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Glenn Strömberg Collection –
Favorability of a Moderately
Incongruent Celebrity Brand

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Glenn Strömberg Collection - Favorability of a Moderately Incongruent Celebrity Brand

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to examine the favorability and opinions of a celebrity brand with a vague connection between its celebrity and its products, in the light of prior findings in the field of celebrity endorsement. This study will examine if previous research, which proves that a moderately incongruent product is more favorable than a congruent product, can be applied on Glenn Strömberg Collection's Italian food products.

Methodology: The method of this study is to, by the use of a survey, examine whether Glenn Strömberg's moderately incongruent product is more favorable than a similar congruent product. This will be conducted through a deductive approach.

Findings: Respondents did not have a more favorable perception of Strömberg's moderately incongruent product compared to the congruent product. Despite that they were familiar with Strömberg and generally had a slightly positive opinion about him. It is possible that Strömberg's congruity with Italian food is too low, which results in the deselection of his product.

Practical implications: By increasing the connection between Strömberg and Italian foods, Glenn Strömberg Collection can approach a better fit as a moderately incongruent celebrity brand.

Originality: This study has a narrow approach merely focused on a specific celebrity brand in a certain segment of the Swedish consumer goods market. This brand has not been examined in academic research prior to this study.

Key words: Congruity, Incongruity, Glenn Strömberg, Favorability, Brand Management, Celebrity Endorsement, Celebrity Brand

Paper type: Research paper

Introduction

In this day and age, the art of brand management has become increasingly important for companies all around the world. Consumers are exposed to countless numbers of brands every single day and in today's business climate, companies regularly try new methods in order to compete.

Clever marketers have always been on the lookout for new and exciting ways to advertise and promote their products. From early on they realized that certain faces would add more value to a brand image than others. The earliest example of celebrity *endorsements* might be from before the 1900s when the actress Lillie Langtry appeared in advertisements for Pears Soap (Sveriges Radio, 2011). The device seemed to work and was used continually afterwards. For example in the 1940s when film stars posed for cigarette brands on billboards and printed media. A few years later, in the 1950s, Bette Davis and Alfred Hitchcock were lending their faces to everything from shampoo to payment services (Von Glinow, 2012).

Brand management has grown as a science and as a mode of procedure, with the theory of brand Identity as one of the essential brand

management tools in the modern business climate (Kapferer, 2006). Brand Identity consists of the key beliefs about the brand and its core values (Kapferer, 2006).

Brand Identity is projected from the sender's side, with the purpose of specifying the brand's meaning, aim and self-image. On the other side are the receivers and the brand image. The brand image refers to how consumers decode and perceive signals emanating from the brand. (Kapferer, 2006)

When a company is developing its brand identity, personality is also vital. The idea behind the brand personality is to give the brand human traits and it is based on the notion that consumers choose brands in the same way as they choose their friends. A shortcut in the development of a brand personality is the use of symbols and figures, for example celebrities or sport stars (Melin, 2002).

Celebrity branding and endorsements have come a long way since the days of simply providing a face for advertisements. Today, sports icons like Usain Bolt and Tiger Woods add more than their renown to a brand. Rather, they <u>are</u> the brand. The phenomenon has become common in most industries with some companies spending many millions to tie certain athletes to their brand. Michael Jordan, for example retired from his professional basketball career in 2003 but has continued to receive checks from Nike of around $50 million per year (Badenhausen, 2015).

Many celebrities now have full ranges of products of their own with their name and approval on them. The best selling celebrity fragrance of 2009, Britney Spears' "Curious", is an Elizabeth Arden fragrance that, together with Spears other fragrances, has grossed over $1,5 billion (Bourne, 2013). Aside from fragrances, Britney Spears, a singer/actress has endorsed sunglasses, hair products and lingerie.

Another aspect that is relevant for marketers to take into consideration when branding a product is the perception of congruity. Research shows that consumers have a more favorable perception of a product when the match between it and its associations is partially congruent, rather than being a complete match or mismatch (Mandler, 1982). This state is defined as <u>moderate incongruity</u>, which is a concept that will be referred to in the rest of the report. A product that has a total match with its associations is referred to as a congruent product. The match between a product and its celebrity endorser in terms of congruity is therefore interesting for a marketer to study.

