CUSTOM MADE FASHION

Customized fashion collection

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ABSTRACT

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis was to study the theme of customization and mass customization with the goal of creating a fashion collection in consideration of the customer's demands. The idea was to understand the methods and function of customization in the fashion industry and to use the outcome to design and manufacture clothing garments with customer integration. Design and development of the collection was focused on the idea to give the potential customer the opportunity to modify and co-design their own fashion garments by integrating them into the design process. The collection includes four customized outfits selected and co-made by four different prospective clients.

The reasons for choosing this theme was personal curiosity and interest in customer's behavior and internship experience at the fashion label M.a.p.h.i.a who is offering the service of customization for clothing.
The background research of the theme of customization and mass customization should bring a greater understanding of the subject to get inspired to design and develop a customizable fashion collection. Sources like contact and interview with a fashion label who already offer this service as well as customer surveys were made and used to round off the background knowledge. Research work of trends and customers' behavior were studied with the goal to figure out the best way of customer integration.

A wearable and trendy fashion collection came to life customized and co-build by four individual customers. The main goal of customer integration experiment met all previous expectations. The customers of this collection were satisfied with the process and the end result of this work. However, as a conclusion of this work, for further development of this idea and collection, the power of customer integration will be limited and displaced to the end of the development process.

Keywords   Customization, mass customization, customer integration, fashion collection, requirements

Pages   53 p. + appendices 27 p.

CONTENTS

1   INTRODUCTION

Fashion can be defined as a personal/customized mode of expression, and varies from the individual to masses. Every one of us choose clothes daily, which describe our personality generally or specifically, even those who might not care about trend or fashion. For a long time the fashion-business was ruled by designers and the economy. They determined the trends and the taste of consumers. Not at least because of globalization, mass production and the resulting lower production cost, individual fit and design were not taken into consideration. One size rarely fits all and so the customer has to deal with the wrong fit or finance a custom tailor. The fashion business itself is confronted with problems such as price war, fierce competition and consumers' strong increasing wish of qualitative and individual products. To solve those problems and to accommodate the customer needs, a solution was needed. In this case customization and mass customization offers a great possibility.

"Now everybody wants to have something different," Tom Ford (2007) said.

Customization is a process of tailoring to individual customer's specifications. Especially in fashion, it allowed consumers to create and customize their own outfit. Online shops as well as physical studios in different countries are providing the service of customization. The sport brand Nike is still seen as a pioneer and guide of this phenomenon. The service was launched initially in 1999. It provides customer with the ability to choose from a limited range of different material and colors to develop their own style of tennis shoes. After the successful start of the online store, NikeiD also offer this service in physical studios around the globe. Independent fashion labels as well as high fashion brands like Burberry and Dior recognize and followed the trend of customization.

My personal interest in the consumption behavior as well as my experience at the practical semester made me choose the theme of customized fashion. During my internship at the label M.a.p.h.i.a, I was confronted with customized fashion for the first time. M.a.p.h.i.a is a fashion label based in the center of Berlin, Germany. A central focus of the company lies in the adaptation of the products to individual customer requirements. In the internet as well as at a personal contact level the customer can specify the colors and materials of the garments. The label offers the service through different online marketplaces and showrooms. Therefore, the label represents a suitable interview partner and source for this work. For me as a designer it is necessary to get to know the change and the advantages and disadvantages, which this phenomenon involves. If it comes to customization as a designer it is important to rethink the procedure of designing and tailoring. In this connection a collection of four outfits was created using the principles of customization which include a deep understanding of the theme and close interaction with the customer.

1.1 Goals and delimitation

When more companies are giving consumers a role in the design process, it is important to know about user behavior: no-one's body is the same and everyone's character is different. The theme of customization is in fact too comprehensive to cover all aspects of the topic. The main goal of this thesis is to find the effects of the service of customization on the designer and the customer. To have the possibility for the consumer to interact with the creative process directly, the fashion sector needs to be rethought. Particularly affected in this regard is the designer personally, since now the large task to create and present new trends can be carried out by the consumer itself. However, it needs a higher performance and commitment of the customer. This thesis will point out the resulting changes of the designers creating process, distribution and customers' behavior. More than ever the consumer and designer have to interact with each other and find a way to communicate and understand both sides. The consumer and designer's needs and wishes will be investigated. The focus of this thesis is based on the answer to the question: How useful is the idea of the custom-made fashion in general, does it have chances for the future and what are the new features and changes? As background research, relevant markets and internet presentations will be studied. To be able to produce and to offer a good product and service according to customization it is essential to acquire background information about this strategy as well as customers purchase motivation, behavior and opinion. To get this information not only is literature was studied but also a survey was carried out and evaluated.

Whereas, in this connection the goal of this thesis is to design a collection in consideration of today's women's needs with the combination of the author's own design and the idea of custom-made fashion (customization). The output of the research work should support the process of designing this collection. The reason for creating the outfits is to find an interface between requirements and needs of the customer and designer creative work. It is an intention of mine to figure out how much power and influence the consumer can or should get in design decisions without losing too much of my own freedom of work as designer. The aim of the collection is to design wearable and trendy wardrobe for woman's everyday life. To create and produce a collection of four outfits, which are changeable in details of the garment and in the whole collection for customer's satisfaction is the main task. To find a reasonable compromise between giving the consumer the freedom to create and change its style with modularity system and the creative ideas of the designer pose thereby a particular challenge. In order to limit the topic of this thesis the target group of the practical work will be women between 20-30 years who are creative, appreciate unique fashion and who are willing to attend the design process. Therefore an interaction with the target group will be simulated to figure out the customer's preferences and requirements to let their ideas flow into the design process. The target's wishes and needs will be considered from the very beginning of the creation process till the very end.

1.2   Frame of references, methods and resources

As seen in figure 1, this work focuses on the first place in the creation of a fashion collection when considering modern women's needs, the combination of own design and the idea of custom-made service. My own interest and curiosity about this theme grew during my internship at the fashion label M.a.p.h.i.a, and it represents the background of this thesis. To design the collection, the topic of customization and mass customization will be studied, and it will flow into the organization of the creative part. The outcome of the survey and the background research will help to understand the customer and to support the process of designing a customizable fashion collection.

Sources such as literature and internet sites as well as blogs about mass customization and customization were used for background research. Statistics and surveys should support and visualize the acknowledgement. To understand customers' behavior and to get to know their taste and preferences a survey was made. Also for the custom-made fashion collection, four potential customer answers of the survey were investigated closely to create a matching fashion garment with the goal to satisfy the customer. Furthermore the leader of the fashion label M.a.p.h.i.a who is already offering the service of customization, was interviewed. Trend research was made to create not only a wearable, custom-made but also trend-orientated collection.
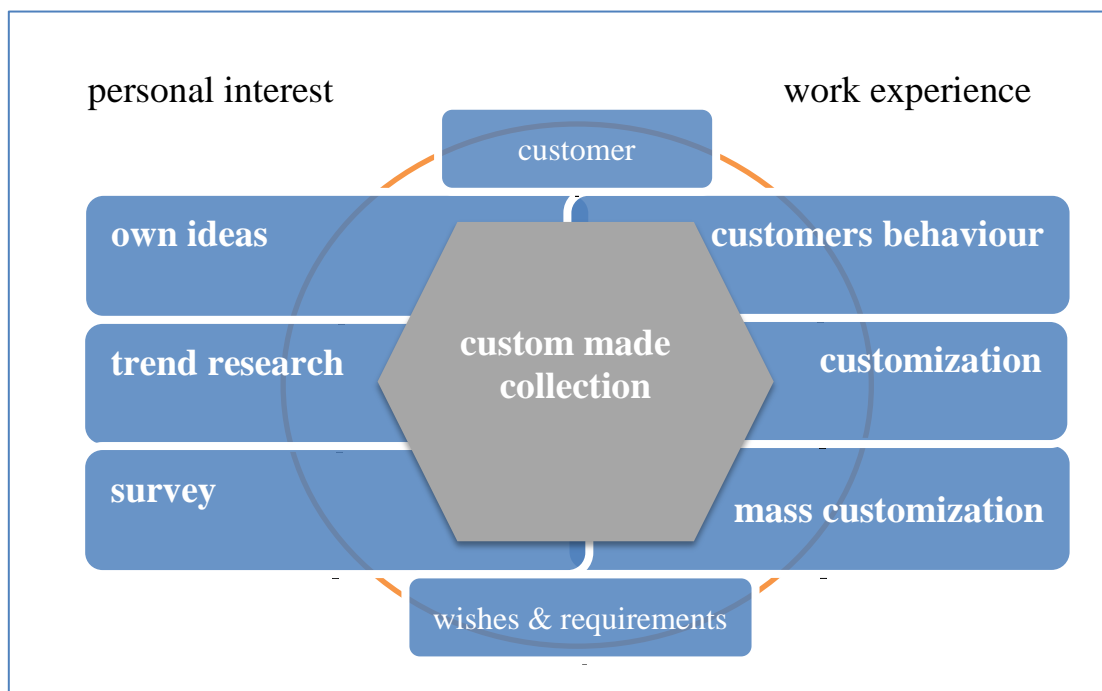

FIGURE 1.   *Frame of references.*

1.3 Consumer survey

To find out how the consumer thinks and reacts to custom-made fashion as well as to figure out their opinion and taste of clothing, a survey was carried out between May and August 2012 anonymously, and with the help of webropolsurveys.com. This is because the collection of clothes can be only completed when the customer is interested in this theme and is willing to work closely with the supplier. The survey was made without asking for the names so the participants can feel secure and comfortable when filling out the survey. Only the four models chosen for the final fashion collection filled out their names. The target group of this interview were women between 20 and 30 years whereby some females outside of this age group participated. The survey was divided into two forms, in the German and English languages so a difference of customers' behaviour of several countries could be pointed out. Forty-eight of German and 31 of English speaking people answered the questions so in total there were 79. This online interview, which included various types of questions like multiple choice or yes-no, was published in a social network, like facebook.com, a forum, like gurugossip.net, as well as via e-mail. As figure 2 shows, the questions are structured so that at the beginning the participants have to state their background than they were asked about their own taste and behavior to clothing, style and trends. Later in this interview, there are questions about the consumer wishes and feelings regarding clothing and in the last part, the respondents moved on to the theme of customization. The aim of this background research was firstly, to figure out if consumers are interested in the service of customization. Furthermore it had to be determined what preferences and taste the consumer have to be able to understand their wishes and to translate them into the design.
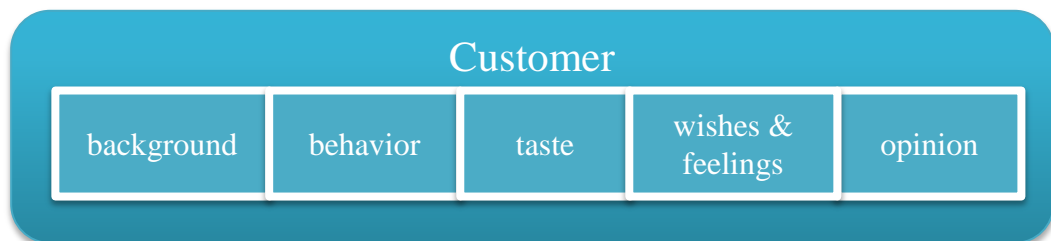

FIGURE 2. *Customer Survey objects.*

2   BACKGROUND

2.1   Introduction and definition

Personalization, customization and mass customization have one basic principle in common: to match individual customer's needs by making something individual. However, cross-language and depending on scope of application like marketing or manufacturing, there are differences between those terms which are not always clearly simplified or rather there are many different debates about those terms and their exact us and meaning.

