

PROFILE OF FAST FASHION CONSUMERS: A CASE STUDY OF PARFOIS ¹

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Abstract:

Globalization, environmental changes, evolving consumption patterns, and heightened concern for personal appearance have redefined consumer behavior. In response, companies must implement innovative strategies to meet market demands effectively. Marketing plays a pivotal role in enabling industries like fashion to adapt swiftly to shifting trends. The fast fashion model exemplifies this by facilitating the rapid creation and release of new products in line with evolving trends.

This research explores the fast fashion phenomenon through a case study of Parfois, a leading Portuguese brand. The study is based on 371 valid responses from consumer surveys. Findings highlight significant sociodemographic differences in consumer perceptions of fast fashion. Specifically, the values of humility and rigor were found to be unrelated to age, while income was a significant predictor of product purchases in the categories of jewelry, clothing, and shoes. Additionally, a relationship between product characteristics and brand values was confirmed, rejecting the null hypothesis across multiple variables.

Keywords: Consumer behavior, brand values, fast fashion, survey, Parfois

1 INTRODUCTION:

According to the definition provided by the American Marketing Association (AMA), *marketing* "is the activity, set of institutions and processes for creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners and society at large" (AMA, 2017). Over time and with the changes that have been evident in the daily lives of individuals, marketing has undergone numerous changes to adapt to the needs of the market (Juárez-Ramírez & Núñez-Hernández, 2024). Consequently, both traditional marketing models and more modern approaches—particularly those leveraging technological advancements—are now employed to promote products (Chi, 2024).

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Closely linked to marketing is the concept of branding. According to the American Marketing Association, a *brand* can be defined as "any distinctive feature like a name, term, design or symbol that identifies goods or services" (AMA, n.d.). It thus gives rise to concepts such as brand *marketing*, personal brand, corporate brand, brand value, brand identity, and brand positioning (AMA, n.d.). Each brand possesses unique characteristics, which lead to the concept of brand value proposition—the distinct factor that sets a brand apart from its competitors (Barbosa, 2021). This paper explores the case of the Parfois brand, which has positioned itself as a pioneer in adopting the fast fashion model. But how does marketing relate to fast fashion? Given that marketing permeates every aspect of our lives, it is no surprise that it plays a crucial role in the fast fashion industry. Fast fashion can be broadly defined as the swift production of goods in large quantities, designed to reduce costs and keep pace with rapidly changing market trends. In this context, marketing's primary role is to conduct a detailed analysis of consumer behavior, enabling the development of tailored strategies that effectively reach the brand's target audience (Martins, 2020). However, it is crucial to fully understand the concept of fast fashion, along with its associated benefits and drawbacks.

This study begins with two primary research questions, each subdivided into a secondary question. The first question seeks to understand the profile of fast fashion consumers, specifically investigating whether knowledge (or lack thereof) of the fast fashion concept is related to sociodemographic characteristics. The second question aims to assess consumers' familiarity with the Parfois brand, particularly its values and characteristics, and whether this awareness is influenced by sociodemographic factors and the types of products they most frequently purchase. Additionally, the study will examine whether income correlates with the amounts consumers are willing to pay across different product categories.

Hence, this paper aims to explore three main research goals: First, to identify the profiles of both Parfois consumers and non-consumers. Second, to assess consumers' understanding of the brand's values and characteristics. Third, to determine whether sociodemographic factors influence consumer knowledge of these values and characteristics, as well as their willingness to pay for each product category.

This article is structured into five sections. After this introduction, section 2 presents a literature review that is very much focused on the consumption of fast fashion. The third section outlines the methodology, which is followed by the PARFOIS case study, presented in section 4. A brief brand context is provided, followed by sample characterization and data analysis. Lastly, the study's conclusions, implications, and limitations are presented.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

2.1 The evolution of the fast fashion concept

The fashion industry has continuously evolved to adapt to the changing demands of society and the market (Ângelo, 2022). Traditionally, fashion was defined by seasonal collections and was influenced by cultural, social, and economic factors. However, this concept has expanded over the years to include various subcategories, such as fast and slow fashion, reflecting the industry's response to global changes in consumer behavior, sustainability concerns, and technological advancements (Tokatli, 2008). According to Kawamura (2018), fashion is not only about clothing but is a social phenomenon shaped by both external influences and individual expression. This evolution accelerated in the late 20th and early 21st centuries when consumerism and mass production began driving trends at unprecedented speeds. The rise of fast fashion, characterized by the rapid design, production, and distribution of low-cost clothing, reshaped the industry by shortening production cycles and democratizing access to fashion trends (Barnes & Lea-Greenwood, 2006). Brands like Zara and H&M pioneered this model, enabling consumers to quickly purchase the latest styles at affordable prices, thus transforming how fashion operates globally (Caro & Martínez-de-Albéniz, 2015). Conversely, the slow fashion movement emerged as a response to the environmental and ethical issues associated with fast fashion. Fletcher (2010) argues that slow fashion advocates for a more sustainable and conscious approach to clothing, focusing on quality, longevity, and ethical

production practices. This movement aligns with growing consumer awareness of sustainability and a shift towards mindful consumption, with brands like Patagonia and Stella McCartney leading the way in promoting eco-friendly fashion.

