### 4.11 STRUCTURAL MODEL ANALYSIS

In accordance with the hypotheses formulated in Chapter 1.5 and repeated in Section 2.14, Figure 4.12 specifies the structural model for this study, which suggests that trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness directly influence endorser credibility. In turn, endorser credibility positively influences attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement while the latter influences purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product. For visual comprehension purposes, the structural model figure presented in this chapter excludes the covariance lines, indicators and residuals. The detailed structural model and accompanying results extracted from AMOS (Version 23.0) are annexed to this dissertation as Appendix C.
Figure 4.12: Structural model

The indices thresholds expressed under CFA in Table 4.10 of this study relating to the respective model fit indices apply to the structural model as well. The structural model chi-square was 1016.794 with 345 degrees of freedom significant at p=0.000. Subsequently, the normed chi-square value ($\chi^2$/df=2.947) that was computed for the structural model fell below 3.0, thus confirming that there is acceptable fit. In addition, acceptable levels of close model fit were met across other indices including: IFI=0.904 (greater than 0.90), TLI=0.908 (greater than 0.90), CFI=0.903 (greater than 0.90), NFI=0.908 (greater than 0.90), while the RMSEA=0.049 (less than 0.050) and SRMR=0.048 (less than 0.050) were the goodness-of-fit measures providing support for the adequacy of the structural model. The overall fit of the model was adequate and the recommended statistics for the overall fit indices supports the adequacy of the model.

In structural model analysis, relationships between variables are referred to as path coefficients (also termed standardised path regression coefficients) and are depicted by single headed arrows. The parameter estimates of the SEM model indicate the direct effects of one construct on the other for the constructs under investigation. The higher the path regression coefficient value, the greater the effect the independent variables have on dependent variables. Table 4.13 summarises the fit indices for the structural model as well as the decisions that were taken regarding the hypotheses that were tested in this study.
Table 4.13: Structural model fit indices and hypotheses testing results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causal path</th>
<th>Path coefficient</th>
<th>Sig (p-value)</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Endorser Credibility ← Trustworthiness</td>
<td>(+) 0.642</td>
<td>0.000***</td>
<td>H&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt; Rejected H&lt;sub&gt;2&lt;/sub&gt; Concluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorser Credibility ← Expertise</td>
<td>(+) 0.178</td>
<td>0.000***</td>
<td>H&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt; Rejected H&lt;sub&gt;3&lt;/sub&gt; Concluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorser Credibility ← Attractiveness</td>
<td>(+) 0.395</td>
<td>0.000***</td>
<td>H&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt; Rejected H&lt;sub&gt;4&lt;/sub&gt; Concluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AttAdvert ← Endorser Credibility</td>
<td>(+) 0.704</td>
<td>0.000***</td>
<td>H&lt;sub&gt;5&lt;/sub&gt; Rejected H&lt;sub&gt;5&lt;/sub&gt; Concluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentions ← AttAdvert</td>
<td>(+) 0.741</td>
<td>0.000***</td>
<td>H&lt;sub&gt;6&lt;/sub&gt; Rejected H&lt;sub&gt;6&lt;/sub&gt; Concluded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.12 DISCUSSION

Figure 4.12 indicates that trustworthiness (path estimate=0.642; p=0.00<0.05) has a significant positive influence on endorser credibility. Consistent with the second hypothesis formulated under Section 1.5 of this study, the path result shows that there is a significant association between the two constructs. As a result, H<sub>2</sub> is rejected while H<sub>2</sub> is concluded in this study, implying that trustworthiness does positively influence athlete-endorser credibility. This finding is consistent with the findings of Wang, Kao and Ngamsiriudom (2017:15). The strong path coefficient result along this path suggests that of the three extrapolated dimensions of source credibility, trustworthiness is the most important to South African consumers as extrapolated by the meta-analysis of Amos et al. (2008:224).

With regard to the third hypothesis, the results of the structural model indicate that expertise (path estimate=0.178; p=0.00<0.05) had the weakest yet significant positive influence on endorser credibility. While this outcome revealed the weakest path weight among the three dimensions of endorser credibility, H<sub>3</sub> is rejected while H<sub>3</sub> is concluded owing to the statistically significant result. Sallam and Wahid (2012:61) also found a statistically significant path result when they tested expertise and endorser credibility within the context of Yemeni products. Interestingly, their research also reported expertise to be the weakest contributor towards endorser credibility while Homer and Kahle (1990:36) found a contradictory influence with expertise having the strongest explanatory power on endorser credibility, when compared with trustworthiness. The weak path outcome in this study could be a result of the type of athlete-celebrity endorsed product in question. In particular, Lay’s™ potato chips are a low-involvement consumer good that do not necessarily recall authoritative product knowledge and expertise of an endorser to enact persuasive capability.
It is possible that a different outcome could be concluded should the study utilise a different product type such as a high-involvement product.

The fourth hypothesis was aimed at testing whether attractiveness has an influence on athlete-endorser credibility. The results of the structural model indicate that expertise (path estimate=0.395; p=0.00<0.05) has a significant positive influence on endorser credibility. Consistently, the significant result suggests that there is a significant impact association between the two constructs. As a result, $H_4$ is rejected while $H_a$ is concluded in this study, implying that attractiveness does positively influence athlete-endorser credibility. Consistently, Bhatt et al. (2013:85) found similar results of a positive effect of attractiveness on the credibility of a celebrity actor endorsing shampoo products. This could suggest that the importance of the physical attractiveness dimension is indefinable across different cohorts of endorsers. While this is so, attractiveness has been found to be of significant weight when evaluating the credibility of endorsers in the study by Amos et al. (2008:224).