2.1.1   Customization and personalization

In the traditional sense customizing means to make or alter to individual or personal specifications. The term was derived from the word customer and it is a way for customers to create products or services according to individual and personal taste. To personalize means to endow with personal or individual qualities or characteristics and especially in clothing to mark with a person's initials, name, etc. Personalization can also be seen as a form of customization. (Tseng & Piller 2003, 7.)

While both personalization as well as customization has the same principal message "to make it individual", there are a number of differences between those emerging, however. Even though personalization in tailoring in English speaking area could be also defined as a product designed by customer requirements which intergrades him or her closely in the realization of a product, it rather used to endow a final product with for instance a name, an emblem or providing the product with a personal packaging. Handbags for example can be monogramed with an own name or T-shirts can get individual prints. The term is also used in the range of technology and marketing like the individualization of the communication with the customer while; particularly in the German-speaking area customization is mostly in use for the adaption of series products to individual customer requirements like objects such as furniture, cars, food, cosmetics and so on. The Journal of Interactive marketing describes customization as a redesign of marketing from the customers' perspective. (Wind & Rangaswamy 2001.)

Personalization in general can be seen as a multi-value customer loyalty tool which collects and evaluates information of user behavior for adaption of individual contents for any communication medium like websites, television or print media. Technologies behind personalization offer the service of personalized content, links, search results or advertisement for individual taste of groups or persons. The task of the personalization tool is it to examine user profiles for similarities to offer a tailored web-based information service to personal users' characteristics or preferences. Its aim is to meet the customers' needs effectively and interact with them faster and efficiently to increase satisfaction. One example for this service

is the electronic commerce company Amazon.com which provides its customers with the ability of tailoring a Web site's interface and supply personalized recommendations of products by selecting and filtering information of purchased products of individuals as shown in figure 3. It can be called collaborative filtering or personalized product recommendations so when visitors of Amazon.com website search or order for example a book the program recommend similar products it thinks the customer might like. (Top 5 Web Trends of 2009: Personalization 2009)

FIGURE 3. *Personalized online-advertisement* (www.amazon.com).

While personalization can be initiated by the customer or by the firm, customization is a buyer-centric strategy which requires build-to-order system. Jerry Wind and Arvind Rangaswamy define (2001), "...customization is more than just mass customization-it is a business strategy to recast a company´s marketing and customer interfaces to be buyer-centric". In case of customization, active and aware participation of the customer as well as interaction and information exchange between customer and supplier is essential for a business transaction. Thus, customization begins with customer and the product only can be manufactured after customers order whereas for personalization there is no intervention in designing process necessary because here the buyer does not have to create the product first but only has to choose one of the proposed. (Wind & Rangaswamy 2001.) In this connection personalization is a targeted and cheap marketing which provides customized benefits and features of products and promise more success of order and customer satisfaction. It can be provided without direct and explicit customers´ request but it is not always wished by each customer which makes the biggest difference between this two terms. Fig-

ure 4 demonstrates an example for customization which is, however, about tailoring the product itself like its shape, material or color by individual customer and by its own demand. Customization can be done in different stages of the supply chain like at designing point, manufacturing or delivering.
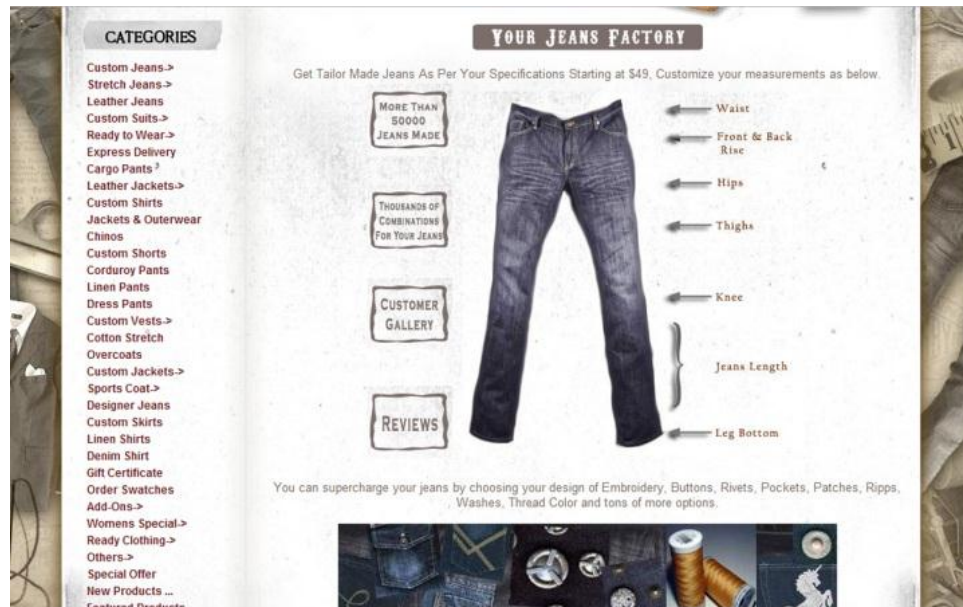

FIGURE 4. *Everyone can design an own individual jeans* (www.makeyourownjeans.com).

2.1.2   Mass customization

The term mass customization is an oxymoron, which consists of mass production and customization and combines advantages of both forms such as fulfill individual request of the client and low cost and fast manufacturing of mass production, as pictured in figure 5. It is a rising trend in the age of internet and electronic commerce which provide customer with the possibility to interfere closely with the creative process of designers and creators. The consumer has got the ability of determination of appearance, fit or shape of products and services. This means that specifically the customer can create or select, order and get delivered a special and individual manufactured product to same conditions as a standard mass product. There are several different debates and approaches already made to clarify the difference between personalization and mass customization. While personalization was already described above Piller and Tseng (2010, 7) are defining those terms as follows: "Mass customization is a process of implementing personalization. In some respects, personalization and mass customization push a company toward being more responsive to the marketplace and thus being more nimble".
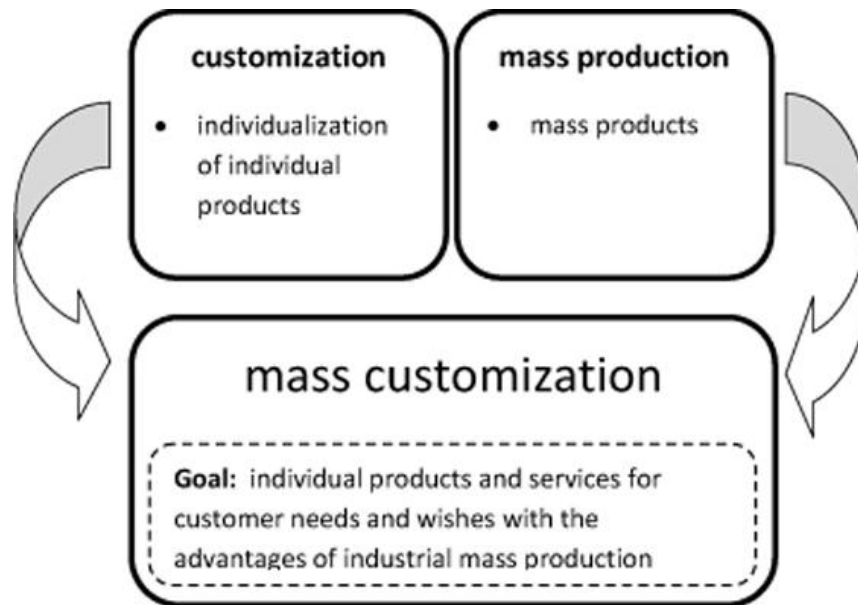
FIGURE 5. *A model of composition the strategy of mass customization.*

According to the book "Zukunft Maßkonfektion" (Piller& Rissiek 2001), every economic activity in one way or another is customer centric but the individual customer with its individual needs and wishes is only exceptionally taken into consideration. Now, by using modern information and communication technology companies have a better opportunity to react faster of structural changes. Mass Customization provides companies with a competitive advantage and furthermore enables to benefit other niches by offering a wide product variety for individual customer and its individual requirements. At the same time with MC it is possible to offer a custom-made product at the quantity, quality, cost and speed of a standard product. (Piller & Rissiek 2001.)

Although both customization and mass customization are IT-intensive customization, it is rather on the marketing side, and mass customization on the production side. The basic difference of those systems is that MC allows the production of a single, individual product with the efficiency of a mass produced product. Therefore, it implies for example large manufacturing, although more and more new startups as well as small businesses, and large international businesses today are offering the service of this competitive strategy; not every company who offers customized products meets the conditions of being a mass customizer. (Wind & Rangaswamy 2001.)

