

# **The Influence of Brand Personality on Customer Loyalty in the German Sports Apparel Industry**

Research dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
**MSc in International Business Management in Global Brand Management**

Griffith College Dublin

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**06.09.2024**

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I certify that the dissertation entitled: **The influence of brand personality on customer loyalty in the German sports apparel industry**

submitted for the degree of: **MSc in International Business Management in Global Brand Management** is the result of my own work and that where reference is made to the work of others, due acknowledgment is given.

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## **Abstract**

This study analyses the influence of brand personality on customer loyalty in the German sports apparel industry. An online survey with 237 participants was conducted as part of a quantitative research design. The analysis of the collected data showed that brand presence does not have a significant influence on customer loyalty. There is no great interest in including brand personality in the purchase decision and that there is an emotional connection with the brand. However, it is possible that brand personality plays an unconscious role. In addition, no significant demographic differences were found. The results suggest that brand personality plays a subordinate role in long-term customer loyalty, while functional attributes such as price and quality are of greater importance in the German sports apparel industry.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Overview

The influence of brand personality on customer loyalty  
in the German sports apparel industry.

In Germany, the correlation between a healthy lifestyle and regular physical activity is increasingly acknowledged, leading to a growing emphasis on sporting activities. This trend significantly impacts the sports apparel industry, which is experiencing heightened demand as a result (Statista, 2024). The industry is intensely competitive, with major global brands such as Nike contending for market share alongside prominent German-based brands like Adidas and Puma. This competitiveness is further compounded by the dynamic nature of customer preferences and market trends, which are in a state of constant flux (Vest, 2024).

Given these circumstances, brands within the sports apparel sector are compelled to cultivate strong relationships with their customers to foster loyalty. Establishing customer loyalty is crucial, as it not only helps in retaining a consistent customer base but also provides a buffer against the volatility of market trends. By understanding and anticipating the evolving needs and preferences of their customers, brands can tailor their offerings to better meet market demands, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty (Ciklum, 2024).

## 1.2. Research Purpose

The purpose of this research is to investigate how brand personality influences customer loyalty from the perspective of consumers in the German sports apparel

industry. This study aims to identify the specific elements of brand personality that resonate most with consumers and how these elements impact their loyalty to a brand. By exploring this relationship, the research seeks to provide valuable insights that can enhance consumer satisfaction, improve the alignment between consumer values and brand offerings.

### **1.3. Significance of the Study**

This research is significant for consumers in several ways, as it addresses how brand personality influences their loyalty and overall experience with sports apparel brands.

On the one hand, it is intended to educate people about brand personality and give customers the chance to support companies that share their values. In addition, it creates a stronger emotional connection between the company and its customers, which can have a positive impact on the company's future actions since customers feel empowered to provide feedback that helps the company to develop further and communicate these values to the outside world.

On the other hand, the study helps brands understand the personality traits that resonate with consumers, leading to products that better reflect consumer values and lifestyles.

### **1.4. Research Objectives**

The study on the influence of brand personality on customer loyalty in the German sports apparel industry aims to achieve the following specific objectives.

First to evaluate the extent to which brand personality influences customer loyalty within the German sports apparel industry and to additionally see which characteristics are most effective in gaining long-term customer commitment.

The second objective is to analyse how demographic factors such as age influence consumer preferences for brand personality in the German sports apparel market.

## **1.5. Hypotheses**

In this study, four hypotheses were formulated based on theoretical considerations and existing research to investigate the relationship between brand personality and customer loyalty in the German sports apparel market.

- H1: Brand personality positively influences customer loyalty.
- H2: The majority of customers in the German sports apparel industry feel an emotional connection with the brand they purchase most frequently.
- H3: Honesty is most connected to the brand that is purchased most frequently.
- H4: The influence of brand personality on customer loyalty is stronger among younger consumers (aged 18-29) in the German sports apparel industry.

## **1.6. Structure of the Study**

The study will be separated into five sections, starting with the first section which is the introduction. The introduction is followed by a literature review which consists of a look at current literature regarding customer loyalty, brand personality and the current German sports apparel industry. The third section will provide a

methodology and research design which will be followed with the fourth section and its findings regarding the conducted primary research. The last and fifth section will provide concluding thoughts on the contribution of this research, its limitations and suggestions for further research.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Overview**

In the following section, a literature review is compiled that takes a closer look at the main topics of brand personality and customer loyalty. Not only definitions are explained, but also existing criticism are discussed. In addition, the Sports apparel industry in Germany is examined in more detail to find out what trends exist and what factors can influence customers' decisions. Additionally, a review will be made into the existing competition between Adidas, Nike and Puma.

### **2.2. German Sports Apparel Industry**

#### **2.2.1. Market overview**

The German sports apparel industry is a steadily growing market with a significant presence both domestically and globally. According to Statista, the market currently boasts a turnover of 5 billion euros, which is projected to rise to six billion euros by 2028 (Statista Research Department, 2024). This growth is fuelled by a strong sports culture in Germany, where more than 33 million people engage in sports activities at least once a month, and 14 million participate in sports more than once a week (Schirmer, 2024). This high level of participation underscores the importance of sports and fitness in the daily lives of Germans, contributing to the robust demand for sports apparel.

The most popular sports among Germans include hiking, going to the gym, and jogging (Schirmer, 2024). Hiking is particularly favoured, reflecting the country's extensive natural landscapes and well-maintained trails. The popularity of gyms underscores a growing trend towards personal fitness and health consciousness, while jogging remains a convenient and accessible form of exercise for many.

These activities drive the demand for specialized apparel that enhances performance, comfort, and style.

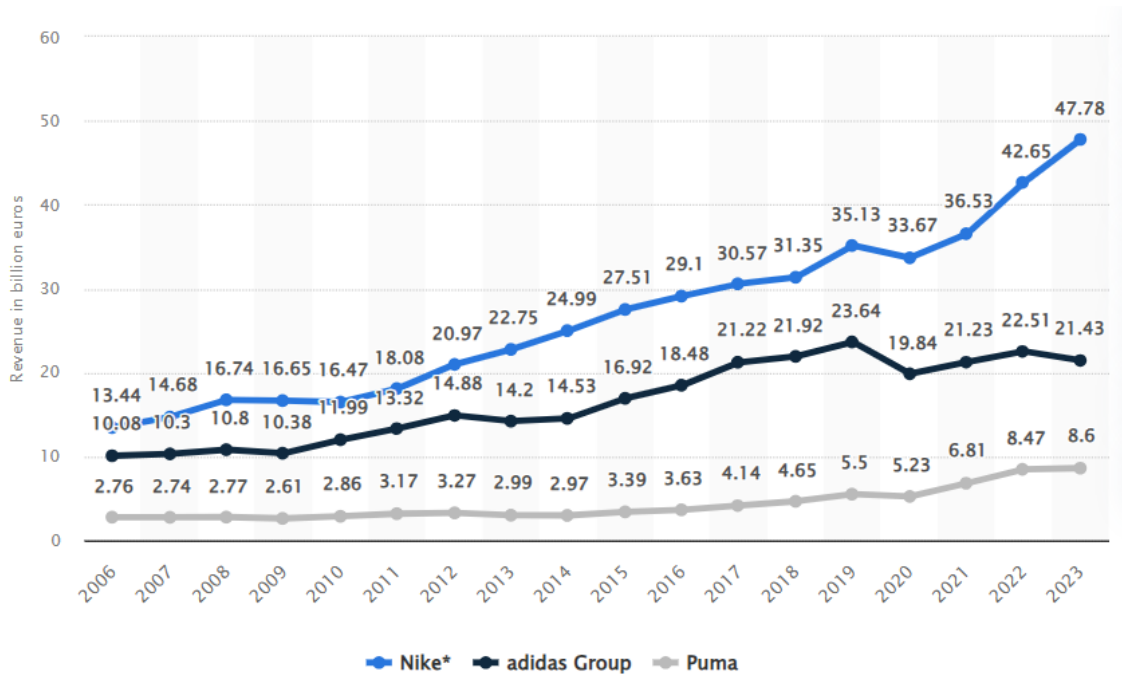
### **2.2.2. Competition**

With an appealing and expanding market, the German sports apparel industry is highly competitive. Two German companies, Adidas and Puma, are leading players in this sector. Adidas, headquartered in Herzogenaurach, Bavaria, reported an impressive annual turnover of 22.51 billion euros in 2023 worldwide (see Figure 1, page 7). The company's success can be attributed to its strong brand identity, innovative product lines, and strategic partnerships with top athletes and sports teams (Adidas, 2024).

Puma, also based in Herzogenaurach, achieved a global turnover of 8.6 billion euros in 2023 (see Figure 1, page 7). Known for its performance-oriented and stylish products, Puma has carved out a significant market share by focusing on both functionality and fashion. The company's collaborations with high-profile celebrities and designers have further boosted its appeal among younger consumers and fashion-conscious athletes (Puma, 2023).

Despite the dominance of Adidas and Puma, the German sports apparel market faces strong competition from international brands, particularly the US-based company Nike. Nike remains the industry leader with a turnover of 47.78 billion euros in 2023 (see Figure 1, page 7). Nike's success is driven by its continuous innovation, extensive marketing campaigns, and a broad product range that caters to various sports and consumer segments (Nike, 2024).

Figure 1: Global revenue of adidas, Nike and Puma from 2006 to 2023 (in billion euros)



(Tighe, 2024)

### 2.2.3. Trends

The German sports apparel market is also characterized by its emphasis on quality and sustainability. Consumers increasingly demand products that are not only high-performing but also environmentally friendly (Lambers, 2023). In response, companies like Adidas and Puma have initiated several sustainability projects. Adidas, for instance, has introduced products made from recycled plastic rather than virgin plastic, to be more appealing for their customers and reinforce a sustainable image (Adidas, Change Materials, 2024).

Furthermore, trends such as the athleisure look are becoming increasingly popular, significantly shaping consumer preferences and market dynamics within the German sports apparel industry (Schirmer, 2024). Athleisure, a blend of

athletic and leisure wear, has transcended its original purpose of being solely sports attire to becoming a staple in everyday fashion. This trend is particularly strong in Germany, where surveys have shown that 24% of Germans purchase sports apparel not just for athletic activities but also for daily wear (Lambers, 2023). This dual-purpose use emphasises the growing appeal of versatile and stylish sports apparel that seamlessly transitions from the gym to casual settings.

The rise of athleisure is closely linked to broader lifestyle trends, including an increasing interest in outdoor activities and a growing awareness of health and wellbeing (Balchandani, et al., 2023). As more people prioritize physical fitness and an active lifestyle, they seek clothing that supports these activities while also being comfortable and fashionable. Athleisure perfectly caters to these needs, offering the functionality required for exercise along with the aesthetic appeal suitable for everyday wear.

The functionality of athleisure is one of its key selling points. Items such as moisture-wicking leggings, breathable tops, and supportive footwear are designed to enhance performance during workouts. However, these products are also crafted with a keen sense of style, featuring modern designs, trendy colours, and high-quality materials that make them desirable for casual and even semi-formal occasions. This combination of practicality and trendiness has made athleisure a dominant force in the sports apparel market (Tiringer, 2024).

The growing popularity of athleisure is also a reflection of changing social norms and workplace environments. As more workplaces adopt casual dress codes, sports apparel has become increasingly acceptable in professional settings. Surveys have shown that 63% believe that employees are more productive in a casual look than profession in Germany (Statista Research Department, 2010). This shift has expanded the market for athleisure, allowing sports apparel brands to tap into new consumer segments who prioritize comfort and style in their work attire.

Additionally, the influence of social media and fitness influencers cannot be overstated. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok have become powerful tools for promoting athleisure, with influencers showcasing how to incorporate sports apparel into everyday outfits. This digital exposure has significantly boosted the visibility and desirability of athleisure products, drove sales and reinforcing the trend's popularity (Balchandani, et al., 2023).

In conclusion, the German sports apparel industry is a dynamic and growing sector driven by a strong sports culture, innovative products, and a commitment to sustainability. The competition is fierce, with major players like Adidas and Puma leading the market domestically while facing significant challenges from global giants like Nike. As consumer preferences continue to evolve, the industry is poised for further growth and transformation, fuelled by advancements in technology and a greater emphasis on environmental responsibility.

### **2.3. Customer Loyalty**

Nowadays, there are a large number of companies in different sectors that manufacture and sell identical or similar products. They are therefore in direct competition for the customers whose needs are to be satisfied (Ciklum, 2024). This can also be observed in the German sports apparel industry. If it is looked at the companies Adidas, Puma and Nike, it can be seen a similar product range, from shoes to T-shirts and leggings. This leads to the conclusion that customer loyalty is an important part of the companies in this industry, to gain revenue.

Customer loyalty is defined as an enduring emotional relationship between a brand and a customer that ultimately drives the customer to buy repeatedly from the same company and not consider alternatives (Faria, 2024; Oracle, 2024). This emotional bond can be achieved in several ways.

One significant avenue through which companies can cultivate customer loyalty is by providing intangible benefits. These benefits resonate with customers on an emotional level and often involve the company's engagement in social responsibility initiatives, such as supporting local communities or environmental causes. This form of loyalty, often referred to as "heart loyalty," is characterized by the consumer's emotional attachment to the brand, stemming from shared values and a sense of trust and respect (Beltramo, 2017). For instance, a brand's commitment to sustainability and ethical manufacturing practices can engender a deep-seated loyalty among consumers who prioritize these values.

On the other hand, functional benefits play a crucial role in fostering what is known as "head loyalty." This type of loyalty is driven by the practical and utilitarian aspects of a product or service, such as its ease of use, superior performance, or cost-effectiveness compared to alternatives (Beltramo, 2017). Customers who experience consistent satisfaction with a product's functionality are more likely to develop a preference for that brand, driven by rational evaluation of its benefits. Kopp (2023) emphasizes that both heart and head loyalty are essential for maintaining a robust and enduring connection with consumers.

In the highly competitive sports apparel market, where product differentiation can be minimal, the dual approach of leveraging both emotional and functional loyalty is particularly relevant. Companies like Adidas, Puma, and Nike must continuously innovate not only in product design and technology but also in their corporate social responsibility initiatives to cultivate a loyal customer base.

### **2.3.1. Influencing customer loyalty**

Marketing efforts that encompass post-purchase activities are critical for maintaining ongoing engagement with customers and fostering long-term loyalty (Alderton, 2023; Brütting, 2023). Effective post-purchase marketing strategies can

include a variety of initiatives such as follow-up emails, loyalty programs, personalized offers, and exceptional customer service. Each of these components plays a significant role in enhancing the customer experience and encouraging repeat business.

Follow-up emails serve as a touchpoint to express gratitude for the purchase, solicit feedback, and provide additional information about the product or service. They can also introduce customers to complementary products, thereby increasing the likelihood of future purchases (Brütting, 2023). Loyalty programs reward customers for their repeat business and encourage continued engagement by offering exclusive benefits, discounts, or points that can be redeemed for rewards. These programs not only incentivize repeat purchases but also create a sense of belonging and appreciation among customers (Alderton, 2023).

Personalized offers, tailored to the individual preferences and purchasing history of customers, can significantly enhance the relevance and appeal of marketing messages. By leveraging data analytics and customer insights, businesses can create highly targeted campaigns that resonate with customers on a personal level. This level of personalization can lead to increased customer satisfaction and a stronger emotional connection to the brand (Alderton, 2023).

Excellent customer service is another cornerstone of effective post-purchase marketing. Providing prompt, helpful, and courteous service can significantly impact a customer's perception of the brand. High-quality customer service can address any issues or concerns promptly, ensuring that customers feel valued and supported. This positive interaction can lead to increased customer loyalty and positive word-of-mouth referrals (Brütting, 2023).

Marketing efforts that include post-purchase activities are essential in maintaining contact with the customer. Effective post-purchase marketing can involve follow-up emails, loyalty programs, personalized offers, and excellent customer service. Studies have shown that 64% of German consumers are loyal to brands that offer

good customer service, incentives, or personalization (Emarsys, 2022). Furthermore, approximately 23.3 million Germans aged fourteen or older indicated that if they liked a brand, they would buy it repeatedly (Koptyug, 2022). This underscores the value of customer loyalty in the German market. Furthermore, a study, which is not limited to the German market, showed that 89% of respondents remain loyal to a brand if they feel that the same values are shared (Miller, 2021).

### **2.3.2. Benefits of maintaining customer loyalty**

The significance of customer loyalty transcends the mere concept of repeat purchases, encompassing a broader spectrum of strategic advantages for businesses. Loyal customers frequently evolve into brand advocates, sharing their favourable experiences with others and significantly influencing potential new customers. This phenomenon of word-of-mouth promotion is particularly invaluable, as recommendations from trusted sources hold substantial persuasive power. According to Helgesen (2010), brands that adeptly foster customer loyalty can reap the benefits of reduced marketing expenditures. This is largely because retaining existing customers is generally more cost-effective than acquiring new ones. Gallo (2014) supports this by indicating that the cost of acquiring a new customer can range from five to 25 times higher than that of maintaining an existing customer.

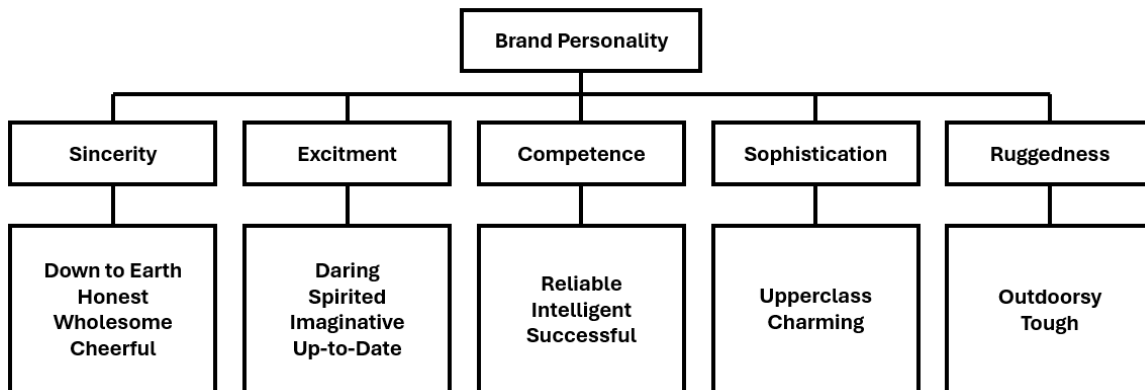
Moreover, loyal customers present businesses with the opportunity to gain valuable insights into areas such as product development, service enhancement, and overall customer experience improvements. As noted by Luarn and Lin (2003), engaging with loyal customers can yield valuable feedback that drives innovation and refinement. These insights are crucial for maintaining a competitive edge and ensuring that the offerings align closely with customer expectations and preferences.