As the fashion industry continues to evolve, digitalization has also played a crucial role. The rise of social media, e-commerce, and data-driven marketing has allowed brands to engage with consumers in new ways, further reshaping the landscape (Menkes, 2019). AI and big data are now being used to predict trends, personalize marketing efforts, and optimize supply chains, adding another layer to the modern fashion ecosystem (Puddu & Dekker, 2020).

Thus, fashion is no longer confined to traditional definitions but has expanded into a multi-dimensional concept that incorporates speed, sustainability, technology, and changing consumer values.

The concept of fast fashion can be briefly described as a strategy adopted by companies to quickly meet market expectations with products that align with current trends (Rodrigues, 2022). As such, This concept encompasses two main components: the speed of the product development process and the incorporation of current fashion trends during production.

To fully understand the concept of fast fashion, it is essential to consider its origins. The emergence of fast fashion is closely linked to globalization, environmental changes, shifting consumer habits, and an increasing focus on personal appearance (Ângelo, 2022; Rodrigues, 2022; Tran & D  ng, 2024). It is estimated that the concept of fast fashion, albeit indirectly, first emerged in the 1960s and 1970s (Tran & D  ng, 2024). During these decades, there was a growing emphasis on prosperity, leading consumers to seek more affordable products. Consequently, the fashion industry has evolved in recent years, adapting to changing consumption patterns (Tran & D  ng, 2024). According to Martins (2020),

Fast fashion is a term that originated in the late 1990s due to an expression that was widely used by the media to identify the increasingly rapid changes in fashion. It is considered a business strategy that aims to reduce the processes involved in the purchase cycle and delivery times of new fashion products in stores in order to satisfy consumer needs (p. 34).

In summary, the fast fashion model is built on large-scale replication of products, which allows for cost efficiencies and, consequently, lower prices. This approach is commonly employed by major retail chains such as Zara and H&M, among others (Ângelo, 2022; Rodrigues, 2022), enabling them to rapidly produce and distribute new fashion trends at affordable prices (Caro & Mart  nez-de-Alb  niz, 2015). By reducing production times and leveraging economies of scale, these companies can quickly respond to consumer demand and maintain a competitive edge in the market (Tokatli, 2008). The use of this strategy proves highly advantageous for companies, as research suggests that product purchases in fast fashion are often driven by consumer impulse and a tendency to accumulate items (Barnes & Lea-Greenwood, 2006; Rodrigues, 2022). Fast fashion retailers capitalise on the desire for constant novelty, encouraging frequent purchases of low-cost items, which fuels rapid turnover and high sales volumes (Byun & Sternquist, 2008). This strategy also enables consumers to purchase low-cost clothing that mimics styles worn by well-known figures in the media, allowing them to keep up with the latest trends at a fraction of the price (Fang, 2023; Tran & D  ng, 2024).

However, this method frequently raises concerns about sustainability and the environmental impact of mass production. Critics argue that fast fashion encourages overconsumption and leads to excessive waste generation, contributing to environmental degradation (Fletcher, 2010), as discussed in the following section.

2.2 The Relationship between fast fashion and sustainability

It is widely acknowledged by academics, researchers, and practitioners that the fast fashion industry often compromises ethical, social, and environmental standards, with far-reaching global consequences. As a result, the fashion industry is now considered one of the most impactful sectors worldwide in terms of its adverse effects (Gaj  st, 2024; Sorensen & Jorgensen, 2019). This production model is primarily sustained by outsourcing labor to

developing countries, where wages are significantly lower (Tran & Dũng, 2024). Hence, the negative socio-environmental impacts often arise because, in many cases, the low price of products is tied to the poor working conditions faced by laborers in other countries (Ângelo, 2022).

On the other hand, alongside the social impacts of this production model, there are also significant environmental consequences. Concerns about sustainability began to take on greater importance in the 1980s, sparking the emergence of numerous campaigns and international agreements aimed at reducing environmental damage (Pereira et al., 2021). However, the fashion industry is still among the most polluting sectors globally. It is a major contributor to waste production, excessive resource consumption, and increasing carbon emissions, making it a significant generator of greenhouse gases (Gajšt, 2024).

The rapid production of goods to meet market demands leads to the daily consumption of vital planetary resources. A large amount of material is wasted, and the washing of clothes releases microfibers into the ocean. Most garments are made from non-biodegradable materials like polyester, resulting in the accumulation of microplastics in marine environments. Additionally, the industry's excessive water use and carbon emissions are responsible for approximately 10% of global carbon emissions (Ângelo, 2022; Fang, 2023; Tran & Dũng, 2024).

