

**Brands of athletes- The effect of brand personality of athletes on consumers**

A quantitative study of brand personality of athletes, influencing consumer behavior facets, regarding product brands of athletes

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## Abstract

Title	Brands of athletes – The effect of brand personality of athletes on consumers. A quantitative study of brand personality of athletes, influencing consumer behavior facets, regarding product brands of athletes.
Authors	Filip Svensson & Jonas Schäfer
Course	BUSN39 Degree project in Global Marketing, 15 ECTS credits
Supervisor	Veronika Tarnovskaya
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Purpose	To investigate the effect of an individual celebrity athlete’s personality on the consumer behavior facets of perceived quality and purchase intention.
Methodology	A quantitative survey with 257 respondents all over the world to deductively test hypotheses.
Theories	The theoretical foundation of this thesis is the customer-based brand equity theory with a strong emphasis on brand personality. Furtherly used concepts include the consumer behavior facets of perceived quality and purchase intention.
Findings	Brand personality of athletes affects the perceived quality of their respective product brands. The perceived quality of the product brand positively influence purchase intention.
Keywords	Brand equity, brand personality, celebrity entrepreneurship, perceived quality, purchase intention, athletes

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This master thesis completes the one-year master programme in International Marketing and Brand Management at the Lund University School of Economics and Management.

The topic of the thesis was chosen on the basis of our athletic backgrounds. We are both enthusiastic tennis players and passionate about the broad topic of branding, so we decided to choose this area of research. With our findings, we hope to contribute to theory and practice in the field of brands of athletes.

We would like to thank Veronika Tarnovskaya, for her support, as a supervisor for this thesis. We also want to thank Kayhan Tajeddini and Antonio Marañon for their help, concerning all statistical matters.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

It is fair to say that all people have their own personal brand (Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2012).

Many accomplished athletes have such strong personal brands that established manufacturers and retailers sponsor them to endorse their own brands. There are, however, several examples of world-class athletes, who have used their illustrious athletic performances and celebrated personalities, to go a step further with their so-called personal brands and actually launch products, carrying their names. In this thesis, we will use the expression “product brand” to stand for this phenomenon, instead of retail brand, as the latter is connected with stores or retail outlets, which is not of interest in this work. We will therefore focus on the brands launched by athletes. Examples of athletes with their own product brand include former Norwegian alpine skiing world champion, Lasse Kjus and Swedish 11-time Grand Slam champion, Björn Borg. There are also athletes, who have launched their own collection together with an established manufacturer. Examples in this case include Michael Jordan (Air) and Lance Armstrong (Livestrong) with Nike. Though these are also manufacturer brands in nature, they are still almost entirely associated with one individual athlete.



Figure 1: Lance Armstrong and the Livestrong brand (left) and Michael Jordan, and the Air Jordan (right), are both in cooperation with Nike.



Figure 2: The product brand of Lasse Kjus

Moreover, product brands of athletes are becoming an important branch of economic activity, as the example of Michael Jordan distinctly illustrates. His brand, "Air Jordan" has a market share of 58% in the basketball shoe market and the brand produces over \$2.5 billion in annual sales for Nike (Warner, 2013). Consequently, this phenomenon is getting more and more attention, also in academic literature, in recent years. While the vast majority of academic research is about celebrity endorsement or sponsoring, the aspect of naming the brand after an athlete/celebrity is barely covered.

In a society, where products tend to become more and more identical, companies are faced with more tasks to differentiate their products and strengthen their brand personality. According to Melin (1999), consumers choose brands that they wish to associate themselves with. Consumers are therefore expected to consume products of brands that enforce their own self-image. If a company possesses an attractive brand personality, this appearance leads to consumers' being able to strengthen their own personality. In effect, this fortification augments the predispositions for the brand owner, to maintain a sustainable relationship with the consumers.

The traditional view on brand personality is that its traits become associated with a brand, through ambassadors, such as the typical user of a brand, the company's employees or Chief Executive Officer and the brand's endorsers. This wholesome phenomenon of brand association is the reason for companies' using celebrity-, and especially, athlete-endorsement; it takes a long time to transfer the brand image of this celebrity to its own personality. It is exceptionally fitting and unmistakably relevant that the idea of brand personality is a key component of athletes' personal brands and the effects that these have on consumers. Using Aaker's (1997) dimensions of brand personality, it is possible to personify a brand and to some extent measure the degree to which a certain brand is a certain adjective. The personality of an athlete is likely to dictate the way consumer's feel about the athlete's product brand. Among several other factors, the single most important determinant for consumer decision-making is perceived quality. Consumers want value for their money and will most often only seek to intend to buy the product brand of an athlete, if they perceive the athlete's brand personality to convey quality. The relationship between brand personality of individual athletes, the perceived quality of their product brands and

the effect that it consequently has on the consumer purchase intention is a fascinating and fresh area of study.

## 1.2 Problem formulation

There is a vast amount of evidence that the use of top athletes as brand endorsers, through sponsoring improves the brand personality and thereby brand equity of the firm (Cliff & Motion, 2004). It is, however, difficult to pinpoint the perception differences between the person and the company. The notion of leveraging brand personality to not only the established company but to an athlete's product brand is interesting, because it goes beyond the main purpose of the sponsorship.

There exists extensive literature on brand personality, such as Aaker's (1997) five dimensions, which is a broadly used model. Aaker developed a scale to measure brand personality and came up with the five dimensions of sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness. Furthermore, Carlson (2008) focuses on the influence that brand personality of sports teams has on consumers. He was able to show that when the brand personality facets of Aaker were adapted to the sporting context, they influenced prestige and distinctiveness, which lead to identifications and ultimately, created favorable consumer behavior. Despite the findings of the above-mentioned scholars, we could identify an additional gap. Aaker's five facets of brand personality are yet to be adapted to individual athletes. If successful athletes with a strong brand personality build their own business, they seem to have a clear advantage in building a strong product brand.



**Figure 3: David Beckham, a football and fashion icon has used his famous personality to create a personal brand, manufacturing fragrances and fashion**



Even more unexplored is the effect that the product brands of athletes have on consumers. It is interesting to explore how the underlying concept of brand personality can affect the consumer, in terms of perceived quality, which furthermore influences purchase intention. The aim of this work is to investigate the relationship between sport and branding, which has developed into an exciting research topic (i.e. athletes as brands, the role of sports in the consumer buying processes, brand personality and brand-consumer relationships). We carry out our investigation, by applying the brand personality theory into a sporting context, to explore perceived quality and purchase intention, on the topic of product brands of athletes.

### **1.3 Research question, purpose and contribution to theory**

Research question: What is the effect of brand personality of celebrity athletes on perceived quality of the athlete's product brand and how does this perceived quality affect purchase intention?

Research purpose: Manifested in one's own product brand, we will examine the effect of an individual celebrity athlete's personality on the consumer behavior facets of perceived quality and purchase intention. We focus our empirical part exclusively on the individually embossed sport of tennis, to explore the effects of personality traits of individual athletes on mentioned consumer behaviors.

Contribution: With our work, we aim to contribute to the general brand personality theory, especially to describe the effect that brand personality of athletes have on consumer behavior. Aaker's model (1997) is widely used; Carlson (2004) adapted the model to the sport area. Furthermore, Hunter (2009) investigated the phenomenon of celebrity entrepreneurship.

We aim to combine these theories in using the Brand personality theory of Aaker and the findings of Carlson concerning sports and the ones of Hunter concerning celebrity entrepreneurship and create an own theoretical framework consisting of mentioned topics adapted to individual athletes. The results can contribute to general branding literature dealing with brand personality, identity or image especially in the context of sport. The findings furthermore help in understanding consumer perception of quality and purchase intention influenced by brand personality.

The practical contribution of our work will be relevant for manufacturers, as well as athletes and their management team. It will be of interest for manufacturers, such as Nike and Adidas, who deal with individual athletes, on a professional level. On the one hand, it can be a chance for these companies, when using the product brands of the athlete, to sell more products of their own brand. An example is David Beckham who endorses his own collection, in collaboration with Adidas and H&M. While this kind of representation is more related to the topic of endorsement, a standalone brand of an athlete in cooperation with an established manufacturer is another option, to use the brand personality of an athlete. A successful example is, as already mentioned the brand "Air Jordan", endorsed by and named after former basketball-star Michael Jordan but owned and produced by the manufacturer, Nike. On the other hand, it is highly relevant knowledge for manufacturers, as they are aware of the threat that individual athletes could pose, if they decide to create their own product brands.

For individual athletes and their management, the results can be of importance, in order to know which aspects are important, when creating a product brand. It is furthermore relevant in how to behave during the active career, in order to achieve a high brand personality.

#### **1.4 Focus and limitations**

The largest possible obstacle is that the study will be too focused and that a generalization will be hard to make. Every sport is different and since we will focus our empirical study solely on tennis players, it might be inappropriate to draw conclusions about consumers of all sporting communities. Not only are sports very different (team vs. individual) but consumers within the different sporting communities are also very distinguishable. Since tennis is a more materialistic sport than many others, the consumer involvement in gear and attire is more extensive than in say, football. This materialistic aspect also makes it difficult to ignore the social stratification aspect of consumers. Football is for example known to be more of a working-class man's sport, whereas tennis is recognized as more elitist. An eventual conclusion might therefore not be plausible to draw, for the entire spectrum of individual athletes' brands and consumers. However, if we choose just to focus on tennis, by conducting a survey exclusively for tennis players - including only individual brands of known tennis players, this obstacle could be removed or at least severely minimized.

Another limitation might be the fact we dedicate our study almost solely to brand personality. The other half of brand equity is, of course brand awareness. Even though, we are not assuming 100% awareness, we are not emphasizing it as much as brand personality. This could prove problematic because even though a consumer might be aware of all athletes, they could feel that they are more aware of one than the others. We are stating that we will look at celebrity athletes, which automatically takes emphasis off of the independent variable of brand awareness. The definition of the word, celebrity clearly indicates that a person is known in public (Boorstin, 1961).

Furthermore, another possible obstacle could be the devotion to other stars in the game. Even though, the Federer-Nadal rivalry is dubbed one of the greatest in the history of any sport, everyone has their own favorite. The current dominance of especially Novak Djokovic but also Andy Murray could interfere here. In addition, the demography of the respondents might bias the result. Even though there will be respondents from several different countries, the countries of Sweden and Germany, which are the authors' countries of origin, might get over-represented.

### **1.5 Outline & Disposition**

After we introduced the phenomenon of athletes' endorsing their own product brands and the importance of brand personality in this context, we presented our research purpose. From here on, we will describe our methodological choices and move on to our theoretical framework. Following the theoretical background, we will present our empirical method and the collected empirical material, which we will analyze and draw conclusions from. Finally, we will represent limitations of our research and try to make recommendations for future studies.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 Research strategy**

There are three different kinds of research strategies and they all seek to accomplish different goals, as not all research projects have the ability to be specific (Kotler and Keller, 2009). Exploratory research is meant to dig into the real heart of the problem and to use explicitly gathered information, to present plausible solutions or new suggestions. Descriptive research seeks to make a problem quantitative and then describe possible solutions to the outlined problem. Causal research, also known as explanatory research is scientific in nature, as it plays with experiments. It examines cause and effect relationships. With regards to our purpose, we use a causal research strategy that seeks to explain the effect that personalities of individual athletes cause on the behavior of consumers of their product brands.

### **2.2 Research philosophy**

Firstly, philosophical assumptions help to clarify the research design and also indicate which research design is best suitable for the research purpose (Easterby-Smith et al, 2008). With regard to epistemological considerations, this research takes a relativistic approach, as it assumes there are regular patterns in human behavior. In our case, this behavior includes the consumer facets perceived quality and purchase intention, which are not easy to detect (Easterby-Smith et al, 2008). In order to detect potentially underlying relationships between the brand personalities of an athlete/ his product brand and the consumer decision-making, we believe a relativistic approach is best suitable. The advantage of a relativistic approach is the possibility to use multiple data sources and to be able to generalize beyond the present sample and to conduct it efficiently. The disadvantages include the need for large samples and the difficulties to deal with cultural differences within international studies (Easterby-Smith et al, 2008).

With regard to ontological considerations and our research purpose, we use objectivism to approach our research. Objectivism states that social actors are independent of the social phenomena and its meanings (Bryman & Bell 2007). The main advantage of using objective research is the possibility to generalize outcomes to a wider population than social constructionism, the contradicting ontological position.

### **2.3 Nature of research**

Our main focus will be a survey with a quantitative research design, even though we will start with a qualitative method. The qualitative part of the study will be conducted prior to the quantitative survey and will lay the foundation of relevance for our questions in the survey. Sample questions (pilot study) will be asked, where we seek to test Aaker's (1997) brand personality attributes, regarding individual athletes (tennis players) and their product brands. These open-ended questions will stimulate answers, consisting of descriptive personality traits, which we will be able to categorize. Though the findings of both Aaker (1997) and Carlson (2009) will be used extensively, we may find synonyms to their category names that we find more fitting for describing the personality attributes of professional tennis players.

The main research is of quantitative nature and will be conducted in an online survey. We will contact local, as well as foreign tennis clubs and use our extensive tennis networks to reach as many tennis fans as possible. In order to collect data that involves observations of a representative subset of the population of tennis fans at one specific point in time, we apply a cross-sectional design. Since we are controlling our sample by personally inviting respondents to answer our survey, we realize that we make our sample our own population. We can therefore not generalize about the entire population of tennis players as a whole. Instead, we intend to provide, as good of an overview as possible of what the general trends are. The findings will be both descriptive and causal, since the results will both tell us simple characteristics of our respondents. The findings will also explain a cause and effect relationship between the superstar athletes, their respective brands and consumer behavior. In effect, we will see how well the attributes correspond and the effect that brand personality itself has on the consumer decision-making dimensions of perceived quality and purchase intention. Our questionnaire will be constructed with a focus on the tennis players of Björn Borg, Boris Becker, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, as all of them own their own product brand.

### **2.4 Research design**

A research design provides a framework for collecting and analyzing data (Bryman & Bell, 2007). As the focus is a quantitative survey, we aim to find results based on theories (Aaker, 1997; Carlson, Donovan & Cumiskey, 2008), which means that we use a deductive approach,

with the creation and test of hypothesis to answer the research question. In contrast to inductive research, which tries to generate theory out of findings and observations, the deductive approach means using theory in order to make observations or accomplish findings (Bryman & Bell, 2007). However, as we start with a qualitative pilot study to test Aaker's dimension, we aim to reduce or adjust the attributes used by Aaker and come up with different traits. As this is more an inductive method, we will have a mixture of both approaches, with a clear emphasis on the deductive part. According to Bryman & Bell, (2007) quantitative research implies the use of numbers, test of theory, use of structure, attempts to generalize and investigation of behavior. Therefore quantitative research is best suitable for our purpose.

Research philosophy	Relativism
Research approach	Deductive
Research strategy	Quantitative survey
Research design	Cross-sectional design
Data collection method	Questionnaire

Figure 5: Research strategy overview, (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2003)

The research strategy is based on a survey with a multiple cross-sectional research design approach, which seems to be suitable to get valid results. We will use an inferential survey, which aims to establish relationships between variables (brand personality, perceived quality, purchase intention) and concepts (Aaker's brand personality) with hypothesis or assumptions regarding the nature of the relationship (Easterby-Smith et al, 2008). We try to isolate the factors that appear to be involved and decide what appears to be causing what (Easterby-Smith et al, 2008), in our case, the brand personality of the athlete causes positively perceived quality, which furthermore leads to purchase intention. As we focus only on unique outcomes of each athlete rather than general findings, we considered a multiple cross-sectional design as best suitable, which is similar to a cross-sectional design. We collect data on more than one case (Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, Björn Borg, Boris

Becker) and at a single point in time, in connection with 2 variables, which are then examined to detect patterns of association (Bryman and Bell, 2007).

The questionnaire is chosen, as a framework to collect and analyze data. Furthermore, we aim to discover causal connections between variables, which will help us to present an overview that will help us understand the behavior of the consumers in question. The data will be tested statistically, to interpret the gathered data, which allows us to measure and quantify the effect of brand personality on consumer decision-making.

## **2.5 Generalizability**

We seek to find relationships, between the brand personality of individual athletes and perceived quality of their respective product brands perceived by consumers, which then influence the purchase intention. To get valid results, we focus on the individual sport of tennis. It is a sport in which there are several players with their own product brand. Further justifications to focus on tennis consist of the strong personalities of these athletes, the strong visibility of the athletes, their gear, apparel and therefore the brand and the high availability of respondents.

