The Influence of Branding on Consumer Purchasing Behavior: A Multi-Generational Comparison

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Prozkoumejte vlivy jednotlivých aspektů značky na zákazníka.
Zjistěte, jak působí ekonomické vlivy na nákupní chování zákazníka.
Definujte generační rozdíly.
Vypracujte analytickou část na základě shromážděných dat.
Vyvoďte závěry.

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ABSTRAKT

Cílem této bakalářské práce je nalézt a analyzovat rozdíly v nákupním chování různých generací při nakupování značkových produktů. Tuto práci jsem rozdělil na dvě stěžejní části: teoretickou a praktickou. V teoretické části se budu zabývat poznatky okolo samotného brandingu, značky jako takové, a v neposlední řadě se zaměřím na nákupní chování spotřebitele. V praktické části za pomoci dotazníku analyzuji nashromážděné informace a vyvodím z nich závěry.

Klíčová slova: branding, značka, zákazník, produkt, nákupní chování

ABSTRACT

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to find out and analyze differences in the purchasing behavior of various generations during the purchasing process of branded products. I divided this thesis into two pivotal parts: theoretical and practical. In theoretical part, I will deal with findings about branding itself, brand as it exists, and last but not least, I will focus on consumer purchasing behavior. In the practical part, with the help of a questionnaire, I will analyze collected data and according to these data, I will provide conclusions.

Keywords: branding, brand, customer, product, purchasing behavior

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INTRODUCTION

In these days, brands are inseparable elements of our living. We see them everywhere. They are present at home, while shopping or just while relaxing at your favorite cup of tea. Since brands have such influential positions in current world, I decided to write about this field in my bachelor thesis. As a topic, I chose the more specific study focusing on brand oriented purchasing behavior of various people generations. I considered it interesting to find out and analyze differences among these generations and potential reasons why these differences exist.

I decided to divide my thesis into two main parts: theoretical and practical part. In the first chapter of my theoretical part, I want to include information about branding, its definition and history, importance, components, benefits, and its future. Secondly, I will describe the most important information concerning about brands, such as types of brand, brand identity, brand equity, brand creation, brand elements etc. And lastly, I would like to write down a few words about the consumer purchasing behavior, how it may differ, and what are the main influential factors which definitely have a strong influence on consumer's decision-making during the purchasing process.

In the practical part, I will create the questionnaire that will be able to serve my expectations. That means, it will be constructed the way so I will be able to find out those distinguishing factors of each age group, share my final thoughts and make the conclusions. I want to ask various people from the Czech Republic, ranging from teenagers to pensioners, what is their view on brands, on purchasing branded products and their brand oriented purchasing behavior.

I.   THEORY

1 BRANDING

1.1 Definition of Brand

This term has developed from the Old Norse verb 'brandr' (burn). According to The Pocket Oxford Dictionary of Current English (1934), term brand is characterized as a piece of burning or smouldering wood, torch, sword, stigma or trade-mark. However, forty-six years later in The Oxford American Dictionary (1980), the brand is described as a trade mark, a mark of identification made with a hot iron or to mark something with a hot iron. Apparently, over the course of nearly fifty years, this term has changed its meaning into more commercial use. (Clifton and Simmons 2003, 13)

1.2 History of Branding

Branding has deep roots in our history. The oldest references come from Ancient Egypt, where it was the first time, when mankind began to use branding for practical purposes. Excluding Ancient Egypt, we are also able to define the roots of branding from other parts of the world.

- Ancient Egypt - they were putting symbols on bricks as a sign of identification
- Europe – branding was used in medieval guilds to protect their products against imitations
- United States – branding in the US developed along with marking livestock by cattle ranchers
- Manufacturers – branding was used for burning marking onto barrels for identification purposes by manufacturers. (Batey 2008, 2)

1.3 Importance of Branding

The importance of branding has become more and more crucial in the past ten years. The main reason of this is that companies begin to see their brands as assets. In other words, branding is being put on the same level next to their systems and patents. Therefore, brands nowadays are not just slogans or icons, they are something more. They are subjects of monitoring. They are being watched closely by a wide range of people, such as CEOs, CFOs and also by industry analysts. In these days, brands are sometimes considered as assets on balance sheets. However, the value of branding is still being unaccepted or rather unappreciated by certain businesses, such as business-to-business marketers and service

providers. It does not matter, if a company knows theory how to build a successful brand. In order to success, the key point is in performing actions through which their potential customers would see the target company's image. Consequently, customers will remember this image and depending on their experience, a company can acquire a new potential satisfied customer. This is the right way for these companies, how to improve and boost the value of their brand. (Jelsema)

1.4 Components of Branding

Branding in form, we use it nowadays, is divided into five core components.

- Positioning
- Storytelling
- Design (color)
- Price
- Customer Relationship (Healey 2008, 8)

1.4.1 Positioning

The main goal of positioning is to determine the reasons why potential customers should prefer 'that' brand over others. Positioning covers all kinds of action in order to help brand make connections with its customers and persuade them why they should choose or stick to this particular brand. Well organized positioning should be able to create a unique picture of the brand and distinguish from the competitors. It should be also able to answer us questions such as, if our business is appropriate to all major geographic markets and businesses, if our business is significant and encouraging enough to the niche market, if this activity is able to help and boost up the organization, or, if it is helpful when we speak about how the organization wants to achieve its financial goals. Brand positioning serves as a medium through which customers can see what the organization wants to achieve for them and what organization means to them. We can imagine a brand positioning as an activity when one side is trying to offer its brand and doing everything possible to be unique, valuable and to stay in the minds of their customers. This field of branding is one of the most influential things that will affect organization's competitive stance they want to adopt. Brand Positioning has often been associated with identifying and determining points of similarity and difference and with the creation of a proper brand image. It is the key to marketing strategy. Properly managed positioning strategy can lead into significant

benefits for a particular organization. When an organization is able to deliver clear information to their customers why they should choose and use the products of this specific brand, customer has a much clearer vision and is more likely to be suggestible. Still, main factors will be uniqueness and difference from their competitors. It is also the tool for developing and increasing the required knowledge and perceptions of the customers. The organization should avoid various positioning errors, such as:

- Under positioning – customer has blurred and unclear idea of brand
- Over positioning – in this case, customer's awareness is too limited
- Confused positioning – confused positioning may lead into a confused opinion of a customer of the brand
- Double positioning – double positioning signals, that customer does not accept the claims of a brand. (Brand Positioning - Definition and Concept)

All in all, this single feature can have an immense impact on organization's being; if an organization is successful or not. Being unique and not similar is extremely important in the world we live in now. (Brand Positioning - Definition and Concept)

1.4.2 Storytelling

When a customer buys any product of a particular brand, he or she will almost certainly speak about it with his family, friends and others. Apparently, if his or her needs will not be met, this brand can expect a spread of bad impressions. The brand is supposed to provide its customer its own story. In order to success, customer should be familiar with this story. If he or she is, the process of forwarding this information can continue. If there's no word-of-mouth buzz about the brand, customer service is probably doing something wrong. (Albertson)

1.4.3 Design (Color)

Design is not just a visual aspect. It refers to all aspects on how a thing is crafted. The design is the liquid as well as the label. (Healey 2008, 9)

Sight becomes the predominant sense for human beings from the age of ten for understanding and exploration of our surroundings and the world itself. A healthy human being is able to memorize every single experience, at least for a few moments. Therefore for brands, the design of their product can be potentially alpha and omega of their business success. Colors are creating associations in our mind. And we are capable of linking these associations with other elements. For instance, we are able to associate certain colors with

particular themes, emotions, feelings etc. Thus, every branding strategy must consider the impact of colors and their absence will have on the brand. The perception of our central nervous system and the cerebral cortex can trigger very specific responses just based on which color we see at the moment. This is the main reason why is color so crucial for branding strategy. (Gobé 2010, 79)

Design (color) of the product is not the only carrier of this perception. We cannot forget to mention logos and packaging, elements creating brand identity. The common brand strategy of choosing color is to choose one that is easily associated with their product. For example, IBM's color is blue as the color of responsibility and safety. John Deere' color is green, symbolizing nature. Every smart brand should never choose color as their competitors in the same field have. Being unique is again a key to success. For example, Hertz, the first car-rental brand, picked yellow. So Avis, the second brand, picked red. (Gobé 2010, 81)

1.4.4 Price

The idea of perfect market from 1776 sees that identical items should be priced exactly the same way, and when supply and demand would change, price would change too. This principle of market pricing remained valid but its original form rarely applies. First of all, we must say that every product for everyone somehow differs; one may prefer white, another black. A person who prefers white over black will pay more for his or her desired color. As an example could serve a situation when a customer is choosing a car and he is willing to pay more for particular colors. However, there are more issues influencing price.

- The timing – deals with the issue if the customer needs it now or later and thus he or she has a time to look for alternatives
- The place – place has a strong influence on the customer. People tend to pay more in more friendly, clean and product related environment
- The features – additional services that our potential customer will be willing to pay for. (Nilson 2003, 115)

Pricing is one of the fundamental elements for every company. Price multiplied by volume generates revenue. Revenue is consequently used for paying employees, raw materials, fixed overheads etc. and last but not least to generate a profit. But setting the price level correctly is not easy. Products with high price will not sell and products with low price will not be profitable enough. (Nilson 2003, 116)

1.4.5 Customer Relationship

The customer relationship is the fifth core component of branding.

For this part of my thesis, I decided to explain following issue via CBBE (Customer Based Brand Equity) Model. Keller describes this model of brand building as an ascending series of steps, from bottom to top:

- Being sure that the customer is able to associate specific products with target brand.
- Resolutely establishing the entirety of brand meaning in the minds of customers via strategic linking a host with tangible and intangible brand association.
- Invoking the proper customer responses connected with in terms of brand-related judgment and feelings.
- Converting brand response to create an intense, active loyalty relationship between brand and customer. (Keller 2009, 143)
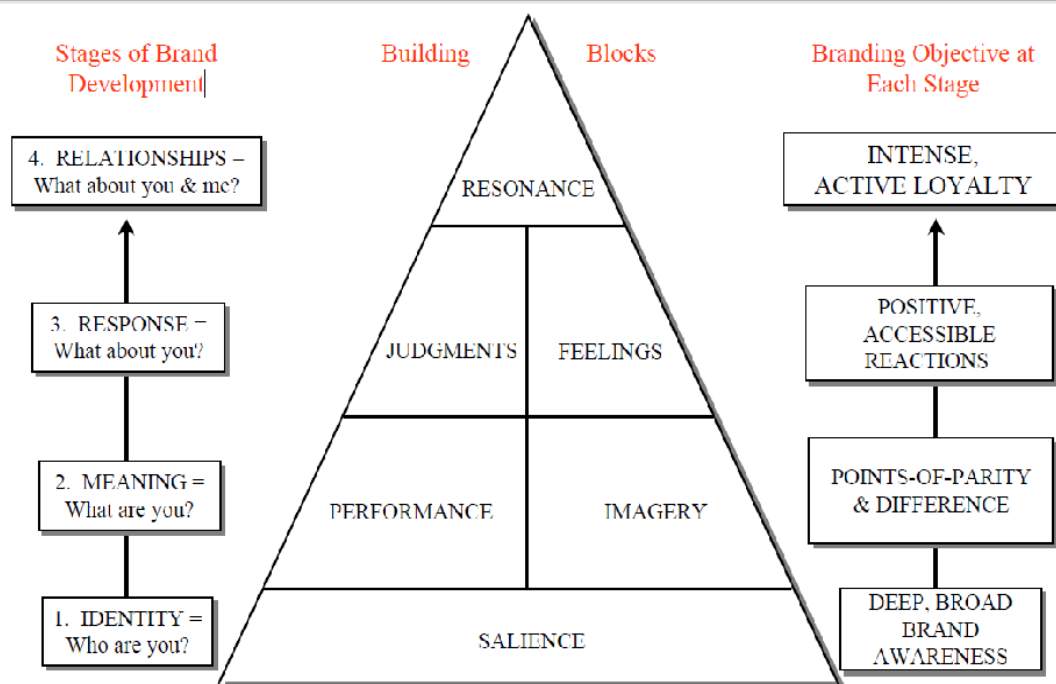

Figure 1. Customer-Based Brand Equity Model Pyramid. (Keller 2009, 144)

This model is promoting a pyramid of six 'brand building blocks' with customers. The CBBE model emphasizes the duality of brands:

- Left-hand side – rather rational route.

- Right-hand side – rather emotional route. (Keller 2009, 143)

In order to reach the top or pinnacle of the brand resonance pyramid, blocks from both sides are needed to be put into place.

- Brand salience - means how easily and often customer thinks of the brand under certain purchase or consumption situations.
- Brand performance – defines how well the product or service meets the customer's needs and desires.
- Brand imagery – trying to describe, how product affects psychological or social needs of the customer via extrinsic properties of the product or service.
- Brand judgments – investigation of customer's own personal opinions and evaluations.
- Brand feelings – customer's emotional responses and reactions with respect to the brand.
- Brand resonance – studies the nature of the relationship, whether the customer is on the same page with the brand or not. (Keller 2009, 143)

1.5   Benefits of Branding

Lately, everything in business has been in token of competition. Thus, the best strategy for smaller companies seems to be being attentive and focused on branding these days. When a brand wants to become or stay competitive, probably the most effective way how to do this, is to create a favorable, memorable positioning of its products and services. Branding is a tool that extends and strengthens relationships with customers. A powerful, well-established brand also gives company an opportunity to remove the product from the 'commodity' category and often relieves the company so it does not have to be involved in competitive price wars. (Jelsema)

1.6   Branding Future – Key Future Trends

Brand culture is still evolving and this process is literary unstoppable. It is same as for instance, development of culture in our country. This is all natural process of the evolution. But we have to bear in mind that brand culture has not evolved everywhere at the same time. That is why branding should be in some cases very sensitive. All those characterístics, such as society's affluence, availability, public awareness of brands, or general accessibility to brands could be essential. Branding is now widely spread

throughout the world and is internationally recognized and accepted mostly because of more frequent traveling, or that countries are more opened to global politics and international trends and last but not least that the population is being flooded with new forms of media and communications. (Davis 2009, 150)

1.6.1   Technology

Without any doubt, technology had an immense impact on our lives in the last twenty years and will continue to have a large impact in the future. We cannot nearly imagine living without the inventions of the current era. They are integrated into our lives. We use various devices on a daily basis, at work, in personal life or while shopping. Due to this fact, there is a room for new brand-building experience that can potentially lead into higher profits. The question is, what kind of approach should particular brand use as a way to communicate and intensify the brand experience. Brands will have to adapt to the changes in technology, such as handling conversations at online level or operating with online communities. (Davis 2009, 150)

1.6.2   Conversation

Brands need to react and be prepared for communication with customers on a one-to-one level. Audiences want to be involved in a brand dialogue, to share views, and to be answered. Online formats of communication allow companies to indicate and evaluate what is said about their brand more effectively. One example for all, the travel site, TripAdvisor, is running its business based on customers' own contributions and references on hotels. On the other hand, www.amazon.com, also allows readers to contribute and write reviews of books and products, but they also allow commentaries from the author. Brands need to be highly adaptable to be competitive players. Getting used to knowledge-based services such as news feeds, Twitter etc. opens further possibilities to increase the dialogue between brand and customer. (Davis 2009, 151)

