

ATTRIBUTES THAT DEFINE THE CATEGORY OF CONSUMER FASHION BRANDS FROM CUSTOMER'S POINT OF VIEW

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This paper was supported by the students project SGS-EF-3430-21140

This article focuses on the common brands of clothing. From the perspective of buyers, the fashion market in the Czech Republic can be divided into nine categories, each according to price and quality. Of these, the category of common fashion was selected for this article. Among the common fashion brands are, for example, H&M, C&A and New Yorker. The goal is to define the attributes that best cover this category according to professional literature and establishes a hierarchy of importance for these attributes from a customer point of view, as well as to identify how these attributes may be changed by the demographic factors of the customers. The results were evaluated using descriptive statistics, as well as a single-factor analysis of dispersion. Wide availability in stores, easy accessibility and fashionable design were identified as the most important attributes of common clothing brands.

Keywords: common clothing brands, fashion, attributes of common clothing brands, price, quality

1 Introduction

Fashion is a field that has attracted the attention of marketing specialists for a long time (Bakewell et al., 2006). It is an exciting, dynamic and creative global business that blends aesthetics, technology and trade. Fashion is about self-expression, emotions and wearer identity. In the larger context it defines cultural and social boundaries (Hines and Bruce, 2007). Over the last twenty years, the field of fashion developed quickly (Djelic and Ainamo, 1999) and has become a dynamic environment due to mass production (Doyle et al., 2006). Profits primarily increase due to increased consumption in the female segment, as women have ever growing income and purchase practically anything they desire (Jones and Hayes, 2002). Yet despite this growth, sellers continually try to increase turnover (Workman and Kidd, 2000) by decreasing production prices and production costs (Priest, 2005; Jones and Hayes, 2002). This strategy caused the production of a number of companies to be relocated to countries with low labor costs (Kilduff, 2005; Lowson, 2001; Mattila et al., 2002), particularly the Middle East and Italy, Portugal and Turkey (Da Silva et al., 2002). Much attention is currently paid to China, where the pressure on production speed, along with low costs lead to environmentally-unfriendly and often unethical production. This problem arises in the awareness of certain customers from Western countries and forces producers into new production strategies (Priest, 2005).

Frings (2002) points out the continually changing needs of customers in relation to their lifestyles, thanks to which they continually demand new fashion trends. Therefore, one cannot win in the market based on price alone, but also by the ability to introduce the latest products (Christopher et al., 2004; Evans, 1989). Birtwistle (2003) remarks that a successful fashion company must remain flexible in creating new designs and thus respond to the latest trends as well as customer demand.

For these reasons, the original fashion goods cycle is no longer useful. Traditionally, the fashion cycle was dependent on fashion shows of prestigious houses that typically took place twice a year (Birtwistle et al., 2003). Nowadays, customers want to buy the next day what they saw celebrities wearing on TV. The fashion cycles has therefore shortened to approximately one month (Sull and Turconi, 2008). Due to these many changes, there are also structural changes to the supplier chains as well as end stores (Doyle, et al., 2006) and the market is becoming more complicated and confusing.

Simová (2015) focuses on the retail fashion market structure in the Czech Republic. Her research is based on exact data concerning the number of stores, as well as their size and type of assortment. When defining the term "common fashion" in this

article, we work based on our previous research in the fashion market from a customer point of view (Novotová, 2016). The qualitative research aimed to establish categories according to price and product quality, thus clarifying the subject of market structure for further research. From the customer point of view, there are nine categories of fashion. These include second hand, Vietnamese shops, discount, supermarkets, cheaper common fashion, more expensive common fashion, boutiques, luxury and fashion designers. This article focuses only on the categories of cheaper common fashion and more expensive common fashion that are similar in their intense distribution strategy, sales in shopping centers, as well as a focus on younger and less rich clientele segment. The typical brands of cheaper common fashion are for example: C&A, Tako, H&M, Cropp, Reserved and New Yorker. Well recognized brands from more expensive common fashion categories are Camaieu, Time out, Zara, Promod, Lindex, Mango or Marks&Spencer. The differences between these categories were mainly identified through price and product quality levels. Due to the great similarity between those two categories, they will be analyzed together for the purposes of this article.