The level of explained variance provided by the significant path outcomes along the three source attributes with endorser credibility as the endogenous variable, is measured by the squared multiple correlation (SMC) coefficient value of 0.60. This indicates that in sum, trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness explain at least 60 percent of the variance in South African consumers’ perceptions of the credibility of A.B De Villiers as an athlete-celebrity endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips. This contribution is considered very substantial and, therefore, marketers should devote much attention towards refining the image of their selected endorsers in terms of conferring them with trust elements, expertise about the endorsement product as well as physical attractiveness coupled with overall likeability.

The fifth hypothesis aimed at testing whether athlete-endorser credibility has any influence on attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement. The results of the structural model indicate that athlete-endorser credibility (path estimate=0.704; p=0.00<0.05) has a significant positive influence on attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement. Muda et al. (2014:17) also found a statistically significant path result when they tested a similar path between celebrity credibility with attitude towards the endorsement of a skin-care advertisement in Malaysia. Gaied and Rached (2010:7) provide further support of this existing effect. Consistently, the significant result reported in this study reveals that there is a significant association between the two constructs. As a result, $H_5$ is rejected while $H_a$ is concluded. In addition, the level of explained variance provided by the significant path outcome, with attitude towards the advertisement as the endogenous variable is measured by the squared multiple
correlation (SMC) coefficient value reported at 0.50. This indicates that endorser credibility explains 50 percent of the variance in South African consumers’ attitudinal evaluations of the advertisement featuring A.B De Villiers endorsing Lay’s™ potato chips. In totality, this contribution is considered very substantial and, therefore, marketers should devote ample effort in enhancing the credibility elements of their selected endorsers with a view to improving consumers’ attitudinal evaluations and responses to their marketing communication messages.

With regard to the sixth hypothesis, the results of the structural model indicate that attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement (path estimate=0.741; p=0.00<0.05) has a significant positive influence on purchase intentions. This outcome was the most important path outcome in the structural model since it is linked directly to the overt behaviour of consumers, as measured by purchase intent. Notably, this outcome revealed the strongest path weight in the structural model; therefore, H6 is rejected while H6 is concluded owing to the statistically significant result. This result is in harmony with more recent scholars who have concluded a positive influence of attitude towards the advertisement as well as attitude towards the brand on purchase intentions as the outcome variable in their studies (Muda et al. 2014:15; Sallam & Algammash 2016:515).

The level of explained variance provided by the significant path outcome between attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement and purchase intentions as measured by the squared multiple correlation (SMC) coefficient value is 0.55. This indicates that consumers’ attitudes towards the advertisement featuring A.B De Villiers explain at least 55 percent of the variance with regard to their intentions to purchase Lay’s™ potato chips in future encounters. Therefore, when the endorsement advertisement is evaluated in a positive manner, consumers are likely to be inclined to purchase the athlete-celebrity endorsed product or brand, per se.

4.13 SYNOPSIS

This chapter analysed and presented the results from the empirical study. Initially, a brief discussion of the results of the pilot study was provided. The pilot study preliminary assessment was included to ensure that the questionnaire measures the relevant variables. The results from the pilot test revealed that the items on the measuring instrument had high internal-consistency reliability with Cronbach’s alpha coefficient value falling above the recommended value of 0.70. Following on, a presentation of the findings of the main survey was made, commencing with the analysis that was made using SPSS (Version 23.0) and then culminating in the SEM analysis. In this regard, a sequence of steps was followed to present these results pertaining to the main study results. Once the data were collected for the main survey, a preliminary data analysis procedure
was conducted comprising frequency analysis and tabulation. This was followed by a description of the sample as well as information regarding purchases of the athlete-endorsed product. Nonetheless, while the results from the sample were meant only to describe the characteristics of the participants used in this research, the findings could not be used to draw inferences, since statistical significance calculations were not made.

Data analysis was undertaken through EFA, whereby items C6, C7, C30 and C31 were deleted after a careful examination of the psychometric properties of those observed variables. Moreover, the items were omitted after checking that their deletion would not alter the overall conceptualisation of the respective constructs. Thereafter, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient values were computed to affirm the internal consistency of the study after which descriptive statistics and correlation analysis were conducted on the eventual set of 28 scale items. The descriptive statistics revealed mean values above 3.0 on the five-point Likert scale, which suggests that sports consumers agree that purchase intentions towards Lay’s™ potato chips is influenced by the credibility of the athlete endorser, as defined by trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness attributes as well as consumers’ attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement. Moreover, the Spearman correlation analysis that was carried out ascertained that there were positive and significant relationships cross all pairs of constructs in this study with no evidence of collinearity problems in the study.

A measurement model comprising six latent factors was specified using AMOS (Version 23.0). Initially, CFA was conducted to validate the measurement model. In addition, reliability of the measurement model was established by the computed Cronbach’s alpha coefficient values and CR values, which were established above the 0.70 level. Construct validity of the measurement model was ascertained using factor loadings, AVE values, correlation coefficient values as well as SV values, thereby validating the statistical accuracy of the specified measurement model, leading to the researcher concluding H1, while rejecting H0. Thereafter, a structural model was specified for the study, wherein the alternative hypotheses (H2, H3, H4, H5 and H6) were concluded after evaluating the path regression weights, path coefficient direction (positive outcome) as well as the significance levels (p=0.000).

