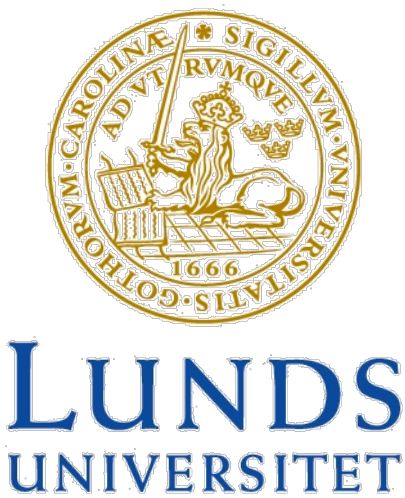

School of Economics and Management – Department of Business Administration

MSc International Marketing & Brand Management

The Effect of Corporate Endorsement on Consumers' Product Brand Evaluations
–
An Empirical Analysis of the Influence of Corporate Image

– Master Thesis –

Handed in by
Pia Faulseit and Marion Küpers

Supervisor: Niklas Bondesson
Examinator: Anna Jonsson
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Abstract

Title: The Effect of Corporate Endorsement on Consumers' Product Brand Evaluations – An Empirical Analysis of the Influence of Corporate Image

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Authors: Pia Faulseit (piafaulseit@googlemail.com)
Marion Küpers (marion.kuepers@googlemail.com)

Advisor: Niklas Bondesson

Keywords: Brand Architecture, Endorsed Branding Strategy, Product Brand Evaluation, Corporate Association Transfer, Image Spill-over

Thesis purpose: This study aims to investigate the effect of corporate endorsement on consumers' product brand evaluations by taking into consideration varying levels of corporate brand and product brand image as well as product brand familiarity; thereby providing more detailed and nuanced insights for which product brands corporate endorsement is beneficial, neutral or even detrimental.

Theoretical perspective: The main theories that the study is based upon are dealing with brand architecture, endorsed branding, corporate branding, and corporate associations transfer. Furthermore, the related research streams of brand extensions, co-branding, and brand alliances are consulted.

Methodology: In order to fulfil the outlined purpose, the study adopts a quantitative research strategy. In a first step, a pre-study survey is conducted to reveal product and corporate brands of varying images. Based on these findings, an experimental research design is applied within the main study, which is implemented in form of a post-test only control group design. Multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) serve as primary method of data analysis.

Empirical data: The empirical data consists of quantitative data, which is generated through a paper-based survey (pre-study) and an online survey (main study).

Conclusion: This study reveals that the effect of corporate endorsement should generally not be overstated, as in most investigated instances consumers' product brand evaluations remain unchanged after the addition of a corporate brand. Only in the case of an endorsement of a new product brand by a corporate brand with a positive image a significant beneficiary effect for the product brand can be identified. As so far limited research has addressed the effect of corporate endorsement on consumers' product evaluations, the pioneering study at hand takes a first step to fill this research gap. The study therewith contributes to existent theory by providing an initial starting point and preliminary insights in the research field under investigation.

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1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the topic of corporate branding and its recent development while also elaborating upon the central topic of the thesis – endorsed branding. This is a branding strategy in which the corporate brand is visibly apparent within the product brand value communication. Subsequently, previous literature within this research area is briefly reviewed. Based on this, the research gap is identified, leading up to the aim of the thesis and the research questions that are addressed. It is also elaborated upon why the thesis is relevant and important from a practical as well as theoretical perspective. Finally, the thesis outline is presented.

1.1 Background

In recent years, increasing attention is given to the development and management of corporate brands and their potential value in the branding process (Knox & Bickerton 2003; Xie & Boggs 2006). Both – academics and practitioners – have realized the importance of the corporate brand as a strategic asset and as a source of sustainable competitive advantage (Brown & Dacin 1997; Souiden et al. 2006). Hence, there is evidence of a trend among organizations away from the prevalence of hiding the corporate identity towards the increasing use of the corporate brand within the product brand value communication (Kapferer 2008; Souiden et al. 2006). Big international corporations, such as Unilever and Procter & Gamble, have changed their branding strategies by displaying their corporate brand more visibly on the majority of products within their portfolios (Kapferer 2008; Uggla 2006). This development is further emphasised by Laforet and Saunders (2005) who revealed that the use of mixed branding strategies such as endorsed branding has experienced a continuous surge in recent years among multinational corporations.

For a long time, however, the study and practice of branding has particularly focused on product brands. Thereby, the communication of product benefits as well as the creation of strong and unique associations for each individual product in the portfolio were of primary concern (Xie & Boggs 2006). Especially within marketing and brand management practice, less attention was attributed to the corporate brand as a source of brand equity. As a consequence, many corporations failed to recognize the opportunities which may reside in linkages between the corporate brand and other brands of the portfolio by designing coherent brand architectures and by leveraging the inherent power through endorsed branding or sub-branding. (Uggla 2006)

Due to changing marketplace conditions, however, a shift away from the dominant focus on product brands to a greater reliance on corporate brands as a strategic marketing tool can be identified (Xie & Boggs 2006; Leitch & Richardson 2003). Globalization, higher consumer demands, intense competition and shorter product life cycles have led to highly complex, fragmented and fast changing markets as well as decreasing brand loyalty (Xie & Boggs 2006; Kapferer 2008). In addition, there is a growing similarity between products in regard to quality and price and product innovations are quickly imitated (Souiden et al. 2006; Xie & Boggs 2006). In these market environments brand managers face greater difficulties in creating and maintaining product differentiation by relying solely on product brands (Xie & Boggs 2006). Hence, corporate images and values arise as key elements for differentiation which thus in turn can help to attain a sustainable competitive advantage (Xie & Boggs 2006; Souiden et al 2006). King (1991, in Muzellec & Lambkin 2009) already foresaw this trend in his article 'Brand-building in the 1990s', where the author referred to the 'company brand' as the main discriminator in the future, meaning that consumers' choice will increasingly depend on the holistic assessment of the

corporation behind a product, rather than on the sole evaluation of the product benefits.

Whether the corporate brand is applied within the product brand value communication or not is a question of high strategic importance. Answering this question is directly related to the branding strategy (i.e. brand architecture) adopted by a firm; in other words, the organization's approach to structure, link and manage the different products and brands within the portfolio (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; Harish 2008). One brand architecture type that combines the application of a corporate brand and individual product brands is called endorsed branding. The term refers to a dual branding approach, whereby the product brand is visibly and continuously endorsed by the corporate brand across marketing activities (e.g. packaging, advertising) (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004). A well-known example of an endorsed brand is the chocolate bar Nestlé KitKat (Harish 2008; Kapferer 2008).

As outlined above, the endorsed branding strategy experiences a strong upsurge, which is likely attributable to its inherent benefits. By establishing a linkage between the corporate brand and the product brand a transfer of brand associations occurs from the corporate brand to the product brand level and vice versa (Boisvert 2011). Through this enrichment of associations consumers are provided with additional credibility, reassurance of product quality and reliability as well as corporate legitimacy (Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004; Uggla & Åsberg 2009; Xie & Boggs 2006). Hence, within literature it is stated that the corporate brand can add value to individual product brands through its leveraging potential (Souiden et al. 2006). At the same time, the corporate brand gains visibility and brand awareness among consumers and other stakeholders (Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004; Uggla & Åsberg 2009). Establishing a linkage between a product brand and a corporate brand is therefore commonly considered as mutually beneficial as each entity benefits doubly from two sources of brand equity (Souiden et al. 2006; Saunders & Guoqun 1997). Within the thesis at hand, the endorsed branding strategy and, more precisely, its effect on consumers' product brand evaluations depicts the central field of interest.

1.2 Brief Literature Review

Corporate brand leverage and the underlying association transfer have been addressed by several authors (e.g. Berens et al. 2005; Brown & Dacin 1997; Muzellec & Lambkin 2007; Souiden et al. 2006). Studies of these authors investigated the influence of the corporate brand and corresponding corporate associations on consumers' product evaluations. Thereby, the authors concentrated on different partial aspects of the phenomenon. Brown and Dacin (1997) revealed that the relationship between corporate associations and consumers' evaluations of products differ depending on whether corporate ability (CA) or corporate social responsibility (CSR) associations are inferred. Berens et al. (2005) as well as Biehal and Sheinin (2007) extended the examination of the effect of varying corporate associations on consumers' product evaluations by further taking into consideration different branding strategies (i.e. brand architectures) respectively product portfolio effects. All in all, these studies have revealed that the type of corporate associations held by consumers has a moderating effect on their product brand evaluations. Within the context of corporate branding, a manageable amount of studies also demonstrated that the favourability of associations respectively the image of the corporate brand has an influence on consumers' product responses (e.g. Andreassen & Lindestad 1998; de Ruyter & Wetzels 2000; Souiden et al. 2006; Muzellec & Lambkin 2007). These studies revealed, for instance, that corporate image is an important determinant influencing consumers' perceptions

and evaluations in regard of quality, satisfaction and loyalty (Andreassen & Lindestad 1998) and is further used as an information cue to judge credibility or purchase intention (de Ruyter & Wetzels 2000). However, although these studies have identified the fundamental influence of the corporate image on product imagery, the impact of different corporate images (positive vs. negative) on consumers' product evaluations was examined only to a limited extent. Brown and Dacin (1997) are two of the few authors who devoted attention to the influence of favourable respectively unfavourable corporate associations on consumers' judgements towards new products. However, the favourability of associations only constituted a minor research aspect within their study and was therefore not investigated in greater detail, as their study rather focussed on different types of associations (CA, CSR) as prior outlined.

Further, hardly any of these studies - investigating the transfer of corporate associations - were placed within an endorsed branding setting or communicated the endorsing brand as a stimulus on the product's packing. Showing the corporate endorsement on the product's packaging is however decisive, as the packaging is a strong influencing cue at the point of sale (POS) (Kapferer 2008). To our best knowledge, a study carried out by Saunders & Guoqun (1997) is the only one exploring the impact of different corporate brands on the evaluation of product brands by creating a product endorsement, which was depicted on the product's packaging. In specific, the authors analysed whether the addition of a corporate identity to a confectionary brand increases consumers' preferences for that product brand or not. Within their study, the selected corporate brands differed in their familiarity and advertisement expenditure. Thus, also in their study no inference was made to the image of the corporate brands and their potential influence on consumers.

Within the closely-related research streams of co-branding, brand extension and brand alliances little more attention was given to the transfer of associations taking into consideration different strengths of favourability respectively equity, which each brand brings into the relationship. Within the context of brand extensions, it was revealed that the formation of a favourable attitude towards the extension is closely connected to whether the existing brand evokes positive beliefs and favourable attitudes (Aaker & Keller 1990; Keller & Lehmann 2006). Further studies demonstrate that linking two brands of varying favourability affects consumers' attitudes towards each of the entities. A study of brand alliances by Simonin and Ruth (1998) showed that favourable associations of a brand are transferred to the brand alliance. Reversely, the authors found that an alliance between a favourable and a less favourable brand could potentially harm the strong, original branding partner. Ueltschy & Laroche (2004) contribute similar findings within a study of co-branding. The authors claim that co-branding of two high equity brands is mutually beneficial, whereas co-branding between a high equity and a low equity partner can be a threat to the high equity partner. However, these results are partly opposed to findings of Brown and Dacin (1997) and no comparable investigations were conducted in the field of endorsed branding, where corporate and product brands of varying favourability or strength are linked.

1.3 Research Gap

Although the concept of corporate image has a remarkable history within marketing literature and prior studies revealed that corporate image is an important determinant in the consumers' product brand evaluation, it becomes apparent that – despite important theoretical and managerial implications - there is a lack of literature and research dealing with this latter

phenomenon in greater detail. Especially within an endorsement setting, to our best knowledge, no study so far has investigated the effect of varying corporate images on consumers' product brand evaluations. This highlights that there is an extensive research gap concerning the differing impact of corporate image within an endorsed branding strategy.

Several authors also support the notion that the transfer of associations and the corresponding influence of the corporate image on consumers' product evaluations need to be further investigated. According to Brown and Dacin (1997) and Biehal and Sheinin (2007), the empirically based understanding of the extent to which corporate and product brand associations interact and influence each other is still insufficient. Souiden et al. (2006) notice that there are many theories explaining how consumers select and evaluate products, yet little attention is devoted to the influence of corporate branding on consumers' product evaluations. In the same manner, Uggla and Åsberg (2009) express the need for further studies exploring positive or negative spill-over effects emerging from the linkage between the corporate brand and other internal or external brands.

1.4 Aim of the Thesis

Against this background, the thesis aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by exploring the influence of corporate brand image on consumers' product brand evaluations within an endorsed branding strategy. To our best knowledge, the study at hand is the first one that analyses the outlined relationship. It therefore provides an initial starting point and preliminary insights, which will likely stimulate new discussions on the use of corporate endorsement and its possible benefits.

To provide a detailed understanding of the effect of corporate image on consumers' product brand evaluations, the study investigates the influence of well-known corporate brands with varying images (positive/negative) on consumers' product brand evaluations. Apart from variations on the side of the corporate brand, also the investigated product brands have nuanced levels, being either also well-known with prior differing images (positive/negative) or representing a new product brand. Hence, corporate image transfer is investigated for a total of six corporate-product brand combinations. *It therefore becomes apparent, that the study at hand further contributes by providing more thorough and nuanced insights in which cases corporate endorsement leads to positive, neutral or even negative transfer of brand associations.* In other words, in which instances a corporate brand can be used to enhance product brand evaluations or when corporate endorsement should be avoided, due to its possible detrimental effect on consumers' product brand evaluations. In doing so, the study provides not only a more profound understanding of brand association transfer in terms of varying images caused by corporate endorsement as well as on the side of the product brands, but also consumers' product brand evaluations are analysed in greater detail than in previous studies by focussing on three constructs, namely, 'overall attitude', 'perceived quality' and 'willingness to pay a price premium'.

1.5 Research Questions

Based on the research aim, the thesis addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: Within an endorsed branding strategy, can corporate brands with a positive image boost consumers' product brand evaluations and, conversely, can corporate brands with a negative image jeopardize consumers' product brand evaluations?

RQ2: Does an endorsement by a corporate brand with a positive image differ in its impact on consumers' product brand evaluations from an endorsement by a corporate brand with a negative image?

RQ3: For which product brands is a corporate endorsement beneficial, neutral or even detrimental?

These research questions are investigated in the study at hand in form of an experiment. With the help of an online survey, the subjects' evaluations concerning the various product-corporate brand combinations are measured which provide the basis for later comparisons for the different combinations. Within the survey, the different corporate logos were graphically included on the respective products' packaging to elicit consumer associations for the different treatment combinations. The Swedish juice market and its brands serve as a basis for investigation.

1.6 Practical Relevance of the Topic

The detailed analysis of the impact of corporate endorsement and its underlying corporate association transfer on consumers' product brand evaluations is of great interest to practitioners. Since many corporations have at least one corporate brand as well as a portfolio of different product brands with varying images it is crucial to understand how linkages between these brand levels influence consumers' product brand evaluations. The more detailed understanding provided by this study enables corporations to fully grasp how differing corporate images impact on the product brand level. In other words, brand managers are provided with a decision base whether and in which instances corporate endorsement is beneficial. The findings of the study at hand thus provide clarity about whether a corporate brand should be used as a strategic asset within the product brand communication or not. Investigating consumers' brand evaluations in terms of three constructs – 'overall attitude', 'perceived quality', 'willingness to pay a price premium' – provides information about the possible changes in brand value and consumer-based brand equity, leaving brand managers with a richer basis for decision-making. Hence, the study offers great insights for the design of a coherent brand architecture, which can substantially impact the financial performance of a company by enabling synergies and leverages for the organizations on the one hand but also by enhancing consumer-based brand equity through leveraging consumers' evaluations of the product brand.

1.7 Outline of the Thesis

After this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 provides the theoretical background of the thesis, where the main concepts are defined, relevant literature and knowledge is reviewed and summarized, and underlying theories that are of importance for the research study are introduced. Based on this theoretical outline, the hypotheses that are analysed in the empirical study are developed. The subsequent methodology chapter provides information concerning the underlying research philosophy, research strategy and design as well as the method of data collection and analysis. Within Chapter 4 the procedures of the data analysis and the subsequent findings are presented, followed by a detailed discussion of the findings in Chapter 5. The final chapter rounds off the thesis by summarising the main findings and by providing managerial and theoretical implications resulting out of the study at hand. Additionally, the limitations of the study are outlined and suggestions for further research are presented.

2 Theory

In this chapter, the theoretical foundation which guides the research at hand is laid. It is based on an extensive literature review in the fields of brand architecture, corporate branding as well as corporate association transfer. As the literature is limited in these research streams, literature from related research areas such as brand extensions, co-branding and brand alliances is further consulted. The research topic being framed within the domain of brand management, the concept of a brand is initially defined. Differences between the distinct entities of corporate brand and product brand are revealed in a next step since these brand levels are the two under investigation in the study. As the study examines the effect of corporate endorsement on consumers' product brand evaluations, a literature review of brand associations, which are said to primarily shape consumer's evaluations of brands, follows. Thereby, the constructs of 'overall attitude', 'perceived quality' and 'willingness to pay a price premium' are also highlighted, as these form consumers' product brand evaluations. Subsequently, the concept of brand architecture with its main types is presented. The focus is thereby put on the branding strategy 'endorsed branding' as this type of brand architecture is at the core of the study. Following this, the rise of corporate branding and its underlying reasons are outlined. Within the following sub-section, the leverage potential of a corporate brand is highlighted. It is thereby also be touched upon the underlying mechanism of association transfer between the corporate and product brand in case they are merged. Finally, the hypotheses are derived from the corresponding literature.

2.1 The Power of Brands

2.1.1 Definition of a Brand

Brands are omnipresent in our everyday lives, since we face them in any encounter of consumer society. Nevertheless, it is difficult to reveal a generally accepted definition of the term as each author defines the brand concept to some extent differently (Leitch & Richardson 2003; Kapferer 2008).

According to Kotler et al. (2009: 425), "A brand is a name, symbol, logo, design or image, or any combination of these, which is designed to identify a product or service. A successful brand is an identified product, service, person or place, augmented in such a way that the buyer or user perceives relevant unique, sustained added value that matches their need most closely." Kapferer (2008) states that each brand comprises four distinguishing characteristics: a symbol, a word, an object, and a concept. The symbol incorporates figurative elements such as logo, colours, forms, design and packaging. The word represents the brand name, by which verbal information on the product is provided. It is considered an object, since the brand differentiates the product from competing offerings. Finally, a brand is a concept that conveys significance and meaning to a product. According to Petromilli et al. (2002: 23), a brand can be defined as "all the expectations and associations evoked from experience with a company or its offerings. Logos, taglines, advertising jingles, spokespeople or packaging are merely the representations of the brand. The actual brand is how customers think and feel about what the business, product or service does."

Particularly this latter definition throws light on the important aspect of how consumers perceive and experience brands. From a consumer's perspective, a brand is an important part of a product or a service that adds value to the offering (Armstrong et al. 2009). Through branding, differentiation and preference for a product can be created (Knox & Bickerton 2003). More specifically, for consumers brands enable to recognize products more easily and distinguish them from other products designed to serve the same need, thereby facilitating the purchase process

(Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004). Furthermore, brands give a promise concerning quality, reliability and consistency; thus reducing the perceived risk of consumers within the purchase situation (Armstrong et al. 2009; Kotler et al. 2009). Besides playing a functional and more rational role, which is first and foremost related to the performance of the respective product or service, a brand further embraces emotional, symbolic and intangible aspects, which refer to the meaning consumers attribute to a brand. Within consumer culture consuming brands is about much more than just functional satisfaction, rather brands are used as symbolic means to create and express identity and lifestyle (Kotler et al. 2009; Kim 1992). Brands are therefore commonly regarded as "extensions of the personality" (Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004: 243). This emotional and psychological component of brands plays a powerful role in the customer's selection and loyalty towards brands (Kotler et al. 2009). Hence, brands represent 'mental constructs' within the consumers' minds that are loaded with meaning and which exert a powerful influence on consumers' buying decisions (Kim 1992).

Building strong brands therefore brings along several advantages for the companies owning the brand. Primarily, branding facilitates the differentiation of organizations' products and services from those of competitors which thus helps to create a competitive advantage (Pappu et al. 2005; Kotler et al. 2009). Additionally, the branding concept makes it easier for companies to elicit and build customer loyalty; therefore providing the company with predictability and security of demand (Kotler et al. 2009; Keller 2003). Strong brands are also able to charge price premiums (Keller 2003). Therefore, brands are often referred to as assets based on the financial value they incorporate (Kapferer 2009; Petromilli & Berman 2007). Overall, building and managing brands is one of the most important tasks of marketers (Armstrong et al. 2009), since a well-managed brand or brand portfolio has substantial impact on the overall financial performance of an organization (Keller & Lehmann 2006; Petromilli et al. 2002).

2.1.2 Corporate Brand and Product Brand – A Comparison

Since the study at hand investigates the effect of adding a corporate brand to a product brand on consumers' product brand evaluations, it is crucial to recognise the fundamental differences between these two brand levels.

One of the main differences between the corporate and the product brand refers to their level of action and their stakeholder audiences (Kapferer 2008; Knox & Bickerton 2003). While the product brand is conducted at the level of the product and primarily directed towards consumers, the corporate brand is conducted at the level of the firm and extends its reach beyond consumers to other stakeholder groups such as employees, suppliers, investors, partners and communities (Kapferer 2008; Knox & Bickerton 2003; Xie & Boggs 2006). Product branding therefore tends to rely on specific product benefits and presupposes a fine understanding of consumer preferences, attitudes and behaviours (Xie & Boggs 2006). The corporate brand, in contrast, is of greater complexity because of its multiple stakeholder audience and tries to represent and communicate the overall corporation's value system and identity (Balmer & Greyser 2003; Leitch & Richardson, 2003). Corporate brands, compared to product brands, therefore have a higher strategic focus (Muzellec & Lambkin 2009; Xie, Boggs 2006) and tend to be more strongly based on holistic perceptions of the corporation such as the overall product portfolio, emotional appeal (e.g. trust), vision and leadership, workplace quality, financial performance as well as social and ethical responsibility of the company (Kapferer 2008; Knox & Bickerton 2003; Xie & Boggs

2006). Consumer's corporate associations are derived from various sources of information which can lead to more elaborate and confidently held impressions about the company in comparison to product associations which are primarily based on the product itself (Berens et al. 2005).

While corporate and product brands have been recognised so far as distinct entities, they are occasionally regarded as similar, as they share the same goal of creating differentiation and preference in consumers' minds (Knox & Bickerton 2003). Achieving this objective is however undertaken in different manners among the two brand levels. Product brands are primarily 'imaginary constructions' that rely particularly on intangible values that have been created to fulfil consumer needs (Kapferer 2008). Corporate brands, in contrast, acquire a degree of tangibility through the different kinds of messages they deliver and relationships they hold (Xie & Boggs 2006). Additionally, corporate brands incorporate an identity and values which are enacted through its employees (Balmer & Greyser 2003). Hence, the corporate values cannot be constructed as free as product brand values, they need to be lived internally and meet the expectations of all internal and external stakeholders (Kapferer 2008).

Within today's fast moving and highly competitive markets, the corporate brand constitutes an increasingly important component of marketing strategy (Leith & Richardson 2003). Corporate brands are regarded as powerful sources of brand equity as they can increase the company's visibility, recognition and reputation to a far greater extent than product brands (Balmer & Greyser 2003). Additionally, corporate brands offer leverage potential for existing products, brand extensions or diversifications as they provide a sense of trust, credibility and quality to the other entity (Balmer & Greyser 2003; Xie & Boggs 2006). This explains why many corporations increasingly enhance the visibility and presence of their corporate brands (Kapferer 2008).

2.1.3 Brand Image and Brand Associations – Major Determinants of Consumers' Product Brand Evaluations and a Source of Brand Equity

The prior outlined definition of a brand has highlighted that the real power of a brand resides in the minds of consumers (Kotler et al. 2009; Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004). It is the mental image of the brand that is of value as this cognitive representation shapes the brand meaning within consumers' minds and thus triggers consumers' responses towards the brand (Aaker 1991).

The mental picture of a brand is based on brand associations, which can be defined as "anything linked in memory to a brand" (Aaker 1991: 109), such as thoughts, feelings, experiences and beliefs about the brand that exist beyond the objective product (Keller 2003; Keller 1993; Keller & Lehmann 2006). Low et al. (2000: 361) refers to brand associations as those "intangible brand assets which consumers hold in memory related to a brand name and symbol". Keller (1993: 3) defines brand associations in a similar manner by stating that brand associations are "informational nodes linked to the brand node in memory" that give a brand its meaning. Brand associations have therefore been called "the heart and soul of the brand" (Aaker 1996, in Till et al. 2011: 92).

Among researchers it is commonly agreed that brand associations are closely related to brand image, one central concept in the study at hand and whose impact on consumers' product brand evaluations is measured within an endorsed branding strategy. Keller (1993) proposes that brand associations jointly form the overall image of a brand. Till et al. (2011) and James (2005) also

acknowledge that brand image consists of the associations that consumers connect to a brand. It can therefore be said that a consensus has emerged around the notion that brand associations shape the image consumers attach to a brand. Brand associations can thus be regarded as "fundamental buildings blocks of brand image" (Till et al. 2011: 93).

Within the literature, various definitions of brand image exist (Keller 1993; Brown & Dacin 1997). While some authors (Martineau 1958; Feldwick 1996) generally equate brand associations with the concept of image, others refer to brand image as the overall impression of a brand that has been built up in the minds of individuals based on the present brand associations (Xie & Boggs 2006; Souiden et al. 2006; Muzellec & Lambkin 2007). Closely related to this latter notion, Low et al. (2000) as well as Brown and Dacin (1997) conceptualise brand image as the external perceptions consumers have about a brand. Again others (Davies & Chun 2002; Dowling 2001, in Muzellec & Lambkin 2007) define brand image as the global evaluation of a brand resulting from the brand associations and signals emanating from the brand. The authors of the study at hand agree on the latter definition of brand image which is thus applied subsequently in the course of the study. With the background of this definition of brand image and having in mind that brand associations shape the brand image, it can be concluded that brand associations are a major determinant of consumers' product brand evaluations (James 2005).

The fact that consumers form their brand evaluations on the basis of their mental associations with the brand highlights the advantages of creating favourable brand associations. Firstly, by creating positive associations, consumers form beneficial attitudes and feelings towards the brand which provide them with reasons to buy the brand (Aaker 1991; Keller 1993; Pappu et al. 2005). Additionally, brand associations facilitate the information retrieval within memory which further aids consumers in making a purchase decisions (Aaker 1991). Consumers also tend to be willing to pay premium prices for a brand towards which they have a positive attitude (Keller 1993). Apart from these positive consumer responses, favourable associations also enable the company to position, extend and differentiate their brands, thereby building a "barrier to competitors" (Aaker 1991: 21). Based on these outlined benefits, it becomes apparent that favourable brand associations can be a major source of competitive advantage and brand equity (Till et al. 2011).

From a consumer perspective, brand equity can be broadly defined as the value of a brand to the consumer (Aaker 1991). It is therefore commonly referred to as consumer-based brand equity (Pappu et al. 2005). In specific, Aaker (1991: 15) defines consumer-based brand equity as "a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand (…) that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's customers." Keller (1993: 1) refers to brand equity as the "marketing effects uniquely attributable to the brand". Both Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) emphasise the central role of brand associations in the creation of brand equity. Having this in mind, building strong and favourable associations that are unique to the brand and that infer superiority over other brands needs to be a top priority for companies (Keller 1993; Low et al. 2000).

To further leverage brand equity, companies are able to link their brands to other brands through strategic alliances, such as co-branding, to benefit doubly from existing brand equity (Keller 2003). Also within the internal brand hierarchy, brand equity can be leveraged, e.g. through the addition of a corporate brand to a product, as investigated in the study at hand. Within such a combination of brands, the corporate brand brings secondary associations into the relationship

which are likely transferred to the product brand to form a new, holistic set of associations (James 2005). To be able to assess the effectiveness of the leveraging process, it is important to examine how a change of associations affects consumers' evaluations of the product brand when they interpret the brand on the basis of the combined set of associations (Boisvert 2011; Keller 2003; James 2005). This approach of analysis is also adopted in this thesis. Overall, the transfer of associations can have a positive or negative impact on product evaluations (James 2005). These corporate associations can thus possibly be a strategic asset helping to leverage the product brand but can also exert a detrimental effect on the product brand (Brown & Dacin 1997).

Within this study, consumers' product brand evaluations are measured and conceptualised via three constructs: 'overall attitude', 'perceived quality' and 'willingness to pay a price premium'. These constructs were selected as within academic marketing literature they constitute frequently cited and discussed indicators of consumers' product brand evaluations (Low et al. 2000; Aaker 1991). The constructs are also commonly regarded as the most global constructs of measuring brand evaluations, which is beneficial to the study at hand as due to its pioneering nature the use of global constructs is preferable over specific ones to address the research questions raised (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008). Additionally, the literature provides established and reliable measures for all chosen constructs (Low et al. 2000). The authors of the present study believe that the selected constructs constitute a good starting point for measuring consumers' product brand evaluations within an endorsement setting. The authors however also acknowledge that the selected constructs only provide a partial picture of consumers' brand evaluations, as this is a complex, multidimensional phenomenon for which several other dimensions exist (Low et al. 2000).

In the following the three dimensions that form consumers' product brand evaluations are outlined shortly.