The dynamics of customer loyalty also encompass the economic implications of a stable customer base. A loyal customer base often translates into a more predictable revenue stream, reducing the unpredictability associated with customer acquisition efforts. This stability allows businesses to allocate resources more efficiently, focusing on long-term strategic initiatives rather than continuous customer acquisition campaigns.

## **2.4. Brand Personality**

A brand personality is a set of human characteristics associated with a brand, as defined by Aaker (1997). Jennifer Aaker's development of the Brand Personality Scale (BPS) has been instrumental in measuring and describing a brand's personality, providing a structured approach to understanding the human traits that consumers attribute to brands. This scale breaks down a brand's personality into five core dimensions: Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication, and Ruggedness (see Figure 2, page 14). Each of these dimensions encompasses specific traits that contribute to a brand's overall personality profile (Aaker, 1997). For instance, Sincerity includes traits like honesty, Down-to-earth, cheerfulness and wholesomeness, while Excitement covers traits such as daring, spirited, Imaginativeness and up-to-date. Competence involves traits like reliability, success and intelligence, Sophistication includes traits like upper-class and charm, and Ruggedness covers traits such as toughness and outdoor-oriented characteristics.

Figure 2: Brand Personality Scale



(Aaker, 1997)

The BPS not only helps in identifying these traits but also facilitates targeted communication of personality, values, and characteristics to customers. According to Aaker, these dimensions can help in crafting a brand image that resonates with the desired customer base (Aaker, 1997). As an example, a brand that emphasizes Sincerity might focus on narratives around trust and family values, while a brand leaning towards excitement could highlight themes of adventure and innovation.

Based on personality, values, and characteristics are repeatedly communicated to customers in a targeted manner, attracting customers with similar or identical characteristics and values, who are then more willing to buy a product or service (Tarver, 2024; Tigre Moura, 2021). This strategic alignment can foster strong Customer loyalty and drive purchase behavior. However, it is important to recognize that it is not just the brand's direct communication that influences customer perception. Other factors, such as the use of a branded product or the observation of other customers using the brand's products or services, also shape the customer's impression (Tigre Moura, 2021).

It is critical to note that while the BPS provides a useful framework, it may also generalize consumer behavior. Each consumer interaction is unique, and

individual experiences and societal influences can significantly impact brand perception. Moreover, companies do not have to assign themselves to just one dimension, they can embrace multiple dimensions to appeal to a broader customer base (Kumar, 2016). As a result the Adidas company is not only labeled as confident, but also as positive, brave and unbeaten (Wentworth, 2023) and Nike not only trendy, but cheerful, imaginative and real as well (Mustamil, Chung, & Ariff, 2014). This flexibility allows brands to diversify their appeal and resonate with a wider audience, tailoring their messaging to different market segments.

Furthermore, it should be mentioned that Aaker's model from 1997 may not fully capture the evolving trends and values of today's consumers. For instance, current trends such as social responsibility and sustainability are increasingly influencing consumer choices and customer loyalty. These trends are not explicitly included in Aaker's original dimensions, suggesting that the model may be outdated (Madrigal & Boush, 2008). Modern consumers often look for brands that reflect their own values, including environmental responsibility, ethical sourcing, and corporate social responsibility (CSR). Therefore, brands that actively engage in these areas might need to communicate these aspects alongside the traditional dimensions of brand personality.

In addition, research indicates that a significant majority of consumers, 86%, demonstrate a preference for purchasing from companies that exhibit an authentic and honest brand personality, particularly through their social media presence (Miller, 2021). This finding underscores the growing importance of digital engagement and the role that perceived authenticity plays in shaping consumer trust and loyalty.

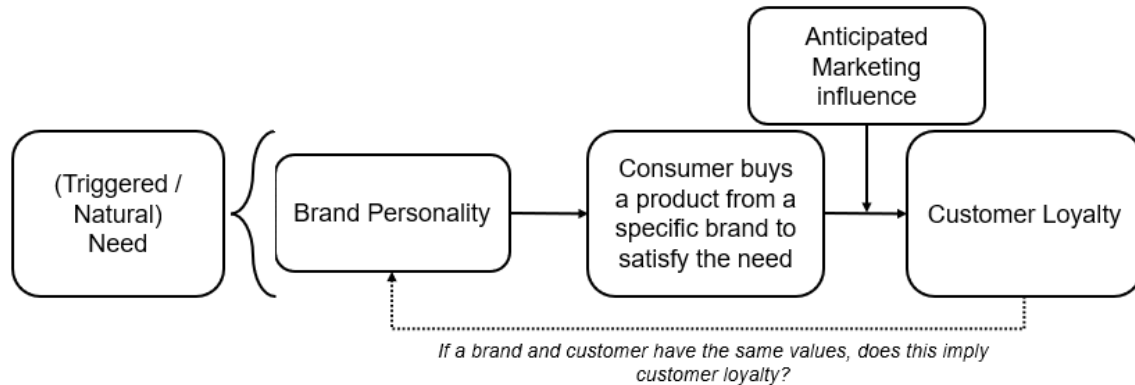
Moreover, Miller's (2021) study reveals slight gender differences in the emotional connection consumers feel towards companies. Specifically, 64% of women and 68% of men reported feeling an emotional bond with a brand, suggesting that emotional engagement is a widespread and critical factor in consumer behaviour

across both genders. These findings emphasize the importance of emotional branding strategies in creating loyal customers who are not only satisfied with the product but also feel a deeper connection to the brand's identity and values.

In conclusion, brand personality is a crucial variable that needs to be considered when understanding consumer behavior and the decision-making process. As shown in the conceptual framework (see section 2.5, page 17), brand personality can influence the need to buy a product or service. By aligning brand characteristics with consumer values and preferences, companies can enhance their market positioning and build stronger, more enduring relationships with their customers. This alignment requires continuous adaptation to current trends and consumer expectations, ensuring that the brand remains relevant and appealing in a constantly changing market landscape.

## 2.5. Conceptual Framework

Figure 3: Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework emphasizes that consumer needs serve as the cornerstone. Understanding these needs is crucial for businesses aiming to influence consumer decisions effectively. Within this framework, variables such as brand personality play significant roles in determining whether a consumer decides to make a purchase and where they choose to make it.

Brand personality, as a set of human characteristics associated with a brand (see section 2.4, page 13), helps consumers relate to and identify with the brand. When a brand successfully embodies traits that resonate with a consumer's self-image or aspirations, it can significantly impact their purchasing decisions. For instance, a consumer who values positivity and confidence may be drawn to Adidas. Similarly, a consumer who prioritizes Trendiness and imaginability might prefer Nike.

However, the journey from a registered customer to a truly loyal one remains complex and often elusive. While marketing efforts may lay the groundwork for loyalty by attracting customers and encouraging initial purchases, the specific factors that contribute to genuine loyalty are multifaceted and require further

exploration and analysis. For example, shared values between the consumer and the brand can foster a deeper connection.

Practical considerations, such as product quality, customer service, and price, also play critical roles in building loyalty. A consumer might initially choose a brand because of its appealing personality, but continued loyalty often depends on consistent, positive experiences with the brand's products and services. For instance, if a brand consistently delivers high-quality products and exceptional customer service, it reinforces the consumer's decision to remain loyal.

The transition from a registered customer to a loyal one also involves emotional and psychological elements. Trust, satisfaction, and emotional connection are critical components of loyalty. A brand that consistently meets or exceeds customer expectations can build trust, while a brand that evokes positive emotions can create a strong emotional bond.

This underscores the complexity of consumer-brand relationships and loyalty dynamics. The interplay between rational and emotional factors, along with external influences such as market trends and social norms (see section 2.2.3, page 7), adds layers of complexity to understanding and cultivating loyalty. It is essential for businesses to continuously monitor and adapt their strategies to meet evolving consumer needs and expectations as stated in section 2.4 on page 16.

In conclusion, while consumer needs are central to the decision-making process, the variables of brand personality significantly influence purchasing decisions and loyalty. Effective marketing that resonates with these needs can attract customers but transforming them into loyal customers requires a deeper understanding of the factors driving genuine loyalty. This complex and dynamic relationship necessitates ongoing research to adapt to changing consumer landscapes and enhance brand loyalty strategies.

## 2.6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this literature review highlights the key dynamics influencing customer loyalty and brand personality in the German sports apparel industry. The industry is highly competitive, with major players like Adidas, Puma, and Nike driving growth through innovation, brand identity, and sustainability efforts. Customer loyalty is shaped by both emotional and functional benefits, requiring brands to maintain a balance between cultivating emotional connections and delivering high-performance products.

The growing popularity of trends such as athleisure and the increasing demand for sustainable products underscore the need for companies to align their brand values with consumer expectations. The evolving preferences of German consumers, particularly their focus on quality and, environmental responsibility, are essential drivers of customer loyalty.

Furthermore, the concept of brand personality remains a critical tool for fostering customer loyalty. A brand's ability to align its personality traits with the values and aspirations of its target audience can strengthen consumer relationships and influence purchasing decisions. However, as consumer expectations evolve, it is crucial for brands to continually adapt their personality and communication strategies, incorporating trends like social responsibility to remain relevant in a dynamic market.

Ultimately, the review demonstrates that while functional attributes are significant, the emotional connection consumers form with a brand is vital for long-term loyalty. To sustain growth and remain competitive, companies in the German sports apparel industry must continue to innovate and resonate with the evolving needs and values of their customers.

## **3. Methodology and Research Design**

### **3.1. Overview**

This study explores the relationship between brand personality and customer loyalty in the German sports apparel industry, focusing on the perceptions of German consumers who regularly purchase sports apparel. The research is framed within the positivist paradigm, adopting a deductive approach to test hypotheses about how brand personality influences customer loyalty. A cross-sectional, quantitative survey was conducted, targeting participants who meet specific criteria such as German citizenship, legal adulthood, and prior experience purchasing sports apparel. The survey is designed to capture data on participants' brand preferences, perceptions of brand personality traits, and levels of loyalty to specific brands.

The data collection uses Microsoft Forms for ease and flexibility, and analysis is conducted using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics offer an overview of the sample and the basic trends in consumer perceptions, while inferential statistics are used to test hypotheses and identify significant relationships between variables. Statistical tests such as Pearson's correlation, the Chi-square test, and t-tests are employed to explore how brand personality traits, such as honesty and emotional connection, influence customer loyalty, with a particular focus on the differences across age groups.

## 3.2. Research Philosophy and Approach

The research philosophy chosen by the researcher aligns with the positivism paradigm, a widely recognized approach in scientific inquiry that emphasizes the objective measurement of reality. Positivism, rooted in the natural sciences, asserts that the world operates according to fixed laws and patterns that can be observed, quantified, and tested through numerical data (Jansen, 2023). The central assumption of positivism is that reality exists independently of human perception, and thus, it can be objectively measured using structured methodologies such as surveys, or statistical analysis (Dudovskiy, 2024).

In this research, the focus is on identifying and analysing the quantifiable relationships between specific variables, notably brand personality and customer loyalty. Brand personality refers to the human-like characteristics attributed to a brand (see section 2.3, page 9), while customer loyalty reflects a consumer's commitment and repeat engagement with a brand (see section 2.4, page 13). The aim is to determine how different aspects of brand personality influence customer loyalty, with the goal of drawing conclusions that are generalizable to a broader population or market segment.

The research follows a deductive approach. A deductive approach involves starting with a general theory or hypothesis and then testing this through data collection. In this method, researchers begin with existing theories or models, develop hypotheses, and use data to confirm or reject these hypotheses (Dudovskiy, 2024).

Advantages of the deductive approach include its structured and logical process, allowing the researcher to test established theories in a clear, objective manner. It also enables the creation of generalizable findings if the sample is representative (Dudovskiy, 2024). Since this method relies on quantifiable data, it provides

concrete evidence to support or refute hypotheses, making the research findings more reliable.

However, disadvantages include its reliance on pre-existing theories, which can limit the discovery of new insights (Dudovskiy, 2024).

The aim is to test whether brand personality has a significant impact on customer loyalty in the German sports apparel industry.

### **3.3. Research Strategy and Design**

This research adopts a quantitative strategy, utilizing a cross-sectional survey methodology to collect data from participants at a specific point in time (Surendran, 2018; Thomas, 2023). The quantitative nature of the study allows for the measurement of relationships between the variables of interest, namely, brand personality and customer loyalty, using numerical data. A cross-sectional survey design is particularly suited to capturing a snapshot of consumer perceptions and behaviours in the German sports apparel industry at a single moment, providing insight into the current state of these relationships.

By collecting data at one point in time, this design allows for efficient data gathering from a large sample, facilitating the statistical analysis necessary to test predefined hypotheses. However, the cross-sectional nature also means that this research cannot track changes or trends over time, limiting its ability to capture long-term shifts in customer loyalty or brand personality (Thomas, 2023). Despite this limitation, the approach remains valuable for identifying and analysing the immediate impact of brand personality traits on customer loyalty within the given industry context.

### **3.4. Collection Primary Data**

#### **3.4.1. Sampling strategy**

The study sample will consist of German citizens, deliberately chosen without restrictions based on cultural background. This inclusive criterion ensures a broad and representative sample of the population, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the findings. This diversity within the sample is intended to capture a comprehensive picture of the behaviours and opinions prevalent among the German population.

To be eligible for participation in this study, individuals must meet the following criteria: they must be at least 18 years of age, ensuring they are legally recognized as adults and capable of providing informed consent. Additionally, participants must hold German citizenship, which is necessary for the scope of the research focusing on consumer behaviour within Germany. Furthermore, participants are required to have prior experience purchasing sports apparel, as this ensures they have relevant consumer experience, which is central to the objectives stated in section 1.4 on page 2 of this study. These criteria help ensure the sample is appropriate for addressing the research questions.

The target response rate for the survey is 269. This is based on the total population of Germany, which is 83,400,000 (Destatis, 2024). Furthermore, a population proportion of 56% can be assumed. Based on the statement from section 2.2.1 on page 5, this means that 33,000,000 people exercise at least once a month and 14,000,000 several times a week. It can therefore be concluded that at least 56% of the population buys sports apparel.

A confidence level of 90% and a margin of error of 5% can therefore be achieved, despite the small period of one week in which the data will be collected.

### **3.4.2. Survey**

The primary research is conducted with an online survey, conducted with Microsoft forms (see Appendix A, page A). The use of surveys in research offers considerable flexibility allowing participants to engage with the questions at their convenience, rather than being restricted to a predetermined meeting with the researcher. This cross-sectional approach enables participants to consider their responses thoughtfully and thoroughly, within the constraints of a specified deadline. Consequently, this flexibility can lead to more considered and accurate responses, enhancing the overall quality of the data collected (DeFranzo, 2012).

By leveraging tools such as Microsoft Forms, the researcher can create a survey that seamlessly integrate different types of questions, thus minimizing the effort required from participants (Microsoft, 2024).

Quantitative questions, such as multiple-choice, for a gender question or scale items for how often they purchase sport apparel, can capture measurable data on respondents' attitudes, behaviours, and preferences. These questions are typically straightforward and quick to answer, which can encourage higher response rates (McCombes, 2021).

One of the significant advantages of using surveys is the ability to ensure anonymity, which can be crucial in encouraging honest and candid responses (DeFranzo, 2012). When participants are assured of their anonymity in advance, they may feel more comfortable sharing their true opinions and experiences. This can be especially important when dealing with sensitive topics or when participants might otherwise be hesitant to disclose certain information, like their age or opinions to specific topics.

In addition to these benefits, the digital nature of tools like Microsoft Forms allows for efficient data collection and management. Responses can be automatically recorded and organized, facilitating easier analysis. The ability to distribute

surveys electronically also means that a wide and diverse range of participants can be reached, enhancing the representativeness of the sample (Microsoft, 2024).

Since the survey is made with only German participants the survey will be conducted in German and later translated into English by the researcher if necessary.

The survey is divided into four parts as it can be seen in Appendix A on page A. The first part is the request for consent, whether the participant really wants to take part in the study and allows the researcher to use the data for academic purposes.

If consent is not given, the survey will not be continued with the participant. If the participant agrees, he or she will be led to control questions to confirm that the participant belongs to the target group of the survey. This is tested by confirming that the participant is a German citizen and has bought sport apparel before. If both questions are answered in the affirmative, it can be confirmed that the participant is a customer of the German sports apparel industry. If one or both questions are denied, the participant has completed the survey and is not eligible for further questions.

The third section of the survey asks for demographic data. This includes questions about gender, how old the participant is and how often they buy sports apparel on average. This serves to illustrate that both highly involved and less involved people can take part in the survey and every insight is valuable.

The fourth section explores the topic of brand personality and customer loyalty. Firstly, an overview is given of which brands are familiar to the sample group and which are purchased the most. As in the literature review, the focus here is on Adidas, Puma and Nike, but there is also the opportunity to name other brands independently in order to identify any brands that were not previously considered but have an influence on the German sports apparel industry.

Furthermore, questions are asked which, on the one hand, ask which factors the participants consider important to become customers of a brand, to find a value for brand personality in contrast to other factors. On the other hand, participants were asked what factors make them switch their brand to determine the importance of brand personality.

To see how loyal the participants are, they are not asked how loyal they are to their brand, but whether they would recommend their brand to their friends and family.

As a final question in connection with their most frequently purchased brand, participants are asked which characteristics they associate with the brand. The dimensions of Aaker's brand personality model are not used here (Aaker, 1997), but rather the characteristics that belong to the dimensions. This gives participants the opportunity not to have to choose a dimension, but to concentrate entirely on how they feel about the brand, since, as already mentioned in section 2.4 on page 13, a brand can have more than one characteristic and can therefore belong to more than one dimension.