The findings reported in this chapter offer interesting insights into the dimensions of athlete-celebrity endorsement credibility and their influence on attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsement advertisement as well as purchase intentions towards Lay’s™ potato chips, the endorsement product of choice in this study. The following chapter (Chapter 5) outlines the conclusion and recommendations emanating from this study. Chapter 5 seeks to establish whether
the formulated research objectives and hypotheses posited were achieved satisfactorily with a view to ascertain that the research model did indeed, contribute significantly to the body of knowledge. Limitations, recommendations and implications for further research are posited in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STUDY

“All models are wrong, but some models are useful”
George E.P. Box

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Celebrity endorsement has emerged as one of the most popular advertising tools across global markets. Marketers are using celebrities to communicate their messages to the targeted audience as this affords them a unique opportunity to have authoritative figures recommending the use of their brands and products to the public (Ilícic & Webster 2011:230). In addition, the rise of such strategy in marketing has also led to increased interest from the academic arena, more so the topic has gained popularity amongst marketing academics (Bergkvist & Zhou 2016:642).

This study intended to examine the influence of athlete-celebrity endorser credibility on consumers’ attitude as well purchase intentions. The study considered the three key attributes of celebrity endorsers, which are considered vital when altering the credibility of endorsers as reliable sources of marketing messages. These attributes, which can also be referred to as dimensions of celebrity endorser credibility, include trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness (Gaied & Rached 2010:2). The majority of the studies in the field of celebrity endorsement have focused on the fit between the endorser and the product (Kamins 1990; Fleck et al. 2009) as well as the source credibility attributes (Ohanian 1990; Pornpitakpan 2004) upon determining the important attributes in the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement advertising.

According to Muda et al. (2014:14), a popular celebrity endorser, possessing trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness as identifiable attributes has the potential to alter consumers’ attitudes as well as intentions towards the endorsed product. That is, positive beliefs and feelings formed by consumers as a result of seeing a recognisable and credible figure endorsing a product in an advertisement increases the likelihood of consumers forming a positive attitude towards the endorsed brand or product. These attitudes can potentially result in consumers’ decision to purchase the endorsed product in the long-term.

This chapter explains how the objectives set out at the beginning of the study were achieved by outlining the empirical findings as they were extrapolated from the data analysis procedure conducted in Chapter 4. Inferences are made from the findings, culminating in key
recommendations to both academics and marketing practitioners. In addition, the modest contribution made by this research is described while the limitations and implications for future research are described.

5.2 ACHIEVEMENT OF THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective for this study was to examine the influence of selected antecedents on athlete-endorser credibility, attitude towards the advertisement and purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product. In order to achieve the primary objective that was set out in Section 1.4.1 of this study, four theoretical objectives and seven empirical objectives were formulated in this research.

5.2.1 Evaluation of the theoretical objectives

This section addresses the evaluation of the theoretical objectives, which were addressed in the form of a literature review and reported in Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

The first theoretical objective relating to reviewing the literature on the marketing communication process was achieved in section 2.2 and 2.3 of this study, while the second theoretical objective was achieved by examining the variables influencing persuasive marketing communication in section 2.4 of this study. This primer provided the requisite foundation upon which to build this study from both a marketing and consumer-behaviour context. In this regard, a review of the communication process as well as elements that are useful in customer persuasion was useful in providing a clear understanding of how marketers can apply celebrity endorsement strategies as a persuasion tool to any audience.

The third theoretical objective comprised a review of the literature on celebrity endorsement, which was achieved in sections 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8 and 2.9. Initially, an overview of the celebrity endorsement process was provided. Moreover, different forms of product endorsement were identified from the literature, which included testimonials, imported, inverted, observer and harnessed endorsers. In addition, consumers, experts and celebrities were also identified as the three types of product endorsers available to marketers and advertising organisations. Following on from this review, a decision was taken to bend the focus of this research towards athletes, as a specific category of celebrity endorsers. This is because athlete-celebrity endorsers who are professionals in their respective fields of play command universal fame and shared affection from sports fans and different people across all walks of life. As such, focusing on an athlete-celebrity assisted to garner interest from the participants regarding this study.
Chapter 2 proceeded to enlist the contribution of celebrity endorsement marketing across global and local markets. Thereafter, the benefits of celebrity endorsement were identified, culminating in a discussion on how celebrity credibility could play a positive effect in altering consumers’ attitude towards the advertisement and ultimately the intention to purchase the endorsed product. While this is so, the study did not shy away from describing the evident flaws and risks of applying celebrity endorsement as a marketing communication strategy.

The fourth theoretical objective relating to conducting a review of the literature on celebrity endorsement theories was achieved in Section 2.10. Two category options of celebrity endorsement theories were identified and explained, namely product or situation theories as well as the celebrity selection theories. Among the latter cohort, the Source attributes theory was nominated as the underlying theory for this research, comprising trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness as the foundational dimensions that serve to define the credibility of a product endorser.