In his study, Fang (2023) presents striking data on the vast consumption required by the fashion industry to manufacture its products. He highlights that producing just one kilogram of cotton demands 20,000 liters of water, a staggering figure that underscores the resource-intensive nature of textile production. Additionally, the cultivation of cotton heavily relies on insecticides and pesticides, which not only harm the environment but also pose serious health risks to agricultural workers and local communities. Fang (2023) further emphasizes the environmental toll of the fashion industry, noting that it "generates more than 92 million tons of waste each year and consumes 1.5 trillion liters of water" (p. 167). The adoption of fast fashion strategies exacerbates these issues by prioritizing rapid production and low costs, resulting in excessive waste. As production speeds up to meet market demands, vast amounts of unsold or discarded clothing accumulate, contributing to the fashion industry's growing waste problem. The core objective of fast fashion—mass production to reduce prices for consumers—also fuels a culture of impulsive buying, where products are purchased not out of necessity but rather due to the constant pressure to follow fleeting trends. This encourages more frequent and regular purchases, driving overconsumption and exacerbating environmental degradation (Fang, 2023; Rodrigues, 2022).

Moreover, recent research highlights that the fashion industry is responsible for roughly 8-10% of global carbon emissions, surpassing the combined emissions of international flights and maritime shipping (European Parliament, 2022; UN Environment Programme, 2019). This further underscores the scale of the environmental impact, as the sector not only consumes vast resources but also contributes significantly to climate change through carbon emissions and the release of microfibers and microplastics from synthetic fabrics, such as polyester, into the ocean (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017). These materials do not biodegrade, leading to long-term pollution of marine ecosystems.

In conclusion, while fast fashion has succeeded in making trendy, affordable clothing accessible to consumers, its environmental and social costs are significant. The unsustainable consumption of water, the use of harmful chemicals in material production, and the industry's contribution to global waste and carbon emissions all point to the urgent need for more responsible and sustainable practices in fashion (Fang, 2023; Rodrigues, 2022).

2.3 Research Hypotheses

This section outlines the key hypotheses that guide the current research, each of which is developed based on the existing literature and the context of the fast fashion industry. The hypotheses aim to explore the relationships between consumer knowledge, brand perception, sociodemographic variables, and purchasing behaviors. By testing these hypotheses, the study provides insights into how different consumer segments engage with the Parfois brand and

the fast fashion model in general. The following hypotheses form the basis for the research and will be examined through quantitative analysis.

Hypothesis 1: Knowledge of the Concept of Fast Fashion Varies According to Sociodemographic Variables

This hypothesis suggests that consumers' understanding of the fast fashion concept differs based on their sociodemographic characteristics, such as age, gender, education level, and income. Research shows that sociodemographic factors often shape consumer awareness and behavior in the fashion industry. Tokatli (2008) argues that globalization and the rise of fast fashion have created disparities in how different consumer groups perceive and engage with fashion trends. For instance, younger consumers, particularly Generation Z, are more likely to be aware of fast fashion due to their active engagement with social media platforms and digital marketing, which frequently promote fast fashion brands (Caro & Martínez-de-Albéniz, 2015). In contrast, older generations may be less familiar with the term or less engaged with the fast fashion model due to different purchasing habits and value systems. Sociodemographic variables such as education also play a crucial role. According to Byun & Sternquist (2008), higher levels of education correlate with greater awareness of the ethical and environmental implications of fast fashion, which might lead to differing levels of familiarity with the concept itself. Therefore, we hypothesize that knowledge of fast fashion will vary across these sociodemographic categories.

Hypothesis 2: The Perception of Parfois' Values is Related to Sociodemographic Variables

This hypothesis explores the relationship between sociodemographic factors and consumers' perceptions of Parfois' brand values. Research has shown that perceptions of brand values can be influenced by an individual's sociodemographic background, particularly age, income, and education (Barnes & Lea-Greenwood, 2006). Fletcher (2010) highlights that as consumers become more aware of environmental and ethical concerns, their perception of brands shifts, especially among younger and more educated groups who tend to prioritize sustainability and ethical practices in their purchasing decisions.

Additionally, Niinimäki et al. (2020) emphasizes that fast fashion brands often project specific values related to affordability and trendiness, which resonate differently with distinct consumer segments. Younger consumers may prioritize fashion-forwardness and affordability, while older or more affluent individuals may place more emphasis on quality or sustainability. Thus, Parfois' values, such as Ambition, Rigour, and Humility, are likely to be perceived differently depending on the sociodemographic profile of the consumer, supporting the notion that these perceptions are not uniform across the population.

Hypothesis 3: Income Influences the Price that Each Individual is Willing to Pay for Categories of Products

This hypothesis posits that a consumer's income level directly influences how much they are willing to pay for different product categories, such as clothing, accessories, or footwear. Rodrigues (2022) found that income plays a critical role in shaping consumer spending patterns, particularly in fast fashion, where lower-income consumers are more likely to seek out affordable, trend-driven items. Consumers with higher incomes, on the other hand, tend to spend more on premium or higher-quality products, often perceiving these purchases as investments. The relationship between income and purchasing behavior has been well-established in the literature. Caro and Martínez-de-Albéniz (2015) note that fast fashion retailers rely on a pricing strategy that appeals to budget-conscious consumers, who may prioritize price over quality or sustainability. Higher-income consumers, by contrast, may be less influenced by price sensitivity and more focused on other factors such as brand reputation or product durability. This hypothesis is also supported by Byun and Sternquist (2008), who argue that consumer willingness to pay varies significantly by income level, particularly when it comes to discretionary purchases in fashion categories.