2.1.3.1 Brand Attitude

Brand attitude can be defined as the consumers' global evaluation of a brand which can be rather favourable or unfavourable (Low et al. 2000; Keller 1993). Having in mind the prior outlined and accepted definition of image, it becomes apparent that the construct of attitude equates the concept of image within the study at hand. In general, attitudes can be described as "person's relatively consistent evaluations, feeling and tendencies toward an object or idea. Attitudes put people into a frame of mind of liking or disliking things, or moving towards or away from them" (Armstrong et al. 2009: 160). More precisely, brand attitudes are the salient beliefs consumers hold about products or brands and the evaluative judgement of those brand-related beliefs (Keller 1993; Keller 2003). A positive, favourable attitude towards a brand is formed when consumers believe that the brand incorporates attributes and benefits that satisfy their needs and wants (Keller 1993). According to Low et al. (2000) and Armstrong et al. (2009), consumers' attitude towards a brand is an important determinant of their purchase behaviour. Similarly, Keller (1993) argues that the attitude towards a brand, which is related to attributes and benefits, is important and forms the basis for consumer behaviour (e.g. brand choice). The author further points to the importance of the concept of brand attitude as it strongly affects consumers' responses to prices. Strong, favourable brand attitudes are an indicator for consumers' willingness to pay a price premium for a brand.

2.1.3.2 Perceived Quality

Perceived quality is another important dimension of consumers' product brand evaluations which is investigated in this study. The construct refers to "customer's judgment of the overall excellence, esteem, or superiority of a brand (with respect to its intended purposes) relative to alternative brand(s)" (Netemeyer et al. 2004: 210). Thereby perceived quality does not represent the actual quality of a product respectively a brand, rather it reflects consumers' subjective perception and evaluation of it (Pappu et al. 2005; Aaker 1991). Hence, the construct depicts an intangible, overall feeling held by consumers. However, it also underlies dimensions including product characteristics such as performance or reliability. (Aaker 1991)

Perceived quality offers value to consumers in that it provides them with a reason to purchase the brand and differentiates the brand from those of competitors (Pappu et al. 2005; Aaker 1991). Pappu et al. (2005) state that consumers holding strong and favourable brand associations are also likely to establish favourable and high perceptions of quality. Additionally, perceived quality was found to be related to consumers' willingness to pay a price premium for a product or brand (Low et al. 2000). This aspect it also confirmed by Aaker (1991) who highlights that perceived quality has an direct influence on consumers' purchase intention and can further support a price premium. Overall, the construct of perceived quality is a key aspect of the theory "that strong brands add value to consumers' purchase evaluations." (Low et al. 2000: 353)

Generally the dimension of perceived quality differs from brand attitude since a low quality product which is offered at a low price can evoke a positive attitude. At the same time consumers can hold an unfavourable attitude towards a high quality product that is offered to an unreasonable high price. (Aaker 1991)

2.1.3.3 Willingness to Pay a Price Premium

Willingness to pay a price premium is the third construct included within the conceptualisation of consumers' product brand evaluations. It can be defined as the amount consumers are willing to pay for a product of a brand compared to offerings of other relevant brands providing similar benefits (Netemeyer et al. 2004; Aaker 1996; Anselmsson et al. 2007; Bondesson 2012). Although a price premium associated with a brand is often equated with a higher price that consumers are willing to pay, Aaker (1996) points out that a price premium can either be positive or negative depending on the brands that are involved in the comparison. In other words, a negative price premium can occur when a brand is compared to a higher priced brand (Aaker 1996).

Within the literature, willingness to pay a price premium is frequently referred to as a strong indicator of brand loyalty (Aaker 1996; Netemeyer et al. 2004) and even more importantly as a measure of overall consumer-based brand equity (Aaker 1996; Anselmsson et al. 2007; Netemeyer et al. 2004). According to the stated literature (Anselmsson et al. 2007; Netemeyer et al. 2004), each dimension of brand equity should eventually lead to consumers' willingness to pay a price premium for the brand. Therefore, 'price premium' results from successfully managing other brand equity dimensions, such as perceived quality, which should in turn be congruent with and predictive for consumers' willingness to pay a price premium.

Hence, the willingness to pay a price premium is indicative for the strength of a brand (Netemeyer et al. 2004; Bondesson 2012). From an economic perspective, consumers' willingness

to pay a price premium enables corporations to charge higher prices for their branded products resulting in increased profits (Aaker 1991).

2.2 Brand Architecture

Today, brands can be found on many different levels, ranging from corporate brands over sub-brands to specific product brands. The two most definite types of brands – corporate brand and product brand – have been outlined in Chapter 2.1.2 and depict key elements of this research project. As a consequence of the accumulation of brands and brand levels, one strategic discussion that needs to be addressed by many organizations is how to organise and orchestrate different brands within the organizations' brand portfolio. A useful concept to understand this matter is 'brand architecture', also sometimes referred to as 'brand strategy' (e.g. Laforet & Saunders 1999: 51) or 'brand hierarchy' (e.g. Gopal & Rajagopal 2007: 27), which has evolved into a brand management discipline of its own (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000).

2.2.1 Definition and Concept of Brand Architecture

Brand architecture can be defined as "the way in which companies organize, manage and go to market with their brands." (Petromilli et al. 2002: 23) The term refers to an organization's approach to structure and manage the brands within its brand portfolio by deciding on the number of brands, by assigning specific roles to each brand as well as by building relationships between them (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; Harish 2008). Consequently, brand architectures establish hierarchical relationships among brands and represent a framework for the positioning and marketing of each individual product and brand within the portfolio (Harish 2008; Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004). This also implies the specification of how value flows between different brands and products of the organization (Kapferer 2008). Hence, the concept is especially important when it comes to managing a large brand and product portfolio (Harish 2008).

Within recent years the concept of brand architecture has gained importance (Petromilli & Berman 2007). The reasons for this can be traced back to the dynamics of today's competitive markets. Market fragmentations, globalisation, channel dynamics, new brand launches, brand extensions, and the rise of mergers and acquisitions have led to highly complex business contexts as well as intricate business strategies (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; Laforet & Saunders 1999; Petromilli & Berman 2007). As a result, organizations face complex brand structures comprising portfolios of multiple brands with different brand identities that need to be managed (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; Laforet & Saunders 1999). The necessary evaluation of the different brands within the organizations' brand portfolio, how they fit together or might be integrated, makes brand architecture a critical component of the overall business strategy and a determining factor of success (Petromilli & Berman 2007). "A dynamic, forward-thinking brand architecture may well be one untapped source enabling organizations to get more from their existing brands and derive real value from those that they acquire." (Petromilli et al. 2002: 28).

The value-creating potential of brand architectures explains why their design raises a variety of strategic key questions. According to Kapferer (2008), these involve the number of brand levels that should be implemented, the naming of and the linkage between these brand levels, the role and the visibility of the corporate brand on the product brand, the respective weight of the different, coexistent brands and their graphical arrangement as well as the internationalisation of

the brand architecture. Answering these interrelated questions by choosing between different architectures has considerable implications for the organizational and managerial structure as well as the "value creation and the construction of brand capital." (Kapferer 2008: 347).

Another important aspect is that the brand architecture constitutes the 'external face' of a business strategy (Petromilli et al. 2002: 23). In other words, the way in which consumers and other stakeholders perceive brands, understand the relationships between different brands and how these interrelations affect the associations, value and relevance of the various brands (Petromilli & Dan Morrison 2002; Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004). Eventually, consumers decide on the success or failure of brands (Petromilli & Berman 2007). Consequently, the brand architecture should be based on an outside-in perspective, i.e. how consumers experience and form perceptions of brands, derive value from them as well as how they transfer the value – negative or positive – between brands (Petromilli & Dan Morrison 2002; Petromilli & Berman 2007; Petromilli et al. 2002). The entire product and brand portfolio of an organization should be structured and communicated in a way that makes it easy to understand for consumers and other stakeholders. This involves minimizing confusion, while simultaneously building brand equity through the offer (Kapferer 2008; Harish 2008). Concerning the study at hand, the consumer-based view of an organization's brand architecture is of particular interest, as the authors investigate the effect of an endorsed branding strategy on consumers' product brand evaluations.

The aim of consistent brand architectures is to provide clarity, leverage opportunities and synergies (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000) in order to maximise growth potentials and the value of the brand portfolio (Petromilli et al. 2002). A well-designed brand architecture is a means to launch new brands, leverage strong brands across product-market contexts, rejuvenate weak brands, assimilate acquired brands or consolidate an organizations' brand portfolio (Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004). Therewith building brand architectures incorporates highly strategic decisions, which should be in line with the business strategy and objectives (Kapferer 2008; Petromilli et al. 2002), since different business strategies and market environments (e.g. levels of segmentation or competition) require different architecture types (Petromilli et al. 2002). However, as the organization's brand and product portfolio is continually evolving and consumers' perceptions of brands are changing over time, it is crucial to constantly revise the brand architecture (Petromilli & Dan Morrison 2002). "What is under discussion is not a formal problem of graphic organisation, but the concomitant construction of turnover, growth and real brand capital, a source of competitive advantage. Brand growth implies increased complexity, and therefore the risk of loss of image coherence, and of dilution of the brand capital." (Kapferer 2008: 349).

2.2.2 Types of Brand Architectures

Within the literature, several categorisations and terms describing different types of brand architectures and brand levels can be found. Laforet and Saunders (1994, in Uggla 2006) reveal 'corporate dominant', 'product dominant' and 'hybrid' or 'mixed' structures as the major patterns of brand architectures. Keller (2002) talks about 'corporate brand', 'family brand', 'individual product brand' and 'modifiers', whereas other authors (e.g. Berens et al. 2002; Olins 1989, in Harish 2008) distinguish between 'monolithic', 'stand-alone' or 'dual' respectively 'endorsed' strategies. Urde (2003) identifies four basic brand architectures: 'corporate', 'product', 'corporate-and-product' (emphasising the corporate brand) and 'product-and-corporate' strategy (emphasising the product brand). Kapferer (2008) provides an even more detailed categorisation

into 'product brand', 'flexible umbrella brand', 'masterbrand', 'maker's mark', 'endorsing brand' and 'source brand' strategy. According to Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), the various forms of brand architectures and relationships between brands can be illustrated along a spectrum from the 'branded house' to the 'house of brands', comprising 'sub-brands' and 'endorsed brands'.

Generally, the different brand architectures and underlying categorisations outlined above differ in the degree of synergy between the organisation's corporate brand and individual product brands (Muzellec & Lambkin 2007). Either organizations solely rely on their corporate brand or on individual product brands when communicating with consumers. In-between these two approaches, a combination of both brands (dual branding) or an implementation of further intermediate brand levels is possible. This implies balancing the emphasis between the dominance of the indication of the products' origin (emphasising the corporate brand) and the focus on product differentiation (emphasising the product brand) (Kapferer 2008).

In a very simplified and broad sense brand architectures can therefore be distinguished between 'branded house' and 'house of brands' (Kapferer 2008; Petromilli et al. 2002). These two categorisations describe the most extreme or pure forms of architectures (Petromilli et al. 2002). For the sake of clarity these two types of brand architectures are outlined shortly.

Within a branded house, one single master brand is employed across multiple offerings of an organization (Petromilli et al. 2002; Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; Muzellec & Lambkin 2007). In the purest form of a 'branded house' the master brand represents the corporate brand, also referred to as corporate master brand strategy (Kapferer 2008; Xie & Boggs 2006). Levi's, Sony or Nike are typical examples of corporations applying such a strategy. The corporate master brand strategy implies that all products or services of the organization carry the same brand name – this of the corporation itself – and no distinct brand names for individual products and services are employed (Harish 2008). Within this branding strategy, the corporation acts as a source of reputation and aligning force (Kapferer 2008). In a branded house the corporate master brand is therefore considered the dominant motivator (Kapferer 2008) respectively driver (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000), i.e. it has a leading role in creating brand associations and therefore dominantly shapes consumers' product evaluations and thus the value of the product offering (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004).

In contrast to the branded house, the house of brands architecture embraces several individually product brands (Kapferer 2008; Petromilli & Berman 2007). This branding strategy is therefore also commonly referred to as stand-alone branding (Saunders & Guoqun 1997; Petromilli et al. 2002) or product brand strategy (Kapferer 2008). Examples of companies applying this branding strategy are General Motors and LVHM (Petromilli et al. 2002; Kapferer 2008). Each brand within the organization's portfolio has a distinct identity, a unique positioning, its own associations as well as separate brand values and arguments (Kapferer 2008; Harish 2008; Muzellec & Lambkin 2007). Thereby, the link to the corporation is completely absent or hardly present as each brand has a distinct brand name which is divergent from that of the corporation (Kapferer 2008). The individual product brands therefore enjoy great freedom concerning products, activities and communication (Muzellec & Lambkin 2007). The motivator or driver responsibility of consumers' associations is inherent in the product brand and corporate brand associations are usually not involved in consumers' product evaluations (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; Muzellec & Lambkin 2007).

In-between these major alternatives of brand architectures – branded house and house of brands – several intermediate forms exist (e.g. endorsed branding), which either combine the application of a (corporate) master brand and product brands or implement further brand levels and linkages.

2.2.3 Endorsed Branding

One increasingly applied brand architecture is a hybrid respectively mixed branding approach, where individual product brands are endorsed by another brand, usually the organization's corporate brand (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004). This dual branding strategy and its effect on consumers' product brand evaluations depicts the central field of interest in the research project at hand. As the majority of authors (e.g. Kapferer 2008; Aaker and Joachimsthaler 2000; Berens et al. 2002; Olins 1989, in Harish 2008) refer to this type of architecture as endorsed branding, this term is also applied throughout the course of this thesis.

As outlined above, within an endorsed brand architecture products carry two brands – a specific brand for the product or product line to provide a unique identity, positioning and differentiation, supplemented by the corporate brand indicating the source and authenticity of the product (Harish 2008). One commonly cited example of endorsed branding is Nestlé KitKat (Harish 2008; Kapferer 2008). In principle, the endorsed product brand is of higher prominence than the endorsing corporate brand; whereby the latter is commonly depicted in form of a logo or the corporate name (Kapferer 2008; Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000). The corporate brand thus backs the product brand in a more subtle fashion (Uggla & Åsberg 2009). Accordingly, the communication emphasises the characteristics and advantages of the individual product brand and even the visual style can be different for each endorsed product brand under the endorsement of the corporation (Kapferer 2008). Through the endorsement, however, associations of credibility, trust and reliability are transferred from the corporate brand to the product brand (Åsberg & Uggla, 2009; Harish 2008). Moreover, the endorsement can work to counterbalance exaggerated promises made by product brands; for instance when a product brand claims too much, the corporate endorsement adds trust and realism (Uggla 2006; Uggla & Åsberg 2009). As the case of Nestlé KitKat illustrates, within this approach the individual product brand still embraces a comparatively high degree of freedom to create own associations, but at the same time it is endorsed by the corporate brand Nestlé and thus also enjoys the corresponding corporate associations (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004).

According to Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000: 12), "An endorsement by an established brand provides credibility and substance to an offering and usually plays only a minor driver role." The dominant driver of consumers' product associations thus remains the product brand (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000). In the outlined example of KitKat by Nestlé, the endorsing brand Nestlé takes minor driver responsibility. The brand rather indicates a source of value, in other words, that the product brand KitKat shares the values carried by the corporate brand Nestlé (Kapferer 2008). Kapferer (2008) further points to the role of the endorsing brand as an approver or guarantor to the product brand. As the endorser, the corporate brand can be applied across various product brands in different markets (Kapferer 2008; Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000).

The endorsed branding strategy is associated with several advantages. Firstly, despite the endorsement by the corporate brand, each individual product brand has relatively great freedom to establish a distinct image and positioning. Since greater prominence and driver responsibility is

attributed to the product brand, the corporate brand is flexible to target several product-market contexts with different product brands. (Kapferer 2008) Additionally, by adding the endorsing corporate brand, credibility, reassurance and a guarantee of quality are provided to the product brand and the perceived risk within consumers' choice is reduced (Kapferer 2008; Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000). At the same time the corporate brand endorsement acts as an integrating force by establishing a linkage between the different product brands of an organization's brand portfolio (Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004). When launching new product brands, confidence is also given to consumers by the endorsing corporate brand (Saunders & Guoqun 1997).

Reversely, through the presence of the corporate brand within the product brand communication, corporate brand visibility is provided and consumers become more familiar with the corporation. Hence, the endorsing brand strategy is a way to provide the corporate brand with some valuable associations and to give some substance and status to the corporate brand in a relatively inexpensive way (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; Kapferer 2008). For instance, a successful or particularly innovative new product or an established market leader brand can enhance the corporate brand associations (Gopal & Rajagopal 2007). Overall, endorsed branding can be a key to create an effective and coherent brand strategy, since it enables corporate brands to stretch across different product-markets-contexts, to target different segments and to leverage existing brand equity (Uggla 2006; Gopal & Rajagopal 2007).

One of the main downsides of an endorsed branding strategy resides in the possibility of a negative image transfer from the corporation to the individual product brand or vice versa. For example, when a corporation is involved in a crisis or scandal, negative corporate associations can spill-over to the product brand level resulting in weaker likability of the product brand or even in reluctance to buy the brand (Muzellec & Lambkin 2007). Furthermore, the addition of a corporate brand on the product brand communication may lead to a decrease of the perceived difference and uniqueness of a product brand (Saunders & Guoqun 1997) and harm the emotional brand traits (Kapferer 2008). Especially when a company offers several product brands within the same category, each targeting a specific segment, a loss of differentiation can result in cannibalization between the different product brands (Saunders & Guoqun 1997). Finally, the corporate endorsement across a very diverse portfolio of product brands may lead to a dilution of the corporate brand image (Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004).

As a consequence, it is crucial to carefully weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the endorsed branding approach and to investigate its impact on consumers' product evaluations.

2.3 The Increasing Prominence of the Corporate Brand in the Product Brand Value Communication

As already outlined in the introduction, the use of the corporate brand within the product brand value communication has experienced a tremendous surge in recent years (Kapferer 2008; Souiden et al. 2006). Big international corporations (e.g. Unilever, P&G) have realised the value of linking the corporate brand to other brands within the portfolio. These companies recently moved from a predominantly product-oriented architecture to a branding strategy in which the corporate brand is displayed visibly on the products, thus having adopted a mixed branding strategy such as endorsed branding (Kapferer 2008; Uggla 2006). This development has been triggered by changing marketplace conditions, which has increased the perceived homogeneity of

products (Xie & Boggs 2006; Kapferer 2008). In these instances the corporate brand can act as a key differentiator and thus as a source of competitive advantage (Souiden et al. 2006; Xie & Boggs 2006).

The tendency towards corporate endorsement within the product brand value communication can be further seen as a response to the increase in consumer need for reassurance of product quality and reliability as well as the growing demand from consumers and other stakeholders for more transparency and responsibility of corporations' activities (Knox & Bickerton 2003; Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004; Uggla & Åsberg 2009). Consumers increasingly expect some kind of corporate legitimacy (Xie & Boggs 2006). Hence, displaying the corporate brand on the products influences consumers' product brand evaluations additionally to and in another way than the product brand as such (Souiden et al. 2006). Therefore, many corporations decide to make their actions, values and missions more salient (Kapferer 2008).

However, in these market environments it is not enough for corporations to be known, rather it is crucial to consistently bring a set of values to the conscious minds of consumers and stakeholders and stimulate emotional resonance (Kapferer 2008). This is best attainable through increasing coherence of the brand and product portfolio. Corporate endorsement helps to establish and strengthen a global corporate identity as well as to unify the entire brand and product portfolio under a global umbrella – the corporate brand (Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004).

Furthermore, the trend is likely to be substantiated in the need for greater synergies and leverage as well as improved efficiency among organizations. Global expansion, natural growth as well as mergers and acquisitions have left corporations with a complex portfolio of multiple independent brands and products (Petromilli et al. 2002). Managing each brand separately likely leads to inefficiencies and neglects sustainable organizational value propositions (Uggla 2006). In order to be successful in today's challenging and international market environments, organizations increasingly seek to improve their brand architectures through reducing the number of individual brands and by better integrating them. The consolidation of the brand portfolio to a limited number of strategic brands and the creation of linkages between those brands enables organizations to strengthen these key brands, leverage brand equity and, thus, enhance the overall value of the brand portfolio. (Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004) Petromilli et al. (2002: 22) summarize this development as follows: "Where much of an organization's brand-building efforts once focused on acquiring, launching, or aggressively extending brands to expand the brand and business portfolio, today's focus is on trying get the most from existing brands through better organizing and managing brands and brand inter-relationships within the existing portfolio."

Another important reason for a stronger linkage between the corporate brand and product brands is to maximise customer loyalty. When a corporation is active in different markets or seeks to open up new markets, the aim of corporate endorsement is to develop customer loyalty across the different fields of activities of the corporation. Additionally, the visibility of the corporate brand is an important criterion in regard to attractiveness on the employee market and the requirements of stock exchange valuation, as the company's name and reputation also contributes to success in these settings. (Kapferer 2008)

The aim of this strategy change is to boost both the product and the corporate brand (Souiden et al. 2006). The corporate brand and its associations add value to the product brand and in turn

product brand associations can be beneficial to the corporate brand (Souiden et al. 2006). More precisely, the corporation, its values and actions, are more visible and present in consumers' minds and specific added values are diffused across product-market contexts (Kapferer 2008). Reversely, the product brand benefits from spill-over of credibility and reassurance from the corporate brand, especially in the case of new product introductions (Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004).

2.4 Corporate Brand Leverage and its underlying Association Transfer

As just outlined, the utilization of the corporate brand within the product brand communication has experienced an enormous upswing over the last years. To fully grasp how the corporate brand can be used as a strategic asset in leveraging the product brand, it is important to understand the underlying mechanism of association transfer that comes into play in consumers' minds when linking a corporate brand to a product brand, as well as the influencing factors and risks. In the following, it will be touched upon these aspects and the findings of related studies investigating the effect of a corporate brand on consumers' product evaluations will be presented.

By linking a brand to another entity (e.g. another brand, a place, celebrity etc.), a transfer of brand associations from one level to the other is said to occur (Boisvert 2011). While much research has investigated these transfer effects in relation to country-of-origin, celebrity, co-branding and brand extension effects, there is only limited research examining corporate branding effects in particular (Keller 2003). To investigate the influence of association transfer between a corporate brand and a product brand (as in the case of endorsed branding), it will therefore be drawn upon these existing streams of research to better understand the phenomenon at hand.

According to Keller (1993), through the linkage of two brands (as in our case corporate brand and product brand) the added brand, in this case the corporate brand, becomes identified with the other entity. Consumers thereby link the newly added associations to the other brand in memory and infer that the product brand shares associations with that 'new' entity, thus producing so-called indirect or 'secondary associations'. A corporate brand can thereby, among others, be a potential source of secondary associations. These secondary associations can provide credibility or other attributes related to the product's meaning to the product brand. (Keller 1993)

Whether a transfer of associations however actually comes into play depends largely on the consumers' perceptions of fit respectively similarity between the two levels of brands (Boisvert 2011; Berens et al. 2005; Aaker & Keller 1990; Keller 1993; Uggla 2004). Perceptual fit between two brands is commonly referred to as the level of psychological congruency between the two entities; in other words, whether the combination of brands makes sense to consumers (Uggla 2004). When the perceived fit is regarded as high, the more likely the brand associations are transferred from one entity to the other and feed into consumers' evaluations of the product brand (Boisvert 2011; Aaker & Keller 1990; Keller 1993). Further preconditions for a transfer of brand associations to occur include the presence of cues to activate an association at all as well as the sufficient strength of these associations (Aaker & Keller 1990).

In case an association transfer comes into existence between the two brand entities, i.e. that corporate associations are inferred on the product brand and vice versa, the consumer subtly evaluates the product holistically on the basis of these two sources of brand associations (Boisvert 2011). The corporate brand can thus constitute a strong point-of-leverage as corporate

associations (such as trust, innovation or other symbolic associations such as beauty) can be infused into the product (Uggla & Åsberg 2009; Harish 2008; Åsberg & Uggla 2009). Thereby the value proposition of the other brand can be reinforced or revitalised. This enhancement of the brand identity can thus potentially influence consumers' evaluations of the respective product; thereby initiating a corporate brand leverage process. "Corporate brand leverage means that the pre-established equity and reputation of the corporate brand (…) is capitalized through a process of identity or image transfer" (Uggla 2006: 789). Aaker (2004, in Uggla & Åsberg 2009) argues that the corporate brand is a particularly strong point of leverage as it embeds deeply grained associations with history, heritage, assets and skills. Within an endorsement, the corporate brand thus acts as a leverage point and co-driver whereby the value proposition of the product brand is mirrored or complemented through the identity of the corporate brand (Uggla 2004; Uggla 2006). The brand equity of the product brand is thus attempted to be increased, in fact, by borrowing equity from the corporate brand (Keller 2003). In other words, "in using two names on a product, companies hope to benefit doubly from brand equity." (Saunders & Guoqun 1997: 41).

Saunders and Guoqun (1997) have investigated the leveraging potential of the corporate brand within an endorsed branding strategy. In specific, they analysed whether the addition of a corporate brand to a confectionery brand adds value. The study involved nine confectionery product brands (all established brands, except for one fictional product) each of which was endorsed by five corporate brands (Cadbury, Mars, Nestlé – well-known, established brands; Terry's – a small brand; Walls – Unilever's ice cream brand, i.e. a brand from a related product category). The results showed that the addition of a corporate brand to a product brand is in all of the tested instances beneficial; meaning that consumers' preferences for the endorsed product brand have increased, even for the fictional product brand and for the non-category related brand Wall's. Saunders and Guoqun (1997), however, additionally revealed that not all corporate names add the same value to a product brand. They found out that the more highly advertised corporate brands add more value than the less advertised ones, that established corporate brand names are preferred over less established corporate names as well as that non-category related corporate brands add less value than category-related brands. The study of Saunders and Guoqun (1997) therefore provides evidence for the fact that endorsement pays off and that the increasing use of an endorsed strategy thus follows consumers' preferences. In sum, "consumers are happier with two loads of brand equity from a corporate and brand name, than they are with either name alone." (Saunders & Guoqun 1997: 47).

A (corporate brand) leverage process is particularly beneficial in situations where existing product brand associations are deficient (Keller 1993). In other words, negative associations can be shored up by infusing favourable associations through another brand (Keller 2003). The use of a well-known corporate brand as an endorser can also facilitate acceptance of new products (Keller 1993). In such an instance, the consumer has only limited associations on which to base his evaluation of the product and thus, as Brown and Dacin (1997) suggest, consumers consider salient attributes of the product (such as corporate brand associations in the context of an endorsement) to form an opinion of the new product. Corporate associations thereby provide cues about the standing of the new product and act as an evaluative context (Brown & Dacin 1997; Ueltschy & Laroche 2004). In situations where a consumer identifies a new product with a company, as in an endorsement context, corporate associations are thus able to influence consumers' product responses (Brown & Dacin 1997; Keller 1993). In their brand extension

study, Aaker and Keller (1990) provide additional evidence for the fact that a well-known corporate brand can facilitate a successful product launch. They revealed that the leverage of a well-known brand can substantially reduce the risk of introducing a new product as consumers are provided with the familiarity and knowledge of the established brand (Aaker & Keller 1990). Although their study is placed in a brand extension context, it can be assumed that these findings are also applicable when a well-established corporate brand endorses a new product. Saunders & Guoqun (1997) provide additional support for the beneficiary effect of a corporate endorsement when launching new products. They revealed that the endorsement of a corporate brand on a fictional product brand, which is close to introducing a new product brand, pays off as it enhances consumers' preference for the new product. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2003: 13) validated this finding by arguing that "the (…) endorsement will have more impact if the endorser: is well-known already, is consistently presented, has a visual metaphor symbol, and appears on a family of products that are well-regarded and thus provides credibility from its ability to span products."

Apart from the familiarity of the corporate brand, the company's branding strategy is seen as a moderating factor in the relationship between corporate associations and consumers' product evaluations (Keller 1993; Berens et al. 2005). According to Keller (1993), the branding strategy defines the emphasis and the visibility the corporate brand receives; thereby affecting the strength of associations with the corporate brand. The influencing effect of the adopted branding strategy on the transfer of corporate associations to consumers' product evaluations was investigated by Berens et al. (2005) in an extensive study. They thereby focused their investigation on two different types of corporate brand associations: corporate ability (CA) associations (i.e. the perceived company's capabilities for producing products) and corporate social responsibility (CSR) associations (i.e. the perceived social responsibility of the company). Their results show that consumer's different types of corporate associations (CA or CSR) have different influences on the product evaluations depending on the branding strategy adopted (monolithic or endorsed branding). Biehal and Sheinin (2007) provide further evidence for the fact that CA and CSR associations have differing impacts on consumers' product portfolio evaluations. They revealed that CA messages are more diagnostic than CSR messages resulting in more positive product attitudes. Also Brown and Dacin (1997) have revealed that the relationship between corporate associations and consumers' evaluations of products differ depending on whether CA or CSR associations are inferred. In specific, they found out that less product-relevant associations (in their instance CSR associations) have less influence than product-relevant attributes (such as CA associations) on consumers' product evaluations. The type of corporate associations held by the consumers thus has a moderating effect on the respective relationship.

Apart from the moderating influences prior outlined, the leverage effect on consumers' product evaluations further depends on whether the inferred associations are regarded as favourable or not (Keller 1993). Within brand extension studies, it was revealed that the favourability of the inferred associations is strongly dependent on whether the original brand evokes positive beliefs and favourable attitudes which in case of an extension facilitate the formation of a favourable attitude towards the extension (Aaker & Keller 1990; Keller & Lehmann 2006).