The fifth theoretical objective relating to a review of the literature on the influence of selected antecedents on athlete-celebrity credibility, attitude towards the advertisement and purchase intentions were achieved in sections 2.11, 2.12, 2.13 and 2.14. It was noted that an athlete-endorser credibility, which comprises the three dimensions of trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness plays a significant role in the overall endorser credibility judgements made by consumers and, thus, posits an influence on attitudes towards the advertisement wherein the product endorser appears. Furthermore, the literature supported the notion that attitude towards the advertisement, which results from consumers’ perception of celebrity endorser’s credibility is a predictor of consumers’ intentions to purchase the athlete-celebrity endorsed product (Sallam & Wahid 2012:59; Muda et al. 2014:15).

5.2.2 Evaluation of the empirical objectives

The empirical objectives listed below were drawn from the primary objective of this study and were directly translated towards the formulation of the research model, SEM analysis and eventual hypotheses testing. In this study, seven empirical objectives were formulated and their achievement is elaborated on next.

- To determine consumers’ perceptions regarding the identified local athlete-celebrity’s trustworthiness as a product endorser

The first empirical objective formulated for this study was about determining consumers’ perceptions regarding the trustworthiness of A.B De Villiers as the nominated endorser of Lay’s™
potato chips (refer to Section 3.7.4). Upon achieving this objective, the empirical data were reduced into identifiable factor components as explained under Section 4.6 of this study. This procedure led to the extraction of a five-item based factor, labelled trustworthiness. Based on the preliminary findings, the reliability analysis procedure (Section 4.7) as well as the descriptive statistics (Section 4.8) confirmed that the consumer sample viewed A.B De Villiers as a trustworthy product endorser. This is evidenced by the positive mean values (greater than 3.0) along the items on this sub-scale as well as the positive and significant correlation values along trustworthiness when correlated with other source credibility dimensions (Section 4.9). In addition, the CFA procedure and measurement model confirmed that trustworthiness was a pertinent construct in the model of purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product as shown in Section 4.10.2 of this study. Thereafter, the positive and significant path coefficient shown on the structural model between trustworthiness and endorser credibility ($\beta =+0.642; p=0.000$) led to the decision to reject Ho2 and conclude the alternative hypothesis Ha2, instead. The strong result along this path denotes that South African sport consumers’ prioritise trust elements relating to honesty and dependability when athlete-celebrity endorsers are used as sources of marketing communication messages.

- To determine consumers’ perceptions regarding the identified local athlete-celebrity’s expertise as a product endorser

The second empirical objective formulated for this study was about determining consumers’ perceptions regarding the expertise of A.B De Villiers as a product endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips. Consistent with the second objective, sections 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8 report on the EFA procedure, reliability analysis and descriptive statistics with a view to provide preliminary evidence regarding the importance of the expertise variable as a pertinent component in this study. Interestingly, the correlation analysis results (Section 4.9) as well as the CFA procedure revealed that expertise was a valid predictor of the credibility of the athlete endorser (Section 4.10.2). In addition, the positive and significant path coefficient between expertise and endorser credibility ($\beta =+0.178; p=0.000$) along the structural model led to the decision to reject Ho3 and conclude the alternative hypothesis Ha3, suggesting that expertise does indeed have a positive and significant influence on the credibility of A.B De Villiers as a product endorser.

- To determine consumers’ perceptions regarding the identified local athlete-celebrity’s attractiveness as a product endorser

The third empirical objective formulated for this study was about determining consumers’ perceptions regarding the attractiveness of A.B De Villiers as a product endorser of Lay’s™
The EFA procedure and reliability analysis provided preliminary evidence to support the salience of the attractiveness construct as an important variable in this research as reported in sections 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8 of this dissertation. Additionally, the positive and significant correlation values along attractiveness when correlated with other source credibility dimensions (Section 4.9) provided the inference that the attribute was a fundamental component when discussing the credibility of A.B De Villiers as a product endorser. An analysis of the measurement model and the resultant CFA procedure (Section 4.10.2) revealed that attractiveness was a relevant construct in the model of purchase intentions towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed product. Thereafter, the reported positive and significant path coefficient between attractiveness and endorser credibility ($\beta = +0.395; p = 0.000$) along the structural model led to the decision to reject $H_o4$ and conclude the alternative hypothesis $H_a4$, instead. The strong result along this path denotes that South African sport consumers’ are of the view that physical appearance, charm and athletic abilities are important when athlete-celebrity endorsers are used as sources of marketing communication messages.

- To determine consumers’ perceptions regarding the identified local athlete-celebrity’s credibility

The fourth objective of this study was to determine consumers’ perceptions regarding A.B De Villiers’ overall credibility as a product endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips. Again, the results of the EFA procedure (Section 4.6), reliability analysis (Section 4.7) as well as the descriptive statistics (Section 4.8) proved that the participants in this study regarded A.B De Villiers as a credible endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips. In addition, the positive and significant correlation values along the endorser credibility construct when correlated against expertise ($r = 0.589; p = 0.01$), trustworthiness ($r = 0.693; p = 0.01$) as well as attractiveness ($r = 0.612; p = 0.01$) denote that the three attributes pose a moderate to strong relation with consumers’ perceptions of A.B De Villiers’ overall credibility as a product endorser. The measurement model results (Section 4.10) further supported the salience of the endorser credibility construct in this study.