Quantitative research aims to generalize about a wider population (Bryman and Bell, 2007). In our research, the objective is theoretical generalizability, which means to show if something can happen, rather than if something does happen (Mook, 1983). At this moment, it is not clear if brand personality of an athlete has an effect on perceived quality of the product brand, which then might influence purchase intention. It is therefore more important to find out whether or not brand personality can have an effect on perceived quality than finding exactly when and why it has the effect. We therefore prioritized theoretical generalizability over statistical generalizability. Since our sample was not randomly collected, what we have is a large cross-sectional design. To a certain extent, we had control of who responded to our survey and this fact disables us to draw statistically generalizable data. We therefore hope that we can get a sample large enough to generate theoretical generalizability.

We aim to reach this generalizability, even though our focus is on a single sport only. Our findings will be relevant for other athletes in different disciplines, because a strong personality will influence perceived quality, in general. Even though we aim to generalize, it

is most likely not possible to draw conclusion about all athletes, especially about athletes with less visibility, such as the one practicing a team sport.

Even though our external validity might be limited, we aim to get results, which can help us understand the effect that the phenomenon of brand personality has on product brands of athletes. If a strong brand personality influences perceived quality of an athlete's product brand, it might be transferable to other categories, athletes or celebrities in general.



### **3. Theory**

#### **3.1 Introduction to theory**

This section starts with a short description of the importance of brands and branding in today's marketing. It follows an explanation of what is meant by personal brands of athletes, which is a main aspect of this thesis. Here, we investigate the emergence of product brands of athletes, which is, on a more general level in literature, called celebrity entrepreneurship.

We also present the concept of brand equity and focus on the aspect of brand personality – a phenomenon central to the building of brand equity, especially that of an individual athlete. Apart from brand personality, another important part of brand equity is brand awareness, which will be presented together with the consumer outcomes of brand loyalty, perceived quality and purchase intention.

Moreover, we present a theoretical framework, which will guide the empirical research of this thesis. Beside the already mentioned concepts of Brand personality, this framework also consists of the consumer behavior facets perceived quality and purchase intention. These outcomes are important facets of brand equity and we will illustrate the importance and relevance of these areas for our research.

#### **3.2 Brands and Branding**

The history of branding can be traced back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the Industrial revolution. Due to the mass production of goods and the need to sell these goods to a wider market, companies had to distinguish their products from them of local producers (Mercer, 2010). These local products were familiar to the public and in order to compete with these products, one had to build trust and convince the market. This epiphany was the starting point of “marking” the products and the branding as we know it today (Mercer, 2010). Through medias like television and radio, companies started advertising their products by use of slogans and jingles, to create a recognition effect.

Manufacturers had to learn how to build their brand's identity and personality, as they recognized that consumers were buying the brand and not only the product. Kapferer (2008) mentions that one makes money by selling brands, not products. He furthermore defines this brand as a unique set of values, both tangible and intangible.

Branding is a way to distinguish goods of one producer from those of another (Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2012). According to the American Marketing Association, a brand is a *“name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them, to identify the goods and services of one seller and to differentiate them from those of competition”* (AMA, 2013). This definition implies that a brand is created whenever someone creates brand elements like names, logos or symbols for a new product. Today, it is even common to consider a brand to be more than these symbols, such as the building of awareness or reputation (Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2012). Brand elements come in many different forms. There are a variety of different brand names, such as company names, used also for their products (Nokia, BMW), or individual product brands, different to the manufacturer brand (Unilever and Lipton or Axe). Furthermore, “private labels” broke onto the scene recently. This term means that retailers create own brands labeled with their shop name (Tesco, ICA). Brand names are based either on people, (Borg, Becker) such as the focus of this thesis will be, places (Amazon), objects (Apple) or animals (Reebok). These multiple branding formats are today important components of marketing strategy (Mercer, 2010).

It is important to differentiate between a trademark and a brand. A trademark is a tangible item of intellectual property – the logo, name, design, or image – and the brand is based on that (Mercer, 2010). Schwarzkopf (2008) argues that brands incorporate intangibles, such as identity, associations and personality and are fundamentally identity systems, including a personality, an affinity, and a reflection in consumers’ minds. A brand is not only a product; it is what is added to this product. This can include packaging, services, advertising or delivery, everything people value. This added value, which can be related to the product and is tangible or more symbolic and intangible, differentiates the product from competition. Customers expect a brand to provide certain benefits, which are often of intangible nature. This nature includes the creation of relevant images around the products, which is very often the only way to distinguish different brands in a product category (Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2012).

There are two main brand functions, widely discussed in literature (Kapferer, 2012; Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2012; Mitchell and McGoldrick, 1996). These functions are risk reduction and social demonstration, which both influence the consumer at different stages of the purchase and consumption process. In general, a strong brand is of high economic value for

a company, which is commonly described as brand equity. Branding can create perceived differences in products, which leads to loyal consumers or a price premium, which furthermore leads to financial profit for the company. Therefore, it is agreed that the brand as an intangible asset is the most important one a company possesses.

Today, every organization wants to have a brand and branding has become a strategic issue in all sectors (Kapferer, 2008). This importance is the reason behind why companies pay a lot more money to acquire successful brands than they are actually worth in their balance sheets. Examples include Nestlé, who bought Rowntree for almost three times its stock market value and 26 times its earnings or Buitoni, which was bought for 35 times its earnings (Kapferer, 2008). The reason for these high prices paid by companies with brands is that one purchases positions in the minds of potential consumers which includes the brand awareness, image, reputation and trust, which are the guarantees for future earnings (Kapferer, 2008). This price is the financial value of a brand, which is also called brand equity (see 3.4). Today, strong brands are the most valuable assets that a company possesses (Holger & Holmberg, 2002). This fact, besides many others, lead to an increasing interest in branding in theory and practice. Even the concept of market orientation, for years a respected and used model stating that the satisfaction and the needs and wants of the customer is the focus for every marketer, is extended to brand orientation (Urde et al, 2011). The concept of brand orientation is an approach with a focus on brands as resources and strategic hubs (Melin, 1997; Urde et al, 2011). Brand orientation is an approach in which the procedure of the firm centers on the formation, expansion, and safeguard of brand identity, in an ongoing interplay with target customers, with the goal of accomplishing durable competitive advantages, in the form of brands" (Urde, 1999). The concept of brand orientation is one recent example, which proves the importance of branding, in general and in marketing strategies in particular.

### **3.3 Product brands of athletes and celebrity entrepreneurship**

Celebrities and here especially professional athletes have acted as endorsers for companies for decades (Louie, Kulik & Jacobson, 2001). Purposes of endorsement are the association with high-profile athletes and the connection to consumers, to tie into their passions and furthermore increase brand awareness, loyalty or image (McGhee, 2012).

While endorsement or sponsoring is a widespread area of academic research and will not be touched any further in this work, Hunter (2009) raises the question about what happens when a celebrity tries to benefit from his influence and start his own brand? He calls this phenomenon, celebrity entrepreneurship, which in fact is not completely new. Already in the 90's, the restaurant, Planet Hollywood was opened with some famous actors, such as Sylvester Stallone and Arnold Schwarzenegger, as shareholders (Sylt, 2006). This development continued and today many celebrities moved from purely endorsement towards entrepreneurship (Hunter, 2009). In our thesis, we focus on athletes, as they seem to have a special emotional bond to their consumers (Eisler, 1997), which lets us assume that the brand personality is even more important for an athlete, acting as an entrepreneur.

In practice, many athletes with an own product brand use a partnership with an established manufacturer in order to promote and distribute their products, which can be seen as a mixture between endorsement for the manufacturer and promoting the own brand. Current examples include Tiger Woods in Golf, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal in Tennis (all with Nike) or Sidney Crosby in Ice Hockey (with Reebok).



**Figure 6: Product brand of Tiger Woods, the best paid athlete of all time (left) and Canadian ice hockey star, Sidney Crosby's personal brand, in collaboration with Reebok (right).**

Basketball legend, Michael Jordan created a standalone brand named Air Jordan, still a brand owned by Nike but marketed and labeled only "Air Jordan" and therefore purely associated with his name. However, some athletes created own labels and are now competing directly with other retailers or manufacturer. Examples here are former tennis player Björn Borg in the fashion industry or former ski professional Lasse Kjus, who successfully established his brand in the outdoor apparel business. These recent developments prove the importance of this area, also in academic research, where a lack of scholarly interest can be spotted. The relevance of celebrity entrepreneurship is justified by the well-established phenomenon of celebrity endorsement (Hunter, 2009). Endorsers can

evoke positive responses in a certain area of the brain, as research at the Erasmus University in the Netherlands could prove. Positive emotions get transferred from the personality to the product, resulting in a more positive impression of the endorsed product (Stallen et al, 2010). Consequently, celebrity entrepreneurs seem to have similar benefits, while endorsing their own products (Hunter, 2009).



Figure 7: The product brands of football stars Lionel Messi (left) and Ronaldinho (right) are stand-alone brands, still in the process of gaining recognition.

### 3.4 Brand equity

When celebrities or athletes create their own product brand, it is reasonable to adapt the concept of brand equity onto this phenomenon.

There are several approaches on how to define brand equity. Most scholars, such as Keller (1993) claim that brand equity is mainly derived from the customer and is therefore generally called "Customer-Based Brand Equity". Others argue that brand equity is financially based and should be assessed according to its impact on financial performance indicators such as sales, profits and operating margin (Simon & Sullivan, 1993). As this thesis focuses on the outcome variables of consumer behavior, such as perceived quality and purchase intention, we follow the definition based on customers. Customer-based brand equity implies that the consumer has a high level of awareness and familiarity with the brand. Customers should also have built strong, favorable and unique brand association in their memory. It is defined as the value of a brand and the components of it are brand awareness and brand image (Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2012). The term brand image is very much similar to the aspect of brand personality and for the sake of this paper's focus on individual athletes; we will focus on brand personality. Both brand image and brand personality are consumer perceptions, resulting from consumer brand associations (Aaker, 1997). Both are considered crucial components in the consumer decision-making process (Keller, 1993) and both are also considered very important elements of brand equity (Aaker,

1996). While brand image is defined as *“the set of associations linked to the brand that consumers hold in memory”* (Keller, 1993, p.2), brand personality is *“the set of human characteristics associated with a brand”* (Aaker, 1997, p.347). Aaker (1996). Furthermore, brand personality can be the basis to establish relationships or even friendships between brands and human beings, in creation of likings and feelings toward this brand. Brand personality is all about people’s feelings about it (Keller, 1998) and is viewed as a driver of consumer buying behavior (Biel, 1993).

All these facts are based on tangible brands, which lead to the question of how all the brand aspects are relevant for persons. There is no question that athletes have a special and emotional connection to their consumers and naturally have the ability to establish relationships with them. Keller, Aperia & Georgson (2012) mention that a personal brand is a set of associations identified with a particular person. Hence, the concept of brand equity can be used accordingly for humans. In general, those who have discussed non-personal brands agree that positive associations and high-equity brands lead to favorable responses from end-consumers (Keller, 1993). These favorable responses to high-equity brands may translate into a range of opportunities, not enjoyed by lower-equity brands (Aaker 1991; Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2012).

Kapferer (2012) shares a survey where marketing directors were asked what they believe made up the components of a strong brand. Brand awareness lead the way with 65%, followed by the strength of brand positioning (concept personality, precise and distinct image) with 39%, then came the strength of the logo, codes, packaging or other types of signs of recognition with 36%, ultimately followed by brand authority with consumers, which included brand esteem, perceived status of the brand and consumer loyalty with 24%.

According to Kapferer (2012), there are numerous questionnaires, like the one mentioned above, which attempts to measure brand value (brand equity). Most often, these surveys provide either a nationally or internationally ranked list, based on just one part of brand equity: brand awareness. The definitions of brand awareness vary between research institutes and can be anything from the primary brand brought to mind, aided or unaided, preference of brand, image of quality, prestige, primary and secondary purchasing preferences, in the case of the favored brand not being available or liking.

As an alternative approach, Kapferer (2012) recommends four main indicators of brand assets (equity). The first one is aided brand awareness. This phenomenon measures whether the brand has a minimal resonance. The second one is spontaneous brand awareness. This notion measures the saliency of share of mind when cued by the product. The third one is called evoked set. Evoked set is also dubbed consideration set and refers to the brand in question's being in the top two or three of the individual's definite choice alternatives. The fourth and final one is previous consumption. This indicator seeks to see if the brand has already been consumed or not.

### **3.4.1 Brand personality**

As already mentioned, brand personality is an important part of the brand equity concept. Hence, it is essential to illustrate the concept of brand personality more in detail. First of all, the concept of brand personality is derived from human personality and has its roots in personality psychology. It became a common term for symbolizing the fashion in which consumers show their actual identities or ideal identities through a product or brand choice (Smith, Graetz & Weterbeek, 2006).

Aaker (1997) defines brand personality, in terms of human characteristics, associated with brands. Furthermore, Batra et al. (1993) argues that brand personality is, in terms of a consumer's evaluation of a brand based on traits, used to describe a person's personality. Carlson (2008) investigated the effect of several brand personality traits on the outcome variables of prestige and distinctiveness, which influences cognitive identification and furthermore retail spending and number of games watched. His study was focused on sport teams but it was shown that brand personality, prestige, distinctiveness and identification are important facets with regard to consumer behavior, especially retail spending and games watched. Aaker (1997), whose model will be used as a basis for our research, discovered five distinct and robust personality dimensions for brands: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness. According to Aaker's (1997) scale, each of the five dimensions covers several facets. For instance, sincerity has four facets: down to-earth, honest, wholesome and cheerful. Excitement also has four facets: daring, spirited, imaginative and up to date. Competence includes three facets: reliable, intelligent and successful. Consumers use humanlike personality traits to describe brands, which are of

symbolic nature. The personality characteristics to which brands are associated give an insight into consumer perceptions of brands.

Aaker's model is also criticized for being confusing with classical dimensions of product performance, such as "sensuous" for an ice-cream brand (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003). The degree of association is misleading in the eyes of Azoulay & Kapferer (2003). Apart from this criticism, Aaker's scale has been used in a variety of industries (Siguaw et al., 1999) and cultural contexts (Aaker et al., 2001) with success. Many researchers, who used Aaker's brand personality instrument, claimed that it is a useful tool for defining brand personality and for improving the alignment between consumer perception and desired symbolism (Siguaw et al., 1999; Deane et al., 2003).

In general, the justification for studying brand personality is that a significant link exists between brand personality and outcome variables, such as preference (Aaker, 1999), usage (Sirgy, 1982), emotions (Biel, 1993), trust and loyalty (Fournier, 1994).

Based on these outcome variables, we decided to investigate the influence of brand personality on perceived quality and purchase intention.

### 3.4.2 Brand awareness

Customer based brand equity is created when the consumer is highly aware and familiar with the brand (Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2012). Furthermore, brand equity is evident when consumers hold firm, preferred and unique associations with the brand in their memory (Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2012). Aaker (1991) also states that the name of the brand provides memory nodes in consumers' minds. Consumers may connect their brand knowledge to the brand name and this influences positively brand equity (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). Hence, brand awareness is an important component of brand equity. According to Keller, Georgson & Aperia (2012) the first step in creating brand equity is to register the brand in consumer's minds.



Figure 8: The fastest man of all time, Usain Bolt and his own product brand, in cooperation with Puma.



Brand awareness is composed of brand recognition and brand recall performance (Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2012). According to Keller, Aperia & Georgson (2012) brand recognition means that consumers can recognize and correctly identify the brand as having been seen or heard before. Brand recall is explained by correctly providing the brand from memory upon request, i.e. given the product category. The difference between the two is very similar to the difference between a multiple-choice examination and an essay-format test. Brand recall performance is the more dominant component. At the point of purchase, when consumer decisions are made, brand recognition is of great significance while if the decision is made mostly away of the point of purchase brand recall is more important (Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2012).

Brand awareness affects consumer decision-making, as a known brand has a much better chance of being chosen by consumers than a brand, which is unknown (Hoyer and Brown, 1990). Known brands are more likely to be in consumers' consideration set, which is the small set of brands that consumers seriously consider, when finalizing the purchase (Nedungadi, 1990). A consumer has to be made aware of the brand, before he can buy it. If not aware, brand attitude cannot be formed, and intention to buy will not step in (Rossiter & Percy, 1987; Rossiter et al., 1991). Wilson (1981) confirmed in his study the importance of top – of - mind awareness. He states that there is a positive relationship between the position of the brand in the consumer's mind and purchase intention of the brand. Hence, a brand with high awareness likely performs better compared to a lesser-known brand.