The last three questions of the survey are intended to give a picture of the participants' opinions on whether they feel an emotional connection to a brand, how much they think brand personality influences their customer loyalty and how important it is for them that a brand represents the same values as they do.

To conclude, the survey aims to get a diverse group from the German sports apparel industry to share their opinions on how they perceive their brand and how they see brand personality as an influence that affects their customer loyalty.

#### **3.4.2.1. Pilot test**

A pilot test with a total of 10 people, who were personally selected from the private environment from the researcher, was carried out to check the functionality and

user-friendliness of the system in a controlled environment. The aim of the test was to identify potential weaknesses, usability problems and technical errors at an early stage and to rectify these before the wider implementation. The selection of 10 participants made it possible to gather valuable feedback from a manageable group while ensuring that the system was robust enough for a larger number of users.

### **3.4.3. Access and Ethical Issues**

Participants for the survey will be approached by the researcher online ensuring a diverse and representative sample of the target population. Potential participants will receive an invitation explaining the purpose of the study, the nature of their involvement, and the importance of their contribution to the research. Emphasis will be placed on the voluntary nature of participation, assuring participants that they are under no obligation to partake in the survey.

Participants can decline the invitation without any consequences and will be asked to give freely, specific consent at the beginning of the survey (GDPR, 2024). Furthermore, even after agreeing to participate, participants retain the right to withdraw from the study. They may opt-out before starting the survey or during the process of completing the survey. This ensures that participants feel in control of their involvement and are not subjected to any pressure.

To protect the privacy of participants, strict confidentiality protocols will be implemented. The identities of all respondents will remain confidential throughout the research process. Unique identifiers, like an ID as it can be seen in Appendix C on page S, will be used instead of personal information to ensure anonymity. All completed surveys will be securely stored on a password-protected computer to meet General Data Protection Regulations and access to the data will be

restricted to the researcher and authorized personnel involved in the study only (GDPR, 2024).

The data collected from the surveys will be managed with the utmost care to ensure privacy and confidentiality. Once the master's dissertation is completed, all survey responses will be permanently deleted from the storage device possessed from the researcher to meet storage limitations principles (GDPR, 2024).

Participants will be informed about the measures taken to ensure their privacy and the security of their data. This includes a clear explanation of how their responses will be used, how confidentiality will be maintained, and the steps taken to anonymize and translate any direct German quotations used in the analysis. Transparency in these procedures is crucial to build trust and ensure participants feel comfortable and secure in providing honest and comprehensive responses.

By ensuring voluntary participation, maintaining strict confidentiality, securely managing data, and transparently communicating with participants, the research will uphold high ethical standards. These practices are essential to protect participants' rights, encourage honest participation, and enhance the overall integrity and reliability of the research findings.

### **3.5. Hypothesis**

As part of the deductive approach, four hypotheses were formulated based on theoretical principles and observations in connection with brand personality and customer loyalty:

**H1: Brand personality positively influences customer loyalty.**

This hypothesis is based on the theory that brand personality influences purchasing behaviour. A strong brand personality can promote consumer

identification with the brand and thus increase customer loyalty. Customer loyalty is a decisive factor for long-term brand success, as loyal customers not only buy repeatedly, but also maintain their relationship with the brand over a longer period (Alderton, 2023; Brütting, 2023). This hypothesis aims to investigate the positive relationship between the perception of brand personality and customer loyalty.

**H2: The majority of consumers in the German sports apparel industry feel an emotional connection to the brand they buy most often.**

The emotional connection between consumers and brands is a key factor in consumer behaviour research, especially in highly competitive industries such as the sports apparel industry. Studies show that 64% of women and 68% of men feel an emotional connection to their favourite brand (Miller, 2021). On this basis, the hypothesis assumes that the majority of customers develop an emotional relationship with the brands they regularly purchase.

**H3: Honesty is most strongly associated with the most frequently purchased brand.**

The perception of honesty as an attribute of brand personality is crucial for customers' trust in the brand. According to Miller's studies (2021), 86% of consumers prefer to buy from brands that they perceive as honest and authentic. This hypothesis examines the extent to which honesty in brand personality plays a decisive role in the choice of the most frequently purchased brand. In the German sports apparel industry, where authenticity and transparency are becoming increasingly important, honesty could be a key factor influencing brand choice.

**H4: The influence of brand personality on customer loyalty is stronger among younger consumers (18-29 years).**

Research shows that 64% of women and 68% of men feel an emotional connection to their favourite brands, but these results hardly reveal any gender-specific differences. Therefore, this hypothesis aims to differentiate the influence of brand personality by age group to show possible differences in the behaviour of younger consumers compared to older groups. Additionally, the direct question, if brand personality influences their customer loyalty will be used to compare.

The hypotheses aim to test theoretical assumptions about brand personality and customer loyalty, considering industry-specific factors in the German sports apparel industry.

### **3.6. Approach to Data Analysis**

The analysis of the survey data employs a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical methods to comprehensively examine the research questions and test the proposed hypotheses as stated in section 3.5 on page 28. The use of both types of statistics allows for a thorough exploration of the data, including summarizing key patterns and trends as well as making inferences about the relationships between variables. This mixed approach ensures that the data are interpreted in both a straightforward and statistically rigorous manner.

### **3.6.1. Descriptive Statistics and Data Visualisation**

The initial analysis is conducted using descriptive statistics to provide an overview of the sample and the responses. Descriptive statistics summarize the basic features of the data by presenting measures such as frequencies, means, and standard deviations. In this study, Microsoft Forms will be used as the primary tool for collecting and generating graphical statistics such as bar charts and pie charts. These graphical representations provide an immediate visual overview of the data, allowing for a clearer understanding of the demographic composition of the participants, as well as their responses to key questions (Microsoft, 2024).

To further enhance data visualisation, Microsoft Excel will be used to generate additional charts and graphs.

### **3.6.2. Inferential Statistics and Hypothesis Testing**

Beyond descriptive statistics, inferential statistics are essential for making broader generalizations about the population from which the sample is drawn. In this study, IBM SPSS Statistics software was employed to conduct more sophisticated analyses. SPSS is particularly well-suited for quantitative research due to its ability to handle complex data sets and perform a wide variety of statistical tests. The researcher selected SPSS not only for its comprehensive features but also for its user-friendly interface and ability to deliver quick and reliable results, which is critical given the limited time available for analysis (Williams, 2024).

Several statistical models will be employed to test the study's hypotheses and examine the relationships between variables. The main statistical tests used in this study include Pearson's correlation, the Chi-square test, and the t-test for independent samples. Each of these tests serves a specific purpose and is suited to different aspects of the research objectives.

Pearson's correlation coefficient is used to assess the linear relationship between two continuous variables (Turney, 2024). In the context of this study, Pearson's correlation is applied to explore whether brand personality has a positive correlation with customer loyalty. This test helps determine if customers who perceive their favourite brand as having a distinctive and appealing personality are more likely to remain loyal to that brand over time. Furthermore, Pearson's correlation is used to examine the relationship between specific brand characteristics, such as the "honest" dimension of brand personality, and consumer behaviours like purchase frequency.

The Chi-square test of independence is used to determine whether there is a significant association between two categorical variables (Benning, 2023). In this study, the Chi-square test helps investigate whether the observed frequencies in the data differ significantly from what would be expected by chance. One key area of investigation is whether there are significant differences in the frequency of sports apparel purchases among participants who report feeling an emotional connection to their preferred brand, compared to those who do not. By applying the Chi-square test, the researcher can determine whether emotional connection significantly influences purchase behaviour across the sample.

The t-test for independent samples is employed to compare the means of two independent groups to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between them (Flandorfer, 2023). In this study, the t-test is used to analyse whether brand personality has a stronger influence on customer loyalty among certain demographic groups. Specifically, the researcher examines whether the influence of brand personality is stronger in the 18 to 29 age group, compared to older participants. The t-test enables the researcher to identify whether younger consumers are more influenced by brand personality traits when it comes to remaining loyal to a sports apparel brand, as compared to older demographics.

In conclusion, this study combines descriptive and inferential statistics to offer a robust analysis of the influence of brand personality on customer loyalty in the German sports apparel industry. The descriptive statistics provide a clear and accessible overview of the data, highlighting key trends and patterns in consumer preferences and behaviours. Meanwhile, the inferential statistical tests, including Pearson's correlation, the Chi-square test, and the t-test, allow the researcher to explore deeper relationships between variables and test specific hypotheses regarding the role of brand personality, emotional connection, and demographic differences in shaping consumer loyalty.

By leveraging the strengths of both Microsoft Forms, Excel, and SPSS, the researcher can conduct a comprehensive analysis that not only describes the data but also offers insights into the underlying factors driving consumer decisions in the sports apparel industry. The combination of these statistical techniques ensures that the findings are both descriptive and predictive, contributing valuable knowledge to the field of brand personality and customer loyalty.

### **3.7. Conclusion**

The study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the impact of brand personality on customer loyalty in the German sports apparel industry. The findings are expected to validate the hypotheses that brand personality positively influences loyalty, that emotional connections are central to customer loyalty, and that honesty is a key factor in brand choice. Additionally, the research investigates whether younger consumers, aged 18-29, are more influenced by brand personality than older age groups. Through rigorous analysis using SPSS, the study contributes to existing literature by providing insights into the specific ways brand personality traits foster customer loyalty, offering practical implications for brands operating in the competitive sports apparel sector. This research highlights

the importance of a strong, appealing brand personality in shaping consumer behaviour and long-term brand success.

## 4. Presentation and Discussion of Findings

### 4.1. Overview

The survey was conducted over a one-week period and made accessible online for potential participants. A total of 279 individuals responded to the survey during this time. However, upon further review, it became evident that not all 279 responses were completed or met the inclusion criteria necessary for analysis in the study. Several factors contributed to the exclusion of certain responses, which resulted in a final sample size that was smaller than initially anticipated.

First, two participants explicitly indicated that they did not consent to their responses being used for academic purposes by ticking the relevant box. In compliance to ethical research standards as stated in section 3.4.3 on page 27, which prioritize participant consent and data privacy, these responses were excluded from the analysis. This precaution ensures that the study complies with ethical guidelines governing the use of human subjects in research, which is essential for maintaining the integrity of the research process.

*Figure 4: Consent*

1. By proceeding with the survey, you consent to participate in this study. Wenn Sie mit der Umfrage fortfahren, erklären Sie sich mit der Teilnahme an dieser Studie einverstanden.

279 Antworten



*(Appendix B)*

Furthermore, five participants were excluded from the study because they were not German citizens. The study's focus was on the consumption patterns and preferences of German citizens in relation to sports apparel, and therefore, responses from non-German participants were not considered relevant. Their exclusion is justified by the fact that their responses would not contribute to the study's primary objective of analysing consumer behaviour specific to German sports apparel.

Figure 5: Citizenship

2. Are you a German citizen? Sind Sie ein deutscher Staatsangehöriger?

277 Antworten



(Appendix B)

Additionally, another 35 participants indicated that they do not purchase sports apparel at all. As the study sought to gather insights into the behaviour and preferences of individuals who actively engage in the purchasing of sports apparel, these participants were deemed unable to provide meaningful contributions to the research questions. Their exclusion further refines the sample to those individuals whose consumption habits align with the research focus.

Figure 6: Purchasing sports apparel

### 3. Do you purchase sports apparel? Kaufen Sie Sportbekleidung?

272 Antworten



(Appendix B)

After applying these exclusion criteria, the final number of valid responses stood at 237. This sample size, while substantial, did not meet the original target of 269 responses, which had been determined necessary to achieve a 90% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. As a result, the study's findings are based on 237 responses, which yields a slightly wider margin of error. Specifically, with 237 valid responses, the margin of error increases to 5.32%, while maintaining the 90% confidence level. This means that the researcher can be 90% confident that the true population values fall within a range of plus or minus 5.32% of the values based on the survey data.

In conclusion, although the final sample size falls short of the initially desired number of participants, the data collected remains robust. The study's findings are still statistically valid, albeit with a marginally higher margin of error than initially planned. The exclusion of participants who did not meet the consent, citizenship, and consumer behaviour criteria enhances the relevance and accuracy of the data, ensuring that the results reflect the target population of German sports apparel

consumers. Nevertheless, the minor increase in the margin of error should be taken into consideration when interpreting the study's outcomes

## **4.2. Findings**

### **4.2.1. Descriptive Statistics**

#### **4.2.1.1. How old are you?**

In the study, participants were categorized into distinct age groups to understand the demographic distribution of the sample population. The age categories provided were 18-29 years, 30-43 years, 44-58 years, and 59 years and older as the reader can see in Figure 7 on page 39. The data collected from the 237 participants offer a detailed demographic breakdown, which is crucial for analyzing the age-related trends and preferences in the context of sports apparel purchasing.

The largest segment of the sample population falls within the 18-29 years age group. A total of 116 participants (48.9%) belong to this category. This considerable proportion highlights the predominance of younger consumers in the sports apparel market.

The 30-43 years age group includes thirty participants (12.7%) of the total sample. This group represents a mid-range demographic, which might be characterized by a balance of professional responsibilities and personal interests. The relatively smaller proportion compared to the younger age group suggests that while important, this demographic has a lesser representation in the sample.

Twenty-six participants (10.9%) fall into the 44-58 years age bracket. This age group generally encompasses individuals who are more established in their careers and possibly more discerning in their purchase decisions.

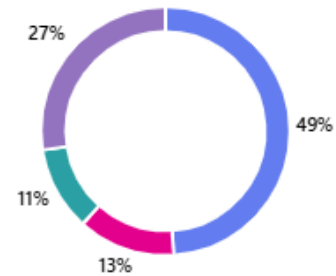
The oldest age group, comprising individuals aged 59 years and over, includes sixty-five participants (27.4%). This age category reflects a sizable portion of the sample, suggesting that older consumers also play a notable role in the sports apparel industry. The substantial representation of this age group highlights the importance of considering diverse consumer needs across age ranges, as older individuals contribute significantly to the market.

Figure 7: Findings age groups

#### 4. How old are you? Wie alt sind Sie?

237 Antworten

● 18 - 29 Years / Jahre	116
● 30 - 43 Years / Jahre	30
● 44 - 58 Years / Jahre	26
● 59+	65



(Appendix B)

The descriptive statistics reveal a diverse age distribution among the 237 participants, with a predominant concentration of younger consumer (18-29 years) and a notable representation of older adults (59 years and over). The relatively smaller proportions of participants in the 30-43 years and 44-58 years age brackets provide insight into the varying degrees of market engagement across different life stages.

Overall, the analysis of the age distribution offers valuable insights into the demographic composition of the sample population, highlighting the diverse consumer base within the sports apparel market and providing a foundation for understanding how age influences purchasing behavior and preferences.

#### 4.2.1.2. Which Gender are you?

Additionally, the sample group demonstrates a diverse distribution of gender identities as it can be seen in Figure 8 on page 40. Of the 237 total participants, 124 individuals identified as male, accounting for approximately 52% of the sample population. This represents the largest gender group within the study.

The study also included 110 female participants, representing around 46% of the total sample. This near balance between male and female participants provides a valuable foundation for exploring potential gender-based differences and similarities in sports apparel purchasing behaviours.

In addition to the male and female participants, three participants (approximately 1% of the sample) identified themselves as belonging to the diverse gender category. The inclusion of individuals who identify as non-binary or gender-diverse reflects a growing recognition of gender diversity within both society and the consumer market. Although a small proportion of the total sample, the presence of participants who identify outside the traditional gender binary is significant.

Figure 8: Findings gender groups

#### 5. Which Gender are you? Welches Geschlecht sind Sie?

237 Antworten

● Male / Männlich	124
● Female / Weiblich	110
● Divers / Divers	3



(Appendix B)

Overall, the gender distribution in the sample offers a broad and inclusive representation of different gender identities, which enhances the study's ability to analyse how gender influences sports apparel consumption patterns.

This diverse composition allows for a comprehensive examination of how customer loyalty and brand personality perception across different gender groups, contributing to a deeper understanding of the role gender plays in shaping preferences and purchasing decisions in the sports apparel market.

#### **4.2.1.3. How often do you purchase sports apparel?**

In addition to demographic information, the 237 participants were also asked to indicate the frequency with which they purchase sport apparel.

The results, which are visualised in Figure 9 on page 42, indicated that 11 participants, or approximately 4.6% of the sample, reported purchasing sport apparel once a month. This group represents the most frequent buyers.

A larger group of 62 participants (26.2% of the sample) reported buying sport apparel every two to three months. These individuals, who make purchases on a quarterly basis, can be considered moderately frequent buyers.

The largest proportion of participants, 85 individuals (35.9%), indicated that they purchase sports apparel twice a year. This semi-annual buying pattern suggests that these consumers may engage with the sport apparel industry on a more occasional basis, possibly in response to specific needs such as changing weather conditions, planned fitness routines, or occasional participation in sports activities.

A further 56 participants (23.6%) reported purchasing sports apparel once a year. This group may consist of consumers who view sports apparel as a functional necessity rather than a frequent purchase.

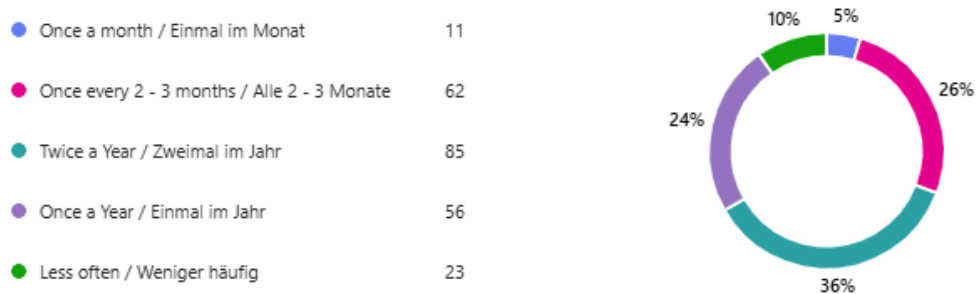
Lastly, 23 participants (9.7%) indicated that they buy sports apparel less than once a year. This group represents the least frequent buyers, likely comprising

individuals who do not regularly engage in sports or physical activities that necessitate frequent updates to their sports apparel collection.