Glenn Strömberg

A celebrity who has his very own brand is Glenn Strömberg. He is a former Swedish football player and a nationally recognized expert commentator regularly appearing on Swedish television. During his career he played 52 games for the Swedish national team. He also played for IFK Göteborg in the top league in Sweden for six years before he moved to Portugal and played for Benfica for a year. His prime, however, was in the Italian football club Atalanta BC during the period 1984-92. During this period, he was awarded as the best Swedish footballer of the year (Ifokus, 2010).

Strömberg resides in Bergamo in Italy and is currently operating his own food brand, Glenn Strömberg Collezione Italiana, or Glenn Strömberg Collection (GSC). It contains a range of 33 Italian foods and delicacies. He also just recently released an Italian-inspired men's ready-to-wear collection with the Swedish apparel chain KappAhl. The food brand is positioned as a high quality premium brand with a genuine Italian feel to it (Strömberg, 2015). Strömberg claims that he has visited all his suppliers to ensure the quality of his products (Strömberg, 2015).

Problem formulation

The authors of this report have chosen to examine GSC as they consider it to be a particularly interesting example of a celebrity brand where it can be argued that the brand has a vague connection and relevance to the achievements and associations of the celebrity. Strömberg is primarily famous for his accomplishments in and around football, yet it is likely to believe that he strives to create a

natural connection to his brand as a connoisseur of the Italian cuisine.

The communication on the webpage of GSC reinforces this belief. One text on his web page states that Strömberg has "developed the ability to indulge in the pleasures of life" and that Strömberg "wants to live, age and enjoy life in the region of Lombardy, not least by the food presented on the table" (Strömberg, 2015). Strömberg also states: "I am not a chef, but I really like good food. During my years in Italy, the Italian cuisine has been generous to my taste buds" (Strömberg, 2015).

The question the authors find interesting and want to answer is, if consumers prefer the products branded by a discharged Swedish football player to a "true" Italian brand. This question is connected to the findings in the theory of congruity of products and its associations, which leads to the purpose of this study.

Aim
Purpose
The purpose of this study is to examine the favorability and opinions of a celebrity brand with a vague connection between its celebrity and its products, in the light of prior findings in the field of celebrity endorsement.

This study will examine if previous research, which proves that a moderately incongruent product is more favorable than a congruent product, can be applied on GSC's Italian food products. By doing this the authors intend to provide managerial implications for this part of the Swedish consumer goods market.

Research hypothesis
Respondents will have a more favorable perception of a moderately incongruent celebrity branded product compared to a congruent product.

Authors' premise on the choice of brand
The authors of this study have made an assumption that Strömberg is a moderately incongruent celebrity endorser for his Italian foods collection. Existing theory defines

moderate incongruity as a partially matched relationship between the individual consumer's frame of reference and the object (Mandler, 1982).

To research the perceived difference in brands with different amounts of congruity, it is initially important to explain these brands. In this study, the authors have chosen the Swedish grocery brand Glenn Strömberg Collection as the brand for analysis.

The authors define GSC as a moderately incongruent product brand based on its extrinsic product cues. This is rationalized on the basis of a few arguments. First of all, the brand sells Italian food and has Italian symbols, maps and language incorporated in the product design. These aspects isolated are by the authors considered to be truly congruent with the perception of Italian food. On the other hand, Strömberg is also incorporated in the product design. On some products, a picture of him covers the product, while on other products his name is the clearest sign. Strömberg is a former football player and his most obvious connection to Italian food is that he used to play and live in Italy. Therefore, the authors' assumption is that Strömberg has a vague connection to Italy and that he is easier for consumers to connect with football or his job as football-commentary.

The assumption that GSC is a moderately incongruent product brand in connection to Strömberg can be supported by two factors: firstly, a strong connection between the Italian food products and Strömberg's career and life in Italy. Secondly, a lack of connection between the brand and Strömberg's fame from the Swedish national team and commentatorship. Thus, the authors define him as moderately incongruent.

Delimitations
The research that is conducted will be limited to the Swedish groceries market with a specific focus on Italian foods. Hence, comparisons will not be made with other markets for consumer goods.