Hypothesis 4: There is a Relationship Between the Products Consumers Buy Most and the Characteristics of the Brand

This hypothesis suggests that the types of products consumers purchase most frequently are linked to their perception of a brand's characteristics. Fang (2023) explains that consumer behavior is often driven by how closely a brand's offerings align with their individual preferences, such as affordability, style, and product variety. In the case of fast fashion brands like Parfois, consumers may prioritize items that reflect the brand's core characteristics, such as trendy yet affordable accessories and clothing. Barnes and Lea-Greenwood (2006) found that fast fashion consumers are particularly motivated by a desire for rapid access to the latest trends at low prices, which aligns with the brand characteristics of many fast fashion retailers. Consumers who regularly buy trendy items such as shoes, handbags, or jewelry may be drawn to brands like Parfois because these products reflect the brand's identity of providing fashionable, low-cost items. Furthermore, Fletcher (2010) argues that the alignment between product categories and brand characteristics reinforces brand loyalty, as consumers are more likely to return to brands that consistently meet their style preferences and financial expectations. Therefore, we hypothesize that the types of products consumers purchase most frequently—whether it's clothing, accessories, or footwear—will be strongly related to the brand characteristics that appeal to them.

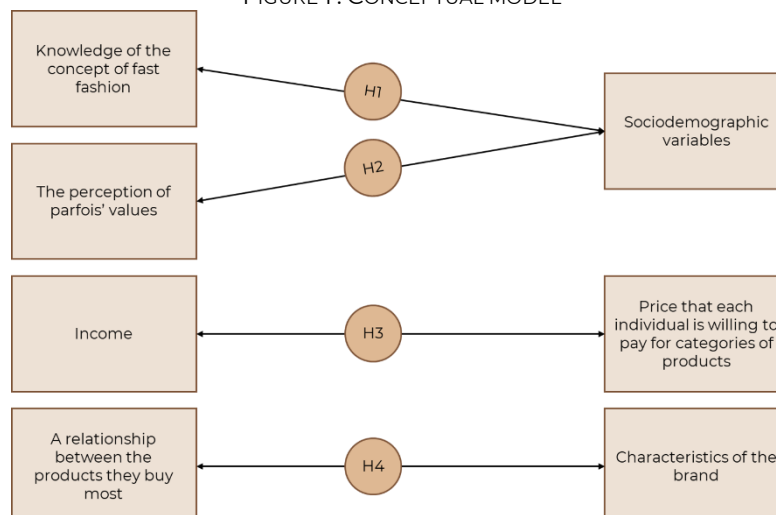
As summarized in Table 2, each hypothesis is grounded in existing literature and reflects well-established connections between sociodemographic variables, consumer behavior, and brand characteristics. The exploration of these hypotheses will allow for a deeper understanding of how different groups of consumers perceive and engage with fast fashion brands like Parfois. By investigating these relationships, this study contributes to the broader discourse on consumer behavior in the fast fashion industry and highlights the influence of sociodemographic factors on purchasing decisions.

Table 1 Hypotheses of the study

Hypotheses Identified	Formulating Hypotheses
Hypothesis 1	Knowledge of the concept of fast fashion varies according to the sociodemographic variables of the sample.
Hypothesis 2	The perception of Parfois' values is related to sociodemographic variables.
Hypothesis 3	Income influences the price that each individual is willing to pay for categories of products.
Hypothesis 4	There is a relationship between the products they buy most and the characteristics of the brand.

Considering these hypothesis the following conceptual model was designed (figure 1).

FIGURE 1. CONCEPTUAL MODEL



3 METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative research approach grounded in a case study of a Portuguese fast-fashion brand, Parfois. While the study focuses on the specific case of Parfois, its broader aim is to explore consumer behaviors and attitudes in the fast fashion industry. The use of a quantitative approach enables the collection and analysis of numerical data, providing statistically valid insights into consumer trends and patterns. Table 1 summarises the methodological decisions employed in this study, which will be further justified in the following sections.

Table 2 Summary of methodology

Unit of Analysis	Consumer
Target group	Consumers and non-consumers of the Parfois brand
Source of information	Questionnaire
Geographic Location	Portugal
Sample	371 valid responses
Important dates	From November 23, 2023, to December 2, 2023
Software used for data processing	SPSS (version 26)

3.1 Unit of Analysis and Target Group

The unit of analysis for this study is the consumer. Both consumers and non-consumers of the Parfois brand were targeted to provide a comprehensive understanding of the brand's reach and appeal. This allows the study to identify any significant differences in attitudes, preferences, and behaviors between those familiar with the brand and those who are not.

3.2 Data Collection and Sampling

The primary source of information for the study was a questionnaire, which was designed to capture various sociodemographic characteristics, shopping habits, and brand perceptions. The questionnaire was administered to a non-probabilistic and convenience sample of respondents in Portugal, ensuring that the data accurately reflects the views of the local population in the country where Parfois operates. The questionnaire included questions to gather quantitative data on key variables such as brand awareness, purchasing behavior, and attitudes toward fast fashion. A total of 371 valid responses were obtained, providing a robust sample size for statistical analysis. Responses were collected over ten days, from November 23, 2023, to December 2, 2023, ensuring that the data reflects current consumer attitudes and market trends.

