

**The Differential Effects of
Celebrity and Expert Endorsements
on the Intention to Visit a Holiday Destination**



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**Master's thesis
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January 2017

Abstract

The use of celebrity and expert endorsements in advertisements is frequently applied as a marketing strategy for the purpose of promoting a variety of products and services. The present study examines the potential effectiveness of this strategy as a means to promote different types of holiday destinations. The differential effects of celebrity and expert endorsers on the attitude toward the advertisement, the endorser's perceived credibility and the intention to visit a specific holiday destination are explored by making a direct comparison within a single study. Furthermore, it is tested whether these effects are contingent on different types of holiday destinations (low-priced versus high-priced). An experimental study was set up in which participants were exposed to one out of four advertisements. Results of a 2 (endorser type: celebrity versus expert endorser) x 2 (destination type: low-priced versus high-priced) between subject factorial design among 138 participants showed that neither endorser type nor destination type had any significant effect on the attitude toward the advertisement, the perceived credibility and the intention to visit a specific holiday destination. The results did show that the attitude toward the advertisement significantly affects the intention to visit a specific holiday destination, so did the endorser's perceived credibility. Lastly, the expert endorser was surprisingly perceived as more attractive than the celebrity endorser. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the use of endorsers in holiday destination advertisements may not be as effective compared to other, more tangible product categories. However, more research is needed in order to test the generalizability of these outcomes. The findings of this research are limited to the endorser and destination types tested in this experiment. This study ends with some theoretical and practical implications, followed by suggestions for future research.

Keywords: endorsement, celebrity, expert, perceived credibility, destination marketing

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1. Introduction

Marketing plays an important role in tourism in order to communicate the uniqueness and image of the destination (Van der Veen, 2008). Destination marketing organizations (DMOs) draw attention and shift attitudes toward destinations in numerous ways. Although most destinations are typically promoted by highlighting its most appealing environmental and cultural characteristics, the present study will discuss the use of celebrity and expert endorsements in advertisements as an alternative way for promoting holiday destinations.

‘Celebrity endorsement’ refers to “an agreement between an individual who enjoys public recognition (a celebrity) and an entity (e.g., a brand) to use the celebrity for the purpose of promoting the entity” (Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016, p. 644). Although not as frequently used as celebrity endorsements, there has been an increase in expert endorsements in advertisements over time as well (Biswas, Biswas & Das, 2006). Expert endorsements focus on the ‘credentials’ or ‘qualifications’ of the endorser in order to enhance the believability of an advertisement (Biswas et al., 2006; Maddux & Rogers, 1980). The idea behind celebrity and expert endorsed destination campaigns is simple: to draw attention to the endorsed holiday destination and to complement the desired image values (Van der Veen & Song, 2014). Thus, in general, it is assumed that celebrities and experts have a positive effect on the persuasiveness of the advertised message (Biswas et al., 2006; Van der Veen & Song, 2014).

However, the potential effectiveness of celebrity and expert endorsements is not as straightforward as it might seem. Research suggests that there are many factors that either contribute to the persuasive effect of endorsers or diminish it (Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016). Frequently identified factors often relate to specific ‘source’ characteristics (e.g., attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness) of the endorser, suggesting that these may positively affect the receiver’s acceptance of a message (Ohanian, 1990). Additional factors that should be taken into account are so-called ‘mediating constructs’ or variables that serve as determinants of any given behavior (Fishbein & Yzer, 2003). Attitude toward the holiday destination advertisement, for example, may affect the intention to visit a specific destination.

Although celebrity and expert endorsements have been widely investigated in a variety of contexts, these studies primarily focus on one specific form of endorsement (either celebrity or expert endorsers) instead of making a direct comparison between two or multiple endorsement types within a single study (Biswas et al., 2006). Additionally, there are reasons to suggest that the effectiveness of celebrity and expert endorsements differs dependent on the type of product being endorsed (Biswas et al., 2006; Rossiter & Smidts, 2012). However,

these assumptions are primarily based on ‘search products’ (e.g., a computer or a watch) which have concrete and functional attributes (Willemsen et al., 2011). Less is known about ‘experience goods’ such as holiday destinations, which are dominated by intangible attributes that are unknown until consumption (Van der Veen, 2008; Willemsen et al., 2011).

The present study extends prior research by examining the differential effects of celebrity and expert endorsements within a single experimental study in order to make a direct comparison between the two endorser types. In addition, this study explores whether these effects are contingent on different types of holiday destinations. The following research questions are formulated: “*How do celebrity and expert endorsements affect the intention to visit a specific holiday destination?*” and “*To what extent does destination type moderate the relationship between endorser type and the intention to visit a specific holiday destination?*”

The scientific relevance of this study is to contribute to the understanding of the potential implementation of both celebrity and expert endorsements as a destination marketing instrument. Celebrities and experts are important and frequently used spokespersons because it is assumed that their unique characteristics make them more persuasive compared to ‘normal’ persons (Erdogan, 1999; Harmon & Coney, 1982). However, the use of endorsers is not always a guarantee for success. This indicates that the desired effects are only obtained under certain conditions (Harmon & Coney, 1982). The present study tries to specify these conditions by testing unique endorser-destination combinations in an experimental context.

The practical relevance of this study is to investigate whether celebrity endorsements are pitted against less expensive alternatives such as experts. The findings that result from this comparison are considered relevant for marketers in general. However, as this study is centered around holiday destination advertisements, the tourism industry is likely to benefit most from this research. Destinations are some of the most difficult entities to market as they are embedded in and associated with a variety of contexts and characteristics (Van der Veen, 2008). Additionally, tourism marketers experience several limitations such as a restricted ability to modify the destination image and limited funding (Van der Veen & Song, 2014). Due to these developments, it is relevant to further investigate less common stimuli in a tourism context such as endorsers in order to enhance the advertising effectiveness.

This master’s thesis is structured around five main sections. The theoretical framework explains the most important concepts and analyzes the main findings derived from previously conducted research. The third chapter will elaborate on the method of the present study. In the fourth chapter, the results will be statistically presented. Thereafter, a discussion with the implications of this study and its results are offered, followed by a brief conclusion.

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter will elaborate on important theories, models and key concepts derived from previously conducted research in order to formulate hypotheses. To be able to understand the potential effectiveness of both celebrity and expert endorsers in an advertising context, both types will be explained thoroughly in this section. Special attention will be paid to the influence of possible mediating and moderating variables, as it is expected that the use of endorsers does not directly lead to behavioral intentions. The mediating variables are the attitude toward the advertisement and the endorser's perceived credibility. Furthermore, the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983) will be presented to explain the possible moderating influence of holiday destination type. As this study is primarily based on the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) and Ohanian's (1990, 1991) source credibility model, these will be explained first as a theoretical point of departure. At the end of this chapter, a conceptual model (see figure 1) is presented in which the obtained insights from the literature review and the relationships between the variables are integrated and visualized. The conceptual model provides in one clear overview a theoretical answer to the research questions.

2.1 Theory of Reasoned Action

The Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) identifies a limited number of variables that serve as determinants of any given behavior. According to the theory, performance of a given behavior is likely to occur when a person has a strong intention to perform that behavior. Intention is the likelihood of a person intending to do something (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Intention, however, is also determined by two factors: the person's attitude and/or the person's subjective norm. The person's attitude toward performing the behavior, described as "one's overall positive or negative feeling about personally performing the behavior", will be highlighted in the present study (Fishbein & Yzer, 2003, p. 165). Attitudes result from behavioral beliefs and their evaluative aspects, which means that people evaluate the performance of behavior in relation to the expected outcomes of that behavior (Fishbein & Yzer, 2003). Due to the Theory of Reasoned Action, 'attitude' is conceptualized as an important mediator of behavioral intentions. Applied to the present study, it is assumed that a person's attitude toward the advertisement operates as a mediating variable and has an influence on the intention to visit a specific holiday destination.

2.2 Endorser effects and source model theories

The present study primarily focuses on two types of endorser effects: the celebrity endorser and the expert endorser. Prior research on endorser effects rely on two general models: the source credibility model and the source attractiveness model (Ohanian, 1990). The source credibility model assumes that ‘expertness’ and ‘trustworthiness’ are the two main factors that lead to the perceived credibility of a communicator (Ohanian, 1990). The source attractiveness model states that the effectiveness of a message is partly determined by the source’s ‘familiarity’, ‘likability’, ‘similarity’ and ‘attractiveness’ to the respondent (Ohanian, 1991; Biswas et al., 2006; McGuire, 1985). Both the source credibility and attractiveness model are combined in and referred to as source model theory (SMT) (Biswas et al., 2006).

Ohanian’s three-factor source credibility model (1990, 1991) is held to be most appropriate for understanding the effects of celebrity endorsed print advertisements (Van der Veen & Song, 2014). The model follows the principles of source model theory and therefore illustrates that ‘expertise’, ‘trustworthiness’ and ‘physical attractiveness’ are the three core dimensions of celebrity endorsers’ credibility. Consequently, Ohanian’s model (1990, 1991) will be used in this study to explain the potential effectiveness of celebrities and experts in holiday destination campaigns.

2.3 Celebrity versus expert endorsements and attitude

2.3.1 Celebrity endorsements and attitude

Prior research has repeatedly associated celebrity endorsers with the ability to enhance the persuasiveness of messages (Ohanian, 1990). Consequently, the focus of celebrity persuasion research has mainly been on identifying factors that either contribute to the persuasive effect via a main effect or moderate it. These factors often relate to the celebrity, the endorsement context and the target audience (Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016), as will be explained in the following subsections. The present study assumes that the differences between the celebrity and the expert endorser (i.e., the independent variable ‘endorser type’) will lead to different outcomes in terms of attitude toward the advertisement, the endorser’s perceived credibility and the intention to visit a specific holiday destination. Additionally, it is expected that the perceived credibility construct has a mediating effect as well (see figure 1).

Following source model theories, many studies on endorser effectiveness suggest that celebrity endorsers have a greater impact on attitude change and purchase intention than non-

celebrity spokespersons (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Erdogan, 1999). It is assumed that if celebrities are perceived to have certain ‘source factors’ such as attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness, they are more liked by the audience and more effective in generating positive brand evaluations (Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016). However, prior research also indicates that if source factors are treated as separate variables, conflicting results appear. For example, the relationship between celebrity attractiveness and brand evaluations is not always found to be positive (Kamins, 1990 & Ohanian, 1991). This suggests that there are probably more factors influencing the relationship, which demonstrates the complexity of source model theories.

Another important concept within celebrity persuasion research is the product match-up hypothesis, which suggests that there must be a perceived fit between the celebrity image and the product message for effective advertising (Kamins, 1990). Fit refers in this context to the degree of similarity, consistency or congruity between the celebrity and the brand (Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016). The higher the perceived fit between the celebrity’s image and the endorsed brand, the more persuasive the ad will be (Keel & Natarajan, 2012). Applied in a tourism context, celebrity endorsed holiday destination advertisements are more likely to result in favorable attitudes and behavioral intentions when the celebrity’s characteristics are in line with, or transferred to, the properties of the destination (Van der Veen & Song, 2014).