Figure 9: Findings purchase frequency

6. How often do you purchase sports apparel? Wie oft kaufen Sie Sportbekleidung?

237 Antworten



(Appendix B)

Overall, the varying frequencies with which participants purchase sports apparel highlight the diversity in consumer behaviour within the market. The distribution of responses provides important insights into how often different segments of the population engage with sports apparel, allowing for a more targeted analysis of the factors that drive purchasing decisions across different consumer groups.

#### 4.2.1.4. Which sports apparel brands are you most familiar with?

To assess brand recognition within the German sports apparel industry, participants were asked to identify which brands they were most familiar with. A descriptive statistical analysis of the data offers insights into the prevalence of brand recognition for major and emerging brands.

Adidas, a globally recognized brand with strong roots in Germany, as stated in section 2.2.2 on page 6, emerged as the most familiar brand among participants. Out of 237 participants, 177 (74.7%) indicated that they were familiar with Adidas. The mode for this category is Adidas, as it was the most frequently mentioned brand, indicating its strong brand equity and widespread market presence.

Nike, another major global player in the sports apparel industry, was familiar to 166 participants (70%). While slightly behind Adidas, Nike still enjoys significant brand recognition among German consumers. Nike's ability to integrate both performance and fashion into its products has made it a go-to brand for a wide demographic, from professional athletes to casual wearers. The high level of brand awareness suggests that Nike competes closely with Adidas in terms of market penetration and consumer visibility. The frequency of mentions for Nike places it second after Adidas in terms of overall familiarity, reinforcing its competitive standing in the market.

Puma, although a smaller player compared to Adidas and Nike, was still familiar to seventy-five participants (31.6%). As a German-born brand (see section 2.2.2, page 6), Puma maintains a notable presence in the local market, albeit with a smaller consumer base in terms of brand awareness compared to its larger competitors.

Figure 10: Findings most familiarity

7. Which sports apparel brands are you most familiar with? (Select all that apply) Mit welchen Sportbekleidungsmarken sind Sie am meisten vertraut? (Wählen Sie alle zutreffenden aus)

237 Antworten



(Appendix B)

Other brands that were mentioned more frequently are Asics, Under Armour, New Balance, Oace and Oacensapart, which are alternatives to the three previously mentioned brands.

#### 4.2.1.5. Which brand of sports apparel do you purchase most frequently?

Following the initial inquiry regarding general brand familiarity within the German sports apparel market, the study progressed to a more focused question, asking participants to specify which brand they purchase the most. This question provided valuable insights into consumer behaviour, highlighting the specific brands that convert brand awareness into actual purchasing decisions.

Adidas emerged as the most frequently purchased brand among the participants, with 88 out of 237 participants (37.1%) indicating that they buy Adidas sports apparel more often than any other brand.

Nike followed closely behind Adidas, with 78 participants (32.9%) stating that they buy Nike products more frequently than other brands. While slightly behind Adidas,

Nike's strong market presence is evident, indicating that it appeals to a broad consumer base.

Puma, another well-established brand in the German and global sports apparel markets, was purchased most frequently by 17 participants (7.2%). While its market share is notably smaller compared to Adidas and Nike, Puma remains a significant brand.

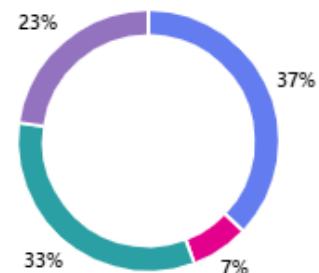
An additional 54 participants (22.8%) indicated that they most frequently purchase sports apparel from an undefined or alternative brand, which includes smaller or niche brands such as Under Armour, Asics, and Oceansapart. The relatively high number of participants selecting undefined brands highlights the diversity and fragmentation within the sports apparel industry. These brands, while not as dominant as Adidas or Nike, cater to specific consumer needs and preferences, often appealing to those seeking specialized products or alternatives to the mainstream options. The mode for undefined brands, while spread across several options, suggests that consumers are increasingly open to exploring alternatives beyond the major players.

Figure 11: Findings most frequently purchased brand

8. Which brand of sports apparel do you purchase most frequently? Welche Marke von Sportbekleidung kaufen Sie am häufigsten?

237 Antworten

● Adidas	88
● Puma	17
● Nike	78
● Sonstiges	54



The statistics indicate that Adidas and Nike dominate the German sports apparel market in terms of purchasing frequency, together accounting for 70% of the participants' most frequent purchases. Adidas was identified as the most purchased brand with 37%, followed by Nike as the second most purchased brand with 33%. Puma represents a smaller but still significant portion of the market with 7%, while a substantial number of consumers (22.8%) gravitate toward alternative brands, demonstrating the importance of niche markets and the variety of options available to consumers.

#### **4.2.1.6. What factors influence your decision to purchase sports apparel from a particular brand?**

The study involved an analysis of the responses from 237 participants regarding the importance of five key factors like quality, price, design and style, comfort, and brand personality, in their decision-making process for purchasing sports apparel. Each factor was ranked on a scale from one to five, with one indicating the most important and five indicating the least important. The results were analyzed to provide insights into the central tendencies and distribution of preferences across these factors.

The quality factor had the highest overall ranking in importance. Out of the 237 participants, 72 (30.4%) ranked quality as the most important factor (ranked one), 79 (33.3%) ranked it as the second most important factor, 58 (24.5%) placed it third, 23 (9.7%) assigned it fourth place, and 5 (2.1%) ranked it as the least important factor. The mode for quality was two, as it was most frequently ranked second. The high percentage of participants who ranked quality in the top two positions indicates that most participants prioritized product quality as a key factor in their purchasing decisions.

Price was the second most important factor overall, although its importance was distributed more evenly across the rankings. A total of sixty-seven participants (28.3%) ranked price as the most important factor, making it a strong consideration for many buyers. Forty-five participants (19%) ranked it second, 53 (22.4%) placed it third, and 54 (22.8%) ranked it fourth. Eighteen participants (7.6%) rated price as the least important factor, indicating some variability in its perceived importance. The mode for price was one, suggesting that for a significant portion of the sample, cost considerations outweighed other factors.

Design and style were ranked as the most important factor by 55 participants (23.2%). However, most rankings for design and style were spread across the middle of the scale, with forty-eight participants (20.3%) ranking it second, 50 (21.1%) ranking it third, and 71 (29.9%) placing it fourth. Thirteen participants (5.5%) ranked design and style as the least important factor, indicating it held lower significance compared to other factors for a subset of participants. The mode for design and style was four, which suggests that while some participants valued design and style highly, the majority viewed it as a secondary consideration behind more functional attributes like quality and price.

Comfort was ranked the most important factor by 41 participants (17.3%). Fifty-seven participants (24.1%) ranked it second, 61 (25.7%) ranked it third, and 67 (28.3%) placed it fourth, with only eleven participants (4.6%) ranking it as the least important factor. The mode for comfort was four, indicating that while comfort was considered relevant by many participants, it was frequently ranked lower in comparison to quality, price, design, and style.

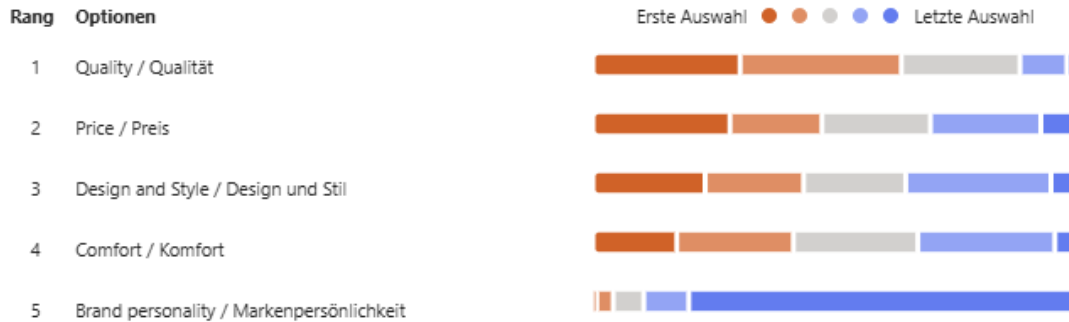
Brand personality was ranked the least important factor by the majority of participants. Only two participants (0.8%) rated it as the most important factor, and eight (3.4%) ranked it second. Fifteen participants (6.3%) ranked it third, while twenty-two participants (9.3%) placed it fourth. The overwhelming majority of participants, 190 participants (80.2%), ranked brand personality as the least

important factor. The mode for brand personality was five, indicating a strong consensus that it was the least influential factor in driving purchasing decisions.

Figure 12: Findings factor influence

9. What factors influence your decision to purchase sports apparel from a particular brand? (Rank in order of importance) Welche Faktoren beeinflussen Ihre Entscheidung, Sportbekleidung einer...

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(Appendix B)

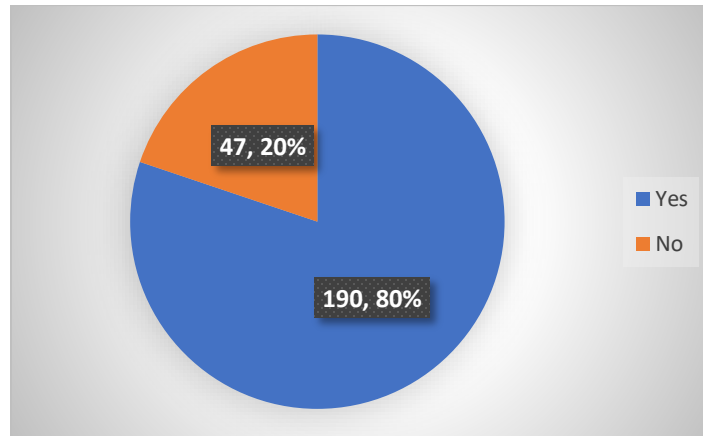
Overall, the statistic indicates that quality is the most important factor for the majority of participants, followed by price, which is also highly influential. Design and style and comfort are considered moderately important but are less critical than quality and price. Brand personality ranks consistently as the least important factor.

#### 4.2.1.7. Have you ever switched from one sports apparel brand to another? If so, what was the primary reason?

Out of the 237 participants, a substantial majority of 190 individuals (80.2%) reported having switched sports apparel brands at least once. This high percentage indicates a significant level of brand mobility within the industry, suggesting that a considerable portion of consumers are open to exploring different brands rather than remaining loyal to a single brand. In contrast, forty participants (16.9%) indicated that they had never switched brands, reflecting a smaller but

noteworthy segment of the consumer base that maintains customer loyalty over time.

Figure 13: Findings switching



The most common reason for switching brands was attributed to better pricing offered by competitors. A total of eighty-eight participants (46.3%) cited price as the primary motivation for changing brands. This finding underscores the sensitivity of consumers to cost considerations and highlights the competitive nature of pricing in the sports apparel industry.

Quality was another significant factor influencing brand switching, with sixty-eight participants (35.8%) reporting that they switched brands due to superior product quality from a competitor. Higher quality offerings from competing brands can prompt consumers to reassess their brand preferences and make switches based on the perceived improvements in material, construction, or functionality.

A smaller proportion of participants, six individuals (3.2%), reported switching brands due to poor customer service experiences. This finding highlights that while customer service is less frequently cited as a primary reason for brand switching, it remains an important factor. Negative experiences with customer service, such as unresponsive support or inadequate handling of issues, can drive consumers to seek alternatives where they anticipate better service quality.

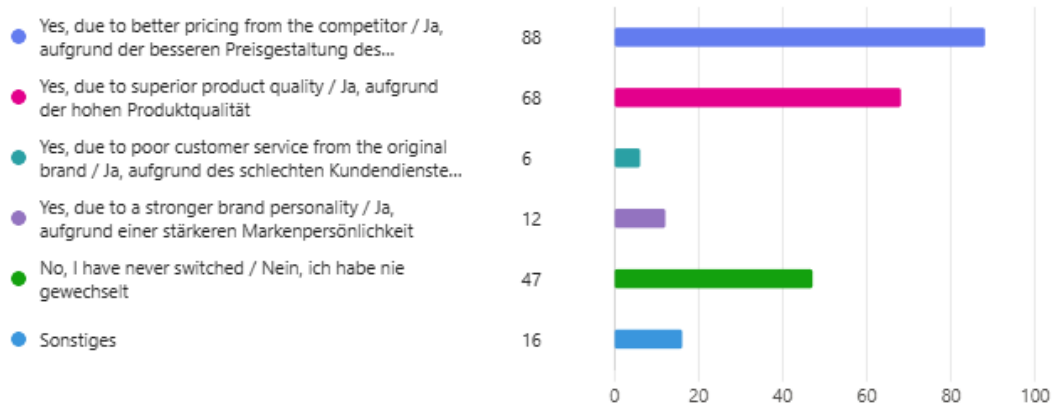
Twelve participants (6.3%) indicated that they switched brands due to a stronger brand personality offered by competitors. A compelling brand personality that resonates with consumers' identities or aspirations can influence their decision to switch from a less engaging brand to one that offers a more appealing brand narrative.

In addition to the specified reasons, participants cited design and style as factors influencing their decision to switch brands. Although not previously defined in the survey options, these responses indicate that aesthetics play a role in brand switching. Consumers who prioritize fashion-forward designs or styles that align with their personal preferences may be inclined to switch brands if competitors offer more attractive or trendsetting options.

Figure 14: Findings switching reasons

10. Have you ever switched from one sports apparel brand to another? If so, what was the primary reason? Haben Sie jemals von einer Sportbekleidungsmarke zu einer anderen gewechselt? Wen...

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(Appendix B)

The statistic reveals that a significant majority of participants (80.2%) have engaged in brand switching behavior, with the predominant reasons being better pricing (46.3%) and superior quality (35.8%). Poor customer service and stronger

brand personality were less frequently cited, yet they still contribute to brand switching decisions. Additionally, design and style emerged as relevant factors for consumers, underscoring the multifaceted nature of brand loyalty in the sports apparel industry.

These insights into brand switching behavior highlight the importance of competitive pricing, high product quality, and compelling brand attributes in maintaining customer loyalty.

#### **4.2.1.8. How likely are you to recommend your preferred sports apparel brand to others?**

In the study, participants were asked about their likelihood of recommending their favorite sports apparel brand to friends and family. This question aims to gauge the level of customer loyalty towards their preferred brand, as well as to provide insights into the brand's potential for positive word-of-mouth and consumer advocacy. The responses were categorized into five levels of recommendation likelihood: very likely, likely, neutral, unlikely, and very unlikely.

A total of sixty-nine participants (29.1%) indicated that they would recommend their favorite brand to friends and family "very likely." This response reflects a strong level of customer loyalty and satisfaction among these consumers. Individuals who fall into this category are likely to be highly satisfied with their brand experience. Their willingness to actively promote the brand suggests that they perceive it as exceptional and are enthusiastic about sharing their positive experiences with others.

Ninety participants (38.0%) reported that they would recommend their favorite brand to friends and family as "likely." This response indicates a positive, though

less intense, level of loyalty compared to the "very likely" group. Consumers in this category are generally pleased with their brand experience and are inclined to endorse the brand, albeit with slightly less conviction. Their recommendations can still contribute significantly to the brand's reputation and market presence, reflecting a solid base of consumer support.

Sixty-five participants (27.4%) chose a "neutral" stance on whether they would recommend their favorite brand. This indicates that while these individuals may not have strong feelings either way, they neither strongly endorse nor reject the idea of recommending the brand. Consumers in this category might be satisfied with the brand but do not feel strongly enough to actively recommend it, or they may have mixed experiences that lead to a more reserved stance, even though they frequently purchase from the brand.

Thirteen participants (5.5%) indicated that they would be "unlikely" to recommend their favorite brand. This response points to a level of dissatisfaction or reluctance to advocate for the brand, even though they frequently buy from the brand.

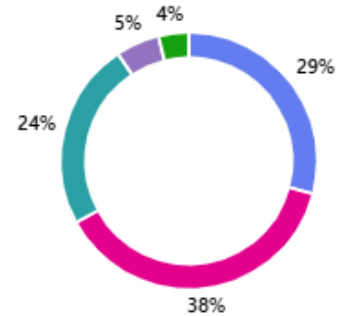
Finally, nine participants (3.8%) stated that they would be "very unlikely" to recommend their favorite brand.

Figure 15: Finding recommendation likelihood

11. How likely are you to recommend your preferred sports apparel brand to others? Wie wahrscheinlich ist es, dass Sie Ihre bevorzugte Sportbekleidungsmarke weiter empfehlen?

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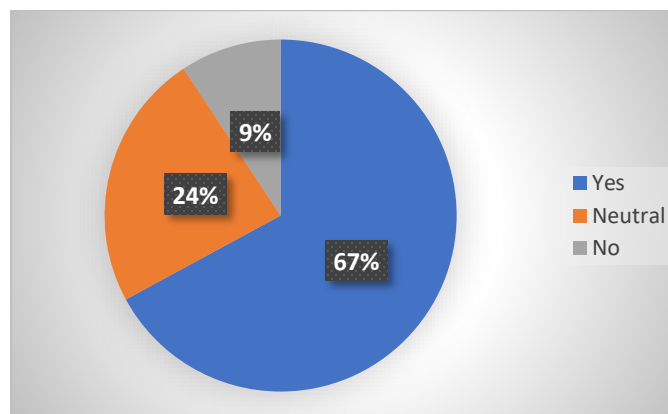
● Very likely / Sehr wahrscheinlich	69
● Likely / Wahrscheinlich	90
● Neutral / Neutral	56
● Unlikely / Unwahrscheinlich	13
● Very unlikely / Sehr unwahrscheinlich	9



(Appendix B)

The statistic reveals a range of likelihood responses regarding the recommendation of participants' favorite sports apparel brands. The majority of participants are positioned positively, with 67.1% expressing a likelihood to recommend their brand either "very likely" or "likely." In contrast, a smaller segment of 9.3% expresses a level of unwillingness or dislike to recommending their brand, either "unlikely" or "very unlikely."

Figure 16: Finding recommendation



This distribution of responses provides valuable insights into customer loyalty. A high proportion of positive recommendations suggests a generally favorable perception of the favorite brands, contributing to potential positive word-of-mouth and brand advocacy. Conversely, the smaller proportion of negative responses highlights areas where brands may need to address issues to improve customer satisfaction and enhance their recommendation potential.