1.6.3   Online Community

Online communities have already existed years before the social network phenomenon, but sites such as Twitter, MySpace or Facebook have changed them radically. Online world lets communities share their feelings, tastes, loyalties or many other means, so these models are fetching for brands. Those social network sites also can be used to praise brands or criticize them and knowing this directly puts brands one step ahead. Building strong

relationships with these online communities is an exclusive option for the particular brand how to differ from others. (Davis 2009, 151)

2   BRAND

Term 'brand' can be interpreted in many ways. We would not be mistaken, if we said that every person sees a brand differently. Still, the core of the idea is preserved, but the way how people describe term brand differs. The American Marketing Association's traditional definition of a brand from 1960 tells us that brand differs through its visual features individually or as a combination of those features. Features, such as name, term, sign, symbol or design. Association sees those features as mediums to identify the goods or services of particular seller or group of sellers and mainly to be unique and not be generic. (Batey 2008, 3)

Basic interpretation for a brand is that the term stands for a proprietary name of a product, service, or group. More in depth view signals that a brand is the marketing 'tool' which is consisted of all functional and emotional assets of the product, service, or group in order to help to be unique in comparison with competitors. (Landa 2006, 4)

A brand describes company's 'personality' and acts as a link between customer and the particular company. Possibilities how to come into contact with desired audience are various, through customer's perception, or general feelings about a company, or through visual and auditive experience. (Davis 2009, 11)

2.1   Types of Brand

2.1.1   Manufacturer Brands

Manufacturer brand is nothing else than the brand which carries the name of its producer. The producer is the owner of this type of brand and is also responsible for setting up a marketing strategy to promote it. Manufacturer type of brand can benefit from two major factors whilst building its brand name, widespread distribution and customer loyalty. (Riley 2012)

2.1.2   Own Label Brands

Own-label brands are not owned by their producers, but by businesses operating in the distribution channel. Mostly, we speak about retailers. Retailers often mix both types of brand together, so they can extend their product range. Great examples of this are major supermarkets, such as Tesco, Asda, or Sainsbury's. Own-label brands can often be advantageous for their owners because of the additional bargaining power when it comes to

negotiating and making contracts with manufacturer brands. Own-label brands can also offer the consumer excellent value for money. (Riley 2012)

2.2 Brand Identity

Term brand identity identifies the core idea of an organization. It is a set of associations that company wants to build and keep. These associations should be customer-focused, unique, and reachable. Brand identity reflects the organization's goals for the future and gives impulses to the organization and its people for following these aims. (www.prophet.com)

2.3 Brand Equity

Brand equity is dependent on associations made by others, not by company. It is an intangible asset we study from at least three different perspectives:

- Financial – setting the premium price is one of the options how to measure brand equity. With the help of premium price, we are able to provide information about the value of the brand. In situations, such as when the customer is willing to spend $20 more for branded t-shirt over the unbranded one. To measure brand equity using this method properly, we cannot forget to take into account expenses, such as promotional costs.

- Brand extensions – a successful brand can serve as a building block to launch further related projects. Obviously, launching such kind of projects can benefit from already built brand awareness and may end in reducing advertising expenditures. Moreover, the customer feels more comfortable and does not risk at all, since he or she has good experience with the original brand.

- Consumer-based – the brand and its associations with the product are perceived through experience. The better and more intensive experience is, the attitude toward the brand is stronger. (Brand Equity)

2.4 Brand Creation

Companies need to do a solid research what is happening around them in order to decide which strategy will suit best for creation of their brand. (Davis and Baldwin 2005, 40)

2.4.1   Brand Creation SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis is the analytic tool that detects strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. SWOT analysis can be used in a wide range of situations. In sports, we can compare it to the situation when coach creates new tactics, or when he needs to decide which player he will buy. Even in branding, a SWOT analysis can be very helpful. Imagine situation when particular brand is ageing, a SWOT analysis might be able to detect key reasons why is this happening and prevent it from being so. Every point of the analysis should be backed up by evidence. Points should be objective and personal opinions should not appear in this analysis unless they are supported by the facts. (Davis and Baldwin 2005, 40)

STRENGTHS	Things we are doing well. Play to these strengths; don't risk losing sight of them.
WEAKNESSES	Things we are not doing so well. We either need to correct them (by raising/lowering price, improving quality, updating design etc.) or avoid them (by positioning ourselves differently).
OPPORTUNITIES	Are our competitors weak in a particular area? Are new markets developing? Is there a new trend? Have we developed a new technology or manufacturing technique? Is the government about to change the law in our area? Attack these opportunities – take advantage with a price promotion, with an advertising campaign, by sending review products to journalists, by holding a press event, by investing in a new factory etc.
THREATS	Are competitors developing new products? Are customers getting tired of what we have to offer? Has technology left us behind? Are changes in the law going to affect us? Is it necessary to defend against these threats by investing in research and development, lobbying the government, launching a PR offensive etc.?

Figure 2. Brand SWOT Analysis. (Davis and Baldwin 2005, 40)

2.4.2   Brand Creation – Vision

Brands do not appear just out of nowhere, they are creations of a company vision. Every brand wanting to success needs to clearly define set of objectives. Good objectives, so called 'SMART':

- Specific – organization's specific future goals such as higher profits or market progress.

- Measurable – how the organization wants to achieve these goals, bringing up a more specific target that can help to measure the potential success such as what increased profit would be considered as a success.

- Achievable – determines if these objectives are reachable, if an organization has enough money or human resources to reach their wished future. Setting a reachable objective is vital. Success cannot become reality, if the organization lacks skilled workforce or finances to support their projects.

- Realistic – being ambitious will more likely result in success rather than being too timid and passive, but the organization has to realize that their ambitions must be realistic. Nobody will capture the whole market overnight. Being overambitious sooner or later will result in failure.

- Timed – organization should decide when they want to achieve their objectives. Probably, the best way how to stay realistic is to prepare a five-year vision with lots of 'milestones' throughout it. Even daily ordinary success counts. The organization should avoid setting an objective as 'ongoing', because there is a high probability that it will never be reached. (Davis and Baldwin 2005, 42)

2.5   Having a Successful Brand

Successfully built businesses and their brands have many advantages over their competitors. These include:

- Higher prices
- Higher profit margins
- Better distribution
- Customer loyalty (Riley 2012)

Brand value is created through the process of augmenting a core product with unique values that makes this particular product different from competitors. Every product made has its own so called 'core benefits' – benefits that are transmitted to all customers. For example:

- Pen serves for writing
- Microwave oven cooks up a meal
- Helmet prevents serious head injury (Riley 2012)

Consumers will almost never buy a product or service for a premium price unless it provides more than just core benefits. Delivery of added value to the core benefits is a must in order to stay competitive these days. When this process is done well, the customer recognizes this almost immediately, and this is what is he or she is looking for. Out of nowhere, this recognized brand becomes his or her preference, and it is also a sign of well done work for the particular brand. Following figure displayed below usefully describes how a brand can be represented. Outer parts of the figure point out less tangible features of a brand. In other words, core ('inner') features are surrounded by these less tangible ones. (Riley 2012)
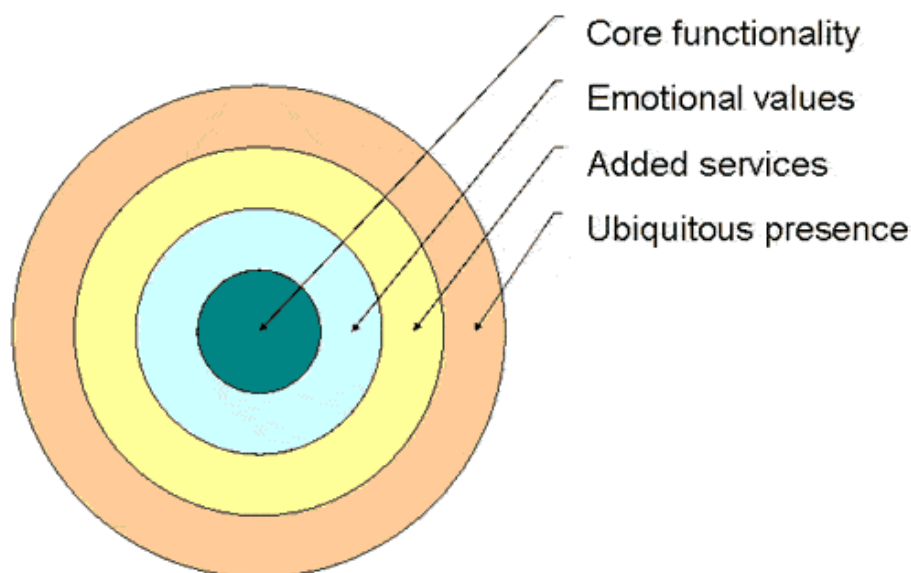
Core functionality
Emotional values
Added services
Ubiquitous presence

Figure 3. Fried-egg Format (Riley 2012)

2.6 Brand Elements

According to Přibová, brand element is the verbal or visual information that is supposed to identify and differ. She mentions these most important elements:

- Logo (Symbol)
- Name
- Representative
- Slogan
- Jingle

- Package (Přibová 2000, 43)

2.6.1 Logo

Word logo is a shortened form of the word logotype – a graphic representation of a brand. A logo is the essential element of any brand. Many people mistakenly associate a logo with brand identity, though. Perceptions in the mind of those who have experience with an organization are perceived through a picture, through a logo. Thus, logo often means success or failure of the particular business. (Budelmann, Kim and Wozniak 2010, 7)

2.6.2 Name and Naming

The name equals brand. The importance of the name cannot be overlooked. This element invokes to mind all feelings and facts about the particular brand. The name is the brand's promise and its emotional value mixed together and it makes it a challenging marketing's assignment. A single word or two is capable of indelibly write a business history. Interestingly, a brand over the life course may be slightly adjusted from many points of view, but the name is most likely to persevere same. Generic names provoke generic businesses and that is a big mistake. For example, three Twin Cities companies call themselves Financial Services Inc., Financial Specialists Inc., and Financial Counseling Inc. It is impossible for these companies to be somehow unique. (Travis 2000, 156)

2.6.3 Representative

The pivotal role of a brand representative is to promote a brand. Brand representative can be also seen as a brand identity transformed into a live brand character. These characters, no matter if they are fairy-tale creatures or sportspersons or anything else, are vital parts of advertisements, or when they are exceptionally successful, they may become the cultural icons. Representatives should be unique and distinguishing, so the promotion is much more intensive. (Wheeler 2009, 64)

2.6.4 Slogan

The slogan is a short message that is created in order to stick in the mind of the customer and to evoke associations with a brand. The slogan is an inherent part of a brand image and personality. Slogans successful in the long term are mostly competent to promote its brand without customer's deeper thinking process. To sum it up, slogans served, serve, and will serve as a helpful tool to promote and support its brands. (O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik 2009, 400)

2.6.5 Jingles

Jingles are musical messages hovering around the brand with one goal, to get through everything and end up in the mind of the target customer. Nowadays, this element partially lost its original importance from the times when most information was given through radio, but still remains relatively very important. (Keller 2008, 156)

2.6.6 Packaging

Packaging has a strong influence when we speak about a customer's first impression during the first encounter with the product. Wrongly chosen package can potentially leads into a situation when a customer loses his favor toward that particular product. With the help of current technological inventions that allow production of desired graphics and layouts, packages should be as catchy as possible. They should evoke unchallenged feelings and be the reasons why consumer chose this product over other options. (Keller 2008, 157)

3 BRAND IMPORTANCE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CONSUMER'S PURCHASING BEHAVIOR

Underestimation of psychological perceptions during the buying process would be a crucial mistake. Mastering this field is a great challenge for every marketing expert. Marketers should be masters of both business and psychology, all-rounded professionals. They should be familiar with how to recognize customer's feelings and separate the good associations from the bad ones. Nowadays though, the key to success seems to be the knowledge of environmental influence on consumer as this directly affects buying decision-making, factors such as culture, family, or media. Learning and adapting to customer purchasing behavior from the psychological point of view in order to success is essential. Understanding all these psychological factors affecting buying process is the actual goal of any marketer. Unfortunately, this process is very complicated, if it would not be so, every single brand would have been successful and this is not a true. We divide these influential factors into two groups, where they are objects of further studies. (Perner)

3.1 External Influential Factors

We generally recognize external factors as factors which affect consumer from the outside. Factors such as elements of the marketing mix, also known as 4Ps and elements of PESTEL analysis (Hawkins, Mothersbaugh and Mookerjee 2010, 26)

3.1.1 Marketing Mix – 4Ps

First part of this chapter is dedicated to the term marketing mix. This well-known term is also known under the abbreviation four Ps of marketing. These broad groups of marketing tools are: product, price, place and promotion, although some sources may add the package as the fifth element. Each member of 4Ps is ultimately linked with its antecedent, so all together they create a 'cycle of life' of a product. This can be explained via example where the organization has to set what is their offer (product), for how much (price), what is the best possible option for placing a product (place) and finally to find out the most effective way how to get it into the minds of customers (promotion). (Kotler and Armstrong 2012, 12)

- Product – main purpose of any product is to enter the market and be sold for profit. Reason to enter the market is nothing else than satisfaction of a want or need. Products differ in shapes, weight, colors, size etc. But products are not just tangible

objects. 'Product' can be defined also as a service, person, idea, organization, or their mixture. Practically speaking, product is not only a television, but also an advice from a lawyer. (Kotler and Armstrong 2012, 224)

- Price – even in history, price was the major player when it came to buying or selling. Every product or service owns its value, and this value is represented via price. Price determines buyer's willingness to pay that particular amount of money. From the seller's point of view, while the rest of the elements of marketing mix represent costs, price, as the one of the most flexible marketing mix elements, represents production of the revenue. This rather unstable element (quick and unexpected changes) is nothing easy to handle. Even experts are not sure in some cases and setting the right price is one of the hardest decisions of the business. (Kotler and Armstrong 2012, 290)

- Place (Distribution) – organizations should question themselves how to get the product and deliver it flawlessly to their customers. This element of marketing mix closely related to logistics deals with certain issues such as choice of ideal transport route, storage capacity, distribution channel and centers, managing inventories, processing orders etc. (The Marketing Mix)

- Promotion – promoting, or in other words giving publicity or advertising. Product promotion covers everything from advertising strategies, through public relations and sales promotion, to direct-marketing tools that are used to in order to create and build intensive relationship with the consumer. (Kotler and Armstrong 2012, 408)

3.1.2 PEST(EL) Analysis

PEST analysis is a helpful tool used for monitoring and evaluating the general environment. Under the abbreviation PEST are hidden four factors: political, economic, social and technological. However, it is necessary to mention that some experts and critics see this analysis as the PESTEL analysis, where two last letters stand for environmental and legal factors. But this clash of ideas is easily explainable. Those two last members are in general approach already covered by other factors, political and social. (Henry 2008, 52)

- Political factor – purpose of this part of the analysis is to warn against potential changes in legislation, government policies (regulations and taxation policies) via the study of legal documents. (Henry 2008, 52)

- Economic factor – monitors indicators of targeted economy, such as GDP, inflation, unemployment and exchange rates etc. Also observes the current potential buying power of the population. (Henry 2008, 54)

- Social factor – sometimes also called socio-cultural factor mostly deals with cultural changes and how they affect the potential buying power of targeted area. (Henry 2008, 56)

- Technological factor – study of this factor should prevent from any kind of potential IT ageing problem within the organization. Also focuses on new emerging industries from these fields. Topics of present discussion are Internet and nanotechnology. (Henry 2008, 58)

3.2 Internal Influential Factors

On the contrary, speaking about internal factors, we mean consumers' personal characteristics. (Hawkins, Mothersbaugh and Mookerjee 2010, 26)

3.2.1 Consumer Behavior

"Consumer behavior can be defined as the study of the processes involved when people select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires". (de Mooij 2011, 20) We can extract from this definition few information, such as that consumer behavior is present before, during, and even after a buy, or that discipline is closely related to the studies of sociology and psychology. (de Mooij 2011, 20)

3.2.2 Types of Consumer Buying Behavior

Every human being on this planet has different buying behavior. Even when it is the tiniest difference, it exists. One would buy "this" product under certain conditions, the second person would buy something else, and this is a daily routine. We can monitor various buying behaviors when we speak about how the consumer is involved in the process of purchase. One group of consumers just chooses and buys a product, maybe because they like it, they like the packaging or it is attractive, but the second group of consumers seeks for additional information. Second occasion mostly happens when it comes to buying the highly valued products, such as cars, machines etc. since the higher value and therefore price motivates them to do so, but still, some people are definitely attentive even when buying common products. (Chapter 6 Class Notes)

We distinguish these four basic purchasing types of behavior:

- Routine Response/Programmed Behavior – level of consumer's involvement is too low. This type of behavior is mostly used when purchasing low cost products. It is used to buy ordinary items such, as food and drinks, where the process of purchase is automatic and where it does not require any special effort in decision-making since consumer most likely already knows the product he or she is buying.