Our research focused on both the determination of these individual fashion categories and the attempt to identify specific attributes within these categories. The goal of this article is to quantitatively determine the importance of these attributes of common fashion brands using a sample of 794 responders from across the entire Czech Republic. Three research questions were established:

RQ1 Which attributes best define the category of common fashion brands from the customer point of view?

RQ2 How does the view of these common fashion brand attribute changes in relation to the demographic characteristics of customers?

RQ3 Which demographic characteristics of customers have the greatest influence on perceptions of the common fashion brand attributes?

2 Common Fashion

In professional publications, "common fashion" is a frequently described category due to its popularity with the general public. However, authors focusing on fashion do not share a unified terminology for this category. One of the most popular terms used is "high street fashion" (Sorensen 1995; Bruce and Daley 2006). Sorensen (1995) uses it as an equivalent to the term "mass market" that emphasized the attribute of mass production and takes into consideration the size of the segment of customers who purchase this fashion. Moore and Burt (2007) divide common fashion into three categories according to the type of assortment and the size of the segment for which the products are intended. The first category is the "product specialist fashion retailers", meaning specialized shops for narrow segments of customers, for example shops with sports clothing (Nike, Adidas), women's clothing (La Senza) etc. The second category is called "general merchandise retailers", offering both fashion and other products. The best known example of this category is Marks & Spencer. The last category is "general fashion retailers", intended for the widest segment of customers and typically with a wide selection of lower-priced goods.

In 2003, Lee introduced the term "McFashion". These are international chains characterized by very cheap chic fashion. This fashion category is based on the same principles as fast food – a reasonable quality for reasonable price available to the widest class. Thanks to mass production, they also bring about considerable uniformity and lack of originality. Lee cites Zara, H&M as well as Marks&Spencer as the representatives of this category, but also clothing found in supermarkets (Lee 2003). For several years now a more common term used for this category is "fast fashion" (Bruce and Daley 2006). The concept

was developed in France and intended for teenagers and young women who want trendy, cheap clothing (Doeringer and Crean 2006). Thanks to mass advertising and the internet, awareness about fashion trends spread with enormous speed nowadays. Fast fashion brings new collections four to six times per year and even weekly collections aren't unusual (Sheridan et al. 2006; Doyle et al. 2006; Doeringer and Crean 2006). Therefore, companies must quickly respond to the market (Cachon & Swinney 2011), copying famous brands at record speeds and getting product to a large mass of customers at reasonable prices (Bruce and Daley 2006; Cachon and Swinney 2011; Sheridan et al. 2006; Lloyd and Luk 2010).

3 Attributes of Common Fashion Brands

According to the MarketLine case study, this fast-fashion approach is spreading through the entire segment of high street fashion or the common fashion brands. It is therefore possible to include the characteristics typical for fast fashion, such as fast-changing assortment and store availability, among the attributes of common fashion brands. Common fashion brand stores are most often located within large shopping malls accessible both by car and public transport. According to Moye and Kincade (2003) customers will not waste more time than necessary and therefore store availability is critical nowadays. Another important attribute is the scope of the assortment within the store. According to Broniarczyk et al. (1998) it is important for stores to offer a wide assortment, including varied quality of products, clothing design, colors, materials and the range of accessory assortment (shoes, jewelry, scarfs, etc.). Very wide assortment is typical for fashion chains located in shopping centers. The breadth of assortment particularly differentiates common fashion from higher levels of fashion in boutiques that are typical by their narrower selection of goods offered. In researching common brands, design was defined as one of the most important attributes (Novotová 2016). Authors Bruce and Daley (2006), Bhardwaj and Fairhurst (2010) also cite design as one of the key attributes, noting that the latest trends are most often demanded by younger customers. They also often prefer extravagant fashion (Novotová 2016).