#### **4.2.1.9. When you think about your favourite sports apparel brand, what characteristics come to mind?**

In the next portion of the survey, participants were asked to identify the characteristics they associate with their favourite sports apparel brand, based on the five dimensions of brand personality as developed by Aaker (1997) (see section 2.4 page 13). Each dimension is represented by a set of traits that collectively shape consumers' perceptions of a brand's personality. By analysing these responses, it can gain a deeper understanding of how participants view their preferred brands in terms of personality traits, and how these perceptions influence brand loyalty.

The sincerity dimension includes traits such as down-to-earth, honest, wholesome, and cheerful.

- **Down-to-earth:** 53 participants (22.4%) identified their favourite brand as down-to-earth.
- **Honest:** 41 participants (17.3%) considered their favourite brand honest.
- **Cheerful:** 12 participants (5.1%) associated their favourite brand with cheerfulness.
- **Wholesome:** 42 participants (17.7%) selected wholesome.

Overall, sincerity-related traits, especially down-to-earth and honest, are commonly associated with brands in the sports apparel industry.

The excitement dimension includes traits like daring, spirited, imaginative, and up to date.

- **Daring:** 9 participants (3.8%) considered their brand daring.
- **Spirited:** 41 participants (17.3%) saw their brand as spirited.
- **Imaginative:** 30 participants (12.7%) viewed their brand as imaginative.
- **Up to date:** The most prominent trait, 134 participants (56.5%), associated their favourite brand with being up to date.

The competence dimension includes traits such as reliable, intelligent, and successful.

- **Reliable:** A significant number, 124 participants (52.3%), viewed their brand as reliable, making it one of the most commonly cited traits.
- **Intelligent:** Only 16 participants (6.8%) associated their brand with intelligence.
- **Successful:** 77 participants (32.5%) selected successful, which implies that many consumers see their favourite brands as leaders in the industry.

The high frequency of reliable and successful traits highlights the importance of competence in building trust and consumer confidence in sports apparel brands.

Sophistication is associated with traits like upper class and charming.

- **Upper class:** 22 participants (9.3%) associated their brand with being upper class.
- **Charming:** 15 participants (6.3%) saw their brand as charming.

Ruggedness includes traits such as tough and outdoorsy.

- **Outdoorsy:** 51 participants (21.5%) described their favourite brand as outdoorsy.
- **Tough:** 63 participants (26.6%) associated their brand with toughness.

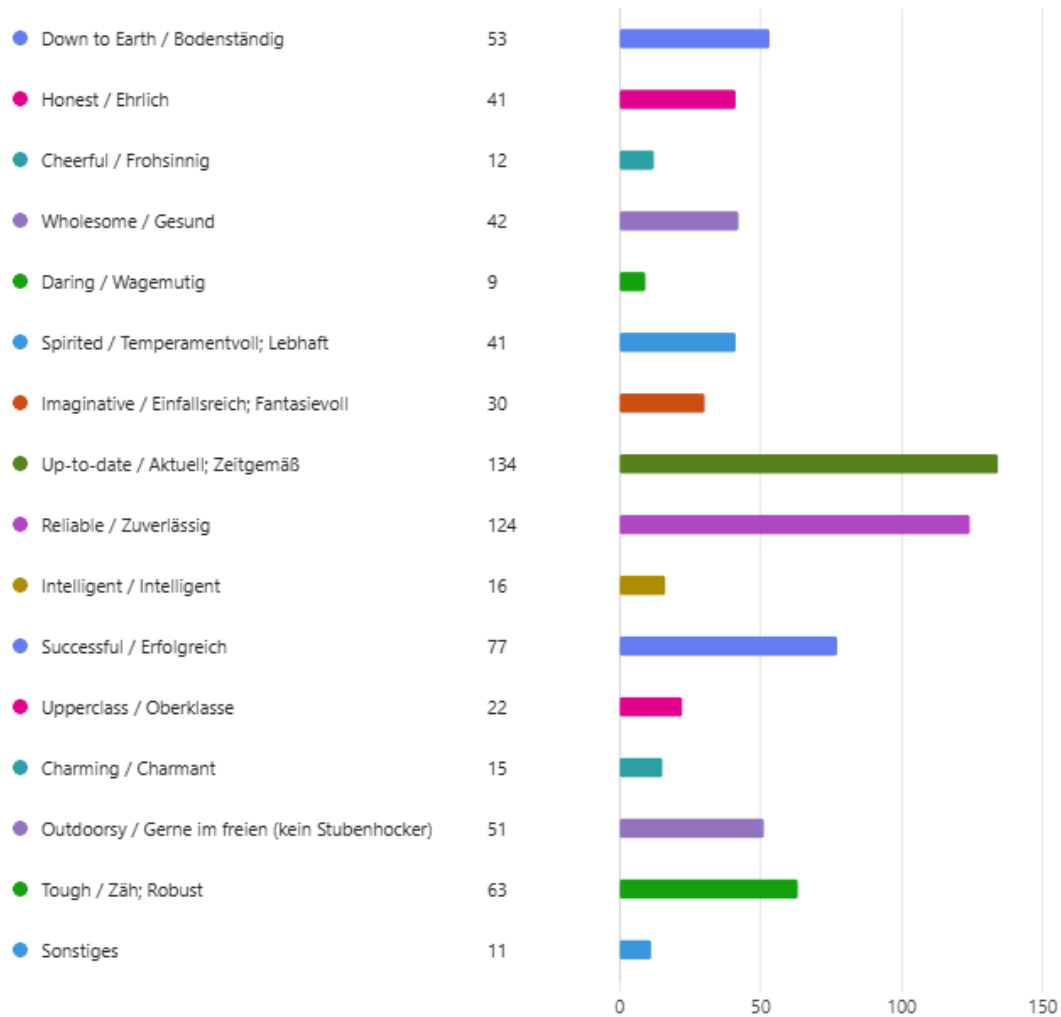
These responses show that ruggedness plays a significant role in shaping the perception of sports apparel brands.

In addition to the predefined traits, 11 participants (4.6%) provided other characteristics that they associate with their favourite brands. These included traits such as innovative, sporty, light, and comfortable. These additional traits reflect key attributes valued by consumers in sports apparel.

Figure 17: Findings characteristics

12. When you think about your favourite sports apparel brand, what characteristics come to mind? (Select all that apply) Wenn Sie an Ihre Lieblingssportbekleidungsmarke denken, welche...

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(Appendix B)

The analysis of the responses to brand personality traits based on Aaker's five dimensions provides valuable insights into how consumers perceive their favourite sports apparel brands. The most frequently cited traits were up to date (56.5%), reliable (52.3%), and successful (32.5%), indicating that consumers prioritize modernity, reliability, and brand success when associating with sports apparel brands.

The lower emphasis on traits like daring, upper class, or charming suggests that sports apparel brands are not typically viewed as aspirational luxury items, but rather as functional, dependable, and current. The additional traits mentioned by participants, such as innovation and comfort, further reinforce the idea that performance and practicality are key considerations in the sports apparel industry.

This analysis highlights the importance of maintaining a modern, reliable, and successful brand image to foster consumer loyalty and positive brand associations.

**4.2.1.10. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “I feel a personal connection to the brand of sports apparel I purchased most frequently?”**

Participants in the survey were asked to rate their level of agreement with the statement, "I feel a personal connection to the brand of sports apparel I purchase most frequently." The purpose of this question was to assess the depth of emotional attachment participants feel toward their preferred sports apparel brands.

Out of the 237 participants, ninety-six participants (40.5%) indicated that they disagree with the statement, meaning they do not feel a personal connection to the sports apparel brand they purchase most frequently. This is a sizable portion of the sample and reflects that for many consumers, their relationship with their preferred sports apparel brand is more transactional and functional rather than emotional. These consumers may base their purchasing decisions primarily on practical factors such as price, quality, or product availability, rather than any deep personal identification with the brand.

A total of one hundred participants (42.2%) responded neutrally to the statement, neither agreeing nor disagreeing that they feel a personal connection to their

frequently purchased sports apparel brand. This group represents the largest segment of the participants and indicates that while these consumers do not have a strong personal connection to the brand, they do not necessarily reject the idea either. Their relationship with the brand is likely characterized by a pragmatic approach to purchasing, where satisfaction with the product or brand is not accompanied by a strong emotional attachment.

The smallest group, consisting of forty-one participants (17.3%), agreed with the statement, expressing that they do feel a personal connection to the sports apparel brand they purchase most frequently. This segment of the sample represents the group of consumers who have established a stronger emotional bond with their brand. These individuals may identify with the brand's values, personality, or messaging, and see the brand as a reflection of their own identity or lifestyle.

For these consumers, the brand is not only a provider of sports apparel but also a part of their personal narrative. Such a connection often leads to increased customer loyalty, with these consumers more likely to choose the brand even when alternatives are available, and more inclined to recommend it to others.

Figure 18: Findings emotional connection

13. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I feel a personal connection to the brand of sports apparel I purchase most frequently." Inwieweit stimmen Sie der folgenden...

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The distribution of responses reflects a detailed perspective on the personal connection consumers feel toward their favorite sports apparel brands. The fact that 40.5% of participants disagree with feeling a personal connection, while 42.2% are neutral, suggests that emotional engagement with sports apparel brands is limited for the majority of consumers. Only 17.3% of participants report a strong emotional attachment to their chosen brand, which underscores the importance of brands focusing on strategies to enhance emotional ties with their customer base.

#### **4.2.1.11. To what extent does the personality of a sports apparel brand influence your loyalty to it?**

Furthermore, in the survey, participants were asked to assess the extent to which the personality of a sports apparel brand influences their loyalty to that brand.

Out of the 237 participants, 101 participants (42.6%) indicated that the personality of a sports apparel brand does not influence their loyalty at all. This is the largest group in the sample, reflecting that for nearly half of the participants, brand personality plays little to no role in shaping their purchasing behavior or ongoing loyalty to a specific brand.

Sixty-six participants (27.8%) reported that brand personality slightly influences their loyalty to a sports apparel brand. This group acknowledges some level of influence from brand personality, though it is not a decisive factor in their loyalty. These consumers may appreciate the personality traits associated with their preferred brands, but other factors such as comfort, design, or price likely play a larger role in their purchasing decisions.

A total of sixty participants (25.3%) indicated that the personality of a brand moderately influences their loyalty. This group represents consumers for whom

brand personality is a meaningful, though not the sole, driver of loyalty. For these participants, elements of a brand's personality, such as being perceived as innovative, reliable, or stylish, likely complement other important factors like quality and price in their decision to remain loyal to the brand.

The smallest group, consisting of ten participants (4.2%), indicated that brand personality significantly influences their loyalty to a sports apparel brand. This group represents consumers with a strong emotional bond to the brand, where the brand's personality plays a crucial role in fostering and maintaining their loyalty. For these individuals, the brand's identity, and the traits it communicates, whether it be Honest, Charming, or Tough, are integral to their continued engagement with the brand.

Figure 19: Findings brand personality influencing customer loyalty

14. To what extent does the personality of a sports apparel brand influence your loyalty to it?  
 Inwieweit beeinflusst die Persönlichkeit einer Sportbekleidungsmarke Ihre Loyalität ihr...

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(Appendix B)

The analysis of responses shows a diverse range of perspectives on the role of brand personality in driving loyalty to sports apparel brands. The largest portion of participants (42.6%) reported that brand personality does not influence their loyalty at all.

However, a significant portion of participants (27.8%) acknowledged that brand personality plays a slight role, while 25.3% indicated a moderate influence, suggesting that for a considerable subset of the market, brand personality can be a meaningful factor in fostering loyalty. Finally, a small but notable group (4.2%) reported that brand personality plays a significant role in their loyalty, demonstrating that emotional engagement and alignment with a brand's identity can be a key driver for some consumers.

For sports apparel brands, this data suggests that while the majority of consumers prioritize functional aspects of the product, there remains a valuable opportunity to leverage brand personality as a tool for building stronger consumer relationships.

#### **4.2.1.12. How important is it for you that your preferred sports apparel brand's personality reflects your own personal identity?**

Furthermore, in the survey, participants were asked to assess the importance of their favorite sports apparel brand reflecting their own personal identity. This question aimed to gauge how much consumers value the alignment between a brand's image and their own self-concept, which can significantly influence customer loyalty.

Out of the 237 participants, one hundred participants (42.2%) indicated that it is not important that their favorite sport apparel brand reflects their personal identity. This is the largest segment of the sample, highlighting that for a substantial portion of consumers, there is little to no emphasis on personal identification with the brand when making purchasing decisions.

A total of sixty-six participants (27.8%) reported that it is somewhat important for their favorite sports apparel brand to reflect their personal identity. While this group does not prioritize the alignment between their identity and the brand to the same extent as others, they do place some value on it. These consumers may consider

personal identity as one of several factors influencing their purchasing decisions, but it is not the decisive element.

Fifty-nine participants (24.9%) responded that it is moderately important for their favorite brand to reflect their personal identity. This group represents individuals who value a stronger connection between their sense of self and the brand they support.

For these participants, the alignment between personal identity and the brand's image plays a more vital role in shaping their loyalty and purchasing behavior.

The smallest group, consisting of twelve participants (5.1%), indicated that it is very important that their favorite sports apparel brand reflects their personal identity. This group of consumers places a high value on the alignment between their personal identity and the brand they choose to support. For these individuals, the brand is not only a provider of functional products but also a key part of their self-expression and identity.

The responses show a wide spectrum of perspectives on the importance of a sports apparel brand reflecting the consumer's personal identity. The majority of participants (42.2%) indicated that this alignment is not important, suggesting that for many, the purchase of sports apparel is driven more by practical considerations than emotional or personal connection to the brand.

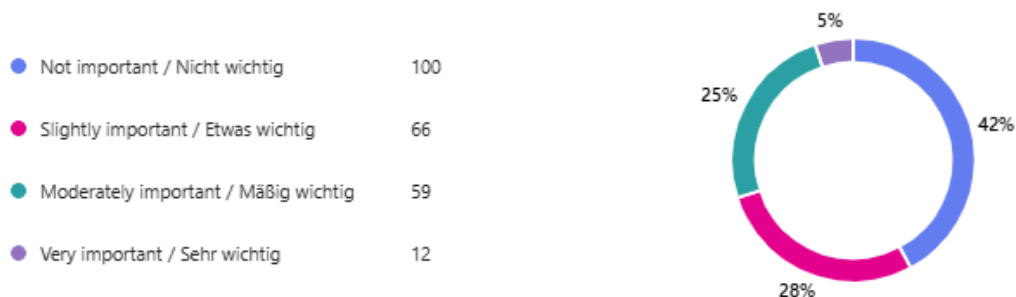
However, a significant portion of participants (27.8%) acknowledged that the reflection of personal identity is somewhat important, and 24.9% indicated that it is moderately important. These segments represent consumers who are more likely to form a deeper connection with a brand based on how well it aligns with their lifestyle, values, and identity. For these consumers, the emotional and symbolic aspects of the brand can play a meaningful role in driving loyalty.

The smallest group (5.1%) emphasized that it is very important for the brand to reflect their personal identity, demonstrating that for some, the brand is not only a provider of sports apparel but also an extension of their personal image.

Figure 20: Findings personal identity reflection

15. How important is it for you that your preferred sports apparel brand's personality reflects your own personal identity? Wie wichtig ist es für Sie, dass die Persönlichkeit Ihrer bevorzugten...

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Overall, these findings suggest that while practical factors dominate the decision-making process for a considerable proportion of consumers, there remains a valuable opportunity for brands to leverage emotional and identity-based appeals to deepen consumer engagement.

#### 4.2.1.13. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Finally, participants were given the opportunity to share any insights they had not yet been able to share through the questions posed earlier.

*“Einfluss der nachhaltigen Produktion ist wichtig.“*  
 (Appendix C2. 205, p.X)  
 (English translation: “The influence of sustainable production is important”)



*“Another important aspect for me is the brands opinion on fast fashion/climate change. I would pay more for something that is recycled/produced climate friendly and for something that pays the workers well and under good conditions.” (Appendix C3. 262, p.CC)*

*„In der jetzigen Zeit versuche ich Produkte zu kaufen die unter fairen Umständen produziert werden.“ (Appendix C4. 264, p.HH)  
(English translation: At the moment, I try to buy products that are produced under fair conditions.)*

These quotes (above) show that sustainability is a growing trend, which influences the decision whether to buy from a brand and thus offers the opportunity to acquire a loyal customer. It is also noticeable that all three quotes were from participants in the 18-29 age group. This could indicate that sustainability is a growing trend that is gaining in importance, particularly among younger people.

*“Es ist vielmehr Gewohnheit und Prägung aus dem letzten Jahrtausend.“ (Appendix C1. 81, p.S)  
(English translation: “It is rather a habit and an imprint from the last millennium.”)*

In addition, one participant points out that the purchase decision does not involve any specific factors, but is simply made out of habit, which has become established over the years.

*“Bewusst ist bei mir eigentlich die Qualität und ein einfacher Kontakt zum Support wichtig, falls etwas mit meinem Produkt nicht stimmt. Ein Produkt kaufe ich aber dennoch zuerst wegen des Designs und Unterbewusst auch durch Markenpräsenz. ...“  
(Appendix C5. 277, p.MM)  
(English translation: “For me, quality and easy contact with support is actually important if something is wrong with my product. However, I still buy a product first because of the design and subconsciously also because of the brand presence. ...”)*

Participant 277 also points out that the design factor plays an important role in the purchase decision, as does brand presence, but only subconsciously. This shows the possibility that factors can play an important role in the purchase decision but are not actually recognised.

#### **4.2.2. Hypothesis testing**

In the following, the hypotheses formulated in section 3.5 on page 28 are tested.

##### **4.2.2.1. H1: Brand personality positively influences customer loyalty.**

To test the hypothesis “Brand personality has a positive influence on customer loyalty”, a Pearson correlation was carried out to investigate whether there is a relationship between brand personality and customer loyalty. For this purpose, the data from the survey (see section 4.2.1.12 on page 62). was used, which indicates how important it is to the participants that the personality of their sports apparel brand reflects their own personal identity, where 1 indicates not important, 2 somewhat important, 3 moderately important and 4 very important. Furthermore, the data was taken from the question of whether they would recommend their favourite brand to others as a customer loyalty variable (see section 4.2.1.8 on page 51). For this, 1 stands for very likely, 2 likely, 3 neutral, 4 unlikely and 5 very unlikely.