- Limited Decision Making – we speak about this type of behavior when we purchase something we do not buy on a daily basis. Mostly we are not completely familiar with information that the product itself provides us and thus, we might spend a rational time looking for additional information. Items, such as clothing or electronics, we are not certain about a brand.

- Extensive Decision Making – happens mostly when a consumer buys expensive, luxurious product. Such a rare and risky purchase requires complex and solid all-round analysis of what he or she is buying. Consumer gathers information from all possible sources, such as family, friends, colleagues, internet etc.

- Impulse buying – consumer enters a store, spots a product and buys it without hesitation. (Chapter 6 Class Notes)

However, this segmentation is not strictly closed for each division of products. Once buying of clothes can be considered as limited decision making and in other cases as extensive decision making. Products can change these categories freely. (Chapter 6 Class Notes)

3.2.3 Personal (Social) Factors

Society is divided into several social groups. Each of this group differs in purchasing behavior and thinking processes during this action. The topic of social groups is a field for marketers' study, study of the potential social and economic buying power. Working class consumers will rarely visit a luxurious shop or the other way round, member of the upper class will hardly visit any unbranded store without reputation. (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard and Hogg 2006, 435-436)

3.2.4 Psychological Motives

Even though it might not be that clear, a purchasing process is hand-in-hand with Maslow's hierarchy of needs. For marketers, every single block of Maslow's pyramid is a potential subject to study. If this study is successful, an organization will slowly, but surely realize

how important these motives are when it comes to improving their marketing mix. The aim is to define which block of the pyramid motivates customer to the particular buy. Maslow's pyramid contain from the bottom to the top:

- Physiological needs

- Safety need

- Belongingness and love need

- Esteem needs

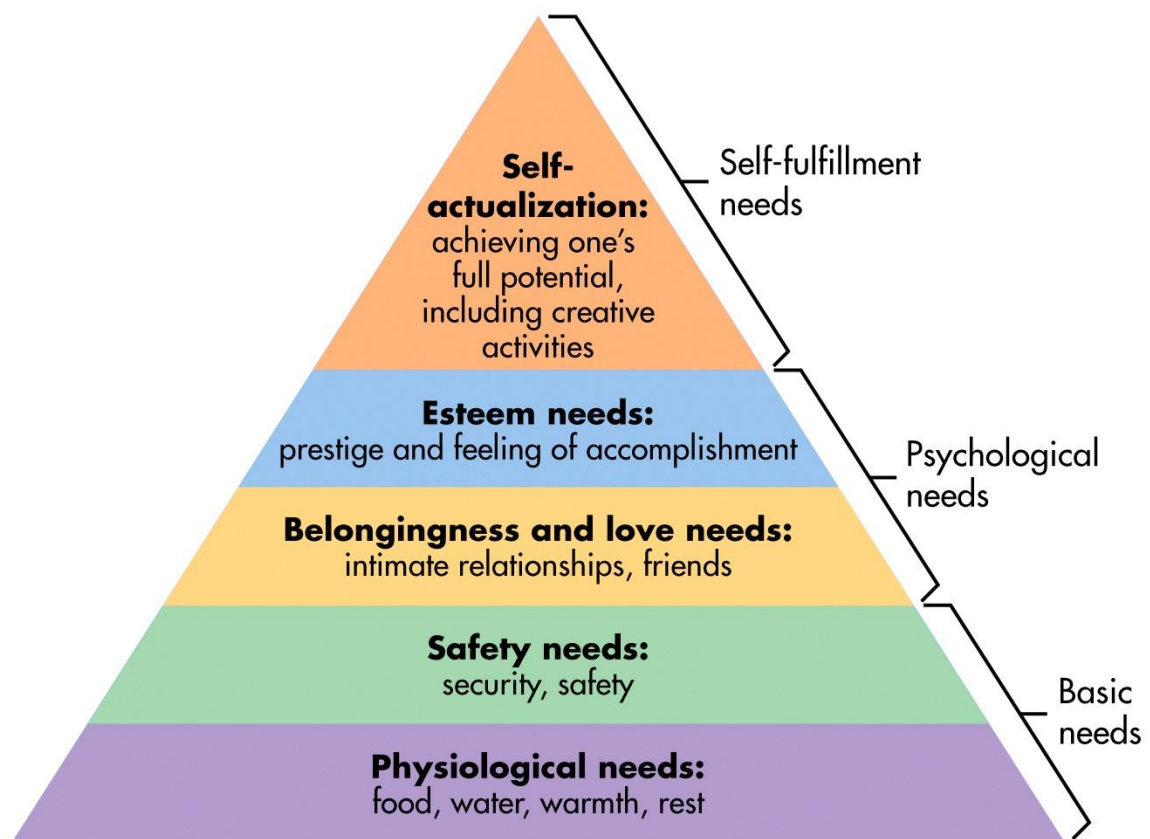- Self-actualization needs (Chapter 6 Class Notes)

Figure 4. *Maslow's pyramid hierarchy of needs.* (Bird 2011)

3.2.5   Cultural Factors

Culture has had an inexpressible impact since beginning of the mankind binding certain groups of people together. We can hardly imagine living without culture. Culture gives people directions and beliefs. The truth is, that we are used to particular manners, we cannot just delete them from our minds. People and culture are two inseparable things as well as culture and its historical background. (de Mooij 2011, 35)

Culture is the driving factor which has tremendous impact on purchasing behavior. Culture can be real decisive factor when it comes to this. It is so, because people, as mentioned a few lines above, are bound to culture. The culture allows or forbids certain buying behaviors. For instance, people from Asia might not be interested in something which Americans are. Consumers around the world expect different values from the products they are buying. They are affected by their culture. (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard and Hogg 2006, 500)

As an illustrative case of the cultural and brand miscommunication could serve a situation, that happened in Taiwan. Pepsi had only one unchanged brand message in every country. And in Taiwan, their slogan "Come alive with the Pepsi generation" was translated as "Pepsi will bring your ancestors back from the dead." (Haig 2003, 138)

3.2.6 Age Factor

Age of the consumer is another extremely important factor during the purchasing process. People are divided into multiple age groups such as children, teenagers, mature people etc.

- Teenagers - first huge group of consumers are teenagers. Average teenager does not earn money, but probably receives pocket money or gets money from parents or grandparents when needed. They are potentially very strong buying power in the low-to-mid cost product range. They are vulnerable to products evoking feelings of independence. In most cases, teenagers are daily shoppers since they are said to go shopping on a daily basis for a routine buys.

- 'Gen-Xers' – is so called generation with age ranging from 18 to 29. Similarly as teenagers this group of buyers carries tremendous purchasing power. Unlike teenagers, the majority of them is not dependent only on the given money. This is reflected in slightly different buying behavior, such as being more attentive since they are buying a product with their own money with their own money.

- Baby Boomers – mature people and at the same time the biggest economical power. Their solid age is reflected in different attitude and points of interest. They think about what they buy. Their priorities are mostly products ranging from housing, childcare to clothing etc.

- Elderly – with the technological inventions in medicine, we experience growth of the age group of elderly consumers. The era, in which rumors about these consumers were that they are rather inactive buyers, is definitely over. Basically

because of the impact of medicine, seniors are able to live a healthy and energetic life. They are active participants of the society and therefore they are also active buying power. The basic characteristic of this group is they are rather skeptical. (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard and Hogg 2006, 472-473)

II. ANALYSIS

4 PRACTICAL STUDY INTRODUCTION

In the modern world, where consumers demand more than just plain product, it comes to additional values that the product is able to offer. Theoretically, some of these values can be granted via brands. A successful brand provides consumer positive associations with it along with a feeling of safety. Mostly, the brand is what sells the particular product. Therefore, I decided to do a research in which I focused on differences of purchasing behavior between various people generations and with the help of evaluation of my survey, to share my own thoughts, why is this happening so. Personally, I consider this part as the most important part of my thesis since it shows the results of my survey and as I will be able to deduce and explain major differences in buying behavior of selected age groups.

4.1 Data Collection

In order to gather data for this bachelor thesis, the questionnaire was created. This questionnaire was created with the help of the Google documents tool. The questionnaire reached its respondents via social networks, e-mails and several discussion forums. I considered this as the fastest, but still a precious option to perform this survey.

4.2 Research Information and Pivotal Researching Factor

The questionnaire was filled by 303 respondents from the Czech Republic. The questionnaire was available for online participation for 12 days from 11th April to 22th April 2013. The whole questionnaire included the set of 25 questions of three types:

- Multiple Choice - respondent is asked to choose one option from multiple options available.
- Choice from the List - respondent may check multiple options.
- Open-ended Questions - respondent is supposed to give an answer in the form of text.

In the first set of the questions, I asked respondents how they see and associate brands, what is their attitude towards them and what is their purchasing behavior. In the second part, I included questions revealing characteristics of respondents (gender, name, education and current status).

Since my main goal of this thesis is to discover the differences of purchasing behavior between various generations, I simply set the age factor as the main factor of the whole

research. This means that every question is analyzed from the age point of view. Every figure has been rounded to the nearest whole percent.

5 PRACTICAL STUDY COMPARING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DIFFERENT GENERATIONS AND THEIR BRAND ORIENTED PURCHASING BEHAVIOR

5.1 General Characteristics of the Questionnaire Participants

My questionnaire included four questions focused on general characteristics of the questionnaire participants. These questions asked for sharing information about gender, age, education and current status of the participants.

5.1.1 Gender Structure

Data were collected from 303 respondents, both men and women. Figure no. 5 shows a percentual representation of genders. 60% of participants were women, rest 40% of addressed people were men.
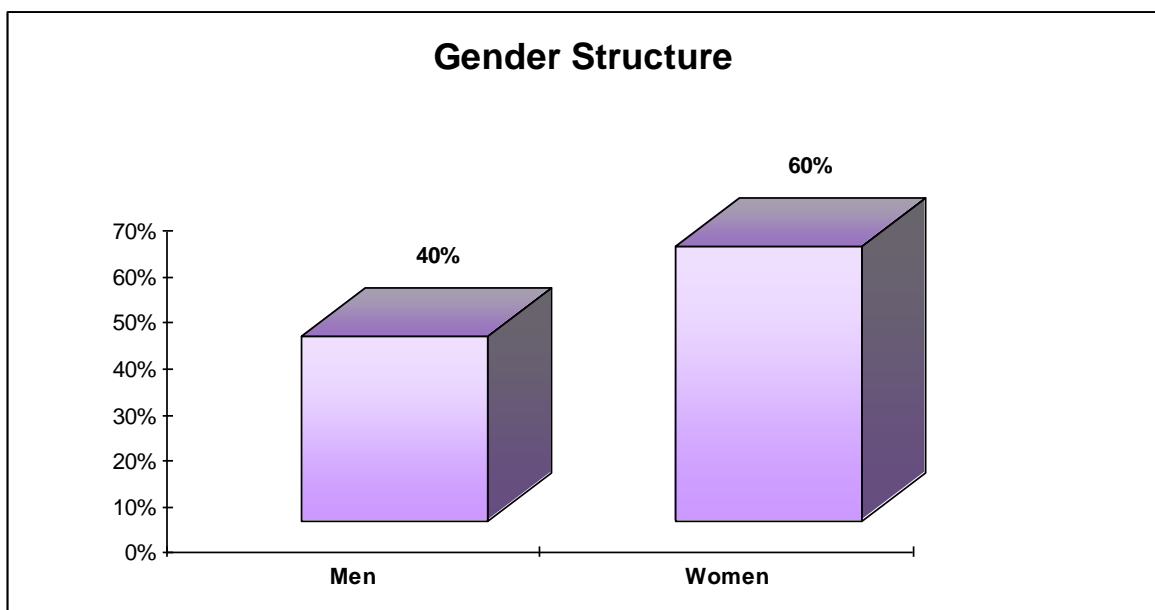
Figure 5. Gender structure. (own work – whole sample)

5.1.2 Age Structure

For this bachelor thesis, this is the most important general characteristic of the questionnaire respondent. Research participants were divided into five age divisions. Since my aim was to make the comparison between all these age groups, I tried to get answers from the roughly same number of respondents from each age group. Age structure displayed in years is following: 0 – 17 (22%), 18 – 30 (26%), 31 – 45 (20%), 46 – 60 (17%), 60 and more (15%).
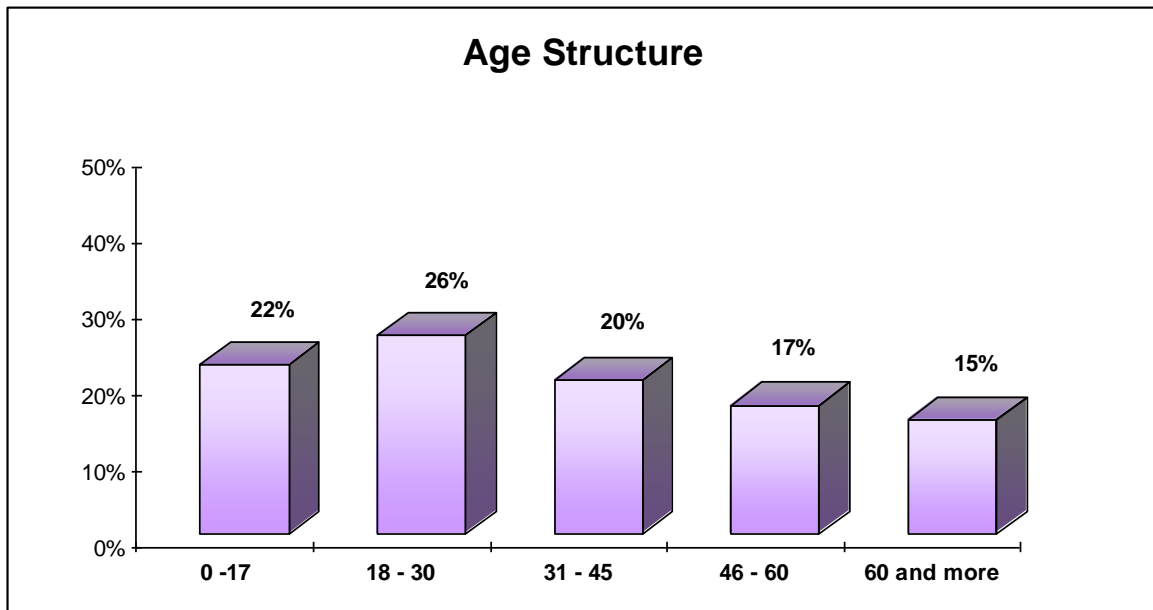
Age Structure

Figure 6. Age structure. (own work)

5.1.3 Education Structure

Highest achieved education can actually have an effect on the buying behavior. While people with university titles will probably spend more time thinking about the particular purchase (as they are expected to do so because of their education), people just with elementary school education probably will not be so cogitative. However, this claim is not proved anyhow and in most cases, this is rather individual situation. The majority of respondents were people with secondary education (41%) followed by people with primary education (29%) and skilled people (16%). Last two places in this category are occupied by people with university education (13%) and people with higher vocational education (2%).