For example the label Maphia, based in the center of Berlin, Germany, is distributing clothing items on the e-commerce online portal dawanda.de, like visible in figure 6 and offers the service of customization where the customer can select the color and the fabric of the garment but not the basic design or shape. In the author's experience at the fashion label, the order will be produced handcrafted by the team of two employees in its own studio in Berlin, which depending on the garment takes between one and ten days and extra wishes can make it cost-intensive. The company can only offer this service because of a small number of customers and

limitation of the customizable features. The experience during my internship at this fashion label made it clear that with a huge number of orders and many special wishes from different customers M.a.p.h.i.a would need more skilled employees, space and equipment. All this has to be rethought and calculated to withstand this challenge. For this reason, Maphia does not see itself as a mass customizer but rather as a fashion label with a special offer of customization, according to Anne-Franziska Gleinig. (Gleinig, survey 12.08.2012). It is not only about the value but about the advantages and efficiency of the mass production strategy. The book Encyclopedia of Production and Manufacturing Management (Swambidass 2000, 450) summarizes: "Notions of customer involvement and modularity coupled with modularity types provide a basis for classifying mass customization.". Various large scale enterprises attempted to change their marketing and manufacturing system to the principle of mass customization but failed by underestimating the situation. In today's market, mass customization is in general suitable for any kind of products such as food, computer, books, cars, clothing, home decor and so on. Therefore, elaborate and clever concepts as well as the evaluation of implementation of this strategy from marketing to the supply chain are needed. In best case MC can provide customers with a high-quality, tailored individually and inexpensive product or service and allow companies to enter new markets, achieve different customers and to bind existing clients. Whereas MC must be distinguished from the single-item production which make it possible to produce one single piece completely created by customer from the beginning. Mass customization allows only a limited number of changes relevant for the individual customer. (Gienke & Kämpf 2007.)
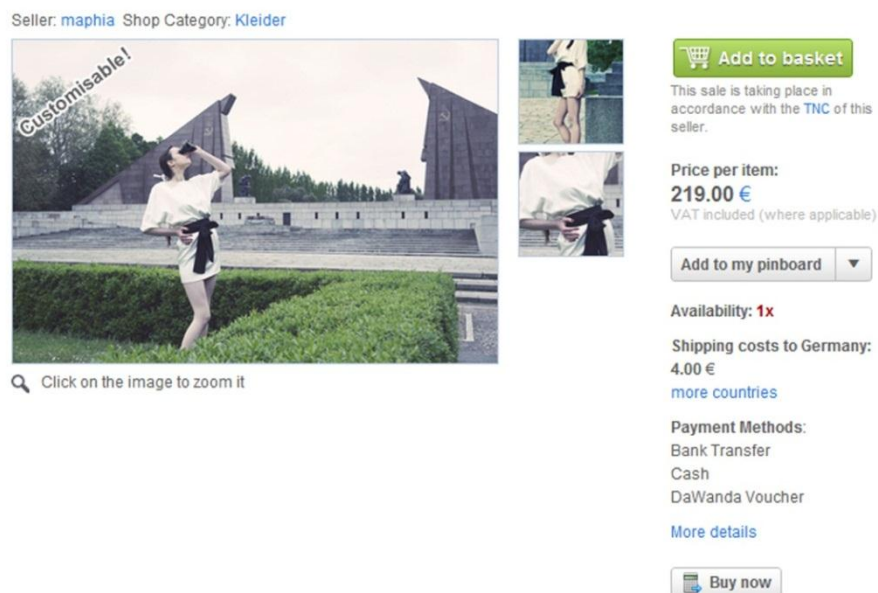

FIGURE 6.   *Maphia dress with the special offer of customization* (www.dawanda.de).

2.1.3   Co-creation

Co-creation is a strategy instrument, which invites the customer to create or build and promote a future service or product. For co-creation the supplier need a number of usually unpaid people to offer this service. For instance, Wikipedia is using this form of customization where professionals as well as unprofessional people can write an article about whatever they want and create therefore a reference work for everyone available and free. Frank T. Piller (mass-customization.de), writes in his internet blog "mass customization & open innovation news": "I define customer co-creation as an active, creative, and social process, based on collaboration between producers (retailers) and customers (users)." In this case mass customization also can be also seen as a form of co-creation.

2.1.4   Developing of mass customization and the need of change

By forecasting the change of society and a collapse of the mass market in his 1970 book "Future Shock" Alvin Toffler, an US-futurist is be said to be one of the first visionary and driver of the idea of mass customization but at that time he described it as "flexible manufacturing". Although the term was coined fundamentally by Stan Davis in the 1987 book "Future Perfect" it was B. Joseph Pine II in 1993, Frank Piller in 1998 in German speaking area and the continuous technological improvements with whose help the concept of mass customization finally was able to prevail and manifest. Even though there are many different reasons for a need of change in this sector there are two particular striking. (Piller & Rissiek 2001, 17.)

Clothing is essential for every human being from time immemorial. It is said that from the beginning of the clothing history when humans wore plant fiber and animal skin like fur and leather the main intention was not only to protect the body from environment but also to attract attention, decorate and impress. (Lehnert 1998, 18) Fashion is a communication tool and a form of freedom and identity which allows people to express their own personality, ideology and status. Dressing was and still is a psychological and social need which offers the opportunity not only of individualizing, to stand out from the crowd but also to integrate and be a part of a group. Nevertheless, clothing or rather fashion always responds to individualism. (Koskennurmi-Sivonen 1998.)

Up until the 18th century royals, wealth society and church dictated "fashion" and only the upper class could afford fashionable clothes. The lower class had to follow rules partly controlled by the government to reflect and separate the rich from the poor. With an economic change in the same century the social classes began to approach and fashion became available to more and more people. But it was in 1920 when the term mass production was defined and fashion finally democratized and made so called off-the-rack clothing affordable for almost everyone. Parallel with mass production haute-couture fashion and tailor-made clothes continued to exist until

this days but still only few people are able or willing to effort the luxury of this individual and often exclusive garments. (Lehnert 1998, 12/133.)

With an often quoted phrase in this context "The mass market is dead" Philip Kotler in 1989 prophesied already more than 20 years ago a significant change from mass market to mass customization. The individualization of our society began around 40 years ago when there was no clear trend in clothing recognizable anymore. Trends which were set no longer at haute-couture shows but on the streets were not new anymore but characterized by imitation and the way of combination and variation. Nevertheless, with the increase of prosperity, in leisure time and higher educational level today's customers require consideration of their needs and wishes. Despite, or perhaps because of nowadays poor quality, low price and accessibility of mass products caused by comparatively low cost of mass-production the consumers became bored and dissatisfied. Because the fashion market is full of copies and duplicates there is everywhere and always a risk to meet a fashion double ganger. But the new generation want to stand out from the mass and express the own individual personality. Even today the variety of possibilities in fashion is greater than ever before more and more customers are demanding a greater freedom for individualism. Modern consumer is showing a clear wish of qualitatively better and more individual products and services to set apart from the masses and highlight their own uniqueness.

One of the reasons for increasing the demand of individualization is the change of education of the post war generation, which has been raised think of competition and individualism instead of togetherness in a group. Today's new technology and internet more than ever allows the new generation being quickly independent and better informed. Internet connects the people from whole over the globe and provides information and exchange of knowledge as never seen before. Consumer know exactly what they want and how and where to find relevant information to get it. An increasing sensation of new design as well as an impulse for experience and adventure makes, particularly well situated and young customers in the industrialized countries act spontaneous and unstable. People not only want to exist or to be but also to discover and to experience. They are becoming more selective and demanding, wherefore it gets increasingly difficult to forecast buying behavior to be able to respond appropriately.

An already saturated market with its countless offers and opportunities is another reason for the need of a change in consumer sector from supplier point of view. Globalization and liberalization of the consumer market increased the international competition and a hard-fought price war. Drastically reduced prices resulting from relocation of manufacturing abroad and low wages especially in textile trade makes it harder to keep up with comparable competitors but also to build customers lasting loyalty to a trademark or a particular company. Wide range of offers and a higher enlightenment give customers a stronger position; allow changing over between different suppliers' spontaneous and consequently obliging enterprises to rethink the methods. In this case customization and mass custom-

ization can be enrichment and provide new possibilities. (Piller & Rissiek, 2001.)

Mass customizations in the field of apparel does not mean to move back to tailor-made clothing and handcraft but it is rather a new innovative way to combine the advantages of both production types to solve the current problems in fashion industry. (Bye 2010, 63.)

2.2 Customization and mass customization in apparel

Nowadays the strategy of customization and mass customization in the consumer market is well established and more and more companies shift from mass production to mass customization and small or private labels offering the service of customization. Nevertheless, while for other types of products it was easier to start offering this service; its benefits and feasibility have long been questioned and discussed in the fashion business.

Now, it seems like with new digital technologies in the apparel industry the time is right to offer individual tailored fashion compared with fast and easy delivering which meet customer desires. There are different ways existing on how to make a customer create their product fast and efficiently to facilitate the tasks for both customer and supplier. To keep the price of the product low and the delivery time short it is suggested to limit the scope of customizable possibilities. For example the use of modularity allows supplier to offer basic components of products produced in large quantity which then can be individual assembled by the customer. In fact, this type of customization does not mean the customer will get a hundred percent individual and customized garment but by using this technic the price of the product can set relatively low and still a wide range of variations is possible, thus makes the use of this services an attractive option for the consumer.

In fact, mass customization in the textile industry has to face challenges different to other kinds of products such as chocolate or jewelry. For example to meet customer requirements it is essential to made fashion available in any time. While chocolate is available throughout the year with the seasonal changing it is even harder to find a summer dress in the right size, desired color and shape on demand. Also mass media, social networks and fashion blogs connect people and inform them about the latest trends of fashion very fast even those are not available at store yet. They get daily inspired by celebrities, movies and even street styles but the standard customer usually can´t receive it. The textile industry determines the style of the upcoming clothes and its launch of sale so the customer has no choice but to adapt. A further barrier for customization in textile is the perfect size and fit of clothing. Mass production with its standard sizes made it difficult for consumers to find the perfectly fitting garment in internet as well as in stores. However, while it is possible to try on in the local store for example, the desired pants it is even more time-consuming and exhausting to do that by ordering online because the shopper has to wait for the product to get delivered, and send it back if not suitable. That

means ways must be found to meet the satisfaction of the customer. In this connection mass customization compared with innovative information and communication technology and individual service such as consulting and body scanner can represent a solution for those problems. (Rissiek & Piller 2001) People nowadays can purchase clothing through retail stores, catalogues, television, and smartphone, but in case of customization and mass customization one of the most effective ways is it to offer this service through internet and physical stores.

2.2.1 Custom-made fashion online

Internet plays a large role in our daily life. We get connected, inspired and entertained by the online world. It makes communication, research and purchasing easier, faster and accessible for people around the globe. The advantages of online shopping are very clear: For the suppliers it represent the best way to reach as many customers as possible fast and cost-effective worldwide. Meanwhile consumers can do their shopping around the world quickly and conveniently from home or while on the move. Also there is a big variety of products and possibility of rapid price comparison available online. According to statista.com, an online-based statistic portal, in figure 6 the clothing and accessories segment in online retailing was the second largest with a turnover of 13.826,72 million euro in 2010.
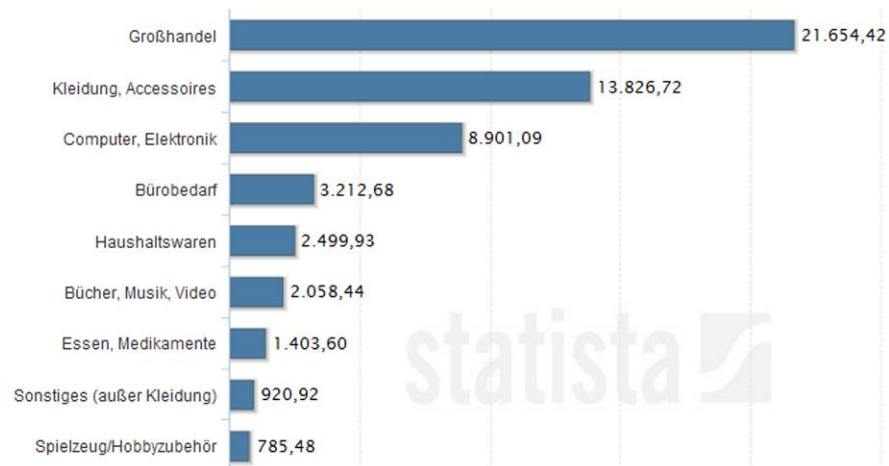

FIGURE 6.   *Online turnover of selected product segments in Europe in 2010* (http://de.statista.com).