The Pearson correlation coefficient is -0.190, which indicates a weak negative correlation between the perception of brand personality and customer loyalty. This means that higher ratings of brand personality tend to be associated with lower customer loyalty, which contradicts the hypothesis of a positive influence.

The two-sided significance of 0.003 is below the generally accepted threshold value of 0.1, which indicates that the negative correlation is statistically significant. This means that the correlation found between brand personality and customer loyalty is highly unlikely to be random.

Figure 21: Correlation H1

**Correlations**

		Importance personality reflection	Would recommnt
Importance personality reflection	Pearson Correlation	1	-,190**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,003
	N	237	237
Would recommnt	Pearson Correlation	-,190**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,003	
	N	237	237

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis show a weak but statistically significant negative correlation between brand personality and customer loyalty, which contradicts the original hypothesis that brand personality has a positive influence on customer loyalty. Instead, the results indicate that a stronger perception of brand personality tends to be associated with lower customer loyalty.

The hypothesis that brand personality has a positive influence on customer loyalty cannot be confirmed on the basis of this data. Instead, a negative influence was found.

**4.2.2.2. H2: The majority feels an emotional connection with the brand they purchase most frequently.**

To test the hypothesis “The majority feels an emotional connection to the brand they buy most often”, a survey was conducted in which the participants were asked whether they feel an emotional connection to their preferred brand, a cross-tabulation was created to analyse the relationship between the frequency of purchase and the emotional connection and a chi-square test was carried out to analyse the distribution of the answers.

The results of the survey as stated in section 4.2.1.10 on page 58 showed that 41% of participants did not feel an emotional connection to their favourite brand, 42% remained neutral and 17% agreed with an emotional connection. This shows that 83%, 41% disagree and 42% are neutral, meaning that the majority of participants do not feel a clear emotional connection to their favourite brand.

In order to be able to analyse the correlations in more detail, a cross table was created in which the frequency is divided into once a month, every 2 - 3 months, twice a year, once a year and less frequently, as in the survey in section 4.2.1.3 on page 41, and the emotional connection is divided into disagree, agree and neutral.

Of those who buy once a month, 4 people agreed with the emotional connection, which is significantly higher than the expected value of 1.9. Even among buyers who buy every 2 to 3 months, 19 people agreed, which is also above the expected value of 10.7. These groups show a higher emotional attachment than expected.

For those who buy twice a year, once a year or less frequently, the actual emotional attachment values are below the expected values, which indicates that there is less emotional attachment in these groups than expected.

In the once a month and every 2 to 3 months categories, the number of those who disagreed is lower than expected (2 vs. 4.5 and 20 vs. 25.1). This suggests that shoppers who shop more frequently are less likely to feel no emotional connection to the brand.

However, in the categories twice a year and once a year, the number of those who disagreed is higher than expected. This shows that shoppers who buy less frequently are more likely to have no emotional attachment to the brand.

The group of neutral participants remains very close to the expected values in almost all categories, which indicates that the distribution of neutral responses is relatively stable.

Figure 22: Crosstabulation

**Feeling an emotional connection \* How often purchased Crosstabulation**

		How often purchased					Total	
		Once a Month	Once every 2 - 3 Months	Twice a Year	Once a Year	Less often		
Feeling an emotional connection	Disagree	Count	2	20	41	24	9	96
		Expected Count	4,5	25,1	34,4	22,7	9,3	96,0
	Agree	Count	4	19	8	5	5	41
		Expected Count	1,9	10,7	14,7	9,7	4,0	41,0
	Neutral	Count	5	23	36	27	9	100
		Expected Count	4,6	26,2	35,9	23,6	9,7	100,0
Total	Count	11	62	85	56	23	237	
	Expected Count	11,0	62,0	85,0	56,0	23,0	237,0	

The chi-square test resulted in a value of 18.959 with a degree of freedom of 8 and a significance of 0.015. As the significance value is less than 0.1, this means that the distribution of responses is statistically significant. There is therefore a significant correlation between the categories of the response options and the question on emotional attachment.

Figure 23: Chi-Square Test

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18,959 <sup>a</sup>	8	,015
Likelihood Ratio	18,633	8	,017
Linear-by-Linear Association	,189	1	,663
N of Valid Cases	237		

a. 4 cells (26,7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1,90.

The results of the cross-tabulation and the chi-square test show a statistically significant correlation between the frequency of brand purchases and the emotional attachment to the brand. Shoppers who buy more frequently (once a month or every 2 to 3 months) tend to feel a stronger emotional connection than expected, while shoppers who buy less frequently tend to have no connection to the brand.

Nevertheless, despite the significant correlations, the overall survey results show that most participants do not feel an emotional connection to the brand they buy most often. The hypothesis that the majority of participants feel an emotional connection to the brand they buy most often can therefore not be confirmed.

**4.2.2.3. H3: Honest is most connected to the brand that is purchased most frequently.**

To test the hypothesis “Honest is most associated with the brand that is purchased most frequently”, a Pearson correlation was conducted to investigate whether there is a relationship between the perception of a brand's honesty characteristic and how frequently the brand is purchased. For this purpose, data was taken from

section 4.2.1.3 on page 41 and section 4.2.1.9 on page 54 on how often they buy sports apparel and what characteristics they associate with their favourite brand. For the evaluation, 1 was given for honesty and 2 for not given.

The Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.044 indicates a very weak positive correlation between the perception of honesty and the frequency of brand purchase. However, this value is close to zero, which means that there is almost no significant correlation.

The two-sided significance of 0.496 is well above the usual threshold of 0.1. This means that the observed relationship is not statistically significant. There is insufficient evidence to assume that honesty and purchase frequency are systematically linked.

Figure 24: Correlation H3

		How frequent will be purchased	Characterising as Honest
How frequent will be purchased	Pearson Correlation	1	,044
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,496
	N	237	237
Characterising as Honest	Pearson Correlation	,044	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,496	
	N	237	237

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis show a very weak and statistically insignificant relationship between the perception of honesty and the frequency with which a brand is purchased. The correlation coefficient of 0.044 and the high two-sided significance ( $p = 0.496$ ) indicate that the perception of honesty has no significant connection to the purchase frequency of a brand.

The hypothesis that honesty is most associated with the brand that is purchased most frequently can therefore not be confirmed.

**4.2.2.4. H4: The influence of brand personality on customer loyalty is stronger among younger consumers of the age 18 – 29 years old.**

To test the hypothesis “The influence of brand personality on customer loyalty is stronger among younger consumers aged 18-29”, a t-test for independent samples was conducted to see if there was a significant difference.

To do this, the data previously collected regarding age in section 4.2.1.1 on page 38 was split into two groups. The first group included everyone aged 18-29, which totalled 116 participants. The second group includes everyone aged 30 and over, totalling 121 participants in the survey. Furthermore, the data from section 4.2.1.11 on page 60 on the extent to which the personality of a sports apparel brand influences their loyalty to it was added, with 1 reflecting Not at all, 2 Slightly, 3 Moderately and 4 Significantly.

The statistics show that the mean score for the older group is slightly higher at 1.9587 compared to the younger group at 1.8621. However, the standard deviations in both groups are similar at 0.88636 and 0.95216, indicating a comparable spread of scores.

*Figure 25: Group Statistic*

<b>Group Statistics</b>					
	Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Brand personality influencing customer loyalty	18 - 29 Years	116	1,8621	,88363	,08204
	30+ Years	121	1,9587	,95216	,08656

The T-test resulted in a t-value of -0.809 with a degree of freedom (df) of 235 and a two-sided significance of 0.419. The significance level is above the recognised threshold value of 0.1, which indicates that the difference in the influence of brand personality on customer loyalty between the two age groups is not statistically significant.

With a significance of 0.419, there is insufficient evidence to claim that the influence of brand personality on customer loyalty is stronger for younger consumers aged 18-29 than for older consumers. The difference between the means of the two groups is not large enough to be statistically significant.

Figure 26: Independent Samples Test

		Independent Samples Test				Significance		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	90% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t		One-Sided p	Two-Sided p			Lower	Upper
		F	Sig.	t	df						
Brand personality influencing customer loyalty	Equal variances assumed	.003	.955	-.809	235	.210	.419	-.09661	.11945	-.29387	.10065
	Equal variances not assumed			-.810	234,756	.209	.419	-.09661	.11926	-.29356	.10034

Based on the results of the t-test, the hypothesis cannot be confirmed. There is no significant difference in the influence of brand personality on customer loyalty between younger and older consumers. The slight difference in the mean values of the two age groups is random and not statistically significant.

### 4.3. Discussion

#### 4.3.1. Interpretation of results

The results of the study offer valuable insights into the purchasing decisions of consumers in the German sports apparel industry and provide a differentiated analysis of the factors that characterise these decisions. The study shows that Adidas dominates as the most purchased brand with a 37.1% market share, indicating a possible national loyalty among consumers. This could be explained

by the German origin of the brand and its long-standing presence in the global and national market environment. At the same time, consumers' openness to alternative brands such as Asics and Under Armour shows that competition in the sports apparel industry is increasingly characterised by exploratory consumer behaviour, with customers willing to look for alternatives beyond the established market leaders.

A key finding of the study concerns the factors that influence purchasing decisions. In contrast to the expected importance of brand personality, the data shows that pragmatic factors such as quality, price and design play the main role. This indicates that the tangible characteristics of the product, but not the intangible characteristics of the brand, guide the purchase decision. The emphasis on price and quality as the most important drivers, both in the purchase decision and when switching brands, shows that consumers make their decisions predominantly based on tangible product attributes. Price is cited as the most common reason for switching brands, followed by quality. This leads to the conclusion that consumers do have a certain loyalty to certain brands, but that this loyalty can be overridden by the tangibility of product attributes.

Another notable result concerns design and style as decisive factors for consumers who value aesthetic aspects. Products that match their individual fashion preferences or current trends are often favoured. This shows the relevance of product design and aesthetics as important influencing factors in purchasing decisions. However, there is a disagreement here with the expected role of brand personality. Instead of emotional or symbolic associations with the brand, functional and aesthetic aspects take centre stage.

Particularly interesting in relation to the title of the study "The influence of brand personality on customer loyalty in the German sports apparel industry" is the observation that brand personality is seen by most consumers as the least influential factor. These results show that abstract characteristics such as

emotional attachment or symbolic associations with a brand play a lesser role in consumers' perceptions compared to practical attributes such as price and quality. This could indicate that brand personality plays a subconscious, as considered by participant 277 (see section 4.2.1.13 on page 64), or indirect role in consumers' decision-making process, while measurable factors such as performance and cost are more strongly anchored in consumers' consciousness.

Regarding the association of brands with specific attributes, the results show that the most frequent associations are linked to terms such as "up-to-date", "reliable" and "successful". These attributes reflect mainly two dimensions: excitement and competence. The lower frequency of attributes suggesting sophistication or luxury emphasises that sports apparel is valued primarily for its functional properties and practicality. These results suggest that the influence of brand personality in the sports apparel industry is strongly characterised by performance-oriented attributes, while symbolic or emotional features play only a subordinate role.

A key finding of the study is that the majority of consumers do not have an emotional connection to the brand. This is particularly relevant in the context of the study's focus on the influence of brand personality on customer loyalty. The data shows that buyers who purchase products from a particular brand more frequently tend to feel a stronger emotional connection to this brand. This finding is supported by the results of the chi-square test, which shows a statistically significant correlation between purchase frequency and emotional attachment (see section 4.2.2.2, page 68). However, overall, the survey shows in section 4.2.1.10 on page 58 that the majority of consumers do not have a deep emotional connection with the brands they buy most frequently. This suggests that brand personality does not play a significant role in overall customer loyalty.

Regarding the question of whether brand personality influences customer loyalty, the study shows that most consumers do not feel this way. Rather, it becomes clear again that factors such as price, quality, design and style are more important.

These results suggest that functional aspects of the product, but not the emotional connection or the symbolic values of a brand, determine the loyalty of consumers in the German sports apparel industry. For a large proportion of consumers, price and quality are more important than identification with the brand personality.

It was also found that in the general market, both men and women develop an emotional attachment to their favourite brand. However, this finding cannot be applied to the German sports apparel market. In section 4.2.2.4 on page 73 was shown that neither older nor younger consumers have a significant influence of brand personality on customer loyalty. A t-test for independent samples revealed no statistically significant differences in the effect of brand personality on customer loyalty between the different age groups.

To conclude, the study makes it clear that although brand personality could theoretically be an influencing factor on customer loyalty, its role is limited in practice. Instead, the study shows that tangible product characteristics such as price, quality and design are far more important. The hypothesis that brand personality plays a central role in customer loyalty is therefore not confirmed by the present results.

#### **4.3.2. Comparison with previous studies**

Looking at previous studies, there is an initial inconsistency between the sales figures and the actual preference of consumers within this sample. While Nike generates the highest sales in the sports apparel market globally (see section 2.2.2, page 6), Adidas enjoys greater popularity and a higher repurchase rate in the sample analysed as shown in section 4.2.1.5 on page 44. This difference could indicate various factors, including the specific demographic characteristics of the sample group, cultural preferences or customer loyalty at a national level. In the

context of the German market, this could also reflect the importance of a national brand identity.

Furthermore, the present results confirm the relevance of trends as a decisive factor for brand perception. This can be seen not only in the frequent mention of the characteristic “up-to-date”, with which the brands are associated, but also in the growing importance of aspects such as sustainability, design and style. These characteristics are increasingly becoming central criteria for purchasing decisions, although they are not included in Aaker's classic Brand Personality Scale (Aaker, 1997). These observations support Madrigal & Boush's (2008) criticism that Aaker's model, which originally used five dimensions to measure brand personality, may be outdated and no longer reflect current consumer trends. In particular, the increasing relevance of sustainability and style in the decision-making process indicates that contemporary demands on brands are more differentiated and go beyond the originally defined dimensions.

Another key finding of this study is consumers' preference for tangible product characteristics such as price and quality over less tangible attributes such as brand personality. This finding contradicts Kopp's (2023) view that both “head loyalty” and “heart loyalty” are equally important in creating a strong bond with customers. In the sample analysed, however, there is a clear tendency towards “head loyalty”, in which practical and functional aspects such as value for money and product quality take priority (Beltramo, 2017). This finding could indicate specific cultural or market-specific differences that influence purchasing behaviour in the German sports apparel industry.

Similarly, in comparison to the general assumption that 89% of consumers remain loyal to a brand if it shares the same values as themselves (Miller, 2021), it can be stated that this assertion cannot be transferred to the German sports apparel industry without restriction. Within the present sample as seen in section 4.2.1.12 on page 62, 42% of participants denied this statement, which indicates a

significantly lower relevance of value consistency. This variation makes it clear that generalisations about customer loyalty and the role of brand personality should be made with caution. In this context, Kumar (2016) criticises the fact that the perception of a brand can vary from customer to customer and that a blanket assumption about customer behaviour based on brand personality is not suitable. In particular, the possibility that a brand identifies with several dimensions of brand personality makes simple categorisation difficult. The present study shows in section 4.2.1.9 on page 54, that characteristics of the dimensions “Sophistication” and “Competence” in particular are most frequently associated with the preferred brands, while other dimensions such as ‘Ruggedness’ appear to be less relevant.

A particularly interesting result of the study concerns the characteristic “honest”. While previous research from Miller (2021) suggests that 86% of consumers prefer brands that are perceived as honest, the present sample of the German sports apparel industry shows, that only 17% of participants associate honest with their preferred brand. This discrepancy could indicate that although honesty is generally perceived as positive, it may play a subordinate role in the specific context of the sports apparel industry. In addition, the Pearson correlation analysis in section 4.2.2.3 on page 71 shows a very weak and statistically insignificant relationship between the perception of honesty and the frequency with which a brand is purchased. This suggests that honesty as a brand personality trait does not have a significant influence on consumers' purchasing decisions in the sports apparel sector.

To conclude, the results of the study make it clear that brand personality plays a subordinate role in the German sports apparel market compared to tangible product characteristics such as price and quality. The increasing importance of trends such as sustainability and style show that the brand personality model is reaching its limits and may need to be updated to meet current consumer demands. The low importance of honesty as a brand attribute also indicates that

the results found in the global context are not fully transferable to the German market.

## **4.4. Conclusion**

### **4.4.1. Research conclusion**

The available results indicate that consumers in the German sports apparel industry value tangible product features more than intangible features, especially for brands that they buy and recommend more frequently. The fact that 67% of participants said they would recommend their favourite brand to friends and family indicates a certain level of customer loyalty. However, brand personality appears to have little influence on this loyalty. This is emphasised by two key findings: Firstly, 42% of participants stated that they did not consider it important for their brand to share their personal values. Secondly, 43% disagreed that brand personality influences their loyalty to the brand. This low importance of brand personality is further supported by the fact that 41% of participants do not feel an emotional connection to their favourite brand, suggesting that functional attributes are more crucial to the purchase decision.

In addition, the Pearson correlation analysis in section 4.2.2.1 on page 67 revealed a statistically significant negative correlation between brand personality and customer loyalty, which further supports the assumption that intangible characteristics, such as brand personality, play a lesser role in building loyalty in the German sports apparel industry. Nevertheless, a detailed analysis of individual characteristics such as “up-to-date”, “reliable” and “successful” reveals positive trends. These characteristics were most frequently associated with the brands that participants are loyal to, indicating a certain relevance of brand-related attributes linked to performance and timeliness.

Another important finding of this study is the lack of a significant difference between age groups in terms of emotional attachment to brands. The hypothesis that younger consumers between the ages of 18 and 29 have a stronger emotional attachment to brands than older consumers was disproved. However, participants in this age group explicitly emphasised that they include sustainability as an additional characteristic in their purchasing decisions. This indicates that younger consumers are increasingly paying attention to social and ecological responsibility in addition to classic functional attributes.

Overall, the results show that the German sports apparel industry is characterised by rational, tangible attributes such as price, quality and reliability, while intangible attributes such as brand personality play a subordinate role.