Athletes have the big advantage of building brand awareness, as they are well known, as a person and can therefore endorse their own brand, in an easier way.

### **3.5 Brand loyalty**

According to Aaker (1996), brand loyalty is an important aspect to establish brand equity and hence, an important concept for this thesis. Loyalty is a prerequisite of long-term financial success of firms (Jones and Sasser, 1995). Reichheld (2003) states that brand loyalty is crucial for growth and has strong impact on profitability. Loyal customers are less price-sensitive and therefore not likely to switch to a competitor very often. Furthermore loyal customers make more frequent purchases, compared to customers are non-loyal (Bowen and Shoemaker, 1998).

Brand and customer loyalty is a buyer's overall attachment or deep commitment to a product, service, brand, or organization (Oliver, 1999). For our purpose and for the sake of new theoretical discussions, in this specific research area, it would be interesting to see if such loyalty also could hold true for individual persons. The concept of loyalty is similar in meaning to relationship commitment, which is described by the literature of relationship marketing, as an enduring desire to be in a valued relationship (Morgan and Hunt 1994). There is agreement that strong favorable associations with the brand can influence consumers (Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2012; Kapferer, 2012) and it is obvious that athletes can create such positive emotions and associations with consumers. Eisler (1997) in Mahony et al. (2000, p15) describes this relationship between sports fans and clubs: *"Marriages come and go, so do jobs, hometowns, and friendships. But a guy's attachment to a sports team? There's a bond that holds the heart."* This quote can be adapted accordingly to individual athletes, which lead to the assumption that athletes with a strong personality and therefore strong associations can enhance brand loyalty of their respective product brands.

Punniyamoorthy (2007) argues that loyalty is a multidimensional construct, consisting of attitudinal, behavioral and emotional dimension. Härtel et al (2008) stress this fact and state that human behavior is generated by one or more of three types of responses: behavioral responses (I do), cognitive responses (I think) and emotive responses (I feel). Brand loyalty is the combination of consumer's thoughts and feelings about a brand, which are expressed in buying behavior (Härtel et al, 2008). This complex definition of brand loyalty leads to the fact that researchers have been contended to define and measure brand loyalty.

Reichheld (2003) mentions that customers, who are truly loyal tend to buy more over time and buy more money from a company that they feel good about. He further mentions referrals and buying patterns, as key measurement devices. Especially, the concept of referrals is a perfect indicator of true brand loyalty. This claim is backed up by the argument that customers put their own reputation in jeopardy, when they recommend or talk positively about a certain product or brand. Olson and Jacoby's (1971) definition of the concept differs slightly from Reichheld's in the way that it takes a more psychological approach. They state that brand loyalty is a slanted, behavioral response, conveyed over time, by some decision-making unit, with respect to one or more alternative brands, as a function of psychological processes.

### **3.6 Consumer behavior facets**

#### **3.6.1 Perceived quality**

Perceived quality can be defined as the customer's comprehension of the overall quality or superiority of a product or service, with respect to its deliberate intent, relative to alternatives (Aaker, 1991). Perceived quality is, first, a perception by customers. It is an intangible, overall feeling about a brand. However, it usually will be based on underlying dimensions, which include characteristics of the products to which the brand is attached, such as reliability and performance (Aaker, 1991).

High quality is often the final factor, deciding whether or not to purchase a brand. A brand that is perceived as possessing a high quality is differentiated from its competitors and can therefore charge a higher price and more easily extend the brand structure (Aaker, 1991). Perhaps one of the most significant, complicated and frequently discussed areas in business strategy, quality and customer's perceptions of it are predominant (Buzzell and Gale 1987; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1985). In other words, it is not the actual quality of the product or service that plays the role; it is the customers' perception of the universal quality or outstanding differentiation. Zeithaml (1988) illustrates the phenomenon of perceived quality as *"price, quality, and value from the customer's perspective"* (p. 2) and further notes that *"objective quality may not exist because all quality is perceived by someone"* (p. 5). In another example, quality has been operationalized, as or used interchangeably with customer satisfaction (Johnson et al, 1995), even though these concepts are distinct (Oliver, 2009). Across all categories of product and services, marketing and brand specialists have more and more come to acknowledge the significance of perceived quality in brand decisions (Morton, 1994). Furthermore, Aaker (1996) claims that perceived quality is one of the main components of brand equity. In addition, perceived quality by itself is a crucial part of the overall field of study of brand equity.

According to Richardson et al (1994), consumers might prefer a product with a good brand image than of superior quality or value. Olson et al (1971) similarly argue that consumers' perception of quality is influenced by brand image. Rao and Monroe (1989) strengthen the assumption that brand image serves as a driver for perceived quality. We already discussed the similarities of brand image and brand personality in 3.4, which let us assume that there should also be a positive correlation between brand personality and perceived quality.

Furthermore, the influence of personality traits of celebrity athletes or sport teams seems to have a special impact on consumers, as mentioned by several authors (Hunter, 2009; Carlson, 2008).

### **3.6.2 Purchase intention**

Scholars define purchase intention as personal action tendencies according to brands. Shabbir et al (2009) argue that purchase intention is the individual's awareness to make an attempt to buy a brand, while Turney and Littmann (2003) mention that purchase intention can be recognized, as a reflection of real purchase behavior and the prediction of which brand a consumer will choose to buy.

Intention is different from attitude. While attitude means assessment of products, intention is the person's stimulus, in the sense of his or her purpose to perform behavior (Rezvani et al, 2012). In addition, Leon, Schiffmann and Kanuk (2012) argue that the greater the purchase intention is, the greater is also a consumer's desire to buy a product. Blackwell et al. (2001, p. 283) believe that purchase intention is "what we think we will buy" and describe that the feeling or likelihood of purchase is closely linked to what is advertised.

Scholars confirm that there are several different facets that affect purchase intention. Koo et al. (2006) mention brand recognition, brand attitude, and corporate image, as explaining facets of purchase intentions. However, Pope and Voges (2000) argue that positive brand attitude and familiarity are the main drivers of purchase intention. Laroche and Zhou (1996) mention that endorsers can influence consumers' personal preferences and ultimately influence consumer purchase intention. As already mentioned in the beginning of the theory part, celebrity endorsement is an important aspect also in the consumer behavior facet of purchase intention and therefore also highly relevant for the phenomenon of product brands of athletes.

Wang et al (2012) argue that particular features of a product or perceptions of consumers have an influence on customer purchase intention (Wang et al., 2012). This notion is related to the already mentioned phenomenon of perceived quality in which rather the perception of the consumer is crucial and less the actual quality. Fournier (1998) discovered a relationship between product features of a brand, which meets consumers' need and purchase intention, as the consumer forms a relationship with the brand. If we argue that consumers can see the fulfilling of a need as perceived quality, we can see a connection to

actual purchase intention. On a similar note, there exists a consumer trade-off between perceived price and perceived quality, which leads to perceived quality (Chang and Wildt, 1994). Chang and Wildt (1994) further argue that perceived value is a primary factor leading to purchase intention.

There are, however, contradictory findings, when it comes to the effect that perceived quality has on consumer purchase intentions. In the studies of Carman (1990), Boulding et al. (1993) and Parasuraman et al. (1996), the relationship is found to be positive. Other scholars, such as Cronin and Taylor (1992) and Sweeney et al. (1999) go slightly against the previously stated relationship and claim that there exists only an indirect effect of perceived quality, through the phenomenon of satisfaction.

Despite the contrasting viewpoints on perceived quality's influence on purchase intention, we assume that a strong brand personality of an individual athlete leads to a highly perceived quality in minds of consumers. In effect, the highly perceived quality leads consumers to experience stronger purchase intentions.

### 3.7 Summary of theoretical concepts and hypothesis

Following we describe our main concepts to summarize our literature review.

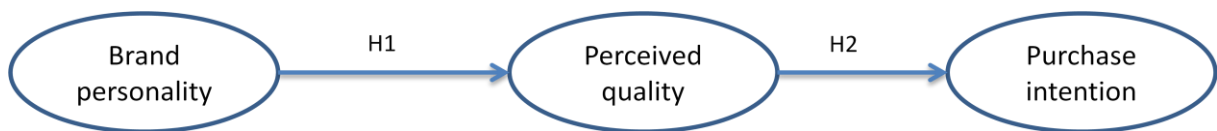


Figure 9: Theoretical concept

After we introduced the general importance of branding and brands in marketing, we looked into the phenomenon of personal brands of athletes. This phenomenon is a growing trend, as we today see more and more athletes' capitalizing on their stellar athletic achievements and strong personalities, to create product brands with their names. Established manufacturers have been able to profit from these personal brands as well. Instead of the traditional way of sponsoring, established manufacturers can leverage their brand, by launching a product bearing both the company's and the athlete's brand logo.

Having defined and explained the phenomenon of personal brands of athletes in our context, we next looked into brand equity. For the adaption of fit to this thesis, we decided to go with the customer-based brand equity definition, which is defined as the value of a brand and the components of it are brand awareness and brand image.

We then explained and related brand awareness and brand image, to the purpose of our thesis. Brand awareness is composed of brand recognition and brand recall performance. Brand image focuses on the positioning that the brand has in the minds of consumers.

Another core component of brand equity is brand personality. Being the central theme of this thesis, we were especially interested in how to put words on a brand's actual personality. Using Aaker's five dimensions of brand personality, it is possible to measure a brand's personality. It is the human characteristics associated with the brand. Aaker's scale included sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness.

As an important aspect in establishing brand equity, brand loyalty is of high significance. Brand and customer loyalty is a buyer's overall attachment or deep commitment to a product, service, brand, or organization. As mentioned, this concept plays an important part in the initial stages of brand equity and is very much relevant, when looking at personal brands.

We proceeded to discuss the facets that made up the foundations for our dependent variable of consumer behavior. This stage was where we were able to concretely lay out our hypotheses. Firstly, we were interested in looking at the effect of brand personality on perceived quality. Perceived quality can be defined as the customer's perception of the overall quality or superiority of a product or service with respect to its intended purpose, relative to alternatives. Despite contrasting views on the psychological phenomenon of perceived quality, we were able to state our hypothesis that perceived quality had a positive relationship with brand personality. Specifically, we decided to use Aaker's model to describe and investigate brand personality with the attributes honest, spirited, reliable, charming and tough.

Consequently our first hypothesis is:

H1. Athlete's Brand personality has a positive effect on perceived quality of the product brand.

Secondly, we wanted to study the effect of this perceived quality on the ultimate purchasing intention of a consumer. Scholars define purchase intention as personal action tendencies according to brands. Despite several different views on perceived qualities impact on the

final purchase intention, we were able to reach our second conclusion that perceived quality has a positive effect on purchase intention.

Consequently our second hypothesis is:

H2. Perceived quality has a positive effect on purchase intention.

As discussed in the introduction and the theory part, brand equity is a very broad topic and has many facets, which are worth to investigate. Due to the academic literature available and the focus on sport and here on individual athletes, we decided to focus on the aspects presented in the model. We are interested in what effect the brand personality traits of athletes have on the quality of their product brands, as perceived by the consumer. Furthermore, we hope to find a positive correlation between this perceived quality and the actual purchase intention for these product brands. Here, the attitude towards the brand is an important factor for the purchase intention of the consumer.

## **4. Empirical Method**

### **4.1 Sample**

The inference task of the sample that the inferential survey produces is to draw generalizable data about the larger population (Easterby-Smith, 2008). Our sample will not be able to generate generalizable data, because the data will not be randomly selected. We will utilize our vast networks and send out the survey, to as many tennis players as possible. There are conflicting views on how large a sample must be. Malhotra outlines a range, where he opines that a sample size of 30 is too small and a sample size of 100 is very good. When a survey has gathered only 30 respondents, it is difficult to draw statistically significant conclusions. As for a sample size of 100, significance is much more likely to be reached. To achieve as many respondents as possible, we will ask respondents to pass on the survey to fellow tennis friends. It is our hope that we can generate a very large sample size. With our vast networks, we will also be able to reach tennis players from all over the world. Such reach gives our survey an edge because even though we cannot draw generalizable data from our study, one can still see major trends and get an overview of what a large number of different tennis players around the world think about our selected topic.

When it comes to sampling design, there are two bases that stand out as the most significant: representativeness and precision. Godi (2013) states that there are two different types of approaches for evaluating responsiveness: distribution-based and anchor-based methods. A distribution-based approach is based on statistical features of the gathered sample and analyzes the capability to disclose change in general. An anchor-based approach calls for an external criterion to settle for a decision whether or not changes in the data output are significant. In our case, we will utilize a distribution-based approach, when looking at possible fluctuations in our data.

Malhotra (2009) states that there are two types of sampling designs. These include probability and non-probability sampling design. In the case of probability sampling, the probability of the entity of the sample is known. What this means is that every unit of the population has a chance ( $p$  greater than zero) to be selected. As for non-probability sampling, the probability is unknown. What this phenomenon essentially means is that there are some elements of the larger population that have no chance of being selected. Unless a



consensus is conducted, one will have a case of non-probability sampling (Malhotra, 2009). Since our distribution method was a finite number of personal e-mails, we naturally had a case of non-probability sampling. Easterby-Smith (2008) states that there are three main types of non-probability sampling techniques: convenience, snowball and quota sample. According to experts, the latter of the three does virtually as good as a job as probability sampling. The reason for this great advantage of a quota sample is that it seeks to produce a sample that mirrors the population in terms of ratios of diverse classes (Bryman and Bell, 2007). We used a form of snowball sampling. It usually starts with someone who meets the criteria to take part in the study. This person is then asked to name others who would also be eligible (Bryman and Bell, 2007). We distributed our survey to our personal networks and requested respondents to forward the questionnaire to more eligible respondents.

In order to gain high scores in the previously stated significant principles of representativeness and precision, we specified that our respondents had to be tennis players. On the first page of the questionnaire, we included a specific yes/no question, which asked if the respondent was a tennis player or not. If this question failed to produce an affirmative answer, we would ignore the rest of the respondents' answers. The importance of this responsiveness is further discussed in the section of reliability and validity (4.3). In essence, this technique required respondents to meet a specified criterion and place themselves in a distinct category.

#### **4.1.1 Research group – choice of players**

Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, Björn Borg and Boris Becker were selected as elements in the survey, mainly because of their illustrious careers. Together, these players hold 44 Grand Slam singles titles and in short, they are four of the utmost successful players of all time. These players all therefore have a very large number of fans all around the world.



Figure 4: Athletes Rafael Nadal (top left), Roger Federer (top right), Boris Becker (bottom left) and Björn Borg (bottom right), with their respective product brands

Another factor that contributed to the election of these players was their respective strong personalities. What follows is a short description of each player, based on their playing styles on-court and appearances in media and other off-court events. These descriptions were echoed and acknowledged by the members of the qualitative pilot study.

Roger Federer, the elegant Swiss superstar, who by many fans is seen as the most talented person to ever hold a tennis racquet, comes across as a very humble, emotional, philanthropic ambassador for the sport.

Rafael Nadal, the feisty Spanish fighter, who by many fans is seen as the fiercest competitor ever to play the game, comes across as an extremely hard-working, fair play-oriented and sympathetic national hero.

Björn Borg, the cool Swedish model-professional, who by many fans is seen as one of the most solid players of all time, comes across as an emotionless (in a cool way), collected and controversial trendsetter.

Boris Becker, the spectacular German hard-hitter, who by many fans is seen as one of the most hard-hitting players of all time, comes across as an out-going, risk-taking and problematic showman.

Finally, these players were chosen because of their established product brands. These are most likely the four most well known personal product brands from tennis players.

## **4.2 Survey operationalization**

A main advantage of survey research is its ability to effectively gather data from a large sample. Since Kwon et al. (2005) and Alexandris (2009) claim that studies in similar fields of study have been conducted with the use of surveys; our choice of doing the same is strongly supported. Prior to conducting our survey, a pilot study was carried out with active tennis players at local tennis club, to assess the reliability and legitimacy of the questions. In addition, it was made sure that the concepts that were to be discussed were clear and concise. The pilot study generated useful insight, which was used to slightly modify and confirm the good flow of our survey questions. The survey was designed in unipark.de and distributed via personal e-mails to our large network of active tennis players.