Education Structure
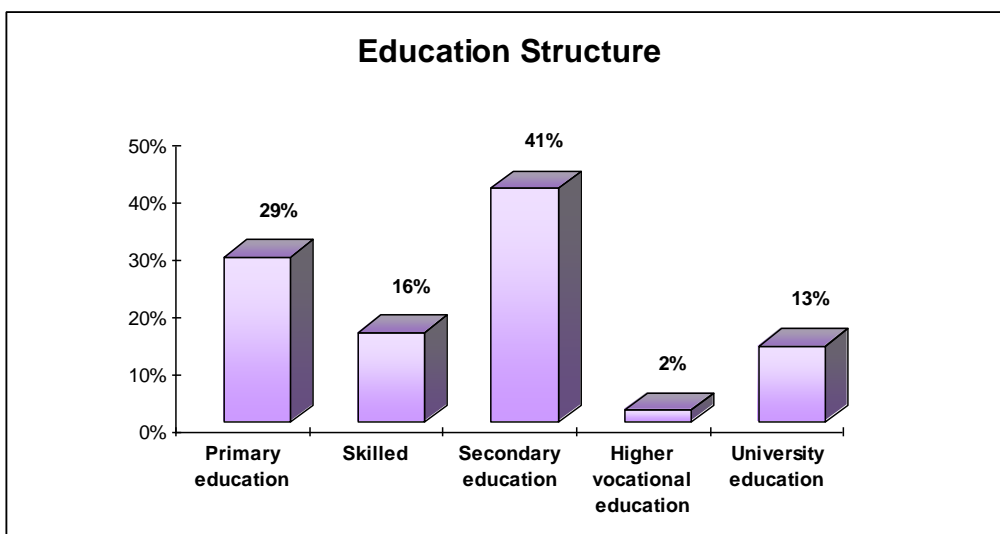
Figure 7. Education Structure. (own work – whole sample)

5.1.4   Current Social Status

Last monitored general characteristic is the current social status of respondents. These results are closely connected to the age structure of this research. Majority of addressed people are students (41%) and employed people (36%) followed by pensioners (15%) and by people who are currently unemployed (5%). Smallest group of respondent were people studying and working at the same time (3%). Current social status as well as other characteristics influences buying behavior. We might expect different buying attitudes among these groups since they are influenced by factor of money and money distribution.
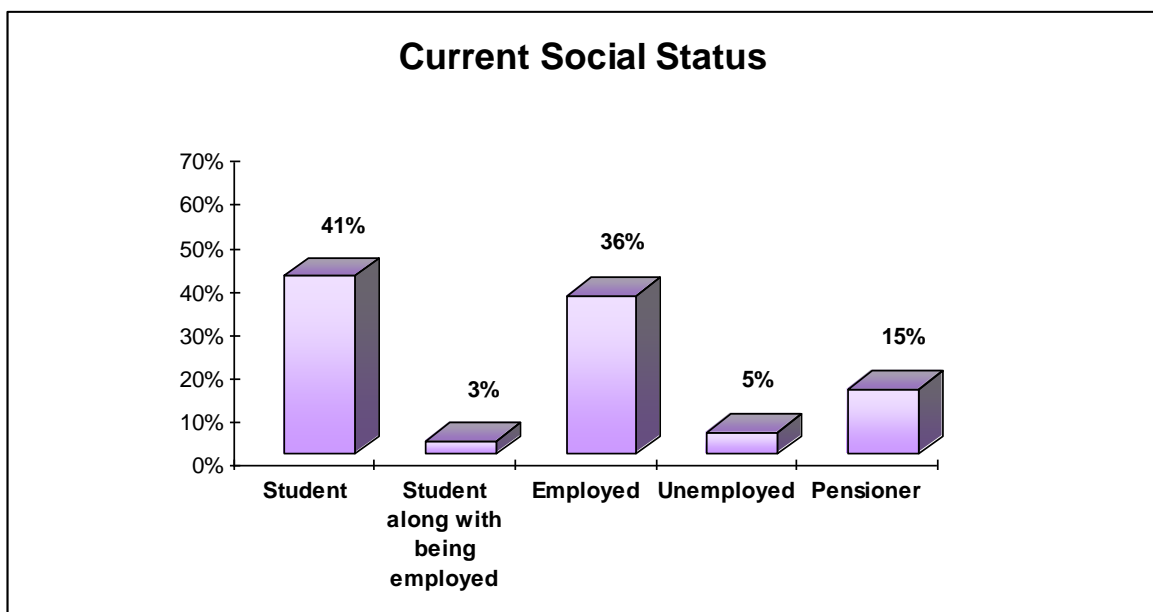
Figure 8. Current social status. (own work – whole sample)

5.2   Brand and Brand Oriented Purchasing Behavior Questions

The second set of questions included 21 questions which were created in order to define the particular differences of all studied generations. Since displaying results of every single group via figures would make this bachelor thesis exceedingly long, I have decided to show just figures representing the whole research sample and consequently write down the results of each particular group.

5.2.1   Questions

Question no.1: What do you imagine behind the term 'brand'?

Figure no. 9 shows the five most frequent brand associations answered on the question no. 1. Interestingly, the majority of every single age group mentioned quality (46%) as their brand association. Following associations were: logo (25%), specification of something

(13%), higher price (10%), image (6%). This clearly signals that brands should follow this trend and offer the quality over anything else since it is demanded by their customers.
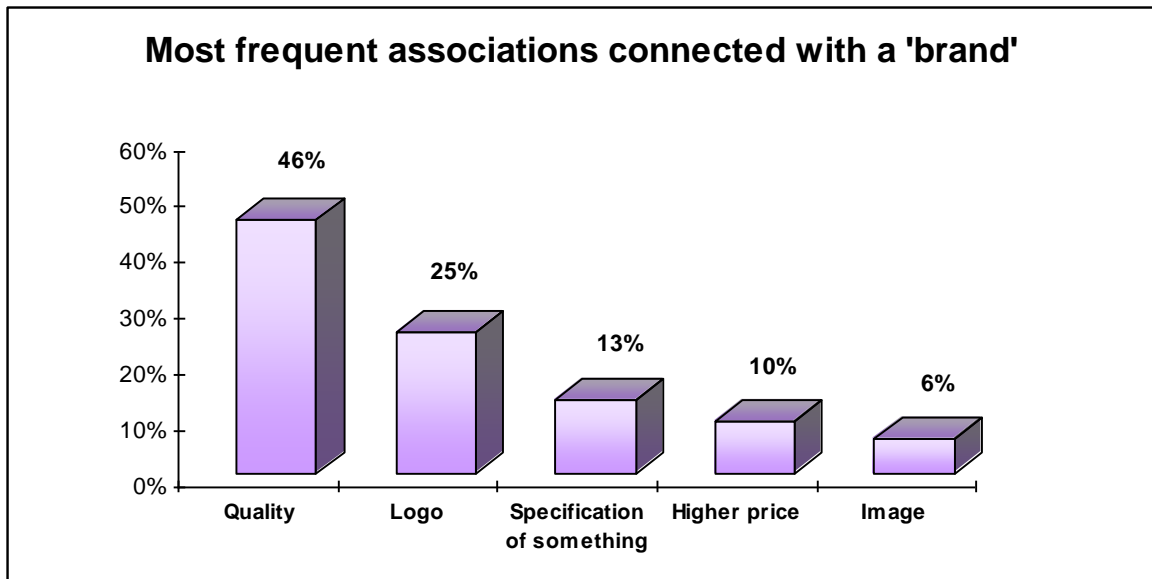

Figure 9. The most frequent associations connected with 'brand'.

(own work – whole sample)

Question no. 2: Do you have an idea which elements create a brand?

The majority of respondents (58%) answered that they have or rather have an idea about asked issue. The rest (42%) replied they do not have or rather do not have an idea. This question is answering how consumers are familiar with brand knowledge. It supports the idea of current world phenomenon which brand definitely is, so people more likely know something about this issue.
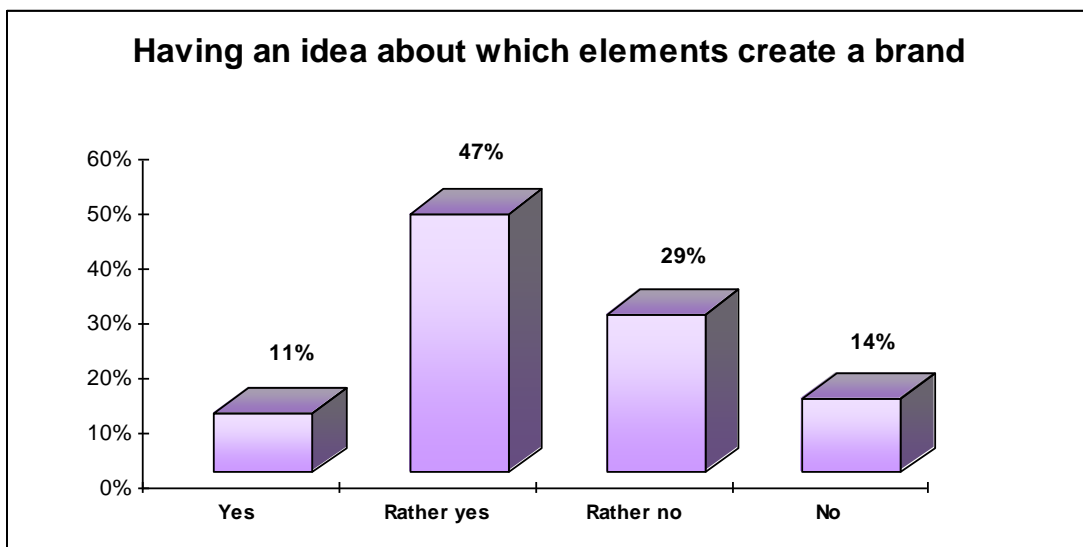
Figure 10. Ideas of brand elements. (own work – whole sample)

Question no. 3: Name three brands that come up to your mind first.

The results clearly describe who has won this 'competition'. Clothing giants Nike (36%) and Adidas (30%) did not give any chances to their competitors. Even such famous brands like Apple (10%) or Coca-Cola (13%) had no chances. The thing is that it was not only result of young age groups, but this was the phenomenon of all groups without exception. I have only one rational explanation for this result. Nike and Adidas are both running advertising campaigns everywhere and in my opinion this is the main reason why they have won by so far. Consumers of all ages are strongly influenced by these advertisements, so they keep these brands in their minds.
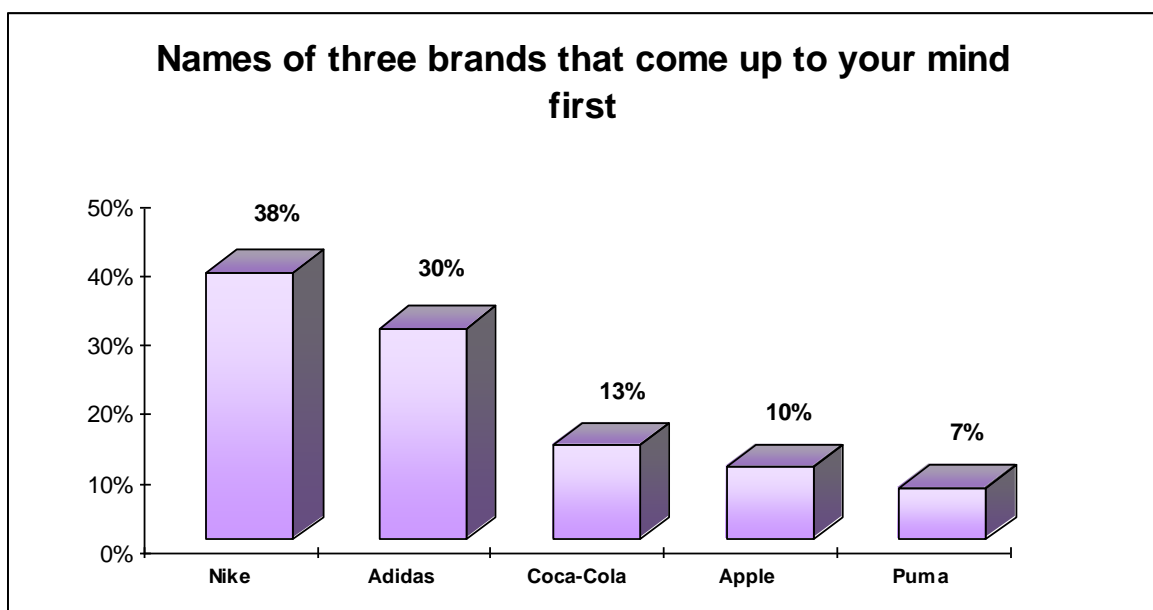
Figure 11. Mostly associated brands. (own work – whole sample)

Question no.4: Advertisement on which product comes to your mind first?