Also within the context of corporate branding, several studies demonstrate that the favourability of associations respectively the image of the corporate brand has an influence on consumers'

product evaluations and responses. Andreassen and Lindestad (1998) conclude in their study that corporate image is able to affect consumers' perceptions of quality, as well as their evaluation of satisfaction and customer loyalty. De Ruyter and Wetzels (2000) support their findings by revealing that consumers use the corporate image as an information cue to judge issues such as quality, purchase intention and credibility.

Souiden et al. (2006) provide further support for the influencing effect of corporate image on consumers' product judgements. They investigated the impact of various corporate branding dimensions, namely corporate brand familiarity, corporate image, corporate reputation and corporate loyalty, on consumers' product evaluations. Thereby it was revealed that corporate image has a significant and positive impact on consumers' product evaluations; either directly or indirectly via the corporate reputation. As displaying the corporate name on the company's products may involve the product's image, the corporate name was also found to have a positive and significant effect on consumers' product evaluations. (Souiden et al. 2006)

Also Muzellec and Lambkin (2007), who analysed the effects of changing the corporate brand name (i.e. rebranding) on consumers' product perceptions, revealed that image spill-overs occur between the corporate brand and the product brand. In particular, they have shown that the product brand image is strongly influenced by the corporate image for characteristics such as honesty, sincerity and social responsibility.

While the just outlined studies (Andreassen & Lindestad 1998; de Ruyter & Wetzels 2000; Souiden et al. 2006; Muzellec & Lambkin 2007) have all identified the effect of a corporate image on product imagery in a general context, the effect of differing corporate images (positive vs. negative) on consumers' product evaluations has been investigated only to a limited extent. Brown and Dacin (1997) are two of the few researchers who examined the influence of unfavourable corporate associations on consumers' judgements towards new products. They demonstrated that the type of corporate associations, whether product-related or not, strongly influences the response towards the new product. In specific, they revealed that when non-product related corporate associations (e.g. associations towards the social responsibility of the company, i.e. CSR associations) are inferred on consumers, the favourability of these associations is transferred on the product evaluation. In other words, if the non-product related corporate associations are considered as unfavourable, they can have, as logically assumed, a detrimental effect on consumers' product evaluations. Similarly, positive non-product related corporate associations enhance consumers' product responses. When however product-related associations (e.g. the perceived company's capabilities for producing products, i.e. CA associations) are inferred on the consumer, contrast effects may occur. Contrast effects may come into play when there is a discrepancy between the corporate associations and the initial evaluations of the new product (e.g. poor corporate associations and a new, well-perceived product). In this case, "the evaluation of the product [may potentially] be higher when it is produced by a company with more negatively evaluated CA associations than when it is produced by a company with more positively CA associations" (Brown & Dacin 1997: 80). This astonishing finding emphasises that products introduced by companies with negative associations are not always destined to receive negative consumer responses. It further highlights that consumers' attitude towards the company is an influencing factor which is moderated by the type of corporate associations. (Brown & Dacin 1997)

Extending the scope of literature to include broader streams of research in which two brand entities are linked (such as co-branding, brand extensions and strategic brand alliances), it was further revealed that linking two brands of differing favourability affects consumers' attitudes towards each of the entities. Simonin and Ruth (1998) revealed in their study of brand alliances that in situations where one of the merged brand entities incorporates favourable associations, these associations are transferred onto the overall brand alliance. Reversely, they also found out that when a less favourable brand is aligned with a favourable brand, this can potentially have a detrimental effect on the strong, original branding partner. Ueltschy and Laroche (2004) revealed similar findings within a study of co-branding. Their findings indicate that due to spill-over effects, the co-branding of two high equity brands, whereby image is a major component of brand equity as prior outlined, is mutually beneficial. They further state that the co-branding of high-equity and low-equity brands can be a potential threat to the high equity partner. Meaning that "if a high equity brand would co-brand with one which had a negative image (…), the resulting co-brand might not only be viewed as negative, but also the spillover effects of that alliance could hurt the brand equity of the constituent brand in that market." (Ueltschy & Laroche 2004: 98). Inferring these findings on an endorsement setting, it can be assumed that a company with a positive image positively contributes to the product evaluation while a negative company image leads to reversed effects. These findings are however in some instances contrary to the results of Brown and Dacin (1997), as prior outlined, and thus evoke equivocal findings.

The potential negative effects inferred on the product brand reveal that the linking of a corporate brand to a product brand also involves risks. One major risk that is commonly identified in linking two brand entities is image dilution (Keller 1993; Muzellec & Lambkin 2009; Uggla 2004; Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004). When two brands are present on a single product, as prior outlined, there is a reciprocal effect in the way that corporate associations might have a potential effect on the evaluation of the product brand and thus its equity and vice versa. One the hand, through an endorsement the corporate brand might potentially benefit from associations previously limited to the product brand. On the other hand, the opposite is also true that corporate decisions or in particular malpractices of the company (e.g. Nestlé's scandal of baby infant formula in the less developed countries) are inferred on the product brand and thus might have detrimental consequences for the image and equity of the product brand. (Muzellec & Lambkin 2009) The control of the product brand image is thus no longer solely in the hands of the product brand management, but partially contingent upon the company's actions (Keller 1993). As positioning is primarily based on associations (Aaker 1991) and a potential association transfer is likely to occur between the two brands, incompatibility and discrepancy between the two brand association bases can also potentially lead to a positioning dilution of the respective brands (Uggla 2006). Through using the corporate brand on several product categories, the corporate brand might additionally risk itself to over-exposure respectively over-stretching (Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004; Uggla 2006). Due to these outlined risks, companies are advised to carefully analyse within an endorsement setting whether the corporate brand evokes associations within consumers' minds that are congruent with the desired brand associations that should be transferred upon the product brand (Keller 1993).

The outlined theoretical review on corporate brand leverage and its underlying association transfer has highlighted that several studies (e.g. Berens et al. 2005; Brown & Dacin 1997; Muzellec & Lambkin 2007; Souiden et al. 2006) have investigated the influence of corporate

image on consumers' product evaluation. However, the impact of different corporate images on the product imagery was only examined to limited extent, and of the studies that have, none was placed within an endorsement setting. To our knowledge, the only study that has investigated the impact of different corporate brands on product brand evaluations within an endorsement setting, visualised on the product's packaging, is the study by Saunders & Guoqun (1997). Thereby, the corporate brands differed in their familiarity and advertisement expenditure. Saunders and Guoqun (1997) focused on these differing characteristics (familiarity and advertising expenditure) in terms of the corporate brand and evaluated their impact in terms of consumer preferences for the product as a sole dependent variable. Thus, no inference was made to the favourability of the corporate brands as perceived by consumers. Likewise, other authors have not addressed this issue of diversity of corporate images. Moreover, the results of different studies are partly equivocal in regard to the exact effect of corporate image (Brown & Dacin 1997).

To our best knowledge, the study at hand is therefore the first one that within an endorsement setting investigates the impact of different corporate images (positive/negative) on consumers' product brand evaluations. The product brands thereby also differ in their brand images (positive/negative) and level of familiarity (well-known/new).

2.5 Generation of Hypotheses

After having outlined the theoretical framework, in this section the hypotheses, which are tested in the empirical research, are developed based on the existing theory.

The literature review revealed that increasing attention is given to the application of brand architecture as a strategic tool and, more specifically, to the possible value of the corporate brand within the product brand value communication. In order to successfully leverage the corporate brand and its associations, it is crucial to develop a detailed and nuanced understanding of their impact on consumers' product brand evaluations. The study at hand, therefore, aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by investigating in greater detail how corporate endorsement influences consumers' product brand evaluations in terms of the three dependent constructs 'overall attitude', 'perceived quality' and 'willingness to pay a price premium'. The ideas underlying the study at hand are summarized in Figure 1.

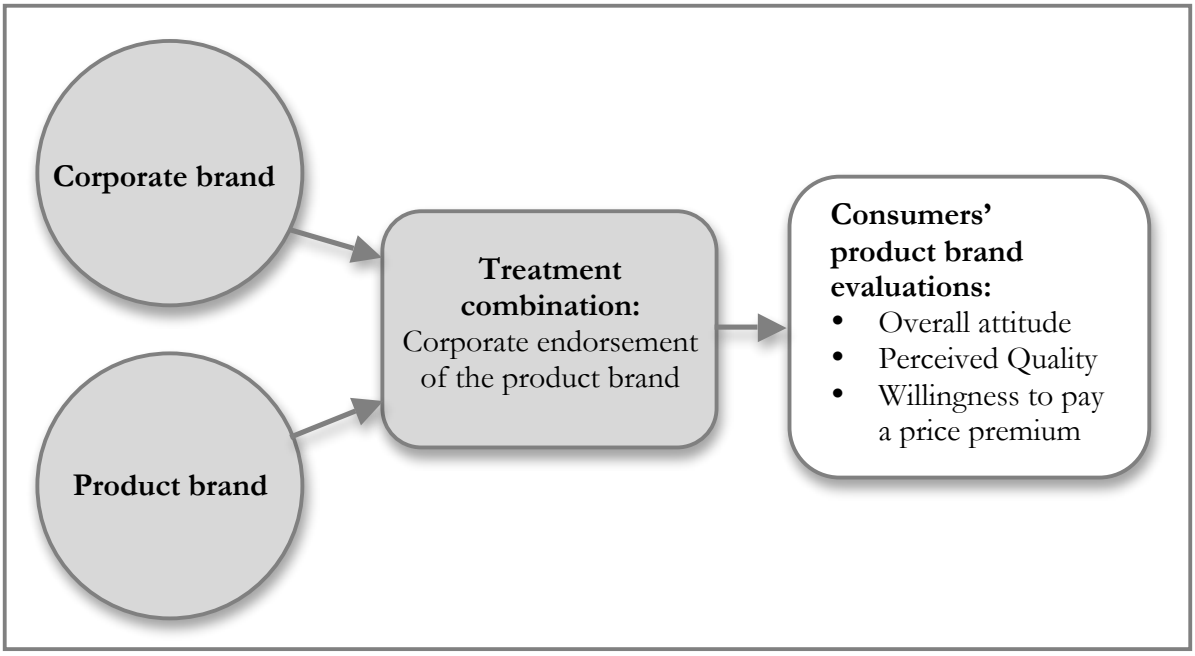

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework (own illustration)

In the literature review it was revealed that the corporate image affects consumers' evaluations of product brands offered by this corporation (e.g. Brown & Dacin 1997; Souiden et al. 2006; Muzellec & Lambkin 2007). However, there is a lack of studies dealing with the precise impact of the image facet. As the study strives to develop a detailed and nuanced understanding of the effect of corporate endorsement, the influencing force of image is investigated within the research study at hand. Therefore, the empirical research incorporates corporate brands of different images (positive/negative) as well as product brands of varying images (positive/negative). Additionally, the influence of corporate endorsement on consumers' product brand evaluations is tested for a new, unknown product brand, where prior brand associations are not yet fully developed. The six resulting treatment combinations are outlined in Table 1 (highlighted in green) and will be tested in form of an experiment. Thereby, the effect on consumers' product brand evaluations brought about by the corporate endorsement is revealed by comparing each treatment combination to consumers' product brand evaluations without a corporate endorsement (highlighted in yellow).

One hypothesis is derived for each treatment combination, as indicated in Table 1.

Corporate endorsement / **Product brand case examples**	No corporate endorsement	Corporate brand with a positive image	Corporate brand with a negative image
well-known, positive image		$H_{1.1}$	$H_{1.2}$
well-known, negative image		$H_{2.1}$	$H_{2.1}$
fictitious, 'new'		$H_{3.1}$	$H_{3.2}$

Table 1: Experimental Design incl. Hypotheses (own illustration)

As corporate image transfer has only been addressed to a limited extent within the existing literature on endorsed branding, adjoining literature streams such as brand extension, co-branding and brand alliances are additionally consulted. As these branding fields share the same

underlying idea, namely that two brands are merged, findings are transferred to the context of endorsed branding in order to develop the hypotheses for this research project.

Souiden et al. (2006) state that a corporate brand can add value to the product brand portfolio and that a linkage between the corporate brand and the product brand is mutually beneficial. Additionally, the authors highlight the possible advantages of co-branding and mergers, namely the transfer of positive associations from the partner brands to the created co-brand, increasing sales and improved brand equity. According to the authors, these benefits most likely come true, when two strong brands are merged. Similarly, Ueltschy and Laroche (2004) revealed that co-branding of two strong brands with a high brand equity is mutually beneficial, leading to even higher brand equity for the newly created co-brand, than these of the constituent brands. Furthermore, within brand extension studies, it was generally revealed that well-known and well-regarded brands extend more successfully (Keller & Lehmann 2006). Therefore, it can likely be inferred that also in the case of endorsed branding, corporate brands that have these characteristics (being well-known and well-regarded) are more successful in leveraging product brands. Thus, by transferring these results to the context of corporate endorsement, it can be assumed:

$H_{1.1}$: When a well-known product brand with a positive image is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a positive image, consumers evaluate the product brand as even more favourable.

Furthermore, the study of Ueltschy and Laroche (2004) has shown that co-branding between a high-equity brand and a low-equity brand can be adverse for the strong brand, since the brand equity as well as the purchase intention of the newly formed co-brand was found to be significantly lower than the brand equity and purchase intention of the constituent strong brand. Within the context of brand alliances, a study of Simonin and Ruth (1998) revealed that due to spill-over effects the partnering of two brands can lead to altered, subsequent consumer attitudes towards the involved original brand. In specific, the authors demonstrated that a brand alliance between a strong, favourable brand and a weak, less favourable brand can negatively affect consumers' brand attitudes and evaluations towards the original strong brand. Based on these findings, it can likely be inferred that a linkage between a strong product brand and a weak corporate brand can jeopardize positive consumers' evaluations of the product brand.

$H_{1.2}$: When a well-known product brand with a positive image is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a negative image, consumers evaluate the product brand as less favourable.

According to Keller (1993) secondary associations, provided for example through a corporate brand, may be particularly important if existing consumer brand associations are somehow deficient. The author states that in this case "secondary associations can be leveraged to create favourable, strong and unique associations that otherwise may not be present." (Keller 1993: 11) In other words, through leveraging secondary associations it is sought to provide complementary brand equity in order to rule out negative associations by infusing positive ones (Keller 2003). Supporting these statements, an experiment of Aaker and Keller (1990) in the field of brand extension identified that negative brand associations can be neutralized through the positive associations inherent in the original brand. Additionally, as already outlined for $H_{1.1}$, Keller and

Lehmann (2006) showed that well-known and well-regarded brands extend more successfully than brands that do not hold these characteristics. Simonin and Ruth (1998) also share this view with reference to brand alliances, as the authors state that brands with strong favourable associations help to build strong alliances. When transferring these findings to the context of corporate endorsement it can be hypothesised:

$H_{2.1}$: When a well-known product brand with a negative image is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a positive image, consumers evaluate the product brand as more favourable.

Generally, Keller (1993) states that in order to be successful a brand needs to hold favourable, strong, and unique associations. This infers that negative consumer brand associations are in any case dangerous and potentially damaging to a brand and should therefore be avoided at the best. Instead, the creation of positive consumer associations is desirable. Hence, it seems to be reasonable to argue that the addition of negative associations through a corporate endorsement exaggerates the already existing negative product brand associations and therefore further exacerbates consumers' product brand evaluations.

$H_{2.2}$: When a well-known product brand with a negative image is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a negative image, consumers evaluate the product brand as even more unfavourable.

As outlined in Chapter 2.4, brand familiarity and prior brand associations can be important influencing factors regarding the transfer of corporate brand associations and their impact on consumers' product brand evaluations. Brands that show a high familiarity tend to have highly developed and structured brand associations in consumers' memory. This differs for unknown brands; due to unfamiliarity, brand associations are less pronounced and, hence, are easier to manipulate (Low et al. 2000; Biehal & Sheinin 2007). At the same time, a detailed understanding of the impact of corporate endorsement and its leverage potential for new product introductions is of high importance for corporations. Therefore, within the study at hand the influence of corporate endorsement on new, unknown product brands is also investigated.

Keller and Aaker (1992, in Knox & Bickerton 2003) emphasise the positive impact of the corporate brand on brand extensions and new product introductions. Saunders and Guoqun (1997) share the view of Keller and Aaker, as the authors found out that a corporate endorsement enhances consumers' product preferences in case the product brand is fictional, or in other words new. Brown and Dacin (1997) further revealed that consumers draw on their corporate associations when forming perceptions of new products of the company. Hence, the authors proved that what consumers know about a company can influence their attitudes and associations towards new products by that company.

With reference to brand extensions, Aaker and Keller (1990) claim that the leverage of a strong brand name can considerably reduce the risk accompanied by introducing a new product in a new market, since the strong brand provides consumers with brand familiarity and associations. Furthermore, as outlined for $H_{1.1}$ and $H_{2.1}$, Keller and Lehmann (2006) found out that well-known and well-regarded brands extend more successfully. Additionally, Rajagopal and Sanchez (2004) state that an endorsement by a strong and associated brand can be beneficial for

establishing new and extended product brands in new markets. Based on this literature, the following relation of cause and effect can be inferred:

$H_{3.1}$: When a new product brand is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a positive image, consumers evaluate the product brand as more favourable.

As the authors generally refer to the positive impact of a well-known corporate brand in an endorsed branding strategy (Keller 1993) respectively in the context of brand extensions (Aaker & Keller 1990), it is assumed that in case of a new product launch the favourability of image is of minor importance in regard to the leverage of corporate associations. Due to a high existent brand familiarity and knowledge among consumers, well-known corporate brands principally reduce risk, enhance acceptance and facilitate a successful product launch (Aaker & Keller 1990).

Further, Brown and Dacin (1997) revealed a negative relationship between corporate evaluations and product evaluations in case product related associations, such as corporate ability, are evoked through the endorsement. According to their findings, consumers do not necessarily perceive new products of companies with negative associations as unfavourable as well; instead product brand associations can still be good. The authors trace this back to contrast effects, which can result from a discrepancy between the evaluative implications of the corporate associations and the new product (e.g. a consumer holds negative associations for a company, but the new product is perceived to be good).

Therefore, it is assumed that a corporate brand with a negative image can still lead to favourable consumer evaluations of a new product. Thus, a new product brand can even be leveraged through a weak corporate brand. Yet, as Keller (1993) claims that strong, favourable and unique brand associations are preferable and always to strive for, the positive influence of a corporate brand with a negative image on consumers' product brand evaluations is assumed to be weaker than the influence of a corporate brand with a positive image. Hence, consumers' brand evaluations of a new product improve in any case, when the product is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand, but a corporate brand with a positive image leads to more favourable product brand evaluations than a corporate brand with a negative image. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

$H_{3.2}$: When a new product brand is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a negative image, consumers evaluate the product brand as more favourable than without an endorsement, but as less favourable than when it is endorsed by a corporate brand with a positive image.

Based on the literature and the developed hypotheses, the underlying assumption becomes obvious that the influence of a positive corporate image on consumers' product brand evaluations differs from that of a negative corporate image. Within an endorsed setting, it is expected that a positive corporate image has in any case a positive effect on consumers' product brand evaluations, whereas a negative corporate image rather has a negative effect respectively a comparatively negative effect. Consequently, three further hypotheses are derived:

$H_{1.3}$: The image of a corporate endorser, either positive or negative, has a differing influence on consumers' evaluations of a product brand with a positive image.

$H_{2.3}$: The image of a corporate endorser, either positive or negative, has a differing influence on consumers' evaluations of a product brand with a negative image.

$H_{3.3}$: The image of a corporate endorser, either positive or negative, has a differing influence on consumers' evaluations of a new product brand.

A summary of all hypotheses that are investigated in the empirical research is given in Table 2.

Number	Hypotheses
$H_{1.1}$	When a well-known product brand with a positive image is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a positive image, consumers evaluate the product brand as even more favourable.
$H_{1.2}$	When a well-known product brand with a positive image is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a negative image, consumers evaluate the product brand as less favourable.
$H_{1.3}$	The image of a corporate endorser, either positive or negative, has a differing influence on consumers' evaluations of a product brand with a positive image.
$H_{2.1}$	When a well-known product brand with a negative image is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a positive image, consumers evaluate the product brand as more favourable.
$H_{2.2}$	When a well-known product brand with a negative image is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a negative image, consumers evaluate the product brand as even more unfavourable.
$H_{2.3}$	The image of a corporate endorser, either positive or negative, has a differing influence on consumers' evaluations of a product brand with a negative image.
$H_{3.1}$	When a new product brand is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a positive image, consumers evaluate the product brand as more favourable.
$H_{3.2}$	When a new product brand is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a negative image, consumers evaluate the product brand as more favourable than without an endorsement, but less favourable than when it is endorsed by a corporate brand with a positive image.
$H_{3.3}$	The image of a corporate endorser, either positive or negative, has a differing influence on consumers' evaluations of a new product brand.

Table 2: Summary of Hypotheses (own illustration)

3 Methodology

In the following chapter, the adopted methodological approach is presented and argued for. To provide the reader with an initial idea on what methodological steps were taken, firstly, the procedure is graphically visualised. Subsequently, the choice for the positivistic epistemology and the objectivist ontological stance as well as the closely related quantitative research strategy is explained. Thereafter, the experimental research design and the data collection instruments of the pre-study as well as the main study are presented. This is followed by an elaboration on the adopted survey administration as well as sampling method. Subsequently, it will be reflected upon the quality criteria of quantitative research and the methodological limitations of the study at hand. The chapter is rounded off by a discussion on the primary method of data analysis that is applied, namely a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA).

3.1 Outline of Methodological Procedure

In order to provide an overview on the methodological procedure of the study, the main phases as well as their aims and methods are outlined in Figure 2.

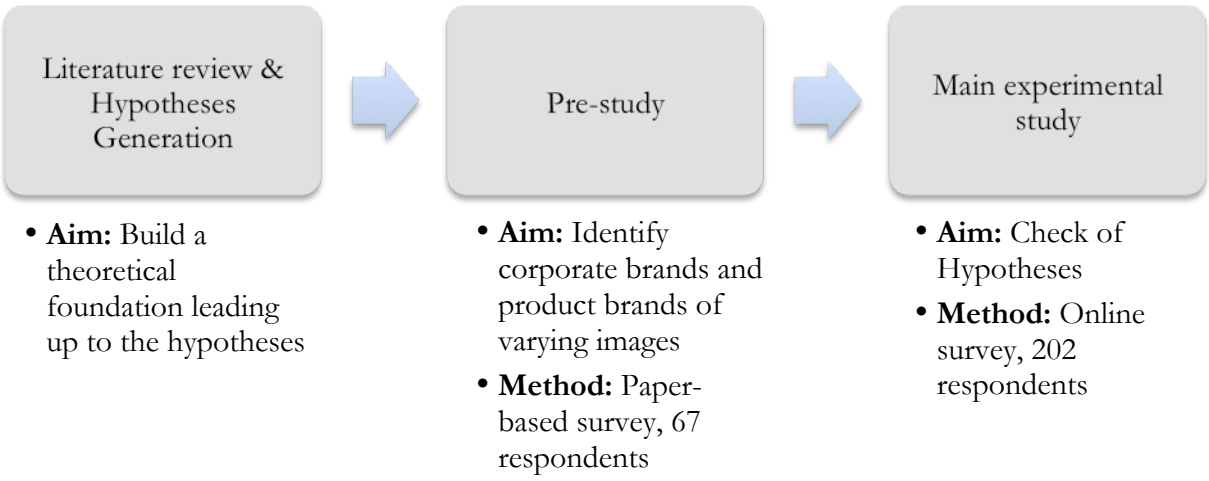

Figure 2: Methodological Procedure (own illustration)

3.2 Philosophical Assumptions and Research Strategy

As the philosophical position adopted by the researchers, particularly the epistemology and the ontology, exerts a major influence on the overall research design, the philosophical stance underlying the design of the study at hand will be addressed preliminary (Bryman & Bell 2011; Easterby-Smith et al. 2008).

To analyse the research phenomenon under investigation, an epistemological stance of positivism is adopted. This choice of epistemology is grounded in the researcher's inherent belief that the social world can and should be studied according to the same principles as the natural sciences (Bryman & Bell 2011). The positivistic approach is strongly in line with our research objective to study the cause-and-effect of a brand architecture manipulation, namely the addition of a corporate brand (of varying brand images) to a product brand (of varying levels of brand image and familiarity) and its effect on consumers' product brand evaluations. The focus of this study

thereby lies primarily on analysing the causal effects of such a brand architecture manipulation and less on explaining *why* the possible changes in consumers' perceptions occur. Thus, pure causality which is a major outcome of positivistic research is sought in this study and not a deeper meaning and explanation for the observed pattern which is more strongly inherent in the contrasting epistemology of interpretivism (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008; Bryman & Bell 2011).

A key principle of positivism is that scientific statements are sought in a value-free way (Bryman & Bell 2011). This positivist principle commonly entails the ontological stance of objectivism that is also adopted by the authors, and which emphasizes that "the social world exists externally, and that its properties should be measured through objective methods" (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008: 57). In relation to this thesis, this objectivist stance translates into the adopted view that actions by companies such as changes of their branding strategy confront consumers as external facts that are beyond their reach and which are able to influence their perception of the respective product brand (Bryman & Bell 2011). Adopting the contrasting ontology of constructionism, in which social actors are regarded as being able to affect things (Bryman & Bell 2011) would make it more difficult for the authors to analyse the research problem under investigation as it presupposes that social phenomena affect consumers' product evaluations externally and that consumers are able to affect their perceptions only to a minor degree.

Apart from its objectivist ontological predisposition, a strong emphasis on deductivism to the relationship between theory and research is also indicative of a positivist epistemology (Bryman & Bell 2011). In other words, theory is regarded as something that guides the overall research, as it constitutes the basis from which hypotheses are deduced that are then tested via empirical analysis (Bryman & Bell 2011). In relation to the research at hand, an extensive literature review was conducted which revealed preliminary hypotheses. These hypotheses (as outlined in Chapter 2.5) incorporate the use of well-known corporate brands (of varying brand images) and product brands (of varying brand images and levels of familiarity). Whether the hypotheses can be used in their original form needs however final approval, as it is necessary to reveal whether brands of varying strengths can be identified at all through a pre-study. If no brands of varying strengths were to be revealed through a preliminary consumer survey, the initial hypotheses would have needed to be amended. The theoretical base therefore guides the design of preliminary hypotheses whose feasibility is approved through a pre-study. This pre-study in form of a consumer survey thus validates the feasibility of the initial hypotheses through identifying corporate and product brands of varying brand strengths which are then used in the main study (see Chapter 3.3.1 for a complete description of the pre-study). The preliminary hypotheses can thus be used in their original version. The research is therefore dominated by a deductive approach to the nexus of theory and research, it does however also incorporate inductive elements through the use of a pre-study in order to approve the initial hypotheses and by contributing to theory by providing the basis for generalizable laws (Bryman & Bell 2011).

The adoption of a positivistic approach and the objectivist conception of social reality, as well as exhibiting a view of the relationship between theory and research as primarily deductive, commonly leads researchers to apply a quantitative research strategy, which is characteristic for the outlined preoccupations (Bryman & Bell 2011). A correspondence between research strategy and the role of theory as well as epistemological and ontological concerns is also sought in this thesis and thus a quantitative approach is adopted (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008). Quantitative

research being concerned with numbers instead of words, this research strategy is well-suited to the study as it aims to quantify consumers' product brand evaluations (Bryman & Bell 2011). The overall attempt is to produce propositions that can be generalised to the wider population (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008). As the generalisation of findings is a major preoccupation of quantitative research, it is further emphasised that thesis lends itself best to quantitative research.

3.3 Experimental Research Design

To investigate the research questions set out in this study, an experimental research design is applied. The use of an experiment is well-suited to the study at hand as it is regarded as the most reputable and primary method for inferring and measuring cause-and-effect relationships as being aimed at in this study (Malhotra & Birks 2006; Bryman & Bell 2011). The use of an experimental method is also strongly characteristic of the positivistic epistemological stance that is adopted in this research, since an identification of the objective reality can most readily be achieved through the design of experiments as they "eliminate alternative explanations and allow key factors to be measured precisely in order to test predetermined hypotheses." (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008: 63)

Generally, the objective of an experiment is to identify cause-and-effect relations by deliberately manipulating one or more independent variables and subsequently observing the reaction of one or more dependent variables, while controlling for the effect of confounding variables (Aaker et al. 2011; Malhotra & Birks 2006). Due to the controlled settings, namely by at best randomly assigning subjects to one or more experimental groups, by making use of a control group as well as by controlling any confounding variables, the observed differences in the level of the dependent variable(s) can then be attributed soundly to the intervention (the 'treatment') imposed on the subjects (Bryman & Bell 2011). In order for a causal nexus between the independent and dependent factors to exist, the variables must satisfy the following conditions: "Cause has to precede effect, (…) cause and effect should correlate" and "all other explanations of the cause-effect relationship must be ruled out" (Field & Hole 2003: 13).

Consequently, the important variables in experimental research are independent variables (IV) that are manipulated and whose effects are measured and compared, dependent variables (DV) which measure the effect of the independent variable/s on the test units and confounding variables (CV), also commonly referred to as extraneous variables, which are all variables other than the IVs that affect the response of the test units. The CV variables can thus have a disturbing influence on the direct effect of the IV on the DV and possibly weaken the results of the experiment. (Malhotra & Birks 2006) These confounding variables therefore need to be controlled to a maximum. Examples of confounding variables include testing effects, selection bias and time effects (for an overview of confounding effects, see Malhotra & Birks 2006: 265).