According to Easterby & Smith (2008), there are three types of surveys: inferential, factual and explanatory. In a marketing context, the most commonly used survey is the inferential type. It is best suitable to investigate relationships between variables and concepts.

In this kind of survey, one usually assumes certain aspects or relationships and creates hypotheses, which have to be tested. We isolate the factors that are involved and define which factors cause what. This method is a typical approach to an inferential survey (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). In our case, we assume that brand personality (as an important part of brand equity) of the athlete causes a positive perceived quality and furthermore triggers a consumer purchase intention. We used a multiple cross-sectional design, which is, according to Bryman and Bell (2007), best to employ when collecting data for multiple purposes. In our survey, we deal with Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, Björn Borg and Boris Becker, at a single point in time and in connection with two variables. Our goal is to discover causal connections between the variables.

The decision of what scale to use was mainly driven by the fact that we aim to measure attitudes and opinions of consumers. For this purpose, a Likert scale is best utilized. According to Easterby-Smith et al. (2008), a Likert scale is an ordinal scale, used to measure attitudes from very positive to very negative. Advantages of this kind of scale include the simplicity to measure large samples and, as it implies to be a closed question format, it is easy to compare, to process and to complete (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

In our survey we used a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5).

#### **4.2.1 Attribute and control variables**

Attribute variables record demographic characteristics of the people who respond to the survey (Bryman & Bell, 2007). As we focused our survey on tennis as a representative individual sport, we also aimed to target only active or former tennis players or informed tennis fans. We also assumed that members of the tennis community were aware of the specific athletes. Furthermore, we believe that the respective product brands of the athletes are better known, in this target group. For our purpose, high awareness is an important prerequisite, to get valid results for the variables of brand personality, perceived quality and purchase intention. Hence, this specification was the only demographic characteristic we needed to control. Thanks to our selective method of sending out personal e-mails, almost all respondents met this criterion. The ones that didn't were disregarded. The second characteristic that we inquired about was the nationality. The main reason was to make sure that we were able to reach out to a greater international population. We also wanted to see if there were possible patterns that explained a certain country or geographic area's preference toward a certain athlete's personality. For example, it could very well be that Swiss respondents had a distinctive preference toward their national idol, Roger Federer. Knowing the characteristics of the sample helps, in generalizing about a wider population. The first questions inquired about gender and nationality of the respondents. Further questions were about the mentioned characteristics (active or former tennis player or not) and about further knowledge of the respondents (awareness about athletes and product brands). As a final stipulation, it was also mandatory to answer all questions.

#### **4.2.2 Dependent variables**

Dependent variables can be seen as the outcome of a research. The independent variables are available from the commencement of the experiment and the dependent variables result from a process in which the independent variables are controlled (Bryman & Bell, 2008).

In our thesis, perceived quality and purchase intention are the dependent variables. We seek to explain these variables, by examining their relationship with the independent variables laid out below.

Measurement of perceived quality is based on Yoo (2001) and will be measured by consumers' subjective judgments about a brand's overall excellence or superiority, using three items adopted from Yoo. We consider two questions to measure perceived quality.

Measurement of purchase intention is also based on Yoo (2001) and will be measured with two questions, along the lines of "I would like to buy X" and "I intend to purchase X" (five-point Likert scale).

#### **4.2.3 Independent variables**

As mentioned in the paragraph above, independent or predictor variables are available from the start of the research and are able to be controlled. This initial availability and the ability to be controlled mark the difference between independent and dependent variables. Our independent variable is brand personality.

Measurements of brand personality are based on the work of Carlson (2008) and will be measured, using single items representing facets from each of the five dimensions of Aaker's (1997) scale. We chose items, after conducting a pre-test, evaluating the appropriateness for measuring sport-related athlete personality characteristics. In this pre-test, we could identify one item for each dimension, as being highly relevant in describing an individual athlete. The brand personality dimension of "ruggedness" originally included both tough and outdoorsy according to Aaker (1997). For our purpose, "tough" was found to be suitable, to describe an athlete, while "outdoorsy" was less suitable.

In our questionnaire, respondents will be asked to rate the extent to which they disagree (i.e. 1) or agree (i.e. 5) that the five brand personality facets of toughness, charm, spirit, honesty and reliability apply to the athlete.

To measure brand personality, we will ask one question, containing five items to be evaluated by the respondent. We will ask this question accordingly for all four athletes.

#### **4.3 Reliability and Validity**

Per definition, reliability is the internal consistency of the data and validity is the extent to which the data is well-founded and corresponds to the real world (Godi, 2013) According to Bryman and Bell (2007), the most significant characteristics of quantitative data are the concepts of metering, causation, generalization and replication. This statement confirms that reliability is of great importance, due to the fact that it tests the extent to which each

component may be relied upon in order to generate equal output time after time (Easterby-Smith, 2008).

As stated in the previous paragraph, validity deals with the extent of accuracy of the data, in relation to the real world (Godi, 2013). Bryman and Bell (2007) eloquently state that measurement validity looks to see if a concept actually measures what it is supposed to measure. While also being more focused than general validity, measurement validity does a better job at making sure that ethical and true measures are used (Godi, 2013). To measure the convergent validity, we will use Pearson's correlation coefficient, which gauges the strength of the relationship between two variables (Malhotra, 2009). The variables will be compared to each other, using the respective correlation coefficients.

Concurrent validity fits in well, when looking at the differences between the correlation coefficients. Bryman and Bell (2007) state that a case of concurrent validity implies there should be different results from different respondents. To achieve concurrent validity, we include the criterion of the respondents' needing to be tennis players. Put simply, tennis players should have more knowledge about the players in our survey and their respective product brands than non-tennis players.

In addition to measurement and general validity, there are also the concepts of internal and external validity. The goal of a positivist research is to achieve the highest possible internal validity. Easterby-Smith (2008) state that what is meant by the phenomenon of maximal internal validity is the obviating of probable alternatives that could influence and elucidate potential disparities between the observed groups. To reach high internal validity, we used a homogenous group of respondents, instead (tennis players or tennis fans) of a heterogeneous, since with latter's ability to detect significant relationships declines (Lynch, 1982).

As for external validity, this phenomenon portrays the degree of generalizability of the data (Godi, 2013). Sometimes a trade-off between internal and external validity is necessary. (Hunter, 2009). Mook (1983) argues that if the goal of an experiment is to test theoretical hypothesis, then external validity is irrelevant. Despite this argumentation we try to maximize both, internal and external validity. There are several indicators that are necessary to look at, to achieve maximal external validity. For example, the gathered data cannot only be a result of the elected group of respondents. As we are selecting respondents from our

personal networks, it is important for us to avoid possible bias, when deciding whom to send the survey to. In order to prevent this possible bias, we will simply go through our lists of contacts and send the survey out to all people who fall into the category of tennis players. We are aware that we cannot draw generalizable conclusions, because of our sampling technique but since our sample size is likely to be large, we feel good about our data ending up with high external validity. Furthermore, the choice of athletes to be used in the survey was made with the aim of achieving as high external validity as possible. We chose athletes from different generations, ages and countries. This initiative helps to rule out the effect idiosyncratic differences between the athletes may have on the findings (McCracken, 1989). Moreover, there are specific requirements that an athlete has to fulfill, in order to be part of the population we were aiming to generalize about. This includes that the athlete is or was highly successful and has a strong personality, which we acknowledge is a rather subjective approach.

## 5. Results

In this chapter, we will present the major results of our survey. We will show the outcomes, for the tested athletes Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, Björn Borg and Boris Becker and their respective product brands.

### 5.1 Descriptive statistics

#### 5.1.1 Sample

The net sample was 394 respondents. After cleaning the sample, due to incomplete or invalid answers, we got a sample of 361 respondents, which means a completion rate of 92%. We cleaned the sample even further and deleted answers not fulfilling our requirements, such as being (or having been) a tennis player or knowing the athletes. This rinsing resulted in a final number of 257 respondents. From this sample, 208 (79 %) were male and 49 (21%) female. We gathered representation from 32 different countries, all over the world. Our native countries, Sweden (100) and Germany (59) were, as expected, represented the most.

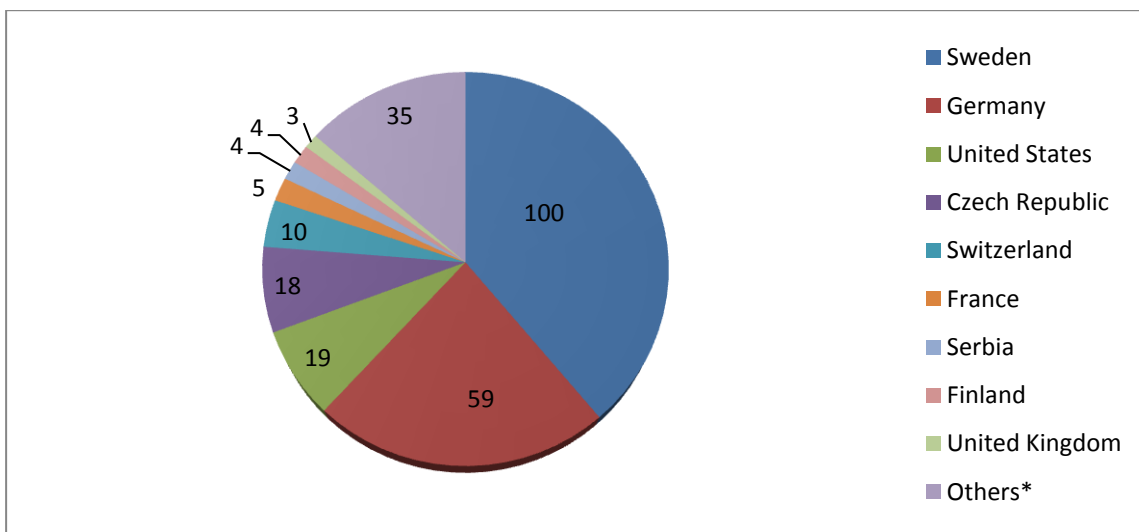


Figure 10: Nationalities of respondents

To get more information about the knowledge of the respondents, we asked if the athletes and the product brands of the athletes were already known and if products of these brands had already been bought. A vast majority of the respondents were aware of the athletes, with an average of 93%, stating that they know the athlete. Even though this number is a high percentage, we expected the number to be even higher. Moreover, we required, based



on our theoretical findings, an awareness of 100%, which resulted in the fact that we had to delete some responses.

The awareness of the product brands of the athletes is 63% in average, ranging from 58% to 84% (Figure 3). 25.5 % of the respondents stated they already bought one of the products of the brands, ranging 11 % in lowest to 39 % in highest (Figure 4).

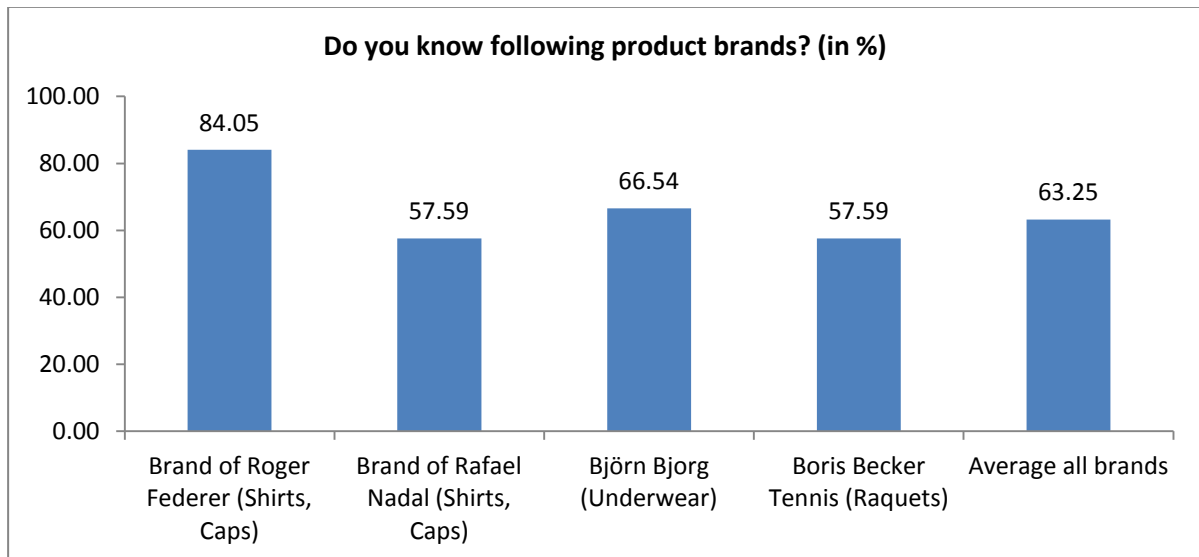


Figure 11: Knowledge about product brands of athletes

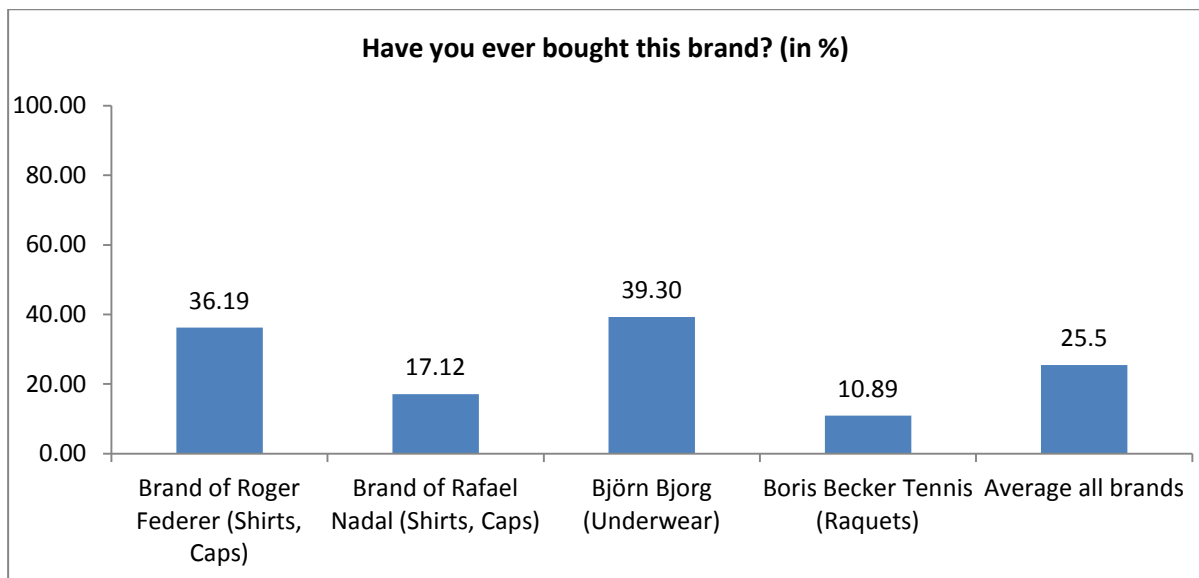


Figure 12: Purchase of product brands of the athletes

### 5.1.2 Mean scores

In this section, we present general tendencies of the results. Aside from the already presented demographic factors and knowledge of respondents, these tendencies include the standard measurements of the average (Malhotra 2009), namely the mean, median and mode. For our purpose, the presentation of mean is most important. The mean shows the quantified average score of respondents, for the survey questions, containing a Likert scale.

As we are interested in how brand personality influences perceived quality and how this perception influences purchase intention, we compare the brand personality means of the different athletes with the means of perceived quality and purchase intention of their respective product brands. As shown in Figure 5, the average brand personality of all athletes has a mean of 4.06. Roger Federer has the highest mean with 4.45 and Boris Becker the lowest with 3.51.