#### **4.4.2. Strategic conclusion**

Based on the results presented here, brand personality currently has no meaningful influence on customer loyalty in the German sports apparel market. Instead, tangible factors such as quality, price and design dominate consumers' purchasing decisions. This preference suggests that companies in this sector should primarily focus on these practical and performance-orientated aspects to remain competitive. Quality and price in particular plays a central role, and it is crucial to continuously respond to current trends and consumers' aesthetic preferences to fulfil their needs and increase their willingness to buy.

In addition, the growing trend towards sustainability indicates that the sustainable image of a brand is becoming increasingly important. This is particularly evident in the younger target group, for whom sustainability plays a central role in purchasing decisions. Brands should therefore align their strategies to create a greater awareness of environmental and social responsibility and visibly communicate

their sustainable practices. This could not only help to retain the existing customer base, but also appeal to new, environmentally conscious target groups.

However, it is also clear that brand personality within the German sports apparel industry has not yet been a strong focus of strategic consideration. This could indicate that a generalisation of the findings on the influence of brand personality on customer loyalty across different industries is only possible to a limited extent. Nevertheless, the influence of brand personality on customer loyalty should continue to be monitored closely. Even if it does not currently play a central role, it could become more important in the future, particularly in the context of an increasingly individualised and emotionally driven consumer culture. Brands that address the development and communication of a strong, consistent brand personality at an early stage could benefit from a stronger emotional bond with their consumers in the long term and secure a competitive advantage.

## **5. Concluding Thoughts on the contribution of this research, its limitations and suggestions for further research**

This study analysed the influence of brand personality on customer loyalty within the German sports apparel industry. To this end, specific research objectives were formulated to evaluate the role of brand personality in the purchasing decisions of German consumers regarding their customer loyalty. A key objective was to determine the extent to which brand personality has an influence on customer loyalty and which specific features and attributes are favoured by consumers. A further aim was to analyse whether demographic factors, in particular age, have a significant influence on whether brand personality is perceived as a relevant factor in the customer loyalty decision.

To achieve these research objectives, a sample of 237 volunteers from different demographic groups, particularly in terms of age and gender, was used. These participants were interviewed as part of a comprehensive survey designed to capture their attitudes towards brand personality and customer loyalty. The data was collected using an online-based questionnaire provided via the Microsoft Forms platform. The data collected was then analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistical analysis methods to gain well-founded insights into the relationship between brand personality and customer loyalty.

### **5.1. Implication of Findings for the Research Question**

The ongoing development of global markets requires companies to continuously adapt to changing conditions. However, this development is not taking place simultaneously in all sectors and markets. While the brand personality factor is already playing an increasingly central role in various sectors, it has not yet

achieved a comparable significance in the German sports apparel industry. In this sector, consumers still primarily favour tangible product characteristics such as quality, design and price as decisive purchasing criteria. As a result, customer acquisition and retention strategies including brand personality that have been successfully implemented in other industries cannot easily be transferred to this industry.

Although the trend towards sustainability is a forward-looking factor that can have a positive impact on brand personality, this alone is not enough to achieve lasting customer loyalty or an increased willingness to recommend the product to others. Rather, it is crucial that the product itself, in particular its quality and value for money, fulfils consumer expectations and positively influences their purchasing decisions.

Furthermore, the results of the study suggest that demographic differences, particularly in relation to age, do not play a significant role in this context. It can therefore be assumed that a standardised strategy for customer retention and acquisition in the German sports apparel industry can be equally effective across different age groups.

## **5.2. Contribution and Limitations of the Research**

### **5.2.1. Contribution**

An important contribution of this study is the current data on how consumers in the German sports apparel industry view brand personality in terms of customer loyalty. In addition, it shows which factors are recognised as important that can lead to customer loyalty. Furthermore, in the case of interest in a developed brand personality, it can be assumed that characteristics such as being up-to-date, reliable and successful are characteristics that are favourably received by

customers. However, for the time being, it has been recognised that brand personality does not have a significant influence on customer loyalty in the German sports apparel industry.

### **5.2.2. Limitations**

A significant limitation of this study is the relatively small sample size of 237 participants. With a total population of around 83.4 million in Germany, this sample provides only a limited insight into perceptions of brand personality and customer loyalty. This limitation reduces the validity of the results, as they may not be representative of the entire population. Furthermore, the study was conducted exclusively in Germany and limited to the sports apparel industry, which prevents the inclusion and comparison of other cultural contexts. Due to these geographical and industry-specific limitations, the results cannot be generalised and transferred to other industries.

A further limitation is that the survey focussed exclusively on participants' opinions of brand personality, without examining whether consumers consciously perceive it at all. This leaves open the possibility that brand personality plays a larger, possibly subconscious role that was not captured in this study.

In addition, the analysis was limited to the survey method, which means that deeper insights into consumers' thought processes may not have been considered. The addition of qualitative methods, such as interviews, would have made it possible to obtain more intensive and differentiated answers and to better understand the underlying mechanisms.

Finally, it should be noted that the perspective of the brands themselves, for example how companies communicate their own brand personality to the outside world, was not considered in this study. This two-sided view could provide valuable

insights, particularly regarding the discrepancy between the perceived and intended brand personality.

### **5.3. Recommendations for Practice**

It is advisable not to treat brand personality as a central priority in the German sports apparel industry for the time being. The initial focus should be on the development and provision of high-quality products that are perceived by customers as valuable and aesthetically pleasing. Only once these basic requirements have been met, particularly in terms of quality and value for money, should the strategic focus on brand personality be given greater consideration.

This means that companies in the German sports apparel industry should first ensure that their products meet consumer expectations before focusing more intensively on external image and brand identity. In view of the intense competition in this sector, consumers are generally open to new market players if the price-performance ratio is convincing.

Nevertheless, the importance of brand personality should not be completely disregarded. It is essential to continuously monitor developments in this area, as brand personality could become increasingly important in the future. A gradual integration of this factor could make it possible to build a stronger emotional bond with the brand in the long term without neglecting the central, tangible product features.

## 5.4. Recommendations for Future Research

Despite the finding that brand personality in the German sports apparel industry does not currently have a meaningful impact on customer loyalty, it should remain a subject of research. The present study is based on a relatively small sample size, so expanding the sample to a larger and more diversified population could potentially provide deeper and more nuanced insights. A larger sample could help to better understand the “why” behind the low importance of brand personality for consumers and shed more light on the underlying factors.

A qualitative study, for example through interviews or focus groups, would be suitable for gaining detailed information on why consumers currently attach little importance to brand personality or how they could be made more aware of these aspects. Such methods offer the opportunity to capture the psychological and emotional drivers of consumer behaviour in a more differentiated way and to identify potential starting points for improving brand perception.

It would also make sense to extend this research beyond the sports apparel industry to other sectors. In this way, it could be examined whether the low significance of brand personality exists exclusively in the sports apparel industry or whether a general trend is recognisable in German industries.

Extending the study to an international level would also be important in order to analyse cultural differences. By comparing different countries and markets, transnational trends could be made visible, and it could be investigated whether and to what extent a generalisation of the results to other cultural and economic contexts is justified.

## 5.5. Final Conclusion and Reflection

This study provides a valuable, albeit limited, insight into the influence of brand personality on customer loyalty in the German sports apparel industry. The results clearly show that brand personality does not have a significant impact on customer loyalty in this specific market segment. Despite this finding, however, the study also highlights the importance of a carefully considered and structured approach to conducting research projects. Awareness of the importance of each phase of the research process, from the development of the hypothesis to data collection and analysis, is crucial.

A key aspect that became apparent during the conduct of this study is the need to make precise and thoughtful decisions from the outset about what information is relevant to the investigation and what potentially adds no value to answering the research question. This ability to separate essential from non-essential information proved to be crucial for the quality of the analysis and the validity of the results. One of the key findings of the research process was therefore the importance of a systematic approach and a clear structure when conducting scientific work.

In addition, the time aspect of the study played a crucial role. A well thought-out and realistic timetable is of great importance for the success of scientific work. It turned out that adhering to such a schedule not only enables more efficient work, but also creates the necessary freedom to deal with the literature in depth and critically scrutinise its relevance. At the same time, it became clear that the working environment has a crucial influence on productivity and the ability to concentrate on complex tasks. A calm and supportive environment proved to be essential to devote the necessary time and attention to evaluating the literature and analysing the data.

The data collection phase was another important source of insight. It showed that distributing a survey to many potential participants does not necessarily lead to a

high response rate. In fact, only a relatively small proportion of those contacted completed the survey, indicating that the recruitment of participants needs to be planned more carefully. Particularly challenging was the realisation that a survey in English can act as a barrier to potential participants despite being translated into German. This emphasises the importance of language choice and cultural sensitivity when designing and conducting surveys, particularly in a national context.

Clear recommendations for action can be copied from these experiences for future studies. It is essential to create a revised and precise schedule that provides sufficient buffer for unforeseen challenges. Regarding data collection, it is advisable to develop targeted measures to increase the participation rate, for example through an improved approach to potential participants. The language of the survey should also correspond to the preferences of the target group to break down barriers and encourage the widest possible participation.

In conclusion, this study not only provides important insights into the influence of brand personality on customer loyalty in the German sports apparel industry, but also offers valuable methodological lessons for future research projects. The research process requires continuous reflection and adaptation to achieve sound results in terms of both content and methodology.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A. Survey Questionnaire

### Questionnaire - Master Dissertation English / Deutsch

**Dear Participants,**

The following questionnaire is part of a study titled  
**"The influence of brand personality on customer loyalty in the German sports apparel industry."**

**Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this research is to investigate how brand personality influences customer loyalty from the perspective of consumers in the German sports apparel industry. This study aims to identify the specific elements of brand personality that resonate most with consumers and how these elements impact their loyalty to a brand. By exploring this relationship, the research seeks to provide valuable insights that can enhance consumer satisfaction and improve the alignment between consumer values and brand offerings.

**Key Definitions:**

- **Brand Personality:** The set of human characteristics and traits associated with a brand, influencing how it is perceived by consumers.
- **Customer Loyalty:** The commitment of customers to continue purchasing from and supporting a brand, often resulting in repeat business and positive word-of-mouth.

**Participation Details:** Your participation in this study is voluntary. The questionnaire should take no more than 10 minutes of your time. Your responses will remain anonymous and will be used solely for academic purposes.

Thank you for your time and valuable input.

**Note:** The primary research will be conducted in English; however, for your comfort, a German translation has been provided.

**Sehr geehrte Teilnehmer,**

der folgende Fragebogen ist Teil einer Studie mit dem Titel  
**"Der Einfluss der Markenpersönlichkeit auf die Kundenloyalität in der deutschen Sportbekleidungsindustrie".**

**Zweck der Studie:** Ziel dieser Studie ist es, den Einfluss der

Markenpersönlichkeit auf die Kundenbindung aus Sicht der Konsumenten in der deutschen Sportbekleidungsindustrie zu untersuchen. Die Studie zielt darauf ab, die spezifischen Elemente der Markenpersönlichkeit zu identifizieren, die bei den Verbrauchern am stärksten auf Resonanz stoßen, und wie diese Elemente ihre Loyalität gegenüber einer Marke beeinflussen. Durch die Erforschung dieser Beziehung soll die Studie wertvolle Erkenntnisse liefern, die die Zufriedenheit der Verbraucher erhöhen und die Abstimmung zwischen den Werten der Verbraucher und den Markenangeboten verbessern können.

**Wichtige Definitionen:**

• Markenpersönlichkeit: Die Gesamtheit der menschlichen

## Consent / Einverständniserklärung

**1. By proceeding with the survey, you consent to participate in this study.**

Wenn Sie mit der Umfrage fortfahren, erklären Sie sich mit der Teilnahme an dieser Studie einverstanden. \*

Yes, I consent / Ja, ich stimme zu

No, i do not consent / Nein, ich stimme nicht zu

## Screening Questions / Kontrollfragen

### 2. **Are you a German citizen?**

Sind Sie ein deutscher Staatsangehöriger? \*

Yes / Ja

No / Nein

### 3. **Do you purchase sports apparel?**

Kaufen Sie Sportbekleidung? \*

Yes / Ja

No / Nein

## Demographic Information / Demografische Informationen

### 4. How old are you?

Wie alt sind Sie? \*

- 18 - 29 Years / Jahre
- 30 - 43 Years / Jahre
- 44 - 58 Years / Jahre
- 59+

### 5. Which Gender are you?

Welches Geschlecht sind Sie? \*

- Male / Männlich
- Female / Weiblich
- Divers / Divers

**6. How often do you purchase sports apparel?**

Wie oft kaufen Sie Sportbekleidung? \*

- Once a month / Einmal im Monat
- Once every 2 - 3 months / Alle 2 - 3 Monate
- Twice a Year / Zweimal im Jahr
- Once a Year / Einmal im Jahr
- Less often / Weniger häufig

## Brand personality and customer loyalty

### 7. Which sports apparel brands are you most familiar with? (Select all that apply)

Mit welchen Sportbekleidungsmarken sind Sie am meisten vertraut? (Wählen Sie alle zutreffenden aus) \*

Adidas

Puma

Nike

Sonstiges

### 8. Which brand of sports apparel do you purchase most frequently?

Welche Marke von Sportbekleidung kaufen Sie am häufigsten? \*

Adidas

Puma

Nike

Sonstiges

**9. What factors influence your decision to purchase sports apparel from a particular brand? (Rank in order of importance)**

Welche Faktoren beeinflussen Ihre Entscheidung, Sportbekleidung einer bestimmten Marke zu kaufen? (In der Reihenfolge ihrer Wichtigkeit) \*

Price / Preis
Quality / Qualität
Design and Style / Design und Stil
Comfort / Komfort

**10. Have you ever switched from one sports apparel brand to another? If so, what was the primary reason?**

Haben Sie jemals von einer Sportbekleidungs-marke zu einer anderen gewechselt? Wenn ja, was war der Hauptgrund dafür? \*

- Yes, due to better pricing from the competitor / Ja, aufgrund der besseren Preisgestaltung des Wettbewerbers
- Yes, due to superior product quality / Ja, aufgrund der hohen Produktqualität
- Yes, due to poor customer service from the original brand / Ja, aufgrund des schlechten Kundendienstes der ursprünglichen Marke
- Yes, due to a stronger brand personality / Ja, aufgrund einer stärkeren Markenpersönlichkeit
- No, I have never switched / Nein, ich habe nie gewechselt
- Sonstiges

**11. How likely are you to recommend your preferred sports apparel brand to others?**

Wie wahrscheinlich ist es, dass Sie Ihre bevorzugte Sportbekleidungsmarke weiter empfehlen? \*

- Very likely / Sehr wahrscheinlich
- Likely / Wahrscheinlich
- Neutral / Neutral
- Unlikely / Unwahrscheinlich
- Very unlikely / Sehr unwahrscheinlich

12. **When you think about your favourite sports apparel brand, what characteristics come to mind?** (Select all that apply)

Wenn Sie an Ihre Lieblingssportbekleidungsmarke denken, welche Eigenschaften kommen Ihnen in den Sinn? (Wählen Sie alle zutreffenden aus) \*

- Down to Earth / Bodenständig
- Honest / Ehrlich
- Cheerful / Frohsinnig
- Wholesome / Gesund
- Daring / Wagemutig
- Spirited / Temperamentvoll; Lebhaft
- Imaginative / Einfallsreich; Fantasievoll
- Up-to-date / Aktuell; Zeitgemäß
- Reliable / Zuverlässig
- Intelligent / Intelligent
- Successful / Erfolgreich
- Upperclass / Oberklasse
- Charming / Charmant
- Outdoorsy / Gerne im freien (kein Stubenhocker)
- Tough / Zäh; Robust
- Sonstiges

**13. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I feel a personal connection to the brand of sports apparel I purchase most frequently."**

Inwieweit stimmen Sie der folgenden Aussage zu? "Ich fühle eine persönliche Verbindung zu der Sportbekleidungsmarke, die ich am häufigsten kaufe." \*

- Disagree / Stimme nicht zu
- Neutral / Neutral
- Agree / Stimme zu

**14. To what extent does the personality of a sports apparel brand influence your loyalty to it?**

Inwieweit beeinflusst die Persönlichkeit einer Sportbekleidungsmarke Ihre Loyalität ihr gegenüber? \*

- Not at all / Überhaupt nicht
- Slightly / Leicht
- Moderately / Mäßig
- Significantly / Erheblich

**15. How important is it for you that your preferred sports apparel brand's personality reflects your own personal identity?**

Wie wichtig ist es für Sie, dass die Persönlichkeit Ihrer bevorzugten Sportbekleidungsmarke Ihre eigene persönliche Identität widerspiegelt? \*

- Not important / Nicht wichtig
- Slightly important / Etwas wichtig
- Moderately important / Mäßig wichtig

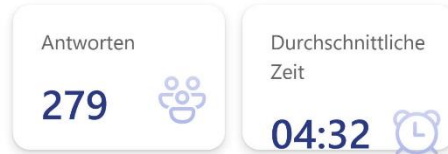
**16. Thank you for sharing your insights. Is there anything else you would like to add or any questions you have for me?**

Vielen Dank, dass Sie mir Ihre Erkenntnisse mitgeteilt haben. Gibt es noch etwas, das Sie hinzufügen möchten, oder haben Sie Fragen an mich?

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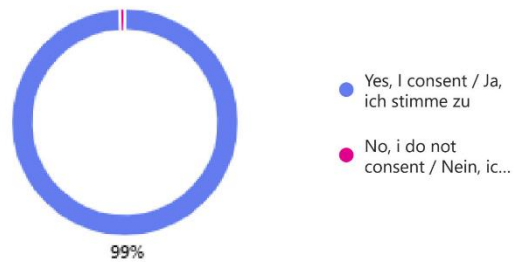
## Appendix B. Survey results

### Übersicht über Antworten Geschlossen



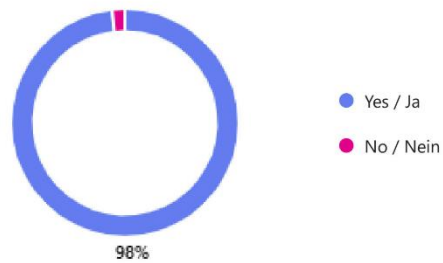
#### 1. By proceeding with the survey, you consent to participate in this study.