Within the study at hand, one independent variable is present which is labelled 'corporate endorsement'. This independent variable has three levels. In a first instance, no corporate endorsement is applied on the product brand level, meaning that the product brand acts as a stand-alone brand (i.e. no corporate brand is added on the product's packaging). The other two levels are manipulated inasmuch that in one condition a corporate brand with a positive image is employed and in another instance a corporate brand with a negative image is used as an endorser of the product brand. Both of these corporate brands are well-known among Swedish consumers and are thus stable on the dimension of brand familiarity. The effect of the corporate

endorsement (IV) is measured on 'consumers' product brand evaluations', which thus constitutes the dependent variable in the study at hand. The overall dependent variable is based on and measured by the dependent constructs 'overall attitude', 'perceived quality' and 'willingness to pay a price premium'. The study at hand therefore applies three dependent constructs, which in their aggregated, collective form constitute the dependent variable 'consumers' product brand evaluations'. The effect of corporate endorsement (IV) in its various levels on consumers' product brand evaluations (DV) is investigated for three different product brands, which act as illustrative case examples in the study at hand. As a first case example a well-known product brand with a positive image is used. Contrary to the first example, a well-known product brand with a negative image is applied as a second case example. The third product case is comprised of a fictitious, 'new' product brand, which simulates a launch of a new product. The first two product brands, similar to the corporate brands, enjoy a high level of familiarity among Swedish consumers, while the fictitious, 'new' product brand as inherent in its characteristics is unknown to the consumers and therefore only evokes limited associations.

As a fictitious, 'new' product brand the German juice brand 'Albi' is used which is non-existent on the Swedish market. The remaining product and corporate brands were identified in a pre-study, which was conducted prior to the experiment (see Chapter 3.3.1.2 for an explanation and findings of the pre-study).

The outlined design – as depicted in Table 3 – results in six product-corporate brand combinations (highlighted in green), whereby experimental units in each cell receive a specific treatment combination (Malhotra & Birks 2006). The treatment was induced on the experimental subjects through a visual stimulus, whereby the respective corporate brands were graphically added to the respective product brands on the front of the product's packaging (for each combination). Three additional cells represent the control group, which has received no treatment (highlighted in yellow), as they were solely exposed to the product brands in their original version as stand-alone brands.

Corporate endorsement / Product brand case examples	No corporate endorsement	Corporate endorsement with a positive image	Corporate endorsement with a negative image
Well-known product brand with a positive image	Control Group	Group B	Group A
Well-known product brand with a negative image	Control Group	Group A	Group C
Fictitious, 'new' product brand	Control Group	Group C	Group B

Table 3: Experimental Design incl. Experimental Groups (Group A-C) & Control Group (own illustration)

The experimental design is implemented as a between-subjects-design for the various levels of the independent variable, resulting in three experimental groups and one control group (see Table 3). The choice of the between-subjects-design entails that the change in the dependent variable is measured between different subjects, whereby separate groups of subjects each receive different levels of the independent variable (Balnaves & Caputi 2001). The between-subjects-design is however not taken to an extreme in the present study, as each experimental group is susceptible

to two experimental treatments whereby two levels of the IV 'corporate endorsement' are combined with two product brand examples. It was therefore ensured that no corporate or product brand is exposed twice to the same experimental group to avoid between experiment confusion and contrast effects (Malhotra & Birks 2006). No comparison within subjects thus takes place. The adopted approach, namely having three experimental groups, is preferred over incorporating six complete between-subject experimental groups as the complexity and effort of balancing specific variables (e.g. age, gender) as well as achieving similar sample sizes across groups to ensure their comparability was aimed to be minimised due to the limited scope of the study.

The experiment is conducted within a post-test only control group design (Malhotra & Birks 2006), which can be symbolised as:

		Pre-measurement	**Treatment**	**Post-measurement**
R	EGs	-	X	O_1
	CG	-	-	O_2

Table 4: Post-test only Control Group Experiment Design (own illustration)

Consequently, the three different experimental groups (EGs) are exposed to different treatment combinations (X), whose effects are to be determined, while the control group (CG) receives no unusual conditions. The test units are thereby assigned randomly (R) to their respective groups. Based on this random assignment, the experimental design can be considered a 'true' experimental design (Malhotra & Birks 2006). Moreover, the design does not involve any pre-measurement of the control as well as experimental groups, as the measurement respectively observation of the dependent variable (O) for both the control group and experimental groups solely takes place after the experimental groups have received their treatment. Thus, no classical before-and-after analysis is conducted and both the control group and the experimental groups are measured simultaneously. No longitudinal element is therefore present in the experimental design. The overall treatment effect is obtained by the equation O_1–O_2. (Malhotra & Birks 2006)

Through the incorporation of a control group, the arbitrary assignment of subjects to the various experimental groups or the control group as well as the matching of the respective groups on key background variables (as will be outlined in Chapter 3.3.2.2), possible alternative explanations of experimental results are eliminated (Bryman & Bell 2011). This means that the influence of confounding variables (CVs) (e.g. demographic factors) on the direct effect of the IV on the DV is controlled for to a certain extent in the present experiment (Balnaves & Caputi 2001).

The experiment at hand is performed as an online laboratory experiment. Undertaking a laboratory experiment whereby artificial and simplified conditions are inferred is the only feasible option for the study at hand, as a manipulation of product packages and its later visual exposure to consumers within a real-life setting (e.g. at the POS) would have been unrealistic to achieve. Beneficial to a laboratory experiment is the fact that any kind of interfering factors can be controlled for and that they are generally more cost-efficient and faster (Aaker et al. 2011).

3.4 Data Collection Methods

The data for the experimental study was collected via a web-based, self-completion questionnaire. Prior to this main study, however, as already mentioned, a pre-study was conducted to identify brands, which are characteristic of the two levels of the independent variable as well the product brand case examples. The pre-study thus aimed to reveal corporate and product brands of high awareness and of varying images, which are then used in the main experimental questionnaire.

Consequently, the procedure and the questionnaire design of the pre-study as well as its findings are illustrated in a first step. Subsequently, the questionnaire design, survey administration as well as the sampling approach of the main experimental study are highlighted.

3.4.1 Pre-study

The pre-study was conducted in form of a paper-based, self-completion questionnaire, which was administered to grocery shoppers in front of supermarkets. This approach ensured that a relevant sample was extracted. In order to reduce respondent selection bias, a randomised selection procedure was adopted, whereby the researchers waited outside a supermarket and approached every third shopper leaving the store. To further minimise time and visit bias, the questionnaire was distributed at two different supermarkets in the city of Lund, Sweden (ICA Tunavägen & Coop Mårtenstorget) on two different dates (31st April & 2nd May 2012) (Sudman 1980).

3.4.1.1 Questionnaire Design

As prior outlined, the pre-study questionnaire aimed to reveal both one corporate brand and one product brand, which are perceived by consumers as positive and both a corporate brand and a product brand, which are generally perceived as negative. To identify these brands of varying brand images, respondents were shown a variety of corporate brand logos respectively product packages in the questionnaire. These visuals were intended to activate consumers' memory about the brands and in case of the product packages to depict the product brands as perceived in the store and as used subsequently in the main study. For each depicted brand, the respondent was asked to express his opinion towards two statements. The first statement relates to the respondent's awareness of the depicted brand and was expressed as, 'I am aware of this (corporate) brand.' As a choice of answers, a binary response format (yes/no) was given. The first question was implemented as a filter question whereby consumers not being aware of the brand (thus ticked the 'no' box) were asked to proceed to the next brand and thus to skip the second question which relates to the respondent's attitude towards the depicted corporate respectively product brand. This is a logical choice as respondents who are not familiar with a brand do not have well-developed and definite attitudes, as however being sought in the pre-study. The second statement targeting the respondent's brand attitude, and therewith the central question to reveal the brand image, was formulated as 'My attitude towards this (corporate) brand is…'. The corresponding response option was expressed as a seven-point semantic differential scale with the bipolar adjectives of positive and negative. This allowed eliciting nuanced brand images. Both statements were developed on the basis of existing brand performance scales, namely the brand awareness scale by Aaker (1991) and the overall attitude scale by Research International (n.d., in Lehmann et al. 2008). By using the same two statements for each depicted brand, a simple questionnaire design resulted. Apart from the two questions referring to each

brand, two demographic questions asking for the respondent's age and gender were included at the beginning of the questionnaire to draw conclusions about the sample.

The product brands depicted in the questionnaire were Swedish fruit juice brands. This category was chosen as it is mainly characterised by a product-brand only strategy. This was a necessary precondition for the choice of brands as within a product-brand only strategy the consumer is likely not aware of the company behind the product. Knowledge of the 'real' company behind the product would have created confusion among the respondents when being exposed to the 'fake' packaging – depicting the juice product with another, possible corporate logo (as in the case of our experiment). Therefore, only fruit juice brands were chosen that do not yet communicate their corporate brand in addition to their product brand (e.g. the Bravo juice brand was excluded as is already visibly endorsed by the company Skånemejerier). The following ten product brands were finally chosen: Brämhults, God Morgon, Proviva, Tropicana, Mer, Sundis, Kiviks, Fontana, Finnerödja and Saltå Kvarn. The choice of these brands was based on a review of the Euromonitor report "Fruit/vegetable Juice – Sweden" (Euromonitor International 2011) which offers an extensive analysis of the fruit juice market in Sweden from the year 2005 to 2010. Based on the brand shares of fruit juice by off-trade volume in 2010 (Euromonitor International 2011), a diverse spectrum of brands with varying brand shares were chosen to elicit fruitful consumer insights. Private brands were thereby neglected. The Euromonitor report being based on figures at the latest of the year 2010, the choice of product brands was validated through a supermarket visit. To maximise product comparability within the questionnaire, the product brands were depicted where possible as an orange juice.

In relation to the corporate brands, the following ten corporate brands were included in the pre-study: Del Monte, Swed-Jam, Arla, Nestle, Procter & Gamble, Danone, Unilever, Procordia, Chiquita and Coca-Cola. The majority of these companies (except for Unilever, Nestlé and P&G) are juice producers on the Swedish market. This was also revealed through the Euromonitor report "Fruit/vegetable Juice – Sweden" (Euromonitor International 2011) and validated through browsing the companies' websites. Unilever, Nestlé and P&G were added to the list of corporations to have a more comprehensive and diverse choice of corporate brands. These three companies are all big corporations that are active in various product categories and which could possibly be juice producers or acquire a juice brand. For those companies that already use their corporate brand in addition to their product brand and whose corporate logo is divergent from the commercial logo placed on products, it was ensured that the commercial logo instead of the corporate logo is depicted in the questionnaire as this would be the logo being placed on products in a real-life setting. Nestlé, for example, has a corporate logo which depicts a bird's nest with three birds, while it uses various commercial company logos for different product categories, such as the blue commercial logo used in the pre-study at hand.

The pre-study questionnaire was solely distributed in English. A questionnaire in the native language of the country would have been preferable, as possible misunderstandings on the side of the respondents can weaken the data quality and people not capable of the English language are automatically excluded from the sample. An English version is however considered as sufficient for the purpose and scope of the pre-study. Possible deficiencies are likely limited since the English language is well-established in Sweden which is characterised as a bilingual country (Eurostat 2012). Additionally, the researchers were available in person during the administration

of the questionnaire to clarify any upcoming questions. To further assure a complete understanding on the side of the respondents, the survey briefly introduced its purpose, gave instructions on how to fill out the survey and ensured confidentiality of the findings.

To avoid respondent's fatigue, the questionnaires of the corporate brands and product brands were separated and distributed to different respondents. Both questionnaires have the same design and use the same questions (except for smaller changes to adapt for the wording of either a corporate or a product brand). The questionnaires differ of course in the way that one questionnaire depicts corporate brands while the other depicts product packages. Please refer to Appendix A for an overview of the two questionnaires. Both questionnaires were piloted to friends and relatives to reveal any deficiencies prior to data collection. To minimise order effects between the questions, the pages of the questionnaires were randomised (Bryman & Bell 2011).

3.4.1.2 Pre-study Findings

The pre-study questionnaires were analysed with the help of basic descriptive statistical tools, namely by calculating percentages, means and standard deviations.

Corporate brands

The 'corporate brands' questionnaire was answered by 33 respondents. This sample size (n > 30) is considered to deliver sufficient confidence in the survey results, as the standard deviation is expected to balance out around this sample size (Hair et al. 2010). The respondents were nearly equally distributed in terms of gender (55 % female; 45% male) and spanned an age range of 18-75 years ($\bar{x}$ = 36,55).

Concerning the constructs corporate 'brand awareness' and 'brand attitude' the following findings were generated:

Corporate Brand Awareness		
1.	Coca-Cola	100%
	Nestle	100%
2.	Arla	96,97%
3.	Chiquita	93,94%
4.	Danone	84,85%
5.	Unilever	72,73%
6.	Del Monte	69,70%
7.	P&G	54,55%
8.	Procordia	45,45%
9.	Swed-Jam	3,03%

Corporate Brand Attitude			
		mean (1 = negative, 7 = positive)	σ
1.	Arla	5,970	1,159
2.	Del Monte	4,917	1,666
3.	Procordia	4,867	1,552
4.	Danone	4,679	1,335
5.	P&G	4,222	1,592
6.	Unilever	4,208	1,719
7.	Coca-Cola	4,152	2,093
8.	Swed-Jam	4,000	0
9.	Nestlé	3,758	1,969
10.	Chiquita	3,548	1,767
		Overall mean 4,432	

Table 5: Corporate Brand Awareness & Corporate Brand Attitude (own illustration)

Based on these findings (see Table 5), the brand Arla was chosen to characterise a corporate brand with a strong positive image in the experimental design. The corporate brand Arla has an exceptional positive attitude ($\bar{x}$ = 5,970), both compared to the neutral mid-point of 4 on the employed attitude scale as well as in relative comparison to the other brands (overall $\bar{x}$ of all brands = 4,432). The corporate brand Nestlé was chosen to characterise the other end of the extreme, namely a corporate brand with a negative image. Nestlé reached an attitude mean of 3,758 which is close to the neutral mid-point of 4, but in relative comparison to the other corporate brands which overall achieved a mean of 4,432, Nestlé can be seen as a corporate brand with a negative image. Nestlé instead of Chiquita (which also possesses by trend a negative consumer image) was chosen to ensure a stronger comparability in terms of brand awareness, as Nestlé and Arla both have among the highest brand awareness of all corporate brands (Nestlé: 100%; Arla: 96,97%). This is critical as it is proven that brand associations and therefore consumers' product evaluations differ depending on the brand's familiarity (Low et al. 2000).

Product brands

The 'product brands' questionnaire achieved an overall sample size of 34. The age composition is close to the one in the corporate brands sample with an age range of 20-72 years ($\bar{x}$ = 38,59). The sample however shows a slight tendency towards more females (59%) than males (41%).

In relation to product 'brand awareness' and 'brand attitude' the following findings were generated:

Product Brand Awareness		
1.	God Morgon	97,06%
	Brämhults	97,06%
2.	Kiviks Musteri	94,12%
3.	Proviva	91,18%
4.	Tropicana	88,24%
5.	Mer	85,29%
6.	Fontana	67,65%
7.	Sundis	38,24%
8.	Sålta Kvarn	35,29%
9.	Finnerödja	23,53%

Product Brand Attitude			
		mean (1 = negative, 7 = positive)	σ
1.	Finnerödja	6,125	1,356
2.	Brämhults	6,061	0,998
3.	Kiviks Musteri	5,656	1,181
4.	Sålta Kvarn	5,462	1,613
5.	Proviva	5,387	1,687
6.	Tropicana	5,133	1,408
7.	Mer	4,724	1,412
8.	God Morgon	4,212	1,453
9.	Sundis	3,923	1,256
10.	Fontana	3,696	1,222
		Overall mean 5,038	

Table 6: Product Brand Awareness & Product Brand Attitude (own illustration)

Based on these results (see Table 6), the product brand Brämhults was chosen to characterise a product brand with a strongly positive image in the experimental design. Consumers hold a particularly favourable attitude towards Brämhults ($\bar{x}$ = 6,061), both compared to the neutral mid-point of 4 on the employed attitude scale as well as in relative comparison to the other brands (overall $\bar{x}$ of all brands = 5,038). The product brand God Morgon was chosen to depict the contrasting case, namely a product brand with a negative image. Although God Morgon

reached an attitude mean of 4,212 which scores above the neutral mid-point of 4, in relative comparison to the other product brands which overall achieved a mean of 5,038 and in relation to its high consumer awareness in the market (97,06%), God Morgon can still be regarded as a product brand with a negative image. Reviewing Table 6, it becomes obvious that Finnerödja ($\bar{x}$ = 6,125) possesses an even more positive attitude than Brämhults and that also the product brands Sundis ($\bar{x}$ = 3,923) and Fontana ($\bar{x}$ = 3,696) are perceived as even more negative than God Morgon. Brämhults and God Morgon were however chosen as they enjoy the same brand awareness in the Swedish market (both 97,06%). This ensures also in this case that brand associations and consumers' product evaluations concerning these two brands are comparable (Low et al. 2000).

Based on the outlined choices of corporate brands and product brands, the experimental design (as prior outlined) can be filled with concrete case examples. The final grid that emerges is depicted hereunder (Table 7).

Corporate endorsement / Product brand case examples	No corporate endorsement	Corporate endorsement with a positive image	Corporate endorsement with a negative image
		Arla	Nestlé
well-known, positive image 	Control Group	Group B	Group A
well-known, negative image 	Control Group	Group A	Group C
fictitious, 'new' 	Control Group	Group C	Group B

Table 7: Experimental Design incl. selected Product Brands and Corporate Brands (own illustration)

3.4.2 Main Experimental Survey

The data for the main experimental study was collected via a web-based, self-completion survey, which was online from 17 – 26 April 2012. The choice of online research is beneficial to the study at hand as it comprises a cost-efficient and quick method for reaching a large and widely dispersed group of participants, facilitates the random distribution to one of the four groups of the experiment, allows customisation based on individual responses and finally facilitates the data processing as the responses are directly stored into statistical software (Bryman & Bell 2011; Easterby-Smith et al. 2008). Due to the limited time span of the study at hand, these factors are decisive.

3.4.2.1 Questionnaire Design

As prior outlined, the experimental design is comprised of one control group and three experimental groups, the latter each being exposed to two treatment combinations (see Table 7). Overall, four questionnaires were thus used in the main experimental study. All of these questionnaires follow the same questionnaire design and structure (except for some adaptations for logical reasons), which will be illustrated hereunder.

To ensure a complete understanding of the questionnaire design and its questions, each questionnaire was introduced by a brief explanation of the purpose of the study and instructions on how to fill out the survey. This was complemented by an ethical assurance of the respondents' answers.

This basic introduction was followed by the main part of the questionnaire, which was introduced by a visual stimulus depicting the respective product's packaging. In case of the control group questionnaire, the picture showed the product in its un-manipulated, original version to solely elicit brand associations of the product brand. In case of the questionnaires for the experimental groups, the respective corporate brand was graphically included on the respective product's packages (depending on the treatment combination). The respective packages were manipulated graphically by a professional graphic designer, whereby it was ensured that the product brand is slightly more prominent than the corporate brand which was visually added, as this is in line with the endorsed branding approach adopted in this study (Kapferer 2008; Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000). Due to the professional execution the newly created product packages had a realistic appearance. Slight modifications to the product's original packaging were necessary in some instances to place the corporate brand logo above the product brand's name. The size and position of the corporate logo was similar on all packages to ensure comparability of the findings. The Albi product packaging was also graphically adapted in a way that all German labels were removed or changed so that it appears as a possible Swedish product brand.

The following Figures 3-5 depict the various product pictures as used in the questionnaire: (1) in its original version as exposed to the control group (left of each picture), (2) manipulated through the inclusion of the Arla logo (middle) and (3) manipulated through the inclusion of the Nestlé logo (right).

Figure 3: Brämhults Juice Packages

Figure 4: God Morgon Juice Packages

Figure 5: Albi Juice Packages

The control group was thus visually exposed to all three products in their original version (left pictures in Figure 3-5) to which their evaluation in terms of the various constructs was measured.

The product evaluations of the experimental groups were, however, measured for two product/ corporate brand combinations based on their respective treatment combinations (see Table 7).

The respondents were asked to look thoroughly at the shown picture, which for the experimental groups was complemented by a scenario statement saying that the respective juice brand "product brand X" was recently bought by the company "corporate brand X". This statement was used for 'fake' treatment combinations while in the real Arla-God Morgon case (Arla owns God Morgon in reality) and for the Albi-product the phrasing was changed to "(product brand X) which is owned by (corporate brand X)". The different phrasings of the scenario are necessary to avoid confusing consumers who possibly know the 'real' corporate brand behind the product brand. This scenario technique accompanied by the picture was employed to introduce the situation to the subjects and to strengthen that consumers recognise the product manipulation.

After this introductory scenario, the main questions regarding the dependent variable 'consumer's product evaluations' were posed. As prior outlined, the DV is based on the latent constructs of 'overall attitude', 'perceived quality' and 'willingness to pay a price premium' which cannot be directly observed and thus need to be operationalized through measurable indicators (i.e. items) (Bryman & Bell 2011). The indicators are based upon existing research and were thus not developed by the researchers themselves (except for one item to suit the particular context). Through the use of existing indicators, a certain measurement quality is ensured, as these items were susceptible to prior reliability and validity tests (Bryman & Bell 2011).

Each dependent construct was measured by three items as a multi-item measurement is preferable to single-item measurements to ensure greater reliability and validity (Hair et al. 2010). For all constructs the items were formulated as statements. The 'overall attitude' construct was thereby measured with a seven-point semantic differential scale with different bipolar adjectives for each item, while for the constructs 'perceived quality' and 'willingness to pay a price premium' the subjects were asked to indicate their level of agreement on a seven-point Likert scale ((1) indicated "strongly disagree" and (7) "strongly agree") (Field & Hole 2003). A seven-point scale with a neutral mid-point was chosen to generate nuanced findings and to allow for the possibility that an individual may have no opinion on certain items (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008).

The following Table 8 gives a complete overview of the indicators used to measure the underlying constructs of the DV 'consumers' product brand evaluations' and indicates the previous research from which they were derived.

Dependent construct and its operationalisation	Source/Theory
Overall Attitude 1.) This brand* is… (bad/good) 2.) This brand* is… (undesirable/desirable) 3.) My opinion of this brand* is… (unfavourable/favourable)	Based on Research International (n.d., in Lehmann et al. (2008) 7-point semantic differential (with the corresponding bipolar adjectives)
Perceived Quality 1. This brand* is of high quality. 2. This brand* consistently satisfies its users. 3. This brand* is made to high standards.	Based on Ambler (2003) 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)
Willingness to pay a price premium 1.) I am willing to pay a higher price for this brand* than for other juice brands. 2.) I am willing to pay a lot more for this brand* than for other juice brands. 3.) This brand* is worth a higher price than other juice brands.	Based on Netemeyer et al. (2004) (1) & (2) original version (3) own creation 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)

* Note: The wording "this brand" was replaced by "(product brand X) juice by (corporate brand X)" for the respective combinations, e.g. Brämhults juice by Nestlé.

Table 8: Overview of Dependent Constructs and their Indicators (own illustration)

Each question set for each construct was thereby displayed separately on the screen and was accompanied by the respective picture (as outlined above) to enhance consumers' associations.

Apart from these main question sets concerning the dependent constructs, a control question asking for the respondent's knowledge of the company behind the depicted product brand was included at the end of the questionnaire to rule out that in the case of 'fake' treatment combinations potential knowledge of the real company behind the product brand has caused confusion within the respondent. In other words, subjects might be aware that Brämhults is in reality owned by the corporation Eckes-Granini, which in case they are exposed to the Brämhults combinations by Arla or by Nestlé might have caused confusion. In case of the treatment combination God Morgon by Arla, which constitutes a 'real' combination as God Morgon is in reality owned by the corporation Arla, the findings help to better interpret and discuss the results. The treatment combination God Morgon by Arla depicts the only 'real' combination. For the product group Albi, no question concerning the awareness of the company behind the product brand was posed, as Albi is a non-existent product on the Swedish market and therefore it can be assumed that consumers have no prior knowledge of the company behind the product brand. Through the incorporation of the question concerning knowledge of the company behind the product brand, confounding influences on the direct effect of the IVs on the DV could be accounted for. As the control group questionnaires solely measure the product brand evaluation (without the inclusion of a corporate brand), this control question was logically not included in the control group questionnaire.

To identify whether a relevant sample was generated, meaning that at best regular juice buyers and/or juice drinkers were targeted with the questionnaire, two questions concerning the

respondents' juice consumption and buying behaviour were included. These being: 'When did you buy juice the last time?' and 'When did you drink juice the last time?'. To each of these questions, various response options with different time spans as well as the option 'I never bought/drank juice before.' were given.

The questionnaires were rounded off by two demographic questions concerning age and gender which allow drawing appropriate conclusions about the sample at a later stage.

As the study at hand focuses on the Swedish population, the different questionnaires that were originally phrased in English were translated into the Swedish language to ensure a complete understanding on the side of the respondents. The translation was undertaken by a native Swede who is also perfectly fluent in English. A complete overview of all four questionnaires in their English version is provided in Appendix B.

To ensure that the questionnaires have been designed logically and that the manipulation of the IV is perceived as such, a pilot study prior to the administering of the questionnaires was conducted (Bryman & Bell 2011). Six people, comparable to members of the population from which the sample was drawn, provided valuable feedback for improving the questionnaire. Apart from general design issues that were adopted for higher simplicity, the feedback revealed that the manipulation effect was not of sufficient strength through the sole inclusion of a visual stimulus. Based on this feedback, the names of the endorsers were integrated in each single item.

To minimise order effects between the questions (Bryman & Bell 2011), the latent constructs within the questionnaires were randomised. The survey was additionally accompanied by a progress indicator to reduce the number of respondents abandoning the questionnaires uncompleted (Bryman & Bell 2011).

3.4.2.2 Survey Administration and Sampling Approach

The online survey was administered by the panel agency Norstat, which in this research was responsible for the technical construction of the questionnaire and the data collection. Norstat is a leading provider of data collection within the Nordic region that focuses exclusively on the collection of data, thus, being a pure data supplier. The agency conducts various types of data collection within the Nordic and Eastern European countries and is in particular an acknowledged leader in the online research market. With more than 350.000 pre-recruited respondents (primarily been recruited via nationally representative telephone surveys), Norstat owns one of the largest Internet panels in Northern Europe. On the Swedish market, which is of interest to the study at hand, the research institute has 90.000 active panellists. (Norstat 2009) A major benefit of using a panel agency is that a stronger control over the sample is ensured as the control and experimental groups can be roughly balanced according to pre-defined characteristics (in our case for age and gender) so that at best equivalent, homogeneous groups are created to maximise comparability. Moreover, it can be ensured, based on background information of each panellist, that the sample is composed to the specifications of the target group. In our case, it was aimed to have a sample that is close to being representative of the Swedish adult population in order to be able to generalise the findings to this population. The panel agency has a population of registered Swedish panellists within the age range of 18-65 years, so that the sample was extracted from this overall panel population. The respondents were chosen and approached on a

random basis and randomly assigned to one of the four groups of the experiment (one control group, three experimental groups). The sampling approach adopted by the panel agency can therefore be regarded as simple probability sampling within the sample population (Bryman & Bell 2011). Beneficial to a probability sampling procedure is that it excludes human bias in the respondent selection and therefore maximises the possibility of generating a representative sample which allows generalising the findings to the population from which it was drawn, which is in our case the 'panel population' (Bryman & Bell 2011). The panel population can be assumed to be nearly representative of the overall Swedish population, as the registered panel population of 90.000 Swedish panellists likely incorporates characteristics that are representative of the overall Swedish population (Norstat 2012; Easterby-Smith et al. 2008). The generated findings can therefore likely be generalised to the overall population of adult Swedes.

A major precondition for being able to generalise the findings to the larger population is a sufficient sample size as it increases the precision of the sample (Bryman & Bell 2011). In the study at hand, the sample size was determined based on theoretical statistical sample size requirements for a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), which was applied in this research design. Hair et al. (2010) argue that the sample size for each treatment group must be greater than the number of dependent variables and suggest a minimum sample size of 20 subjects for each group. As the study at hand involves three experimental groups plus one control group, this translates into a minimum sample size of overall 80 subjects. To increase precision of the sample beyond this minimum sample requirement, it was aimed at a minimum sample of 50 subjects per group resulting in an overall sample size of 200.

The respective respondents were incentivised by a monetary reward for their participation in the survey. The length of the questionnaire is therefore of minor importance as respondent's fatigue is counterbalanced through the monetary incentive.

3.5 Quality Criteria in Empirical Research and Limitations

According to Bryman & Bell (2011), reliability, validity and replicability are the most prominent criteria for evaluating empirical research. Hereunder, the considerations made to ensure that these criteria are adhered to, are outlined as well as their corresponding limitations.