3.3 Data Processing and Analysis

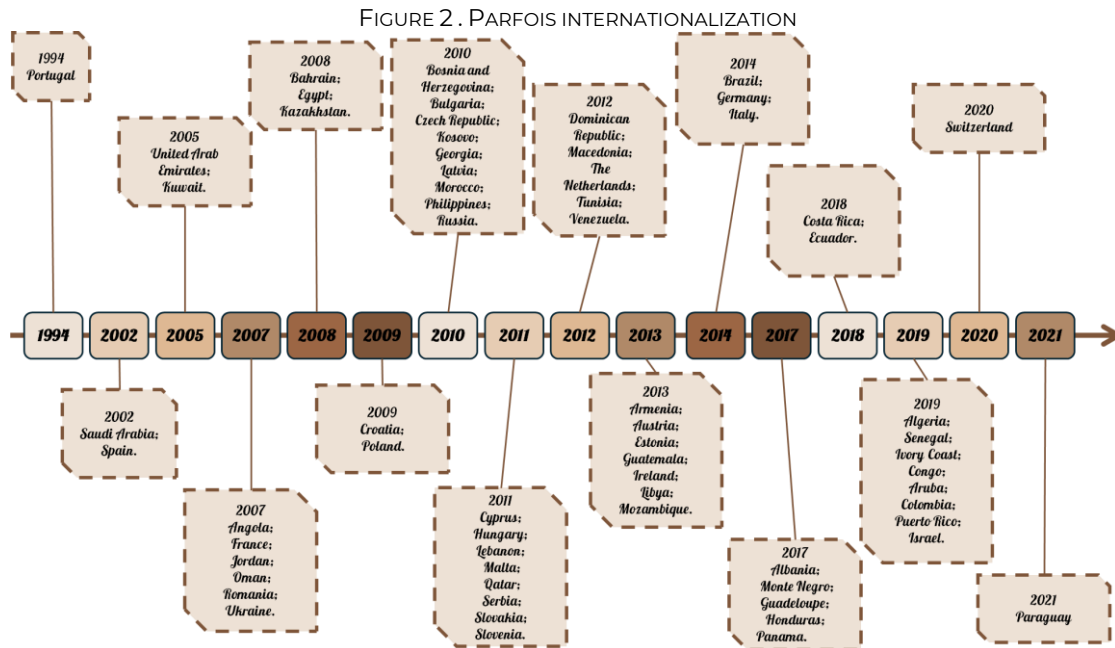
For data analysis, the study utilized SPSS (version 26), a powerful statistical software that allows for rigorous data processing and analysis. The software was used to perform a variety of statistical tests, including descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations, and hypothesis testing, to explore relationships between variables such as sociodemographic factors, brand perceptions, and purchasing behaviors. The analysis focused on identifying key trends in the fast fashion sector, as well as factors that influence consumer decisions.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 PARFOIS's Background and Competitors

Parfois, a globally recognized fashion brand, operates in over seventy countries. Founded in 1994 by Manuela Medeiros at the age of 42, the brand was inspired by her travels and introduced a unique fashion concept in Portugal (Archer, 2021; Peralta, 2023; Silva, 2022). At its inception, Parfois became a pioneer by exclusively selling accessories to the general public. The brand, now globally recognized, began on Rua Santa Catarina in Porto and has since expanded

to over a thousand stores worldwide, with the majority located outside of Portugal (Parfois, n.d.; Peralta, 2023). Today, at the age of 70, Manuela Medeiros is considered by Forbes magazine (in 2023) to be the 11th most powerful Portuguese woman in business. Over time, the brand has seen a growing evolution in terms of the markets in which it is present. Figure 2 shows the historical evolution of the brand over time and the respective countries in which it is represented.



Source: Adapted from Silva (2022)

Initially, the materials used to furnish Parfois' first store were items Manuela Medeiros collected during her travels. According to Silva (2022), the brand now employs its own team of designers who draw inspiration from their travels when developing products. The same author notes that Parfois currently operates with two design teams—one based in Portugal and the other in Barcelona. Regarding its corporate values, the Parfois brand is built on core values of ambition, humility, and rigor. Each value reflects a distinct objective: ambition symbolizes the brand's drive for growth, humility represents its commitment to learning from people, and rigor emphasizes the focus on product quality, which enhances its global competitiveness (Archer, 2021; Silva, 2022; Sousa, 2012).

It is essential to highlight that Parfois is characterized as a fast fashion brand. As discussed in the literature review, this model involves the rapid production of large quantities, resulting in lower product prices. This sets the brand apart, as its production methods allow for more affordable pricing, making it easier to reach its target audience. Like other international brands, Parfois uses the fast fashion approach to ensure quick stock replenishment and minimize costs for the end consumer. According to the author Silva (2022) Parfois uses fast fashion because its motto is "value and fashion for money" (p. 48). Thus, Parfois's primary goal in adopting the fast fashion model is to make its products more accessible to a wide range of consumers.