The theoretical concepts of *celebrity endorsement* and *celebrity brands* are

different. Therefore, this study will be limited to the academic theories that are applicable for both concepts.

This study will focus solely on one celebrity brand, namely GSC, thus omitting comparisons between different celebrity brands. This is to ensure that factors such as product quality, design and level of recognition do not affect the result.

The product that will be tested in this in this study is Glenn Strömberg's "Spaghetti di Gragnano". Spaghetti was chosen on the criteria of it being a classical Italian food product that most consumers can be expected to buy somewhat regularly.

Methodology

Target audience

This study is primarily written for master's students in the course Brand management at Lund University but also for the marketing management of GSC. The authors hope to be able to provide managerial implications for the management of GSC.

Approach

The approach of this study is to examine if survey respondents perceive Strömberg's moderately incongruent product as more favorable than a congruent product. For this kind of study, a deductive approach is suitable. This approach means that the scientists have a theory that will be tested through an empirical study (Bryman & Bell, 2007: 28).

Respondents

The population of the study consists of potential customers for GSC. The sample consists of 86 people. The respondents were included based on the criteria of being potential customers and being over the age of 20. The reason for this is that it is reasonable to believe that GSC should target consumers who are old enough to purchase their own groceries.

Collection of data

Quantitative data is concerned with finding numerical data that can be used to make assumptions (Bryman & Bell, 2007). This study will mainly make use of quantitative data since the favorability of Glenn Strömberg's product is possible to measure. On the other hand, another method could be to use qualitative data. Qualitative data puts focus on the interpretation of words and analysis of answers, from for example interviews. This form of data is well suited for creating a broad and detailed picture of a subject (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

This study does not to focus on qualitative data primarily since the authors wanted to acquire the opinions of a larger group people, during a tight frame of time. If the study would have focused on qualitative data and interviews, the data would have been very detailed and rich in information, but the sample would likely have been smaller. In order to come closer to generalizable opinions, a larger sample is preferable. Although, there are some parts of the data that are of qualitative art, mainly for the purpose of creating more depth in the analysis.

Design and Procedure of the Survey

To compare the moderately incongruent product to one that is congruent, the authors created a fictional product with the purpose of representing total congruity with Italy. This was made to keep the valuation of the two products based on the criteria of congruity in extrinsic cues only. Therefore, the authors endeavored to make the fictional product as similar to the original product as possible. This was achieved by only removing Glenn Strömberg's name from the product. Most other extrinsic cues stayed the same. The prototype for the congruent product was given the brand name "La Selezione Italiana" with an added logo for the city of Bergamo, to further consolidate the impression of being an authentic Italian brand.

By using a fictional product to compare with GSC, the authors can ensure that respondents can have no prior knowledge or opinion of it. If GSC would have been compared to another existing brand, for example the well-established pasta brand *Barilla*, the authors could have encountered problems with the comparison of taste, quality, loyalty and

familiarity. However, by changing and therefore redesigning the product, problems of a different nature may occur. Perceived quality is closely related to design (Kapferer, 2008). Therefore, the design and the graphical charter are made as equal as possible for the two products in the study.

By giving the respondents the choice between an actual brand and a fictional brand, there is a risk that the fictional brand will be perceived as inferior, simply because of (a possibly) inferior design. By giving the respondents the opportunity to write why they choose either product, potential issues with this method can be identified and taken into consideration.

It was not made clear in the survey that GSC is currently available in stores.

The design of the study was adapted to achieve a particular set of data. When using quantitative data one of the most commonly used designs is surveys (Bryman & Bell, 2007). The study was designed as an online survey consisting of nine questions. Initially, respondents were asked to provide information about their gender and age. The purpose of this is to obtain some basic characteristics of the data sample in order to identify if the sample is diversified or not. However, no actions were taken to ensure a diversified data sample.

Respondents were shown pictures of the original GSC product and the fictional La Selezione Italiana product. They were also informed that the products were priced equally. Consequentially, respondents were asked to choose which one of the products they preferred. The purpose of this question is to examine whether respondents would prefer a congruent or a moderately incongruent product. The product selection was followed by a question of *why* this selection had been made, with an "open-answer" response being asked for. The aim of this was to achieve an understanding as to why the respondents made the decision they made, with the hopes of supporting the discussion regarding the initial hypothesis.