While there is a considerable amount of research that has investigated the fit or match between a celebrity and the product being endorsed, less attention has been paid to the celebrity/consumer relationship (Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016; Choi & Rifon, 2012). Choi and Rifon (2012), who investigated the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement in relation to the consumer’s self-concept, found that the congruence between consumer self-image and celebrity image plays an important role in the celebrity endorsement process. They state that “when a consumer perceives a celebrity endorser as possessing an image close to his or her ideal self-image, the consumer is likely to rate the ad as more favorable and report greater purchase intentions” (Choi & Rifon, 2012, p. 647). Thus, consumers buy specific goods and services not only for their need, but also for their associated meanings. Individuals adopt attitudes and behaviors from celebrities because they offer a range of personality and lifestyle meanings which are in congruence with their (ideal) self-image (Van der Veen, 2008).

As people are seeking to express their identity in everything they do or purchase, destinations may also be used by tourists to communicate specific meanings about themselves. In other words: the tourists’ choice for a specific holiday destination goes to a certain extent hand in hand with the identity of the traveler (Clarke, 2000). In line with these readings, it can be assumed that as long as there is a congruence between the target audience

and the celebrity endorser (e.g., celebrity-audience fit) and, additionally, between the celebrity endorser and the holiday destination (e.g., celebrity-product fit), celebrity endorsement may be more effective than non-celebrity endorsement in generating desirable outcomes (Van der Veen, 2008).

2.3.2 Expert endorsements and attitude

An expert is commonly described as a source of valid assertions (Hovland, Janis & Kelly, 1953), one who knows the correct stand on an issue (McGuire, 1969), or one whose statements have been verified empirically (Birnbbaum & Stegner, 1979). Important to note is that expertise is not a generalized trait but a relational concept that implies an object. This means that an expert usually possesses expertise on a specific topic (Maddux & Rogers, 1989). In empirical research, expertise had been related to age, education, experience, intelligence, occupation, social status, training and ability (Maddux & Rogers, 1989; Birnbaum & Stegner, 1979).

Expert endorsements are ought to be effective because they are strongly associated with source factors such as trustworthiness and expertise (Willemsen et al., 2011; Harmon & Coney, 1982). Due to the presence of these source factors, experts have an increased source credibility which affects attitude change, behavioral intentions and the persuasiveness of messages in a positive manner (Harmon & Coney, 1982; Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999; Maddux & Rogers, 1980; Woodside & Davenport, 1974; Priester & Petty, 2003).

Prior research suggests that both celebrities and experts are effective in producing attitude changes toward advertisements, partly because they have been related to the same source factors (i.e., Ohanian's perceived expertise and trustworthiness) in a variety of studies. However, when a direct comparison is made between both endorser types, it is expected that celebrity endorsers lead to more positive attitudes toward the holiday destination advertisement than expert endorsers. This expectation is primarily based on the fact that, compared with an anonymous expert endorser, celebrities have a distinguishing characteristic in terms of personality and lifestyle meanings (McCracken, 1989). Thus, because the celebrity endorser enjoys public recognition, people are more willing to adopt specific attitudes or behaviors from this person (Van der Veen, 2008). Although a celebrity's famous identity is definitely no guarantee for success in terms of persuasive power, it can be assumed that as long as important precautions are met (i.e., celebrity-audience fit; celebrity-product fit), a celebrity leads to more positive attitudes toward the holiday destination advertisement than a non-famous expert. Therefore, the following hypothesis is put forward:

H1 A celebrity endorser leads to more positive attitudes toward the advertisement than an expert endorser.

2.4 Celebrity versus expert endorsements and perceived credibility

Perceived credibility has been positively linked to attitude change, behavioral intentions and the persuasiveness of messages (Harmon & Coney, 1982; Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999; Maddux & Rogers, 1980; Woodside & Davenport, 1974; Priester & Petty, 2003). Although both celebrities and experts possess source factors that are highly related to the perceived credibility construct (Ohanian, 1990), it is not always clear which type is best in achieving the highest perceived credibility levels. While many studies have examined the effects of celebrity and expert endorsements, there are not many scientific studies that make a direct comparison between celebrity and expert endorsers within a single study (Biswas et al., 2006 & Freiden, 1984). Thus, prior research has mainly been focusing on solely celebrities or experts, isolating them into different contexts which makes these studies hard to compare. Despite these differences, insights can still be obtained by making comparisons between studies that are addressing the same endorser types. These comparisons provide indications that it is more challenging for a celebrity endorser to be perceived as an expert compared to an unknown, identifiable expert endorser (Keel & Natarajan, 2012; Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016).

In a selling context, research indicates that consumers are inclined to seek and follow the advice of expert sources more than non-expert ones (Bansal & Voyer, 2000). It is assumed that experts are better capable in distinguishing relevant and accurate information from irrelevant information, which makes the expert a trustworthy and useful source during the buying process (Willemsen et al., 2011; Van der Veen & Song, 2014). Additional support for the persuasiveness of expertise claims can be found in studies which are specified on online content. For example, studies focusing on online consumer reviews (Cheung, Sia & Kuan, 2012), electronic word-of-mouth (Pollach, 2008) and online health information (Eastin, 2001; Hu & Sundar, 2010) repeatedly suggest that source expertise positively affects message credibility. Content written by an identifiable expert is, in general, found to be perceived as more credible and useful than content written by a layperson. This can be explained by the 'authority-heuristic', experts are cognitively processed as reliable information sources due to their professional authority on a subject (Willemsen et al., 2011; Hu & Sundar, 2010).

It should be noted that the degree to which a source is considered an 'expert' is to a great extent determined by the target audience (Willemsen et al., 2011; Gotlieb & Sarel,

1991). They evaluate if the source has the knowledge and competence to act as an expert. Consequently, it is irrelevant whether a celebrity endorser is actually an expert on the topic. What truly matters, is the public's perception in this context. If they believe the celebrity endorser is capable to act as an expert, then it is likely that the celebrity will be perceived as an expert as well (Ohanian, 1991). This is not as straightforward as it might seem. Compared to experts, celebrities evoke more associations due to their famous status (McCracken, 1989). This has implications for marketers and for the way an endorsed campaign is interpreted.

Non-famous expert endorsers are created and fine-tuned in a thoughtful and professional manner to ensure a match with the brand and the company. However, the image, personality and actions of a celebrity endorser cannot (or hardly) be manipulated prior to advertising campaigns because they are well-known to a great public already (Keel & Natarajan, 2012). Due to the celebrity's public position, they are more likely to generate negative publicity than non-celebrities (Keel & Natarajan, 2012). Consequently, the use of celebrity endorsements is often described as a strategy that includes certain risks. For example, it is always possible that a celebrity endorser appears to be unreliable or misbehaves, a phenomenon known as 'celebrity transgressions' (Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016). This could lead to negative and sceptic consumer evaluations of brands endorsed by the celebrity (Berkvist & Zhou, 2016; Bailey, 2007).

Additionally, there are reasons to suggest that knowledge about the celebrity's motives for endorsing a product influences how the endorsed product is received by the consumer (Willemsen et al., 2011). This effect can be explained in the context of the attribution theory, which suggests that "people attribute information either internally to the source of information or externally to factors which are related to the information" (Kniesel, Waiguny & Diehl, 2014, p. 2). Applied to the present study: if information presented in the advertisement is attributed externally (i.e., information is directly related to the holiday destination), the advertisement is likely to be perceived as legitimate and believable. However, if the information is attributed internally (i.e., the information is directly related to the source), it is possible that the source is assumed to have personal motives for providing that information (Kniesel et al., 2014). Thus, if celebrities are suspected to have a clear commercial interest for participating in advertising campaigns, they are probably taken less seriously or perceived with cynicism by the target audience. This lack of credibility deteriorates if celebrities endorse products they do not fit, which is why the match-up hypothesis is so crucial in this context (Van der Veen, 2008).

Experts, on the other hand, are expected to be less vulnerable for internal attributions

because they are not known by the audience and less associated with commercial interests. They are probably perceived as neutral and authentic sources providing first-hand experience, which makes them more credible than celebrity endorsers (Willemssen et al., 2011). In sum, the readings and theories discussed in this section have led to the following hypothesis:

H2 An expert endorser is perceived as more credible than a celebrity endorser.

2.5 The moderating effect of holiday destination type on attitude

There are reasons to suggest that the effectiveness of celebrity and expert endorsements is, to a great extent, dependent on the type of product being advertised (Biswas et al., 2006). More specifically, low-involvement and high-involvement products lead to different effects with regard to product perception and attitude change (Biswas et al., 2006; Rossiter & Smidts, 2012; Petty et al., 1983). The construct of involvement is widely investigated in advertising research in order to understand the effects of advertising on consumer behavior (Muehling et al., 1993). Within advertising literature, the ‘level of involvement’ reflects the extent to which a product is personally relevant and of interest (Petty et al., 1983). Thus, high-involvement products have greater personal relevance and consequences than low-involvement products. Consequently, it is assumed that the consumer decision process is more complex, extensive and in-depth for high-involvement products than for low-involvement products as consumers cognitively process the information in an active way (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985).

The model that explains the effects of involvement on consumer responses to advertisements is the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Petty et al., 1983). ELM assumes that there are two distinct routes to attitude change, namely ‘the central route’ and ‘the peripheral route’. The routes represent different styles of information processing. The central route views attitude change as resulting from a person’s thoughtful, cognitive consideration of issue- or product- relevant information. Via the peripheral route, attitude formation occurs because the object is associated with various positive or negative cues. In contrast to the central route, the peripheral route does not require any extensive thought (Petty et al., 1983).

The general assumption is that advertisements promoting high-involvement products are processed via the central route whereas attitudes toward low-involvement products are affected via the peripheral route (Petty et al., 1983). Annual holidays are frequently categorized as high-involvement products because the choice for a specific destination involves great personal relevance and social, financial or even psychological risks (Van der Veen, 2008). However, it is questionable whether all destination types lead to the same levels

of involvement. This assumption is based on prior research in which different types of search goods have also been categorized under different involvement levels and risk perceptions (i.e., high versus low), dependent on the product's price and its specific attributes (Biswas et al., 2006; Rossiter & Smidts, 2012). Similar to search goods, intangible goods like holiday destinations are just as likely to induce different levels of involvement and risk perceptions, especially when taking into account specific holiday and destination characteristics.

The question remains how celebrities and experts are related to this distinction between high- and low involvement destination types and why they are likely to generate different effects in this context. It appears that ELM is not only a useful tool to explain how high- and low involvement products are processed. In addition to the products, celebrities and experts may also be differently processed by the consumer dependent on whether they follow the peripheral or central route (Biswas et al., 2006; Petty et al., 1983). ELM suggests that when consumers are purchasing high-involvement products, they are highly motivated to process the advertisement under scrutiny in order to reduce certain risks (Petty et al., 1983). While processing the advertisement, the endorser is likely to be perceived and judged as product-relevant information. Thus, when high-involvement products are presented in combination with an endorser, it is likely that both the product and the endorser will be processed via the central route and thus critically assessed (Petty et al., 1983). In this scenario, it is expected that expert endorsers are perceived as more knowledgeable and useful than celebrity endorsers. Consumers would believe they have more to gain from an expert source than from a celebrity spokesperson (Bansal & Voyer, 2000; Petty et al., 1983).