Figure no. 12 clearly describes distribution of answers. We can count the results of

T-Mobile (22%) and Mobile operators (20%) together resulting in 42% percent of answers connected with mobile telephones. This is rather an alarming number as the range of answers was huge since it was an open-ended question. This partially negates my previous thoughts about influence Nike and Adidas advertisement strategies. In my humble opinion, reason of these results is that people are influenced by controversial advertisements and their counts. We can see those advertisements on TV on a daily basis.
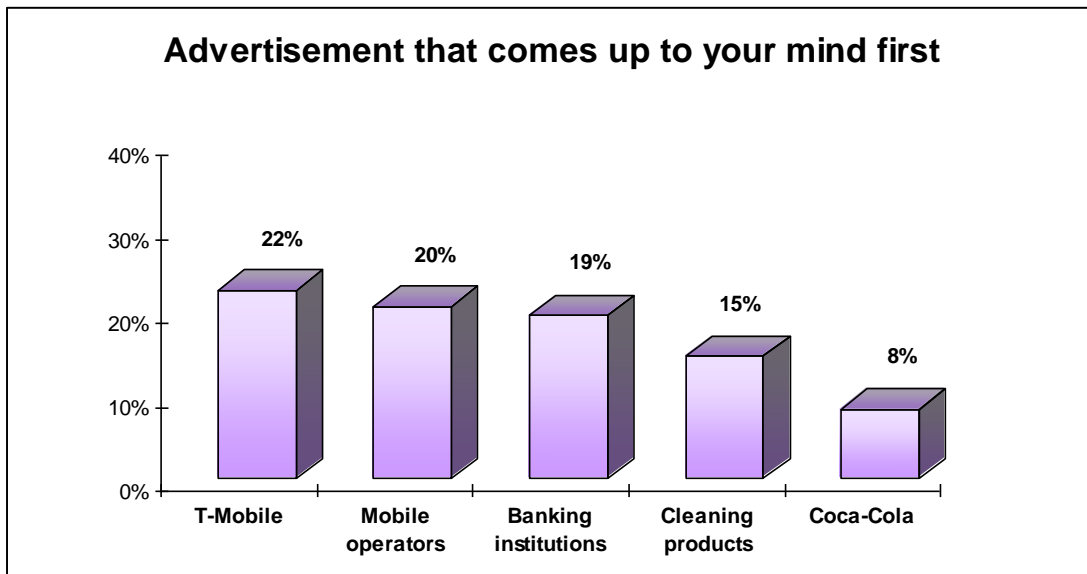
Advertisement that comes up to your mind first

Figure 12. Mostly associated advertisements. (own work – whole sample)

Question no. 5: Do you buy branded products?

On a figure no.13 is visible in what scale consumers are buying branded products. 27% of them answered that they are regular customers of branded stores, 39% of them answered that they are buying these products occasionally, 16% of them said that they are rather rare visitors of branded stores, 10% of them replied that they would buy this kind of products, but they do not have enough money to afford them and lastly, 7% of them responded that they are not buying branded products.

Do you buy branded products?
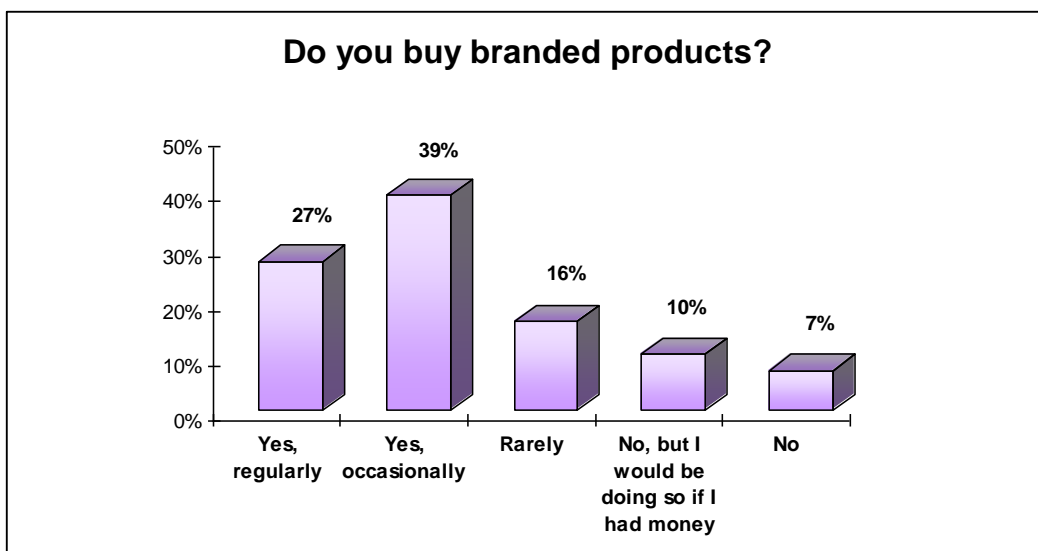
Figure 13. Frequency of purchasing branded products.

(own work – whole sample)

Question no. 6: Do you support the idea: brand = quality?

From the data I have collected, I found out that 5% of addressed people fully support this idea, 39% of them rather support it, 11% of respondents do not have an opinion, 30% of them rather disagree with this idea and finally 15% of them clearly do not support this idea.
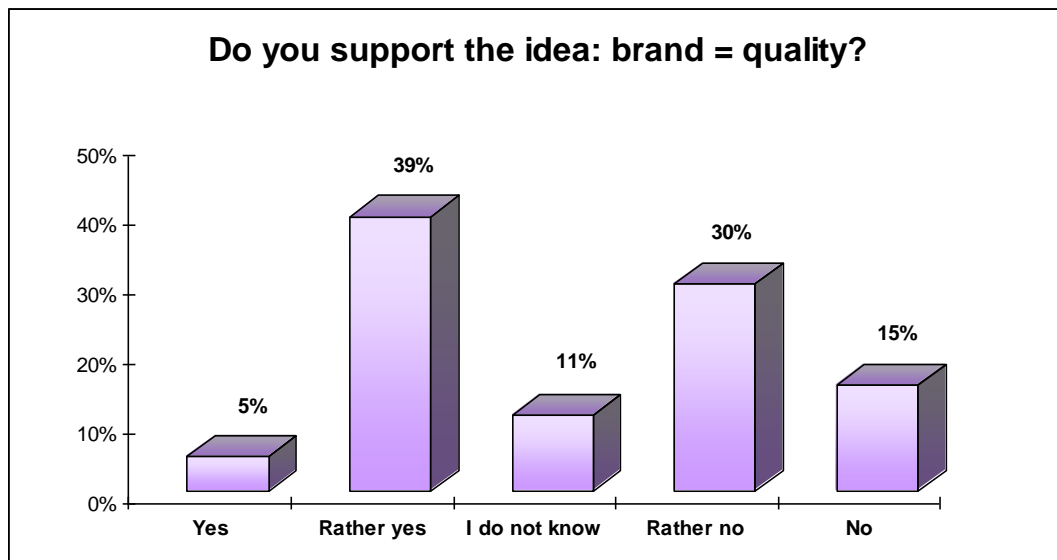

Figure 14. Supporting the idea: brand = quality. (own work – whole sample)

Question no. 7: Do you support the idea: higher price = higher quality?

This question was similar to the previous one, but with different results. People are rather skeptical when they are supposed to expect higher quality from higher priced products. This is probably a conclusion of their experience with these products. Once the consumer is not satisfied with expensive product, he or she will rarely return to this product. General results are: 5% of respondents fully support the idea of higher price equals higher quality, 39% of them rather support this idea, 11% of them do not know, 30% of them rather do not support the this idea and finally 15% of them do not support this idea.
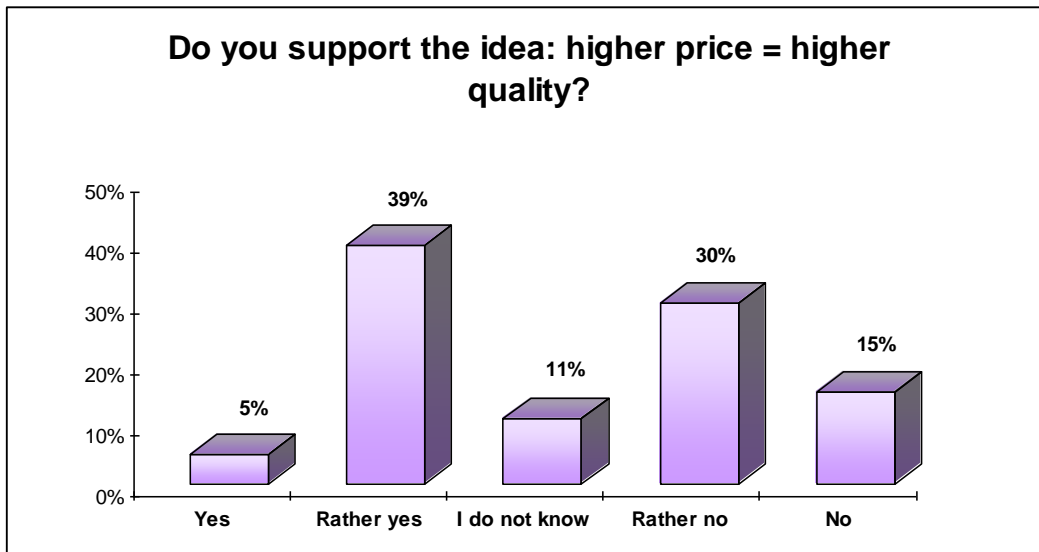
Figure 15. Supporting the idea: higher price = higher quality.

(own work – whole sample)

Question no. 8: What are your most frequent reasons to buy a branded product?

The purpose of question no. 8 was to find out the most frequent reason why consumers buy branded products. Unsurprisingly, answer quality placed first with 35% of the votes. Second most answered option (31%) was references from family, friends etc. Further answers were that buying branded product somehow reflects the consumer's living standards (12%), other reasons (11%), fitting into a certain social group (6%), according to the advertisement (3%), and according to the famous person who use the product (2%).
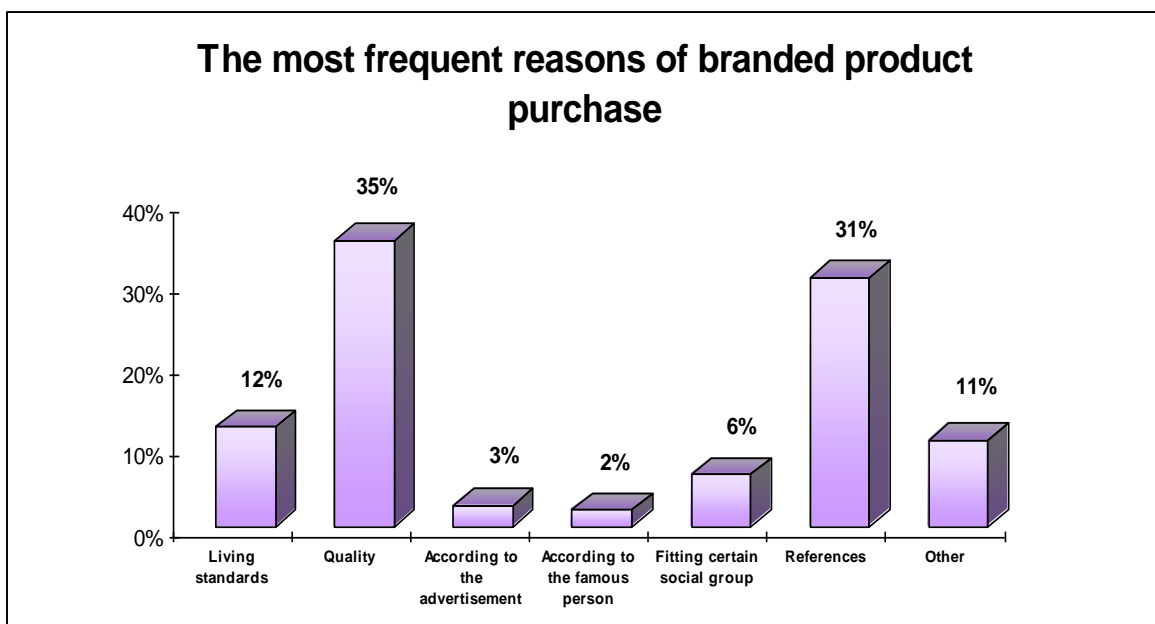

Figure 16. *The most frequent reasons to buy a branded product.*

(own work – whole sample)

Question no. 9: Are you willing to pay more for a branded product?

Based on the evidence which figure no. 17 provides, we can see that 19% of respondents are willing to pay more for a branded product and 37% of them are very like to do so as well. 14% of addressed people are not sure about this issue, 19% of them probably would not spend more money for a branded product, and 11% of them are against this idea of paying more for branded products. This study shows how consumers are open to potentially spend more money and since more than a half is willing to pay more, generally speaking, brands can afford to have higher prices than their competitors. This can serve as a signal for brands how to adjust their pricing policies.
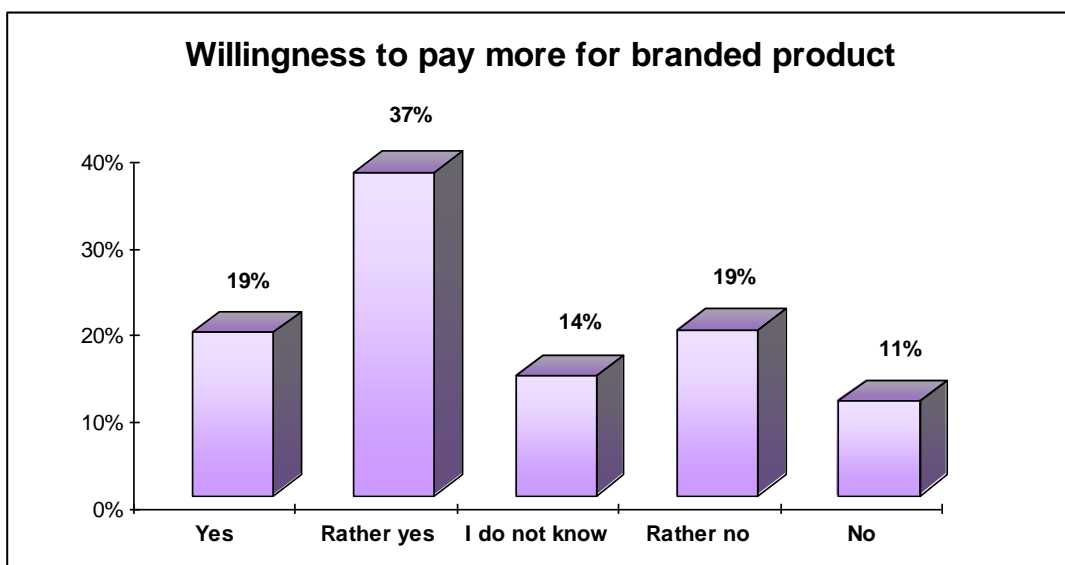

Figure 17. Willingness to pay more for a branded product.

(own work – whole sample)

Question no. 10: You have neutral experience with the brand, would you keep buying products from this particular brand?

Graph no. 18 shows the distribution of answers to this question. It was the one of the two situations where the option 'I do not know' actually was in the first place (32%) signaling that it is not that easy to decide unless consumer has clear good or bad experience with the particular product. Further results are: 27% of respondents answered they rather would not, 25% of addressed people said they rather would, 10% of them replied they would, and finally 7% of them checked they would not continue purchasing products from the same brand.
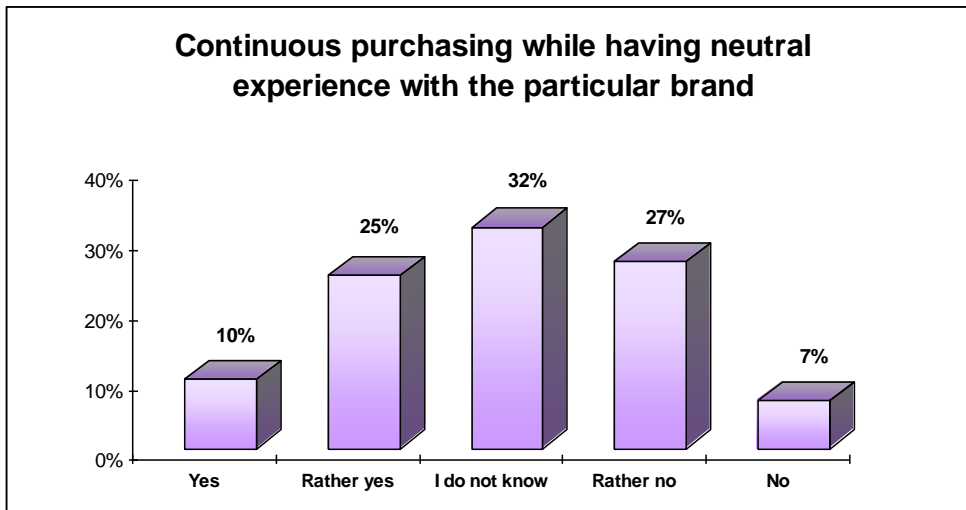
Continuous purchasing while having neutral experience with the particular brand

Figure 18. Continuous purchasing while having a neutral experience with

the particular brand. (own work – whole sample)

Question no. 11: Do you have an idea for what you are actually paying when you buy a branded product?