- To determine consumers’ attitude towards the athlete-celebrity endorsed advertisement

The fifth objective of this study was to determine consumers’ attitudes towards the advertisement where A.B De Villiers’ endorses Lay’s™ potato chips. EFA was performed in which six factors were extracted as described in Section 4.6 and this construct was labelled attitude towards advertisement. In addition, reliability analysis procedures in Section 4.7 and descriptive statistics in Section 4.8 proved that the participants in this study were in agreement that the advertisement
where A.B De Villiers appears could be positively evaluated. Moreover, the reported positive and significant correlation values between the attitude towards the advertisement construct when correlated with both endorser credibility \( (r_s=0.600; \ p=0.01) \) as well as purchase intentions \( (r_s=0.583; \ p=0.01) \) showed that the construct related well with the variables in this research. Finally, the results of the measurement model (Section 4.10) posited a valid confirmation that attitude towards the advertisement was a salient variable towards consumers’ purchase intentions towards Lay’s™ potato chips.

- **To determine consumers’ intentions towards purchasing the athlete-celebrity endorsed product**

The sixth objective of this study related to consumers’ intentions to purchase Lay’s™ potato chips as the product endorsed by A.B De Villiers. Consistent with the aforementioned objectives, the reported EFA, reliability and descriptive results (sections 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8) proved that the participants in this study were in agreement that they will purchase the athlete-celebrity endorsed product in future encounters. Moreover, positive and significant correlation values were reported between purchase intentions and attitude towards the advertisement as explained in Section 4.9. The findings showed that there is strong relationship between attitude towards the advertisement and purchase intentions.

- **To empirically test a model of trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, athlete-celebrity endorser credibility, attitude towards the advertisement and consumers’ purchase intentions towards celebrity endorsed products within the South African market**

A research model with six relative hypotheses statements was developed for testing in Section 2.14 of this study and later proved in Section 4.11 of this dissertation, thereby leading to the achievement of the seventh empirical objective that was formulated in Section 1.4.3. Initially the empirical data set was assessed against the results of the specified measurement model. Based on the fit indices, the measurement model was deemed as having acceptable fit (Section 4.10.1) with six variables being confirmed as being salient components of this study through the CFA results. In particular, all indicators on the measurement model reported standardised factor loadings greater than 0.70, except for indicator C26, which reported a loading of 0.635, which was also considered adequate (Section 4.10.2) drawing from conventional SEM practises. In addition, reliability and validity checks ensured that the statistical accuracy of the measurement model was validated in Section 4.10.3, leading to a decision to conclude the first alternative hypothesis (H₂₁) statement, which stated that the model of purchase intentions is a six variable structure comprising
trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, athlete-endorser credibility, attitude and purchase intentions.

The structural model results revealed that trustworthiness has a direct positive influence on endorser credibility ($\beta = +0.642; \ p=0.000$), which led to the decision to reject $H_2$ and conclude the second alternative hypothesis $H_2$, instead. These results are in keeping with the previous study by Wang, Kao and Ngamsiriudom (2017:15). The strong result along this path denotes that South African sport consumers’ prioritise trust elements relating to honesty and dependability when athlete-celebrity endorsers act as sources of marketing communication messages. In addition, expertise was found to have a positive (yet the weakest of the three source attributes) influence on endorser credibility ($\beta = +0.178; \ p=0.000$), thereby leading to the decision to conclude $H_3$ in this study. This conclusive result corresponds with the study by Sallam and Wahid (2012:61) who also found the predictive influence of expertise on endorser credibility. By implication, therefore, consumers’ perceptions about A.B De Villiers’s expertise as a product endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips does indeed have a positive and significant influence on his credibility thereof. Furthermore, attractiveness was found to have a direct and significant influence on endorser credibility ($\beta = +0.395; \ p=0.000$), leading to a decision to conclude $H_4$, which is in line with study by Bhatt et al. (2013:85). The reported structural model results indicate that the three attributes of source credibility, namely trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness explain 60 percent of A.B De Villiers’ credibility as an endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips ($R^2=0.60$). This finding is in keeping with Sallam and Wahid (2012:61) who found that a $R^2$ value of 0.40 for endorser credibility against the three explanatory variables.

With regard to the relationship between endorser credibility and attitude towards the advertisement, the empirical results reported that endorser credibility positively influences consumers’ attitude towards the advertisement where A.B De Villiers appears endorsing Lay’s™ potato chips ($\beta =0.704; \ p=0.000$). This led to the decision to conclude $H_5$ and reject $H_5$. The structural model shown in Section 4.11 indicates that endorser credibility explains 50 percent ($R^2=0.50$) of consumers’ attitudes towards the advertisement featuring A.B De Villiers.

Finally, the path between attitude towards the advertisement and purchase intentions revealed a direct and significant result ($\beta =0.741; \ p=0.000$), implying that attitude towards the advertisement does positively influence consumers’ purchase intentions towards Lay’s™ potato chips. Therefore, the decision was made to conclude $H_6$ and reject $H_6$. In addition, the structural model shown in Section 4.11 indicates that consumers’ attitude towards the Lay’s™ potato chips
advertisement explains at least 55 percent ($R^2=0.55$) of their intention to purchase the respective athlete-celebrity endorsed product.

5.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In terms of theory, the significance of this study lies in the utilisation of theories and frameworks from consumer psychology, in particular Ohanian’s (1990) Source attributes theory. Hence, the study built upon previous research. However, the results of this study may be relevant to businesses, consumers and researchers.