However, low-priced holiday destinations raise different expectations due to lower levels of involvement and limited risks. In this situation, it is more likely that the advertisement, including the endorsers, is only peripherally processed (Biswas et al., 2006). Petty et al. (1983), who compared sports celebrities and normal citizens as endorsers for products in advertisements, found that especially celebrity endorsers had strong effects on attitude formation about the product when presented with a low-involvement product. This influence was absent in advertisements depicting solely high-involvement products.

Following the principles of ELM, it can be hypothesized that different destination types lead to different levels of involvement. Dependent on the destination type (i.e., low-priced or high-priced), attitude change occurs via either the central route or the peripheral route (Petty et al., 1983). In addition, it is suggested that celebrity and expert endorsers in combination with a particular destination type are differently processed as well and thus lead to different attitudes and product perceptions. Expert endorsers are expected to have more

influence in combination with high-involvement products whereas celebrities are stronger combined with low-involvement products. Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H3 A celebrity endorser leads to more positive attitudes toward the advertisement than an expert endorser, but only for the low-priced destination advertisement.

2.6 The moderating effect of holiday destination type on perceived credibility

It has already been hypothesized that an expert endorser is perceived as more credible than a celebrity endorser (see H2). An identifiable expert is, due to his or her status as an ‘expert’, almost naturally associated with trustworthiness and expertise, two components of the perceived credibility construct (Willemssen et al., 2011; Harmon & Coney, 1982; Ohanian, 1990). People are inclined to think that experts would not have been appointed as ‘experts’ if they did not have some authority on a subject, which makes them by profession a reliable source of knowledge (Willemssen et al., 2011; Hu & Sundar, 2010).

Furthermore, the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) suggested that advertisements promoting high-involvement products are more likely to be critically assessed than advertisements containing low-involvement products (Petty et al., 1983). Although Petty et al. (1983, p. 135) mainly emphasize the consumers’ “diligent consideration of issue- or product-relevant information” in the context of high-involvement products, it is not unlikely that when such a product is featured by an endorser, this person will be critically processed as well. Instead of making simple inferences about the endorser (i.e., “If an expert says it, it must be true”), which would happen if consumers process the advertisements via the peripheral route, consumers will pay more attention and think about what they see. This is especially true for high-involvement products like annual holiday destinations, because these kind of purchases are quite expensive and carry great personal relevance (Petty et al., 1983; Van der Veen 2008). As consumers have much to lose, it is probably relevant for them whether a celebrity or expert endorses the holiday in the advertisement. A celebrity may raise more favorable attitudes toward the advertisement, but with regard to providing trustworthy information, the expert endorser is perceived as more credible. The present study therefore hypothesizes the following:

H4 An expert endorser is perceived as more credible than a celebrity endorser, particularly for the high-priced destination advertisement.

2.7 Attitude and intention to visit

Following the Theory of Reasoned Action, attitude is considered as an important mediator of behavioral intentions (Fishbein & Yzer, 2003). The presumed relationship between attitude and the intention to change behavior has been investigated in many contexts in order to create, for example, effective health behavior interventions (Fishbein & Yzer, 2003; Hu & Sundar, 2010) or to predict consumer purchase intentions (Belleau et al., 2007; Sheppard, Hartwick & Warshaw, 1988). For example, Hu & Sundar (2010) emphasize that in order to initiate positive behavior changes, the source of communication is of high importance. Positive or negative attitudes toward the communicator and the provided information are likely to have a direct influence on the actual performance of health behavior.

Applied in the context of the present study, the Theory of Reasoned Action suggests that a favorable attitude toward the destination advertisement positively influences the intention to visit the endorsed holiday destination. This could ultimately lead to the end goal of most destination marketing campaigns, namely the actual performance of visiting. In the present study, it is expected that a positive attitude toward the destination advertisement enhances the intention to visit. Consequently, the following is hypothesized:

H5 Attitude positively influences the intention to visit a specific holiday destination.

2.8 Perceived credibility and intention to visit

It is common to include the perceived level of credibility because of its presumed impact on behavior (Van der Veen & Song, 2014). Research indicates that higher levels of perceived expertise have a positive impact on attitude change (Ohanian, 1990; Van der Land & Muntinga, 2014; Van der Land, Willemsen & Unkel, 2015; Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999). In line with the Theory of Reasoned Action, perceived expertise has been positively linked to behavioral intentions as well. For example, Woodside and Davenport (1974) found that expert salespersons were able to convince a significantly higher number of customers to purchase the product than non-expert salespersons. Furthermore, Lafferty and Goldsmith (1999) found that both endorser credibility and corporate credibility (i.e., the company's reputation) significantly influence consumers' attitude toward advertisements and attitude toward the brand. Additionally, corporate credibility appears to have a significant influence on purchase intentions. Within celebrity persuasion research, higher levels of perceived expertise have also been associated with more persuasiveness and higher purchase intentions (Ohanian, 1991;

Pornpitakpan, 2004). As prior research has repeatedly demonstrated that expertise and credibility are positively linked to attitude change and behavioral intentions, it is assumed that the endorser’s perceived credibility is positively linked to the intention to visit a specific holiday destination as well. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H6 Perceived credibility positively influences the intention to visit a specific holiday destination.

2.9 Conceptual model

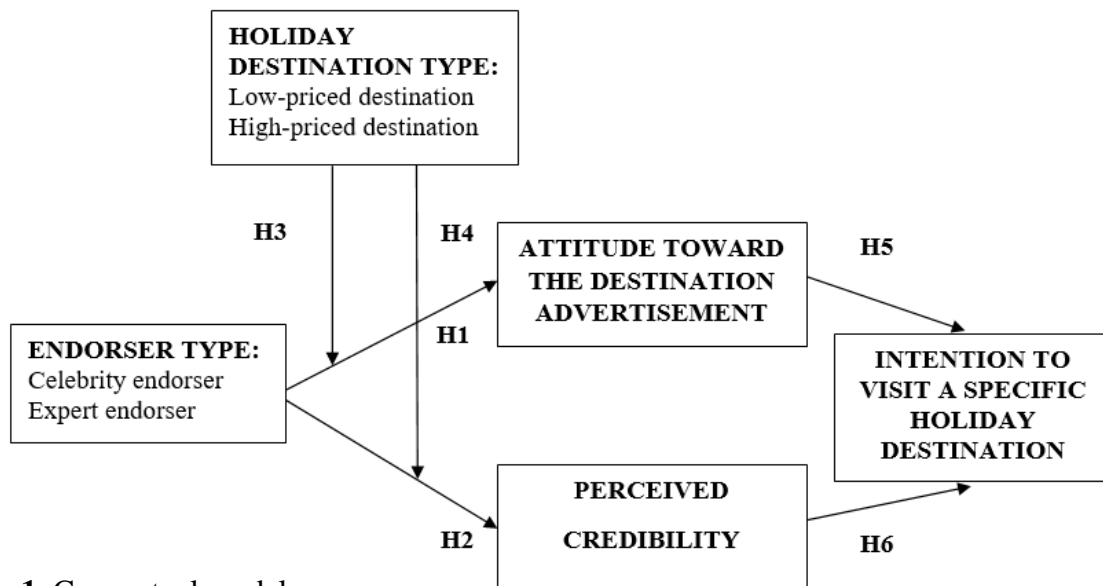


Figure 1. Conceptual model

This study will verify the aforementioned relations by means of an experimental study in which the several conditions and variables are manipulated and tested in an online survey. This will ultimately result in an attempt to answer the following research questions: “*How do celebrity and expert endorsements affect the intention to visit a specific holiday destination?*” and “*To what extent does destination type moderate the relationship between endorser type and the intention to visit a specific holiday destination?*”

The conceptual model visualizes how different endorser types affect the attitude toward the destination advertisement and the endorser’s perceived credibility, which finally results in the intention to visit a specific holiday destination. However, the extent to which an endorser type leads to favorable attitudes toward the destination advertisement and high perceived credibility levels is moderated by the holiday destination type. In sum, the conceptual model integrates the aforementioned theories and provides a theoretical answer to the research questions.

3. Method

In order to empirically test the differential effects of celebrity and expert endorsements on the intention to visit a specific holiday destination, an experimental study was set up in which participants evaluated different types of holiday destination advertisements via an online survey.

3.1 Sample

A total of 138 Dutch participants between 18 and 75 years old (80% female, $M_{\text{age}} = 36.57$, $SD = 15.57$) filled out the questionnaire. The minimum age for participating was set at 18 years old in order to exclude participants who do not represent financially independent potential tourists. There were no further restrictions in order to participate in the online survey.

Participants were recruited to participate in an online survey through email and social media (i.e., Facebook and WhatsApp). Consequently, the sampling method used for this research could best be described as a combination of two nonprobability sampling techniques, namely: convenience- and network or snowball sampling. Convenience sampling is based on the convenience to the researcher, indicating that participants were selected because of their accessibility and willingness to participate (Treadwell, 2014). A smaller part of the sample was collected via network or snowball sampling, which occurred when members of the researcher's network introduced other members of their network in order to complete the survey (Treadwell, 2014).

3.2 Design

Participants were assigned to a 2 (endorser type: celebrity versus expert endorser) x 2 (destination type: low-priced versus high-priced) between subject factorial design. For the experiment, four holiday destination advertisements were developed. Participants were exposed to only one advertisement representing one experimental condition. A quantitative approach was chosen because the particular strength of an experimental method is its potential to identify and isolate variables in order to test if and how they are related (Field, 2013). Assessing the influence of different independent and dependent variables and their implied causal relations fits the purpose of the present study and legitimizes the use of an experiment.

3.3 Pretest and development of the manipulation material

3.3.1 Selection of the holiday destinations

The holiday destination types needed to differ in terms of pricing (low-priced versus high-priced) in order to evoke different levels of involvement. To achieve this goal, it was decided to depict a luxury, expensive trip for the high-priced experimental condition and a nearby, short weekend trip for the low-priced experimental condition. Several websites of real existing travel agencies (i.e., TUI, D-reizen, KLM) were consulted for inspiration. Finally, it was decided to select a 5-star hotel situated in Sint Maarten for the luxury, expensive trip (i.e., Resort Sonesta Ocean Point View, €2822 p.p., ten days). This destination was chosen because Sint Maarten is an island in the Caribbean Sea and thus associated with an appealing, tropical environment which suits the luxury setting for this vacation. Furthermore, it was important that participants could imagine themselves going to this destination. Although relatively high-priced, it is not financially impossible for most people to book this specific holiday to Sint Maarten. For the low-priced experimental condition, a 2-star hotel situated in Bruges, Belgium was selected (i.e., Hotel Albert I Brugge, €134 p.p., four days). As all participants in this study are Dutch, Bruges is likely to be perceived as nearby. Both trips were found via travel company TUI.