However, as previously mentioned, Parfois is not the only one who has adopted the fast fashion model. Competitors like Zara and H&M also rely on this system to produce large quantities of their collections efficiently. According to Sorensen and Jorgensen (2019), these brands, like other fast fashion companies, strive to keep up with ever-changing market trends. To achieve this, Zara produces approximately 24 new collections per year, while H&M releases around 18 (Sorensen & Jorgensen, 2019). In addition to these global brands, other prominent players in Portugal include Primark and MO (Silva, 2022)

4.2 Characterization of Sample

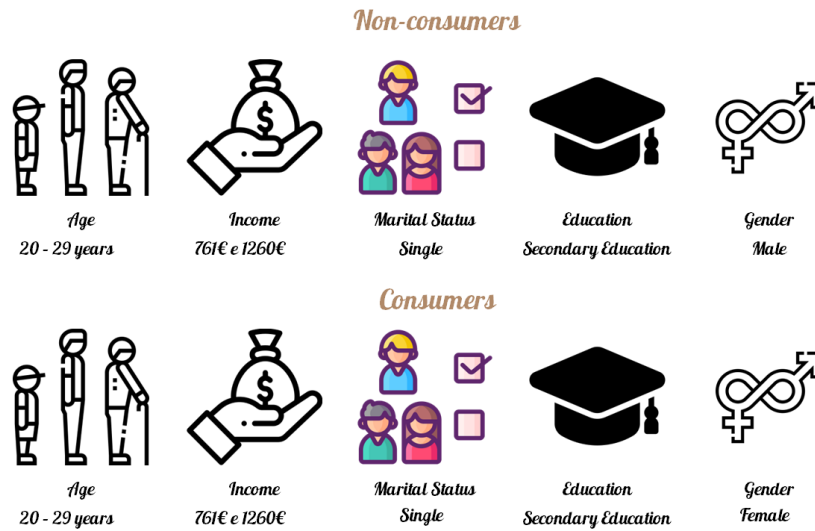
The study gathered 371 valid responses, as previously mentioned. Since the focus was on Parfois consumers, respondents were first asked whether they had ever purchased products from the brand. This question served as the basis for distinguishing between consumers and non-consumers of Parfois. As a result, only 14% of the sample, or 52 respondents, indicated they had never purchased from the brand. This distinction allowed for a more explicit characterization of both consumer and non-consumer profiles, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Sociodemographic variables of Parfois consumers and non-consumers

Sociodemographic variables		Consumers	Non-consumers
Age	< 19 years	3,76%	11,54%
	20 - 29 years	40,44%	51,92%
	30 - 39 years	25,08%	9,62%
	40 - 49 years	19,75%	17,31%
	50 - 59 years	8,78%	5,77%
	60 - 69 years	1,57%	0%
	> 70 years	1,92%	3,85%
Monthly Income	No income	12,54%	30,82%
	Up to 760€	21,63%	25%
	761€ - 1260€	49,53%	36,54%
	1261€ - 1760€	8,77%	3,8%
	1761€ - 2260€	3,76%	1,92%
	2261€ - 2760€	2,51%	1,92%
	2761€ - 3260€	0,63%	0%
	> 3260€	0,63%	0%
Marital status	Widower	2,19%	0%
	Single	47,65%	73%
	Divorced	3,44%	1,92%
	Married/marital partnership	46,71%	25%
Academic qualifications	Basic Education	5,96%	5,77%
	Secondary Education	45,14%	65%
	CTeSP	4,08%	15,38%
	Bachelorato	0,94%	1,92%
	Degree	29,78%	9,61%
	Master's Degree	12,85%	1,92%
	Doctorate	1,25%	0%
Gender	I prefer not to disclose	0,63%	1,92%
	Other	0,31%	3,84%
	Female	88,4%	28,85%
	Male	10,66%	65,38%

In short, the diagram below summarizes the most representative variables, taking into account the sociodemographic variables described in the table above.

FIGURE 3. SUMMARY OF THE MOST REPRESENTATIVE VARIABLES IN CONSUMERS AND NON-CONSUMERS



4.3 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The proposed hypotheses were analyzed using Pearson's chi-square test and Cramer's V test. Pearson's chi-square test indicates whether there is a relationship between the variables or whether there is no relationship between the variables. If the significance value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis must be accepted (H_0), i.e., there is no relationship between the variables (Chagas, 2016). On the other hand, Cramer's V test indicates the strength of the relationship between the variables. In this sense, taking into account that the values obtained must be between 0 and 1, the closer the value is to 1, the stronger the relationship between the variables (Delgado, 2020). Therefore, considering the above, the analysis of the results obtained follows.