According to Moye and Kincade (2003) the renown of the fashion brand is important in the purchase of clothing. Their theory states that knowledge of the brand first forms on the level of brand awareness. It is a certain imprint in the memory of the consumer and represents the ability to identify the brand under various conditions (Russiter and Percy 1987). Brand awareness relates to the likelihood that the name of the brand comes easily to mind. A number of authors divided brand awareness into stimulus-based brands and top-of-mind awareness, abbreviated as TOMA (Aaker 1991; Keller 1993; Ballantyne et al. 2006). In general, it is easier to recognize a brand than to recall it from memory (Keller 2007). TOMA represents situations in which the brand comes to mind without help. Thanks to their long term existence as well as worldwide expansion of common brands, these brands are globally recognized by their customers and become traditional (Alexander and Doherty 2010). Knowledge of brands such as H&M, C&A or Marks & Spencer are typically ranges at the TOMA level (Novotová 2016).

Kotler (1998) mentions that the meaning of factors that influence customer orientation in the market significantly raised, while price remains a determining factor. Many customers see price as a quality indicator, according to the principle of 'customers get what they paid for' (Erickson and Johansson 1985). This was confirmed by Hasen, who identified a positive relation between price and perceived quality in the food segment using the LISREL (Hansen 2005) as well as by authors such as Ding et al. (2010) and Beneke and Carter (2015). However, unlike quality, price is immediately recognizable and can therefore suggest a level of quality among unknown products (Yoon et al. 2014). There are customers who are only influenced by price in their purchase decision making. Most consumers evaluate price and quality along with other factors (Beneke and Carter 2015; Das, 2015). Prices are often driven downward, however some research shows that in certain product categories, while

discounts may increase sales, they also have a negative impact on the brand and its perceived quality and actually damage the image of the brand. Fast fashion, and thus from a certain point of view including common brands, are typical with low quality (de Klerk and Tselepis 2007). Customers being highly sensitive to price. Therefore the stores often display discount specials that increase sales volume (Tokatli, 2008).

Based on this knowledge, it was determined ten attributes of common fashion brands: fast-changing assortment, store availability, wide assortment, design, extravagance, global recognition, tradition, low price, lower quality and discounts, that will be further statistically tested.

4 Methodology

Quantitative research using an electronic questionnaire was selected to determine answers to the research question stated in the introduction of this article. The questioning was organized using the Google – Disk electronic questionnaire service, enabling the respondent to answer in the comfort of their home at a time of their choice. The electronic questionnaire can also be considered clear and easily intuitively navigable, therefore a very convenient tool for data collection. The questionnaire was distributed via the Facebook social network. This method was chosen for a very fast and free distribution of the questionnaire. The actual collection of data took place between April and May 2016.

An initial set of responders was established, the main criteria of which were that they were Czech citizens over 18 years old and that they, at least occasionally, purchase clothing from common fashion brands. It was not possible to use random methods of respondent sample selection due to the absence of sampling frame. The judgmental selection method appeared as most suitable. According to this author's previous article, the largest customer group of common fashion brands was identified as the category of people under 30 years of age and this group was therefore most present in this research (Novotová 2016).

The electronic questionnaire was divided into three sections. First, the respondents were asked to write down three common brands of clothing they buy. This opening question filtered out those respondents who purchase brands other than the common fashion category. The second part of the questionnaire contained ten attributes of common fashion brands, evaluated according to their importance for customers, using a Likert scale from '1 – absolutely agree' to '7 – absolutely disagree'. The final part of the questionnaire contained questions regarding age, sex, education, income and clothing purchase frequency of the responders.