3.3.2 Selection of the celebrity and expert endorser

An important decision to make was to select both a celebrity and an expert endorser who would match convincingly with the two holiday destination types. Applying the match-up hypothesis was considered important, as endorsed print advertisements for a destination are more persuasive when the properties of the endorser are in line with the endorsed destination (Van der Veen & Song, 2014). For the celebrity endorser, it was decided to select a well-known person in the Netherlands as the participants in this study are almost certain to have the Dutch nationality as well. In order to select an appropriate celebrity endorser for this study, a focus group of thirteen people was consulted. The researcher confronted them with a list of ten Dutch celebrities (i.e., five male and five female celebrities) which were selected beforehand. They were asked which celebrity endorser from the list they would choose as a convincing representative for a travel agency, promoting both high- and low-priced destinations (see appendix A for the list). The focus group yielded useful insights. In contrast to what was expected, many members of the focus group stated that they were not familiar with all the names on the list. According to these members, this was caused by the fact that

they did not watch Dutch television on a frequent basis. Eventually, it was decided that Johnny de Mol should represent both holiday destination types. Important arguments for this choice were based on the assumption that Johnny de Mol is liked and known by a large Dutch audience (all focus group members indicated that they were familiar with him). In addition, results of the focus group showed that he matches convincingly with both destination types.

During the selection process of the expert endorser, it was decided to portray only male endorsers to avoid the influence of gender differences between both endorser types. As prior studies have repeatedly demonstrated that visual cues related to someone's appearance evoke different impressions (Martin & Gardner, 1979; Creekmore 1980; Forsythe, 1990; Van der Land & Muntinga, 2014; Van der Land et al., 2015, 2016), it was tried to select an expert endorser that looked relatively similar to the celebrity endorser in terms of attractiveness. Moreover, both the expert and celebrity endorser needed to be comparable in terms of, for example, smiling, eye-contact and clothing. This precaution prevented to some extent that different impressions of the endorsers would have been mainly caused by differences in appearance between the endorser types. With these conditions in mind, the search for an appropriate expert endorser was continued and completed by deriving a photograph from the website Shutterstock (<http://www.shutterstock.com/>). Finally, to ensure that the expert endorser was recognized as such, the expert's function (i.e., 'travel-expert') was explicitly mentioned in the holiday destination advertisement and related to a fictional travel agency.

3.3.3 Final construction of the holiday destination advertisement

After selecting the two endorser types and holiday destinations, the overall design of the holiday destination advertisement was taken into account. In order to create realistic advertisements, several theoretical and practical precautions were made.

Research on tourism advertising and destination marketing was consulted in order to determine which stimuli needed to be included in the advertisements. Tourism research suggests that effective tourism marketing is impossible without an understanding of consumer's motivation (Goossens, 2000; Fodness, 1994). Tourists' motivations are strongly linked to emotional and experiential needs such as escape, exploration and relaxation (Goossens, 2000; Min, Martin & Jung, 2013). It is assumed that these needs are triggered and reinforced during the information processing stage, which is why marketing stimuli often represent desirable destination attributes such as a warm climate, friendly natives and an appealing scenery (Goossens, 2000; Van der Veen, 2008). However, the tourists' decision

process is not solely based on emotions as the destination's decision process requires some rational involvement and cognitive processing as well. Utilitarian and practical information about the destination is relevant for tourists in order to make the best choice among competing alternatives (Min et al., 2013; Goossens, 2000). In line with these readings, it was decided to fulfil experiential and informational needs by including both visual and textual stimuli.

To ensure that the holiday destination advertisements were manipulated only in terms of endorser- and holiday destination type, it was tried to keep the general design of the four different advertisements identical (see figure 2). A graphical designer used the software programs Adobe Photoshop and InDesign to create realistic advertisements. To determine whether the advertisements for the experiment were also perceived as realistic, five students judged the final versions. Fortunately, their statements confirmed that the advertisements had a realistic and professional appearance. Finally, it was decided to create a fictional travel agency (i.e., 'TravelDeal') to avoid the possibility that participants were influenced or biased because of their positive or negative experiences with existing travel agencies in the past. The first versions of the manipulation material are shown in appendix B.



Figure 2. Stimuli featuring the celebrity endorser (first version)

3.3.4 Quantitative pretest

A quantitative pretest ($N = 20$) was conducted in order to test whether the manipulation material evoked the intended effects. This quantitative pretest was carried out by means of an online survey in which participants answered questions about the holiday destination advertisements. It should be noted beforehand that the sample size was too small to assess whether differences between the samples were significant (Field, 2013). Conclusions about the pretest are derived from the descriptive statistics, which gave a first impression about the initial effects of the materials.

First, it was expected that both endorser types (i.e., the celebrity and expert endorser) resulted to some extent in different values for mainly attitude toward the advertisement and perceived credibility, which were both measured on seven-point semantic differential scales. Unfortunately, there were minimal differences between both endorser types. Participants ($n = 11$) who were exposed to the celebrity endorser ($M = 4.70$, $SD = 1.29$) had almost the same attitude toward the advertisements compared to participants ($n = 9$) who were exposed to the expert endorser ($M = 4.55$, $SD = 1.14$). The same was true for the perceived credibility construct. Participants found the celebrity endorser ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 0.85$) almost just as credible as the expert endorser ($M = 4.81$, $SD = 1.49$). It is possible that participants do not, or hardly take, the endorser into account when they are asked to indicate their overall attitude toward the advertisement. In such a scenario, it is irrelevant for the participants whether an expert or celebrity endorser is used. With regard to perceived credibility: It might be the case that participants truly perceive Johnny de Mol as a credible person, which explains why the results showed that he is just as credible as the expert endorser.

Secondly, prior to the pretest, there were some concerns that the person who was initially selected as ‘the expert endorser’ (i.e., expert type 1), was too young and likeable to be convincingly perceived as an expert. Therefore, it was decided to include a second, older person as ‘the expert endorser’ (i.e., expert type 2) in the pretest in order to verify whether this person indeed would lead to more different results. The two expert types are presented in figure 3. Although it is difficult to draw harsh conclusions based on the nine participants who were exposed to either one of the expert endorser types, the results did indicate that expert type 1 ($M = 4.4$, $SD = 1.74$) was perceived as less credible than expert type 2 ($M = 5.32$, $SD = 1.13$). This result supports the use of the second expert type in the final questionnaire version.

Finally, there were two manipulation checks included to test whether the celebrity endorser and destination types were well chosen. All participants ($n = 11$) who were exposed to the conditions in which the celebrity ‘Johnny de Mol’ was shown, indicated that they were familiar with him. This finding strengthens the assumption that Johnny de Mol is a widely recognized celebrity in the Netherlands. In addition, it was important to verify whether the different destination types (i.e., St. Maarten and Bruges) were indeed perceived as high-priced and low-priced. Participants indicated on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= strongly disagree) to 7 (= strongly agree) whether they found the holiday destination economical. As expected, Sint Maarten ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 2.09$) was found to be less economical than Bruges ($M = 5.11$, $SD = 1.54$). This difference was expected and points in the right direction.

However, the results also indicated that participants somewhat disagreed when answering questions about the price mentioned in the Sint Maarten advertisement (i.e., €2822 for ten days). Participants were not quite convinced that the holiday destination “is priced correctly” ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 1.58$) and “a good product for the price” ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.70$). In addition, one participant explained that she found the advertisement’s appearance not luxury at all but more “mainstream”. Her expectations about a luxury holiday did not match with what she saw in the Sint Maarten advertisement. Due to these findings, it was decided to adjust the Sint Maarten advertisement in order to make the luxury characteristics of the presented holiday more visually salient. Instead of solely showing a tropical environment by emphasizing the sea and the beach in the advertisement, a swimming pool was added in combination with a photo of a luxury hotel room. The final versions of the advertisements are shown in appendix C.



Expert 1.

Expert 2.

Figure 3. The two expert endorser types used in the pretest

3.4 Procedure

Participants were led to a Qualtrics survey website after having clicked on the online link. All participants were welcomed, followed by a brief explanation of the purpose of the study and general information. If the participants agreed to the terms, they were able to proceed with the questionnaire. Thereafter, participants were randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions (e.g., celebrity versus expert endorser in combination with one of the holiday destination types). Dependent on the experimental condition, the survey started by asking the participants to imagine they were making plans for either a short, nearby city-trip

or a more luxury holiday abroad. Participants were exposed to one holiday destination advertisement for at least ten seconds, after which the questionnaire could be continued.

3.5 Measures

This research used validated scales for measurement. The questions were developed in order to assess the successfulness of the manipulation material (i.e., endorser and holiday destination type), and to measure attitudes toward the holiday destination advertisements, the endorser's perceived credibility and the intention to visit a specific holiday destination. Questions were asked on seven-point Likert scales ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' or from 'not very likely' to 'very likely' or with semantic differentials. See appendix E for the rotated varimax factor loadings per variable and eigenvalues.

The present study included several manipulation checks in relation to the endorser and destination types. First, participants were asked if they were familiar with the celebrity endorser (i.e., Johnny de Mol) to ensure that they properly processed the manipulations. A total number of 64 participants confirmed that they were familiar with the celebrity endorser and were kept in the analysis. Participants who could not correctly identify the celebrity endorser ($n = 3$) were excluded from the sample.

In addition, it was tested at the beginning of the questionnaire whether the selected holiday destinations were indeed perceived as low-priced and high-priced. Four items were constructed to measure the participants' perception toward the holiday destinations' pricing. For instance: "This holiday destination is economical". The items were inspired and partly derived from literature in which the consumer's perceived value on consumer goods (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001) and the impact of the destination product on traveler perceptions (Murphy, Pritchard & Smith, 2000) was measured. Especially the items related to 'functional value' (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001) and 'trip value' (Murphy et al., 2000) were relevant in this context as these provide information about the relationship between the travel product and perceptions of value that are drawn from a personal cost/benefit assessment. Besides measuring the functional value of the destinations, the emotional value (i.e., feelings or affective states that a destination generates) was also taken into account with four items to ensure that the chosen destinations evoked positive feelings among a large part of the sample (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Participants evaluated all items using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= strongly disagree) to 7 (= strongly agree). Both the scales for 'functional value' and 'emotional value' were shown to be reliable (Cronbach's alpha = .88, = .92).

Attitude toward the holiday destination advertisement was assessed by including both

cognitive and affective components. The advertising context (e.g., a holiday destination) can prime or activate both cognitive and affective reactions to participants (Van der Veen & Song, 2010; Yi, 1990). The cognitive reaction is derived from the interpretation of information presented in the ad (e.g., holiday destination type) whereas affective reactions relate to the overall positive and negative feelings an advertising context is able to evoke (Yi, 1990). Participants were asked to rate their “overall attitude toward the holiday destination advertisement” using a seven-point semantic differential scale format. The cognitive component was measured by five items: unpersuasive-persuasive, uninformative-informative, unbelievable-believable, ineffective-effective, unconvincing-convincing (Van der Veen & Song, 2010). The affective component was measured by five items as well, which were all frequently used and highly similar to items used in prior studies: bad-good, unappealing-appealing, not-irritating-irritating, unlikable-likable, unpleasant-pleasant (Van der Veen & Song, 2010; Klaus, 2008; Mackenzie & Lutz, 1989; Yi, 1990). Both the attitude scales were reliable (Cronbach’s alpha = .87, = .91). The overall attitude scale, consisting of ten items in total, was reliable as well (Cronbach’s alpha = .93), with an eigenvalue exceeding 1 (= 6.29).