Graph no. 19 shows that respondents of my questionnaire mostly have an idea of what they actually pay for when they are purchasing branded products. We know that price of the branded product is not only its value. It also has to cover the expenditures of advertising campaign, and according to this study, people mostly know that they are paying for promotion of the particular product. 20% of addressed people answered they have an idea about it, 40% of them said they rather have an idea and 32% replied they rather do not have and an idea. Only 9% of respondents who filled my questionnaire answered they do not have an idea about it.
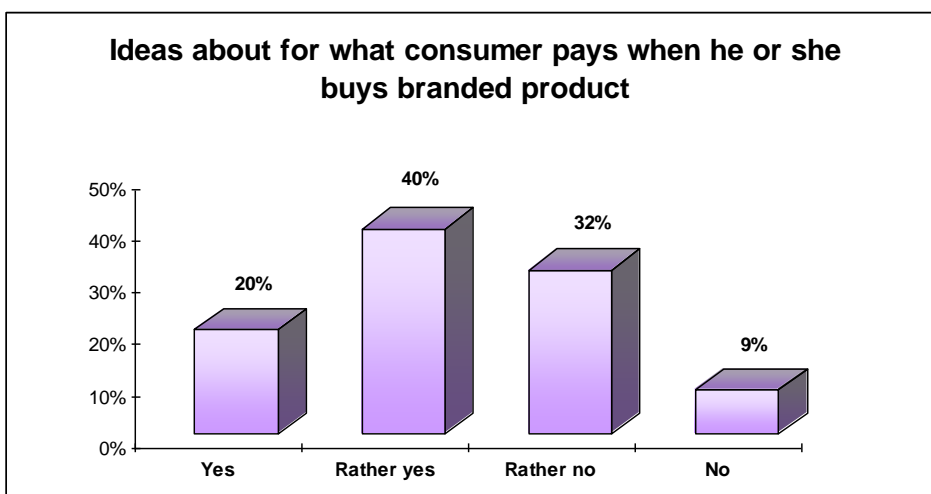
Ideas about for what consumer pays when he or she buys branded product

Figure 19. Ideas of consumers for what they are actually paying when

 they buy branded product. (own work – whole sample)

Question no. 12: Do you care about the country of origin when you buy a branded product?

Graph no. 20 describes how much consumers are caring about the country of origin when they are purchasing branded products. Surprisingly, the majority of them does not pay an attention to this issue. Only 10 % of respondents answered they actually care about this, and just 11% of them stated they are rather interested in this information, 7 % of them do not have an opinion. 44% of addressed people rather do not care about the country of origin and 29% do not care at all. Options 'rather no' and 'no' make together over 70% which is already some kind of achievement.
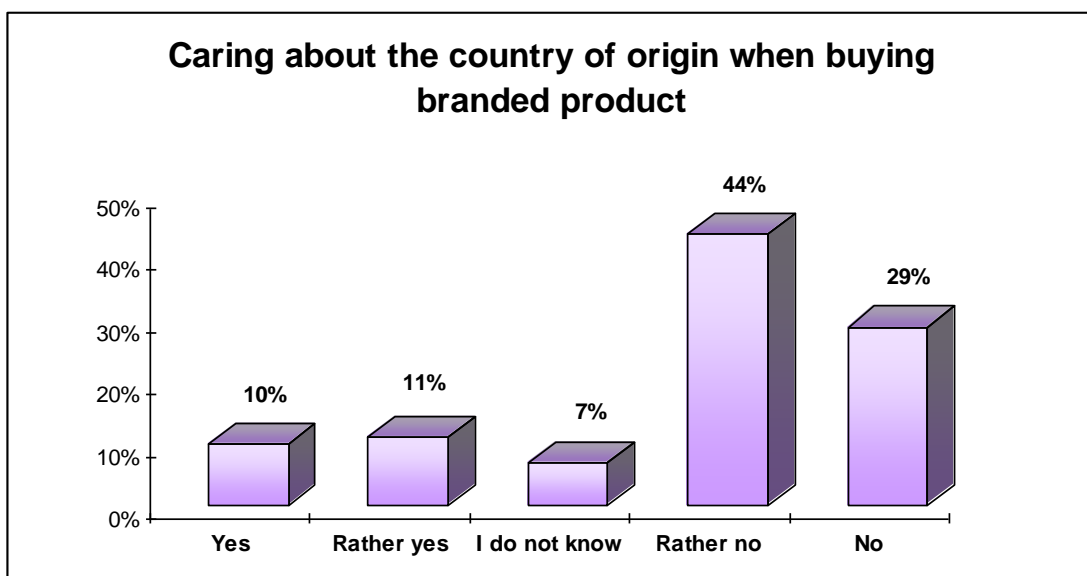

Figure 20. Consumers' caring about the country of origin when buying

branded products. (own work – whole sample)

Question no. 13: Do you prefer Czech brands over foreign ones?

According to the graph no. 21, the largest group of consumers (39%) does not care whether they prefer Czech brands over foreign ones or not. The second largest group of consumers (21%) rather prefers Czech products. 15% of people rather do not prefer Czech brands, 9% of addressed people prefer Czech brands over foreign brands, but on the contrary, 8% of them do not prefer Czech brands over foreign ones. 8% of respondents is stating they do prefer foreign brands over Czech ones.
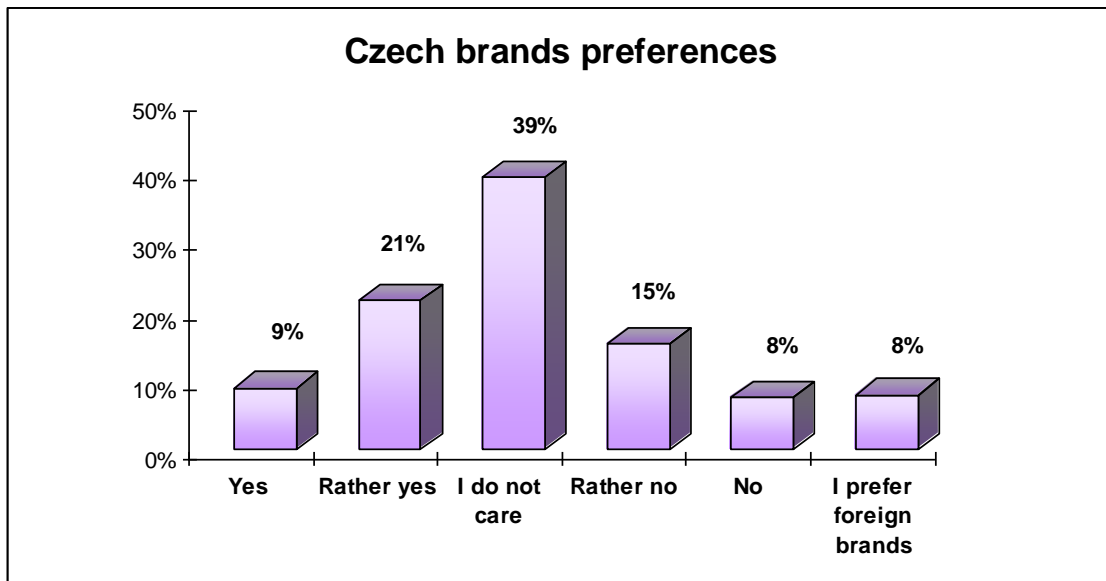
Czech brands preferences

Figure 21. Consumers preferring Czech brands. (own work – whole sample)

Question no. 14: Which Czech brand name comes to your mind first?

On the graph no. 22 are visible the most frequent answers on the question: Which Czech brand name comes to your mind first. This graph represents the four most frequent responses this question. First place was taken by Baťa with 36% of the votes. It is the company with long history led by one of the most successful businessmen of that era in our country. Second place with 22% of votes stands for Škoda Auto. It is rather a representative of the present. This company is still progressive, offers a decent number of job opportunities and also has a solid reputation. Third place is strongly connected with the Czech tradition of drinking beer, therefore 12% of the votes for breweries. Finally the fourth place, Kofola with 8% of the votes.
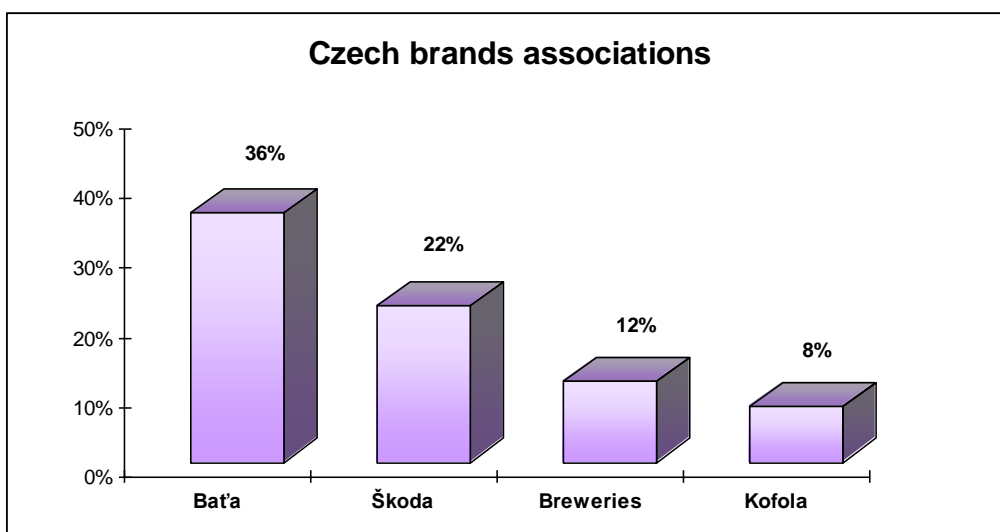
Czech brands associations

Figure 22. Consumers' associations of Czech brands. (own work – whole sample)

Question no. 15: What is your experience with quality of branded products in comparison with common 'unbranded' product?

On the question no. 15 42% of respondents replied they experienced only small differences in comparison with unbranded products when they purchased branded products. However, 30% of addressed people checked the option of incomparable quality. Both together with more than 70% of votes clearly describe that branded products in most cases possess a higher quality than unbranded products. Although, 10 % of them answered they were rather disappointed with the quality of branded product, 12% of them mentioned that the quality of branded product in comparison is same or even worse, and 6% of them voted for the 'other' option.
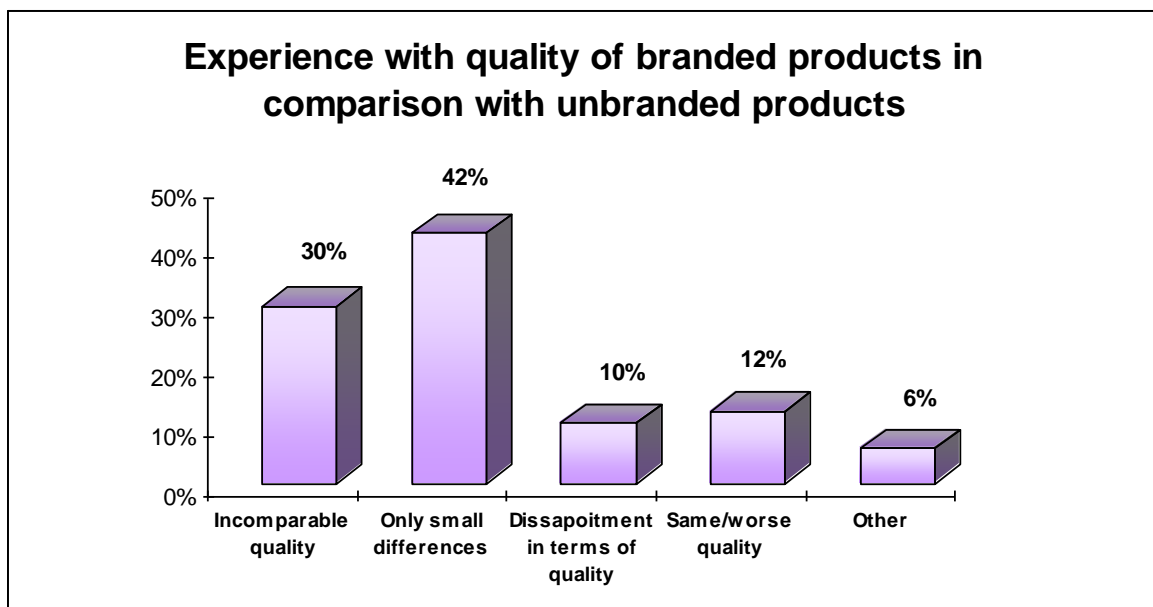

Figure 23. Consumers' experience with quality of branded products.

(own work – whole sample)

Question no. 16: Do you even buy already used goods?

Figure no. 24 provides us information that consumers tend more to not buy already used products, especially younger generations. 35% of respondents explained their thoughts via answer 'rarely', The second largest group of people who answered this questionnaire is represented by the option 'no' with 31% of the votes. A third group of people which is still relatively close to the previous group is the group who voted for the option 'yes, occasionally'. Only 8% of respondents voted for the option 'yes'. Reason of the results of this study is probably mainly that consumers are able to purchase for example clothes very cheaply and there is nearly no reason to purchase already used goods unless they really lack money.
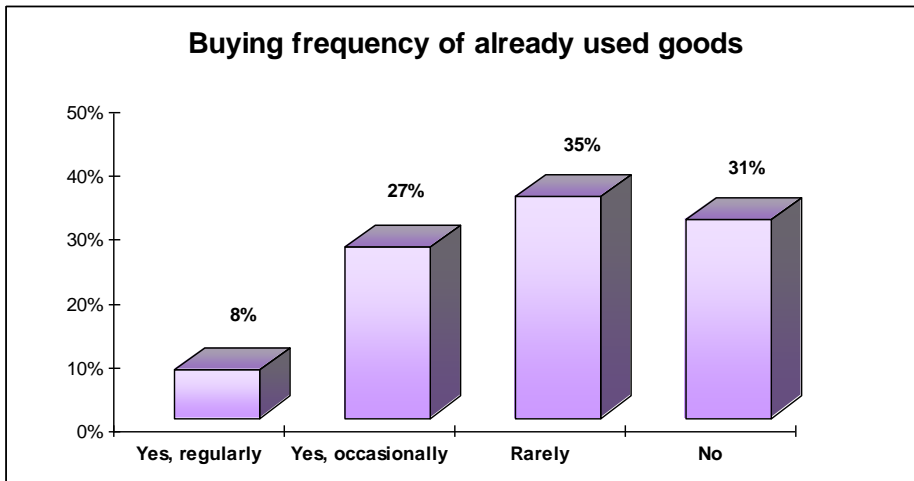
Figure 24. Consumers' buying frequency of already used goods.