Subsequently, the next question's purpose is to show if the participant is familiar with the celebrity Glenn Strömberg. If not; the survey is ended, if yes; the respondents were asked what they associate with Glenn Strömberg. By this, the authors' ambition is to reveal whether the respondents associate the celebrity primarily with his prior activities as a football player or an expert commentator rather than an expert in Italian foods. Once again, the authors strive to examine the perceived level of congruity.

To identify if the respondents opinion of Glenn Strömberg does bias the result to a great extent, they were asked to provide their general opinion about him, ranging in a 5-step scale from negative to positive.

Finally, questions with a more straightforward approach were asked to provide information on whether or not people liked the GSC brand and if the respondents themselves thought that Glenn Strömberg has a relevance to his products. The latter was measured on a scale from 1 (irrelevant) to 5 (relevant), the former gave the respondents the option to rate their opinion as: *really do not like it, do not like it, indifferent, like it* and *really like it* but also *do not know about it.* The purpose of this question is to acquire a clear perception of how the respondents consider Strömberg's level of congruity.

The survey was created and distributed through the web-based software Google Forms.

Criticism of the method
The authors are aware of the fact that the chosen method contains limitations. This section will present different dimensions in which this paper needs to be criticized.

An assumption on the target brand
The authors have made an assumption that Glenn Strömberg is moderately incongruent to the products based on a number of arguments. However, this may not be the general opinion among the customers of the target brand.

Empirical Findings
The target population of the brand is consumers on the Swedish convenience goods market. Due to the extent of this project, a narrow sample has been acquired through an electronic survey. No consideration has been

taken to the respondents' purchasing habits. Also, the survey has been available for students at Lund University and others with a connection to the authors. This has most likely resulted in under-coverage of the target population. No measures have been taken to ensure a sufficient diversity of the respondents.

Data quality

No data validation efforts have been carried through. However, the survey is very brief and has no complex or potentially intimidating questions. Therefore, the authors are willing to trust the gathered answers provided by the respondents.

Pilot Study

No pilot study was conducted in order to examine if Strömberg is moderately incongruent with the GSC product in the eyes of the consumers. A pilot study would have made the assumption on its congruity more legitimate.

Survey formation

The survey is created based on the authors' prior knowledge from basic academic statistics studies. Also, the survey was not tested on a sufficient group of test subjects to obtain feedback on its formulation. Therefore, the survey is likely to be suboptimal, with semi leading questions and inefficient formulations as a result.

Analysis of data

The data from the study was compiled and the results were compared to the hypothesis, analyzed and finally discussed.

THEORY

BRAND IDENTITY

As consumers, we all have a need of creating our own identity. To channel our identity, humans tend to use symbolism and connotations that can be found in the brands that we choose. Brands have personalities, which are similar to ours in many ways (Erdogan, 1999). The personality is created mainly from marketing. A shortcut for

building a brand personality is however, by using a celebrity with fitting and suitable human traits. Since most people do not know celebrities on a personal level, the personality, which consumers relate to, is the celebrity's brand. These are the characteristics and the attributes that the consumers register from their public appearances (Thomson, 2006).

The purpose of using celebrities to endorse products is to transfer attributes from the public personality of the celebrity onto the products personality (McCracken, 1989). By using a celebrity, new brands do not need to build their own personality from scratch.

Brand levels

Brands can be viewed as a structure of four different levels. The first level is the brand's functional attributes, i.e. the specific properties of products or services. These attributes are easy for competitors to copy, which makes them unsustainable. The second level consists of a functional and/or emotional usage of the product, simply put; what it actually does. The third level consists of values that are supposed to reflect the buyer's values. Finally, the forth level consists of the brand's personality. As the brand escalades on this scale of levels, the competitor's difficulty of copying increases. The personality is the essence of a brand and the hardest part for competitors to imitate (Kotler, 2001).