Ohanian’s (1990) seven-point semantic differential scale was used to measure the perceived credibility of both the celebrity and expert endorser. The scale consisted of fifteen items in total, five for each of the three sub-dimensions (i.e., attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise). The reliability of the scales was good (Cronbach’s alpha = .92, = .92, = .95). The perceived credibility construct as a whole was also found to be reliable (Cronbach’s alpha = .92). Additionally, the principal component analysis revealed the presence of three components with an eigenvalue exceeding 1 (eigenvalue = 1.59).

The outcome variable for this study is the intention to visit a specific holiday destination, which is often the ultimate goal for destination marketing organizations. Measurement for this variable was based on a two-item rating scale adopted from Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). The first item measured the likeliness to consider a visit to the portrayed destination in the advertisement (“If you were looking for a holiday within this price range, to what extent would you have considered this destination?”). The second item measured the probability that the intended behavior would be performed if particular imaginable constraints were absent (“If you would have the time and the financial means, to what extent would you be interested in visiting the portrayed destination in the next three months?”). Both questions were answered using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (= not very likely) to 7 (= very likely). The reliability analysis showed a sufficient, but certainly not great reliability of the scale (Cronbach’s alpha = .65).

4. Results

4.1 Control variables

It was investigated whether the control variables had any influence on the intention to visit a specific holiday destination. The included control variables in this study were *gender*, *education level*, *income level* and *holiday frequency*.

Results showed that women ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 1.67$) have a higher intention to visit the destination than men ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 1.25$). An independent samples t-test indicated that the participant's gender was of significant influence on the intention to visit a specific destination $M_{difference} = -.58$, $t(136) = -2.00$, $p = .048$, BCa 95% CI [-1.18, -.03]. However, it has to be noted that there was an unequal gender distribution in this study, and that far more women ($n = 111$) than men ($n = 27$) participated. Therefore, the p -value may be somewhat biased. In addition, several one-way ANOVA's were performed to assess the influence of the other three control variables. However, the results showed that none of the other aforementioned control variables had a significant influence on the intention to visit, $F_{education\ level}(5, 132) = 2.18$, $p = .06$, *Welch's* $F_{income\ level}(3, 32.23) = 1.67$, $p = .19$, $F_{holiday\ frequency}(4, 133) = .60$, $p = .66$.

4.2 Manipulation checks

To test whether the manipulation of a high-priced destination versus a low-priced destination was indeed recognized by the respondents as such, an independent samples t-test was performed. The two groups were compared on the dependent variable *functional value*, as this construct included items about the holiday destination's pricing. In general, participants perceived the price of the high-priced destination ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 1.18$) as more expensive than the price for the low-priced destination ($M = 4.83$, $SD = 1.10$). This difference was significant $M_{difference} = 1.50$, $t(136) = 7.71$, $p < .001$, BCa 95% CI [1.11, 1.92], $r = .55$. These findings indicate that the manipulation of a high-priced versus a low-priced destination was successful.

Additionally, it was checked whether the celebrity and the expert endorser were perceived as equally attractive. The physical attractiveness of (professional) communicators is known to have an influence on several dependent measures (Van der Land, Willemsen & Wilton, 2016). An independent samples t-test was performed to compare the two groups of different participants that were exposed to one of the endorser types. For this test, the dependent variable *attractiveness* was used, which is one of the three sub-dimensions of Ohanian's perceived credibility construct (1990, 1991). Participants perceived the expert

endorser ($M = 4.58, SD = 1.02$) as significantly more attractive than the celebrity endorser ($M = 4.01, SD = 1.14$), $M_{difference} = .57, t(136) = 3.13, p = .002, 95\% CI [.23, .95], r = .26$.

However, the celebrity and the expert endorser did not result in significant differences with regard to *trustworthiness*, *expertise* or *perceived credibility* in general. For an overview of all the means and standard deviations for the different conditions, see Table 1.

Table 1
Means and standard deviations of variables per condition.

<i>Destination type</i>	<i>Low-priced destination</i>				<i>High-priced destination</i>			
	<i>Expert endorser (n = 38)</i>		<i>Celebrity endorser (n = 32)</i>		<i>Expert endorser (n = 36)</i>		<i>Celebrity endorser (n = 32)</i>	
<i>Endorser type</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Functional value</i>	4.86 ^a	1.12	4.79 ^a	1.10	3.25 ^b	1.17	3.41 ^b	1.20
<i>Emotional value</i>	5.11	1.05	4.98 ^a	1.11	5.78 ^b	1.01	5.55	1.19
<i>Cognitive attitude</i>	4.54	.98	4.38	1.19	4.52	1.14	4.20	1.36
<i>Affective attitude</i>	4.47	1.12	4.24	1.21	4.78	1.20	4.61	1.32
<i>Attitude</i>	4.51	.98	4.31	1.13	4.65	1.12	4.41	1.30
<i>Attractiveness</i>	4.45 ^a	1.02	3.71 ^{ab}	1.07	4.72 ^b	1.01	4.30	1.15
<i>Trustworthiness</i>	4.64	.84	4.64	1.07	4.62	.96	4.88	1.19
<i>Expertise</i>	3.99	.85	4.21	1.13	4.03	1.02	4.52	1.17
<i>Perceived Credibility</i>	4.36	.72	4.19	.88	4.46	.84	4.57	.92
<i>Intention to visit</i>	4.43	1.53	4.13	1.86	4.74	1.26	4.53	1.79

Note. Standard deviations between parantheses. Different superscripts within rows relate to significant differences conditions, $p < .05$, two-tailed.

4.3 Mediation

In order to test whether attitude toward the advertisement and perceived credibility mediate the relationship between endorser type and intention to visit, the four criteria for mediation as proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986) have to be met. This approach has been very influential and frequently used in scientific papers (Field, 2013). When this approach is applied to the present study, mediation is present when the following conditions are met: (1) *endorser type* must significantly predict *the intention to visit*; (2) *endorser type* must significantly predict the mediating variables *attitude toward the advertisement* and *perceived credibility*; (3) The mediating variables *attitude toward the advertisement* and *perceived credibility* must significantly predict *the intention to visit*; (4) *endorser type* must predict *the intention to visit* less strongly when the mediating variables are involved (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Field, 2013).

The first criterion assumes that participants who were exposed to the celebrity endorser differed significantly on the intention to visit compared to participants who were exposed to the expert endorser. An independent samples t-test was performed with *endorser type* as the independent variable and *the intention to visit* as the dependent variable. The results showed that there was no significant difference between the variables, $M_{\text{difference}} = .25$, $t(117.47) = .90$, $p = .37$, 95% CI [-.30, .81]. Based on this result, it can be concluded that the first condition as formulated by Baron and Kenny (1986) was not met and therefore it is not possible to speak of full mediation. However, in order to answer all the hypotheses, additional analyses were conducted. The criteria of Baron and Kenny will be further addressed when applicable.

4.4 Hypothesis testing

In this section, the influence of the mediating and moderating relationships will be further discussed and explained for each hypothesis separately. The mediating variables are *the attitude toward the advertisement* and *perceived credibility*. The moderating variable is *holiday destination type*. The hypotheses will be tested in chronological order, as presented in the theoretical framework. They will be tested by conducting two independent samples t-tests, two two-way ANOVA's and two linear regressions.

4.4.1 Endorser type, attitude and perceived credibility

The first hypothesis (H1) posed that a celebrity endorser leads to more positive attitudes toward the advertisement than an expert endorser. An independent samples t-test was

performed to test for this relationship as the scores of two groups (i.e., groups exposed to either the celebrity or expert endorser) consisting of different participants were compared on a certain dependent variable (i.e., attitude toward the advertisement). The results of the test showed that the differences between the groups were not significant, $M_{\text{difference}} = .26$, $t(136) = 1.14$, $p = .26$, 95% CI [-.16, .60]. It can be concluded that H1 is not supported.

The second hypothesis (H2) posed that an expert endorser is perceived as more credible than a celebrity endorser. Again, an independent samples t-test was performed because two different groups of participants were exposed to either the celebrity or expert endorser and compared on a certain dependent variable (i.e., perceived credibility). The results indicated that the differences between the groups were not significant, $M_{\text{difference}} = .03$, $t(136) = .22$, $p = .82$, 95% CI [-.25, .32]. In sum, there is no support for the hypothesis that an expert endorser is perceived as more credible than a celebrity endorser. By rejecting the first two hypotheses, it can additionally be concluded that the second criteria as proposed by Baron & Kenny (1986) was not met either.

4.4.2 Destination type, attitude and perceived credibility

The third hypothesis (H3) posed that a celebrity endorser would lead to more positive attitudes toward the advertisement than an expert endorser, but only for the low-priced destination advertisement. To test this hypothesis, a two-way ANOVA was performed to explore the interaction effect of destination type and endorser type on the attitude toward the advertisement. The ANOVA showed that there were no significant main effects for endorser type $F(1, 134) = 1.66$, $p = .26$, $\eta^2 = .01$ and destination type $F(1, 134) = .48$, $p = .54$, $\eta^2 = .003$. Finally, there appeared to be no interaction effect between endorser type and destination type $F(1, 134) = .01$, $p = .91$, $\eta^2 < .001$. Destination type did not moderate the relationship between endorser type and the participant's attitude toward the advertisement. Due to these results, H3 is rejected.

Hypothesis 4 (H4) posed that an expert endorser would be perceived as more credible than a celebrity endorser, particularly for the high-priced destination advertisement. To test this hypothesis, a two-way ANOVA was performed to explore the interaction effect of endorser type and destination type on perceived credibility. The ANOVA showed that there were no significant main effects for endorser type $F(1, 134) = .05$, $p = .82$, $\eta^2 < .001$ and destination type $F(1, 134) = 2.79$, $p = .097$, $\eta^2 = .02$. Finally, there appeared to be no interaction effect between endorser type and destination type $F(1, 134) = .10$, $p = .32$, $\eta^2 <$

.01. Destination type did not moderate the relationship between endorser type and perceived credibility. Thus, H4 is not confirmed.

4.4.3 Attitude, perceived credibility and intention to visit

The fifth and six hypothesis posed that both attitude (H5) and the perceived credibility (H6) would positively influence the intention to visit a specific holiday destination. In order to test H5 and H6, two linear regression analyses were conducted.

The first linear regression analysis investigated the relationship between a person's attitude toward the advertisement and their intention to visit a specific holiday destination. The regression analysis with *attitude toward the advertisement* as the predictor and *intention to visit* as the outcome variable showed that a person's attitude toward the advertisement did significantly predict their intention to visit $b = .77, \beta = .54, t(136) = 7.42, p < .001$. The model explains 29% of the variance in intention to visit $R^2 = .29, F(1, 136) = 55.04, p < .001$. Several analyses ensured no violations of the assumptions of normality, linearity, independent errors and homoscedasticity. The model thus seems to generalize well to the population and can substantiate the relationship between a person's attitude toward the advertisement and their intention to visit a specific holiday destination. Therefore, H5 is confirmed.