Wenn Sie mit der Umfrage fortfahren, erklären Sie sich mit der Teilnahme an dieser Studie einverstanden.



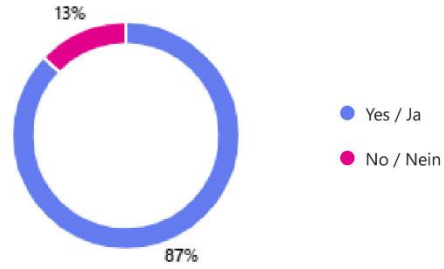
#### 2. Are you a German citizen?

Sind Sie ein deutscher Staatsangehöriger?



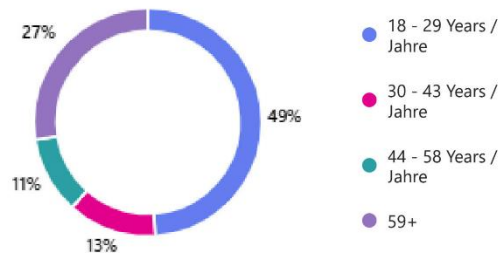
### 3. Do you purchase sports apparel?

Kaufen Sie Sportbekleidung?



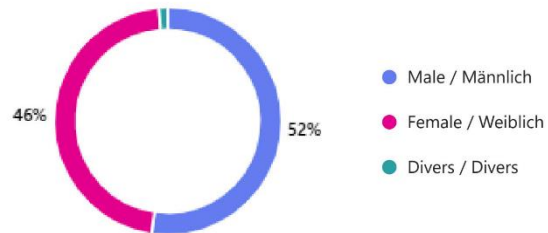
### 4. How old are you?

Wie alt sind Sie?



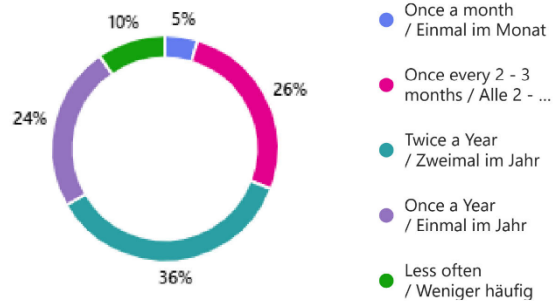
### 5. Which Gender are you?

Welches Geschlecht sind Sie?



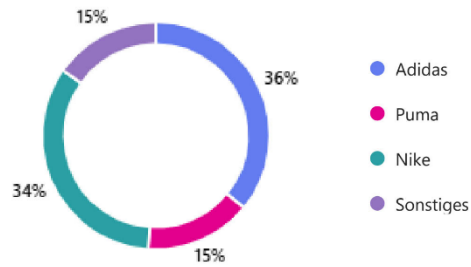
### 6. How often do you purchase sports apparel?

Wie oft kaufen Sie Sportbekleidung?



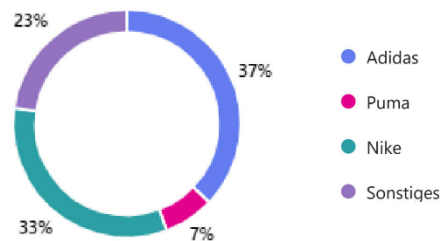
### 7. Which sports apparel brands are you most familiar with? (Select all that apply)

Mit welchen Sportbekleidungsmarken sind Sie am meisten vertraut? (Wählen Sie alle zutreffenden aus)



### 8. Which brand of sports apparel do you purchase most frequently?

Welche Marke von Sportbekleidung kaufen Sie am häufigsten?



**9. What factors influence your decision to purchase sports apparel from a particular brand? (Rank in order of importance)**

Welche Faktoren beeinflussen Ihre Entscheidung, Sportbekleidung einer bestimmten Marke zu kaufen? (In der Reihenfolge ihrer Wichtigkeit)



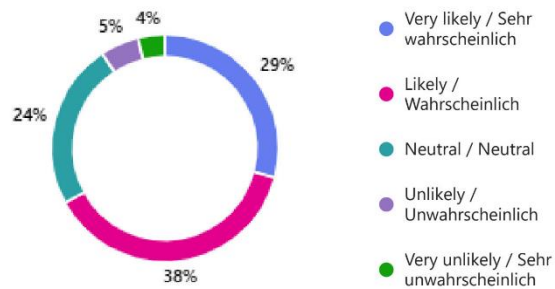
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Haben Sie jemals von einer Sportbekleidungs-marke zu einer anderen gewechselt? Wenn ja, was war der Hauptgrund dafür?



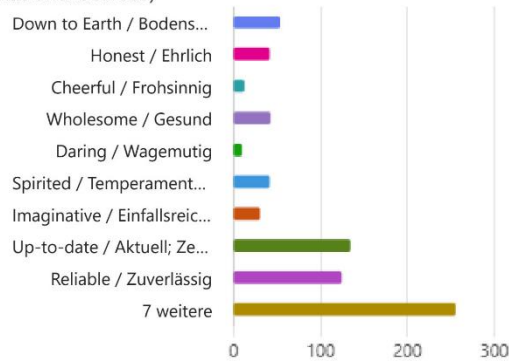
**11. How likely are you to recommend your preferred sports apparel brand to others?**

Wie wahrscheinlich ist es, dass Sie Ihre bevorzugte Sportbekleidungs-marke weiter empfehlen?



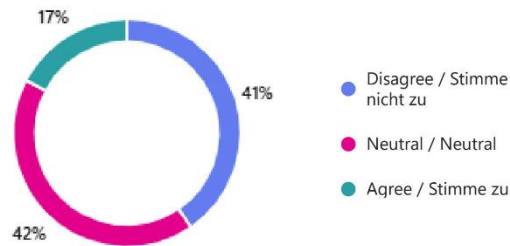
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Wenn Sie an Ihre Lieblingssportbekleidungsmarke denken, welche Eigenschaften kommen Ihnen in den Sinn? (Wählen Sie alle zutreffenden aus)



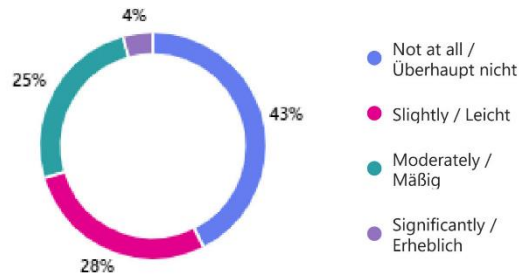
13. **To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I feel a personal connection to the brand of sports apparel I purchase most frequently."**

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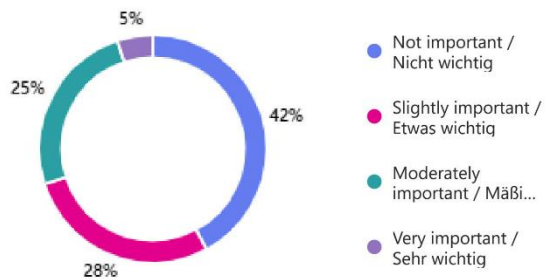
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Inwieweit beeinflusst die Persönlichkeit einer Sportbekleidungs-  
marke Ihre Loyalität ihr gegenüber?



15. **How important is it for you that your preferred sports apparel brand's personality reflects your own personal identity?**

Wie wichtig ist es für Sie, dass die Persönlichkeit Ihrer bevorzu-  
gten Sportbekleidungs-marke Ihre eigene persönliche Identität  
widerspiegelt?



16. Thank you for sharing your insights. Is there anything else you would like to add or any questions you have for me?

Vielen Dank, dass Sie mir Ihre Erkenntnisse mitgeteilt haben. Gibt es noch etwas, das Sie hinzufügen möchten, oder haben Sie Fragen an mich?

23 übermittelte Antworten [Aktualisieren](#)



## Appendix C. Significant individual results

C1. 81

Auskunftsperson

81 Anonym

02:18

Zeit zum  
Ausfüllen

### Consent / Einverständniserklärung

**1. By proceeding with the survey, you consent to participate in this study.**

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- Yes, I consent / Ja, ich stimme zu
- No, I do not consent / Nein, ich stimme nicht zu

### Screening Questions / Kontrollfragen

**2. Are you a German citizen?**

Sind Sie ein deutscher Staatsangehöriger? \*

- Yes / Ja
- No / Nein

**3. Do you purchase sports apparel?**

Kaufen Sie Sportbekleidung? \*

- Yes / Ja
- No / Nein

### Demographic Information / Demografische Informationen

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Brand personality and customer loyalty

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- Sonstiges

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1 Quality / Qualität

2 Design and Style / Design und Stil

3 Comfort / Komfort

4 Price / Preis

5 Brand personality / Markenpersönlichkeit

**10. Have you ever switched from one sports apparel brand to another? If so, what was the primary reason?**

Haben Sie jemals von einer Sportbekleidungs-marke zu einer anderen gewechselt? Wenn ja, was war der Hauptgrund dafür? \*

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- Sonstiges

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Wie wahrscheinlich ist es, dass Sie Ihre bevorzugte Sportbekleidungs-marke weiter empfehlen? \*

- Very likely / Sehr wahrscheinlich
- Likely / Wahrscheinlich
- Neutral / Neutral
- Unlikely / Unwahrscheinlich
- Very unlikely / Sehr unwahrscheinlich

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Inwieweit stimmen Sie der folgenden Aussage zu? "Ich fühle eine persönliche Verbindung zu der Sportbekleidungsmarke, die ich am häufigsten kaufe." \*

- Disagree / Stimme nicht zu
- Neutral / Neutral
- Agree / Stimme zu

**14. To what extent does the personality of a sports apparel brand influence your loyalty to it?**

Inwieweit beeinflusst die Persönlichkeit einer SportbekleidungsMarke Ihre Loyalität ihr gegenüber? \*

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- Moderately / Mäßig
- Significantly / Erheblich

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Wie wichtig ist es für Sie, dass die Persönlichkeit Ihrer bevorzugten SportbekleidungsMarke Ihre eigene persönliche Identität widerspiegelt? \*

- Not important / Nicht wichtig
- Slightly important / Etwas wichtig
- Moderately important / Mäßig wichtig
- Very important / Sehr wichtig

**16. Thank you for sharing your insights. Is there anything else you would like to add or any questions you have for me?**

Vielen Dank, dass Sie mir Ihre Erkenntnisse mitgeteilt haben. Gibt es noch etwas, das Sie hinzufügen möchten, oder haben Sie Fragen an mich?

Es ist vielmehr Gewohnheit und Prägung aus dem letzten Jahrtausend

### Consent / Einverständniserklärung

**1. By proceeding with the survey, you consent to participate in this study.**

Wenn Sie mit der Umfrage fortfahren, erklären Sie sich mit der Teilnahme an dieser Studie einverstanden. \*

- Yes, I consent / Ja, ich stimme zu
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Sind Sie ein deutscher Staatsangehöriger? \*

- Yes / Ja
- No / Nein

**3. Do you purchase sports apparel?**

Kaufen Sie Sportbekleidung? \*

- Yes / Ja
- No / Nein

### Demographic Information / Demografische Informationen

**4. How old are you?**

Wie alt sind Sie? \*

- 18 - 29 Years / Jahre
- 30 - 43 Years / Jahre
- 44 - 58 Years / Jahre
- 59+

**5. Which Gender are you?**

Welches Geschlecht sind Sie? \*

- Male / Männlich
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- Divers / Divers

**6. How often do you purchase sports apparel?**

Wie oft kaufen Sie Sportbekleidung? \*

- Once a month / Einmal im Monat
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**Brand personality and customer loyalty**

**7. Which sports apparel brands are you most familiar with? (Select all that apply)**

Mit welchen Sportbekleidungsmarken sind Sie am meisten vertraut? (Wählen Sie alle zutreffenden aus) \*

- Adidas
- Puma
- Nike
- New Balance

**8. Which brand of sports apparel do you purchase most frequently?**

Welche Marke von Sportbekleidung kaufen Sie am häufigsten? \*

- Adidas
- Puma
- Nike
- Unterschiedlich

**9. What factors influence your decision to purchase sports apparel from a particular brand? (Rank in order of importance)**

Welche Faktoren beeinflussen Ihre Entscheidung, Sportbekleidung einer bestimmten Marke zu kaufen? (In der Reihenfolge ihrer Wichtigkeit) \*

1 Quality / Qualität
2 Comfort / Komfort
3 Brand personality / Markenpersönlichkeit
4 Price / Preis
5 Design and Style / Design und Stil

**10. Have you ever switched from one sports apparel brand to another? If so, what was the primary reason?**

Haben Sie jemals von einer Sportbekleidungs-marke zu einer anderen gewechselt? Wenn ja, was war der Hauptgrund dafür? \*

- Yes, due to better pricing from the competitor / Ja, aufgrund der besseren Preisgestaltung des Wettbewerbers
- Yes, due to superior product quality / Ja, aufgrund der hohen Produktqualität
- Yes, due to poor customer service from the original brand / Ja, aufgrund des schlechten Kundendienstes der ursprünglichen Marke
- Yes, due to a stronger brand personality / Ja, aufgrund einer stärkeren Markenpersönlichkeit
- No, I have never switched / Nein, ich habe nie gewechselt
- Sonstiges

**11. How likely are you to recommend your preferred sports apparel brand to others?**

Wie wahrscheinlich ist es, dass Sie Ihre bevorzugte Sportbekleidungs-marke weiter empfehlen? \*

- Very likely / Sehr wahrscheinlich
- Likely / Wahrscheinlich
- Neutral / Neutral
- Unlikely / Unwahrscheinlich
- Very unlikely / Sehr unwahrscheinlich

12. **When you think about your favourite sports apparel brand, what characteristics come to mind?** (Select all that apply)

Wenn Sie an Ihre Lieblings sportbekleidungs marke denken, welche Eigenschaften kommen Ihnen in den Sinn? (Wählen Sie alle zutreffenden aus) \*

- Down to Earth / Bodenständig
- Honest / Ehrlich
- Cheerful / Frohsinnig
- Wholesome / Gesund
- Daring / Wagemutig
- Spirited / Temperamentvoll; Lebhaft
- Imaginative / Einfallreich; Fantasievoll
- Up-to-date / Aktuell; Zeitgemäß
- Reliable / Zuverlässig
- Intelligent / Intelligent
- Successful / Erfolgreich
- Upperclass / Oberklasse
- Charming / Charmant
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- Sonstiges

13. **To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I feel a personal connection to the brand of sports apparel I purchase most frequently."**

Inwieweit stimmen Sie der folgenden Aussage zu? "Ich fühle eine persönliche Verbindung zu der Sportbekleidungs marke, die ich am häufigsten kaufe." \*

- Disagree / Stimme nicht zu
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**14. To what extent does the personality of a sports apparel brand influence your loyalty to it?**

Inwieweit beeinflusst die Persönlichkeit einer Sportbekleidungsmarke Ihre Loyalität ihr gegenüber? \*

- Not at all / Überhaupt nicht
- Slightly / Leicht
- Moderately / Mäßig
- Significantly / Erheblich

**15. How important is it for you that your preferred sports apparel brand's personality reflects your own personal identity?**

Wie wichtig ist es für Sie, dass die Persönlichkeit Ihrer bevorzugten Sportbekleidungsmarke Ihre eigene persönliche Identität widerspiegelt? \*

- Not important / Nicht wichtig
- Slightly important / Etwas wichtig
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Vielen Dank, dass Sie mir Ihre Erkenntnisse mitgeteilt haben. Gibt es noch etwas, das Sie hinzufügen möchten, oder haben Sie Fragen an mich?

Einfluss der nachhaltigen Produktion wichtig.

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### Screening Questions / Kontrollfragen

**2. Are you a German citizen?**

Sind Sie ein deutscher Staatsangehöriger? \*

- Yes / Ja
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Kaufen Sie Sportbekleidung? \*

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- Nike
- Sonstiges

**8. Which brand of sports apparel do you purchase most frequently?**

Welche Marke von Sportbekleidung kaufen Sie am häufigsten? \*

- Adidas
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- Quechua

**9. What factors influence your decision to purchase sports apparel from a particular brand? (Rank in order of importance)**

Welche Faktoren beeinflussen Ihre Entscheidung, Sportbekleidung einer bestimmten Marke zu kaufen? (In der Reihenfolge ihrer Wichtigkeit) \*

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2 Design and Style / Design und Stil

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Another important aspect for me is the brands opinion on fast fashion/dimate change. I would pay more for something that is recycled/produced dimate friendly and for something that pays the workers well and under good conditions.

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In der jetzigen Zeit versuche ich Produkte zu kaufen die unter fairen Umständen produziert werden

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- Nike
- Asics

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Bewusst ist bei mir eigentlich die Qualität und ein einfacher Kontakt zum Support wichtig, falls etwas mit einem Produkt nicht stimmt. Ein Produkt kaufe ich aber dennoch zuerst wegen des Designs und Unterbewusst auch durch Markenpräsenz. Ich würde mir aber z.B. keine Basketballschuhe kaufen nur, weil sie von Jordan, Kobe oder Lebron sind, sondern weil der Schuh gut zum Spielen ist, ich werde aber durch die Bekannten Namen dazu verleitet mir den Schuh überhaupt anzugucken. Bei sowas wie T-Shirts oder Hosen ist das anders da diese ja meistens nichts an meiner Performance verändern können im Gegensatz zu verschiedenen Schuhwerken. Wenn ich mir T-Shirts hole, greife ich dann oft einfach zu Nike oder Adidas, weil ich bei den Marken bereits gekauft habe und die Größe, die mir passt, kenne. Außerdem ist es dadurch auch einfach Produkte Umtauschen oder Reklamieren zu lassen da ich bei diesen Marken bereits weiß wie ich sowas schnell hinter mich bringen kann. Als Kunde verliert man mich aber schnell, wenn man ein laufendes Konzept, mit dem ich als Kunde zufrieden war, ändert. Nike hat z.B. die Passform seiner T-Shirts verändert, sodass sie Länger und Enger wurden seitdem habe ich mir nicht nochmal ein T-Shirt von Nike geholt. Bei einem bestimmten Schuh, den ich bestellt und umgetauscht habe, war auch 2 Mal derselbe Fehler vorhanden, weil die Qualitätskontrolle in den Fabriken nicht mehr so Streng genommen wurde.