4.1 Data Evaluation

The evaluation of data obtained through the questionnaire research was performed using the Statgraphics XVII statistical program. First, a descriptive statistic was used for the analysis, specifically for the characteristics of location. In the second part of the research, the individual statements were analyzed using the ANOVA single-factor dispersion. The above stated demographic characteristics of respondents and purchase frequency were used as independent factors. The ANOVA was chosen on the basis of the premise that the used evaluation scales in the questionnaire were cardinal variables, but also due to the high number of selection units that amounted to more than 20. Thanks to these characteristics, the normality of the data sets was not validated (Churchill 1987). A double-selection t-test was performed in case of factors with two values (Budíková et al. 2010; Meloun and Miličský 2002). The second condition of using the dispersion analysis, meaning the conformity of the dispersion, was evaluated using the Levene test that is less sensitive to the breach of the presumption of normality. ANOVA was calculated in the situation that the Levene test resulted in more than 0.05 of P-value (Šimonová 2006). In case that this condition was not met, Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric test was chosen, where the condition of conformity of the dispersion is

not necessary (Meloun and Militký 2002). When using the Kruskal-Wallis test, a zero hypothesis assumes that the measurement in the groups have the same medians (Hendl 2004). Hypotheses H_0 were established for all statistical methods regarding the conformity of dispersion, specifically the medians, as well as hypotheses H_1 regarding the differences and the statements were tested on the 95% level of significance. To establish significant differences between individual groups, the Fisher post-hoc test was used in the parametric ANOVA test and Scheffe test was used in the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test (Šimonová 2006).

4.2 Respondent Sample

In total, 794 respondents participated in the test, meeting the key criteria that they purchase clothing of common brands. As initially expected, the age categories over 55 years old very seldom purchase clothing from common brands. Due to the very small number of respondents, this category was therefore merged with the age group 45 – 54 years (the right side of Table 1).

Tab. 1: Division of respondents according to age
(Source: author)

Age	Frequency	%	Age new	Frequency new	% new
18 - 24	251	31,6	18-24	251	31,6
25 - 34	281	35,4	25-34	281	35,4
35 - 44	160	20,2	35-44	160	20,2
45 - 54	92	11,6	45 and more	102	12,9
55 - 64	10	1,3			

More women participated in the research (Table 2), and women are more aware of the brands they purchase. Men were very often disqualified as they were not able to fill out the questionnaire correctly.

Tab. 2: Division of respondents according to gender
(Source: author)

Sex	Frequency	%
men	353	44,5
women	441	55,5

Mostly those who had university degrees participated in the research, followed by those with high-school leaving exams. Thanks to the small number of respondents with only basic education for the purpose of the dispersion analysis, this category was merged with the category of high-school level education without leaving exams (right side of Table 3).

Tab. 3: Division of respondents according to education
(Source: author)

Education	Frequency	%	Education new	Frequency new	% new
primary	7	0,88	secondary without diploma	76	9,58
secondary without diploma	69	8,7			
secondary with diploma	319	40,2	secondary with diploma	319	40,2
colledge	399	50,3	colledge	399	50,3

Net monthly income of the household is shown in Table five in Euros. Due to the great variance in the number of respondents in individual categories, the initial categories were merged into four groups. The left side of the table shows the original division and the right side the four new categories.

Tab. 4: Division of respondents according to income
(Source: author)

Incom Euro	Frequency	%	Incom new	Frequency new	% new
to 370	34	4,4	the lowest	119	15,5
371-741	85	11,1			
742-1111	168	22			
1112-1482	160	20,9	low	328	42,9
1483-1852	120	15,7			
1853-2222	95	12,4	high	215	28,1
2223 and more	103	13,5	the highest	203	13,5

Purchasing frequency of was originally divided into six categories. For clarity and due to the small number of respondents in classes 1 and 6, these categories were also merged into three (the right side of Table 5).

Tab. 5: Division of respondents according to purchase frequency
(Source: author)

Frequence of purchase	Frequency	%	Frequence of purchase new	Frequency new	% new
every week	11	1,4	several times per month	143	18
several times per month	132	16,6			
once a month	182	22,9	several times per quarter	332	41,8
several times per quarter	150	18,9			
several times per year	277	34,9	several times per year	319	40,2
maximum once a year	42	5,3			

5 Results

The first research question RQ1 focused on identifying the most important attributes of common fashion brands from the customer point of view. Ten attributes of common fashion brands, were evaluated by respondents according to their importance, using a Likert scale from '1 – absolutely agree' to '7 – absolutely disagree'.