Additionally, a second linear regression was conducted in order to investigate the relationship between perceived credibility and intention to visit. The regression analysis with *perceived credibility* as the predictor variable and *intention to visit* as the outcome variable indicated that the endorser's perceived credibility did significantly predict a person's intention to visit $b = .32, \beta = .17, t(136) = 2.00, p = .048$. The model explains 3% of the variance in intention to visit $R^2 = .03, F(1, 136) = 3.99, p = .048$. However, further exploration of the data questioned the generalizability of the model as the assumption of normality was not met. Consequently, bootstrapping was performed to assess whether the model was sensitive to any violations of assumptions. The bootstrapped coefficients showed quite similar results as the previous analysis $b = .32, p = .058, \text{BCa } 95\% \text{ CI } [.01, .67]$.

Normally, a value of $p = .058$ indicates that the results are not significant. However, as H6 is a directional hypothesis and thus a one-tailed test, the p-value would be half of the two-tailed value ($p = .029$). This one-tailed value would be significant at a conventional level (Field, 2013, p. 67). Furthermore, the bootstrapped 95% confidence interval did not cross zero, indicating that the model generalizes to the population. In sum, it can be concluded that H6 is confirmed. Lastly, as both H5 and H6 were accepted, it can additionally be concluded

that the third criterion of Baron & Kenny (1986) was met.

The remaining criterion of Baron & Kenny (1986) that has not been investigated yet is the fourth condition: *endorser type* must predict *the intention to visit* less strongly when the mediating variables are involved. Several regression analyses were conducted to test for these relationships. When controlling for *the attitude toward the advertisement*, the effect of the independent on the dependent variable did reduce from $p = .359$ to $p = .715$. With regard to *perceived expertise*, the significance level reduced from $p = .359$ to $p = .374$. These results indicated no clear change in significance which would occur when full mediation was present (Field, 2013). Thus, with regard to the four conditions of Baron & Kenny (1986), only the third condition was met and therefore neither partial nor full mediation was present.

To conclude, the results have not confirmed that attitude toward the advertisement and the perceived credibility mediated the relationship between endorser type and the intention to visit. In addition, holiday destination type had no moderating effect on the relationship between endorser type and attitude toward the advertisement, or on the relationship between endorser type and the endorser’s perceived credibility. However, attitude toward the advertisement and the perceived credibility did predict the intention to visit a specific holiday destination. For an overview of the significant relationships, see figure 4.

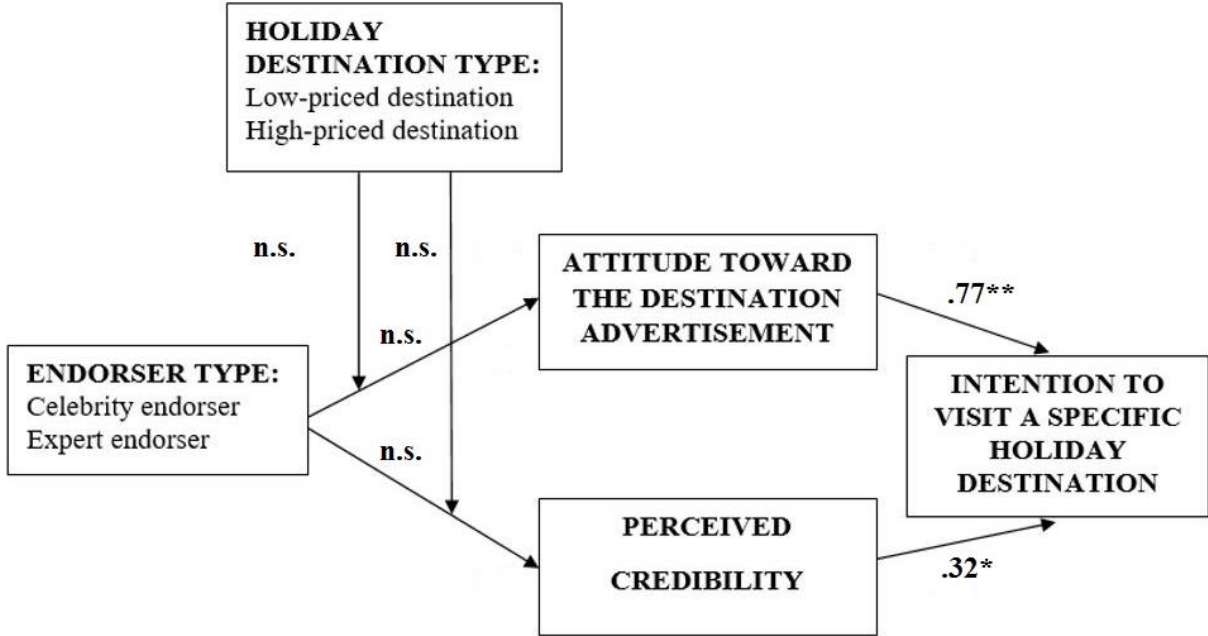


Figure 4. Conceptual model with significant relations

Note: * significance on .05 level
 ** significance on .001 level

4.5 Mediation and moderation using the PROCESS command

According to Field (2013), moderation and mediation analyses can be performed best using the PROCESS command written by Andrew Hayes (2013). In addition to the previously conducted individual analyses, it was therefore decided to test the whole conceptual model at once using the PROCESS tool in SPSS (model 8 with bootstrap 5000).

In the PROCESS model, specific letters and numbers represent the variables and relationships. The independent variable *endorser type* is indicated with X whereas Y stands for the dependent variable *intention to visit*. The mediators M1 and M2 are respectively *attitude toward the advertisement* and *perceived credibility*. The moderator *destination type* is known as W. Lastly, XW shows whether there is an interaction effect between *endorser type* and *destination type*. The results of the analyses are shown in table 2 and figure 5.

Table 2
Mediation and moderation using PROCESS macro (model 8 with bootstrap 5000).

	M_1			M_2			Y			
	(Attitude toward the advertisement)			(Perceived credibility)			(Intention to visit)			
	b	SE	p	b	SE	p	b	SE	p	
X (endorser type)	-.22	.19	.27	-.04	.15	.81	-.07	.24	.76	
	$a_{1,1}$			$a_{2,1}$			c_1'			
M_1 (attitude toward the advertisement)	---	---	---	---	---	---	b_1	.90	.12	<.001
M_2 (perceived credibility)	---	---	---	---	---	---	b_2	-.35	.17	.05
W (destination type)	.12	.20	.54	.22	.14	.12	c_2'	.32	.24	.18
	$a_{1,2}$			$a_{2,2}$						
XW	-.04	.40	.91	-.29	.29	.33	c_3'	.24	.48	.61
	$a_{1,3}$			$a_{2,3}$						
Constant	4.47	.10	<.001	4.39	.07	<.001		1.97	.81	.02
	$R^2 = .01$			$R^2 = .03$			$R^2 = .32$			
	$F(3, 143) = .55, p = .65$			$F(3, 143) = 1.03, p = .38$			$F(5, 132) = 11.76, p < .001$			

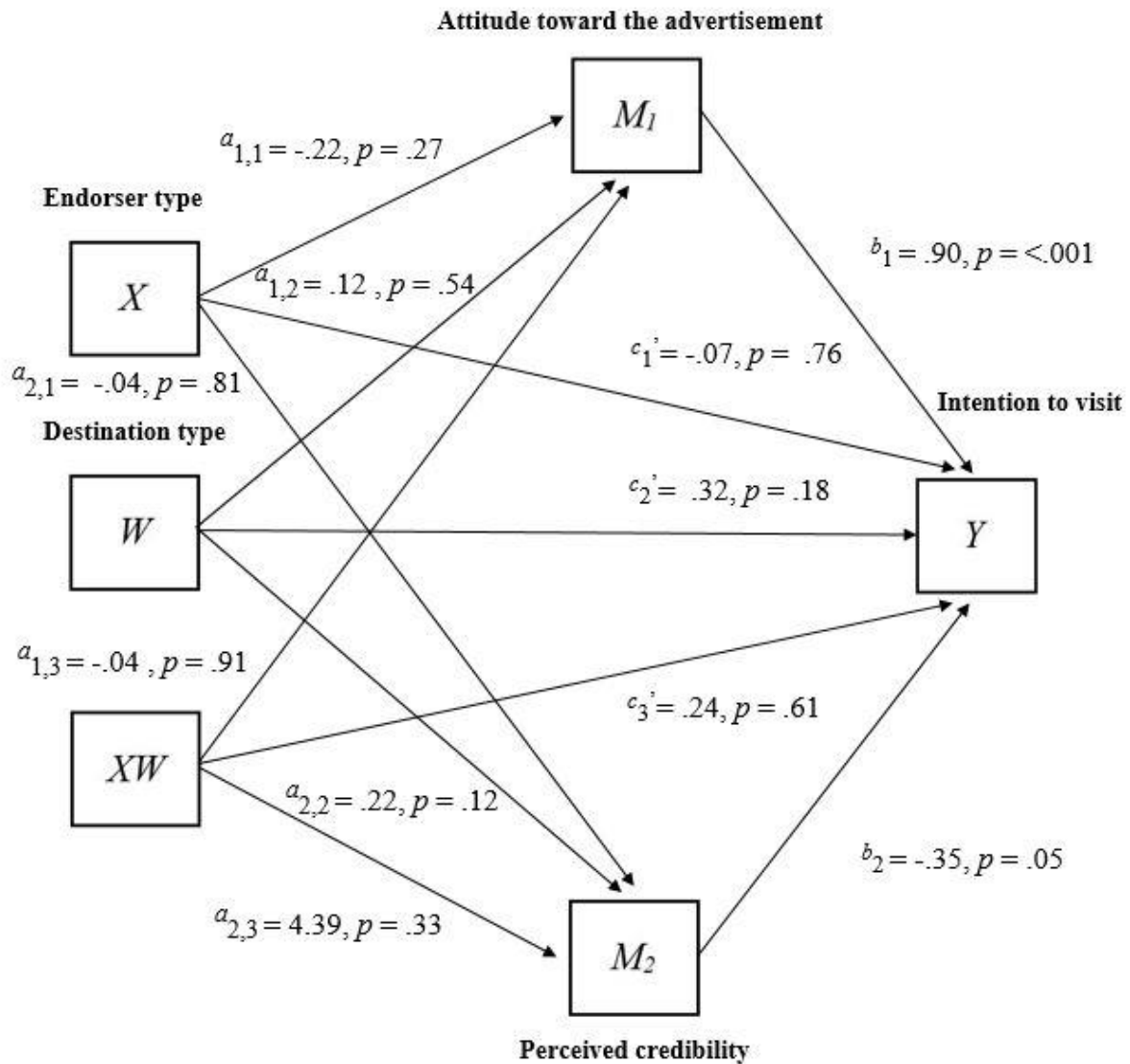


Figure 5. Conditional process model

After using Hayes' PROCESS method (2013), the results demonstrated that there was a significant relationship between attitude toward the advertisement (M1) and intention to visit (Y), $b = .90$, 95% CI [.66, 1.13]. Furthermore, there was a significant relationship between perceived credibility (M2) and intention to visit (Y), $b = -.35$, 95% CI [-.69, -.00]. Again, no support was found to indicate the further presence of any mediating and/or moderating effects. It can be concluded that the results are in line with the previously conducted individual analyses and the results of the Baron & Kenny (1986) approach.