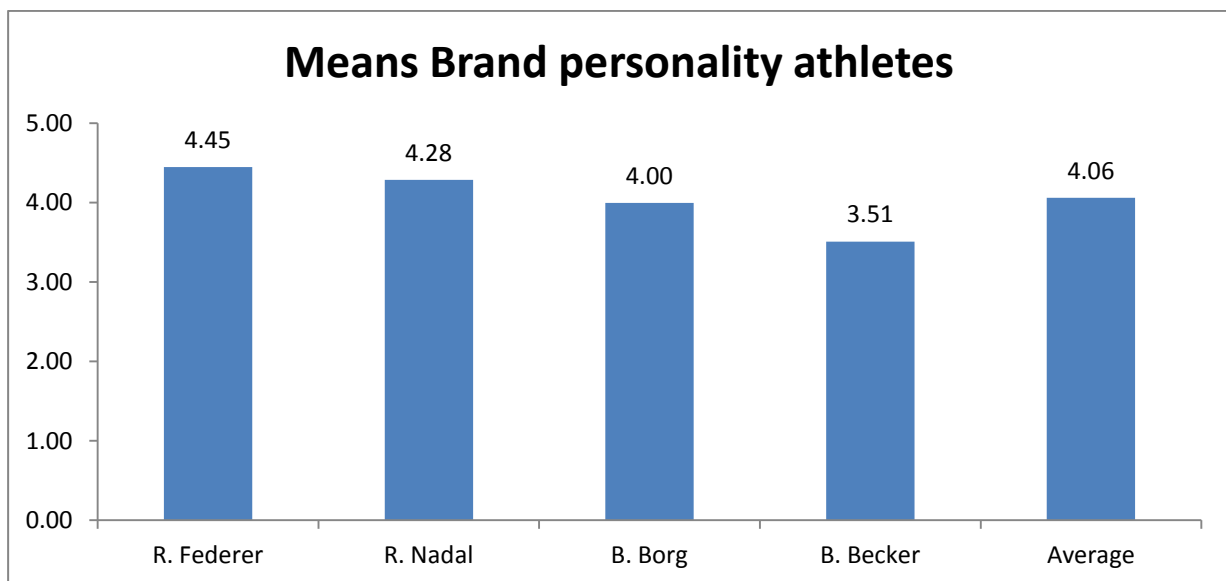


Figure 13: Means Brand personality athletes

Comparing the perception of the quality of the product brands shows that the perceived quality of the brand of Roger Federer has the highest mean (4.22), while Boris Becker has a significantly lower mean of 2.83. The average mean of all athletes is 3.66, as shown in Figure 6. The standard deviations are shown in the appendix.

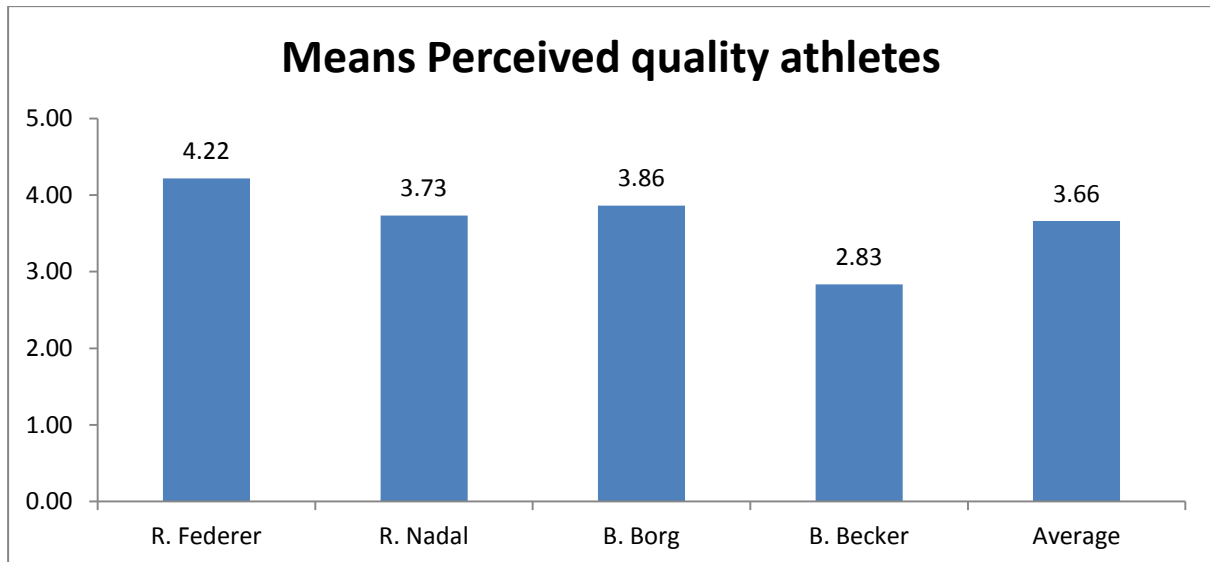


Figure 14: Means Perceived quality athletes

The average mean of purchase intention is 2.86. Again, Roger Federer's brand has the highest mean, with 3.47; Boris Becker has the lowest mean, with 1.91 (see Figure 7).

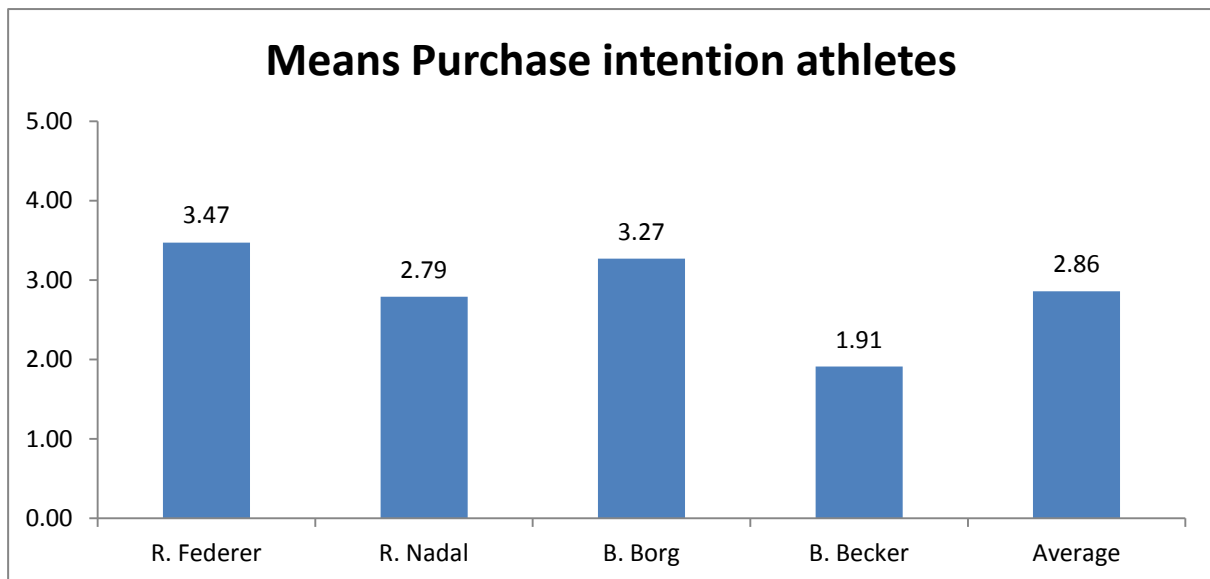


Figure 15: Means Purchase intention athletes

We also examined if there are distinct nationality patterns, such as the possibility of Swedish respondents evaluating Björn Borg differently than for example, Germany. We could not find any significant differences between the nationalities. The absence of such deviations is likely to be the result of an absence of official World and Regional Championships.

## 5.2 Simple Linear Regression

Simple linear regression is the least squares estimator of a linear regression model, with a lone independent variable (Malhotra, 2009). In statistical correlations, we look to measure relationships between variables (Malhotra, 2009). Pearson's correlation coefficient is denoted  $R$  and measures the strength of the linear relationship, between two variables (0 being perfectly uncorrelated and 1 being perfectly correlated) (Malhotra, 2009). We also look at R-squared. R-squared is the coefficient of determination and seeks to predict future outcomes. It essentially measures the goodness of fit of the overall model and also runs from 0 (weakest) to 1 (strongest) (Malhotra, 2009).

The type of correlation is categorized through the consequences for a variable when the other variable increases. There are three different types, positive, negative and no correlation. Positive correlation can be stated when one variable tends to increase, after increasing the other variable. Negative correlation has to be stated, when one variable tends to decrease, after increasing the other variable. No correlation signifies the variable has no tendency, to increase or decrease when increasing the other variable.

Pearson's correlation coefficient is used differently, depending on the author or researcher. We follow Cohen (1998) and use these guidelines, to describe the correlation between our variables.

For the sake of interest, we also looked at the direct link between brand personality and purchase intention.

$r = .10$  to  $.29$  --- small or weak correlation

$r = .30$  to  $.49$  --- medium or moderately strong correlation

$r = .50$  to  $1.0$  --- large or strong correlation

A negative R-value indicates a negative relationship and vice versa.

Before looking closer at the respective athletes, we ran an ANOVA test, to test the significance of our results. ANOVA stands for analysis of variance and measures a gathering of statistical models utilized to analyze differences between group averages and their connected processes (Malhotra 2009).

### 5.2.1 Simple Regression Roger Federer

Based on the ANOVA table, located in the appendix, for the correlation between brand personality and perceived quality, the F-statistic value is 44.704, and at 1 and 256 degrees of freedom, the associated probability value of the test statistic is below 0.001. For the correlation between perceived quality and purchase intention, the F-statistic value is 165.655, and at 1 and 256 degrees of freedom, the associated probability value of the test statistic is below 0.001. These scores indicate significant results and a good model.

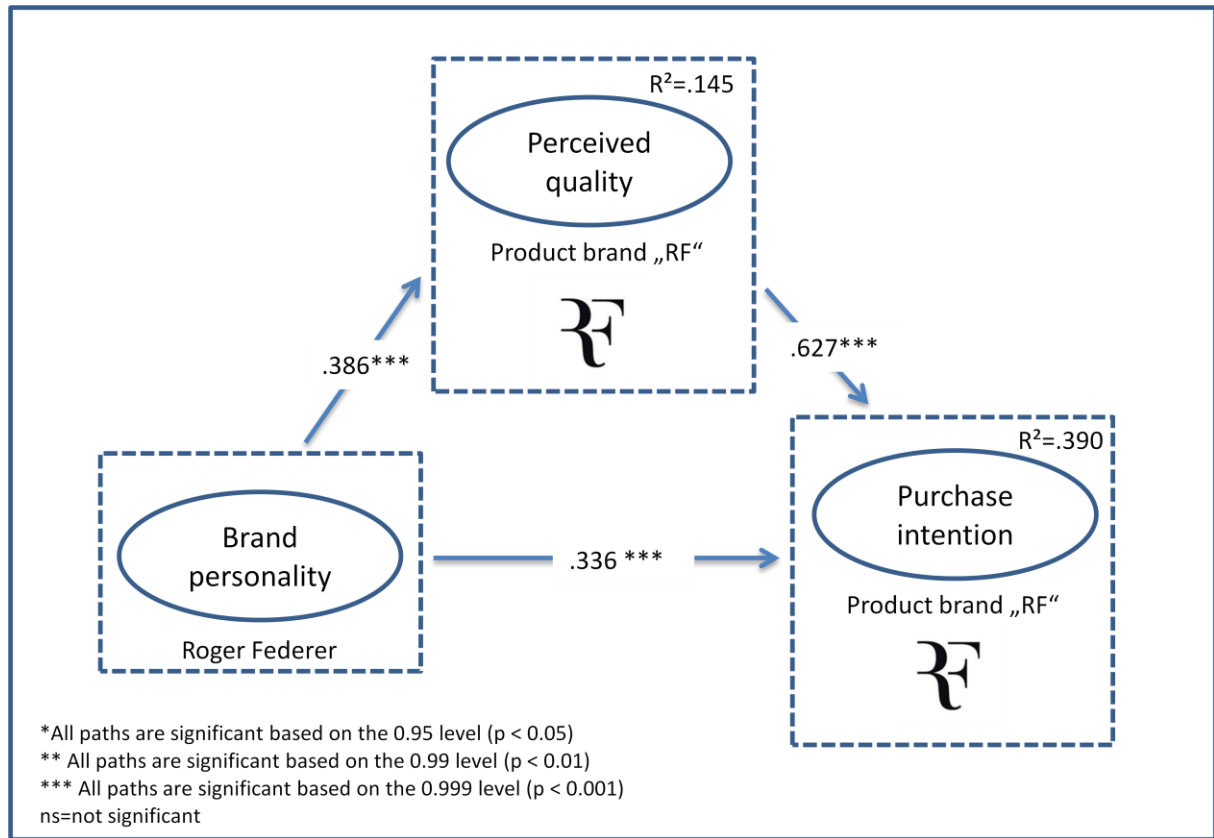


Figure 1: Regression Analysis Roger Federer

As seen in Figure 16 and as presented by the Pearson correlation coefficient of .386, the brand personality of Federer has a moderately positive relationship with perceived quality. The perceived quality of Federer's product, in turn has a strongly positive relationship with purchase intention, as indicated by the Pearson correlation coefficient of .627. Federer's brand personality further showed to have a moderately positive relationship with purchase intention ( $r=.336$ ).

As seen in the appendix, all these relationships are significant.

From Figure 16, we can also conclude that the model does a fairly weak job of explaining brand personality's impact on perceived quality, as indicated by the R-squared value of .145.

What this essentially translates into is that 14.5% of the variation in perceived quality can be elucidated by brand personality. As for perceived quality's influence on purchase intention, however, the R-squared value of .390 demonstrates that the model does a decent job of explaining this relationship. In statistical terms, 39% of the variation in purchase intention can be explicated by perceived quality.

### 5.2.2 Simple Regression Rafael Nadal

Based on the ANOVA table, found in the appendix, for the correlation between brand personality and perceived quality, the F-statistic value is 76.036, and at 1 and 256 degrees of freedom, the joint probability value of the test statistic is below 0.001. For the correlation between perceived quality and purchase intention, the F-statistic value is 231.516, and at 1 and 256 degrees of freedom, the associated probability value of the test statistic is below 0.001. These scores indicate significant results and a good model.

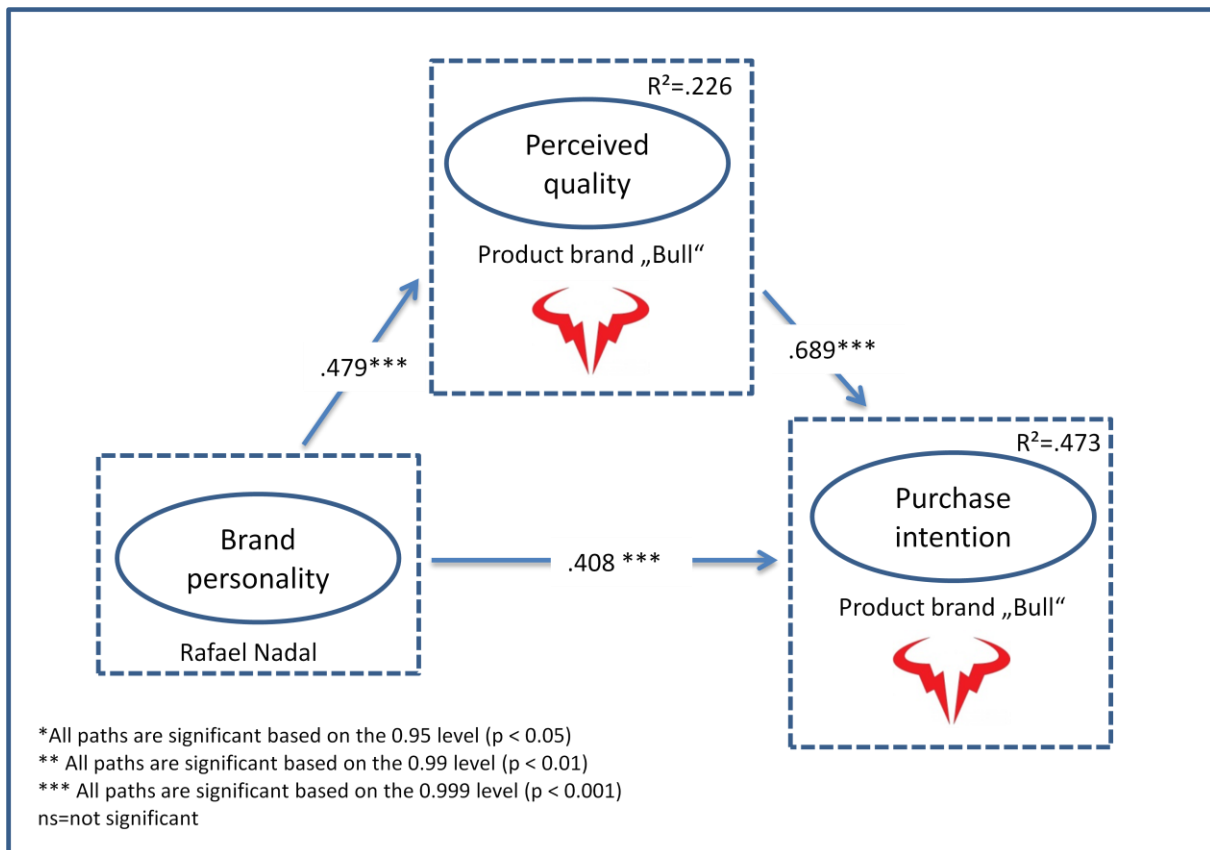


Figure 2: Regression Analysis Rafael Nadal

As seen in Figure 17 and as designated by the Pearson correlation coefficient of .479, the brand personality of Nadal has a moderately positive relationship with perceived quality. The perceived quality of Nadal's product, in turn, has a strongly positive relationship with purchase intention, as signified by the Pearson correlation coefficient of .689. Nadal's brand

personality also proved to have a moderately positive relationship with purchase intention, as shown by the R-value of .408.