It is evident that marketing organisations are presented with a wide variety of options when attempting to persuade their target markets with success. This research added to the body of knowledge by testing a research model that presents the different elements that should be considered when attempting to enhance consumers’ purchases of a specified product. While using purchase intentions as a proxy for actual future purchases, this study validated that trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness are determinants of the credibility of an athlete-celebrity endorser. In addition, attitude towards the advertisement is a predictor of purchase intentions. This model is simple to apply and will possibly unlock great potential in the persuasive capabilities of a well-selected athlete-celebrity endorser.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STUDY

In accordance with the literature review and the empirical findings concluded from the South African sports consumers’ sample that participated in this study, the following recommendations are outlined.

5.4.1 Emphasise trustworthiness as a core attribute for product endorsers

Sertoglu et al. (2014:69) affirm that trustworthy celebrity endorsers are persuasive. In other words, the effectiveness of a celebrity endorser in advertising depends mainly on his or her level of trust. Therefore, it is recommended that marketers use trusted celebrities when engaging in celebrity endorsements. This can be achieved through celebrities engaging in social responsibility campaigns across the country, leading to interactions with fans. Such interaction can potentially lead to the formation of positive images in the minds of consumers about the celebrity, as well as trust formations. This trust formation will increase consumers’ confidence in endorsers’ claims about the endorsed product.
5.4.2 Emphasise expertise as a core attribute for product endorsers

The perceived expertise of the endorser plays a significant role in the overall judgement of the endorser’s credibility (Van der Waldt et al. 2009:104). This study recommends the training and mentoring of product endorsers by companies engaging in endorsements. This would improve the level of knowledge as well as equip endorsers with relevant skills to enable them to become able and capable experts in relation to the products they endorse. In this vein, marketers could guarantee that product endorsers share the same vision being conveyed by the message sender as well as the product manufacturer.

5.4.3 Emphasise attractiveness as a core attribute for product endorsers

Figuratively, beauty, if utilised in the right way, has the potential to be a more powerful source of commendation than any letter of recommendation. Ohanian (1991:47) also states that physical attractiveness has a positive effect on consumers’ behaviour towards a product when compared to unattractive ones. As such, attractiveness plays a key role in the social appraisal as well as acceptability of an athlete-endorser. This study recommends that marketers should consider physical attributes such as endorser’s physical looks when deciding on which celebrity to use in advertisements. More so in the case of low-involvement products such as Lay’s™ potato chips, which is a FMCG, implying that consumers derive attitudinal beliefs and behavioural responses towards this product from external cues. As such, elements of physical appearance such as charm as well as elegance could be improved on through expert coaching on public appearance and public relations management.

5.4.4 Employ celebrity brokers

Celebrity brokers act as liaisons between a marketer and a celebrity endorser. They will make connections, negotiate deals and advise both parties. Brokers have a keen knowledge of marketing, but their expertise lies much more in the world of entertainment. It is important to establish personal relationships with athletes and their agents and offer a convenient entry for advertisers hoping to work with celebrities. Marketers could seek to expand the role of celebrity brokers by permitting them to coach the celebrities on public appearances, media interactions and red carpet interviews so that their overall deportment is consistent with the values espoused by the endorsed brand as well as the sponsoring organisation.
5.4.5 Enforce single-endorsement deals with product endorsers

Marketers will do well to avoid bombarding consumers with the use of multiple endorsers, as this can be confusing to consumers. Since the product becomes synonymous with the endorser, confusion may arise as a result of consumers’ not being able to distinguish which of the endorser’s characteristics are shared with a product in an advertisement. In addition, company values become synonymous with the endorser in the process of endorsement and vice versa. As such, the use of more than one personality to endorse one company’s brand or product has a potential to deliver negative effects on the credibility of the company utilising such a multiple endorsement strategy. Therefore, it is recommended that endorsement contracts include a watertight exclusivity clause that mandates a company to enlist the services of only one celebrity to endorse a single product or brand at a time. Relatedly, to avoid possible conflict of interests, the same clause should be enforced on celebrities, prohibiting them from entering into multiple contracts with different companies at any given time. It is envisaged that such exclusivity can result in a simultaneous improvement of the endorser, company and brand’s overall credibility.

5.4.6 Prioritise endorsement contract deals with local product endorsers

The marketers’ ability as well as capability to gratify consumers chiefly relies on understanding of consumers from a cultural point of view. Halimi et al. (2011:120) suggest that culture has an effect on consumers’ attitudes as well as purchase intentions. As such, a choice of local celebrities in endorsement can play a crucial role in increasing appeal as well credibility of marketers’ brands and products in advertising. Therefore, this study recommends that marketers should select home-grown celebrities to endorse their products since it is much easier for consumers to identify with and trust local celebrities more than foreign ones. This is because local celebrities mostly share similar cultural backgrounds with consumers and are able to persuade these consumers to believe in their assertions about brands and products.

5.4.7 Apply novel ‘touch-points’ to evoke positive and lasting attitudes towards celebrity-endorsed products

Celebrity endorsements has been heavily criticised in some circles as nothing but a money making scheme. While the traditional celebrity endorsement model seems to have fallen out of favour among the elite markets, South African advertisers need to unrest in novel ways to re-connect with an ever-changing consumer market. The use of touch-points is crucial since they explain any point of contact where a business engages with a customer by taking advantage of the most effective channels to appeal to and entice consumers to alter their attitude towards celebrity-endorsed
advertisements. Recently, some of the most common touch-points used in celebrity branding largely are through social media, namely Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Tumblr. Social media sites give celebrity branding a significant boost and immense opportunities to create an audience, which is virtually endless. Other strategies include the use of celebrity voice-overs in films and movies as well as embarking on lifestyle-oriented advertising as this is considered appealing by some segments of society.