5. General discussion

The aim of the present study was to answer the following research questions: “*How do celebrity and expert endorsements affect the intention to visit a specific holiday destination?*” and “*To what extent does destination type moderate the relationship between endorser type and the intention to visit a specific holiday destination?*” Answers to these research questions were obtained by conducting a 2 (endorser type: celebrity versus expert endorser) x 2 (destination type: low-priced versus high-priced) between subject factorial design. The following subsections will elaborate on the hypotheses and unexpected outcomes. Furthermore, the theoretical and practical implications of the present study will be discussed, followed by its limitations and suggestions for future research. This chapter ends with a final conclusion to summarize the present study.

5.1 Discussion

The first hypothesis (H1) posed that a celebrity endorser would lead to more favorable attitudes toward the advertisement than an expert endorser. However, the findings indicated that this hypothesis was not confirmed. The celebrity endorser used in the present study (i.e., Johnny de Mol) did not lead to more favorable attitudes toward the holiday destination advertisement than the unknown expert endorser.

It was expected in the second hypothesis (H2) that an expert endorser would be perceived as more credible than a celebrity endorser. However, the data showed that the small differences on perceived credibility between both endorser types were not significant. Consequently, there was no support for the assumption that an expert endorser is perceived as more credible than a celebrity endorser.

The third and fourth hypotheses posed that destination type would moderate the relationship between endorser type and attitude toward the advertisement (H3) and the relationship between endorser type and perceived credibility (H4). In contrast to what was expected, the results showed that there were no interaction effects for any of the aforementioned variables, and therefore H3 and H4 were rejected.

The last two hypotheses (H5 and H6) stated that both the attitude toward the advertisement and perceived credibility would have a positive influence on the intention to visit a specific holiday destination. These assumptions were accepted by the results. A person’s attitude toward the holiday destination advertisement and the extent to which an endorser featuring in the advertisement is perceived as credible, do play a significant role on

the intention to visit.

The present study led to a few unexpected and/or surprising findings. First, this research aimed to show that the use of celebrity and expert endorsers in advertisements would lead to differential effects, especially with regard to the attitude toward the advertisement and the endorser's perceived credibility. In contrast to all expectations, the data were unable to show significant differences between the two endorser types in this context. The absence of these differential effects implies that in the present study, the participants perceived the type of endorser depicted in the holiday destination advertisements to be irrelevant.

A possible explanation could be that for intangible, affective products such as holiday destinations, the destination's characteristics in the advertisement are perceived as more important than the human endorser (Van der Veen, 2008; Glover, 2009). Consequently, neither the celebrity nor the expert in the advertisement had a significant influence on the participant's attitude toward the advertisement. This is also why celebrity endorsers are not always perceived as an appropriate destination marketing instrument as they may not change the attributes of the destination (Van der Veen, 2008). Celebrities are mainly selected and used in marketing campaigns for their familiarity, appeal and perceived credibility in the eyes of the public (Van der Veen 2008 & Glover, 2009). The potential of celebrity and expert endorsement lies therefore in the expectation that they will support the destination's image, even though this expectation cannot always be completely guaranteed (Glover, 2009).

Furthermore, there were no significant differences between the two endorser types in terms of perceived credibility. Although both celebrities and experts possess source factors that are highly linked to perceived credibility, it was still expected that the expert endorser would surpass the celebrity in this context (Willemsen et al., 2011; Keel & Natarajaan, 2012; Hu & Sundar, 2010; Kniesel et al., 2014). However, the results showed otherwise. It could be that participants truly perceived Johnny de Mol as a credible person, which explains why he had almost the same credibility scores as the expert endorser. Additionally, as these findings are based on the direct comparison of only two male endorser types, they cannot be generalized to other celebrities as well. Thus, it cannot be ruled out that the choice for a different celebrity endorser would have led to greater and more significant results.

Secondly, the control checks indicated that the expert endorser was perceived as significantly more attractive than the celebrity endorser. This finding was surprising, as it would be more logical to expect the reverse outcome in this context, namely: because the celebrity endorser is already known and liked by a great audience, people are more inclined to rate the celebrity endorser as more attractive compared to a person they have never seen

before. Attractiveness in the present study was measured conform Ohanian's sub-dimension of attractiveness (1990), and should therefore be interpreted as 'physical attractiveness'.

This research did not intend to make the expert endorser more attractive than the celebrity endorser. On the contrary, it was explained in the method section that an attempt was made to avoid clear differences between both endorser types in terms of attractiveness. Thus, for example, both men smiled, made eye-contact and had a beard. The endorsers only clearly differed in terms of public familiarity and age. There are multiple studies to be found that have investigated the effect of age or aging on attractiveness (Teuscher, 2007; Sontag, 1972; Deutsch, Zalenski & Clark, 1986). The "double standard of aging" hypothesis, as proposed by Sontag (1972), states that older men are perceived as more attractive compared to older women. With increasing age, men's sexual desirability is thought to increase as well as aging is often associated with intelligence, fame, money and power (Deutsch et al., 1986; Sontag, 1979). It is therefore a possibility that the women in the current sample judged the expert endorser in a similar way, and found him more attractive than his younger counterpart.

Although Johnny de Mol was perceived as less physical attractive than the unknown expert endorser, this perception had no significant influence on the other two components of the perceived credibility construct: trustworthiness and expertise. This is not in line with Ohanian's perception (1990) that attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise are intertwined and positively related to each other as sub-dimensions of the perceived credibility construct. This issue will be further addressed as a suggestion for future research in section 5.3.

5.2 Theoretical and practical implications

This study contributes to existing research in the following ways. First, to date, there are not that many studies that make a direct comparison between expert and celebrity endorsements within a single study. This research gap is quite surprising as the origins of celebrity endorsement date back to the second half of the nineteenth century (Keel & Natarajan, 2012). For unclear reasons, it is far more common in endorsement research to focus on only one endorsement type. The present study made an attempt to fill this research gap by analyzing the potential differences between two endorser types in one experimental study.

Although there is much more variation in prior studies with regard to the products that celebrities and experts are endorsing, most of them are still centered around search products. It is questionable whether the outcomes of these studies can be applied to other types of products as well. Thus, the second contribution of the present study is its focus on holiday destinations, which are categorized as 'intangible' or 'experience' products and therefore

quite different from search goods (Van der Veen, 2008, Willemsen et al., 2011).

In relation to this, the present study made an attempt to apply the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty et al., 1983) on different holiday destination and endorser types. The assumption that holidays should be categorized and treated as high-involvement products (Van der Veen, 2008) was challenged by including two holiday destination types in the experimental conditions, reflecting different levels of involvement (i.e., high versus low). In addition, it was argued that besides the holiday destinations, the endorser types are also processed via the central and/or peripheral information processing routes (Petty et al., 1983).

It should be noted that holiday destinations are not unique in the context of celebrity persuasion research. The present study mentioned several studies in which the potential effectiveness of celebrity endorsers as a destination marketing instrument was the main topic under discussion (Van der Veen, 2008; Van der Veen & Song, 2010; Van der Veen & Song, 2014). The results of these studies showed that the effects of celebrity endorsers in holiday destination advertisements are difficult to comprehend. There seems to be consensus about the inference that celebrity endorsers lead to more favorable attitudes toward the advertisement compared to non-endorsed advertisements (Van der Veen, 2008 & Van der Veen & Song, 2014). However, there is no clear empirical evidence to suggest that the use of celebrities in advertisements directly affects behavioral intentions (Van der Veen & Song, 2014). The present study was unable to support the notion that celebrities lead to more favorable attitudes toward the advertisement and neither that they influence the intention to visit a destination.

In contrast to celebrities, it was challenging to find empirical studies in which the use of expert endorsers was centralized in a tourism context. A lot of background knowledge on expert endorsements presented in this study has therefore mainly been derived from scientific findings related to other product categories. To our knowledge, the present study is the first to make a direct comparison between celebrity and expert endorsements within a single study in the context of holiday destination marketing, especially in the Netherlands.

This research also contains several practical implications. It is and always has been a primary goal of marketers to increase the effectiveness of advertising campaigns. Both celebrities and experts have been frequently used as a means to achieve this goal. It is relevant to know for marketers, and especially for destination marketers, whether the use of endorsers in holiday destination advertisements is effective in general. The present study found no evidence to suggest that celebrities are more effective in creating positive attitudes toward the advertisement than experts. The same is true for experts. Thus, it can be questioned whether the use of endorsers in holiday destination advertisements should not be avoided in the first

place. Although it can be argued that especially celebrity endorsers are capable of drawing attention to the advertisement, the destination primarily has to sell itself in the end (Van der Veen, 2008). Especially under high-involvement situations, people prefer information about the destination over the endorser's offerings (Petty et al., 1983). Thus, experience goods may require a different marketing approach than search goods and this has implications for the general design of the advertisement. If endorsers have no clear effect on the intention to visit the destination, it would be wise to structure the design of the advertisement differently, and to devote more space to, for example, characteristics about the destination.

In addition, the present study shows that there are no clear differences between the two endorser types. If experts are truly pitted against celebrities (and more research is needed to verify this), destination marketers no longer have a valid reason to spend enormous amounts of money on contracts with celebrity endorsers. This would be a major financial implication.

Finally, the present study has tried to find out whether different holiday destination types would require a different approach in terms of selecting the right endorser type. Although the two destinations used in the present study can be considered as each other's opposites in terms of pricing, appearance and location, this had no moderating effect on the perception of the endorser or the advertisement in general. In practice, this would imply that it is not directly necessary to base the design of the advertisement on type of holiday.

5.3 Limitations and suggestions for future research

This study has several limitations. First, it was previously mentioned that although the two endorser types differed significantly in terms of physical attractiveness, this difference did not affect other dependent measures such as trustworthiness and expertise. It is quite common in endorsement studies to include physical attractiveness in measurement scales, as this construct is known to have an influence on several dependent measures (Ohanian, 1990; Van der Land et al., 2016). However, based on the findings of the present study, it could be useful to extend the attractiveness component by adding extra items on the scale. Besides focusing solely on 'physical' or 'model' attractiveness, it could be interesting for future studies to involve other forms of attractiveness such as 'social attractiveness' as well. Social attractiveness does not only refer to visual cues (i.e., is someone perceived as ugly or beautiful), but more to social cues (i.e., is someone popular and known to have a lot of friends), consisting of additional information upon which an impression of another person is made (Hong et al., 2012). The attractiveness construct should thus become more varied.

The second limitation refers to the sample. There was an unequal distribution of men and women over the sample as the majority of the participants were women. This is important to keep in mind while interpreting the results of the present study. For example, the fact that the expert endorser was perceived as significantly more attractive than the celebrity endorser, reflects to a large extent the opinion of the female participants and cannot directly be generalized to men. Furthermore, apart from gender, only Dutch participants were recruited for this study. Thus, the results from the present study are not applicable to foreign markets as prior research indicated that culture is a factor of influence in this context (Choi, Lee & Kim, 2005). A variety of cultures performs celebrity advertising quite differently and the same is true for the audience's perceptions toward celebrities used in the advertisements (Choi, Lee & Kim, 2005). It would be interesting to investigate the possible influence of dominant culture values in future studies on celebrity and expert endorsements more thoroughly.