4.3.1 H_1 - Knowledge of the concept of fast fashion varies according to the sociodemographic variables of the sample

The first hypothesis assumes an association between question 13 of the questionnaire ("Do you know the concept of *fast fashion*?") and the sociodemographic variables found in the study. In this sense, it was found that knowledge of the concept of fast fashion is related to all the sociodemographic variables, i.e., it varies according to the characteristics of the sociodemographic variables. However, there was a stronger relationship between knowledge of the concept of fast fashion and age, with this indicator having a strength of 28,4%.

Table 4 Chi-square tests of concept knowledge with socio-demographic variables

Knowledge*Socio-demographic variables	Pearson's chi-square	Cramer's V test	Decision
Individual's income	0,004	25,4%	Reject H_0
Academic qualifications	0,018	21,9%	Reject H_0
Gender	0,026	17%	Reject H_0
Marital status	0,010	18,8%	Reject H_0
Age	0,000	28,4%	Reject H_0

4.3.2 H_2 - Perception of Parfois' values is related to sociodemographic variables

The second hypothesis aimed at assessing whether there are relationships between the perception of the values defended by the brand (ambition, humility, and rigor) and consumers' sociodemographic variables. Regarding ambition, the results obtained when associated with the sociodemographic variables determine that the null hypothesis should be rejected. It is,

therefore, possible to state that there is a relationship between the variables. Furthermore, using Cramer's V test, it is possible to determine that gender is the variable with the strongest relationship, with a total of 59,5%. On the other hand, in the second value defended by the brand, that is, humility, one variable shows no relationship with the consumers' perception of the values defended by the brand. The age variable shows no relationship with the perception of the values defended by the Parfois brand. However, the other variables reject H_0 and are therefore related. As in the previous case, the greatest strength is found in the relationship between the perception of the brand's values and gender, with a total of 57,2%. Finally, the case of rigor follows the same line of thought as the case of humility since there is no relationship in terms of age either, and in the case of gender, this is the one with the most robust relationship (57,3%). In short, in the three cases explained, gender is the variable with the strongest relationship with agreement/disagreement with the values defended by the Parfois brand.

Table 5 Chi-square tests of Parfois values with socio-demographic variables

Parfois values	Sociodemographic variables	Pearson's chi-square	Cramer's V test	Decision
Ambition	Individual's income	0,001	42,6%	Reject H_0
	Academic qualifications	0,000	48,7%	Reject H_0
	Gender	0,000	59,5%	Reject H_0
	Marital status	0,001	32,4%	Reject H_0
	Age	0,037	34,9%	Reject H_0
Humility	Individual's income	0,032	37,4%	Reject H_0
	Academic qualifications	0,000	47,7%	Reject H_0
	Gender	0,000	57,2%	Reject H_0
	Marital status	0,000	35,2	Reject H_0
	Age	0,162	----	Accept H_0
Rigor	Individual's income	0,040	37%	Reject H_0
	Academic qualifications	0,000	41,3%	Reject H_0
	Gender	0,000	57,3%	Reject H_0
	Marital status	0,005	29,6%	Reject H_0
	Age	0,161	----	Accept H_0

4.3.3 H_3 - income influences the price individuals are willing to pay for product categories

The third hypothesis questioned whether individuals' income could affect the amount they are willing to pay for the categories of products offered by the Parfois brand. In this sense, when related to the individual's income, bags, watches, hats, and scarves accept H_0 , i.e., they are not related. However, the null hypothesis is rejected when it comes to jewelry, clothing, and shoes, indicating a relationship between these categories and the income earned by the brand's consumers. In this case, the greatest strength of the relationship is found in the relationship between income and shoes, which has a strength of 41,9%. It should be noted that there is only a 3% difference between those who know and those who don't know the concept of fast fashion. This lack of awareness of the concept could lead to respondents being willing to pay more for a particular product since they may not be aware that this type of product usually has a lower quality, for example. Thus, this lack of knowledge could condition the decision that there is no relationship between the above variables and the products suitcases, watches, hats, and scarves.

Table 6 Chi-square tests of price of the product with the individual income

Price of the product*income of the individual	Pearson's chi-square	Cramer's V test	Decision
Suitcase	0,266	----	Accept H_0
Jewelry	0,000	33,5%	Reject H_0
Clothing	0,000	34,2%	Reject H_0
Shoes	0,000	41,9%	Reject H_0
Watches	0,128	----	Accept H_0
Hats	0,896	----	Accept H_0

Price of the product*income of the individual	Pearson's chi-square	Cramer's V test	Decision
Scarves	0,114	-----	Accept H ₀

4.3.4 H₄ - There is a relationship between the products they buy most and brand characteristics

Finally, the primary purpose of the fourth hypothesis was to understand the relationship between the products that the brand's consumers buy the most and the brand's characteristics. In this case, all the alternatives rejected the null hypothesis, so it can be concluded that there is a relationship between the products most purchased by consumers and the brand's characteristics. The Cramer's V test indicates the strength of the relationships, as previously mentioned. However, the strengths of the existing relationships explained in the table below are very similar, with the highest value being 46,6% and the lowest 45,6%.