The trend of online shopping is rising and my survey as shown in figure 7, confirmed this statement. It shows that majority of the participants in the English version of the interview purchase clothing online while for the Germans shopping in the internet takes the second position.
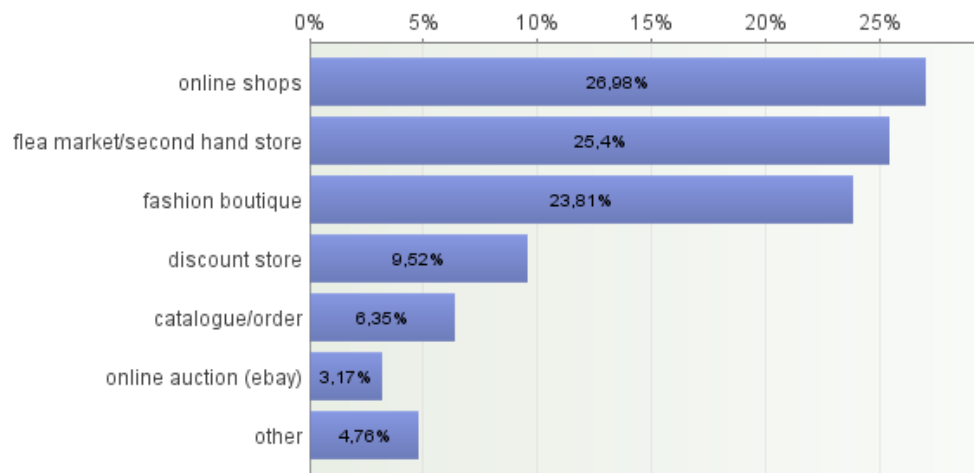
FIGURE 7.   *Survey result "Where do you purchase clothing?"*

For those reasons, the internet, with suitable software, provide a good way for the use of mass customization and customization. With the help of so called configurator customers can combine different components of the product therefore many variations are possible. Different websites are providing different configuration types where consumer can choose for example colors, material, shape or accessories of the product and see the end result online for example on a mannequin, avatar or a 3D presentation. (Rissiek & Piller 2001.)

One of the most famous companies and a pioneer in mass customization in clothing is Lands´ End a clothing retailer which launched the online service of mass customization in 2001. Lands' End gives its shoppers an opportunity to create an individual shirt, jeans or dress by choosing its color, silhouette, fit and style. Blake Ives and Gabriele Piccoli (2003) stated: "In less than a year, 40 % of Lands' End customers buying chinos and jeans from the firm's web site were buying tailored products. Over 20 % of these customers never made a purchase over the web before."

Shopper of Lands' End can choose a garment and start to customize by specifying fit, size, color, quantity and for some garments even an own initial. On this website the number of possible customizing features is limited which means the shopper can´t create the garment in total but relevant features important for the customer. This way of customization makes it faster and easier to produce and to create the clothing. Furthermore the website provides information about sizing, inseam and hemming options, library about important facts of clothing like washing instruction as well as views and reviews of customers who have already experienced with the products and further an online chat where customers can set questions and discuss about everything at Lands´ End. When the customer is not sure about the fabric, how it feels and how it exactly looks like, the company is also sending fabric swatches for free. At the same time the company offers the service of personalization in form of recommendations of other products which the customer might also like. Figure 8 shows, the visual presentation consists of colored 2D pictures of the individual products and

clothing on models with detailed views and zoom option. The price range of for example men´s polo shirt is between $25 and $50 and for women´s pants between $20 and $70 in USA and around €30 - €100 in Germany. It takes around five minutes to customize one garment and the delivery time is usually about 5 till 9 workdays depending on degree of change, location and volume of orders.
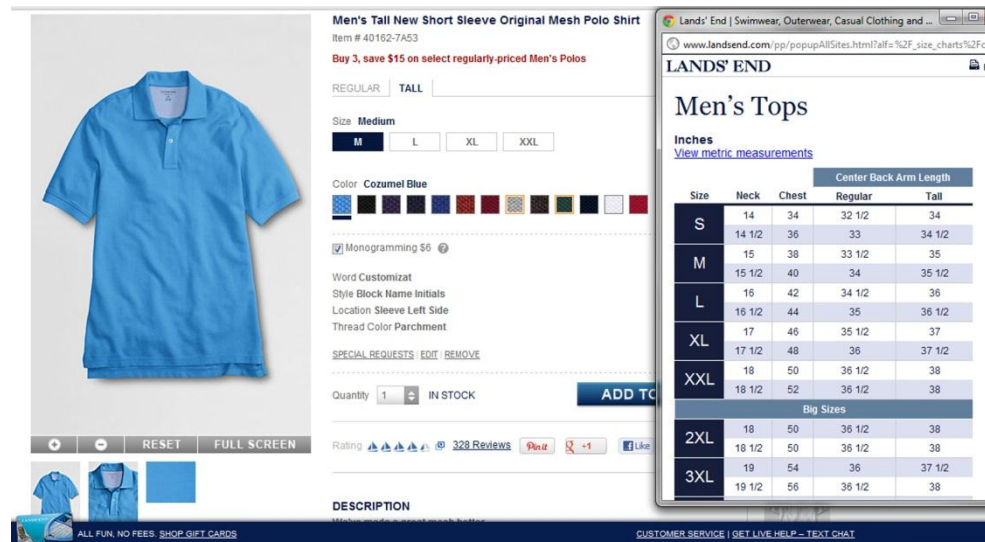

FIGURE 8. *Lands´End online customization* (www.landsend.com).

Another example for online customization in clothing is the website itailor.com. The Thai located company offers further opportunities and a rich feature set for designing the own garment. According to the website customer can create in only four steps an individual tailored blouse, jeans or suite with free monograms and contrast fabric. More than one million varieties of design and style are possible with a starting price of €19.95 for blouse and the shipment takes between 5 and 6 weeks. Figure 9 demon-strates that the website provides a 3D presentation, around 200 different fabrics and modifications of style like sleeves, collar, pockets and cuffs and even further colors of buttons and monograms. There are two options for body sizing as visible in figure 10 such as standard sizes and measur-ing oneself with the assistance of a video. The uniqueness of those prod-ucts is the fact that the garments are all handmade and manufactured in a tailor shop in Thailand.

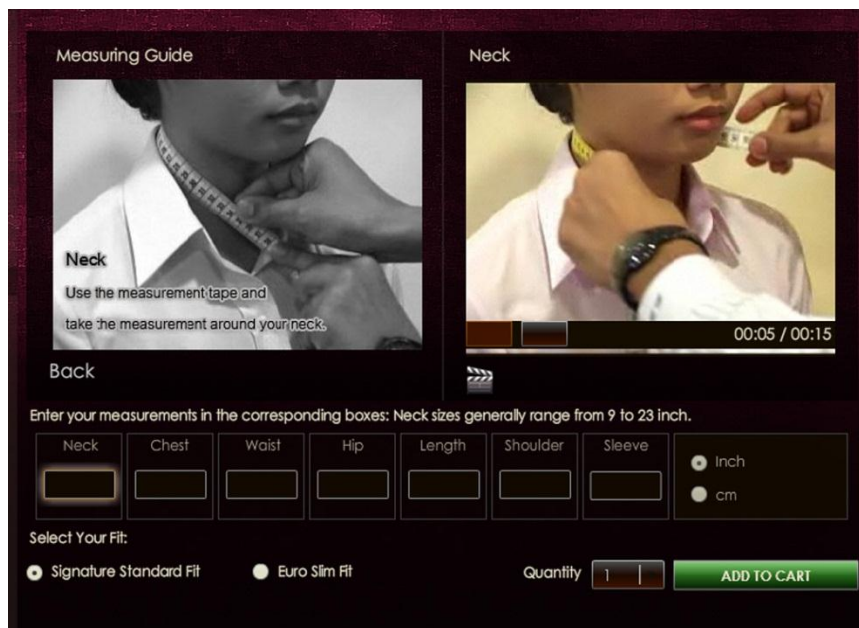FIGURE 9.   3D *blouse configuration* (www.itailor.com).

FIGURE 10. *Measurement system of iTailor* (www.itailor.com).

A sophisticated configuration system is not a must to offer customizable garment on the internet. For instance the online company dawanda.de shows how to sell individual and customized products in a more simple way. Dawanda is Europe´s largest online marketplace for handmade items like fashion, bags, art, and jewelry comparable to an American version etsy.com. It is a platform for individual products and design made by various individual designers and hobby designers. Everybody can sell handmade, customizable, restored and tailor made products. However, mass products, material excluded, are not allowed to offer but individual products as well as vintage and products in limited number can be distributed and presented by photographs. Dawanda.de is not a mass customizer, the

service of customization does not cover every single product of every designer, just a view are customizable and only limited number of features of this products can be customized. Designers present an already made garment and offer than the opportunity to tailor a new with changes of fabric, color, accessories or size. For example, the label Maphia distributes its collection through Dawanda and offers customers to choose between different types of fabric and color on the website. Special wishes and requirements like different sizes or length of pants can be taken in consideration but with an extra charge, longer delivery time and more intensive communication.

2.2.2 Custom-made in physical stores

Besides customization on the web some companies give customers an extra opportunity of this service in physical studios. A famous example for this is the clothing, footwear and sportswear brand Nike with its customizable shoes of NikeID. In addition to its online shop for customized shoes shoppers can build individual pair of shoes in the store, visible in figure 11. The biggest advantage of this service is that the shop accommodates samples of the different basic components and materials so the customer can see and feel the colour and material of the garment before it will be produced. Experienced personnel at the studio are informing and helping during the modular design process. After the different components of the product are chosen a shop assistant or customer himself will enter the information into the NikeID software. The online blog "treehouselogic" (2001) wrote about NikeID store: "The in store experience is a great way to give customers a hand-on design-your-own experience in the context of a pre-defined product. The process is playful, interactive, and ing. Customers aren't just shopping, they are controlling and making." That means customer can explore real and unique experience of being a designer.

FIGURE 11. *NikeiD physical store for customization*
(www.sneakernews.com).

Further reasons for a costumer to buy a custom-made product in store are for instance the local body measuring and fitting. In an interview (Gleinig, Survey 12.08.2012) with the head of the company M.a.p.h.i.a, Anne-Franziska Gleinig explained the operation in her store in Berlin (figure 12): The company gives customers the chance to come into the showroom where qualified employees take measurements manually and show them different fabrics and possible styles of the different products. The clients can tell about their wishes, and then they will be informed when the clothing is sewn so it can be picked up and tried on in the store. If further changes of the clothes should be necessary the team of M.a.p.h.i.a will take care of it very fast. The security of internet and payment could be also one advantage because still many shoppers do not trust the internet and cashless payment or feel insecure especially older generations. By intensive interaction with the employees, clients can build a personal relationship and trust could be build up. (Keiser & Garner 2008, 426) By offering customization online and at the same time in physical stores a company can solve different problems such as right sizing and satisfy customer by giving them unique experience of designing an own product.