The reliability of empirical research is defined as the degree of the exactness of measurement, which means that the measures devised for concepts are consistent and a repetition of the experiment under the same conditions would generate the same results (Bryman & Bell 2011; Churchill 1979). Through the use of multiple-item and existing indicators to measure the dependent constructs in the study at hand, a certain measurement quality is ensured as these items were susceptible to prior internal reliability and validity analyses (Bryman & Bell 2011). All existing indicators that were employed in the questionnaires have been tested for reliability by the respective authors, whereby all scales achieved satisfactory values of Cronbach's alpha ($C\alpha > 0.80$) which infers a sufficient internal reliability of the indicators used (Bryman & Bell 2011; Netemeyer et al. 2004; Lehmann et al. 2008). The internal consistency of the measures used is re-tested via a reliability analysis in the course of this study to review whether the applied indicators are reliable and stable within the context of this research (see Chapter 4.2.2).

Validity is generally concerned with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a study (Bryman & Bell 2011). This presupposes that the research is conceptually accurate and that thus systematic errors are avoided. There are various types of validity that have to be adhered to. Construct validity as characterising one form of validity concerns the question whether the indicators of a measure do in fact measure the concept that is supposed to be measured (Bryman & Bell 2011). Through the use of existing indicators that were validated in previous research, also in this instance a certain degree of construct validity is ensured. By translating the original English items into the Swedish language, however, discrepancies between the original and translated indicators might have potentially occurred. To minimise this source of invalidity, the questionnaires were translated by a native speaker with a strong marketing background and who is fluent in both Swedish and English. To however completely verify that the indicators are valid measures of the concept in question and thus to determine sufficient construct validity, the reliability analysis (as prior outlined) was complemented by a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (see Chapter 4.2.1) (Bryman & Bell 2011). A CFA is commonly regarded as a "relevant technique for the validation of scales for the measurement of constructs" (Pappu et al. 2005: 146), as in our case the dependent constructs 'overall attitude', 'perceived quality' and willingness to pay a price premium'.

Another type of validity is internal validity, which concerns the question whether the manipulation of the independent variable actually caused the observed effects on the dependent variable. Any extraneous variables which could have a possible disturbing effect on the relationship between the independent and dependent variables thus need to be controlled for to be able to draw valid inferences about the causal relationship between the IV and DV. (Malhotra & Birks 2006) Experimental designs are generally touted as the strongest in terms of internal validity as the researcher is able to exercise a high degree of control leading to a considerable confidence in the trustworthiness of causal findings (Bryman & Bell 2011; Malhotra & Birks 2006). Through the incorporation of a control group, the random assignment of subjects to the control group and experimental groups, as well as through matching the groups according to age and gender so that nearly homogeneous, equivalent groups are created, confounding variables are accounted for in the study at hand. This ensures that any differences between the control and experimental groups are attributable to the manipulation of the independent variable. (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008; Bryman & Bell 2011) To control for further extraneous variables, a sufficient sample size was adopted as variability among groups is considered to be minimised with increasing sample size (Hair et al. 2008). Confounding effects of the 'knowledge of the company behind the product brands' on the direct effect of the IV on the DV were also controlled through including this question set into the questionnaire. A brand name which is non-existent, fictitious in the Swedish market was used to characterise the 'new' product brand (in our case the juice brand Albi) in order to avoid the influence of established brand associations on the results and thus to heighten experimental control (Low et al. 2000). Additionally, through the incorporation of a sole post-test measurement other sources of invalidity (such as maturation, time and testing effects) are eliminated (Malhotra & Birks 2006).

External validity concerns the question whether the cause-and-effect relationships revealed in the experiment can be generalised beyond the specific research context (Malhotra & Birks 2006). One focus of attention is therefore to generate a sample that is representative of the population from which it is drawn (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008). Having adopted a random sample procedure,

it can be assumed that the panellists are representative of the overall panel population from which the respondents to the questionnaires were selected. The generalizability of the findings to the overall Swedish population might be limited, as panellists might differ in their characteristics to the overall Swedish population. Through the regular participation in market research studies panellists are likely more knowledgeable about brands and the involving monetary incentive likely further demarcates them from others (Bryman & Bell 2011). The mode of survey administration, namely on the Web, might have further contributed to a biased sample of the population, as conducting a survey online excludes non-internet users which are proven to differ from Internet-users in terms of personal characteristics and attitudinally (Bryman & Bell 2011). Although these preoccupations might indicate that the generated findings are only partially transferable to the overall Swedish population, it can be assumed that the findings are still representative of the overall Swedish adult population as the outlined biases are only minor. Additionally, within a post-test only design, it is assumed that the control and experimental groups are similar in terms of pre-treatment measures on the dependent variable. Due to the lack of these pre-treatment measures, this assumption can however not finally be checked (Malhotra & Birks 2006). Having conducted the experiment in a laboratory setting may further limit the generalizability of the results, as the unnatural conditions of the experiment do not accurately represent a real POS situation (Bryman & Bell 2011). However, internal validity is maximised through the controlled conditions of a laboratory experiment and the experiment at hand would have likely not been feasible to conduct in a real-life setting (e.g. grocery store).

Finally, it needs to be remarked that the authors of this study aimed to minimise bias while maximising objectivity throughout the whole experimental study. By being explicit about the researcher's procedures in great detail and through undertaking a laboratory experiment in which the findings are less tied up with a certain milieu, the study at hand is more easily capable of replication (Bryman & Bell 2011).

3.6 The Applied Method of Data Analysis: Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)

After the data collection, the data was processed within the programme SPSS Statistics 20. After having ensured the quality of measurements via a reliability analysis and a confirmatory factor analysis (as outlined in the previous section), the means of the different items for each dependent construct were calculated and aggregated to form a basis for the subsequent data analysis.

The primary method of data analysis that was applied in the study at hand to test the pre-defined hypotheses (as outlined in Chapter 2.5) is a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). According to Hair et al. (2010: 439), a MANOVA is "a dependence technique that measures the differences for two or more metric dependent variables based on a set of categorical (nonmetric) variables acting as independent variables". A MANOVA, being an extension of a basic analysis of variance (ANOVA), assesses the statistical significance of differences between groups (or experimental treatments) regarding the arithmetic mean of the dependent variables. In case a significant effect is detected within an experimental context, this would prove that the causal connection between the group membership and the dependent value is given. While an ANOVA tests the effect of one or more independent variables on solely one dependent variable, a MANOVA tests group differences across multiple dependent variables simultaneously. (Hair et al. 2010)

This peculiarity of a MANOVA highlights why this method of data analysis is particularly suitable for the research question under concern. As the study at hand aims to assess the impact of the addition of a corporate brand (in its variations) on consumers' collective product brand evaluations (being comprised of the multiple dependent constructs 'overall attitude', 'perceived quality' and 'willingness to pay a price premium'), differences on the individual dependent measures are of minor concern (Hair et al. 2010). The pre-defined hypotheses, which were formulated as theoretical, directed hypotheses are therefore rejected if no significant effect between the comparing entities can be detected for the overall dependent variable 'consumers' product brand evaluations'. The overall p-value as indicated in the SPSS output 'multivariate tests' of the MANOVA is therefore indicative of a hypothesis acceptance or rejection. The level of significance (i.e. the level of risk accepted by researchers) was set at 0.05 for all subsequent analyses, which is a commonly accepted level of risk (Hair et al. 2010). In instances, where a more conservative level of significance of 0.01 was applied due to the sensitivity of the respective test, it is mentioned explicitly.

Overall, nine MANOVAs, one for each hypothesis, were computed: six for analysing the effect of each treatment combination in comparison to the respective product brand in the control group (e.g. Brämhults by Nestlé vs. Brämhults without an endorsement) as well as three MANOVAs to compare the influence of a negative image versus a positive image for each product brand (i.e. Brämhults, God Morgon, Albi) (e.g. Brämhults by Arla vs. Brämhults by Nestlé). Thus, in all nine MANOVAs solely two entities were compared with each other, which makes the application of post-hoc tests unnecessary.

4 Empirical Analysis and Findings

The following chapter incorporates the analysis of the generated data and presents the resulting findings. In a first step, the sample is analysed descriptively in terms of their demographic characteristics and their knowledge of the real company behind the product brand. This is followed by an examination of the measurement quality on the basis of a confirmatory factor and reliability analysis. Subsequently, the assumptions underlying a multivariate analysis (MANOVA) are checked and the results of the various MANOVAs are presented. On the basis of these findings, the hypotheses are discussed.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis of the Sample

In the subsequent section the sample will be investigated descriptively. Firstly, the analysis focuses on the subjects' demographic characteristics in terms of age and gender. This analysis is carried out for the overall sample and for each experimental group as well as the control group in order to demonstrate group comparability. In a second step, it is revealed whether the respondents are aware of the real company behind the different product brands to assess whether this knowledge might have potentially influenced subjects' responses.

4.1.1 Demographics

The overall sample size of the experiment is 202, with 50 respectively 51 subjects in the control group and in each of the three experimental groups. The overall sample shows a slight tendency towards more males (57%) than females (43%). The age of the overall sample ranged from 18-65 years with a mean of 44,63. The sample can be considered a relevant target group being composed of regular juice buyers and consumers (72% bought and 85% drank juice within the last month).

As comparability between the different groups of the experiment should be maximised for the sake of validity, it is important to compare the characteristics of the control group as well as the experimental groups to draw conclusions about their matching. The experimental Group A, which was exposed to the treatment combinations Brämhults by Nestlé and God Morgon by Arla, has a group size of 51 subjects. The gender within this sample is nearly equally distributed, with 49% females and 51% males. The age ranges from 21 to 65 years with a mean of 46,53. The experimental Group B, which involved the treatment combinations Brämhults by Arla and Albi by Nestlé, has a sample size of 50 subjects. The sample shows a slight tendency towards more males (58%) than females (42%). The age spans from 19 to 65 years with a mean of 44,32. The experimental Group C was exposed to the treatment combinations God Morgon by Nestlé and Albi by Arla. It involved 50 subjects and was composed of the following gender distribution: 58% males and 42% females. The age ranges from 20 to 65 years with a mean of 45,36. The control group was composed of 51 subjects with a slighter dominance of males (58%) over females (42%). The subjects' age spans from 18 to 65 years with a mean of 42,31. The outlined characteristics of the respective groups are summarised in Table 9 hereunder.

	Group Size (subjects)	Gender (%) female	male	Age Range (years)	Age Mean (years)
Exp. Group A	51	49%	51%	21-65	46,53
Exp. Group B	50	42%	58%	19-65	44,32
Exp. Group C	50	42%	58%	20-65	45,36
Control Group	51	42%	58%	18-65	42,31

Table 9: Descriptive Analysis of the control group and experimental groups (own illustration)

Table 9 reveals that *the experimental groups and the control group are, except for minor deviations in terms of gender distribution and age mean, highly balanced in terms of demographic characteristics and group sizes.* The respective groups can therefore be regarded as highly comparable.

4.1.2 Knowledge of the real Company behind the Product Brand

The control question in the experimental questionnaire asking for the respondent's knowledge of the company behind the depicted product brand showed the following results.

With respect to the product brand Brämhults, it was revealed that the majority of respondents, which were exposed to a Brämhults treatment combination, believe that the brand is owned by an independent company (Group A: 61%; Group B: 54%). Only 18% of the subjects of Group A and 16% of the subjects of Group B think that Brämhults is owned by a bigger corporation. Of these respondents, however, nobody could correctly identify that Eckes-Granini is the real corporation behind the Brämhults juice. The remaining subjects answered 'I don't know' and thus expressed insecurity about the company behind Brämhults. These findings reveal that in the instances of the treatment combinations involving Brämhults likely no confusion within the respondents has come up, as consumers are not aware that is an un-real combination.

With regard to the God Morgon product brand, the results revealed that 26% of the subjects for Group C (treatment combination God Morgon by Nestlé) have correctly identified Arla as the corporation behind the product, by freely choosing from a list of possible corporations. Among the subjects of Group A (treatment combination God Morgon by Arla), 59% believe that it is true that Arla owns the product brand God Morgon, while 18% disagree to this statement and 23% expressed that they do not know whether Arla is the owner of God Morgon. The fact that 59% assumed that Arla is the owner of God Morgon and that a considerable amount of 26% even correctly identified Arla as the company behind God Morgon indicates that not all respondents are unaware of the relation between God Morgon and Arla. In the case of the treatment combination God Morgon by Nestlé, possible confusion might have arisen among the respondents that were prior aware of the real company behind God Morgon, namely Arla. This confusion was however mitigated in the experimental design by introducing the scenario that God Morgon was recently bought by the company Nestlé, a scenario that might potentially be true and therefore might have detracted respondents from the inconsistency between God Morgon and Nestlé. In the case of the treatment combination God Morgon by Arla, the prior knowledge of this relation cannot have led to confusion as this relation is correct. As outlined in the methodology chapter, no control question was asked within the Albi treatment combinations.

4.2 Quality of Measurements

In order to assess the validity and reliability of the measurement model applied in the study at hand, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) as well as a reliability analysis (RA) is conducted. As prior outlined, the dependent constructs 'overall attitude', 'perceived quality' and 'willingness to pay a price premium' are comprised of three indicators each. In this chapter, it is thus specifically determined via a CFA and RA whether these sets of measured items actually reflect the theoretical latent construct they are supposed to measure (e.g. 'overall attitude') and whether they are reliable as a construct (Hair et al. 2010).

4.2.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

In general terms, factor analysis is a multivariate method of statistical analysis "whose primary purpose is to define the underlying structure among the variables in the analysis" (Hair et al. 2010: 94). The literature distinguishes between exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). While an EFA is applied to determine a factor structure from a multitude of variables without having a prior hypothesis about which factors will emerge out of the analysis, within CFA it is prior assumed based on theory that certain variables correctly measure a certain factor. CFA may thus be used to investigate to which extent the different assumed indicators truly measure a certain construct. (Janssens et al. 2008)

To determine how well the theoretical specification of the dependent constructs 'overall attitude', 'perceived quality' and 'willingness to pay a price premium' matches the data in the study at hand, a confirmatory factor analysis model involving the latent constructs was created in AMOS.

Based on the AMOS output, the unidimensionality of the measurement model respectively the dependent constructs are tested (Janssens et al. 2008). According to Hair et al. (2010: 696), "unidimensional measures mean that a set of measured variables (indicators) can be explained by only one underlying construct". To determine unidimensionality, the variable measures must all have high loadings (> 0.50) and the Critical Ratio (C.R.) must be significant (i.e. C.R. > 1.96) (Janssens et al. 2008). With respect to the study at hand, it was revealed that the standardised loadings for all variables of the three dependent constructs cross the threshold value of 0.50 (lowest value: 0.812 > 0.50). Additionally, the variables satisfy the requirement of significance as the Critical Ratio (C.R.) is in all instances well above the cut-off rate of 1.96 (lowest value: 24.901 > 1.96) (Janssens et al. 2008). Please refer to Appendix C for the AMOS output concerning the loadings and significance levels of the variables.

Unidimensionality can further be studied by determining the 'overall fit' of the measurement model (Janssens et al. 2008). According to Hair et al. (2010), model fit concerns how well the proposed factor structure accounts for the correlations between the variables in the dataset. Within the literature different criteria and threshold values are proposed to determine the goodness of model fit. The most common metrics and their corresponding cut-off rates are summarised in Table 10.

Measure		Threshold value (authors)
CMIN/DF	Chi-square value/degrees of freedom	< 2 (Janssens et al. 2008) < 3 good (Rasch et al. 2004) < 4 acceptable (Rasch et al. 2004)
p	p-value of the model	> 0.05 (Janssens et al. 2008)
GFI	Goodness of Fit Index	> 0.90 (Janssens et al. 2008)
AGFI	Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index	> 0.80 (Janssens et al. 2008)
TLI	Tucker-Lewis-Index	> 0.90 (Janssens et al. 2008)
CFI	Comparative Fit Index	> 0.90 (Janssens et al. 2008)
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	< 0.05 good fit < 0.08 acceptable fit (Browne & Cudeck 1993, in Janssens et al. 2008)
SRMR	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual	< 0.08 (Hu & Bentler 1999, in Janssens et al. 2008)

Table 10: Overall fit Criteria (adapted from Janssens et al. 2008, Rasch et al. 2004)

In relation to the measurement model at hand, the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) revealed that *the original model is not acceptable according to all of its indicators*. While the majority of criteria are fulfilled (GFI = 0.944 > 0.90; AGFI = 0.895 > 0.80; TLI = 0.970 > 0.90; CFI = 0.980 > 0.90; SRMR = 0.040 < 0.08), the model shows discrepancies in terms of three criteria (CMIN/DF = 4,835; p = 0.00; RMSEA = 0.092).

To identify potential sources of improvement, the modification indices of covariance were consulted. These indices indicate the potential decrease on the Chi-square value (i.e. decrease of discrepancy) when modelling or allowing an additional relationship (Janssens et al. 2008). In the case of the original model at hand, the covariance indices (see Appendix D) highlight that through the removal of the first item of the construct 'perceived quality' (indicated as 'e1') the highest decrease in the Chi-Square value can be achieved. Through the omittance of this indicator, the model fit could be improved considerably (GFI = 0.971 > 0.90; AGFI = 0.938 > 0.80; TLI = 0.983 > 0.90; CFI = 0.99 > 0.90; SRMR = 0.037 < 0.08; RMSEA = 0.07 < 0.08; CMIN/DF = 3,251; p = 0.00). Apart from improved indices in nearly all cases, the results also show that the prior discrepancies to the proposed threshold value could be eliminated or at least minimised. The prior discrepancy of the RMSEA value is now ruled out by having achieved a satisfactory value of 0.070 (< threshold value 0.080). Furthermore, the CMIN/DF value could be reduced tremendously (from CMIN/DF = 4,835 down to CMIN/DF = 3,251), indicating an acceptable value according to Rasch et al. (2004). The sole fit index that could not be improved is the p-value. According to Hair et al. (2010), the p-value is however less meaningful in relative comparison to other fit metrics. *Based on these indices, the authors consider the improved model, which involves the removal of the first indicator of the construct 'perceived quality', as satisfactory.* The model will therefore be applied in its modified form in subsequent analyses.

Apart from achieving a satisfactory 'overall fit', the overall validity of the measurement model further depends on assuring construct validity (i.e. the extent to which a set of items actually reflect the latent construct) (Hair et al. 2010). Convergent validity and discriminant validity being the primary components of construct validity, it will be briefly commented upon these constructs

in the context of the study. To ensure convergent validity (i.e. the degree to which two indicators of a latent variable confirm one another), two major conditions must be satisfied, namely a good fit of the measurement model as well as significant and high factor loadings (estimates > 0.50; C.R. > 1.96). (Janssens et al. 2008) *As outlined in Appendix E, these conditions are satisfied also for the modified model.* Owing to the fact that AMOS does not offer a possibility to determine discriminant validity (i.e. extent to which a construct is truly distinct from other constructs), the proposed procedure by Fornell and Larcker (1981, in Janssens et al 2008) was applied to test for discriminant validity. These authors propose that for each couple of constructs the square of the correlations among them should be smaller than their corresponding average variance extracted (AVE) (Janssens et al. 2008). Therefore, the average variance extracted for each latent variable (see Appendix F) as well as the squared correlations based on the correlations among the constructs were calculated. Based on these calculations, the following Table 11 emerges.

	Overall Attitude	**Quality**	**Price Premium**
Overall Attitude	**0,881**		
Perceived Quality	0,643	**0,851**	
Price Premium	0,327	0,402	**0,808**

Table 11: Discriminant Validity (own illustration)

The table indicates that none of the variances that are shared by two constructs (squared correlations) is higher than the AVE of these constructs (marked in bold), indicating discriminant validity for the three constructs (Janssens et al. 2008).

In conclusion, it can be said that *the final measurement model proves to be unidimensional and that it indicates convergent and discriminant validity.*

4.2.2 Reliability Analysis

The confirmatory factor analysis was complemented by a reliability analysis in order to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items and thus the consequential reliability of the dependent constructs ('overall attitude', 'perceived quality' and 'willingness to pay a price premium'). In this respect, both Cronbach's Alpha (Cα) for all three latent constructs for each possible juice brand respectively juice brand combination as well as an overall composite reliability (CR) value for each latent construct were calculated.

The results of the reliability analysis are summarised in Table 12 hereunder.

	Dependent Constructs		
Cronbach Alpha (Cα) Treatment combinations & control group	Overall Attitude (3 items)	Perceived Quality (2 items)	Willingness to pay a price premium (3 items)
Brämhults	.944	.901	.867
Brämhults by Arla	.942	.921	.908
Brämhults by Nestlé	.948	.955	.934
God Morgon	.914	.901	.868
God Morgon by Arla	.979	.931	.970
God Morgon by Nestlé	.931	.920	.983
Albi	.878	.963	.916
Albi by Arla	.927	.920	.977
Albi by Nestlé	.927	.976	.901
Composite Reliability (CR)	0.957	0.919	0.926

Table 12: Reliability Analysis (own illustration)

These results show that Cα for all latent constructs is very high and that in all instances the commonly agreed threshold value of 0.70 (Hair et al. 2010) is crossed (lowest value: 0.867). The Cα values are even higher than the threshold value of 0.80 as recommended by Bryman & Bell (2011). In specific, this means that all three items of the respective constructs correlate to a high degree, indicating great internal consistency and reliability of the items.

This indication is also supported by the composite reliability (CR) results. For all three dependent constructs the composite reliability is well above the commonly proposed threshold value of 0.70 (overall attitude CR = 0.957; perceived quality CR = 0.919; willingness to pay a price premium CR = 0.926), which indicates strong internal consistency (Janssens et al. 2008). Please refer to Appendix G for the calculation of the composite reliability.

Overall, the results of the confirmatory factor analysis and the reliability analysis indicate a high quality of the dependent constructs. To enhance clarity, the overall means of the different items for each dependent construct were calculated and aggregated as an overall score for the construct, which is used in the subsequent analyses.

4.3 Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA)

The primary method of data analysis applied in the study at hand is the multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). Prior of applying a MANOVA, several conditions need to be satisfied. These requirements are outlined subsequently and checked for compliance. In a next step the pre-defined hypotheses are analysed and checked for verification respectively falsification based on the results of the nine MANOVAs that were performed.

4.3.1 Check of the Assumptions underlying a MANOVA

According to Janssens et al. (2008), four assumptions must be met to be able to consider the multivariate test procedures of MANOVA to be valid. These conditions include: 1.) observations must be at least interval-scaled, 2.) observations must be independent, 3.) the variance-covariance matrices must be equal for all treatment groups, and 4.) the set of dependent variables must follow a multivariate normal distribution.

The first requirement of a MANOVA, namely that the observations are interval-scaled, is met in the study at hand as all dependent variables were measured via a seven-point Likert-scale respectivly seven-point semantic differential scale which are according to Rasch et al. (2004) considered as being characterised by equal distances between the response options. In specific, this means that it is assumed that the respondents perceive the different response options as equally-distant which characterises an interval scale (Rasch et al. 2004).

The independence of the observations, i.e. that the responses in each group are made independently of responses in any other group, was ensured in the present study by applying a random sampling plan and by randomly assigning the subjects to the control group respectively experimental groups. According to Hair et al. (2010: 479), these experimental arrangements ensure "the necessary independence of observations".

The third assumption underlying a MANOVA, namely the equality of variance-covariance matrices across the groups, is concerned with substantial differences in the amount of variance for the dependent variables for each group (Hair et al. 2010). Apart from maintaining equal sample sizes among the experimental groups and the control group, which already infers homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices (Hair et al. 2010), Box's M tests for each of the nine MANOVAs were conducted to test for the likelihood of differences between the groups. Given the sensitivity of the Box's M tests, the level of significance was set at the conservative level of 0.01 (Janssens et al. 2008). The results indicate that the null hypothesis from the Box's M tests cannot be rejected in all instances as all p-values were well above the threshold value of 0.01 (lowest value: 0.085). *This indicates that in all instances equality of variance-covariance matrices across the groups is ensured.* To validate these findings, Levene tests for each MANOVA were carried out. These revealed that in all cases the threshold value of 0.05 was crossed and therefore further lend support to the assumption of equal covariance matrices across the groups. (Hair et al. 2010)

The final assumption that needs to be adhered to is that the dependent variables follow a multivariate normal distribution. As no direct test is available to check for multivariate normality, the univariate normality for each dependent variable within the groups used for each MANOVA was tested in the study at hand as this comprises the best approximation to a multivariate normal distribution (Hair et al. 2010; Janssens et al. 2008). The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test with Lilliefors corrections as well as the Shapiro-Wilk's test were applied to test for univariate respectively multivariate normality. The findings reveal that for nearly all dependent variables among all product brand comparisons applied in the MANOVAs (except for the 'perceived quality' construct for the product group God Morgon), the p-value is below 0.05. This indicates that apparently no normal distribution is given. According to Janssens et al. (2008), a rejection of the null hypothesis does however not necessarily indicate that the deviation would be sufficiently large to cause a distortion of the statistical analyses which are to be performed on the data. Therefore, Janssens et al. (2008) recommend performing a graphic inspection of the normal distribution in addition to the formal testing. As a graphic indicator of normality, Q-Q plots for each dependent variable among each product brand comparison were used. In all instances (except for some minor deviations in the product group of Albi), the Q-Q plots indicate normality as the observations are generally plotted closely along the straight line. Although this univariate graphic inspection acts only as an approximation for normality within a multivariate setting, *based on the graphical findings the researchers assume a normal distribution of the dependent variables*

underlying all MANOVAs. Additionally, it should be noted that the MANOVA is generally robust if violations of the normality assumption are modest (Hair et al. 2010).

Consequently, it can be argued that all assumptions for applying a MANOVA have been satisfied.

4.3.2 Main Analysis: Hypotheses Check

Having identified that all assumptions underlying the MANOVA are fulfilled, in a next step the pre-defined hypotheses (as outlined in Chapter 2.5) are analysed for verification respectively falsification based on the results of the MANOVAs. As the study at hand investigates the effect of a corporate brand with varying images on consumers' evaluations of different product brands with either a positive or negative image or one which is considered as 'new' in the market, it is advisable to split up the analysis of hypotheses according to these product brands (Brämhults, God Morgon, Albi), as it was also undertaken in the calculation of the MANOVAs. Specifically, nine MANOVAs were calculated, one for each hypothesis and thus three MANOVAs for each product brand. For every product brand, one MANOVA calculates whether the consumers' evaluations of a product brand which is endorsed by a company with a positive image differs significantly (concerning the arithmetic mean of the DV) from the same product brand without an endorsement (being represented by the control group). The second MANOVA investigates the same effect for a corporate brand with a negative image. And the third MANOVA examines whether consumers' evaluations of the product brand which is endorsed by a corporation with a positive image differs significantly from consumers' evaluations of a product brand being endorsed by a company with a negative image. The findings of the MANOVAs and the resulting discussion of hypotheses for each respective case example are presented hereunder.

4.3.2.1 The Case of Brämhults – a Product Brand with a Positive Image

Within the case example of Brämhults, the effect of corporate brands with varying images (either positive or negative) on consumers' evaluations of a well-known product brand with a positive image is investigated (i.e. treatment combinations Brämhults by Arla and Brämhults by Nestlé are each compared with the control group Brämhults). In addition, the treatment combinations Brämhults by Arla and Brämhults by Nestlé are compared to account for a possible differing influence of the corporate image on the respective product brands within an endorsement.

In Chapter 2.5, it was hypothesised that a positive corporate image further improves consumers' evaluations of an already positively perceived product brand ($H_{1.1}$), while a negative corporate image was assumed to have a negative effect on consumers' evaluations of a positively perceived product brand ($H_{1.2}$). It was therefore assumed that the different images of the corporate brands (either positive or negative) have a differing influence on consumers' product brand evaluations ($H_{1.3}$).

The MANOVAs performed for the product brand Brämhults, however, revealed findings that are contrary to the assumptions made in the hypotheses. The following Table 13 summarises the results for $H_{1.1}$-$H_{1.3}$ (see Appendix H for the complete SPSS output).

Hypo-thesis	Compari-sons	p-value overall	Rejection (X) or Acceptance (✓)	p-value for each dependent construct (a) overall attitude (b) perceived quality (c) price premium	η^2 for each dependent construct (a) overall attitude (b) perceived quality (c) price premium
$H_{1.1}$	Brämhults by Arla vs. Brämhults	0.787 > 0.05	X	(a) 0.773 > 0.017* (b) 0.386 > 0.017 (c) 0.852 > 0.017	(a) 0.001 (b) 0.008 (c) 0.000
$H_{1.2}$	Brämhults by Nestlé vs. Brämhults	0.375 > 0.05	X	(a) 0.084 > 0.017 (b) 0.117 > 0.017 (c) 0.414 > 0.017	(a) 0.030 (b) 0.024 (c) 0.007
$H_{1.3}$	Brämhults by Arla vs. Brämhults by Nestlé	0.513 > 0.05	X	(a) 0.150 > 0.017 (b) 0.448 > 0.017 (c) 0.539 > 0.017	(a) 0.021 (b) 0.006 (c) 0.004

* Note: To account for Type I errors occurring from performing different univariate ANOVAs (as in the case of evaluating the individual dependent constructs), the usual threshold p-value of 0.05 must be divided by the number of tests performed, i.e. that it is converted into 0.017 (=0.05/3) (Janssens et al. 2008).

Table 13: MANOVA Case Example Brämhults (own illustration)

These results show that in all three instances the overall p-values are above 0.05, indicating that there are *no significant differences in terms of consumers' overall product brand evaluations between Brämhults in an endorsement (either endorsed by corporate brand with a positive or a negative image) and Brämhults as a stand-alone brand.* Additionally, it was revealed that the image of the corporate brand (either positive or negative) does not exert a differing influence on the positively perceived product brand. Consequently, $H_{1.1}$ – $H_{1.3}$ need to be rejected.