As seen in the appendix, all these relationships are significant.

From Figure 17, we can also infer that the model does a respectable job of expounding brand personality's effect on perceived quality, as indicated by the value of .226. Interpreted, this number means that 22.6% of the variation in perceived quality can be explained by brand personality. As for perceived quality's effect on purchase intention, the R-squared value of .473 shows that the model does an even better job of explaining this relationship. 47.3% of the variation in purchase intention can be explained by perceived quality.

### **5.2.3 Simple Regression Björn Borg**

Based on the ANOVA table, found in the appendix, for the correlation between brand personality and perceived quality, the F-statistic value is 34.640, and at 1 and 256 degrees of freedom, the associated probability value of the test statistic is below 0.001. For the correlation between perceived quality and purchase intention, the F-statistic value is 260.910, and at 1 and 256 degrees of freedom, the associated probability value of the test statistic is below 0.001. These scores indicate significant results and a good model.

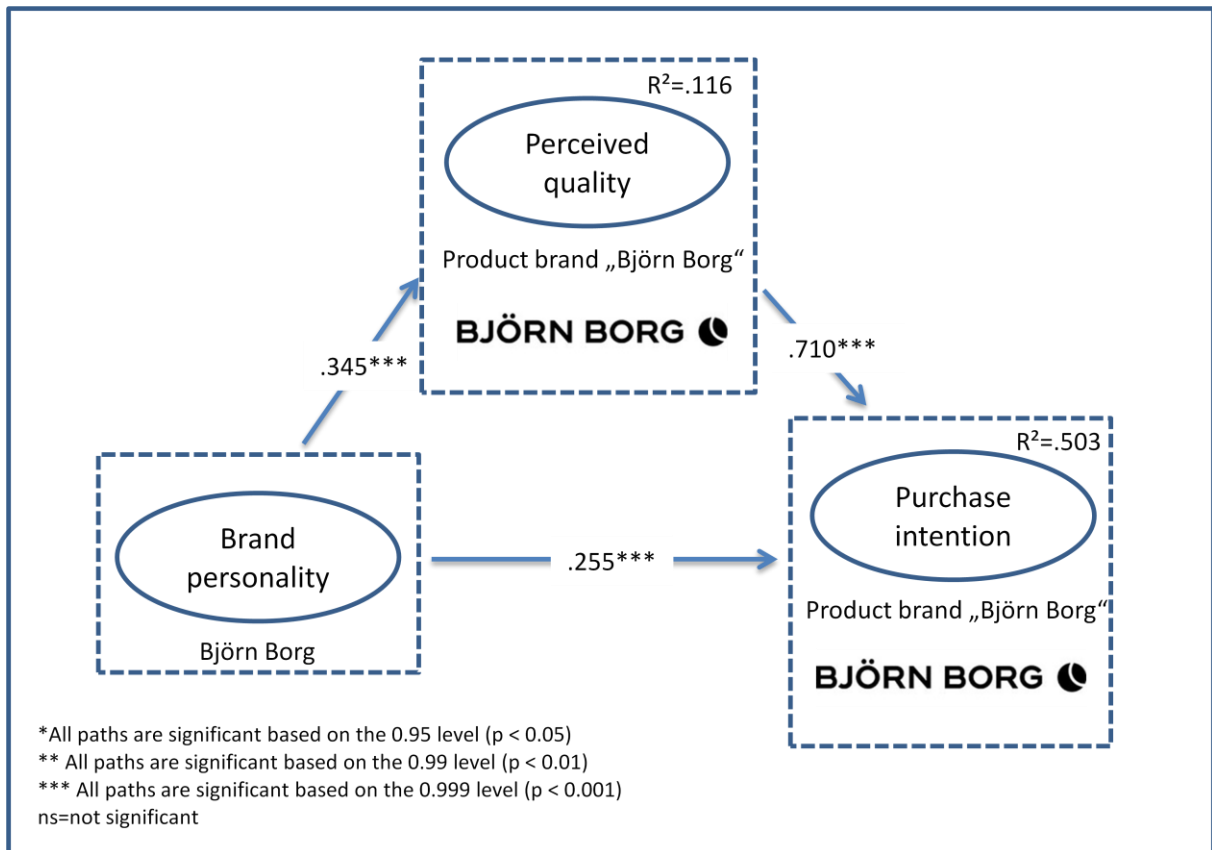


Figure 3: Regression Analysis Björn Borg

As seen in Figure 18 and as pointed out by the Pearson correlation coefficient of .345, the brand personality of Borg has a moderately positive relationship with perceived quality. The perceived quality of Borg’s product, in turn, has a strongly positive relationship with purchase intention, as indicated by the correlation coefficient of .710. Borg’s brand personality showed to have a weakly positive relationship with purchase intention ( $r = .255$ ).

As seen in the appendix, all these relationships are significant.

From Figure 18, we can also conclude that the model does a fairly weak job of explaining brand personality’s effect on perceived quality, as indicated by the value of .116. In essence, only 11.6% of the variation in perceived quality can be explained by brand personality. As for perceived quality’s effect on purchase intention, however, the R-squared value of .503 shows that the model does a good job of explaining this relationship. More than half, namely 50.3% of the variation in purchase intention can be explained by perceived quality.



### 5.2.4 Simple Regression Boris Becker

Based on the ANOVA table, found in the appendix, for the correlation between brand personality and perceived quality, the F-statistic value is 67.723, and at 1 and 256 degrees of freedom, the connected probability value of the test statistic is below 0.001. For the correlation between perceived quality and purchase intention, the F-statistic value is 57.691, and at 1 and 256 degrees of freedom, the associated probability value of the test statistic is below 0.001. These scores signify significant results and a good model.

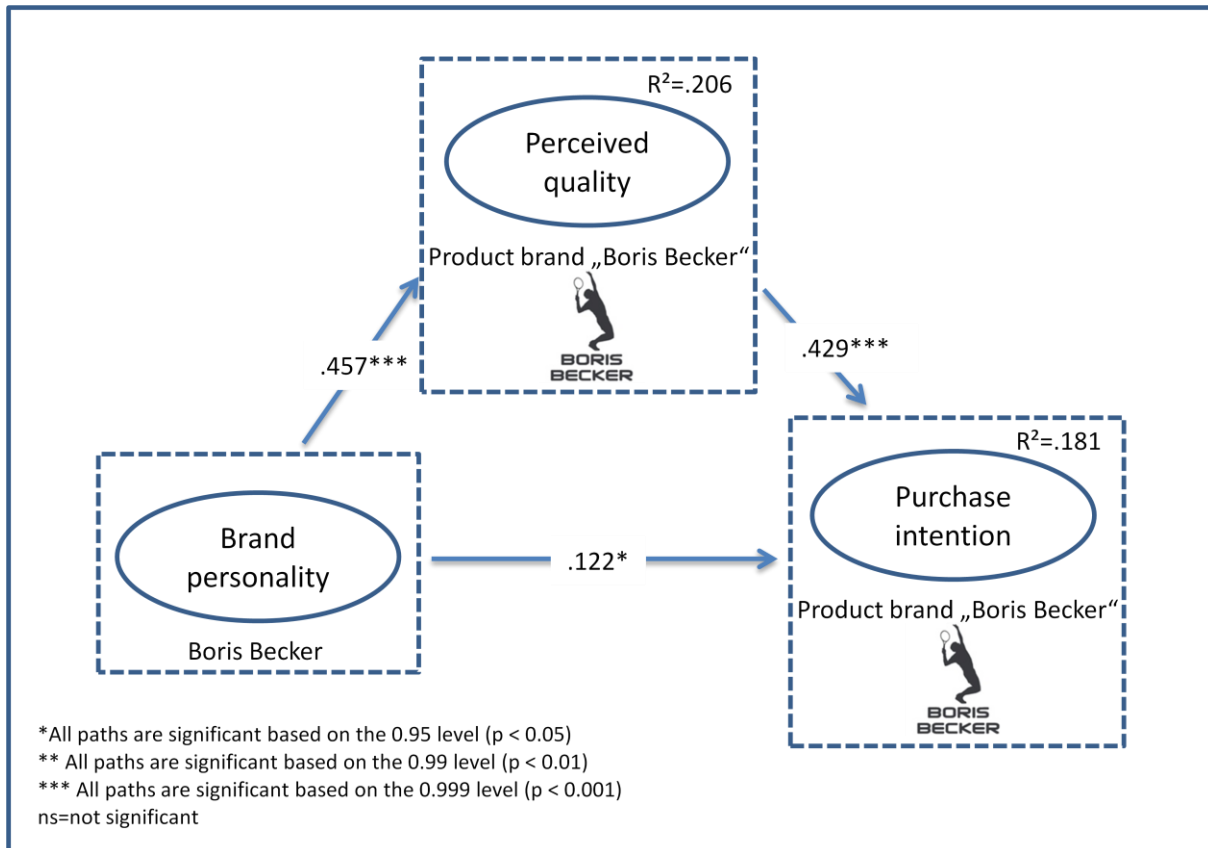


Figure 4: Regression Analysis Boris Becker

As seen in Figure 19 and as indicated by the Pearson correlation coefficient of .457, the brand personality of Becker has a moderately positive relationship with perceived quality. The perceived quality of Becker's product, as well as has a moderately positive relationship with purchase intention, as indicated by the Pearson correlation coefficient of .429. Becker's brand personality further showed to have a weakly positive relationship with purchase intention ( $r = .122$ ).

As seen in the appendix, all these relationships are significant.

From Figure 19, we can also conclude that the model does a decent job of explaining brand personality's effect on perceived quality, as indicated by the value of .206. This value means

that 20.6% of the variation in perceived quality can be explained by brand personality. As for perceived quality's effect on Purchase intention, however, the model does a fairly poor job, as shown by the R-squared value of .181. Only 18.1% of the variation in purchase intention can be explained by perceived quality.

## **6. Analysis**

### **6.1 Theme 1: Brand personality affects perceived quality**

#### **6.1.1 Hypothesis testing**

H1: An athlete's brand personality has a positive effect on the perceived quality of the athlete's product brand.

We reject the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between brand personality and perceived quality and accept H1.

We looked at the simple regression models for all four athletes and found that brand personality had, on average, a moderately positive correlation with perceived quality. More importantly, all correlations turned out to be significant based on  $p < 0.999$ .

1. The brand personality of Roger Federer has a moderately positive correlation with perceived quality (.386)
2. The brand personality Rafael Nadal has a moderately positive correlation with perceived quality (.479)
3. The brand personality of Björn Borg has a moderately positive correlation with perceived quality (.345)
4. The brand personality of Boris Becker has a moderately positive correlation with perceived quality (.457)

#### **6.1.2 Discussion Theme 1**

The data shows that all the athletes have a strong brand personality, as the average mean indicates. This strength implies that our choice of players was good and that our assumption about all these athletes having a strong personality is valid. We looked at the brand personality of each athlete and their influence on their respective product brand. For example, Roger Federer's personality was tested to see if it influences the perceived quality of his brand, "RF". We therefore got different results for the four athletes, which we have included in the discussion.

When looking at the correlation between brand personality and perceived quality, one can see a moderately positive correlation for all athletes. Within this scope, the brand personalities of Rafael Nadal and Boris Becker have a slightly stronger correlation with perceived quality than the ones of Roger Federer and Björn Borg.

However, as illustrated in the results, the mean scores indicate significantly different values in the brand personality of the athletes and also in the perceived quality of the product brands. Therefore, we looked at the results, in more detail.

The brand personality of Björn Borg and Roger Federer are the ones that have the lowest correlation with perceived quality. In other words, their product brand is not as strongly influenced by their personality as the other two.

As noted in the theory, the phenomenon of perceived quality includes the price, quality and value from a consumer's perspective (Zeithaml, 1988) and is also used, in relation to customer satisfaction (Johnson et al, 1995). Perceived quality is a customer perception, based on reliability and performance (Aaker, 1991). This understanding implies that the consumer has at least some experience with the brand. Hence, this experience, based on performance of the brand, leads to the fact that consumer's opinions about product quality are already made.

Keeping these theoretical findings in mind, our results do support these standpoints. The product brands of Roger Federer and Björn Borg are most known by the respondents, as shown in the results section. Moreover, both product brands are also purchased more often than the product brands of the other two athletes. Hence our respondents have already some experience with the mentioned brands and could build their opinion about performance or reliability. Consequently, one can conclude that the personality of an athlete does not seem to influence the respective brand to such a high extent, or in other words the person plays a smaller role in this context.

Brand awareness or brand knowledge positively influence brand equity (Aaker, 1991) and a first step in creating brand equity is to register the brand in consumer's minds (Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2102). Keller, Aperia & Georgson (2012) mention that brand awareness consists of brand recognition and brand recall. In our survey brand recognition for Roger Federer's product brand, which states that the consumer can recognize and identify the brand as having been seen or heard before (Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2012), has the highest percentage (84%), also higher than the brand of Björn Borg (66%). This clearly explains the slightly stronger correlation of Roger Federer's brand personality with his brand's perceived quality, compared to the one of Björn Borg. Roger Federer is still an active tennis player, present in media and on court. Björn Borg retired in 1993 and is not seen in public and

media that often. Borg's relative absence from media results in the fact that his brand personality declines, rather than refreshes in the minds of consumers.

In the case of Boris Becker and Rafael Nadal, the majority of people's perceived quality is purely imaginative, as the brand is not known or has not been consumed before. These consumers can only speculate about the perceived quality and will most likely base this speculation on the brand personality of the athlete. Hence perceived quality is not based on performance or experience with the brand (Aaker, 1991). The brand personality consequently, seems to have more influence on the perceived quality of the brand. Therefore, the imaginative perceived quality of Boris Becker's brand is influenced by his rather lowly rated brand personality. It in fact resulted in a low perceived quality and therefore a moderately strong correlation. Similarly, Rafael Nadal, who has a significantly stronger brand personality than Boris Becker, also has a significantly stronger perceived quality of his product brand. There is therefore a moderately strong correlation. From this it follows that brands not known or registered in the memory rely more on the personality of the athlete.

Ultimately, one has to distinguish between product brands, which are well known (Federer & Borg) and those not as well known (Becker & Nadal), to draw conclusions. In doing so, one can see clear patterns and relationships between the brand personality of the athlete and the perceived quality of their product brands. For product brands already established and known, the brand personality of the athletes is indeed important, yet the consumer also makes a judgment about the quality of the brand, based on experience with the brand. This is supported by theory about perceived quality as mentioned above. For product brands not yet established and known, the brand personality of the athletes is even more important, which can be expressed in both, positive and negative ways.

## **6.2 Theme 2: Perceived quality affects purchase intention**

### **6.2.1 Hypothesis testing**

H2. The perceived quality of an athlete's product brand has a positive effect on the consumer purchase intention of this product brand.

We reject the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between perceived quality and purchase intention and accept H2.

Using simple regression models, for all four athletes it is observed that perceived quality had an, on average, strong positive relationship with purchase intention. Even more importantly, all correlations turned out to be highly significant, based on  $p < 0.001$ .

1. The perceived quality of the product brand of Roger Federer has a strongly positive correlation with purchase intention (.627)
2. The perceived quality of the product brand of Rafael Nadal has a strongly positive correlation with purchase intention (.689)
3. The perceived quality of the product brand of Björn Borg has a strongly positive correlation with purchase intention (.710)
4. The perceived quality of the product brand of Boris Becker has a moderately positive correlation with purchase intention (.429)

### **6.2.2 Discussion Theme 2**

Except for the product brand of Boris Becker, which shows a moderate positive correlation, all other product brands show a strong positive relationship between perceived quality and purchase intention.