A marketer can choose to use a variety of spokespersons to endorse and communicate their brand. For example, they can use an *expert*. The expert is a person with a recognized knowledge about an area or a product, whose judgment is trusted. Another spokesperson is the *ordinary consumer*. These are people just like "you and me" and they are used in order for consumers to identify directly with them, like a twin soul (Söderlund, 2003). Consumers are readily able to believe that people who seem to be like us choose products from the same criteria as they do. *Fictitious personalities* are made up spokespersons whose behavior or preferences are decided by the company itself. It can be, for example Judith and Judith from the Swedish Com Hem-commercials. Lastly,

companies can use celebrities to endorse their products. Celebrities are rarely experts in the area of the endorsed product. Instead they are widely recognized and use this recognition to promote products (McCracken, 1989). In all cases of celebrity endorsement, it is important for the celebrity to be perceived as a convincing spokesperson for the brands and products that they endorse. This is due to the fact that credibility affects consumers' attitudes and behavior (Lafferty, Goldsmith & Newell, 2002).

Previous knowledge and opinions about celebrities affect the attitude of consumers. It can increase trust, which in turn can increase the effectiveness of the branding (McCracken, 1989). However, it can also affect the opinions of consumers in a negative manner, for example by the celebrities other endorsements or commitments. The attitude towards celebrities is heavily affected by the celebrities' behavior and attractiveness. Attractiveness is not merely physical but the collected positive characteristics that the public perceives of them (Erdogan, 1999).

Celebrity Endorsement

Celebrity endorsements, as self-explanatory it may be, should be defined in order not to leave any doubts as to the forthcoming section. Grant McCracken defines celebrity endorsements as:

"any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement" (1989, p. 310).

This definition is clear, concise and widely acknowledged (Rajakaski & Simonsson, 2006), which is why this study will refer to it throughout. To differentiate celebrity endorsements from celebrity branding, the authors will provide a defining description of the latter based on the theory:

"the endeavor to name or mark an entire product or service after a celebrity who is not famous for the goods itself and without the product having an obvious connection to another brand".

To clarify, the difference between the two concepts is that celebrity endorsement refers to the use of a celebrity to promote an existing brand, using advertising with images and/or names of the celebrity. Celebrity brands on the other hand, are products or services that show no underlying independent brand name except for that of the celebrity.

Congruity

Intuitively, one might believe that if a product's characteristics are congruent with its celebrity sponsorship, it will be positively influenced (Kahle & Homer, 1985). Research on schema incongruity supports the opposite of this prediction. One study has shown that consumers have a more favorable perception of a product when the match between it and its associations is partially congruent, rather than a complete match or mismatch (Mandler, 1982). This effect is called the moderate schema incongruity effect (MSIE). A schema is the knowledge structure of an individual and works as a frame of reference when judgments are made. When an individual is faced with an object that stimulates a concept that is stored in the memory, an activation of a schema occurs (Cohen & Ebbesen, 1979). For example, when an individual sees a can of Coca-Cola, a soft drink schema is activated and other concepts, which are closely related to it, come to mind. Possible concepts for a can of Coca-Cola could be carbonation, sweet and America. The level of congruity or incongruity is based on the degree of matching between the attributes of the Coca-Cola can and the related schema (Mandler 1982).

Congruity occurs when the activated schema and the object match perfectly. On the opposite side is incongruity, which refers to a complete mismatch between the activated schema and the object (Mandler, 1982). Moderate incongruity occurs when the activated schema *partially* matches with the object. The individual should be able to understand the connection without a significant change in the existing cognitive structure (Mandler, 1982).

The level of schema congruity has an impact on the valence, which refers to how positive or negative an individual is while evaluating an object. It also affects the degree of how mild

or intense the evaluation is (Mandler, 1982). Perfect congruity is not surprising to consumers, as it does not change the observer's current state or opinion of a product. When exposed to moderate or high incongruity, the observer is surprised. The mismatch of information also increases affective arousal and cognitive elaboration. The observers resolve moderate incongruity relatively easy, which allows them to experience a positive affective response. Consumers are pleased when they make connections on their own. A high level of incongruity on the other hand, is not as easily resolved. The observer may experience a negative affective response, like frustration (Mandler 1982; Meyers-Levy & Tybout, 1989).

Empirical findings

Quantitative Data

The electronic survey was answered by a total of 86 respondents. The sample consists of 71 percent men and 29 percent women.

The age of the respondents ranges from 20 to 62. However, 80 percent of these respondents are less than or equal to 26 years of age. The average age of the respondents was 27,4.