FIGURE 12. *M.a.p.h.i.a´s physical store, Berlin.*

2.2.3 Technology and software

Mass customization enables the involvement of customers into different stages of development process of a product. New and innovative technologies these days like 3D body scanner, digital printer, laser cut machines for fabric, CAD technology and new software like body scanner for webcam are making this possible in first place. Like for instance by scanning customer body with a body scanner supplier are able to get the exact measurements and with computer aided design garments with individual design and fitting can be created. CAD and a web-based configuration allow clients to choose different sizes, style and fabric at an online store. By using a digital printer, the suppliers are able to offer a greater variety of patterns as well as individual and customizable print designs created or chosen by the shopper in any quantity. (Chapman 2008, 27.)

But those technologies are all driven by members of the industry so the customer does not use them by themselves because they are not available or affordable for ordinary people. The biggest challenge fashion retailers have to face is still the sizing problem of the individual customer's body, since 3D body scanner does not represent the ultimate solution because not every single consumer has the opportunity to get scanned and not every online supplier runs a physical store with this technology.

One new and innovative technology named UPcload was created by Sebastian Schulze and Asaf Moses in Berlin in 2010. It is an online shopping assistant with which an online customer can scan their body by using this software, using a CD and webcam from home. The founders were tired of getting the wrong size and fit of clothes they ordered via the internet and this was motivation enough to search for a simple and cheap way to get measured exactly and use the received information inform with Upcload identification number to buy well-fitting fashion. The scan process can take only around 3 minutes and according to "Spiegel-online magazine" (Knoke 2011), the founder said this technic is even more exact than measuring by a professional tailor.

To scan with Upcload the client needs a common CD, white or light background such as a wall in the living room and tightfitting dark clothing. Then to start the program an account needs to be created at the Upcload webpage and the process can begin. Figure 13 shows how the program escorts the customer through every step and scans the shape of the body in four different positions. By using the CD as a reference in all of the four poses the program recognize and compare the size of the CD and body and is able to calculate the right dimensions. Then the program compares the body information with the size data of clothing retailer or manufacturer and gives a recommendation about the right sizing as visible in figure 14. (Upcload Presskit 2012.) The service is for customers free of charge and companies have to pay one euro per sold garment when using the Upcload technology. The goal behind this idea is not only to inform customer about their real size but also to reduce the costs of return of clothing in fashion industry. The technology is still in its development phase but promise to be able to revolutionize the fashion industry.

FIGURE 13. *Measurement technology of Upload* (upcload.com).

FIGURE 14. *Measurement information and profile of Upcload system* (upcload.com).

2.3 Effects and process of change

With the service of MC and customization come different changes for the consumer, industry and designer. This strategy apparently is bringing nothing but advantages for every participant and on the one hand it can be true. The customer can get exactly what he or she wants in the right size, at a comparatively competitive price and quick delivery while the supplier can achieve new market niches with new customers and at the same time retain already existing relationships and create competitive advantages. But to get the most positive effects for all the above named parties in this context it is said that the customer should get a limited power of creating its own product and involvement in the production process. It is necessary because the customer could get snowed under with an unlimited range of components and endless number of possible variations and therefore could get confused, deciding not to buy a customized product.

For the designer it can mean that they can still follow their usual way in creating clothing but have to research about customer wishes and needs more than before as well as to give consumer the opportunity to create the product by selecting or changing the style of the final product. Also by working closely with the target group, the designer gets to know what the relative parts of the garment customers consider important for customization and at the same time the designer has to inform and inspire customers by giving new ideas, supporting them in finding a solution for desires and helping with the realization of the product. Elizabeth Bye (2010) writes, "Apparel designers will continue to play an important role in codesigned mass customization. Their challenge will be to offer design choices that result in garments that are aesthetically pleasing and can be produced at a profit." For instance, in my experience at the private fashion label M.a.p.h.i.a, the company does keep creating collections of clothing using its own ideas of design first and decide later what parts of the garment could be customizable as well as after getting experience the collected knowledge of customers behaviour regarding to customization is flowing into the new creations. Designers are needed to give the customer basic ideas of a basic product with different components to choose from, because most of the shoppers do not have the necessary knowledge to create a special product. The developer still has to inspire and can get inspired by the buyer, too.

If for instance, mass customization becomes the standard production way in the future, it will change the way people purchase products, which will bring resulting advantages as well as disadvantages for the shopper. The positive aspects of these strategies for example are the online adventure experience and the feeling of being a designer of one's own clothes by developing their ideas. Thus, this gives the product a new significance and makes it important and special for the customer who will therefore appreciate it and take care of it more than standard products. This promises an even longer product life and this could mean a change of our current throwaway society and on the one hand consequently bring benefits for the environment. With customization and the new technologies like a body scanner, people who have not standard sizes or special body attitude have

a greater chance to get well-fitting and individual fashion at a price of a standard product. This makes the customer satisfied, and a happy shopper means repeat purchases at the same company and this allows companies to stand out from their competitors.

With the marketing of customization, customers get higher expectations of quality of the garment more than from mass products. Through the years, the consumer learned that cheap prices of mass products could be connected with low quality of material, manufacturing and the wrong fitting of clothing. When hiring a tailor the price of the garment or the outfit is far higher and so are the expectations. It is necessary for the future of custom-made clothes that companies are currently using or are going to use the way of customization to stand this expectation for keeping its customers satisfied and not to disappoint and frighten them.

On the other hand customization can bring some disadvantages for the buyer of fashion products. While the manufacturer benefit of facts like that mass customization can reduce stockholding cost because the product will made only after the customers explicit order and less returns result of customers satisfaction, for the consumer it also could be seen as a negative aspect. Because retailers don't have left over garments to reduce anymore and that could mean fewer or even the end of sales and discounts for fashion at the end of the season. But on the other hand the business can solve its biggest problems like excessive warehouse stock or error cost can be reduced and affect cost savings. Piller, Moeslein and Stotko (2004, 440) write in a report: "Sanders (2001) calculates that in the apparel industry today almost US$300 billion are wasted annually due to erroneous forecasting, heavy inventory, fashion risks and lost profits as a result of necessary discounts." In the online magazine "Zeit", Etscheit (2002), states in his article that a negative aspect for the fashion business could also be the elimination of the retailer sector. With enabling customer to individualize their product in different stages of the supply chain, the service of MC especially in connection with internet doesn't necessarily need a middleman anymore.

 "In the long run only those mass customization systems will be successful that manage the trade off between the benefits and costs of customer integration sufficiently." (Piller& Moeslein& Stotko 2002,442) MC is still in its development stage especially in the fashion industry and despite supporters of this method they are predicting a positive future the real effects which is based and influenced by customer will discovered in the next years. Today, however, there is one development identifiable already and this is Germany as one of the trendsetter in mass customization. The study paper "The Customization 500" of Walcher and Piller (2010) proved that 38% of 500 analysed mass customization companies which operate with the internet are residing in Germany and 43 % in USA. The main products of all analysed companies are clothing like t-shirt, jacket and suit with together 24%. The author of the blog mass-customization.info argues that Germany is even bigger in mass customization than USA. The reasons according to the writer could be that the Americans are more used to mass products than European countries and therefore for example Germans ac-

cept the idea of customization faster and easier. In the USA there are more big companies like Nike, Dell or Lego which offer mass customized products or services while Germany seems to be a place with small start-up companies. This could be explained by the point that in Europe small companies can find a better environment to start a business in mass customization that can be self-fund with little capital than in the USA.

3 REACTION OF CUSTOMIZABLE FASHION

"Design is business and business is design. The two are absolutely intrinsically linked,.." said Paul Bennett (2010), IDEO's Chief Creative Officer, in a video interview. In today's fashion industry for successful designers, manufacturers and retailers it is essential to listen to consumers and to meet their expectations.

3.1 Customers reaction

The aim of this thesis is it to create a woman's collection which fulfils the needs and wishes of the consumer. Therefore, in the first place it is necessary to find out how the people think about the idea of customization and to understand what the individual females want; for this reason a survey was conducted and analysed. The study with all together 78 participants was made in 2012 and should show the opinion of individuals about the idea of customization of clothing as well as their taste of fashion with the aim to get inspired in designing and to create a customizable collection. The separation of the survey into two languages should facilitate the interview for the German speaking participants and furthermore emerge the difference of intercultural behaviour regarding to trends and the theme of customization. As mentioned previously Germany is called to be a frontier in Mass Customization, for this reason this survey should demonstrate how far this is true.

The investigation established that the biggest part of the questioned persons see themself as creative and 67 people find the idea of creating their own clothes very well and good. (Figure 15) That means that most of the customers like this idea in general. This result was needed to know if it makes sense to develop a customized fashion collection in first place.
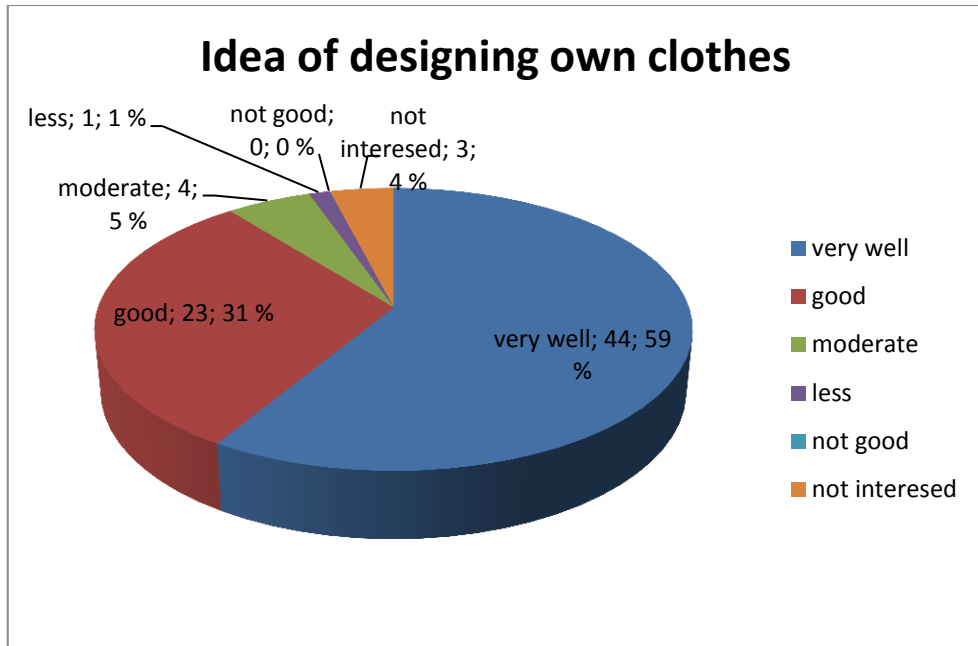
FIGURE 15. *Survey result "How do you think about the idea of creating your own clothes?"* (2012)