As stated in the works of Boulding et al. (1993) and Parasuraman et al. (1996), there is proof that perceived quality leads to purchase intention. Cronin and Taylor (1992) and Sweeney et al. (1999), however, argue differently and this debate confirms contradictory findings, about whether or not highly perceived quality leads to a purchase intention. Our results clearly prove a relationship between these variables, for our specific area of research and we therefore stick to the side of Boulding et al. (1993) and Parasuraman et al. (1996).

When looking at the mean scores of perceived quality and purchase intention, one can recognize that the perceived quality of Boris Becker's brand has by far the lowest value, even though it is only slightly below mid-point (.28 when considering 3 as the neutral answer possibility). However, the mean score for purchase intention of Becker's brand is as well by far the lowest of all, but here we have a rather negative value (.19). This finding implies that the brand of Becker is not in many consumers' consideration sets. We looked again at our available data in more detail and saw that the percentage of respondents, who already bought his brand, is very low (11%). As mentioned above, consumers without any experience with the brand perceive the quality of the product with pure imagination. This fact is apparently even more valid when it comes to the real purchase of a brand. If the

quality of the brand is not known, because the brand is not purchased before, the purchase intention is even lower. This correspondence goes in line with the views of Kapferer (2012), where it is stated that brand awareness is an important prerequisite to selling products. Furthermore, Hoyer and Brown (1990) argue that a known brand has a higher likelihood of being chosen than one, which is not in the consumer's top of mind. This finding goes hand in hand with our results, showing that Federer and Borg's brand have higher purchase intentions than the ones of Becker and Nadal.

Another argument for the low value of Boris Becker's brand is that the products of his brand compete in the very distinct niche product category of tennis racquets. Tennis players do not often change their tennis racquets; they rather stay loyal to one brand, during their whole tennis life. Moreover, the market for tennis racquets is very competitive with a few very strong brands such as Wilson, Head or Babolat. In a sense, this niche market can be seen as somewhat of an oligopoly. Even big manufacturers, such as Adidas are struggling to get into this market. As Becker's brand sells mainly tennis racquets, the purchase intention might be low because of this fact.

On the contrary, the clothing apparel brands of the other three athletes do not face as large of a problem, when it comes to competition with top manufacturers. Again, this fact has to do with the difference in industries. Racquets are much more technical products than clothes and engineering has a much more vital role. The entry barriers to the racquet market are therefore significantly higher than for the clothes market. Put simply, there is a trust issue, when it comes to the performance ability of a new racquet manufacturer. As for clothes, one knows what to expect and if the design is nicely presented, it could greatly augment consumers' intention to purchase. In the future, this difference and the facilitation for clothing brands to compete with big players in this industry could help Federer, Nadal and Borg to grow significantly. Federer and Nadal might very well decide to break away from Nike and run their own company; such an action could pose great threats to not only Nike, but also other large retailers in the industry.

The perceived quality of Björn Borg's product brand shows a strongly positive correlation with purchase intention. As already mentioned, his product brand is well known, many respondents already bought the brand and he furthermore has a strong brand personality. Looking at the mean score of the perceived quality of Björn Borg's product brand also

indicates a high value. As mentioned above, Björn Borg' the brand personality does not have as large of an effect on perceived quality, since his brand is already established and he is not actively playing tennis or present in media that often. Judgments, in terms of quality, are already made, which further leads to a strongly positive correlation with purchase intention.

Roger Federer's product brand is as well known and purchased often, similar to the product brand of Björn Borg. This establishment leads to the fact that the results show similar consequences, concerning the correlation between perceived quality and purchase intention, which is strongly positive. Consumers seem to prefer products of this brand, because of their previous experience with the brand and less, because of the brand personality. Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2012 confirm the importance of previous experience and the advantage of established brands. In short, the product life cycle does a good job of explaining why the more mature products from Björn Borg and Roger Federer have higher purchase intentions.

Rafael Nadal's product brand's relationship between perceived quality and purchase intention is as well strongly positive. Compared to the other product brands, Nadal's product brand is relatively more in the birth stage of the product life cycle than the other three.

Even though it is not part of our hypothesis testing, the correlation between brand personality and purchase intention is as well of interest. The brand personalities of Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal have significant correlations with their respective purchase intentions. Here, one can argue that active tennis players, compared to already retired athletes, like Björn Borg and Boris Becker, influence the direct purchase of product brands to a higher extent. The fact that Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal are still active makes them appear in all kinds of media channels and in this way, the product brands gain free promotion. In other words, the marketing of their respective product brands is greatly facilitated by the fact that they still play.

To sum up, perceived quality leads to purchase intention, if the perceived quality is evaluated as good. All the three product brands, which have high values in perceived quality, show a strongly positive correlation with purchase intention. In the case of Boris Becker, the perceived quality of his brand is not considered to be as high, which explains the weaker correlation with purchase intention.



As seen in the model below, our findings show that brand personality has an effect on perceived quality. It has an especially strong effect, if the product brand is relatively less established and unknown. The reason for this particularly fortified relationship is that the product's quality is almost entirely associated with the person, who embodies it. These findings are relevant, as they had yet to be confirmed by previous works, in the research area.

Furthermore, our findings supported the one side of the debate between perceived quality's effect on purchase intention. It was indeed found that there is a clearly positive relationship between the two variables. When you have a highly perceived quality, there is a strong purchase intention. When you have a weakly perceived quality, there is a weak purchase intention. Again, our results were able to draw conclusions that had previously not been drawn and our findings therefore gain a high degree of relevance. As for the case of the direct link between brand personality and purchase intention, it was found that the personality of active players is more important for purchase intention. Retired players are not seen in media as much and their personalities are therefore no longer as dynamic.

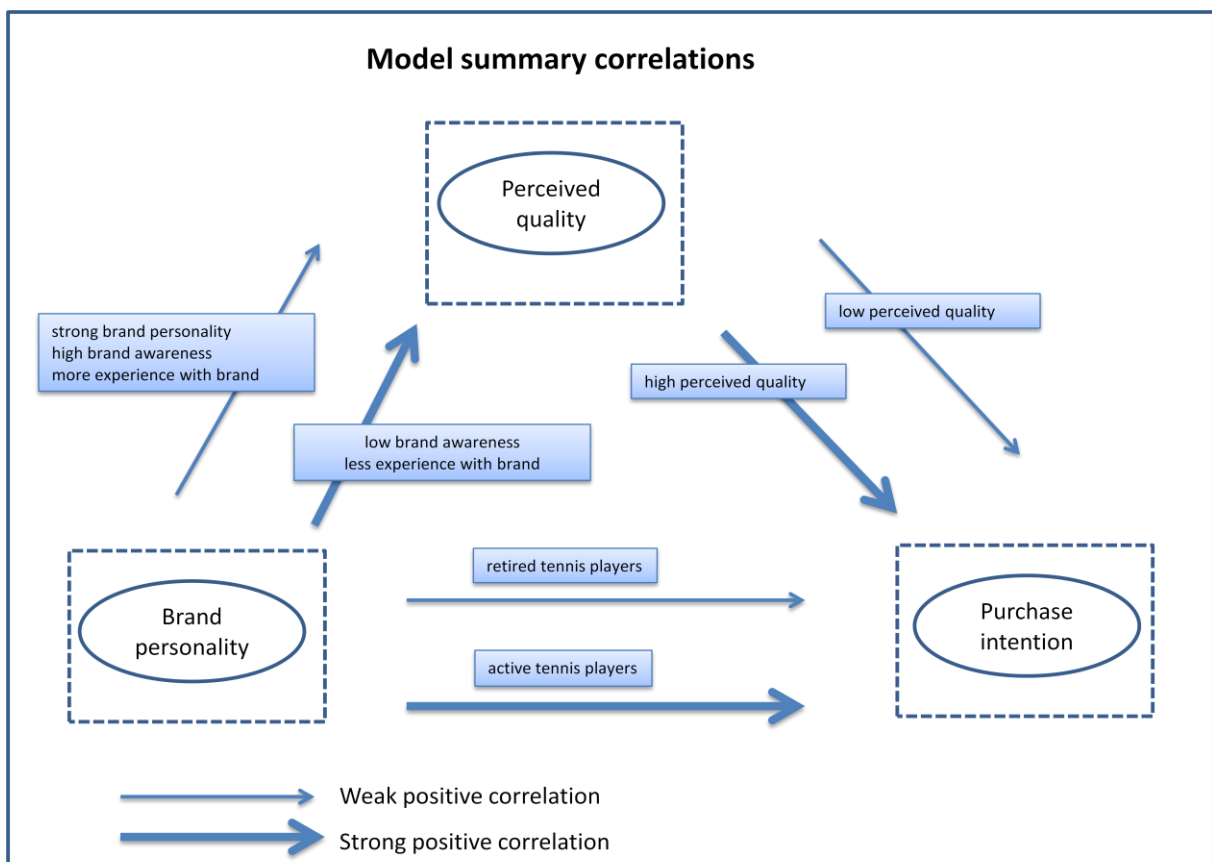


Figure 5: Model summary correlations between the variables

## **7. Conclusion**

### **7.1 Findings**

From our research design, constructed around a qualitative pilot study and a quantitative survey, we found our two hypotheses to hold true.

In our own sample of tennis players, gathered from personal networks, we found that the brand personality of these strong tennis profiles have a positive effect on their respective product brands. Furthermore, we found this perceived quality to have a positive effect on the purchase intention of these product brands. The fact that brand personality is positively correlated with perceived quality stands out as the most fascinating finding. By the mere appearance of these particular athletes, consumers are able to make corresponding perceptions to their product brands. In an industry, where quality is harder to distinguish than say, food, these perceptions can prove to be extremely significant. This significance is confirmed by our second finding. Perceived quality acts as a bridge between brand personality and purchase intention. Our cross-sectional design basically states that consumers within the tennis community have an intention to purchase the product brand of an athlete that they like the personality of. These findings are pioneering in this specific field and could prove revolutionary for future studies around the same topic.

Looking at the relationship between the brand personality of the athlete and the perceived quality of the product brand, we found that for product brands that are not yet established and known by the consumer, the brand personality of the athletes is more important than for product brands that are already established and known. The importance of brand personality for product brands not yet established and known can be expressed, in both positive and negative ways. As for established product brands, consumers apparently make their judgment about the quality, based on their experience with the brand.

Our second hypothesis was the positive correlation between perceived quality and purchase intention. For this hypothesis, we could find a strong support. Perceived quality leads to purchase intention, if the perceived quality is evaluated as good. In our survey, we had the situation that if the perceived quality was evaluated as not good, the correlation to purchase intention was weaker.

A further finding was the correlation between brand personality and purchase intention, which turned out to be positive as well. Here we found that active tennis players, compared

to retired athletes, like Björn Borg or Boris Becker, influence the purchase intention of product brands to a higher extent. Because Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal appear on tennis courts around the world and thereby also in worldwide media, their product brands gain more visibility and promotion, which gives these brands a clear advantage, when it comes to purchase.

Though we are unable to draw conclusions about all kinds of athletes, not even other tennis players for that matter, we are confident that we have provided a solid overview of what the true correlations between our discussed items actually are.

## **7.2 Managerial Implications**

We can distinguish between implications for managers of manufacturers, such as Nike or Adidas, which are considered to have the biggest impact on the tennis sport, at the moment, and implications for the athlete and their management team.

With sponsorship's being an already established phenomenon, we have provided further insight into what managers, in this specific field of sports apparel, need to redirect their attention to in the future. To attract as many consumers as possible and to maximize the stock price of their company, retailers such as Nike and Adidas need to have associations with the best athletes around the world. These are the ones that are seen the most in media and these are simply the superstars of the sports world. Nike has done a great job on this front, by launching the Nike brand, together with the respective product brands of Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal. In this process, two of the tennis world's greatest stars have further strengthened their personalities by creating product brands, carrying their respective names. As for Nike, they have gotten even closer to the athletes by including their logo next to the two personal brand logos. What is described is a win-win situation for both corporation and athlete. When selecting an athlete for sponsoring purposes, or in case of Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal for retail purposes, the manufacturer has to consider the brand personality of the athlete to a higher extent. We could show that the brand personality of the athlete influences the perception and intention towards the product brand. This influence means that the selection of partner athletes is not purely related to the success of an athlete, but more to the personality traits that they carry. Further investigation through a randomized sample survey is needed to prove this phenomenon but a clear tendency can be drawn, from the results of our thesis.

Compared to Federer and Nadal, Borg and Becker have gone their own ways and launched their own products, independent of established corporations. A main difference with these two brands is that their products are directly linked to the player. In the case of Federer and Nadal, Nike is involved in the product as well. The fact that Nike or any other known manufacturer is not included in the Borg and Becker products provides initial uncertainty. With the Federer and Nadal products, the consumer knows that they will get a product with Nike quality.

The current partnerships between Federer, Nadal and Nike are, however, not certain to last. The individual athletes might, just like Borg and Becker, like to have an entirely self-owned brand and in this case, the two products would suddenly become competitors. The power at the moment is at least predominantly with the athlete. Once the athlete retires, however, these tables might change. As seen in the case of Michael Jordan, however, Nike has continued its partnership with the former basketball star and Air Jordan shoes are still very popular today. The age and track record of the brand could prove to be beneficial for an athlete, who has retired. Living legends, such as Federer and Nadal, will most likely have achieved such fabulous careers that their legacies will echo in eternity within the tennis world. This fame could perhaps later compensate for their inactivity and provide them a hint of authenticity.

The perception of the product brand's quality is clearly associated with the personality of the athlete. This association is enabled by consistent appearances in the public and is of high importance, when launching a product brand. This fact is important for the athletes themselves and their respective management teams, when behaving on court, in public and for example in selecting certain sponsors, which support a distinct image. The example of Roger Federer needs to be mentioned here, because he is a person, who is seen as a gentlemen on and off court, working together with only elite brands such as Mercedes, Lindt, Rolex and Credit Suisse, only mention a few.

### **7.3 Limitations and future research**

The first limitation, which was evident with our study, included the fact that we did not gather a random sample. Our narrow sampling frame of tennis players made it difficult to easily attract respondents and we were somewhat skeptical in posting our survey on forums online. We liked the idea of having control over the respondents we collected answers from,

as this tactic ensured us of honest results. With two vast tennis networks on our hands, we figured the best way to conduct this quantitative study was through a cross sectional design, where we acknowledged that our sample was limited. It is our hope that our inability to draw general conclusions is compensated with the fact that we acquired a large number of respondents from a large number of countries. In addition, we can with confidence state that we got more honest and thorough input, thanks to our personal connection with our respondents. There is always the issue with people providing answers that the distributor wants to see but we believe this risk was fairly small, as most respondents were well aware of all players and already had strong perceptions of all of them. Furthermore, we have to state that even though we could gather respondents from thirty-two different countries, the vast majority of our respondents came from Sweden and Germany, the author's home countries. The popularity, and therefore the perceived personalities of the athletes are highly different, depending on the country. Boris Becker for instance, is very famous in England, according to different media sources, while the results in our survey are not that favorable for him.

Furthermore, it must be stated that Aaker's model is not the only model to measure brand personality. Before all, brand personality is an extremely abstract and therefore very difficult phenomenon to measure. As mentioned, even though they were not many, there were other researchers that had studied the concept. Carlson studied the effect of brand personalities of sports teams on consumers. Though team and individual sports are distinctly different notions, it could very well be that Carlson's facets would be highly applicable, for our study. Our choice to focus solely on Aaker's model might have limited us but it would have been very difficult to combine models of different authors. The fact that not too many had studied the concept in question, however, also pleased us, as it automatically increased the relevance of our findings.

Another limitation is then also that we solely focused on tennis players. With every sport having its own personifying nature, we recognize that our overview cannot be directly transferred to other sports, not even other individual sports. Since there are now a fairly large number of athletes, both team and individual, who have their own brands, we could have done a more general study and focused on athletes from all kinds of sports We,

however, considered this approach to be far too broad and we feel that a more narrowly focused approach on one sport would generate much more accurate insights.