As is apparent from the results of the descriptive statistic in Table 2, the most important attributes in common fashion brands are wide assortment in stores, store availability and fashionable design of clothing. The second level is represented by attributes of low price, discount and frequent change of assortment. Tradition, extravagance and low quality are attributes that respondents found least important.

In further parts of the text, both the differences in the perception of attributes of common brands by customers according to demographic factors and purchase frequency will be analyzed, as well as answers to questions RQ2 and RQ3. The table 3 represents the results that appeared on the 95% level as statistically significant. The test used for the analysis is indicated in the table, as well as the testing criteria, P-value and the averages with an indicated difference between the attribute groups. The individual groups are identified using the upper indexes a,b,c.

Tab. 6: Attributes of common fashion brands and descriptive statistics (Source: author)

	Wide sortiment	Availability of shop	Design	Lower price	Discount
Mean	2,11	2,21	2,42	2,79	2,8
Median	2,0	2,0	2,0	2,0	2,0
Mode	1,0	2,0	2,0	2,0	2,0
Standard deviation	1,18259	1,29082	1,39371	1,40947	1,71924
	Changing sortiment	Global acquaintance	Tradition	Extravagance	Lower quality
Mean	2,8	4,02	4,2	4,41	4,43
Median	3,0	4,0	4,0	4,0	4,0
Mode	2,0	2,0	4,0	4,0	4,0
Standard deviation	1,46479	1,97815	1,96076	1,92502	1,81364

1) Wide Assortment

Table 6 shows statistically significant differences in factors gender, education and income. Particularly women without high-school leaving exams and low incomes appreciated this attribute.

2) Store Availability

Table 6 shows statistically significant differences in factors gender, education and purchase frequency. Availability is particularly demanded by women, people without a final leaving exam and those who shop several times per month.

3) Design

Table 6 shows statistically significant differences in factors gender and purchase frequency. Fashionable design is particularly important for women and people who shop very often, up to multiple times per month.

4) Low Price

Gender is statistically significant for the low price attribute. Women are the customers that most expect low price in common fashion brands (Table 6).

5) Discounts

Table 6 shows statistically significant differences in factors gender, education and income. Women expect discounts more, including those a without high-school leaving exam and particularly among those with lower incomes.

6) Changing Assortment

Table 7 shows statistically significant differences in factors gender, education and purchase frequency. Changing assortment is particularly expected by women and those without high-school leaving exams as opposed to those with leaving exams and university education, as well as by consumers who purchase monthly or once every quarter.

7) Global Recognition

Table 7 shows statistically significant differences in factors age, education and purchase frequency. Global Recognition is most demanded by the youngest customers of 18 – 24 years, those without high-school leaving exams, as well as those purchasing monthly.

8) Tradition

Table 7 shows statistically significant differences in factors gender, age and education. Surprisingly, tradition is more expected by men, further preferred by those over 35 years of age and consumers with high school education.

9) Extravagance

Table 7 shows statistically significant differences in factors age and education. Consumers up to the age of 24 years expect extravagance, along with those with a high-school education.

10) Low Quality

Table 7 shows statistically significant differences in factor gender. Women assign lower quality to common brands.

6 Discussion and conclusion

The important attributes defining common fashion brands were determined in the first part of the research using descriptive statistics (research question RQ1). The primary attributes include wide assortment in the store, store availability and fashionable design of the clothing. We can therefore say that consumers associate common clothing brands with large stores that also offer an assortment of accessories and are located within shopping malls that are easily accessible. Design is also a common attribute corresponding to the latest trends. Other attributes can be defined as low prices, discounts and frequently-changing assortments. As is apparent from the results of the research, common fashion brands correspond to the category of fast fashion, based on trending, fast-changing assortments, low prices and wide availability of stores (Cachon and Swinney 2011; Christopher et al. 2004). The result of the low-quality attribute might be considered surprising, as it was evaluated as the least determining factor of common brands. According to customer perception, the attribute of low quality is not a factor for common brands and this prevails even in situations when low price was determined as a significant attribute. The classic strong positive relation between price level and quality, as described in a number of professional articles (Hansen 2005; Ding et al. 2010; Beneke and Carter 2015), was not proven in this case. The correlation coefficients for the dependency of quality and price only resulted at 0.35 and is therefore only a very weak dependency. In the case of Czech customers the lower price of clothing does not therefore necessarily cause a sense that the goods will be of lower quality. This result may be caused by the fact that each consumer has their own idea of what quality means