In this survey the participants were asked if they would like to create or design their own clothes and the majority answered with yes and maybe, only together around 11% would not like to take part of the design process. While the previous question deals with the theoretical idea the following asks if the people are willing to design their own garments.
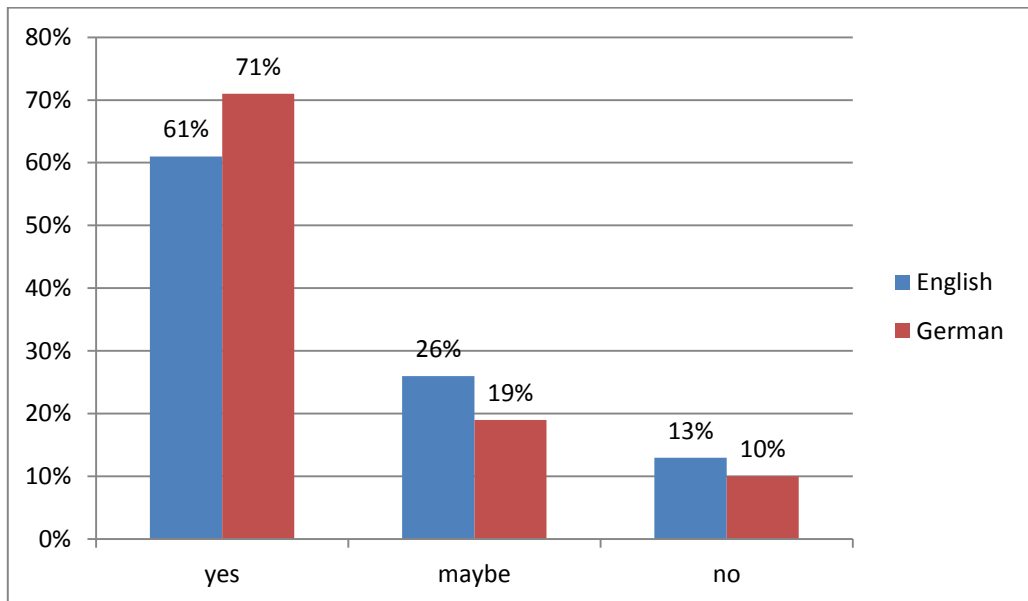

FIGURE 16. *Survey result "Would you like to create/design your own clothes?"* (2012)

Figure 17 left shows how many of the interviewed have heard about custom – made fashion and the right how many had bought customized clothing. Apparently more than half participants of the English version have heard about custom – made fashion. As mentioned previously Germany seems to be a trend setter in mass customization but as this investigation

showed that at least in clothing the majority of the German speaking inter-viewees do not know about that service. At the same time only around one quarter have ever both a customized fashion garment. It could be so be-cause mass customization in fashion is just at its beginning and advertising needs time to reach and affect the people.
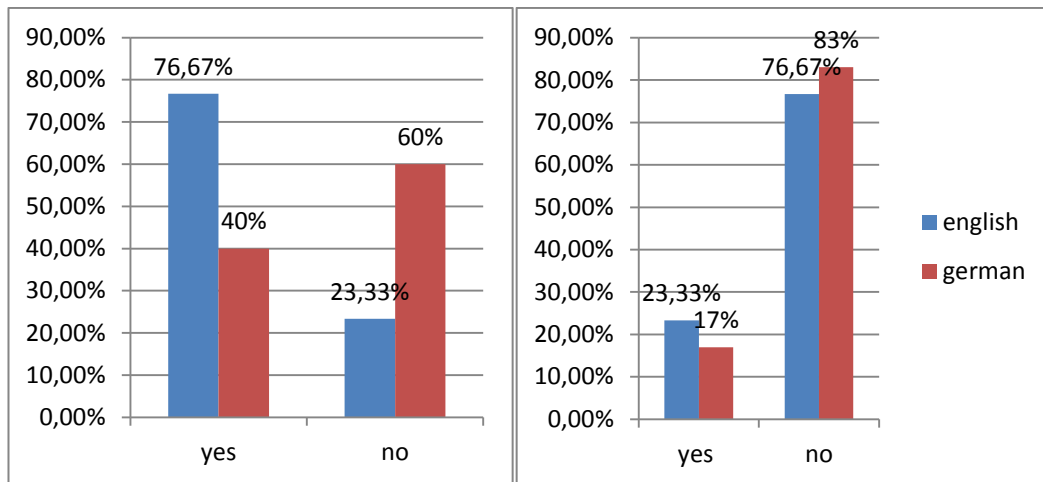
FIGURE 17. Left: *Survey results "Have you ever heard about custom – made fashion?"*

Right: *Survey results "Have you ever bought custom – made clothes?"*

When asking those people who purchase customized clothing what they liked and disliked about customization the positive aspect of most of the answers was the possibility to design an unique garment using their own requirements, which reflect their own personal style. One of the interview-ees for example said "I like that I can have, what I imagine to have". Nev-ertheless, also in this case there were misunderstandings between supplier and customer. According to one participant, "I was disappointed in that old-fashioned or strange design, because the designer and the dress maker could not understand my taste and put their own taste. Some designers and dress makers force the clients too much their own sense and taste. I think it is not for clients, it is for them." Although some were happy about the perfect fit there were answers which express a disappointment about siz-ing, too. These experiences confirm that it is essential for supplier and de-signer to interact closely with the customer and shows that there is still a need for better understanding their needs and wishes.

The participants were also asked what they would be willing to sacrifice for their own design and perfect fit whereby multiple answers were ac-cepted. Half of all interviewed would wait longer for the individual cloth-ing to be delivered while almost 40 would also accept a higher price of the garment and around the same number are fine with acting creative while configuring the product. Less accepted, is the risk of no return of the clothing for instance when the supplier does not take back the customized product and even less participants would accept the danger of dissatisfac-

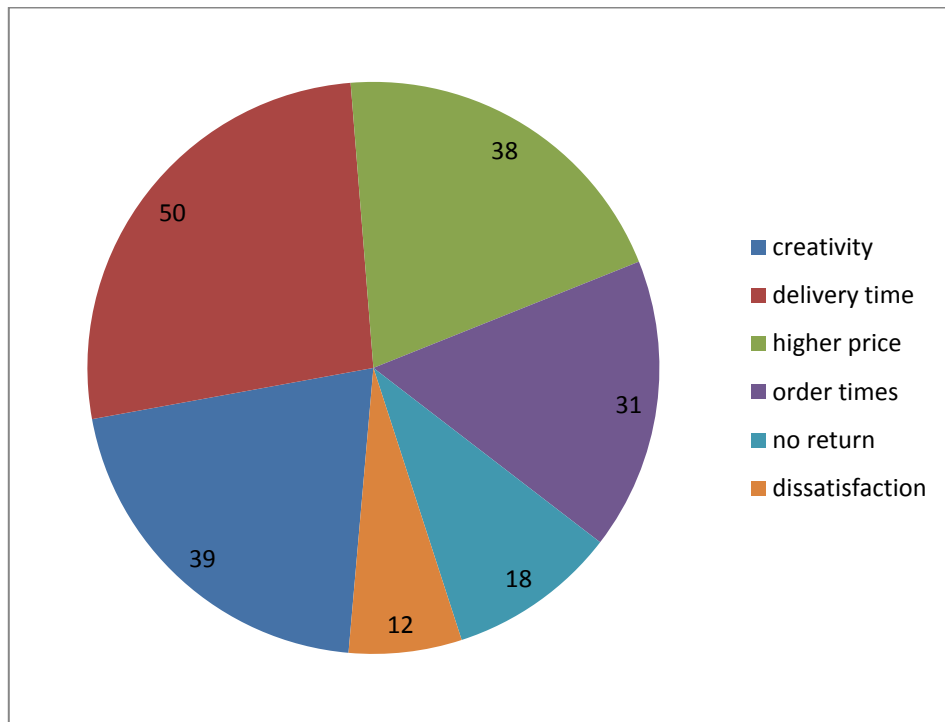tion when for example the clothes doesn't meet their expectations like wrong fit or look.

FIGURE 18. *Survey result "for your own design and perfect fit which of the following would you be willing to accept?"*

4 CUSTOMIZED FASHION COLLECTION

The aim of the collection is it to create and manufacture clothing in combination of my design and the integration of a potential customer in the process of development. The design part will be created so that it will give the customer the possibility to choose between different styles, colours and fabrics. After the decisions and requirements were given a collection of four outfits will be manufactured and tested by the consumer. From the very beginning when creating the mood and sketches until the final product the target group will be consulted and take part in creative decisions. The idea is for it to work together with my target group to find solutions and design ideas so that both me as designer and customer can be satisfied with the result and to find a balance between my freedom of creating and customer demands.

The main idea is to give the potential customer the opportunity to work closely with the designer on this collection. First the customers´ personality, requirements and ideas will get analysed and translated into mood boards and design ideas which will be presented to the customer. Further one particular design will be chosen which, after the customers' agreement will be developed to flat pattern design with different variation opportunities. The final decision will be made by the customer in form of modularity. The customers get variation options to build their favourite style of the particular garment. After the clothes get manufactured, the customers have the chance to see and to try on the outfits and give a statement about them.

4.1 Target group

In my opinion, the best target group for this collection are women between 20 and 30 years because this current generation was growing up with the development of customization and personalization in the last ten years. In first place are women who are creative and self-confident, who appreciate unique clothes which represent the own personality and who are not afraid to express themselves are the main target. The consumer of this collection is a communicative and independent woman who knows exactly what she wants and knows how to get that.

After analysing the customer survey four females were chosen and consulted individually and closely to understand their individual tastes and requirements according to the theme of customization. All of the four women are self-confident and independent young ladies who like the idea of customization in fashion and like to work closely with me as the designer on their own garment. At the same time they have their own individual style and taste which will be dealt with on an individual basis.

4.2   The theme

The theme chosen for this fashion collection is from the individuals, their different lifestyles, their feelings and way of living and thinking. Through the survey as well as through talking and chatting with the four participants I learned about their opinions, ideas and demands which inspired me to create four different characters. The theme should combine their current taste of style with my ideas and new trends. To make the target group satisfied with their outfit and not to impose them into a direction which they might not like I decided to take care of everyone individually and take the inspiration from each of the four participants. In my designing work I want to combine the system of draping and pattern making because in case of the first technic the result might come out differently to customer expectations which could end in dissatisfaction. But on the other hand it can help to produce unique and individual detail solutions.