5.5 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

As with other studies, the study had one theoretic limitation that raised new questions thereby pointing to future research possibilities. This study placed emphasis on Ohanian’s (1990) Source attributes theory as a foundation, consistent with previous research in celebrity endorsement. While this was a movement toward a better understanding of consumers’ perceptions regarding the credibility of the selected athlete-celebrity, the relevance of the endorser credibility dimension is limited to the initial stages of celebrity selection. In other words, the scales applied in this dissertation can be used during the initial phase of selecting which celebrity to use to endorse products in order to avoid costly mistakes of choosing inappropriate celebrities. However, other theories such as the match-up hypotheses as well as the meaning transfer theory should be considered with a view to assess the long-term effectiveness of an already contracted celebrity endorser.

A number of limitations should be highlighted following the empirical component of this research. First, a snowball sampling method was utilised, implying that the participants were selected in accordance with the researcher’s social networks and therefore, the study result may not present the entire social class spectrum of consumers and test results may only apply to the participating respondents. Moreover, snowball sampling presented implications for sampling error and social desirability bias, thereby leading to a possible contamination of the results. Consequently, the results of this study were limited in terms of overall generalisability.

Secondly, the study only focused on a single cross-sectional sample of 456 consumers based in Southern Gauteng. Naturally, this may not present the perceptions of South African consumers accurately. While this is so, consumers sometimes change their perceptions according to time change, cultural shifts and/or individual experiences. Thus, marketers cannot depend entirely on what they currently know about the credibility of celebrity endorsers to remain the same in the future. Therefore, it would be worthy to consider a longitudinal study to compare how consumers’ perceptions change over time and across provinces. Furthermore, comparison of a larger group of
participants with different income categories and different brand preferences could be elicited from further research.

Thirdly, this research was conducted with specific emphasis on a single athlete-celebrity endorsing Lay’s™ potato chips only, which tends to limit the representativeness of the results. As already determined in Section 4.12, when discussing the empirical findings of this study, future research across wider product categories and brands such as high-involvement product categories could go a long way to broaden the impact of the constructs used in this study. In addition, future research could consider the credibility of different types of celebrity endorsers including actors and fictitious characters as identified in Section 2.6.3 of this dissertation.

Despite the aforementioned limitations, the study added to the body of knowledge by providing an empirically tested model of the purchase intentions of consumers towards a celebrity endorsed product. Where gaps exist, future research could play a role in filling those gaps that fell outside the scope of this study.

5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Drawing from the findings of this research, there is little doubt that celebrity endorsements are on the rise and consumers are affected by celebrities as endorsers of different products and brands. Nevertheless, the success of any celebrity endorsement strategy depends largely on marketers’ understanding of the target audience. As it stands, celebrities are trendsetters and are able to influence consumers’ decision. Given the influence of celebrities in future product choices, the essential step, therefore, is to complement the significant contribution of product endorsers by emphasising the core attributes of trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness while attempting to deliver endorser credibility, in order to alter consumers’ attitudes and ultimately, moderate the intent to purchase the endorsed product in a positive manner.


KOEKEMOER, L. 2012. *Introduction to integrated marketing communications*. Cape Town, RSA:Juta.


APPENDIX A – PRELIMINARY QUESTIONNAIRE
Dear Sir/Madam

Celebrity product endorsers are well-known people who appear in advertisements aimed at promoting certain products or brands. When conducting empirical investigations on endorsement, it is necessary to identify an athlete endorser that possesses the right set of characteristics and will produce the most favourable response from the consumers. I am interested in knowing who your favourite professional athlete endorser is and which product or brand they have endorsed in the past 12 months or longer. It will be appreciated greatly, if you could assist by completing the following questions in less than 3 minutes. Your input is very valuable. Your responses will be treated in the strictest confidentiality and you will remain anonymous at all times. The information gathered from this survey will be used for research purposes only.

Thank you for your time and effort in completing the questionnaire enclosed.

Yours faithfully

---

Mr BB Mahao

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your favourite professional sport in South Africa</th>
<th>Soccer</th>
<th>Rugby</th>
<th>Cricket</th>
<th>Other (Specify)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the name of your favourite professional South African sportsman/sportswoman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify an advertisement where your favourite sportsperson has endorsed a brand or product</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for time and your cooperation
Dear Sir/Madam

I am currently undertaking a research project for the MTech degree in Marketing under the supervision of Dr Dlodlo. The study investigates the influence of selected antecedents of athlete celebrity endorsement credibility towards the purchase intentions of consumers. Specifically, this questionnaire relates to celebrity attributes and their subsequent influence on consumers’ perceptions of the credibility of the selected endorser. In addition, the questionnaire seeks information regarding consumers’ attitude towards the advertisement where the endorser appears as well as the consumers’ intentions to purchase Lay’s™ potato chip in the future. The statements reflected on this questionnaire relate to A.B De Villiers, captain of the South African cricket team (Proteas™).