Although no significant differences were found among the groups, the mean values of each comparing entity (as outlined in Table 14) allow us drawing inferences about tendencies.

Descriptive Statistics				
	Group	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**N**
Overall Attitude	Brämhults by Nestlé	5,1634	1,3070	51
	Brämhults by Arla	5,5533	1,3942	50
	Brämhults	5,6340	1,4130	51
Perceived quality	Brämhults by Nestlé	4,5490	1,3660	51
	Brämhults by Arla	4,7467	1,2391	50
	Brämhults	4,9673	1,3034	51
Price premium	Brämhults by Nestlé	2,8235	1,5016	51
	Brämhults by Arla	3,0133	1,5936	50
	Brämhults	3,0719	1,5582	51
Overall	Brämhults by Nestlé	4,1786	1,3915	51
	Brämhults by Arla	4,4378	1,4090	50
	Brämhults	4,5577	1,4249	51

Table 14: Descriptive Statistics Case Example Brämhults (own illustration)

First of all, the descriptive statistics depicted in the Table 14 clearly indicate that the mean value of the dependent construct 'overall attitude' for the control group Brämhults confirms the results of the pre-study. In both studies the product brand Brämhults is perceived as favourable with only slighter variations (pre-study $\bar{x}$ = 6,061; main study $\bar{x}$ = 5,634), which confirms the usage of Brämhults as a case example of a product brand with a positive image.

Furthermore, the mean values as depicted in Table 14 clearly indicate that for all dependent constructs in all instances the mean value is lower when a corporate brand is added to the product brand Brämhults. This indicates that Brämhults is more favourably perceived as a stand-alone brand without an endorsement. This tendency is in contrast to the effects presumed in $H_{1.1}$ where it was assumed that a positive corporate image further enhances consumers' evaluations of the product brand, but in line with the effects assumed in $H_{1.2}$ where it was hypothesised that the addition of a negative corporate image leads to less favourable perceptions of the product brand than without an endorsement. Although both the strong (i.e. positive image) and the weak (i.e. negative image) corporate brand have a negative effect on consumers' evaluations in the case of Brämhults, the mean values for all dependent constructs indicate that the detrimental effect is more strongly apparent for the weak corporate brand (i.e. Nestlé) than for the strong corporate brand (i.e. Arla). In other words, although both corporate brands have a negative effect on Brämhults, adding Nestlé to Brämhults is worse than adding Arla to Brämhults. This indicates a differing influence of the corporate image on consumers' product perceptions. This tendency is in accordance with the effects presumed in $H_{1.3}$. It should however be noted that all of the outlined tendencies are non-significant.

4.3.2.2 The Case of God Morgon – a Product Brand with a Negative Image

Within the product group of God Morgon, which is used as a case example of a weak product brand, the effect of corporate brands with varying images (either positive or negative) on consumers' evaluations of a product brand which is perceived as unfavourable is examined (i.e. treatment combinations God Morgon by Arla and God Morgon by Nestlé are each compared with the evaluation of God Morgon in the control group). Furthermore, the treatment combinations God Morgon by Arla and God Morgon by Nestlé are compared to be able to draw inferences about the possible differing influence of the corporate image on a negatively perceived product brand.

The hypotheses (outlined in Chapter 2.5) for the product group God Morgon presumed that a positive corporate image enhances consumers' evaluations of a negatively perceived product brand ($H_{2.1}$), while a negative corporate image exacerbates the already negative product brand evaluations ($H_{2.2}$). Also in this instance, it is hypothesised that the corporate image has a different influence on the product brand's evaluations depending on its favourability ($H_{2.3}$).

The MANOVAs calculated for the product brand God Morgon yielded results that are in contrast to the presumptions made in all three hypotheses. The following Table 15 summarises the results for $H_{2.1}$-$H_{2.3}$ (see Appendix I for the complete SPSS output).

Hypo-thesis	Compari-sons	p-value overall	Rejection (X) or Accep-tance (✓)	p-value for each dependent construct (a) overall attitude (b) perceived quality (c) price premium	η^2 for each dependent construct (a) overall attitude (b) perceived quality (c) price premium
$H_{2.1}$	God Morgon by Arla vs. God Morgon	0.309 > 0.05	X	(a) 0.654 > 0.017* (b) 0.316 >0.017 (c) 0.558 > 0.017	(a) 0.002 (b) 0.010 (c) 0.003
$H_{2.2}$	God Morgon by Nestlé vs. God Morgon	0.920 > 0.05	X	(a) 0.749 > 0.017 (b) 0.843 > 0.017 (c) 0.648 > 0.017	(a) 0.001 (b) 0.000 (c) 0.002
$H_{2.3}$	God Morgon by Arla vs. God Morgon by Nestlé	0.193 > 0.05	X	(a) 0.450 > 0.017 (b) 0.420 > 0.017 (c) 0.301 > 0.017	(a) 0.006 (b) 0.007 (c) 0.011

* Note: To account for Type I errors occurring from performing different univariate ANOVAs (as in the case of evaluating the individual dependent constructs), the usual threshold p-value of 0.05 must be divided by the number of tests performed, i.e. that it is converted into 0.017 (=0.05/3) (Janssens et al. 2008).

Table 15: MANOVA Case Example God Morgon (own illustration)

These results show that in all three instances the p-values of the multivariate tests are above 0.05. This means that also in the case of the product group God Morgon, consumers' evaluations of this product brand do not significantly differ depending on the prevalence of an endorsement (either positive or negative). Furthermore, the results indicate that the favourability of the corporate image (whether positive or negative) has no significant influence on consumers' evaluations of the product brand. In consequence, $H_{2.1}$ – $H_{2.3}$ have to be rejected as well.

Despite non-significant findings, also in the case of God Morgon, the mean values of each product-corporate brand within this product group (see Table 16) are consulted to draw conclusions about possible tendencies.

Descriptive Statistics				
	Group	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**N**
Overall Attitude	God Morgon by Nestlé	5,0200	1,3874	50
	God Morgon by Arla	4,8235	1,2135	51
	God Morgon	4,9346	1,2807	51
Perceived quality	God Morgon by Nestlé	4,2000	1,2527	50
	God Morgon by Arla	4,4052	1,2950	51
	God Morgon	4,1503	1,2584	51
Price premium	God Morgon by Nestlé	2,2467	1,2667	50
	God Morgon by Arla	2,5294	1,4593	51
	God Morgon	2,3660	1,3470	51

Overall	God Morgon by Nestlé	3,8222	1,3023	50
	God Morgon by Arla	3,9194	1,3226	51
	God Morgon	3,8170	1,2954	51

Table 16: Descriptive Statistics Case Example God Morgon (own illustration)

Firstly, the mean value of the overall attitude within the control group indicates that the attitude towards God Morgon slightly differs in the main study from the pre-study. While the pre-study has revealed an average mean score of 4,212, the control group within the main study has a slightly more positive attitude towards God Morgon ($\bar{x}$ = 4,9346). At first glance, when having in mind the 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree) this might indicate that God Morgon is no longer suitable as a representative case of a weak product brand. However, when reviewing the bottom 2 boxes (i.e. the percentage of respondents that has ticked the response options 1 or 2 in the questionnaire) and top 2 boxes (i.e. the percentage of respondents that has ticked the response options 6 or 7) scores (see Table 17), it becomes obvious that God Morgon in relative comparison to Brämhults is still generally perceived as less favourable. This is further supported by a multivariate analysis among the product groups within the control group (see Appendix K for the results), which revealed that Brämhults and God Morgon differ significantly in terms of attitude. God Morgon is thus still indicative of a product brand with a negative image.

	Attitude Mean	Bottom 2 boxes (%)	Top 2 boxes (%)
Brämhults	5,6340	3,9%	60,8%
God Morgon	4,9346	4,6%	36,7%

Table 17: Comparison of Mean Values and Top and Bottom Boxes (own illustration)

Having a glance back to the Table 16, which indicates the mean values for the dependent constructs for all product-corporate brand combinations within the product group God Morgon, it is shown that the addition of a positive corporate image (i.e. Arla) slightly enhances the prior negative consumers' evaluations of the product brand which would be in line with $H_{2.1}$. This finding was however only found to occur for the constructs 'perceived quality' and 'willingness to pay a price premium', and not for the 'overall attitude'. In contrast with the effects presumed in $H_{2.2}$, the addition of a negative corporate image (i.e. Nestlé) to a weak product brand does not lead to more overall favourable perceptions, as the tendential enhancement is extremely low. Generally, it becomes however evident that the findings are inconsistent among all combinations and that the differences in the overall evaluations are so little that they can be considered not meaningful. Consequently, no definite and meaningful tendencies concerning the differing influence of the corporate image in the case of God Morgon can be identified.

4.3.2.3 The Case of Albi – a fictitious, new Product Brand

Within the product group Albi, which is a product brand not available on the Swedish market and which therefore depicts a potential new product launch, the effect of an endorser with varying images (either positive or negative) on consumers' evaluations of the new product brand is analysed (i.e. treatment combinations Albi by Arla and Albi by Nestlé are each compared with the control group Albi). As in all other product groups, also in this instance the possible differing influence of the corporate image on the respective product brand is accounted for and therefore the combinations Albi by Arla and Albi by Nestlé are compared.

In Chapter 2.5, it was hypothesised that both a positive and negative corporate image has a positive effect on consumers' evaluations of a 'new' product brand ($H_{3.1}$ & $H_{3.2}$). However, it was assumed that the effect is stronger for the positive corporate image than for the negative corporate image. The different images of the corporate brands (either positive or negative) are thus supposed to have a differing influence on consumers' evaluations of the new product ($H_{3.3}$).

Descriptive Statistics				
	Group	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**N**
Overall Attitude	Albi by Nestlé	3,4400	1,3256	50
	Albi by Arla	3,6400	1,1911	50
	Albi	2,9216	1,0405	51
Perceived quality	Albi by Nestlé	3,1800	1,0631	50
	Albi by Arla	3,4400	1,1770	50
	Albi	2,7778	1,1268	51
Price premium	Albi by Nestlé	1,7133	,9875	50
	Albi by Arla	2,0467	1,2159	50
	Albi	1,6863	1,1989	51
Overall	Albi by Nestlé	2,7778	1,1254	50
	Albi by Arla	3,0422	1,1947	50
	Albi	2,4619	1,1221	51

Table 18: Descriptive Statistics Case Example Albi (own illustration)

The results in Table 18 indicate that the effects presumed in $H_{3.1}$-$H_{3.3}$ are in accordance with the tendencies reflected in the mean values. The mean values clearly indicate that for all dependent constructs in all instances the mean value is higher when a corporate brand is added to the 'new' product brand Albi. *This indicates that Albi is more favourably perceived when an endorser, independent of its image, is added to its value communication.* An endorsement for a 'new' product brand is thus likely perceived as favourable from a consumer perspective. This finding is contrary to the product group Brämhults where the addition of a corporate brand proved to be by trend detrimental in all instances. What is however similar to the case of Brämhults in the case of Albi is that in all instances across all dependent constructs an endorsement by Arla is perceived as more favourable than an endorsement by Nestlé (see mean value in Table 18). This indicates that a positive corporate image is more strongly valued than a negative one, which supports a differing influence of the corporate image on consumers' product perceptions.

However, in most instances these tendencies solely remain tendencies, as they do not show significant effects, as outlined in Table 19 (please refer to Appendix J for the complete SPSS output).

Hypo-thesis	Compari-sons	p-value overall	Rejection (X) or Acceptance (✓)	p-value for each dependent construct (a) overall attitude (b) perceived quality (c) price premium	η^2 for each dependent construct (a) overall attitude (b) perceived quality (c) price premium
$H_{3.1}$	Albi by Arla vs. Albi	0.014 < 0.05	✓	(a) 0.002 < 0.017* (b) 0.005 < 0.017 (c) 0.137 > 0.017	(a) 0.095 (b) 0.078 (c) 0.022
$H_{3.2}$	Albi by Nestlé vs. Albi	0.126 > 0.05	X	(a) 0.031 > 0.017 (b) 0.068 > 0.017 (c) 0.902> 0.017	(a) 0.046 (b) 0.033 (c) 0.000
$H_{3.3}$	Albi by Arla vs. Albi by Nestlé	0.476 > 0.05	X	(a) 0.429 > 0.017 (b) 0.249 > 0.017 (c) 0.136 > 0.017	(a) 0.006 (b) 0.014 (c) 0.023

* Note: To account for Type I errors occurring from performing different univariate ANOVAs (as in the case of evaluating the individual dependent constructs), the usual threshold p-value of 0.05 must be divided by the number of tests performed, i.e. that it is converted into 0.017 (=0.05/3) (Janssens et al. 2008).

Table 19: MANOVA Case Example Albi (own illustration)

The results in Table 19 show that only in the comparison of Albi by Arla with Albi in the control group the overall p-value does not cross the threshold value of 0.05, which indicates that a significant difference between these two groups exists. *Based on this finding, it can be argued that the mean value of Albi by Arla is significantly higher than without the endorsement and thus $H_{3.1}$ is accepted.* The tests of between-subjects effects further specifies that the significant effect is inherent in consumers' evaluations of the product brand's overall attitude and perceived quality which consumers both rate as significantly more positive when a positively perceived endorser is added to the 'new' product brand. According to Cohen's (1988) classification of effect sizes, the respective sizes are in the medium range for these significant effects, indicating a medium strength of relationship.

For all other product-corporate brand comparisons the overall p-value is above 0.05, indicating a non-significant effect among these groups. This means that although a tendency was revealed that was in line with the assumptions in the hypotheses, $H_{3.2}$ and $H_{3.3}$ have to be rejected, as the tendency is non-significant. In other words, the evaluation of Albi being endorsed by a negatively perceived company (i.e. Nestlé) does not differ significantly from the evaluation without an endorsement. Moreover, the results in Table 19 indicate that a positive corporate image does not differ significantly in its impact on consumers' evaluations of a 'new' product brand from a negative corporate image. Nevertheless, the fact that Albi by Arla differed significantly in comparison to Albi without an endorsement, whereby this effect was not significant for Albi by Nestlé in comparison to Albi in the control group indicates that the favourability of the corporate image has a definite impact, which is however not significant.

4.3.2.4 Summary of Hypotheses Check

The results of the hypotheses check are summarised in the subsequent Table.

Number	Hypothesis	
$H_{1.1}$	When a well-known product brand with a positive image is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a positive image, consumers evaluate the product brand as even more favourable.	X
$H_{1.2}$	When a well-known product brand with a positive image is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a negative image, consumers evaluate the product brand as less favourable.	X
$H_{1.3}$	The image of a corporate endorser, either positive or negative, has a differing influence on consumers' evaluations of a product brand with a positive image.	X
$H_{2.1}$	When a well-known product brand with a negative image is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a positive image, consumers evaluate the product brand as more favourable.	X
$H_{2.2}$	When a well-known product brand with a negative image is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a negative image, consumers evaluate the product brand as even more unfavourable.	X
$H_{2.3}$	The image of a corporate endorser, either positive or negative, has a differing influence on consumers' evaluations of a product brand with a negative image.	X
$H_{3.1}$	When a new product brand is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a positive image, consumers evaluate the product brand as more favourable.	✓
$H_{3.2}$	When a new product brand is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a negative image, consumers evaluate the product brand as more favourable than without an endorsement, but less favourable than when it is endorsed by a corporate brand with a positive image.	X
$H_{3.3}$	The image of a corporate endorser, either positive or negative, has a differing influence on consumers' evaluations of a new product brand.	X

Table 20: Results of Hypotheses Check (X = rejected, ✓ = accepted) (own illustration)

5 Discussion

In this chapter the empirical findings presented in the previous chapter are discussed by relating them to the existent literature. The results are thoroughly debated on the basis of the three different case examples.

5.1 Strong Product Brand – No Need for a Companion

In relation to the well-known product brand with a positive image (i.e. Brämhults), the results of the empirical analysis show that all three hypotheses ($H_{1.1}$-$H_{1.3}$) need to be rejected (see Table 13). In other words, *it was revealed that a corporate endorsement of a strong product brand, regardless of the favourability of the corporate image, does not significantly influence consumers' overall product brand evaluations.* Additionally, it was demonstrated that in the case of a strong product brand, consumers' product brand evaluations do not differ significantly depending on the image of the corporate endorser (i.e. that Brämhults by Nestlé does not differ in its consumers' product evaluations from Brämhults by Arla).

Especially in regard to the first hypothesis ($H_{1.1}$), which presumed that the endorsement of a positively-perceived corporate brand (i.e. Arla) further enhances consumers' evaluations of the strong product brand (i.e. Brämhults), the study at hand reveals astonishing results at first sight, as the literature underlying the hypothesis clearly states that a linkage between two positively perceived brand levels boosts both brands (Souiden et al. 2006). In general, it is claimed that the product brand equity can be increased by borrowing equity from the corporate brand (Keller 2003), i.e. that the product brand respectively the corporation benefits doubly from existing brand equity (Saunders & Guoqun 1997). According to Souiden et al. (2006) as well as Ueltschy and Laroche (2004) particularly the merger respectively co-branding of two strong brands is mutually beneficial, leading to a transfer of positive brand associations as well as enhanced brand equity. Hence, comparable assumptions were derived for the case of an endorsement of a well-known, strong product brand by a likewise well-known and strong corporate brand.

Contrary to the hypothesised assumption, the findings however indicate that the endorsement of a well-known, strong product brand by a well-known, strong corporate brand does not significantly improve consumers' overall product brand evaluations (in terms of overall attitude, perceived quality, willingness to pay a price premium). *Although the literature indicates a positive relation between two strong brands, based on the study at hand this cannot be validated for the endorsed branding strategy where two strong brands are linked.*

The same applies for the second hypothesis ($H_{1.2.}$) where it was assumed that the endorsement of a well-known, strong product brand (i.e. Brämhults) by a well-known, but weak corporate brand (i.e. Nestlé) leads to a deterioration of consumers' product brand evaluations. This hypothesis is grounded in the literature of co-branding respectively brand alliances, in which it is stated that the partnering of a strong brand and a weak brand can negatively affect consumers' perceptions of the strong brand due to the underlying transfer of associations (Ueltschy & Laroche 2004; Simonin & Ruth 1998). Hence, prior positive brand associations are possibly jeopardized through the linkage with an unfavourably perceived brand. *The literature is however contrary to the revealed results which clearly show no significant deterioration of consumers' product brand evaluations of a weak product brand caused by a weak corporate endorsement.* Just like for $H_{1.1}$, the results of $H_{1.2}$ do thus not indicate a significant change in consumers' product brand evaluations through the corporate endorsement.

Since, contrary to the literature, no significant influence on consumers' evaluations of a strong product brand caused by a corporate endorsement can be identified – irrespective of the corporate brand image – prior studies are challenged through the findings at hand. Although several authors (e.g. Muzellec & Lambkin 2007; Souiden et al. 2006; Andreassen & Lindestad 1998; de Ruyter & Wetzels 2000) claim that the corporate image has an impact on consumers' product evaluations, this view cannot be confirmed concerning a well-known product brand with a positive image within an endorsed branding strategy.

As already addressed within the theoretical framework, the findings of different studies investigating the effect of corporate associations on consumers' product brand evaluations are however partly equivocal or even conflicting (Brown & Dacin 1997). Contrary to the above outlined studies, which build the foundation for hypotheses $H_{1.1}$ and $H_{1.2}$, Biehal and Sheinin (2007) found that a corporate message influences different products within a portfolio in a different manner. Based on their findings the authors state that a well-known product brand may be less susceptible to the transfer of corporate associations than a product brand that is rather unknown or new, since existing prior brand knowledge and associations are more difficult to modify. Similarly, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) point to the fact that the impact of corporate endorsement should not be overstated, in cases where the endorsing corporate brand is not well-known or well-regarded respectively where the endorsed product brand is well-regarded and established. Especially in the latter case the strong product brand may not need the reassurance of an endorser. The authors exemplify this case on the basis of Nescafe, a commercial brand of Nestlé. Nescafe represents a strong endorsing brand outside the U.S., but within the U.S. the brand is rather weak. When Nescafe was used as an endorser for Taster's Choice, a strong product brand within the U.S., the endorsement showed little impact on the product image either positively or negatively, due to the prior brand strength of Taster's Choice.

The findings by Biehal and Sheinin (2007) as well as Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) possibly provide an explanation for the indifference in consumers' product brand evaluations after the addition of a corporate brand on the product brand's packaging. Their findings imply that *consumers' evaluations of a strong and well-known product brand ($H_{1.1}$, $H_{1.2}$) are more difficult to change through the implementation of a corporate endorsement as the product brand already holds strong, favourable consumer associations.* Thus, the product brand does not need the reassurance of a strong corporate brand, being therefore less susceptible to a transfer of brand associations and a resulting change of consumers' product brand evaluations. Likewise, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) claim that an endorsement by an unfavourably perceived corporate brand ($H_{1.2}$) tends to have little impact on consumers' product evaluations, which is underlined in the findings under consideration. The results of both groups of authors therefore provide a possible explanation and better understanding for the findings at hand.

Although no significant changes of consumers' product brands evaluations are revealed in the case of a corporate endorsement of a strong product brand (i.e. Brämhults), both corporate endorsement variants (strong corporate brand and weak corporate brand) show by tendency a slight decrease in consumers' product brand evaluations. In both cases, consumers' product brand evaluations deteriorate in total and on each of the three dependent constructs (overall attitude, perceived quality, willingness to pay a price premium). *Overall, this makes clear that a strong product brand is by tendency most favourably perceived as a stand-alone brand without any corporate endorsement.*

Especially in regard to the endorsement of a strong product brand by a likewise strong corporate brand this is an astonishing finding, as based on the literature a positive relationship was expected. Even though these outlined tendencies are non-significant, they should not be neglected, as they still give a hint on possible changes in consumers' product brand evaluations. When considering the market share of the both selected well-known product brands within the study at hand, added together also minor changes in consumers' product brand evaluations can have a big impact.

The indifference or slight deterioration of consumers' product brand evaluations caused by the corporate endorsement can possibly be traced back to the fact that the selected product brand Brämhults holds strong associations in terms of autonomy and independence. The main study revealed that the majority of consumers think of Brämhults AB, the immediate company behind the product brand Brämhults, as a very independent organization; meaning that consumers do not assume that the company and the corresponding product brand are owned by a bigger, international corporation. Hence, it can be inferred that consumers likely associate Brämhults with a rather Swedish or even local brand and, therefore, secondary associations brought about by a large, international corporation, such as Nestlé or Arla, might be conflicting to or contrary with prior brand associations. Thus, it can possibly be assumed that in this instance no perceived fit is given between product brand associations and corporate brand associations. Within the literature it is however claimed that fit is an important prerequisite for the transfer of associations (Boisvert 2011; Berens et al. 2005; Aaker & Keller 1990; Keller 1993; Uggla 2004). More precisely, it is important that the combination of brands makes sense to consumers in order for a transfer of associations to occur (Uggla 2004; Boisvert 2011). Thus, the lack of fit between Brämhults and Arla or Nestlé potentially explains that no respectively a minor transfer of associations occurs, resulting in significantly indifferent or by tendency slightly decreased product brand evaluations. This demonstrates that the varying product brand and corporate brand characteristics need to be investigated in greater detail in order to understand if both brands hold compatible associations respectively whether a fit exists between those brands, and whether corporate associations thus can be leveraged for the product brand.

The tendency has further revealed that the endorsement by a corporate brand with a positive image (i.e. Arla) still leads to less negative changes of consumer perceptions than the endorsement by a corporate brand with a negative image (i.e. Nestlé). In other words, Brämhults by Arla is evaluated as more favourable than Brämhults by Nestlé.

Although the third hypothesis ($H_{1.3}$) also needs to be rejected, as the difference between the impacts of a corporate endorsement by a strong brand to the corporate endorsement by a weak brand is not significant, in tendency the results show conformance with the hypothesised assumption that consumers' product brand evaluations differ depending on the image of the corporate endorsement. *Thus, for a strong product brand it becomes apparent that there is a differing influence of corporate image on consumers' product brand evaluation and more favourable brand associations are yet still superior, even though not significant.*

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that no transfer of associations occurs from the corporate brand level to the product brand level in case of strong prior product brand associations. A strong product brand is thus almost unsusceptible to secondary associations brought about by a linkage to a corporate brand. Further, the study shows that particularly

product brands holding strong independent or even local associations might be unsusceptible to corporate associations that are contrary to the existent ones, such as internationality or size. Thus, it can be inferred that the perceived fit of product brand and corporate brand associations likely influences the transfer of associations.

Contrary to the hypothesised assumptions, the study at hand therefore shows that a corporate endorsement, irrespective of the corporate image, does not change consumers' product brand evaluations significantly when the product brand is perceived as favourable. The corporate brand thus does not act as a source of leverage for a strong product brand. In tendency, however, it was revealed that the corporate endorsement in case of a strong product brand is not solely indifferent to consumers' product brand evaluations, but that by tendency it further deteriorates consumers' product brand evaluations. Hence, in both investigated cases (strong & weak corporate endorsement) the strong product brand Brämhults is perceived more favourably as a stand-alone, individual product brand. Although both – a positive and a negative corporate image – deteriorate consumers' product brand evaluations, this effect is exacerbated for a negative corporate image. Thus, although not significant, it was revealed that a corporate brand with a positive image differs in its impact on consumers' product brand evaluations from a corporate brand with a negative image, whereby it was identified that a positive corporate image is better than a negative image, but for a strong product brand both are detrimental in any instance.

5.2 Weak Product Brand – No Benefit through Corporate Endorsement

For the investigated cases of a corporate endorsement of a well-known product brand with a negative image (i.e. weak product brand), *it was revealed that irrespective of whether the weak product brand is endorsed by a corporate brand with a positive image ($H_{2.1}$) or by a corporate brand with a negative image ($H_{2.2}$) no significant changes of consumers' product brand evaluations occur* (see Table 15). In other words, no significant influence of corporate associations on consumers' product brand evaluations caused by the corporate endorsement can be identified. Furthermore, it was demonstrated that a corporate endorsement by a strong corporate brand does not differ significantly in its impact on consumers' product brand evaluations in comparison to a corporate endorsement by a weak corporate brand ($H_{2.3}$).

In reference to Keller (1993; 2003), it was assumed that an endorsement by a strong corporate brand can be particularly beneficial, when existing product brand associations are somehow deficient or unfavourable, as in the case of God Morgon. Based on this statement, secondary associations induced by a corporate brand with a positive image, such as Arla, were expected to minimize unfavourable associations held by the product brand. Likewise, Aaker and Keller's (1990) as well as Keller and Lehmann's (2006) findings in the context of brand extensions supported this supposition. The former thereby revealed that negative brand associations can be neutralized by positive associations with the original brand, and the latter showed that well-known and well-regarded brands extend more successfully than brands that do not hold these characteristics. For strategic brand alliances Simonin and Ruth (1998) further demonstrated that strong favourable associations help to build strong alliances. By transferring these findings to the context of corporate endorsement, it was expected that a positive corporate image in an endorsement setting can counterbalance negative associations of the product brand. Hence, within the study at hand it was hypothesised that strong, favourable corporate associations can be leveraged within the product brand communication resulting in more favourable consumer

product brand evaluations ($H_{2.1}$). *However, the transfer of corporate associations did not occur to the expected extent, as no significant changes in consumers' product brand evaluations could be revealed for an endorsement by a positive corporate brand.* In line with the hypothesised assumption, the tendency though shows a slight improvement of consumers' product brand evaluations caused by the corporate endorsement of Arla. By taking a more detailed look at the different constructs of consumers' product brand evaluations, it becomes apparent that the slight enhancement of product brand evaluations can be traced back to the increase in consumers' evaluations in terms of perceived quality and willingness to pay a price premium, whereas the overall attitude is valued worse with the corporate endorsement. *Overall, even if the findings are non-significant and minimal, the tendency is conform to the theory grounded hypothesis $H_{2.1}$.*

For the case of an endorsement of a weak product brand by a corporate brand with a likewise negative image a further decrease of consumers' product brand evaluation was expected ($H_{2.2}$). The assumption was grounded in the general notion that a brand needs to hold strong, favourable and unique associations in order to be successful (Keller 1993). Hence, it was inferred that negative consumer brand associations are in any case dangerous and potentially damaging to a brand. The addition of unfavourable corporate associations to already unfavourable product brand associations through a corporate endorsement was therefore hypothesised to lead to even more unfavourable product brand evaluations. *Contrary to the assumption, the endorsement of a weak product brand (i.e. God Morgon) by a corporate brand with a likewise negative image (i.e. Nestlé) did however not cause a significant change of consumers' product brand evaluations.* Concerning $H_{2.2}$ also the overall tendency does not provide any additional insights, as the mean values remain almost stable. In contrast to the findings for the first product case example (i.e. Brämhults), in the case of a weak product brand the tendencies do not show a coherent direction; rather on some dimensions the corporate endorsement by Arla leads to better results, while on others the endorsement by Nestlé fares better, still others indicate best results for a stand-alone product brand. Due to these inconsistencies, these tendencies do not reveal any meaningful conclusions.