When respondents where asked to choose between the GSC product and the fictional product, 71 percent chose the fictional, non-endorsed product.

A clear majority (80 percent) of the respondents were familiar with Glenn Strömberg already. A majority of the respondents thought of Strömberg primarily as an expert commentator, but nearly as many thought of him as a football player. A very minor share of the respondents associated Glenn Strömberg primarily with Italian foods and cooking, roughly 3 percent.

A majority, namely 38 percent, rated their opinion of Strömberg as 4, in a scale where 1 is negative, 3 is neutral and 5 is positive. The average rate was 3,6, which would translate into a somewhat positive opinion. In total, very few respondents had negative feelings towards Strömberg, on the contrary, almost 90 percent of the respondents had a neutral, somewhat positive or positive opinion.

Regarding Strömberg's relevance as a spokesperson of Italian food products, most of the respondents consider him to be irrelevant. The answers ranged from 1 to 5 where 1 was irrelevant and 5 were relevant. A majority of the respondents, 69 percent, rated Strömberg as either irrelevant or somewhat irrelevant. The mean of Strömberg's relevance as a spokesperson was 2,1. A mere 12 percent rated Strömberg as either somewhat relevant or relevant.

When asked about the GSC products, the majority of the respondents were divided equally at 33,3 percent between being indifferent and not knowing about it. 11 percent of the respondents either did not like, or really did not like his product line. Almost 23 percent either liked or really liked it.

Qualitative data

When asked to choose between GSC and La Selezione Italiana, respondents were also provided with an "open answer"-response field to motivate their choice. The motivations differed greatly but there are some patterns to be found. This section contains a categorization of the most frequently submitted responses together with a number of defining quotes.

In the survey, the product labeled "A" is Glenn Strömberg Collection's Spaghetti di Gragnano and the product labeled "B" is our fictional brand La Selezione Italiana.

Authenticity

18 respondents write that product B seemed to be authentic, genuine or felt like a real Italian brand. Many of the responses looked similar; "Looks more authentic Italian", "B feels more genuine", "Italian pasta - Italian name" and "Because the one I chose [B] seems more authentic without the Swedish name on it. The name makes it seem like a cheap way of selling instead of a real Italian product". Some respondents are frank about their feelings about the fact that Strömberg has a food brand, for example: "I don't know what Glenn Strömberg knows about food", "Who wants to eat pasta supported by Glenn? He should stick with commenting Italian football, not market

Italian foods", where some of the negative responses.

Design

There are 14 responses that indicate that the choice is made based upon the design of the product. 10 out of 14 preferred the design of product B, because either packaging or the logo was: nicer, more appealing, was perceived as better or of higher quality. Some of the responses were as follows: *"Nicer packaging", "Looks more classy"* and *"More stylish logo"*.

The perception of celebrity endorsement in general

There are 13 comments where respondents base their selection on the fact that a celebrity endorses one of the alternatives. Eleven of these respondents state that they do not like the idea of celebrity endorsement, with comments such as *"I don't fall for celebs"* and *"I don't see any benefit from choosing a product which is promoted by a famous person"*.

Response on Glenn Strömberg as a celebrity

Respondents' opinions about Glenn Strömberg are distributed fairly equal. Nine respondents claim to have based their decision on the fact that they like Strömberg. On the other hand, eight respondents claim that they dislike him.

Analysis

Previous Knowledge and Attractiveness

To be a convincing spokesperson for a product it is important that consumers find them credible in the product area that they are promoting as stated by (Lafferty & Goldsmith, 2002). The previous knowledge and opinions that the respondents have of Strömberg can be assumed to heavily influence their choice of product. The respondents have no previous knowledge of product B, which is identical to product A, except for the brand name and logo. Their choice is therefore based on their opinion of Strömberg, which stems from his public appearances (Thomson, 2006).

According to Lafferty et al. (2002) it is of great importance for a celebrity to be convincing for the brand that it represents.

Also, consumers' attitudes toward the brand are greatly affected by the attractiveness and behavior of the celebrity. The attractiveness, which is not merely physical, is based on the consumer's perception of a collection of positive characteristics and attributes affiliated with the celebrity (Erdogan, 1999), in this case Strömberg. As mentioned in the empirical findings, the general opinion of Strömberg was on average 3,6, which should be regarded as a neutral attitude with a minor predominance towards a positive opinion. Based on the prior research about attractiveness, it is reasonable to assume that the respondent's slightly positive opinion of Strömberg affects their attraction to GSC to some extent.