Thirdly, the R-squared results that were generated must be looked upon with slight caution. We focused on a very specific and distinctly new area of branding and our model can therefore not be used as an overview of all kinds of brands. The relative freshness of this particular branding segment was nevertheless something that fascinated us and we recognized that there was a gap in the literature, when it came to this phenomenon. Personal brands of athletes go a step beyond sponsoring and, in a way, revolutionize an athlete's impact on sports merchandise. A growing trend on this front could theoretically pose a potentially legitimate threat to established manufacturers.

We can also state that we provided a foundation for future research in this field. With a randomized and larger sample from different countries, and a more generalized approach, we are convinced that interesting results both for practitioners and academics will prove the importance of product brands of athletes and the underlying forces, involved in this phenomenon. Furthermore, it is of interest which traits of brand personality are the most important ones. We focused our study on brand personality, as one factor but did not look into the single traits of it. Further research should consider this aspect and break the adjective up into more specific segments.

Unrelated to our hypotheses and findings, it was with great interest that we read an article on Yahoo's sports website about Swedish golfer, Alexander Björk. He is the front man of Trade in Sports, a service, which provides the opportunity to purchase shares of sports assets. Björk is an interesting case, because he is the guinea pig in an ongoing experiment by the company, where consumers have the possibility to buy shares of professional athletes. One can namely buy shares of Alexander Björk and make money, if he has success on the professional tour. Even though this article had little to do with our research topic, our findings about the relationships between the topics of brand personality, perceived quality and purchase intention could become highly relevant, if the phenomenon of stocks of athletes were to grow. Buyers would then carefully have to take the athlete's brand personality into consideration. Though Björk is trying out this initiative to finance the start of a potentially successful career, it is not impossible that this concept could be transferred to established athletes as well. We have already seen that famous sports teams, such as

Manchester United have listed itself on the stock exchange. If individual athlete, Björk has done it, who is to say that top individual athletes cannot jump on the bandwagon too?

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## 9. Appendix

### 9.1 Survey

#### Demographics, Characteristics of respondents

A1. Gender

A2. Are you an active tennis player or have you played tennis?

A3. What country are you from?

A4. Which of the following persons do you know of? (*Athletes*)

A5. Do you know following brands? (*Product brands of athletes*)

A6. Have you ever bought this brand? (*Product brands of athletes*)

#### Brand personality athlete (Carlson, B.D, 2008)

B. Please rate the following attributes for this athlete, as you perceive them, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Dishonest – Honest

Unpleasant – Charming

Unreliable – Reliable

Inactive – Spirited

Soft - Tough

#### Perceived quality (Yoo 2001) (*product brands of athletes*)

C1. The likely quality of products of this brand is extremely high (1=strongly disagree; 5 strongly agree)

C2. The likelihood that products of this brand would be functional is very high (1=strongly disagree; 5 strongly agree)

#### Purchase intention (Yoo 2001) (*product brands of athletes*)

D1. I would like to buy products of this brand (1=strongly disagree; 5 =strongly agree)

D2. I intend to buy products of this brand (1=strongly disagree; 5 =strongly agree)

## 9.2 Statistical results

### 9.2.1 Means and standard deviation

#### Brand personality

	N	Mittelwert	Standardabweichung	Standardfehler des Mittelwertes
PersonalityRF	257	4,447	,5000	,0311
PersonalityRN	257	4,284	,6421	,0400
PersonalityBORG	257	3,996	,6577	,0409
PersonalityBECKER	257	3,509	,8873	,0552

#### Perceived quality

	N	Mittelwert	Standardabweichung	Standardfehler des Mittelwertes
Perceived_Qual_RF	257	4,215	,8361	,0521
Perceived_Qual_RN	257	3,733	,9530	,0593
Perceived_Qual_BORG	257	3,860	,9601	,0598
Perceived_Qual_BECKER	257	2,830	,8909	,0555

#### Purchase intention

	N	Mittelwert	Standardabweichung	Standardfehler des Mittelwertes
Purchase_Intention_RF	257	3,471	1,3328	,0830
Purchase_Intention_RN	257	2,787	1,3585	,0846
Purchase_Intention_BORG	257	3,269	1,4402	,0897
Purchase_Intention_BECKER	257	1,909	,9554	,0595

### 9.2.2 Anova-Test & Coefficients

**ANOVA** Roger Federer brand personality to perceived quality

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	26,710	1	26,710	44,704	,000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	152,954	256	,597		
	Total	179,664	257			

a. Predictors : (Constant), PersonalityRF

b. Dependent variable: Perceived\_Qual\_RF

**Coefficient** Roger Federer brand personality to perceived quality

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
		B	Std. errorr	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1,348	,432		3,123	,002
	PersonalityRF	,645	,096	,386	6,686	,000

a. Dependent variable: Perceived\_Qual\_RF

**ANOVA** Roger Federer perceived quality to purchase intention

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	179,357	1	179,357	165,655	,000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	277,175	256	1,083		
	Total	456,532	257			

a Predictors : (Constant), Perceived\_Qual\_RF

b. Dependent variable: Purchase\_Intention\_RF

Brands of athletes- The effect of Brand personality of athletes on consumers

**Coefficient** Roger Federer perceived quality to purchase intention

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-,740	,334		-2,219	,027
	Perceived_Qual_RF	,999	,078	,627	12,871	,000

a. Dependent: Purchase\_Intention\_RF

**ANOVA** Rafael Nadal brand personality to perceived quality

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	53,454	1	53,454	76,036	,000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	179,972	256	,703		
	Total	233,427	257			

a Predictors : (Constant), PersonalityRN

b. Dependent variable: Perceived\_Qual\_RN

**Coefficient** Rafael Nadal brand personality to perceived quality

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	,690	,353		1,955	,052
	PersonalityRN	,710	,081	,479	8,720	,000

a. Dependent Variable: Perceived\_Qual\_RN

Brands of athletes- The effect of Brand personality of athletes on consumers

**ANOVA** Rafael Nadal perceived quality to purchase intention

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	225,228	1	225,228	231,516	,000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	249,047	256	,973		
	Total	474,275	257			

a. Predictors : (Constant), Perceived\_Qual\_RN

b. Dependent variable: Purchase\_Intention\_RN

**Coefficient** Rafael Nadal perceived quality to purchase intention

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-,880	,249		-3,537	,000
	Perceived_Qual_RN	,982	,065	,689	15,216	,000

a. Dependent: Purchase\_Intention\_RN

**ANOVA** Boris Becker brand personality to perceived quality

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	42,669	1	42,669	67,723	,000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	161,295	256	,630		
	Total	203,964	257			

a. Predictors : (Constant), PersonalityBECKER

b. Dependent variable: Perceived\_Qual\_BECKER

Brands of athletes- The effect of Brand personality of athletes on consumers

**Coefficient** Boris Becker brand personality to perceived quality

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1,219	,202		6,037	,000
	PersonalityBECKER	,459	,056	,457	8,229	,000

a. Dependent variable: Perceived\_Qual\_BECKER

**ANOVA** Boris Becker perceived quality to purchase intention

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	43,147	1	43,147	57,691	,000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	191,463	256	,748		
	Total	234,609	257			

a. Predictors : (Constant), Perceived\_Qual\_BECKER

b. Dependent variable: Purchase\_Intention\_BECKER

**Coefficient** Boris Becker perceived quality to purchase intention

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	,607	,180		3,380	,001
	Perceived_Qual_BECKER	,460	,061	,429	7,595	,000

a. Dependent variable: Purchase\_Intention\_BECKER

Brands of athletes- The effect of Brand personality of athletes on consumers

**ANOVA** Björn Borg brand personality to perceived quality

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28,232	1	28,232	34,640	,000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	208,648	256	,815		
	Total	236,881	257			

a. Predictors : (Constant), PersonalityBORG

b. Dependent variable: Perceived\_Qual\_BORG

**Coefficient** Björn Borg brand personality to perceived quality

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1,846	,347		5,323	,000
	PersonalityBORG	,504	,086	,345	5,886	,000

a. Dependent variable: Perceived\_Qual\_BORG

**ANOVA** Björn Borg perceived quality to purchase intention

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	269,046	1	269,046	260,910	,000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	263,982	256	1,031		
	Total	533,028	257			

a. Predictors : (Constant), Perceived\_Qual\_BORG

b. Dependant variable: Purchase\_Intention\_BORG



**Coefficient** Björn Borg perceived quality to purchase intention

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-,844	,262		-3,217	,001
	Perceived_Qual_BORG	1,066	,066	,710	16,153	,000

a. Dependent variable: Purchase\_Intention\_BORG

### 9.2.3 Simple linear regression

Roger Federer

**Correlation brand personality -> perceived quality**

		Perceived_Qual_RF	PersonalityRF
Pearson Correlation	Perceived_Qual_RF	1,000	,386
	PersonalityRF	,386	1,000
Sig. (2-tailed)	Perceived_Qual_RF		,000
	PersonalityRF	,000	
N	Perceived_Qual_RF	257	257
	PersonalityRF	257	257

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R-square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson-Statistics
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Change in Significance of F	
1	,386 <sup>a</sup>	,149	,145	,7730	,149	44,704	1	256	,000	1,941

a. Predictors : (Constant), PersonalityRF

b. Dependent variable: Perceived\_Qual\_RF

Brands of athletes- The effect of Brand personality of athletes on consumers

**Correlation Perceived quality -> Purchase intention**

		Purchase_Intention_RF	Perceived_Qual_RF
Pearson Correlation	Purchase_Intention_RF	1,000	,627
	Perceived_Qual_RF	,627	1,000
Sig. (2-tailed)	Purchase_Intention_RF		,000
	Perceived_Qual_RF	,000	
N	Purchase_Intention_RF	257	257
	Perceived_Qual_RF	257	257

**Model summary**

Model	R	R-square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson-Statistics
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Change in Significance of F	
1	,627 <sup>a</sup>	,393	,390	1,0405	,393	165,655	1	256	,000	2,017

a. Predictors : (Constant), Perceived\_Qual\_RF

b. Dependent variable: Purchase\_Intention\_RF

**Correlation Brand personality -> Purchase intention**

		Purchase_Intention_RF	PersonalityRF
Pearson Correlation	Purchase_Intention_RF	1,000	,336
	PersonalityRF	,336	1,000
Sig. (2-tailed)	Purchase_Intention_RF	.	,000
	PersonalityRF	,000	.
N	Purchase_Intention_RF	257	257
	PersonalityRF	257	257

Rafael Nadal

**Correlation Brand personality -> Perceived quality**

		Perceived_Qual_RN	PersonalityRN
Pearson Correlation	Perceived_Qual_RN	1,000	,479
	PersonalityRN	,479	1,000
Sig. (2-tailed)	Perceived_Qual_RN	.	,000
	PersonalityRN	,000	.
N	Perceived_Qual_RN	257	257
	PersonalityRN	257	257

Brands of athletes- The effect of Brand personality of athletes on consumers

**Model summary**

Model	R	R-square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson-Statistics
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Change in Significance of F	
1	,479 <sup>a</sup>	,229	,226	,8385	,229	76,036	1	256	,000	1,619

a. Predictors : (Constant), PersonalityRN

b. Dependent variable: Perceived\_Qual\_RN

**Correlation Perceived quality -> Purchase intention**

		Purchase_Intention_RN	Perceived_Qual_RN
Pearson Correlation	Purchase_Intention_RN	1,000	,689
	Perceived_Qual_RN	,689	1,000
Sig. (2-tailed)	Purchase_Intention_RN	.	,000
	Perceived_Qual_RN	,000	.
N	Purchase_Intention_RN	257	257
	Perceived_Qual_RN	257	257

Brands of athletes- The effect of Brand personality of athletes on consumers

**Model summary**

Model	R	R-square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson-Statistics
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Change in Significance of F	
1	,689 <sup>a</sup>	,475	,473	,9863	,475	231,516	1	256	,000	1,789

a. Predictors : (Constant), Perceived\_Qual\_RN

b. Dependent variable: Purchase\_Intention\_RN

**Correlation Brand personality -> Purchase intention**

		Purchase_Intention_RN	PersonalityRN
Pearson Correlation	Purchase_Intention_RN	1,000	,408
	PersonalityRN	,408	1,000
Sig. (2-tailed)	Purchase_Intention_RN	.	,000
	PersonalityRN	,000	.
N	Purchase_Intention_RN	257	257
	PersonalityRN	257	257

Björn Borg

**Correlation Brand personality -> Perceived quality**

		Perceived_Qual_BORG	PersonalityBORG
Pearson Correlation	Perceived_Qual_BORG	1,000	,345
	PersonalityBORG	,345	1,000
Sig. (2-tailed)	Perceived_Qual_BORG		,000
	PersonalityBORG	,000	
N	Perceived_Qual_BORG	257	257
	PersonalityBORG	257	257

**Model summary**

Modell	R	R-square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change statistics					Durbin-Watson-Statistics
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Change in Significance of F	
1	,345 <sup>a</sup>	,119	,116	,9028	,119	34,640	1	256	,000	1,730

a. Predictors : (Constant), PersonalityBORG

b. Dependent variable: Perceived\_Qual\_BORG

Brands of athletes- The effect of Brand personality of athletes on consumers

**Correlation Perceived quality -> Purchase intention**

		Purchase_Intention_BORG	Perceived_Qual_BORG
Pearson Correlation	Purchase_Intention_BORG	1,000	,710
	Perceived_Qual_BORG	,710	1,000
Sig. (2-tailed)	Purchase_Intention_BORG	.	,000
	Perceived_Qual_BORG	,000	.
N	Purchase_Intention_BORG	257	257
	Perceived_Qual_BORG	257	257



Brands of athletes- The effect of Brand personality of athletes on consumers

**Model summary**

Model	R	R-square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change statistics					Durbin-Watson-Statistics
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Change in Significance of F	
1	,710 <sup>a</sup>	,505	,503	1,0155	,505	260,910	1	256	,000	2,049

a. Predictors : (Constant), Perceived\_Qual\_BORG

b. Dependent variable: Purchase\_Intention\_BORG

**Correlation Brand personality -> Purchase intention**

		Purchase_Intention_BORG	PersonalityBORG
Pearson Correlation	Purchase_Intention_BORG	1,000	,255
	PersonalityBORG	,255	1,000
Sig. (2-tailed)	Purchase_Intention_BORG	.	,000
	PersonalityBORG	,000	.
N	Purchase_Intention_BORG	257	257
	PersonalityBORG	257	257

Boris Becker

**Correlation Brand personality -> Perceived quality**

		Perceived_Qual_BECKER	PersonalityBECKER
Pearson Correlation	Perceived_Qual_BECKER	1,000	,457
	PersonalityBECKER	,457	1,000
Sig. (2-tailed)	Perceived_Qual_BECKER	.	,000
	PersonalityBECKER	,000	.
N	Perceived_Qual_BECKER	257	257
	PersonalityBECKER	257	257

**Model summary**

Modell	R	R-square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change statistics					Durbin-Watson-Statistics
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Change in Significance of F	
1	,457 <sup>a</sup>	,209	,206	,7938	,209	67,723	1	256	,000	1,988

a. Predictors : (Constant), PersonalityBECKER

b. Dependent variable: Perceived\_Qual\_BECKER

**Correlation Perceived quality -> Purchase intention**

		Purchase_Intention_BECKER	Perceived_Qual_BECKER
Pearson Correlation	Purchase_Intention_BECKER	1,000	,429
	Perceived_Qual_BECKER	,429	1,000
Sig. (2-tailed)	Purchase_Intention_BECKER	.	,000
	Perceived_Qual_BECKER	,000	.
N	Purchase_Intention_BECKER	257	257
	Perceived_Qual_BECKER	257	257

Brands of athletes- The effect of Brand personality of athletes on consumers

**Model summary**

Modell	R	R-square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change statistics					Durbin-Watson-Statistics
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Change in Significance of F	
1	,429 <sup>a</sup>	,184	,181	,8648	,184	57,691	1	256	,000	1,960

a. Predictors : (Constant), Perceived\_Qual\_BECKER

b. Dependent variable: Purchase\_Intention\_BECKER

**Correlation Brand personality -> Purchase intention**

		Purchase_Intention_BECKER	PersonalityBECKER
Pearson Correlation	Purchase_Intention_BECKER	1,000	,122
	PersonalityBECKER	,122	1,000
Sig. (2-tailed)	Purchase_Intention_BECKER		,025
	PersonalityBECKER	,025	
N	Purchase_Intention_BECKER	257	257
	PersonalityBECKER	257	257