Tab. 6 The ANOVA, T-test and Kruskal-Wallis for all attributes

Wide Assortment				
gender	T-test	t statistic	P-Value	mean
women		4,3755	0,0001	1,96
men				2,34
education	Kruskal-Wallis	Test statistic	P-Value	mean
without high-school leaving exams		19,1309	0,0000	1,63 ^a
with high-school leaving exams				2,25 ^b
college				2,11 ^b
income	Anova	F-Ratio	P-Value	mean
the lowest		2,84	0,0371	1,91 ^a
low				2,09 ^{ab}
high				2,25 ^b
the highest				2,29 ^b
Store Availability				
gender	T-test	t statistic	P-Value	mean
women		4,4307	0,0001	2,04
men				2,46
education	Kruskal-Wallis	Test statistic	P-Value	mean
without high-school leaving exams		33,1815	0,0000	1,58 ^a
with high-school leaving exams				2,49 ^b
college				2,11 ^c
purchase frequency	Kruskal-Wallis	Test statistic	P-Value	mean
several times per month		12,2459	0,0022	1,90 ^a
several times per quarter				2,20 ^{ab}
several times per year				2,36 ^b
design				
gender	T-test	t statistic	P-Value	mean
women		5,52273	0,0000	2,16
men				2,73
purchase frequency	Kruskal-Wallis	Test statistic	P-Value	mean
several times per month		43,3582	0,0000	1,89 ^a
several times per quarter				2,27 ^b
several times per year				2,74 ^c
low price				
gender	T-test	t statistic	P-Value	mean
women		4,4106	0,0001	2,6
men				3,03
discounts				
gender	T- test	t statistic	P-Value	mean
women		2,3074	0,0210	2,69
men				2,97
education	Anova	F-Ratio	P-Value	mean
without high-school leaving exams		7,77	0,0005	2,2 ^a
with high-school leaving exams				3,03 ^b
college				2,76 ^c
income	Anova	F-Ratio	P-Value	mean
the lowest		3,06	0,0275	2,47 ^a
low				2,76 ^{ab}
high				3,0 ^c
the highest				3,04 ^c

Tab. 7: The ANOVA, T-test and Kruskal-Wallis for all attributes

Changing Assortment				
gender	T-test	t statistic	P-Value	mean
women		4,3789	0,0000	2,62
men				3,08
education	Anova	F-Ratio	P-Value	mean
without high-school leaving exams		3,97	0,0192	2,41 ^a
with high-school leaving exams				2,81 ^b
college				2,92 ^b
purchase frequency	Anova	F-Ratio	P-Value	mean
		11,80	0,0000	
several times per month				2,54 ^a
several times per quarter				2,66 ^a
several times per year				3,13 ^b
Global Recognition				
age	Anova	F-Ratio	P-Value	mean
18-24		3,72	0,0113	3,7 ^a
25-34				4,2 ^b
35-44				4,21 ^b
45 and more				4,3 ^b
education	Anova	F-Ratio	P-Value	mean
without high-school leaving exams		18,66	0,0000	2,99 ^a
with high-school leaving exams				3,82 ^b
college				4,36 ^c
purchase frequency	Anova	F-Ratio	P-Value	mean
several times per month		3,53	0,0297	3,74 ^a
several times per quarter				3,92 ^{ab}
several times per year				4,23 ^b
Tradition				
gender	T-test	T staitstic	P-Value	mean
women		-2,91368	0,0035	4,38
men				3,97
age	Anova	F-Ratio	P-Value	mean
18-24		6,99	0,0001	4,51 ^a
25-34				4,32 ^a
35-44				3,76 ^b
45 and more				3,76 ^b
education	Anova	F-Ratio	P-Value	mean
without high-school leaving exams		21,23	0,0000	3,14 ^a
with high-school leaving exams				3,97 ^b
college				4,57 ^c
Extravagance				
age	Anova	F-Ratio	P-Value	mean
18-24		5,51	0,0010	4,02 ^a
25-34				4,66 ^b
35-44				4,44 ^b
45 and more				4,63 ^b
education	Kruskal-Wallis	Test statistic	P-Value	mean
without high-school leaving exams		17,9984	0,0001	4,05 ^a
with high-school leaving exams				4,12 ^a
college				4,71 ^b
Low Quality				
gender	T-test	t statistic	P-Value	mean
women		3,3615	0,0007	4,24
men				4,67