Congruity

Concerning Strömberg's relevance as a spokesperson for Italian food, 69 percent of the respondents rated him as somewhat irrelevant or irrelevant. Connecting this to the theory of congruity, a few things are worth emphasizing. Strömberg is clearly not perceived as congruent with Italian food. The mean of his relevance was 2,1 and this implies that the respondents consider him as slightly less than moderately incongruent with the associations they have with Italian foods.

The theory of congruity states that an individual that evaluates a moderately incongruent object should be able to understand the connection without a significant change in the existing cognitive structure (Mandler, 1982). The analysis of the results of Strömberg's relevance is that the participants generally had problems with understanding his connection to Italian food.

Understanding the connection was not difficult to the degree that they saw him as completely incongruent. The connection although led to some changes in their existing cognitive structures. This created the perception of him as being moderately incongruent, with a predominance to incongruity rather than congruity.

The perception of Strömberg's incongruity with Italian food is also reinforced by the question about the associations of Strömberg.

55 percent of the respondents associated him primarily with his role as an expert commentator and 40 percent associated him primarily with football. According to the theory of congruity, moderate incongruity is easily resolved by the observer, which leads to a positive affective response (Mandler, 1982; Meyers-Levy & Tybout, 1989). The authors believe that the strong associations of Strömberg as a football player and expert commentator and the lack of associations to Italian food make it more difficult for the respondents to resolve the incongruity. This complicates the process of experiencing a positive affective response.

Results

A vast majority preferred product B to product A. Despite the fact that most of the respondents are familiar with Strömberg and also tend to have a slightly positive opinion about him, they prefer the other product. As the research of this study shows, Strömberg is overwhelmingly associated with football and commentatorship, almost none of the respondents connected him primarily to Italian food. Hence, it is possible that Strömberg's congruity with Italian food is too low according to the respondents. This perception makes the moderate incongruity of Glenn Strömberg difficult to resolve, which results in the deselection of his product.

CONCLUSION

Hypothesis 1: Respondents will have a more favorable perception of a moderately incongruent celebrity branded product compared to a congruent product in the Swedish consumer goods market for Italian food products.

The empirical data, analysis and results lead to the conclusion that hypothesis 1 should be rejected.

General discussion

The qualitative findings in this study are too scarce to make reliable assumptions. However some tendencies in the answers deserves paying attention to. Many respondents preferred product B, because it had an Italian name and logo. This could be imply that consumers prefer congruent products over moderately incongruent products within this product category. Several respondents emphasized *authenticity* and *design* as their primary basis for decision.

As mentioned in the section *3.6*, the sample for the survey may not be diverse enough to represent the target population. The gender distribution in the sample is 80 percent men and 20 percent women, which is certainly not representative of the Swedish consumer market. Neither has consideration been taken to other factors such as; demographic, geographic and psychographic. This may have had an impact on the outcome of the data collection.

Managerial Implications

The results of the study provide managerial implications for the management of Glenn Strömberg Collection. The fact that a majority of the respondents chose the fictional product rather than Strömberg's product might imply that the associations of Glenn Strömberg is too incongruent with Italian food. By increasing the connection between Strömberg and Italian foods, GSC can approach a better fit as a moderately incongruent celebrity brand. By doing this Strömberg might achieve a more favorable perception in the eyes of consumers, thus creating a more beneficial position in relation to competitors.

Future research

For future studies, researchers should increase the amount of data collected from the respondents and the size of the sample. This would be achieved by adding more questions and by distributing the survey to a larger number of respondents. These changes would improve the result by defining more clearly what influences the final choice of product for the consumer. In order to discern whether Strömberg can be an effective celebrity endorser in other areas, other products could also be tested.