It will be appreciated greatly, if you could assist by completing the attached questionnaire. Your input is very valuable. Your participation is voluntary and as such, you are free to withdraw from the study at any given time should you feel uncomfortable at any stage. Your responses will be treated in the strictest confidentiality and you will remain anonymous at all times. There are no wrong or right answers. The information gathered from this survey will be aggregated for research purposes, in the form of an academic dissertation.

Thank you for your time and effort in completing the questionnaire enclosed.

Yours faithfully

Bafokeng Mahao (Department of Marketing: Vanderbijlpark Campus)

E-mail: fozakeng@gmail.com

Research Supervisor: Dr N. Dlodlo
E-mail: nobukhosid@vut.ac.za

Research Co-Supervisor: Dr S. Tesnear
E-mail: sumarit@vut.ac.za
## SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please answer the following questions by selecting the appropriate box. Mark with a ‘X’ to show your selection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A1</th>
<th>Gender:</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Age:</td>
<td>18-20 years</td>
<td>21-30 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>Ethnic group:</td>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>Coloured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td>Please indicate your language:</td>
<td>Afrikaans</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5</td>
<td>Marital status:</td>
<td>Single/Never been married</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6</td>
<td>Please indicate your highest educational qualification:</td>
<td>Grade 12 / Matric</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A7</td>
<td>Please indicate your monthly income (before tax):</td>
<td>Less than R5000</td>
<td>R5000 – R10 000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## SECTION B: LAY’S™ POTATO CHIPS PURCHASE INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B1</th>
<th>Have you purchased Lay’s™ Potato chips within the past 12 months?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>How many times do you make purchases of Lay’s™ potato chips?</td>
<td>Once a year (annually)</td>
<td>At least twice a year (bi-annually)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
<td>Which is your most preferred media for accessing A.B De Villiers endorsement advertisement of Lay’s™ Potato chips?</td>
<td>Television</td>
<td>Newspaper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION C: DETERMINANTS OF CONSUMERS’ PURCHASE INTENTIONS TOWARDS LAY’S™ POTATO CHIPS

SOURCE ATTRIBUTES

The following statements refer to the specific athlete endorser in the attached picture (A.B De Villiers) chips. Please indicate in your opinion, the extent to which you agree with the following statements anchored along 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 4 (agree) and 5 (strongly agree). Mark only one number with a ‘X’ for each statement.

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>A.B De Villiers is a dependable endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>A.B De Villiers is a reliable endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3</td>
<td>A.B De Villiers is an honest endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4</td>
<td>A.B De Villiers is a sincere endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C5</td>
<td>A.B De Villiers is a trustworthy endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C6</td>
<td>A.B De Villiers is an expert endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C7</td>
<td>A.B De Villiers is an experienced endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C8</td>
<td>A.B De Villiers is a skilled endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C9</td>
<td>A.B De Villiers is a qualified endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C10</td>
<td>A.B De Villiers is a knowledgeable endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C11</td>
<td>A.B De Villiers is a handsome endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C12</td>
<td>A.B De Villiers is a masculine endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C13</td>
<td>A.B De Villiers is a sexy endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C14</td>
<td>A.B De Villiers is a classy endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C15</td>
<td>A.B De Villiers is an elegant endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ATHLETE ENDORSER CREDIBILITY

Please describe (in your opinion) your perceptions about the credibility of A.B De Villiers as an endorser of Lay’s™ potato chips. Mark only one number with a ‘X’ for each statement.

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C16</td>
<td>The assertions made by A.B De Villiers are consistent</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C17</td>
<td>The assertions made by A.B De Villiers are believable</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C18</td>
<td>The assertions made by A.B De Villiers are responsible</td>
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<td>C19</td>
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<td>C20</td>
<td>The assertions made by A.B De Villiers are convincing</td>
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<tr>
<td>C21</td>
<td>Overall, the assertions made by A.B De Villiers are credible</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
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### ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ENDORSEMENT ADVERTISEMENT

Please describe (in your opinion) your overall attitude towards the Lay’s™ potato chips advertisement, which features A.B De Villiers as an endorser. Mark only one number with a ‘X’ for each statement.

| C21 | Overall, the assertions made by A.B De Villiers are credible | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |
| C22 | The Lay’s™ potato chips advertisement is informative | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |
| C23 | The Lay’s™ potato chips advertisement is appropriate | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |
| C24 | The Lay’s™ potato chips advertisement is easy to understand | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |
| C25 | The Lay’s™ potato chips advertisement is objective | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |
| C26 | The Lay’s™ potato chips advertisement is not offensive | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |
| C27 | Overall, I have a favourable attitude towards the Lay’s™ potato chips advertisement | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |

### PURCHASE INTENTIONS TOWARDS THE ENDORSED BRAND

Please describe (in your opinion) your overall intentions towards the purchase of Lay’s™ potato chips being endorsed by A.B De Villiers. Mark only one number with a ‘X’ for each statement.

| C28 | I will buy Lay’s™ potato chips in the future | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |
| C29 | I will buy Lay’s™ potato chips should I happen to see the packet in a store | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |
| C30 | I will make additional purchases of Lay’s™ potato chips, in the future | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |
| C21 | I will actively seek out a retail outlet to purchase Lay’s™ potato chips | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |
| C32 | I will buy Lay’s™ potato chips again in the future | Strongly disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Strongly agree |

Thank you for time and your cooperation. Your views are much appreciated.
### Model Fit Summary

#### CMIN

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