In case of a weak product brand again opposed literature streams help to understand and explain the indifference of consumers' product brand evaluations caused by corporate endorsement, irrespectively of the corporate image. One explanation for the consistency of product brand evaluations in both instances ($H_{2.1}$-$H_{2.2}$) might again result from prior brand knowledge and associations. God Morgon represents a very well-known juice brand in the Swedish market which holds a rather negative image among consumers. According to Biehal and Sheinin (2007), a well-known product brand is likely less prone to the transfer of corporate associations than a product that is rather unknown or new, since existing prior brand knowledge and associations are more difficult to modify. Concerning the case of the endorsement by a weak corporate brand ($H_{2.2}$), Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) further claim that the influence of corporate endorsement should not be overstated, in cases where the endorsing corporate brand is not well-known or well regarded, as in the case of Nestlé.

Further it was revealed that a relatively high number of consumers is aware of the fact that the company Arla owns the juice brand God Morgon. More precisely, 59% of the sample (Group A, treatment combination God Morgon by Arla) believe that it is true that Arla owns the product brand God Morgon, while only 18% disagree to this statement and 23% expressed a lack of knowledge. In respect to the fourth hypothesis ($H_{2.1}$) this background knowledge might have

influenced the effect of the corporate endorsement on consumers' product brand evaluations. With reference to the literature, it was assumed that the endorsement of a well-known, but weak product brand by a well-known, strong corporate brand leads to more favourable product brand evaluations ($H_{2.1}$). As outlined above, however, no significant change of consumers' evaluations was identified. Relating these findings back to the literature, there is talk of shadow endorsement in cases where the endorser brand (i.e. corporate brand) is not connected visibly with the endorsed brand (i.e. product brand), but quite a number of consumers still know about the link between those brands (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; Åsberg & Uggla 2009; Gopal & Rajagopal 2007). Provided examples of shadow-endorsed brands are Mini (BMW), Lexus (Toyota) or Dockers (Levi-Strauss) (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; Åsberg & Uggla 2009). Taking this into consideration while discussing the findings at hand, some interesting implications arise. As many consumers seem to be aware of the fact that the company Arla is in reality backing the product brand God Morgon, limited separation in consumers' mind between these brand levels is given and secondary associations induced by the company might already have influenced their product brand evaluations even without a visible endorsement on the products' packaging. Hence, the visible addition of the corporate logo on the product packaging likely only had a minimal influence on consumers' brand associations which would explain the indifference in product brand evaluations. At the same time, however, consumers' knowledge of the relationship between the product brand God Morgon and the corporate brand Arla indicates that a perceived fit is likely given, which is said to be a premise for the transfer of associations (e.g. Boisvert 2011; Berens et al. 2005; Keller 1993; Uggla 2004).

In regard to the differing influence of a strong and a weak corporate brand on consumers' product brand evaluations ($H_{2.3.}$), contrary to the assumption, no significant disparity was revealed. *This shows that the corporate image is of minor importance when a product brand with a negative image is endorsed, as both instances result in an almost unchanged evaluation.*

To sum up, it becomes apparent that the corporate endorsement, regardless of image, of a weak product brand does not lead to a transfer of corporate associations; rather consumers' product brand evaluations remain unchanged. *Hence, within an endorsement positive corporate associations cannot be leveraged to rule out prior negative product brand associations as assumed based on the literature. Likewise, induced negative corporate associations do not further deteriorate consumers' product brand evaluations.*

5.3 New Product Brand – Leverage through Corporate Endorsement

In the case of Albi (see Table 19), a new product brand with no prior brand awareness and consequently immature brand associations, the corporate endorsement by a well-known corporate brand with a positive image (i.e. Arla) caused a significant improvement of consumers' product brand evaluations ($H_{3.1}$). The endorsement of a weak product brand (i.e. Albi) by a corporate brand with a negative image (i.e. Nestlé), however, did not result in significant changes of consumers' product brand evaluations ($H_{3.2}$). Similarly, no significant difference between the impact of a strong corporate brand and a weak corporate brand was revealed ($H_{3.3}$).

The literature review revealed that brand familiarity and prior brand associations can be important influencing factors concerning the transfer of corporate brand associations and their impact on consumers' product brand evaluations (e.g. Biehal & Sheinin 2007; Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000). Brands that show a high familiarity tend to already hold highly developed

and structured brand associations in consumers' memory. This differs for unknown brands. Due to unfamiliarity, brand associations are less pronounced and, hence, are expected to be easier manipulated (Low et al. 2000; Biehal & Sheinin 2007). Several authors emphasise the positive impact of a well-known corporate brand on brand extensions and new product launches (e.g. Keller 1993; Keller & Aaker 1992, in Knox & Bickerton 2003; Saunders & Guoqun 1997), especially when the (extended) corporate brand holds a positive image (Rajagopal & Sanchez 2004; Keller & Lehmann 2006). It is thereby expected that consumers take into consideration existing corporate associations when forming perceptions of new products of the company (Brown & Dacin 1997). In the case of a new product, corporate associations therefore provide cues about the standing of the new product and act as evaluative contexts (Brown & Dacin 1997; Ueltschy & Laroche 2004). Within brand extension studies, it was revealed that favourable corporate associations facilitate the formation of a likewise favourable attitude towards the extension (Aaker & Keller 1990; Keller & Lehmann 2006). Saunders and Guoqun (1997) provide additional support for the beneficiary effect of a corporate endorsement when launching new products, as consumers' preference for the new product proved to be enhanced. However, the authors have not taken different images into consideration.

In line with the hypothesised assumption ($H_{3.1}$) and the just outlined literature, *the findings at hand show a significant improvement of consumers' product brand evaluations caused by the endorsement of a new product brand by a strong corporate brand.* In other words, through an endorsement by a strong corporate brand, the new product brand is perceived significantly more favourably than without an endorsement. Thus, a leverage process takes place. By looking at the different dimensions that make up consumers' product brand evaluations in the underlying study, it becomes apparent that the overall significant increase in consumers' product brand evaluations can be traced back to improvements in terms of overall attitude and perceived quality, while the third dimension – willingness to pay a price premium – shows no significant positive development. However, the tendency indicated through the mean values is still positive. The fact that consumers are not willing to pay a price premium can likely be traced back to the fact, that Albi is a new brand and consumers do not see any reason to pay a premium price for a product brand they do not know.

Based on the above outlined literature emphasising the positive impact of a well-known corporate brand, it was further assumed that a well-known corporate brand boosts consumers' product brand evaluations, even if the corporate brand itself holds a negative image ($H_{3.2}$). In the context of brand extensions, it was revealed that a well-known brand name is in any case helpful providing consumers with brand familiarity and associations, thereby reducing risk and facilitating acceptance (Aaker and Keller 1990; Keller & Lehmann 2006). Further supporting the hypothesised assumption, Brown and Dacin (1997) revealed that a new product launched by a corporation holding negative associations is not always destined to receive negative consumer responses; instead product brand associations can still be favourable. The authors trace this back to contrast effects, which can result from a discrepancy between the corporate associations and the initial evaluations of the new product (e.g. poor corporate associations and a new, well-perceived product). Yet it was hypothesised that the enhancement of consumers' product brand evaluations is lower when the product brand is endorsed by a weak corporate brand, such as Nestlé, than when it is endorsed by a strong corporate brand, such as Arla. Against the assumption, however, *the findings demonstrate no significant change of consumers' evaluations of the new brand caused by an endorsement by a weak corporate brand. In tendency, however, a slight improvement of*

consumers' product brand evaluations could be identified, which is in line with hypothesis $H_{3.2}$. In accordance with the improvements of consumer evaluations in the case of a strong corporate brand ($H_{3.1}$), for the endorsement by a weak corporate brand again consumers' evaluations increase by tendency mainly in terms of overall attitude and perceived quality, while the willingness to pay a price premium remains almost indifferent.

Comparing the influence of a strong corporate brand on consumers' product brand evaluations with that of a weak corporate brand in the case of a new product brand (i.e. Albi by Arla vs. Albi by Nestlé), no significant difference could be revealed. As the endorsement of a new product brand by a strong corporate brand, however, showed a significant improvement of consumers' product brand evaluations, whereas the endorsement by a weak corporate brand only causes a positive tendency, *it can be claimed that the influence of a corporate brand on consumers' product brand evaluations differs depending on the corporate image.*

Summing up, in regard to a new product brand the study at hand revealed that an endorsement by a well-known, strong corporate brand significantly enhances consumers' product brand evaluations and therewith likely facilitates consumer's acceptance of the new product. *It can therefore be argued that an image spill-over occurs in the endorsement of a new product brand by a well-known, strong corporate brand which substantially boosts the product brand.* This result is in line with and supports prior findings in the field of brand extensions, and can therewith be extended to the context of endorsed branding. A well-known, but weak corporate brand yet only leads to a slight improvement of consumers' product brand evaluations, which is non-significant.

6 Conclusion

This final chapter rounds the thesis off by providing the reader with overall conclusions. Thereby, the findings are discussed in relation to the research questions and the research aim both outlined in the introductory chapter. Subsequently, theoretical contributions as well as resulting managerial implications are outlined. Finally, the limitations of the study at hand and suggestions for future research are presented.

6.1 Response to Research Questions

Despite the increasing prevalence of the corporate brand within the product value communication, which is reflected in a surge of dual branding strategies such as endorsed branding (Laforet & Saunders 2005, Kapferer 2008; Knox & Bickerton 2003), so far little research has investigated the influence of the corporate brand on consumers' product brand evaluations within an endorsed branding strategy. While studies have indeed revealed that the corporate image generally is able to affect consumers' product brand responses (e.g. Andreassen & Lindestad 1998; de Ruyter and Wetzels 2000; Souiden et al. 2006; Muzellec & Lambkin 2007), by now the corporate image transfer and its effect on consumers' product brand evaluations has not been addressed sufficiently within the context of endorsed branding. *The thesis at hand therefore aimed to address this research gap by further exploring the influence of corporate brand image on consumers' product brand evaluations within an endorsed branding strategy.* The investigation was thereby based on varying product brand and corporate brand combinations in terms of image and familiarity. This procedure was applied to be able to seek nuanced and detailed insights in which cases corporate endorsement leads to a positive, neutral or even negative transfer of brand associations. *In other words, it was aimed to be revealed in which instances a corporate brand can be used to enhance product brand evaluations respectively when corporate endorsement should be avoided, due to its possible detrimental effect on consumers' product brand evaluations.*

Due to the aforementioned lack of studies examining the influence of corporate image on consumers' product brand evaluations within an endorsement context, the findings from prior studies in related research streams such as co-branding, brand alliances and brand extensions were transferred to the endorsed branding context. *The study at hand thereby revealed findings that are in many respects contrary to the consulted literature.* To grasp the overall conclusions of the study at hand, the findings will be outlined and discussed in relation to the research questions hereunder.

RQ1: Within an endorsed branding strategy, can corporate brands with a positive image boost consumers' product brand evaluations and, conversely, can corporate brands with a negative image jeopardize consumers' product brand evaluations?

The findings of the study at hand reveal that an endorsement by a strong corporate brand solely boosts consumers' product brand evaluations for a new product brand. In other words, when launching a new product brand, an endorsement by a strong corporate brand is beneficial as it significantly enhances consumers' product brand evaluations and therewith likely facilitates the acceptance of the new product brand. In all other researched instances where a positive corporate image was however involved, no significant differences in consumers' product brand evaluations were revealed; i.e. that consumers' product evaluations remained unchanged despite the addition of the corporate brand. *Therefore it can be concluded that no significant leverage through a strong corporate brand takes place for a well-known strong and a well-known weak product brand.*

With respect to the influence of a weak corporate image within an endorsement setting, it can be concluded that a corporate endorsement by a weak corporate brand in all instances does not have a significant effect on consumers' product brand evaluations. Thus, consumers' product evaluations remain unchanged when a weak corporate brand is added to a product brand. Thus, contrary to the assumptions, the negative associations infused on well-known product brands do not significantly deteriorate consumers' product brand evaluations, but also do not significantly enhance consumers' evaluations of a *new* product brand as prior assumed.

As only in the case of an endorsement on a new product brand by a strong corporate brand consumers' product brand evaluations were significantly enhanced, *it can be said that overall the image of the corporate endorser is not a decisive factor shaping consumers' product brand evaluations in an endorsed branding strategy.* Consequently, the remarks by researchers from the general field of corporate branding (e.g. Andreassen & Lindestad 1998; de Ruyter and Wetzels 2000; Souiden et al. 2006; Muzellec & Lambkin 2007), suggesting that a corporate image has an influence on consumers' product evaluations, cannot be validated for an endorsed branding strategy.

On a more general level, *it further stands out that the influence of a corporate brand on consumers' product brand evaluations – irrespective of the corporate image – is rather limited within an endorsed branding strategy.* These are really surprising findings, as contrary to the theory-grounded assumptions, in five of six investigated cases consumers' product brand evaluations remain almost unchanged after the addition of a corporate logo on the products' packaging. Solely in the case where a new product brand is endorsed by a well-known corporate brand with a positive image, consumers' product brand evaluations significantly improved. The study at hand therefore challenges prior findings by Saunders and Guoqun (1997: 47) who state that a corporate endorsement is in all instances beneficial and that "consumers are happier with two loads of brand equity from a corporate and brand name, than they are with either name alone." And more generally, *the study at hand questions the fact that a corporate brand can act as a point-of-leverage and source of competitive advantage* (e.g. Uggla & Åsberg 2009; Harish 2008), as it only was shown to be the case for a new product brand. The study at hand therefore challenges the trend of the increasing usage of the corporate brand within the product value communication, as according to the study at hand, corporate endorsement does not follow consumers' preferences.

RQ2: Does an endorsement by a corporate brand with a positive image differ in its impact on consumers' product brand evaluations from an endorsement by a corporate brand with a negative image?

The findings of the study at hand demonstrate that within an endorsed setting in all three product case examples, no significant difference between the influence of a positive corporate image on consumers' product brand evaluations in comparison to a negative corporate image could be identified. It can therefore be concluded that consumers' product brand evaluations do not significantly change depending on the different corporate images. *Consumers are thus, at least from a significant perspective, immune to the image of the corporate brand.* This is in line with the findings related to RQ1, whereby it was generally revealed that image is not a critical influencing factor in the nexus of consumers' product brand evaluations and corporate endorsement. Having this in mind, it is logical that the different corporate images do not vary in their impact on consumers' product brand evaluations.

The fact that however in the case of the new product brand significant findings were revealed for the endorsement by the strong corporate brand, but not for the weak corporate brand, indicates that a likely, although non-significant, difference is present between consumers' product brand evaluations in terms of a positive corporate endorser versus a negative corporate endorser. *This assumption is in line with the findings that by tendency an endorsement by a positive corporate brand is in all product case examples (strong, weak or new product brand) preferable over an endorsement by a negative corporate brand.*

RQ3: For which product brands is a corporate endorsement beneficial, neutral or even detrimental?

In the study at hand the influence of corporate endorsement was investigated for a total of three different case examples (well-known product brand with a positive image, well-known product brand with a negative image, new product brand).

The findings thereby reveal that in the case of a well-known, positive product brand a corporate endorsement – irrespective of the corporate image – has no significant effect on consumers' product brand evaluations. However, in this instance, it should be noted that by tendency a well-known, strong product brand is still in any case adversely affected through a corporate endorsement, even if the corporate brand holds a positive image. *Thus, a corporate endorsement (of any image) of a strong product brand has by tendency a detrimental effect on consumers' product brand evaluations. It can therefore be concluded that a strong product brand is most successful as a stand-alone brand.* In the case of a well-known product brand with a negative image, no significant effects were revealed for both a weak and strong corporate brand. *Thus, it can be concluded that the effect of corporate endorsement on a weak product brand has a neutral respectively no effect.* By tendency, it could however be revealed that the endorsement of a positive corporate brand overall slightly enhances consumers' product brand evaluations. In the instance of a new product brand, it was demonstrated that an endorsement by a corporate brand with a positive image significantly enhances consumers' product brand evaluations; thus having a beneficiary effect. For an endorsement by a negative corporate brand no significant findings were revealed, but by tendency it can be said that even an endorsement by a negative corporate brand has a positive impact on consumers' product brand evaluations. *It can therefore be concluded that overall, even though not significant for a negative corporate brand, a corporate endorsement is in any case beneficial for a new product brand.*

These findings emphasise that hardly any leverage of corporate associations occurs within an endorsed branding strategy, particularly when the product brand to which the corporate brand is added is well-known (as in our case for the strong and weak product brand) and already holds developed brand associations. In these instances, prior developed product brand associations are dominant and leading within consumers' product brand evaluations and can hardly be modified through a corporate endorsement. This thus indicates that in case of well-known product brands, the product brand lives up to its driver role in an endorsed branding strategy. Only, if a product brand is new and, thus, does not yet hold pronounced associations, the product brand can be leveraged through an endorsement. In case of a new product, consumers seem to use the corporate associations as salient cues for evaluating the new product brand as the associations are due to the newness of the product inherently limited (Brown & Dacin 1997). *It can therefore be concluded that a new product brand is more susceptible to the transfer of corporate associations from the endorser than well-known product brands.*

In overall conclusion it can be said that the only combination that showed a significant difference is the corporate endorsement by a well-regarded corporate brand on a new product brand.

6.2 Theoretical Contributions

To our best knowledge, the study at hand is the first study that analyses the effect of corporate endorsement on consumers' product brand evaluations for different corporate and product brand combinations in terms of image and familiarity. It therefore offers detailed and nuanced insights in the field of corporate endorsement. Prior studies in the field of corporate endorsement have not accounted for differing influences of corporate images on consumers' product brand evaluations. Those studies that in turn have investigated the effect of corporate image on consumers' product brand evaluations are not framed within an endorsement setting. Additionally, it should be noted that studies from these distinct research streams offer to a great extent equivocal findings. *The study at hand therefore addresses this research gap by aligning these distinct research streams in a pioneering study in the research field under investigation. It therewith contributes to existent theory by providing an initial starting point and preliminary insights in the research field under investigation.* Based on the revealed results, that challenge the underlying literature, the study at hand will therefore likely stimulate new discussions on the efficiency of corporate endorsement - whether or not corporate endorsement is meaningful at all and in which instances.

As the research is inherently limited in the fields of endorsed branding and corporate image transfer (as prior outlined), literature from related research streams such as brand extensions, brand alliances and co-branding was consulted. As the study at hand indicates that a corporate endorsement is beneficial in case of a product launch which is in line with literature from related research areas (e.g. Aaker & Keller 1990; Keller 1993; Keller & Lehmann 2006), the study at hand in this instance extends prior findings from related research streams to the endorsement setting and empirically validates these. In all other instances, however, the present study challenges the findings from corporate branding and endorsement literature as well as related research. At a first glance, *it therefore seems like it could be concluded that theories and findings from brand extension, brand alliances and co-branding literature cannot be directly transferred to the corporate endorsement context since the results hypothesised based on the latter did in the majority of cases not lead to the anticipated results.* In this context, it can thus likely be inferred that the mechanisms underlying corporate endorsement are different to the related research contexts.

6.3 Managerial Implications

A major managerial implication resulting out of the present study is that the effect of a corporate endorsement should generally not be overstated. Brand managers should be aware that in case of well-known product brands – irrespective of the product brand image – likely no significant change in consumers' product brand evaluations and therewith consumer-based brand equity will occur.

By tendency, it was however revealed that consumers' brand evaluations deteriorate when a well-known and well-regarded product brand is endorsed by a corporate brand (irrespective of corporate image). Due to the potential deterioration of consumers' evaluations in case of a product brand with a positive image, brand managers are advised to avoid a corporate endorsement in this instance. *Thus, a product-brand only strategy should be applied in case of a strong and well-known product brand.* In the study at hand, the deteriorating effect in case of a strong product

brand might be attributable to the incongruence between corporate and product brand associations. To minimise risk, brand managers are thus advised to carefully analyse within an endorsement setting whether the corporate brand evokes associations within consumers' minds that are congruent with the desired brand associations that should be transferred upon the product brand and whether these are compatible with each other.

In case a company has a product brand with a negative image in its portfolio, brand managers are advised to primarily focus on boosting the product brand's image in its sole entity with measures other than corporate endorsement as it was found out that this does not significantly change consumers' minds about the product.

Although the effect of corporate endorsement on consumers' product brand evaluations was found to be insignificant for well-known product brands, organisations and especially brand managers are advised to consider further benefits that might come along with the corporate endorsement of a product brand when designing or revising brand architectures. These benefits can include, for example, a greater visibility and transparency of the corporation behind the product brand which likely results in enhanced corporate awareness among consumers and further stakeholders, which is beneficial within the employer or stock market. Furthermore, the endorsed branding strategy can facilitate to build customer loyalty across product-market contexts and complies with consumers' increasing demand for transparency and corporate legitimacy. *Hence, possible costs and benefits of a corporate endorsement need to be weighed up.*

Moreover, as the present study revealed that a corporate endorsement boosts consumers' evaluations of a new product brand in any instance (also only significantly for a positive corporate brand), *brand managers having a well-known corporate brand are further advised to actively seek a corporate endorsement when planning to launch a new product brand.*

The outlined managerial implications presuppose that brand managers are aware of the image of their corporate brand as well as of the product brands they manage. In case they are not, brand managers should carry out market research to reveal these insights before considering an endorsement.

6.4 Limitations and Future Research

As the study at hand is the first one that examines the effect of corporate endorsement on consumers' product brand evaluations for differing levels of image and familiarity, the results of the study require validation and deeper investigation. It is therefore recommended to re-address and confirm the findings of the study at hand; particularly on the background that the present study challenges several findings and propositions from the fields of endorsed branding and corporate image transfer as well as closely related research streams such as brand extensions, brand alliances and co-branding. Apart from this general appeal to perform further research in the research field under investigation, there are a number of research limitations to the present study that can provide a starting point for future studies.

One research limitation that should be acknowledged is that for the different levels of the corporate brand as well as the product brand only a single brand was chosen to characterise the particular case. Hence, only one case example was investigated for each level of the product brand and corporate brand. As it is commonly agreed among researchers (e.g. James 2005) that

each brand carries brand-specific associations and connotations (e.g. country of origin associations), the revealed findings might be limited to the individual brand case examples. It is therefore a question of concern whether the revealed findings in the study at hand are generalizable and transferable to other brands and contexts; and thus whether complete external validity is given. Further research should therefore be conducted that investigates the research field at hand for multiple brands for each case (e.g. positive product brand), to be able to validate the findings and therefore to generalise these to other brands and contexts.

Even though the aim of the research was to measure the direct effect of corporate endorsement on consumers' product brand evaluations, it was not possible to account for all the moderators that have been shown to influence consumers' evaluations of brands. In the experiment at hand, consumers' knowledge of the real company behind the product brand was accounted for as a sole confounding variable. Consumers' individual characteristics (such as involvement and brand loyalty) (Saunders & Guoqun 1997; Berens et al. 2005) as well as the 'perceived fit' between the two brand entities that are merged (Boisvert 2011; Berens et al. 2005; Keller 1993; Uggla 2004) were however shown to influence consumers' product brand evaluations within an endorsed setting. Future research should therefore incorporate and account for these factors to eliminate possible alternative explanations for the relationship under investigation and to achieve more thorough findings.

As the study at hand was undertaken in form of a laboratory experiment whereby the consumer is not exposed to product alternatives, it is questionable whether the experimental procedure applied does actually reflect a real-life POS situation. Brown and Dacin (1997) have revealed that the influence of corporate associations on product responses increases with the amount of product choices. It is therefore recommendable that the findings revealed in the present study are confirmed through a future study within a POS setting.

Additionally, it should be kept in mind that the study at hand was conducted on the Swedish market and is therefore inherently limited to a Swedish context. As Souiden et al. (2006: 825) have revealed that "consumers of different cultures do not perceive in the same way the impact of corporate branding", the findings of the study at hand should be validated across cultures.

Moreover, the study is limited to the investigation of well-known corporate brands and focuses on the three dependent constructs 'overall attitude', 'perceived quality' and 'willingness to pay a price premium' which comprise the overall dependent variable 'consumers' product brand evaluations'. Future research should address other dimensions of consumers' product brand evaluations (such as uniqueness, purchase intention etc.) to grasp a more differentiated and holistic picture of consumers' product brand evaluations in an endorsement setting. Moreover, it is interesting to investigate how consumers' product brand evaluations differ depending on the familiarity of the corporate brand. Future studies should therefore integrate a case example of a corporate brand that is not well-established.

Finally, it should be remarked that the study at hand was applied to consumer goods; in specific the juice category. Whether the findings in the study at hand would extend to other consumer product categories, business products or services are thus further questions for future research.

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Appendix

The complete SPSS output can be requested via Email.

Appendix A: Pre-study questionnaires

Appendix A.1: Version Product Brands

Survey *from* Lund University

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your feedback is important to us as it will contribute to our master thesis at Lund University. This survey should only take about 5 minutes of your time. Your answers will be completely anonymous and confidential.

Instructions: Look at the picture to the left of each question and answer the corresponding question set by choosing the response option that best reflects your opinion. Proceed like this for the whole questionnaire. Please answer the given statements as best as you can – there is no right or wrong answer! If you have any questions while filling out the survey, please do not hesitate to ask us.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Pia Faulseit & Marion Küpers

Your Age: _____

Your Gender: o Female o Male

ProViva

1.) I am aware of this brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Mer

1.) I am aware of this brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Kiviks Musteri

1.) I am aware of this brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

God Morgon

1.) I am aware of this brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Brämhults

1.) I am aware of this brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Sundis

1.) I am aware of this brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Finnerödja

1.) I am aware of this brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Fontana

1.) I am aware of this brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Tropicana

1.) I am aware of this brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Saltå Kvarn

1.) I am aware of this brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Appendix A.2: Version Corporate Brands

Survey from Lund University

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your feedback is important to us as it will contribute to our master thesis at Lund University. This survey should only take about 5 minutes of your time. Your answers will be completely anonymous and confidential.

Instructions: Look at the picture to the left of each question and answer the corresponding question set by choosing the response option that best reflects your opinion. Proceed like this for the whole questionnaire. Please answer the given statements as best as you can – there is no right or wrong answer! If you have any questions while filling out the survey, please do not hesitate to ask us.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Pia Faulseit & Marion Küpers

Your Age: _____

Your Gender: o Female o Male

Chiquita

1.) I am aware of this corporate brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this corporate brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Coca Cola

1.) I am aware of this corporate brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this corporate brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Unilever

1.) I am aware of this corporate brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this corporate brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Procordia

1.) I am aware of this corporate brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this corporate brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Danone

1.) I am aware of this corporate brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this corporate brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Nestlé

1.) I am aware of this corporate brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this corporate brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Procter & Gamble

1.) I am aware of this corporate brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this corporate brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Swed-Jam

1.) I am aware of this corporate brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this corporate brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Del Monte

1.) I am aware of this corporate brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this corporate brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Arla

1.) I am aware of this corporate brand.

o Yes o No

If no, please proceed to the next brand.
If yes, please continue with the question below.

2.) My attitude towards this corporate brand is…

Negative						Positive
o	o	o	o	o	o	o

Appendix B: Main experimental questionnaires

Appendix B.1: Questionnaire 1 – Experimental Group A

Treatment Combination: Brämhults by Nestlé, God Morgon by Arla

Dear Respondent,

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey.

Instructions: Look thoroughly at the upcoming pictures and answer the corresponding question sets below the pictures by choosing the response options that best reflect your opinion. Proceed like this for the whole questionnaire. Please answer the given statements as best as you can – there is no right or wrong answer! Your personal opinion is of interest! If you are unsure about certain questions, just rely on your gut feeling. The answering of the questionnaire will approximately take 20 minutes.

Throughout the questionnaire several similar questions to the same topic will be asked. This is intended for methodological reasons and should not irritate you.

The validity of the research findings can only be assured through completely filled out questionnaires. Therefore, please answer all given questions! Your answers will be completely anonymous and confidential.

Thank you for your participation!

Brämhults by Nestlé

Please look thoroughly at the picture below depicting a product from the juice brand **Brämhults**, which was recently bought by the company **Nestlé.**

Note: The picture of the manipulated juice was first displayed alone, and afterwards above each question set for the whole questionnaire.

1) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Brämhults by Nestlé.**

	bad **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	good **7**
Brämhults juice by Nestlé is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	un-desirable **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	desirable **7**
Brämhults juice by Nestlé is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	unfavou-rable **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	favou-rable **7**
My opinion of Brämhults juice by Nestlé is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Brämhults by Nestlé.**

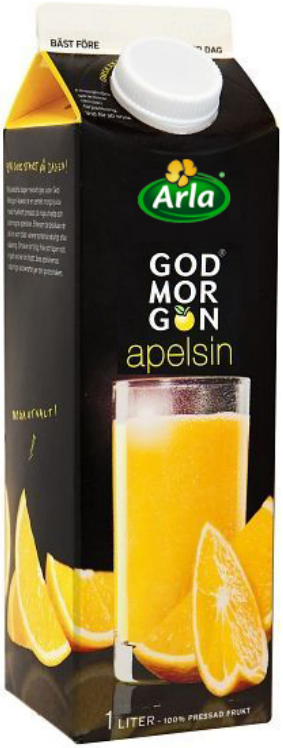
	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
I am willing to pay a higher price for Brämhults juice by Nestlé than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am willing to pay a lot more for Brämhults juice by Nestlé than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Brämhults juice by Nestlé is worth a higher price than other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Brämhults by Nestlé.**

	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
Brämhults juice by Nestlé is of high quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Brämhults juice by Nestlé consistently satisfies its users.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Brämhults juice by Nestlé is made to high standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

God Morgon by Arla

Please look thoroughly at the picture below depicting a product from the juice brand **God Morgon**, which is owned by the company **Arla.**



Note: The picture of the manipulated juice was first displayed alone, and afterwards above each question set for the whole questionnaire.

4) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **God Morgon by Arla.**

	bad **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	good **7**
God Morgon juice by Arla is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	un-desirable **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	desirable **7**
God Morgon juice by Arla is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	unfavour-able **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	favour-able **7**
My opinion of God Morgon juice by Arla is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **God Morgon by Arla.**

	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
I am willing to pay a higher price for God Morgon juice by Arla than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am willing to pay a lot more for God Morgon juice by Arla than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
God Morgon juice by Arla is worth a higher price than other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **God Morgon by Arla.**

	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
God Morgon juice by Arla is of high quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
God Morgon juice by Arla consistently satisfies its users.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
God Morgon juice by Arla is made to high standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7) In this survey we assumed that the company Nestlé has recently bought the juice brand Brämhults. This is however not true.

In reality, the juice brand Brämhults is owned by the Brämhults Juice AB. Do you think that Brämhults Juice AB is an independent company or is it owned by a bigger corporation?

- o I believe Brämhults AB is an independent company.
- o I believe Brämhults AB is owned by a bigger corporation.
- o I don't know.

7a) Which bigger corporation do you think owns Brämhults Juice AB? (This question only shows up, if the answer to the question above is 'I believe Brämhults AB is owned by a bigger corporation.')

- o Coca Cola
- o Procter & Gamble
- o Chiquita
- o Swed Jam
- o Danone
- o Del Monte
- o Eckes Granini
- o Unilever
- o Arla
- o Procordia
- o Other
- o I don't know

8) In this survey we state that the company Arla owns the juice brand God Morgon. Do you believe that this is true?

- o Yes
- o No
- o I don't know

9) When did you buy juice the last time?

- o less than one week ago
- o 1 week – 1 month ago
- o > 1 month – 6 months ago
- o > 6 months – 1 year ago
- o > 1 year – 3 years ago
- o more than 3 years ago
- o I never bought juice before.

10) When did you drink juice the last time?

- o less than one week ago
- o 1 week – 1 month ago
- o > 1 month – 6 months ago
- o > 6 months – 1 year ago
- o > 1 year – 3 years ago
- o more than 3 years ago
- o I never drank juice before.

11) Please finally fill in your demographic details.

Your Age: _____

Your Gender: o Female o Male

Thank you very much for your participation!

Appendix B.2: Questionnaire 2 – Experimental Group B

Treatment Combination: Brämhults by Arla, Albi by Nestlé

Dear Respondent,

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey.

Instructions: Look thoroughly at the upcoming pictures and answer the corresponding question sets below the pictures by choosing the response options that best reflect your opinion. Proceed like this for the whole questionnaire. Please answer the given statements as best as you can – there is no right or wrong answer! Your personal opinion is of interest! If you are unsure about certain questions, just rely on your gut feeling. The answering of the questionnaire will approximately take 20 minutes.

Throughout the questionnaire several similar questions to the same topic will be asked. This is intended for methodological reasons and should not irritate you.

The validity of the research findings can only be assured through completely filled out questionnaires. Therefore, please answer all given questions! Your answers will be completely anonymous and confidential.

Thank you for your participation!

Brämhults by Arla

Please look thoroughly at the picture below depicting a product from the juice brand **Brämhults**, which was recently bought by the company **Arla.**

Note: The picture of the manipulated juice was first displayed alone, and afterwards above each question set for the whole questionnaire.

1) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Brämhults by Arla.**

	bad **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	good **7**
Brämhults juice by Arla is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	un-desirable **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	desirable **7**
Brämhults juice by Arla is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	unfavou-rable **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	favou-rable **7**
My opinion of Brämhults juice by Arla is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Brämhults by Arla.**

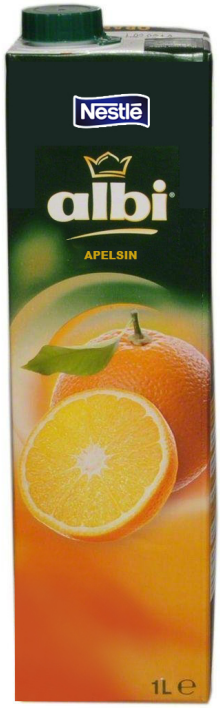
	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
I am willing to pay a higher price for Brämhults juice by Arla than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am willing to pay a lot more for Brämhults juice by Arla than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Brämhults juice by Arla is worth a higher price than other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Brämhults by Arla.**

	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
Brämhults juice by Arla is of high quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Brämhults juice by Arla consistently satisfies its users.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Brämhults juice by Arla is made to high standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Albi by Nestlé

Please look thoroughly at the picture below depicting a product from the juice brand **Albi**, which is owned by the company **Nestlé.**



Note: The picture of the manipulated juice was first displayed alone, and afterwards above each question set for the whole questionnaire.

4) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Albi by Nestlé.**

	bad **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	good **7**
Albi juice by Nestlé is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	un-desirable **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	desirable **7**
Albi juice by Nestlé is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	unfavour-able **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	favour-able **7**
My opinion of Albi juice by Nestlé is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Albi by Nestlé.**

	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
I am willing to pay a higher price for Albi juice by Nestlé than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am willing to pay a lot more for Albi juice by Nestlé than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Albi juice by Nestlé is worth a higher price than other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Albi by Nestlé.**

	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
Albi juice by Nestlé is of high quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Albi juice by Nestlé consistently satisfies its users.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Albi juice by Nestlé is made to high standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7) In this survey we assumed that the company Arla has recently bought the juice brand Brämhults. This is however not true.

In reality, the juice brand Brämhults is owned by the Brämhults Juice AB. Do you think that Brämhults Juice AB is an independent company or is it owned by a bigger corporation?

- o I believe Brämhults AB is an independent company.
- o I believe Brämhults AB is owned by a bigger corporation.
- o I don't know.

7a) Which bigger corporation do you think owns Brämhults Juice AB? (This question only shows up, if the answer to the question above is 'I believe Brämhults AB is owned by a bigger corporation.')

- o Coca Cola
- o Procter & Gamble
- o Chiquita
- o Swed Jam
- o Danone
- o Unilever
- o Del Monte
- o Eckes Granini
- o Nestlé
- o Procordia

- o Other
- o I don't know

8) When did you buy juice the last time?

- o less than one week ago
- o 1 week – 1 month ago
- o > 1 month – 6 months ago
- o > 6 months – 1 year ago
- o > 1 year – 3 years ago
- o more than 3 years ago
- o I never bought juice before.

9) When did you drink juice the last time?

- o less than one week ago
- o 1 week – 1 month ago
- o > 1 month – 6 months ago
- o > 6 months – 1 year ago
- o > 1 year – 3 years ago
- o more than 3 years ago
- o I never drank juice before.

10) Please finally fill in your demographic details.

Your Age: _____

Your Gender: o Female o Male

Thank you very much for your participation!

Appendix B.3: Questionnaire 3 – Experimental Group C

Treatment Combination: God Morgon by Nestlé, Albi by Arla

Dear Respondent,

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey.

Instructions: Look thoroughly at the upcoming pictures and answer the corresponding question sets below the pictures by choosing the response options that best reflect your opinion. Proceed like this for the whole questionnaire. Please answer the given statements as best as you can – there is no right or wrong answer! Your personal opinion is of interest! If you are unsure about certain questions, just rely on your gut feeling. The answering of the questionnaire will approximately take 20 minutes.

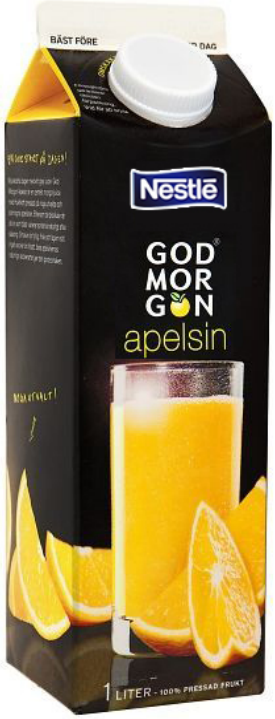
Throughout the questionnaire several similar questions to the same topic will be asked. This is intended for methodological reasons and should not irritate you.

The validity of the research findings can only be assured through completely filled out questionnaires. Therefore, please answer all given questions! Your answers will be completely anonymous and confidential.

Thank you for your participation!

God Morgon by Nestlé

Please look thoroughly at the picture below depicting a product from the juice brand **God Morgon**, which was recently bought by the company **Nestlé.**



Note: The picture of the manipulated juice was first displayed alone, and afterwards above each question set for the whole questionnaire.

1) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **God Morgon by Nestlé.**

	bad **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	good **7**
God Morgon juice by Nestlé is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	un-desirable **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	desirable **7**
God Morgon juice by Nestlé is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	unfavou-rable **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	favou-rable **7**
My opinion of God Morgon juice by Nestlé is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **God Morgon by Nestlé.**

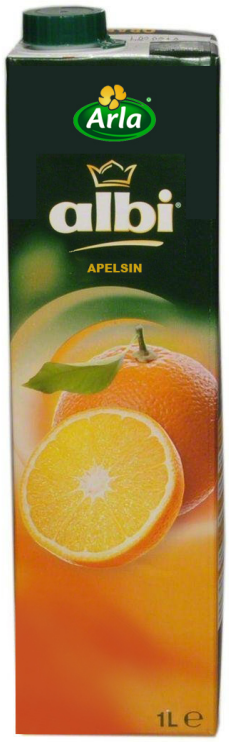
	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
I am willing to pay a higher price for God Morgon juice by Nestlé than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am willing to pay a lot more for God Morgon juice by Nestlé than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
God Morgon juice by Nestlé is worth a higher price than other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **God Morgon by Nestlé.**

	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
God Morgon juice by Nestlé is of high quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
God Morgon juice by Nestlé consistently satisfies its users.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
God Morgon juice by Nestlé is made to high standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Albi by Arla

Please look thoroughly at the picture below depicting a product from the juice brand **Albi**, which is owned by the company **Arla.**



Note: The picture of the manipulated juice was first displayed alone, and afterwards above each question set for the whole questionnaire.

4) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Albi by Arla.**

	bad **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	good **7**
Albi juice by Arla is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	un-desirable **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	desirable **7**
Albi juice by Arla is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	unfavour-able **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	favour-able **7**
My opinion of Albi juice by Arla is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Albi by Arla.**

	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
I am willing to pay a higher price for Albi juice by Arla than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am willing to pay a lot more for Albi juice by Arla than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Albi juice by Arla is worth a higher price than other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Albi by Arla.**

	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
Albi juice by Arla is of high quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Albi juice by Arla consistently satisfies its users.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Albi juice by Arla is made to high standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7) In this survey we assumed that the company Nestlé has recently bought the juice brand God Morgon. This is however not true.

Do you think that the juice brand God Morgon is owned by an independent company or is it owned by a bigger corporation?

- o I believe God Morgon is an independent company.
- o I believe God Morgon is owned by a bigger corporation.
- o I don't know.

7a) Which bigger corporation do you think owns God Morgon? (This question only shows up, if the answer to the question above is 'I believe Brämhults AB is owned by a bigger corporation.')

- o Coca Cola
- o Procter & Gamble
- o Chiquita
- o Swed Jam
- o Danone
- o Del Monte
- o Eckes Granini
- o Unilever
- o Arla
- o Procordia

- o Other
- o I don't know

8) When did you buy juice the last time?

- o less than one week ago
- o 1 week – 1 month ago
- o > 1 month – 6 months ago
- o > 6 months – 1 year ago
- o > 1 year – 3 years ago
- o more than 3 years ago
- o I never bought juice before.

9) When did you drink juice the last time?

- o less than one week ago
- o 1 week – 1 month ago
- o > 1 month – 6 months ago
- o > 6 months – 1 year ago
- o > 1 year – 3 years ago
- o more than 3 years ago
- o I never drank juice before.

10) Please finally fill in your demographic details.

Your Age: _____

Your Gender: o Female o Male

Thank you very much for your participation!

Appendix B.4: Questionnaire 4 – Control Group

Control group: Brämhults, God Morgon, Albi

Dear Respondent,

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey.

Instructions: Look thoroughly at the upcoming pictures and answer the corresponding question sets below the pictures by choosing the response options that best reflect your opinion. Proceed like this for the whole questionnaire. Please answer the given statements as best as you can – there is no right or wrong answer! Your personal opinion is of interest! If you are unsure about certain questions, just rely on your gut feeling. The answering of the questionnaire will approximately take 20 minutes.

Throughout the questionnaire several similar questions to the same topic will be asked. This is intended for methodological reasons and should not irritate you.

The validity of the research findings can only be assured through completely filled out questionnaires. Therefore, please answer all given questions! Your answers will be completely anonymous and confidential.

Thank you for your participation!

Brämhults

Please look thoroughly at the picture below depicting a product from the juice brand **Brämhults**.

Note: The picture of the manipulated juice was first displayed alone, and afterwards above each question set for the whole questionnaire.

1) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Brämhults.**

	bad **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	good **7**
Brämhults juice is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	un-desirable **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	desirable **7**
Brämhults juice is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	unfavou-rable **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	favou-rable **7**
My opinion of Brämhults juice is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Brämhults.**

	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
I am willing to pay a higher price for Brämhults juice than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am willing to pay a lot more for Brämhults juice than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Brämhults juice is worth a higher price than other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Brämhults.**

	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
Brämhults juice is of high quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Brämhults juice consistently satisfies its users.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Brämhults juice is made to high standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

God Morgon

Please look thoroughly at the picture below depicting a product from the juice brand **God Morgon.**

Note: The picture of the manipulated juice was first displayed alone, and afterwards above each question set for the whole questionnaire.

4) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **God Morgon.**

	bad **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	good **7**
God Morgon juice is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	undesir-able **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	desirable **7**
God Morgon juice is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	unfavour-able **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	favour-able **7**
My opinion of God Morgon juice is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **God Morgon.**

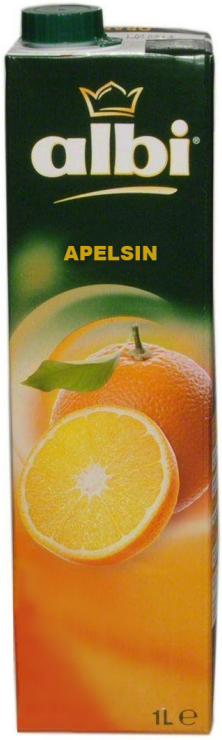
	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
I am willing to pay a higher price for God Morgon juice than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am willing to pay a lot more for God Morgon juice than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
God Morgon juice is worth a higher price than other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **God Morgon.**

	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
God Morgon juice is of high quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
God Morgon juice consistently satisfies its users.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
God Morgon juice is made to high standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Albi

Please look thoroughly at the picture below depicting a product from the juice brand **Albi.**



Note: The picture of the manipulated juice was first displayed alone, and afterwards above each question set for the whole questionnaire.

7) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Albi.**

	bad **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	good **7**
Albi juice is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	un-desirable **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	desirable **7**
Albi juice is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	unfavour-able **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	favour-able **7**
My opinion of Albi juice is…	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Albi.**

	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
I am willing to pay a higher price for Albi juice than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am willing to pay a lot more for Albi juice than for other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Albi juice is worth a higher price than other juice brands.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9) Read the given statements and choose the corresponding response option that best reflects your opinion about the juice brand **Albi.**

	strongly disagree **1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	strongly agree **7**
Albi juice is of high quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Albi juice consistently satisfies its users.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Albi juice is made to high standards.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

10) When did you buy juice the last time?

- o less than one week ago
- o 1 week – 1 month ago
- o > 1 month – 6 months ago
- o > 6 months – 1 year ago
- o > 1 year – 3 years ago
- o more than 3 years ago
- o I never bought juice before.

11) When did you drink juice the last time?

- o less than one week ago
- o 1 week – 1 month ago
- o > 1 month – 6 months ago
- o > 6 months – 1 year ago
- o > 1 year – 3 years ago
- o more than 3 years ago
- o I never drank juice before.

12) Please finally fill in your demographic details.

Your Age: _____

Your Gender: o Female o Male

Thank you very much for your participation!

Appendix C: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (I)

Factor Loadings and Significance Levels of the Dependent Variable

			Estimate	C.R.
attitude3	←	ATTI	,945	
attitude2	←	ATTI	,939	39,984
attitude1	←	ATTI	,932	38,907
pricepremium3	←	PRICE	,936	
pricepremium2	←	PRICE	,812	24,901
pricepremium1	←	PRICE	,944	35,116
quality3	←	QUAL	,892	
quality2	←	QUAL	,926	31,273
quality1	←	QUAL	,942	32,615

Appendix D: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (II)

Covariance Indices

			M.I.	Par Change
e1	<-->	QUAL	11,864	-,075
e1	<-->	ATTI	24,989	,147
e3	<-->	QUAL	8,771	,072
e3	<-->	ATTI	16,690	-,131
e3	<-->	e2	13,471	,076
e7	<-->	ATTI	5,804	,079
e7	<-->	e3	5,517	-,057
e8	<-->	PRICE	10,192	,151
e8	<-->	ATTI	7,514	-,102
e8	<-->	e1	15,840	-,103
e4	<-->	QUAL	4,738	,049
e4	<-->	PRICE	6,725	-,098
e4	<-->	e1	17,730	,086
e4	<-->	e2	6,025	-,049
e4	<-->	e8	4,564	-,054
e5	<-->	QUAL	4,567	-,050
e5	<-->	e3	4,599	-,050

Appendix E: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (III)

Model Fit Criteria of the Modified Model

			Estimate	C.R.
attitude3	←	ATTI	,946	
attitude2	←	ATTI	,940	40,216
attitude1	←	ATTI	,929	38,572
pricepremium3	←	PRICE	,934	
pricepremium2	←	PRICE	,812	24,910
pricepremium1	←	PRICE	,944	35,062
quality3	←	QUAL	,892	
quality2	←	QUAL	,952	28,986

Appendix F: Calculation Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variance extracted								
		standardised regression weight		**squared multiple correlation**		**1-squared multiple correlation**		**variance extracted**
Overall Attitude	item 1	0,929		0,864		0,136		
	item 2	0,940		0,884		0,116		2,643/(2,643+
	item 3	0,946		0,895		0,105		0,105)=
			sum	2,643	sum	0,357		**0,881**
Quality	item 2	0,952		0,907		0,093		1,702/(1,702+
	item 3	0,892		0,795		0,205		0,298) =
			sum	1,702	sum	0,298		**0,851**
Price Premium	item 1	0,944		0,892		0,108		
	item 2	0,812		0,66		0,340		2,425/(2,425+
	item 3	0,934		0,873		0,127		0,575) =
			sum	2,425	sum	0,575		**0,808**

Appendix G: Calculation Composite Reliability (CR)

Composite Reliability								
		standardised regression weight		**squared multiple correlation**		**1-squared multiple correlation**		**composite reliability**
Overall Attitude	item 1	0,929		0,864		0,136		
	item 2	0,940		0,884		0,116		7,924/(7,924+
	item 3	0,946		0,895		0,105		0,357)=
	sum	2,815			sum	0,357		**0,957**
	sum-square	7,924						
Quality	item 2	0,952		0,907		0,093		3,400/(3,400+
	item 3	0,892		0,795		0,205		0,298) =
	sum	1,844			sum	0,298		**0,919**
	sum-square	3,400						
Price Premium	item 1	0,944		0,892		0,108		
	item 2	0,812		0,66		0,340		7,236/(7,236+
	item 3	0,934		0,873		0,127		0,575) =
	sum	2,69			sum	0,575		**0,926**
	sum-square	7,236						

Appendix H: MANOVA results – Product brand Brämhults

Comparison Brämhults by Arla vs. Brämhults (control group)

Multivariate Tests

Effect		Value	F	Hypo-thesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	,948	587,228[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,948
	Wilks' Lambda	,052	587,228[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,948
	Hotelling's Trace	18,162	587,228[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,948
	Roy's Largest Root	18,162	587,228[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,948
Group	Pillai's Trace	,011	,353[c]	3,000	97,000	,787	,011
	Wilks' Lambda	,989	,353[c]	3,000	97,000	,787	,011
	Hotelling's Trace	,011	,353[c]	3,000	97,000	,787	,011
	Roy's Largest Root	,011	,353[c]	3,000	97,000	,787	,011

a. Design: Intercept + group

b. Exact statistic

Comparison Brämhults by Nestlé vs. Brämhults (control group)

Multivariate Tests

Effect		Value	F	Hypo-thesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	,944	546,813[c]	3,000	98,000	,000	,944
	Wilks' Lambda	,056	546,813[c]	3,000	98,000	,000	,944
	Hotelling's Trace	16,739	546,813[c]	3,000	98,000	,000	,944
	Roy's Largest Root	16,739	546,813[c]	3,000	98,000	,000	,944
group	Pillai's Trace	,031	1,049[c]	3,000	98,000	,375	,031
	Wilks' Lambda	,969	1,049[c]	3,000	98,000	,375	,031
	Hotelling's Trace	,032	1,049[c]	3,000	98,000	,375	,031
	Roy's Largest Root	,032	1,049[c]	3,000	98,000	,375	,031

a. Design: Intercept + group

b. Exact statistic

Comparison Brämhults by Nestlé vs. Brämhults by Arla

Multivariate Tests

Effect		Value	F	Hypo-thesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	,944	548,695[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,944
	Wilks' Lambda	,056	548,695[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,944
	Hotelling's Trace	16,970	548,695[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,944
	Roy's Largest Root	16,970	548,695[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,944
group	Pillai's Trace	,023	,771[c]	3,000	97,000	,513	,023
	Wilks' Lambda	,977	,771[c]	3,000	97,000	,513	,023
	Hotelling's Trace	,024	,771[c]	3,000	97,000	,513	,023
	Roy's Largest Root	,024	,771[c]	3,000	97,000	,513	,023

a. Design: Intercept + group

b. Exact statistic

Appendix I: MANOVA Results – Product Brand God Morgon

God Morgon by Arla vs. God Morgon (control group)

Multivariate Tests

Effect		Value	F	Hypo-thesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	,942	533,228[c]	3,000	98,000	,000	,942
	Wilks' Lambda	,058	533,228[c]	3,000	98,000	,000	,942
	Hotelling's Trace	16,323	533,228[c]	3,000	98,000	,000	,942
	Roy's Largest Root	16,323	533,228[c]	3,000	98,000	,000	,942
group	Pillai's Trace	,036	1,212[c]	3,000	98,000	,309	,036
	Wilks' Lambda	,964	1,212[c]	3,000	98,000	,309	,036
	Hotelling's Trace	,037	1,212[c]	3,000	98,000	,309	,036
	Roy's Largest Root	,037	1,212[c]	3,000	98,000	,309	,036

a. Design: Intercept + group

b. Exact statistic

God Morgon by Nestlé vs. God Morgon (control group)

Multivariate Tests

Effect		Value	F	Hypo-thesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	,938	487,945[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,938
	Wilks' Lambda	,062	487,945[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,938
	Hotelling's Trace	15,091	487,945[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,938
	Roy's Largest Root	15,091	487,945[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,938
group	Pillai's Trace	,005	,165[c]	3,000	97,000	,920	,005
	Wilks' Lambda	,995	,165[c]	3,000	97,000	,920	,005
	Hotelling's Trace	,005	,165[c]	3,000	97,000	,920	,005
	Roy's Largest Root	,005	,165[c]	3,000	97,000	,920	,005

a. Design: Intercept + group

b. Exact statistic

God Morgon by Nestlé vs. God Morgon by Arla

Multivariate Tests

Effect		Value	F	Hypo-thesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	,908	317,454[c]	3,000	96,000	,000	,908
	Wilks' Lambda	,092	317,454[c]	3,000	96,000	,000	,908
	Hotelling's Trace	9,920	317,454[c]	3,000	96,000	,000	,908
	Roy's Largest Root	9,920	317,454[c]	3,000	96,000	,000	,908
group	Pillai's Trace	,026	,839[c]	3,000	96,000	,476	,026
	Wilks' Lambda	,974	,839[c]	3,000	96,000	,476	,026
	Hotelling's Trace	,026	,839[c]	3,000	96,000	,476	,026
	Roy's Largest Root	,026	,839[c]	3,000	96,000	,476	,026

a. Design: Intercept + group

b. Exact statistic

Appendix J: MANOVA Results – Product Brand Albi

Albi by Arla vs. Albi (control group)

Multivariate Tests

Effect		Value	F	Hypo-thesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	,907	316,806[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,907
	Wilks' Lambda	,093	316,806[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,907
	Hotelling's Trace	9,798	316,806[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,907
	Roy's Largest Root	9,798	316,806[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,907
group	Pillai's Trace	,103	3,704[c]	3,000	97,000	,014	,103
	Wilks' Lambda	,897	3,704[c]	3,000	97,000	,014	,103
	Hotelling's Trace	,115	3,704[c]	3,000	97,000	,014	,103
	Roy's Largest Root	,115	3,704[c]	3,000	97,000	,014	,103

a. Design: Intercept + group

b. Exact statistic

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	attitude	13,031[b]	1	13,031	10,433	,002	,095
	quality	11,072[c]	1	11,072	8,345	,005	,078
	pricepremium	3,279[d]	1	3,279	2,250	,137	,022
Intercept	attitude	1087,012	1	1087,012	870,307	,000	,898
	quality	976,089	1	976,089	735,650	,000	,881
	pricepremium	351,820	1	351,820	241,347	,000	,709
group	attitude	13,031	1	13,031	10,433	,002	,095
	quality	11,072	1	11,072	8,345	,005	,078
	pricepremium	3,279	1	3,279	2,250	,137	,022
Error	attitude	123,651	99	1,249			
	quality	131,357	99	1,327			
	pricepremium	144,316	99	1,458			
Total	attitude	1221,444	101				
	quality	1116,556	101				
	pricepremium	498,778	101				
Corrected Total	attitude	136,682	100				
	quality	142,429	100				
	pricepremium	147,595	100				

a. R Squared = ,095 (Adjusted R Squared = ,086)
b. R Squared = ,078 (Adjusted R Squared = ,068)
c. R Squared = ,022 (Adjusted R Squared = ,012)

Albi by Nestlé vs. Albi (control group)

Multivariate Tests

Effect		Value	F	Hypo-thesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	,896	279,132[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,896
	Wilks' Lambda	,104	279,132[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,896
	Hotelling's Trace	8,633	279,132[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,896
	Roy's Largest Root	8,633	279,132[c]	3,000	97,000	,000	,896
group	Pillai's Trace	,057	1,954[c]	3,000	97,000	,126	,057
	Wilks' Lambda	,943	1,954[c]	3,000	97,000	,126	,057
	Hotelling's Trace	,060	1,954[c]	3,000	97,000	,126	,057
	Roy's Largest Root	,060	1,954[c]	3,000	97,000	,126	,057

a. Design: Intercept + group
b. Exact statistic

Albi by Nestlé vs. Albi by Arla

Multivariate Tests

Effect		Value	F	Hypo-thesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	,908	317,454[c]	3,000	96,000	,000	,908
	Wilks' Lambda	,092	317,454[c]	3,000	96,000	,000	,908
	Hotelling's Trace	9,920	317,454[c]	3,000	96,000	,000	,908
	Roy's Largest Root	9,920	317,454[c]	3,000	96,000	,000	,908
group	Pillai's Trace	,026	,839[c]	3,000	96,000	,476	,026
	Wilks' Lambda	,974	,839[c]	3,000	96,000	,476	,026
	Hotelling's Trace	,026	,839[c]	3,000	96,000	,476	,026
	Roy's Largest Root	,026	,839[c]	3,000	96,000	,476	,026

a. Design: Intercept + group

b. Exact statistic

Appendix K: MANOVA control group comparison

Multiple Comparisons

Scheffe

Dependent Variable	(I) group	(J) group	Mean Diff-erence (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
attitude	cg Brämhults	cg God Morgon	,6993*	,24838	,021	,0853	1,3134
		cg Albi	2,7124*	,24838	,000	2,0983	3,3265
	cg God Morgon	cg Brämhults	-,6993*	,24838	,021	-1,3134	-,0853
		cg Albi	2,0131*	,24838	,000	1,3990	2,6272
	cg Albi	cg Brämhults	-2,7124*	,24838	,000	-3,3265	-2,0983
		cg God Morgon	-2,0131*	,24838	,000	-2,6272	-1,3990
quality	cg Brämhults	cg God Morgon	,8170*	,24394	,004	,2139	1,4201
		cg Albi	2,1895*	,24394	,000	1,5864	2,7927
	cg God Morgon	cg Brämhults	-,8170*	,24394	,004	-1,4201	-,2139
		cg Albi	1,3725*	,24394	,000	,7694	1,9757
	cg Albi	cg Brämhults	-2,1895*	,24394	,000	-2,7927	-1,5864
		cg God Morgon	-1,3725*	,24394	,000	-1,9757	-,7694
price premium	cg Brämhults	cg God Morgon	,7059*	,27248	,038	,0322	1,3796
		cg Albi	1,3856*	,27248	,000	,7119	2,0593
	cg God Morgon	cg Brämhults	-,7059*	,27248	,038	-1,3796	-,0322
		cg Albi	,6797*	,27248	,047	,0061	1,3534
	cg Albi	cg Brämhults	-1,3856*	,27248	,000	-2,0593	-,7119
		cg God Morgon	-,6797*	,27248	,047	-1,3534	-,0061

Based on observed means.

The error term is Mean Square(Error) = 1,893.

*. The mean difference is significant at the ,05 level.