(own work – whole sample)

Question no. 17: Are you affected by design or packaging when you are buying the particular product?

Figure no. 25 shows that both design and packaging have tremendous impact on whether the consumer buys the product or not. Despite the fact that 23% of addressed people voted for option 'rather no', together with 63% percent of votes, the options 'yes' and 'rather yes' were the most chosen by respondents of my questionnaire. 11% of respondent answered they do not know and only 3% of them answered they are not influenced by design or packaging of the particular product when they are buying it.
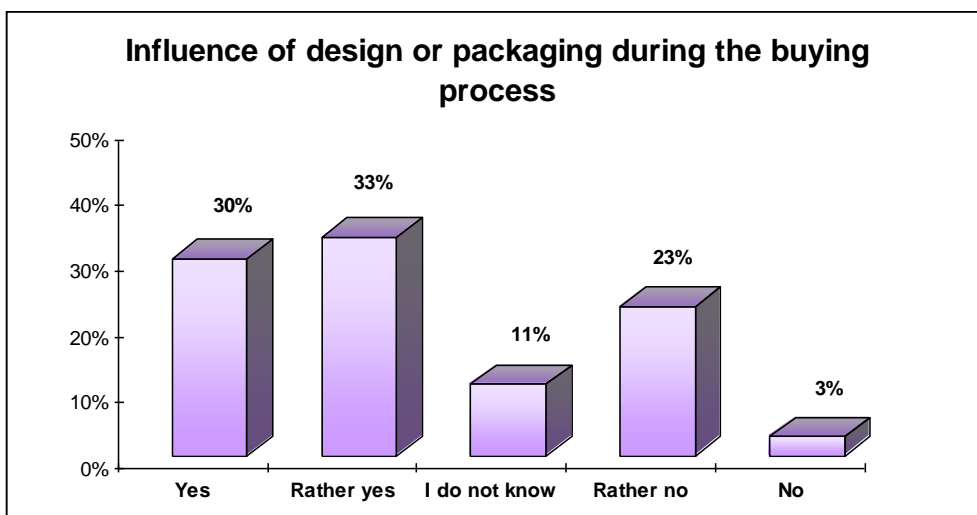

Figure 25. Influence of design or packaging during the buying process.

(own work – whole sample)

Question no. 18: Are you vulnerable to manipulation?

Answers to this question can be seen on the graph no. 26. We can monitor a slight inclinations to answers 'rather no' (42%) and 'no' (12%) signaling that consumers are rather not easy to manipulate with. However, 31% of them chose the option 'rather yes' and only 2% of them answered they are easily manipulable. This is obviously a good sign of the current consumer's profile. Option 'I do not know' was chosen by 14% of addressed people.
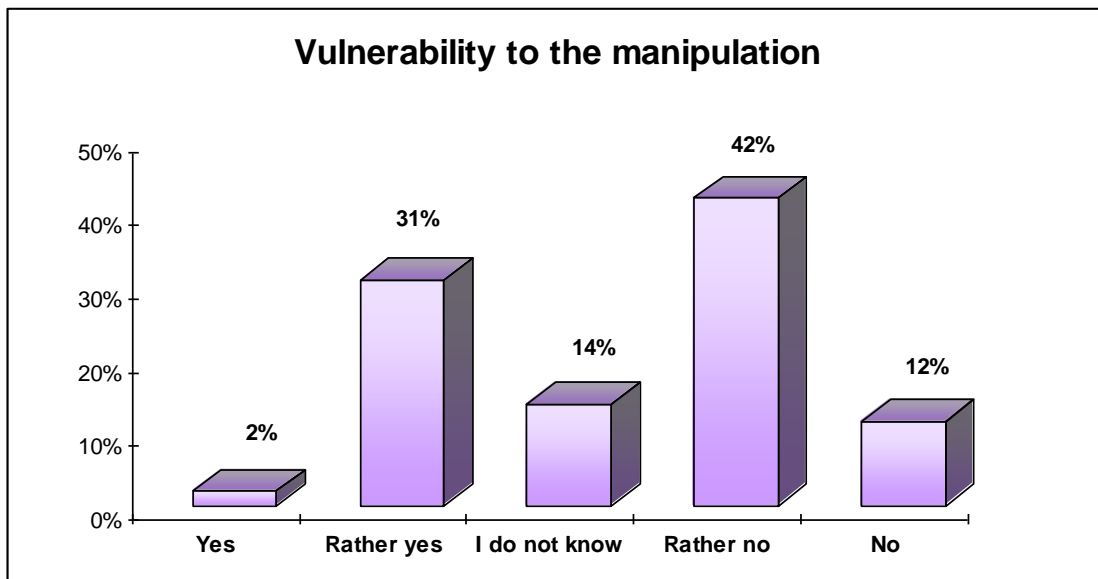

Figure 26. Consumers' vulnerability to the manipulation.

(own work – whole sample)

Question no. 19: Do you seek additional information about the brand of product you buy?

Graph no. 27 shows surprisingly balanced results expect just one studied option. 27% of respondents answered they do not seek additional information about the product they are buying. Two options at the same time registered results of (26%) that is only one percent less than the most answered option. 19% of people are looking for additional information when they buy something, and 3% of the do not know. We can see really balanced results saying that this is rather individual. Some people do so, some people do not.
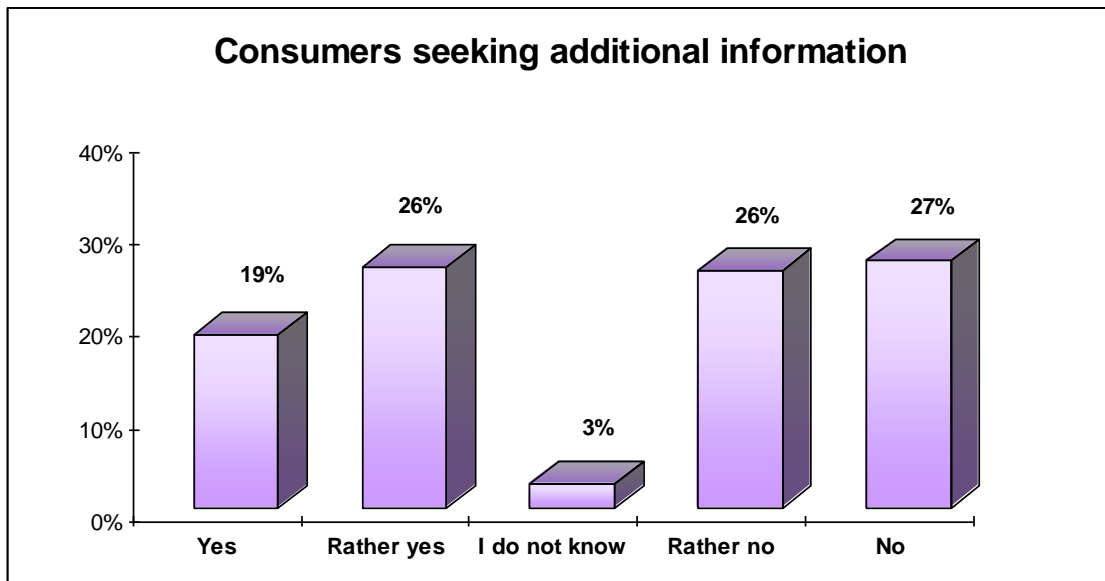
Consumers seeking additional information

Figure 27. Consumers seeking additional information about brand of product

they buy. (own work – whole sample)

Question no. 20: Do you think that young generations tend to put more stress on branded products rather than other generations?

The results of the question no. 20 are shown on the graph below. From the five options available, whole 63% of addressed people agree with given question and 20% of them rather agree. This means more than 80% of people in total think that young generations really cling to branded products. The rest 16% of respondents do not know (11%), rather disagree (1%), or clearly disagree (4%) with given question.
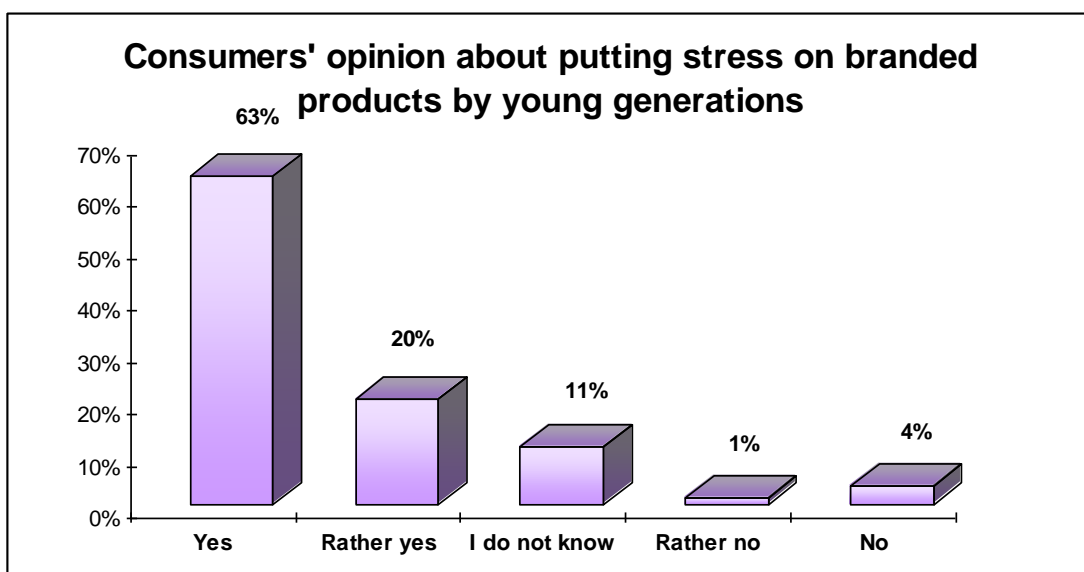
Consumers' opinion about putting stress on branded products by young generations

Figure 28. Consumers' opinion about putting stress on branded products

by young generations. (own work – whole sample)

Question no. 21: Do you buy only when you really need to?

The very last results are shown on figure no. 29 that displays the distribution of answers to the question: Do you buy only when you really need to? 44% of addressed rather agree with given question, 23% of them stated they clearly agree. However only one percent less (22%) of respondents answered they rather disagree. 7% of them replied they do not agree with this given question and just 4% of them do not know. This is a rather positive discovery in the era of consumerism, even though I collected relatively small sample of respondents in order to make really precise evaluations.
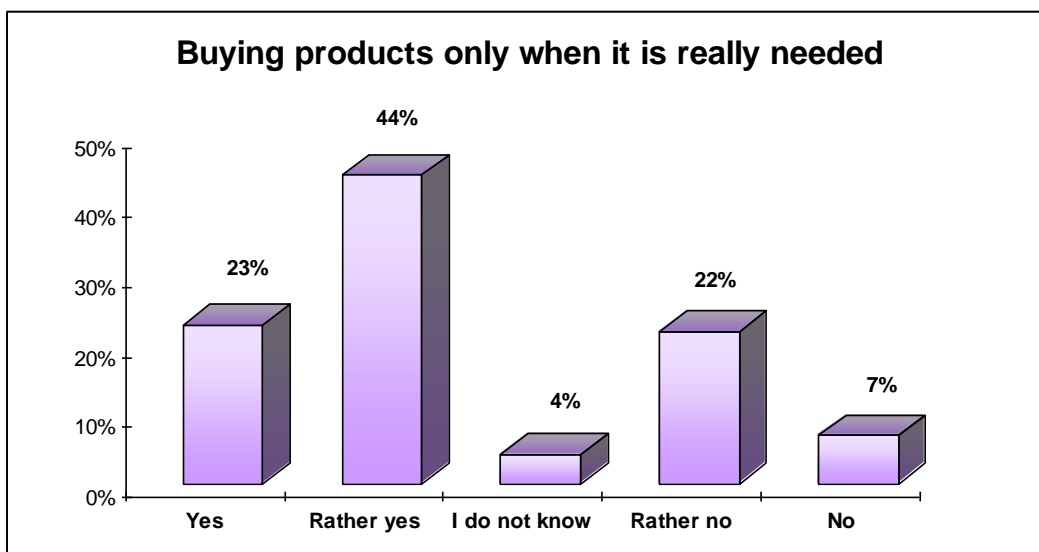

Figure 29. Consumers buying products only when they really need to.

(own work – whole sample)

5.3   Multi-Generational Comparison

This part of thesis represents more in-depth analysis of previous figures. I was able to divide collected data into the particular age groups since Google Documents tools also offer an analysis tool which can make an entry of every single respondent. Therefore, I could write these data down and find out differences among the particular age groups. I always chose the most and the least frequent answers on the multiple choice questions and the most frequent answer on rest of the questions (questions no. 1, 3, 4, 8, 14, 15). Comments on these differences are mentioned in the next chapter.

Question no.1: What do you imagine behind the term 'brand'?

- 0 – 17 – quality (38%), specification of something (22%), higher price (5%)

- 18 – 30 - quality (49%), logo (33%), higher price (7%)
- 31 – 45 - quality (53%), logo (31%), higher price (8%)
- 46 – 60 - quality (50%), higher price (14%), specification of something (13%)
- 60 and more – quality (41%), higher price (17%), specification of something (17%)

Question no. 2: Do you have an idea which elements create a brand?
- 0 – 17 – rather no (44%), yes (4%)
- 18 – 30 - rather yes (62%), no (8%)
- 31 – 45 - rather yes (55%), no (8%)
- 46 – 60 - rather yes (43%), yes (9%)
- 60 and more –rather no (51%), yes (5%)

Question no. 3: Name three brands that come up to your mind first.
- 0 – 17 – Nike (36%), Adidas (27%), Apple (23%)
- 18 – 30 - Nike (43%), Adidas (35%), Apple (18%)
- 31 – 45 - Nike (39%), Adidas (25%), Coca-Cola (19%)
- 46 – 60 - Nike (40%), Adidas (22%), Škoda (15%)
- 60 and more – Adidas (42%), Nike (35%), Baťa (11%)

Question no.4: Advertisement on which product comes to your mind first?
- 0 – 17 – T-Mobile (27%)
- 18 – 30 – T-Mobile (29%)
- 31 – 45 - Mobile operators (26%)
- 46 – 60 - Banking institutions (26%)
- 60 and more – Banking institutions (21%)

Question no. 5: Do you buy branded products?
- 0 – 17 – yes, occasionally (36%), no (5%)
- 18 – 30 - yes, occasionally (47%), no (3%)
- 31 – 45 - yes, occasionally (37%), no (5%)
- 46 – 60 - yes, occasionally (35%), no, but I would if I had money (6%)

- 60 and more - yes, occasionally (35%), no, but I would if I had money (9%)

Question no. 6: Do you support the idea: brand = quality?

- 0 – 17 – rather yes (56%), no (6%)
- 18 – 30 - rather yes (61%), I do not know (6%)
- 31 – 45 - rather yes (62%), I do not know (4%)
- 46 – 60 - rather yes (61%), I do not know (7%)
- 60 and more - rather yes (53%), yes (2%)

Question no. 7: Do you support the idea: higher price = higher quality?