Table 7 Chi-square tests of products they buy most with brand characteristics

Products they buy most *Brand characteristics	Pearson's chi-square	Cramer's V test	Decision
Good value for money	0,000	46,1%	Reject H ₀
Parfois offers competitive prices compared to its competitors	0,000	45,6%	Reject H ₀
Preference for online shopping over physical stores	0,000	46,2%	Reject H ₀
Good quality logistics services for online deliveries	0,000	46,3%	Reject H ₀
Intuitive website/app	0,000	45,9%	Reject H ₀
Active communication to publicize the brand	0,000	46%	Reject H ₀
Friendly and proactive employees	0,000	46,6%	Reject H ₀
I recognize the layout (organization) of physical stores	0,000	45,6%	Reject H ₀

5 DISCUSSION

Considering the conceptual model developed to the investigation the following analyses are made to validate the statements and confirm if the sample follows the same direction suggested by the literature. In this way data data supported Hypothesis 1, which posits that knowledge of fast fashion varies according to sociodemographic variables. The significant influence of age, income, education, gender, and marital status on consumers' understanding of fast fashion is well-aligned with existing literature, underscoring the need for targeted marketing strategies that consider diverse knowledge levels within different demographic groups. Secondly, and regarding H2, the results of Pearson's Chi-Square and Cramer's V tests show significant relationships between several sociodemographic variables (income, education, gender, marital status, and age) and consumers' perceptions of Parfois' brand values—ambition, humility, and rigor. The data supports Hypothesis 2, showing that sociodemographic variables such as income, education, gender, and marital status significantly influence consumers' perceptions of Parfois' core values: ambition, humility, and rigor. The literature by Barnes and Lea-Greenwood (2006), Fletcher (2010), and Byun and Sternquist (2008) further confirms that these differences in perception are shaped by various factors, including consumer awareness, educational background, and expectations regarding brand behavior. Age, interestingly, does not have a significant effect on perceptions of humility or rigor, suggesting that other demographic factors may play a more substantial role in shaping these views. Thirdly, data also supported Hypothesis 3, showing that income significantly influences the price individuals are willing to pay for specific product categories, especially jewelry, clothing, and shoes. These findings align with Rodrigues (2022) and Caro and Martínez-de-

Albéniz (2015), who highlight that higher-income consumers are more likely to spend more on fashion items that they consider investments or that carry greater brand prestige. However, for more functional items like watches, suitcases, and hats, income does not appear to play a significant role in price sensitivity. Finally, the data strongly supports Hypothesis 4, demonstrating substantial relationships between the products consumers buy most and their perceptions of Parfois' brand characteristics. Consumers' choices are influenced by factors such as value for money, competitive pricing, online shopping preferences, and in-store experiences, as highlighted in the literature by Rodrigues (2022), Barnes and Lea-Greenwood (2006), and Fang (2023). These insights reinforce the notion that Parfois' product offerings and brand characteristics are closely intertwined, shaping consumer purchasing behavior meaningfully.

6 CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

To conclude, the findings of this study provide strong support for all four research hypotheses, offering essential insights into consumer behavior and brand perception within the fast fashion industry, specifically concerning Parfois. The results highlight the critical role of sociodemographic factors in shaping consumer knowledge and perceptions of fast fashion, brand values, pricing, and product preferences. Through a combination of statistical analysis and the integration of relevant literature, the study demonstrates that factors such as age, income, education, gender, and marital status significantly influence both consumers' understanding of fast fashion and their engagement with Parfois' brand attributes. These findings underscore the importance of tailoring marketing strategies to the diverse needs and preferences of different demographic segments. The analysis further emphasizes how Parfois' fast fashion model, product offerings, and brand characteristics are interconnected, shaping consumer purchasing behavior in impactful ways.

This study contributed to filling a notable gap in the literature by linking gender and income levels to the concept of fast fashion, as previously highlighted by Rodrigues (2022). However, several limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, using a convenience sample limits the generalizability of the findings. Since the questionnaire was distributed primarily through the authors' personal networks, the sample is not fully representative of the broader Parfois consumer base. The relatively small sample size further restricts the ability to extrapolate the data to the general population. Secondly, the structure of the questionnaire posed limitations. To make the survey easily accessible, most questions used pre-defined answer categories, including ordinal and nominal variables. While this approach simplified data collection, it restricted the ability to perform advanced statistical analyses requiring continuous data or more nuanced measurement scales.

In terms of future research it can be point out that there is a scarcity of recent studies that explore fast fashion beyond its ethical and sustainability dimensions. While these are crucial issues, the limited focus has resulted in fewer studies investigating fast fashion from a consumer behavior or market dynamics perspective. This gap underscores the need for further research that examines the concept of fast fashion through various lenses, including marketing strategies and consumer motivations. Hence, several avenues for future research emerge from this study. First, it is recommended that future studies explore different generations to compare the insights across age groups, potentially revealing generational differences in attitudes toward fast fashion. Additionally, further research focusing on Generation Z, the most predominant group in this study, would be valuable to better understand their unique consumer profile and purchasing behavior in the context of fast fashion. Moreover, more case studies should be conducted to examine the role of marketing in driving fast fashion consumption. Investigating how marketing strategies influence consumer decisions could provide insights into how brands like Parfois maintain customer loyalty and expand their market share.

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