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Appendix

1. Gender:
- Male
- Female
- Other

2. Age
Please state age in years (e.g. 25)

3. Assume that the two products above are priced equally. Which one would you choose?
- A
- B

4. Why do you prefer the chosen alternative above?
-
5. Are you familiar with Glenn Strömberg? *
- Yes
- No

6. If yes, which of the following do you associate primarily with Glenn Strömberg?

Please choose one alternative:
- Soccer
- Expert Commentator
- Italian foods
- Other: -

7. Please rate your general opinion about Glenn Strömberg.

          1   2   3   4   5

Negative ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ Positive

8. How would you rate Glenn Strömberg's relevance as a spokesman of Italian food products?

          1   2   3   4   5

Irrelevant ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ Relevant

9. What is your opinion on the Glenn Strömberg Collezione Italiana products?

Please choose one alternative
- Really do not like it
- Do not like it
- Indifferent
- Like it
- Really like it
- Do not know about it

The survey was created and distributed through the web-based software Google Forms.

The data on the right side of the graphics shows the question alternative, the quantity and the percentage of the total amount of respondents.

Question 1

Gender
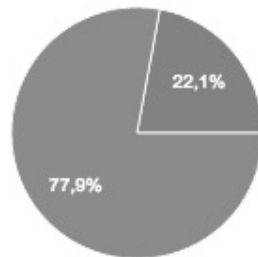
Male	**67**	77.9 %
Female	**19**	22.1 %
Other	**0**	0 %

Question 3.

Assume that the two products above are priced equally. Which one would you choose?
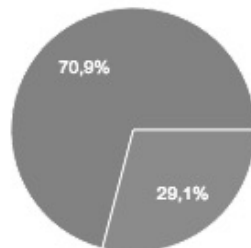
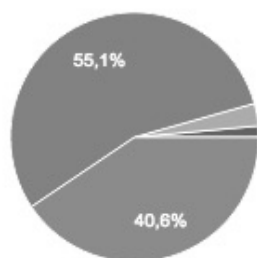|		
A	**25**	29.1 %
B	**61**	70.9 %

Question 5.

Are you familiar with Glenn Strömberg?
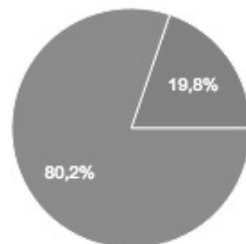
Yes	**69**	80.2 %
No	**17**	19.8 %

Question 6.

If yes, which of the following do you associate primarily with Glenn Strömberg?

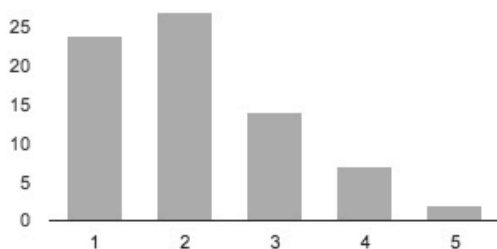|		
Soccer	**28**	40.6 %
Expert commentator	**38**	55.1 %
Italian foods	**2**	2.9 %
Övriga	**1**	1.4 %

Question 7.

Please rate your general opinion about Glenn Strömberg.
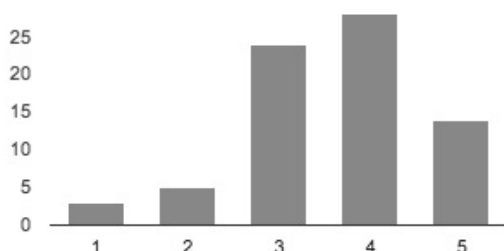
Negative: 1	**3**	4.1 %
2	**5**	6.8 %
3	**24**	32.4 %
4	**28**	37.8 %
Positive: 5	**14**	18.9 %

Question 8.
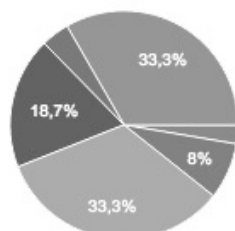
How would you rate Glenn Strömberg's relevance as a spokesman of Italian food products?

Irrelevant: 1	**24**	32.4 %
2	**27**	36.5 %
3	**14**	18.9 %
4	**7**	9.5 %
Relevant: 5	**2**	2.7 %

Question 9.

What is your opinion on the Glenn Strömberg Collezione Italiana products?

Really do not like it	**2**	2.7 %
Do not like it	**6**	8 %
Indifferent	**25**	33.3 %
Like it	**14**	18.7 %
Really like it	**3**	4 %
Do not know about it	**25**	33.3 %