- 0 – 17 – rather yes (42%), yes (6%)
- 18 – 30 - rather yes (48%), yes (8%)
- 31 – 45 - rather no (41%), yes (5%)
- 46 – 60 - rather no (61%), yes (4%)
- 60 and more - rather no (61%), yes (2%)

Question no. 8: What are your most frequent reasons to buy a branded product?

- 0 – 17 – quality (37%), living standards (22%)
- 18 – 30 - quality (42%), living standards (23%)
- 31 – 45 - quality (40%), references (27%)
- 46 – 60 - references (39%), quality (27%)
- 60 and more - references (39%), quality (28%)

Question no. 9: Are you willing to pay more for a branded product?

- 0 – 17 – rather yes (39%), no (6%)
- 18 – 30 - rather yes (41%), no (11%)
- 31 – 45 - rather yes (41%), I do not know (8%)
- 46 – 60 - rather yes (31%), no (9%)
- 60 and more - rather no (36%), yes (8%)

Question no. 10: You have neutral experience with the brand, would you keep buying products from this particular brand?

- 0 – 17 – rather yes (32%), no (6%)
- 18 – 30 - rather yes (29%), no (5%)

- 31 – 45 – I do not know (38%), no (5%)

- 46 – 60 - rather no (36%), yes (7%)

- 60 and more – I do not know (45%), yes (9%)

Question no. 11: Do you have an idea for what you are actually paying when you buy a branded product?

- 0 – 17 – rather yes (39%), no (7%)

- 18 – 30 - rather yes (46%), no (5%)

- 31 – 45 - rather yes (53%), no (9%)

- 46 – 60 - rather no (37%), no (12%)

- 60 and more - rather no (40%), no (13%)

Question no. 12: Do you care about the country of origin when you buy a branded product?

- 0 – 17 – no (32%), rather yes (6%)

- 18 – 30 - rather no (54%), I do not know (4%)

- 31 – 45 - rather no (50%), I do not know (4%)

- 46 – 60 - no (33%), yes (8%)

- 60 and more - rather no (53%), yes (7%)

Question no. 13: Do you prefer Czech brands over foreign ones?

- 0 – 17 – I do not care (46%), yes (7%)

- 18 – 30 – I do not care (48%), yes (6%)

- 31 – 45 – I do not care (45%), no (6%)

- 46 – 60 – rather yes (27%), no (5%)

- 60 and more – rather yes (32%), I prefer foreign brands (3%)

Question no. 14: Which Czech brand name comes to your mind first?

- 0 – 17 – Baťa (29%)

- 18 – 30 - Baťa (34%)

- 31 – 45 - Baťa (31%)

- 46 – 60 – Baťa (40%)

- 60 and more - Baťa (49%)

Question no. 15: What is your experience with quality of branded products in comparison with common 'unbranded' product?

- 0 – 17 – incomparable quality (31%), only small differences (31%), same/worse quality (13%)

- 18 – 30 - incomparable quality (32%), only small differences (29%), same/worse quality (15%)

- 31 – 45 - only small differences (50%), incomparable quality (32%), disappointment in terms of quality (16%)

- 46 – 60 - only small differences (47%), incomparable quality (28%), same/worse quality (15%)

- 60 and more - only small differences (55%), incomparable quality (25%), disappointment in terms of quality (13%)

Question no. 16: Do you even buy already used goods?

- 0 – 17 – no (39%), yes, regularly (7%)

- 18 – 30 - no (40%), yes, regularly (6%)

- 31 – 45 - rarely (42%), yes, regularly (6%)

- 46 – 60 - yes, occasionally (30%), yes, regularly (8%)

- 60 and more – yes, occasionally (33%), yes, regularly (13%)

Question no. 17: Are you affected by design or packaging when you are buying the particular product?

- 0 – 17 – rather yes (33%), no (3%)

- 18 – 30 - yes (35%), no (1%)

- 31 – 45 –rather yes (36%), no (2%)

- 46 – 60 – rather yes (38%), no (2%)

- 60 and more – rather no (32%), no (7%)

Question no. 18: Are you vulnerable to manipulation?

- 0 – 17 – rather no (44%), yes (1%)

- 18 – 30 - rather no 49%), yes (1%)

- 31 – 45 - rather no (41%), yes (1%)

- 46 – 60 – rather no 37%), yes (1%)

- 60 and more – rather yes (38%), yes (7%)

Question no. 19: Do you seek additional information about the brand of product you buy?

- 0 – 17 – rather no (29%), I do not know (4%)

- 18 – 30 - yes (24%), I do not know (3%)

- 31 – 45 –rather yes (35%), I do not know (4%)

- 46 – 60 –rather no (30%), I do not know (4%)

- 60 and more – no (33%), I do not know (2%)

Question no. 20: Do you think that young generations tend to put more stress on branded products rather than other generations?

- 0 – 17 – yes (64%), rather no (1%)

- 18 – 30 - yes (61%), rather no (0%)

- 31 – 45 - yes (68%), rather no (1%)

- 46 – 60 – yes (60%), rather no (1%)

- 60 and more - yes (69%), rather no (0%)

Question no. 21: Do you buy only when you really need to?

- 0 – 17 – rather yes (42%), I do not know (2%)

- 18 – 30 - rather yes (39%), I do not know (4%)

- 31 – 45 - rather yes (42%), I do not know (4%)

- 46 – 60 – rather yes (48%), no (5%)

- 60 and more - rather yes (53%), no (6%)

6 EVALUATION AND FINAL THOUGHTS

All in all, the research showed certain differences in the consumer buying behavior of various generations.

All generations mostly do see behind the term brand quality without exceptions while further results are slightly different, and they are telling us that older people more frequently see higher price under this term rather than younger generations. Also, the majority of respondents have an idea which elements create a brand except respondents from groups 0 – 17 and 60 and more, which mostly answered they rather do not have an idea. I would say it is because of lack of knowledge of the first group, and in the second case, I see that people from this group more or less do not care about 'unimportant' information, therefore they do not know the answer. Surprisingly, clothing giants Nike and Adidas did not give any chances to their competitors, and this also applies to older generations. However we can observe that older people mentioned the names of Czech brands while younger did not at all.

According to the research, advertisement which came up first to the mind of respondents differed. While young people mostly thought of T-Mobile or generally mobile services advertisement, older people thought of advertisements concerning about banking services. This is probably the result of an advertising campaign of particular brands. However, these advertisements had to be somehow provocative in order to stay in the minds of these people. Otherwise, they would have not mentioned them. Every studied age group occasionally buys branded products, but the fact is that age group 18 – 30 buys them most frequently. Also, every age group rather does support the idea: brand equals quality just with minor percentual differences. However, answers to similar questions, if people support the idea that higher price equals higher quality, were not unanimous. Younger generations rather agreed with this idea while older generations rather disagreed.

Young people also were united when they were asked what are their most frequent reasons to buy a branded product, and they replied that the reason is the quality. On the contrary, older people mentioned references as their most frequent reason. Furthermore, all respondents except respondents from the age group 60 and more answered they rather are willing to pay more for a branded product whilst people from the mentioned group rather are not.

Answers to question no. 10 were diverse. While two youngest generations rather agreed with the given question and age groups 31 – 45 and 60 and more were not sure about the

answer, group 46 – 60 rather did not agree with this particular question. Personally, I think that young people are not that skeptical yet, so they are more open to give someone next chance to really make an impression. Question no. 11 follows the phenomenon, where the votes of three youngest age groups differ from two remaining groups. This is possibly a result of recently gained education or individual concern of addressed people. Question no. 12 provides us with interesting information that people of all age generations rather do not care about the country of origin when they buy a branded product or actually they do not care at all. To be honest, I would expect a slightly different results towards the answer 'rather yes' since many even branded products are made in third world countries and people probably do not even realize this. I would definitely recommend them to do so. However, question no. 13 brought following results: younger generations do not care about Czech brands when they have a chance to choose between Czech and foreign product whilst older generations do care about it. This information signals us the reality that older people are probably more patriotic than rest of the country.

Without any exceptions, company Baťa was mentioned as the one that comes to the minds of Czech consumers first. It reflects a long tradition and successes of this company, and being well-known not just in Zlin.

Answers to the question no. 15 differed just by a small margin. While three oldest age generations in most cases said they experienced only small differences in quality between branded and unbranded product, younger generations answered they do see a huge quality gap between those two kinds of product. Results of next question show us how different is the point of view of various age groups on the topic of buying already used goods. While groups 0 -17 and 18 – 30 do not buy already used goods at all, people ranging from 31 years to 45 years rarely do so, and finally, age groups 46 – 60 and 60 and more occasionally buy already used products. Even though, there is infinite number of goods which are already extremely cheap, it seems that older people rather save money and are much more conservative consumers. The question is how much money an average pensioner in our country has for spending. Even though, it was not the subject of this research, I personally think that even it is not much, in average pensioners have more money to spend than teenagers, and still they tend to save money more often by buying already used products.

Question no. 17 shows further distinctions in consumer buying behavior. It basically tells us that pensioners rather are not influenced by design or package of the particular product. Opposite pole is however the group 18 – 30 which says clearly they are influenced by these

factors. This could be the impulse for brands how to adjust their marketing strategy of products for certain age groups.

Only age group 60 and more answered they rather are, to the question, if they are vulnerable to manipulation, for instance, when any friend tells them what is good and what is not good, they will most likely follow these advices. This is kind of dangerous thing, because these people can potentially become the victims of scam when they are offered and intensively persuaded by sellers, so they buy even the unwanted product, and this is not happening exceptionally. Question no. 19 discovered that teenagers up to seventeen years rather do not look for further information about the brand of product they buy as well as people ranging from 46 years to 60, and that people older than 60 years do not look for it at all. However, people around 25 years do seek additional information, and people age 31 - 45 rather do seek these kinds of information too. This means that young mature people are being more informed what they are actually buying.

And finally questions no. 20 and no. 21 describes relatively stable results among all age groups. It seems that globally more than 60% of respondents really think that young generations are much more linked with branded product and that they tend to put more stress on them. We also see that people of all ages rather buy products only when they really need to. This is quite good finding in the era of consumerism and I hope it will potentially get even better as time will go on.

Based on the evidence, I found out certain tendencies in consumer buying behavior. More specifically, we can see that young generations and older generations had sometimes slightly and sometimes completely different attitudes to the given questions. According to this research, I think that the breaking point of the buying behavior is after person reaches forty years, or when he or she begins a family life, since in most cases, answers had a tendency to be similar for neighboring age groups, and we could see a trend, where ideas of younger generations slowly but surely changed their forms while moving further to responses of older generations. Also, we can deduce from this research that older people are less brand oriented, more conservative, slightly vulnerable to manipulation, slightly less informed about given issues and probably more patriotic consumers.

CONCLUSION

The main goal of this bachelor thesis was to provide the reader with general information about branding, brand, and factors influencing consumer purchasing behavior, and to point out and evaluate differences in the brand oriented purchasing behavior of various generations.

Theoretical part included three core chapters, each one focused on different issues. First part was in token of the branding topic. This part described important information about branding, and was studied from many points of view to give the best possible and relevant information for both professionals and for people who are unfamiliar with that particular topic. Second part was concerned about brand as it is being a key factor of success or failure. This part provided information about types of brands and gave us an insight about terms such as brand equity, brand identity, brand creation, and brand elements. The third and final part of theory concentrated on information about consumers, consumer purchasing behavior, and factors which have an influence on this behavior.

Practical part began with an introduction to the questionnaire followed by the analysis of questions from this questionnaire. Each question was analyzed as a whole, and for every single studied age group. The results of this research were shown in the figures for the whole sample and consequently they were divided into already mentioned age groups.

And lastly in the final part, I evaluated collected data and explained my final thoughts about studied issue.

Based on the evidence, this bachelor thesis found out several differences among various generations of people and their brand oriented buying behavior. Even though, the research of this thesis reached a relatively small number of respondents in order to state that these findings are precise, it confirmed the general truth that younger generations and brands are connected together much more than older generations and also that older generations are more conservative customers.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

No.   Number

TV   Television

Etc.   Et cetera

E.g.   For example

CBBE   Customer based brand equity

IT   Information technology

4Ps   Elements of the marketing mix (price, package, place, promotion)

PESTEL Political, economical, social, technological, environmental and legal factors

LIST OF FIGURES

APPENDICES

P I   The questionnaire for the research respondents

APPENDICES

APPENDIX P I: THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESEARCH RESPONDENTS

Question no.1: What do you imagine behind the term 'brand'?

_____ (short textual answers)

Question no. 2: Do you have an idea which elements create a brand?

Yes   Rather yes   Rather no   No

Question no. 3: Name three brands that come up to your mind first.

_____ (short textual answers)

Question no.4: Advertisement on which product comes to your mind first?

_____ (short textual answers)

Question no. 5: Do you buy branded products?

Yes, regularly   Yes, occasionally   Rarely

No, but I would have if I had money   No

Question no. 6: Do you support the idea: brand = quality?

Yes   Rather yes   I do not know   Rather no   No

Question no. 7: Do you support the idea: higher price = higher quality?

Yes   Rather yes   I do not know   Rather no   No

Question no. 8: What are your most frequent reasons to buy a branded product?

It reflects my living standards

I bought a quality product

I bought a product from advertisement

I bought a product which is used by any famous person

I bought a product to fit into a certain social group

I bought a product according to references from my family, friends etc.

Question no. 9: Are you willing to pay more for a branded product?

Yes   Rather yes   I do not know   Rather no   No

Question no. 10: You have neutral experience with the brand, would you keep buying products from this particular brand?

Yes   Rather yes   I do not know   Rather no   No

Question no. 11: Do you have an idea for what you are actually paying when you buy a branded product?

Yes   Rather yes   Rather no   No

Question no. 12: Do you care about the country of origin when you buy a branded product?

Yes   Rather yes   I do not know   Rather no   No

Question no. 13: Do you prefer Czech brands over foreign ones?

Yes   Rather yes   I do not care   Rather no   No
I prefer foreign brands over Czech ones

Question no. 14: Which Czech brand name comes to your mind first?

_____ (short textual answers)

Question no. 15: What is your experience with quality of branded products in comparison with common 'unbranded' product?

Incomparable quality difference   Only small quality difference
Disappointment in terms of quality   Same/worse quality   Other

Question no. 16: Do you even buy already used goods?

Yes, regularly   Yes, occasionally   Rarely   No, I do not buy

Question no. 17: Are you affected by design or packaging when you are buying the particular product?

Yes   Rather yes   I do not know   Rather no   No

Question no. 18: Are you vulnerable to manipulation?

Yes   Rather yes   I do not know   Rather no   No

Question no. 19: Do you seek additional information about the brand of product you buy?

Yes   Rather yes   I do not know   Rather no   No

Question no. 20: Do you think that young generations tend to put more stress on branded products rather than other generations?

Yes   Rather yes   I do not know   Rather no   No

Question no. 21: Do you buy only when you really need to?

Yes   Rather yes   I do not know   Rather no   No

Question no. 22: What is your gender?

Male   Female

Question no. 23: What is your age?

0 – 17   18 – 30   31 – 45   46 – 60   60 and more

Question no.24: What is your education?

Primary   Skilled   Secondary   Higher vocational training
University education

Question no. 25: What is your current social status?

Student   Student along with being employed   Employed
Unemployed   Pensioner