for them. This idea depends on his understanding of the concepts of quality as well as, to some degree, their expectations related to each product (Gill 2009). According to research from the Hospodářské noviny, most Czechs with the concept of quality especially connect long-lasting, with only 21% imagining quality material and 9% quality manufacture (Hospodářské noviny 2012). Clothing from common brands may well be long-lasting, however the quality of material and manufacturing with comparatively low. This fact may be the reason why Czechs do not consider lower price of clothing for lower quality.

In the second part of the research, dispersion analysis was used to determine how the views of the common-brand attributes change according to the demographic characteristics of customers (research question RQ2). The most interesting findings regarding design, global renown, tradition and extravagance are discussed here. Fashionable design is mostly important for those women who shop very frequently, even several times per month. By this result it could be recognized a correlation with the theory of fashion innovators, meaning people who understand fashion and continually purchase the latest fashion trends (Sproles 1979 as cited in Martinez and Kim 2012). Women were identified as the most frequent fashion innovators (Mason and Bellenger 1973-1974). Fashionable product design is specifically most important for fashion innovators. The global renown of a brand is most demanded by the youngest customers, those without high-school leaving exams as well as frequently-shopping customers. In the case of these consumers, a certain attempt to increase their prestige through clothing of renowned brands can be expected, while often they may not be as interested in either the quality or design, as the renown of the brand. On the other hand, particularly older men without high-school leaving exams are accustomed to certain standards and do not care to change their established habits. This category of customers might be identified as very traditional and loyal to established brands. Unlike tradition, an extravagant clothing style is important for young people between 18 – 24 years of age with high-school educations, essentially those who are unafraid to let go and differ from others.

The goal of the third part of the research was to define the demographic characteristics of customers that have the greatest influence on the perception of common brand attributes (RQ3). A statistically significant difference was proven between men and women in most of these attributes. Women are the ones who perceive fashion brand attitudes as more important. These results confirm the fact that women are generally more interested in fashion (Mason and Bellenger 1973-1974; O'Cass 2000; Gould and Stern 1989). On the other hand, foreign research indicates that the difference between men and women in terms of purchasing fashion is beginning to disappear (Kacen 2000; Patterson and Elliot 2002). In fact, even nine-year-old boys are interested in fashion and know clothing brands (Hogg and Bruce 1998). In 2001 a research even showed that young men are more influenced by fashion than their female counterparts (Manrai et al. 2001). They therefore find that the male generation Y (Millennials) is far more involved in the world of fashion than was the case with their fathers (Manrai et al. 2001). This international trend was not proven in the case of Czech men. As is apparent from these results, men in the Czech Republic continue to not consider fashion as that important and do not pay as much as attention as men in other countries.

The results regarding education might be considered rather surprising, as it was significant for seven common fashion brand attributes. Five of them (wide assortment, availability, discounts, changing assortment and global renown) were important for respondents with high-school educations without leaving exams. These results show that the less education prefer precisely the attributes typical of fast fashion. Fast fashion is therefore very attractive for this type of customers. On the other hand, the factors of frequency of purchase (for 4 attributes), age (for 3 attributes) and income (for 2 attributes) are not anywhere near as

important for common fashion brands as are gender and education.

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Primary Paper Section: A

Secondary Paper Section: AE