Thirdly, many celebrity persuasion studies are carried out in the form of advertising experiments: participants are exposed to a print ad depicting a celebrity endorser directly followed by a questionnaire as a measurement instrument (Bergkvist & Zhou, 2016). The present study used a similar approach. However, an important disadvantage of conducting an experiment relates to limitations with regard to external validity (Treadwell, 2014). Although the advertisements were ought to have a realistic appearance, the experimental conditions in which the participants were placed do not reflect reality. The tourist's decision process for a particular destination is quite complex in real life. Therefore, it is unlikely that the intention to visit a specific destination is formed after exposure to only one advertisement. Normally, tourists would have spent more time to search for additional information about the destination and possible alternatives before making a final choice. It is recommendable for future studies to explore other methods (e.g., qualitative approaches) to improve the external validity.

The last limitation includes the manipulation material. The implications of this study are restricted to only two types of male endorsers and two types of destinations. The present study therefore encourages future research to include multiple celebrity and experts endorsers within a single study in order to increase the generalizability of the results. For example, by making a comparison between female and male endorsers instead of using solely male endorsers, or to include more than one endorser for each type. The same is true for holiday destination type: the implementation of multiple destinations decreases the possibility that the results are influenced by, for example, the participant's personal associations with that particular destination. It would be helpful for future studies to control for past visits to minimize the effect of past behavior on future travel intentions (Van der Veen & Song, 2014).

5.4 Conclusion

This research focused on the differential effects between celebrity and experts endorsements on the intention to visit a specific holiday destination (i.e., a low-priced versus a high-priced destination), in order to contribute to the understanding of the potential implementation of both celebrity and expert endorsements as a destination marketing instrument.

The experiment showed that both the attitude toward the advertisement and the endorser's perceived credibility significantly influence the intention to visit a specific destination, regardless of holiday destination and/or endorser type. However, in contrast to all expectations, the present study found no evidence to suggest that it makes a difference to select a celebrity or an expert endorser for the holiday destination advertisement. Endorser type did not significantly affect the intention to visit a specific holiday destination, which answers the first research question. In addition, holiday destination type had no moderating effect between endorser type and the intention to visit a specific holiday destination. This finding answers the second research question. Although these answers do not meet the present study's prior expectations, it can be considered as a conclusion in itself. Future research is needed in order to determine whether these results can be generalized to a wider population.

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Appendix A: The list of possible celebrity endorsers (focus group)

Focus group members were asked which of the following (Dutch) celebrities they would choose as a convincing representative for a travel agency, promoting both high- and low-priced destinations. They could choose from five female and five male endorsers.

- Waldemar Torenstra
- Barry Atsma
- Art Rooijakkers
- Ruben Nicolai
- Johnny de Mol

- Lauren Verster
- Jennifer Hoffman
- Anna Drijver
- Lieke van Lexmond
- Angela Groothuizen

Appendix B: First version of the manipulation material

ALL-INCLUSIVE

Ontdek Sint Maarten

Start jouw droomreis vandaag nog!
Johnny de Mol

Resort Sonesta Ocean Point View *****

- All Inclusive verblijf
- Direct aan een privé-strand
- Hier voel je je V.I.P.
- Vertrek in december

10 dagen v.a. **2822,-** p.p.

BOEK NU www.travelglobe.nl of bel 0999-9697

Celebrity endorser x high-priced destination

CITY-TRIP

Ontdek Brugge

Start jouw city-trip vandaag nog!
Johnny de Mol

Hotel Albert I **

- Inclusief ontbijt
- Centraal gelegen
- Gratis Wi-Fi
- Vertrek in december

4 dagen v.a. **134,-** p.p.

BOEK NU www.travelglobe.nl of bel 0999-9697

Celebrity endorser x low-priced destination

ALL-INCLUSIVE

Ontdek Sint Maarten

Start jouw droomreis vandaag nog!
John de Vries
 reisexpert bij TravelGlobe




Resort Sonesta Ocean Point View *****

- All inclusive verblijf
- Direct aan een privé-strand
- Hier voel je je V.I.P.
- Vertrek in december

10 dagen v.a. **2822,-** p.p.

BOEK NU www.travelglobe.nl of bel 0999-9697



Expert endorser x high-priced destination

CITY-TRIP

Ontdek Brugge

Start jouw city-trip vandaag nog!
John de Vries
 reisexpert bij TravelGlobe




Hotel Albert I **

- Inclusief ontbijt
- Centraal gelegen
- Gratis Wi-Fi
- Vertrek in december

4 dagen v.a. **134,-** p.p.

BOEK NU www.travelglobe.nl of bel 0999-9697



Expert endorser x low-priced destination

Appendix C: Final version of the manipulation material

ALL-INCLUSIVE

Ontdek Sint Maarten

Resort Sonesta Ocean Point View *****

- All Inclusive verblijf
- Direct aan een privé-strand
- Hier voel je je V.I.P.
- Inclusief vlucht + transfer

10 dagen v.a. **2822,-** p.p.

Aanbevolen door *Johnny de Mol*

BOEK NU www.travelglobe.nl of bel 0999-9697

TravelGlobe

Celebrity endorser x high-priced destination

CITY-TRIP

Ontdek Brugge

Hotel Albert I **

- Inclusief ontbijt
- Centraal gelegen
- Comfortabel stadshotel
- Gratis Wi-Fi

4 dagen v.a. **134,-** p.p.

Aanbevolen door *Johnny de Mol*

BOEK NU www.travelglobe.nl of bel 0999-9697

TravelGlobe

Celebrity endorser x low-priced destination

ALL-INCLUSIVE

Ontdek Sint Maarten



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10 dagen v.a. **2822,-** p.p.



Aanbevolen door uw reisexpert
John de Vries

BOEK NU www.travelglobe.nl of bel 0999-9697



Expert endorser x high-priced destination

CITY-TRIP

Ontdek Brugge



Hotel Albert I **

- Inclusief ontbijt
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- Comfortabel stadshotel
- Gratis Wi-Fi

4 dagen v.a. **134,-** p.p.



Aanbevolen door uw reisexpert
John de Vries

BOEK NU www.travelglobe.nl of bel 0999-9697



Expert endorser x low-priced destination

Appendix D: Welcome and instruction texts online survey

Welcome text

As part of my master thesis I am conducting research on the effectiveness of holiday destination advertisements.

Your participation in this study is only useful to me if you answer all of the questions. There are no wrong answers as they should reflect your personal opinion.

Participating in this study takes around 5 minutes of your time. The results will only be used for the purpose of this study and remain confidential and anonymous.

If you have any further questions about your participation or this research, please feel free to contact me via z.e.t.dellink@tilburguniversity.edu

If you acknowledge and understand the above noted terms, you can continue to the survey by clicking on the button >> depicted below.

Thank you in advance!

Instruction text:

Destination type: low-priced

Imagine you were planning to go on a **city-trip** in the nearby future. You have made no concrete plans yet, but a destination nearby has your preference.

While reading one of your favorite magazines, you come across a holiday destination advertisement that grasps your attention. On the next page, you will see this advertisement.

Please look carefully at this advertisement for at least 10 seconds as you will only see it **once**. Pay special attention to **the depicted person, the price and further destination-related information** as you will be asked detailed questions about these parts.

Instruction text:

Destination type: high-priced

Imagine you were planning to go on a **luxury vacation** in the nearby future. You have made no concrete plans yet, but a destination far away in a tropical environment has your preference.

While reading one of your favorite magazines, you come across a holiday destination advertisement that grasps your attention. On the next page, you will see this advertisement.

Please look carefully at this advertisement for at least 10 seconds as you will only see it **once**. Pay special attention to **the depicted person, the price and further destination-related information** as you will be asked detailed questions about these parts.

Appendix E: Questionnaire items

Convergent validity and reliability statistics ($N = 138$)

Construct	Items	Factor Loadings (Varimax Rotation)
Holiday destination type		
<i>Functional value</i>	This holiday destination is reasonably priced	.85
	This holiday destination offers value for money	.87
	This holiday destination is a good product for the price	.87
	This holiday destination is economical	.84
	Cronbach's alpha: .88 Eigenvalue: 2.94	
<i>Emotional value</i>	This holiday destination would make me feel good	.94
	This holiday destination is one that I would enjoy	.86
	This holiday destination would give me pleasure	.87
	This holiday destination is one that I would feel relaxed about	.93
	Cronbach's alpha: .92 Eigenvalue: 3.24	
Attitude		
<i>Cognitive component</i>	To what extent do you perceive this holiday destination advertisement to be: unpersuasive – persuasive	.75
	To what extent do you perceive this holiday destination advertisement to be: uninformative – informative	.69

	To what extent do you perceive this holiday destination advertisement to be: unbelievable – believable	.70
	To what extent do you perceive this holiday destination advertisement to be: ineffective – effective	.83
	To what extent do you perceive this holiday destination advertisement to be: unconvincing – convincing	.87
	Cronbach’s alpha: .87 Eigenvalue: 3.35	
<i>Affective component</i>	To what extent do you perceive this holiday destination advertisement to be: bad – good	.90
	To what extent do you perceive this holiday destination advertisement to be: unappealing – appealing	.83
	To what extent do you perceive this holiday destination advertisement to be: not-irritating – irritating	.69
	To what extent do you perceive this holiday destination advertisement to be: unlikable – likable	.84
	To what extent do you perceive this holiday destination advertisement to be: unpleasant – pleasant	.80
	Cronbach’s alpha: .91 Eigenvalue: 3.66	
Perceived credibility		
<i>Attractiveness</i>	To what extent do you perceive this person to be: unattractive – attractive	.82
	To what extent do you perceive this person to be: not classy – classy	.84

	To what extent do you perceive this person to be: ugly – beautiful	.88
	To what extent do you perceive this person to be: plain – elegant	.82
	To what extent do you perceive this person to be: not sexy – sexy	.86
	Cronbach's alpha: .92 Eigenvalue: 3.75	
<i>Trustworthiness</i>	To what extent do you perceive this person to be: undependable – dependable	.65
	To what extent do you perceive this person to be: dishonest – honest	.81
	To what extent do you perceive this person to be: unreliable – reliable	.90
	To what extent do you perceive this person to be: insincere – sincere	.83
	To what extent do you perceive this person to be: untrustworthy – trustworthy	.84
	Cronbach's alpha: .92 Eigenvalue: 3.78	
<i>Expertise</i>	To what extent do you perceive this person to be: not an expert – expert	.85
	To what extent do you perceive this person to be: inexperienced – experienced	.88
	To what extent do you perceive this person to be: unknowledgeable – knowledgeable	.83

	To what extent do you perceive this person to be: unqualified – qualified	.88
	To what extent do you perceive this person to be: unskilled – skilled	.83
	Cronbach’s alpha: .95 Eigenvalue: 4.11	
Intention to visit	If you were looking for a holiday within this price range, to what extent would you have considered this destination?	.86
	If you would have the time and the financial means, to what extent would you be interested in visiting the portrayed destination in the next three months?	.86
	Cronbach’s alpha: .65 Eigenvalue: 1.50	