4.3   Mood board

The aim of the mood board is to create a feeling and atmosphere for the design part, to understand the customer and the feeling about their personalities and their taste. Because each of the four customers are different and special in their own way, four mood boards were made in the same frame, a profile of a woman, and idea of style but the inside of each is showing and representing the individual personality of the customer. Three mood boards were made for each person; the first is showing a private picture of the targets individual and personal life which describes them the best. The second profile represents their current life style and the third is the final mood for the outfit as a mix of my ideas and requirements of the target group shown as atmosphere, style and colours.

It starts with Nelli, who is a smart and independent woman. She loves fashion and considers clothing as very important for her. In general her style is sporty and sexy with a love for details and accessories but her current favourite style is rock glam inspired by the band The Pretty Reckless. Figure 19 left shows her as an active and hip girl, where her style is already visible and the right picture express her favourite and required style of her garment. In an interview she said she like the rock style for fashion because it does not look too feminine or girlish. The following mood board in figure 20 is inspired by rock glam which is bringing together all her wishes of colour like black and red, style of loose tops and jackets and fabric like leather and jeans.

FIGURE 19. Left: *Silhouette of individuel „Nelli the rebel".*
Right: *Silhouette of personal style "The rocker´s girl".*

FIGURE 20. *Mood board theme "Reckless love".*

Viktoria, the second woman, is enterprising and spontaneous and according to the survey her clothing is comfortable, casual and classic but she also likes trendy and sexy outfits as visible in figure 21 left. Clothing in general is important for her and she want to feel feminine, self-confident and slim in her dress. In an interview, Viktoria explained that it is hard for her to find clothes she really likes and which fit her perfectly and she is less satisfied with the offer available in stores. For those reasons she is really interested in custom made fashion and is therefore a good person for this work. The garment she wants to be customized is a short dress for special events. To meet her expectations a feminine and casual mood with her favourite colours like black and purple was created. (Figure 22.) The theme is inspired by woman with class; who want to dress accurate and feminine without necessarily staying in the spotlight. (Figure 21 right.)

FIGURE 21. Left: *Silhouette of individuel „Viktoria the silent beauty".*
Right*: Silhouette of personal style "The casual beauty".*

FIGURE 22. *Mood board "The accurate class".*

Heidi also fits to the description of the target group for this collection as she is a funny, positive and creative person who is not afraid of hard work. She is a fashion design student in her final year and knows exactly about fashion and design. She feels important that the garments she is wearing are among other things comfortable, wearable and high quality. The following pictures describe her personality as her style is casual and a mix of feminine and manly. (Figure 23 left, right.) Figure 22 demonstrate the colours like black, white and light blue which should meet her personality as she likes to show up but not to attract attention and be in the main focus.

FIGURE 23. Left: *Silhouette of individuel „ Heidi the independent women".*
Right: *Silhouette of personal style "The boyish charakter".*

FIGURE 24. *Mood board theme "The men lady".*

Figure 25 left shows Daria as a creative and passionate person who is romantic, emotional and self-confident. In general she likes to dress casual in her private life as well as at work but she also loves unique and classic but trendy dresses for special events which she wants to be customized in this work. She like to feel feminine, strong and desirable with her clothes, has clear ideas for her garment and wishes a long cocktail dress in her favourite colours violet, brown, black or gold. Therefore, figure 25 right should express her as classy but strong lady at a special event according to her demands. Figure 26 is representing the mood and the basic idea of her outfit as the feeling of a passionate and powerful woman, a woman who loves to celebrate with style and who exactly know how to use her beauty to get what she want. Purple stays in the focus of this mood board firstly because it is one of Daria´s favourite colours and secondly because purple stays for feminism, emphasis on emotion and sensitivity which expresses her character perfectly.

FIGURE 25. Left: Silhouette of individual „ Daria the strong women".
Right: Silhouette of personal style "The passioned lady".

FIGURE 26. *Mood board theme "Daria - Tainted love".*

4.4   First sketches and design

After analysing the personalities and tastes of the four members of the tar-
get group for this collection through interviews and the survey I started
with first sketches which should combine the customer taste with my own
ideas and trends. (Figure 27-29). The main question was it to decide what
kind of collection should be developed and what kind of garments should
be offered to the individual persons. But as the background researched in-
vestigated the four girls know exactly what they want and how it should
look like. As wished by the customers the collection of four outfits consist
of one long dress for Daria, short dress for Viktoria, top and shorts for
Heidi and trousers and top for Nelli. It was necessary for me to satisfy the

target group by fulfilling their wishes instead of imposing on them garments they are not used to wear in their normal life. The four girls got to see the mood boards with the ideas for colours and styles and agreed with the proposals. The step of finding a silhouette in the design process has become unnecessary since all of the four ladies exactly knew what they like to wear and what they dislike. In this connection I began to create and select ideas for the individual garments considering the customer demands and played with different styles and combinations. Those first drawings were not made for the eyes of the customers because the pictures are inaccurate and drawn quickly. People often do not understand the designer´s thoughts on such works and get confused and hesitate about what they see. The following drawings get defined more clearly to make my ideas visual attractive which could also be used as presentation form for interested customers.

FIGURE 27. *First sketches "custom made collection".*

FIGURE 28. *First sketches "custom made collection".*

FIGURE 29. *First sketches "custom made collection".*

The outfit for Nelli should be comfortable, cool and not to girly like in a rock style inspired by the rock band The Pretty Reckless. She wished the colours red and black to be in the focus. Optional as accessories she likes rivets and leather details. She predetermined her wishes clearly as she want a lose top without sleeves and tight trousers. Heidi like to have shorts with a fresh and different design but short and tight should they be and a top where she give me all freedom in design without requirements. After analysing her way of dressing I created a lose top with long sleeves as a basic idea. Viktoria wished to have a short dress for special events and normal day life which challenges me. Therefore I designed one simple basic dress and different variations for the top dress for Viktoria to choose. Daria specified her desired outfit as a long off the shoulder cocktail dress with the main colour purple. All in one the customer gave me different limitations which I have to follow but also which change the way of my usual working method.

4.5   Flatpattern

Since I decided to integrate the customer into the designing process a way had to be found to develop an understandable visual representation of the clothes. In the traditional way designer or enterprises present a prototype or a final product to visualize it but in the case of this work I wanted to figure out how much power the customer should get in the design decisions and therefore decided that the final product can only developed with the customers´ contribution. Flat patterns or technical drawings can represent suitable visual imagery. For this paper, according to the consumer requirements one basic idea was created for each garment and supplemented by different variations which can be selected by the customer himself. The co- designer could therefore choose one of the suggested variations or

build a garment by selecting the different accessories and parts of the designs. To not to confuse the customer I decided to limit the number of possible modularities to a maximum four and one basic with back view. So there are for instance five different types of sleeves, pockets and so on. In addition, proposals for style, mood and colour options were made to give customers an idea of the final product. Two options are given to add sizing in the form of standard size table and optional measurements like bust, hips and waist. In case of the last option the customer can measure her-self and add the data into the field which allows producing a better fitting garment. Furthermore four different suggestions for fabric were made which fits best for the different clothing items.
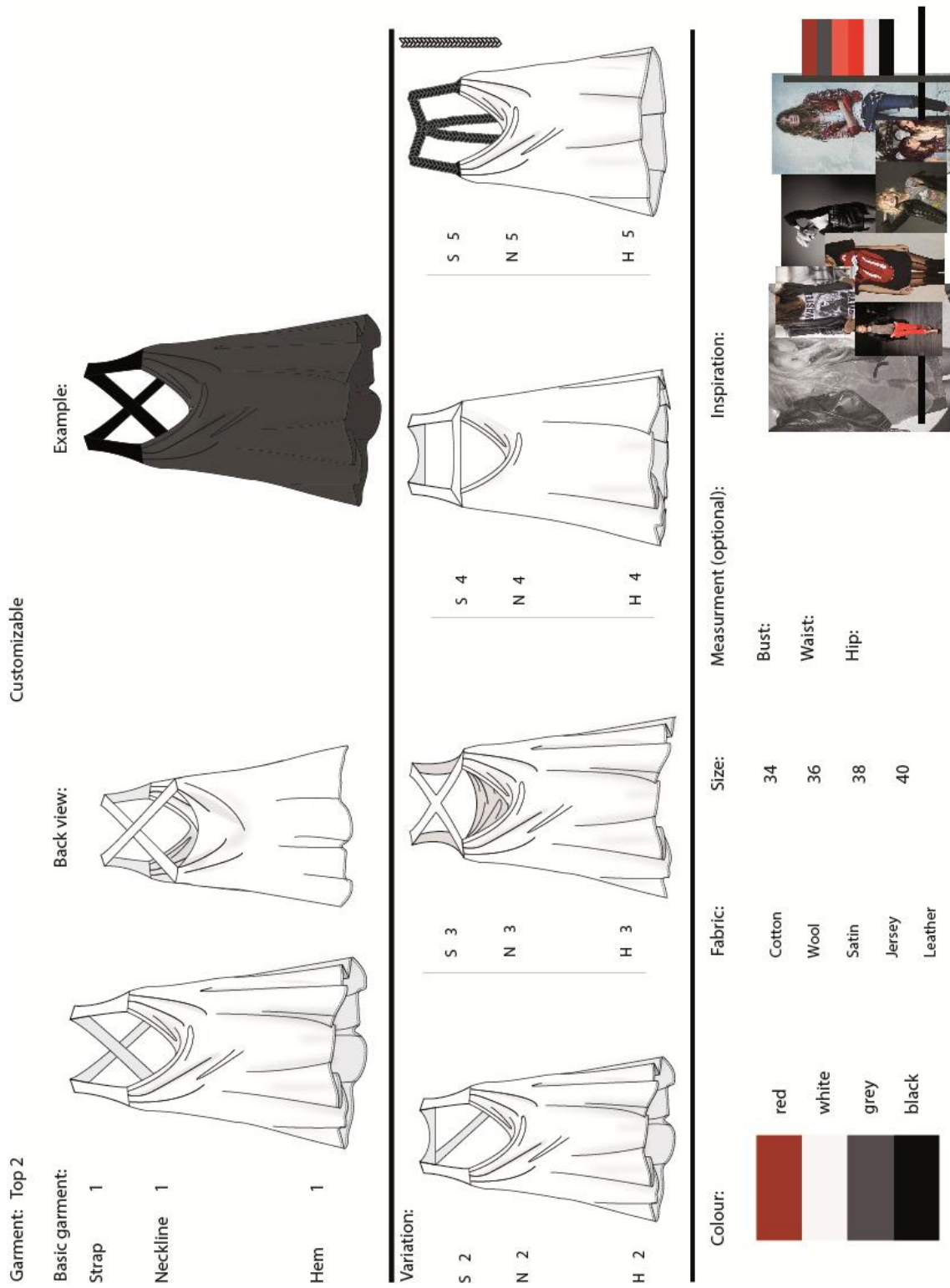
FIGURE 30. *Visualization paper "Customize: top Nelli".*

Customizable

Garment: Trousers

Basic garment:

Example:

Back view:

Waistband 1

Zipper 1

Pocket 1

Hem 1

Variation:

W 2   W 3   W 4   W 5

Z 2   Z 3   Z 4   Z 5

P 2   P 3   P 4   P 5

H 2   H 3   H 4   H 5

Inspiration:

Colour:	Fabric:	Size:	Measurment (optional):
blue	Cotton	34	Body hight:
light grey	Jeans	36	Waist:
grey	Leather	38	Hip:
black	Rayon	40	Length:

FIGURE 31. *Visualization paper "Customize: trousers Nelli ".*

Garment: Dress short
Basic garment:
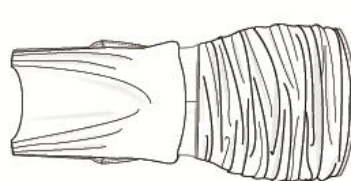
Neckline 1
Belt 1
Button 1
Hem 1

Back view:

Customizable

Example:
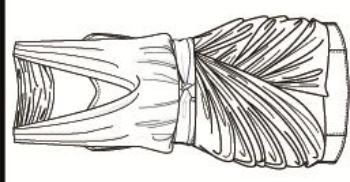
Variation:

N 2
B 2
B 2
H 2

N 3
B 3
B 3
H 3
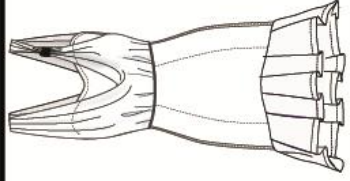
N 4
B 4
B 4
H 4

N 5
B 5
B 5
H 5

Colour:

light grey
dark purple
grey
purple
black

Fabric:

Cotton
Wool
Satin
Jersey

Size:

34
36
38
40

Measurment (optional):

Body hight:
ust:
Waist:
Hip:

Inspiration:

FIGURE 32. *Visualization paper "Customize: dress Viktoria".*

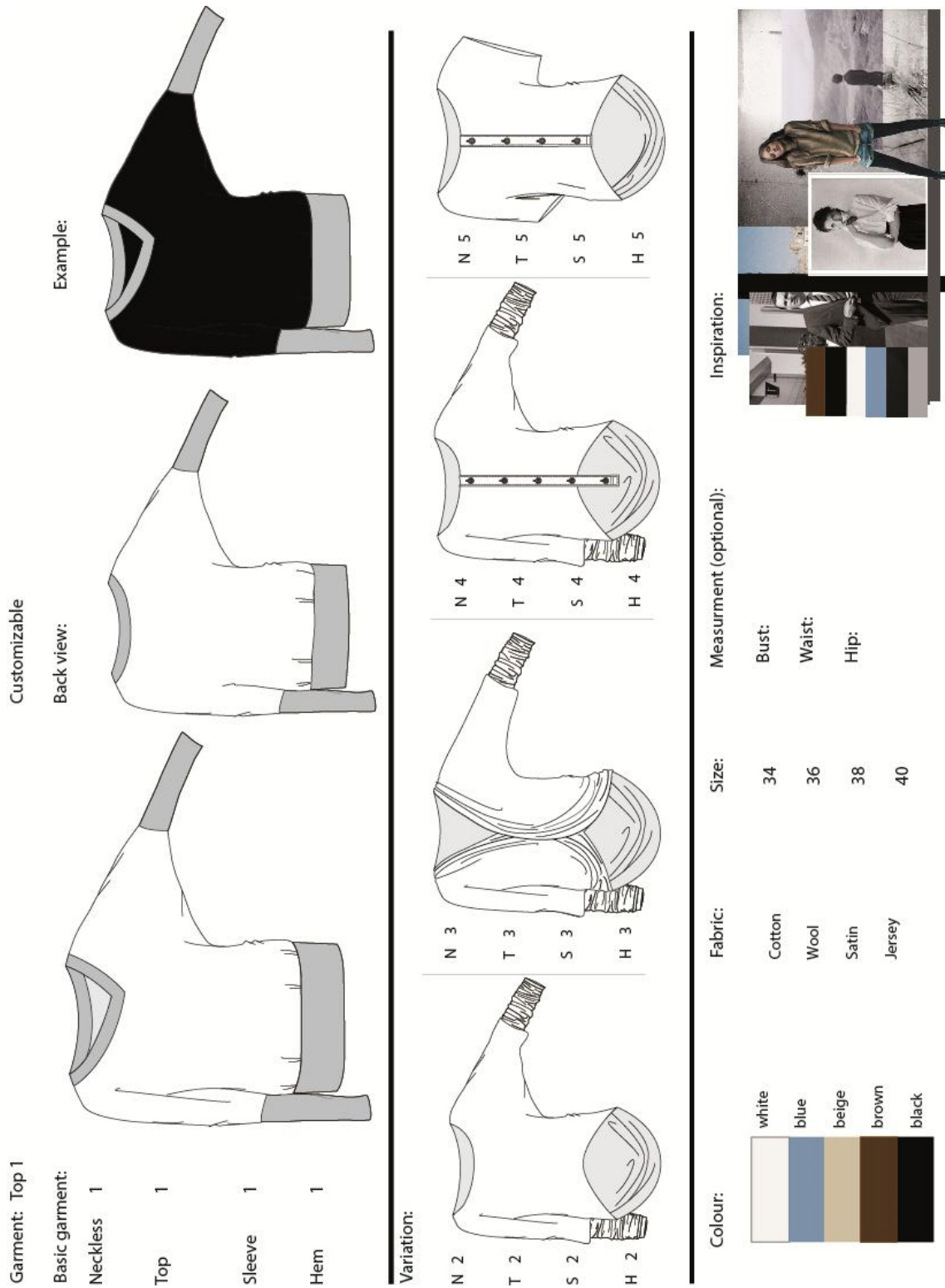**Garment: Top 1**

Basic garment:

Neckless 1

Top 1

Sleeve 1

Hem 1

Customizable

Back view:

Example:

Variation:

N 2   T 2   S 2   H 2

N 3   T 3   S 3   H 3

N 4   T 4   S 4   H 4

N 5   T 5   S 5   H 5

Colour:

white

blue

beige

brown

black

Fabric:

Cotton

Wool

Satin

Jersey

Size:

34

36

38

40

Measurment (optional):

Bust:

Waist:

Hip:

Inspiration:

FIGURE 33. *Visualization paper "Customize: top Heidi".*

Customizable

Example:

Garment: Shorts

Basic garment:

Back view:

Waistband 1
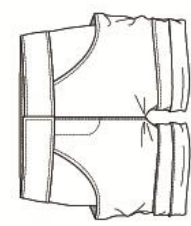
Zipper 1

Pocket 1

Hem 1
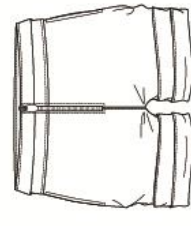
Variation:
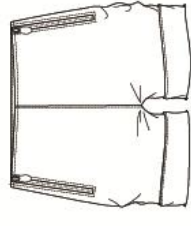
W 2   Z 2   P 2   H 2

W 3   Z 3   P 3   H 3
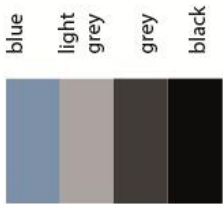
W 4   Z 4   P 4   H 4

W 5   Z 5   P 5   H 5

Inspiration:

Measurment (optional):

Body hight:

Waist:

Hip:

Size:

34

36

38

40

Fabric:

Cotton

Jeans

Wool

Rayon

Colour:

blue

light grey

grey

black

FIGURE 34. *Visualization paper "Customize: shorts Heidi".*

FIGURE 35. *Visualization paper "Customize: dress Daria".*

5   RESULT AND OUTCOME OF THE COLLECTION

5.1 Final collection look-book

FIGURE 36. *Collection look book "Nelli Outfit".*

FIGURE 37. *Collection look book "Daria Outfit".*

FIGURE 38. *Collection look book "Heidi Outfit"*.

FIGURE 39. *Collection look book "Viktoria Outfit"*.

5.2 Customer reaction

With the customers´ requirements, a wearable and trendy fashion collection came to life. The customers were satisfied and would like to repeat this experience. The four target members were asked to comment on the one hand the idea of custom-made fashion in general and on the other hand to evaluate their particular customized outfit.

Nelli´s opinion: "I like the idea in general because in store I have to take already made clothing or leave it. Also I am not able to design and manufacture my own clothes. I like the outfit because it is simple and straightforward and without any frills. Material and patterns embody nonchalance and coolness as well as freedom. In this work I could participate and choose color, material, patterns and so on and the outfit meets my personality."

Viktoria said: "I really liked the idea of custom-made clothes. It is really useful that I can choose the fabric. There were a lot of samples from which I could combine the dress and I am more than satisfied with the result. The dress looks great! Actually it is hard to tell what I didn't like because it all was great."

Heidi´s comment to this work: "I think it is a nice idea, customization, to really get something that person desires. And also good thing is it to support designers and not to buy cheap clothes from big clothing companies, which might even use child labour on producing the clothes. Person gets the garment made to match his/her measurements, colours, materials and so on. The Outfit is very well made and comfortable to wear, colours are ideal to me and the shape is both feminine and masculine. The final garments are exactly like in the drawings."

Daria: "I liked the idea of customizing clothes in general and I used to order tailor made clothes from time to time. Mostly I know what I really want but I don't understand so much about material and design. It is nice to get support and information and also different styles to choose off. I liked the result and how the dress looks like as well as the colours."

My personal opinion: "I really like the outcome and the picture of the final collection. And I also enjoyed working closely with all of the four customers for this collection; I have got inspired and supported by all of them individually. But all in one, I wished to have more freedom in design to create innovative and more trend orientated fashion."

6 CONCLUSION

For the first time I heard about the service of customization during my internship in the fashion label M.a.p.h.i.a in Berlin. I have got taught how to interact with the customers when it comes to customization and met the founder of the software UpCload who made a huge impression on me. During this time I learned the methods used to design and develop a fashion collection in this context. However, during the whole time I selected more questions the answers of which I wanted to research. When choosing this theme I feared that I would lose my interest and mood for this topic but I did not expected it to be so complex and versatile and the deeper I went into the theme the more interested and excited I became. Only after half of the research work were done I start to understand how complex and extensive this theme is and that before offering the service of customization it is advisable first to study and understand the system. It impressed me to find out how much personalization, customization, mass customization and other forms are already part of our everyday life's but at the same time how less people recognize this fact conscious. During the writing part of this thesis I talked to many different people who were interested to know about my theme. Most of those people get really interested in this topic and asked for more information and even advices where to find and how to deal with this concept. I become more and more interested in this theme as deeper I got into the topic.

Furthermore it surprised me how much my ideas of the presentation and implementation of the collection changed from the first thoughts I had before starting the research work. At first I wanted to present a ready collection only after my own design ideas which can be later customized by the customer in colour, fabric and size. But after I got more and more information about this subject my personal goal became to figure out how much power I could give the potential customer in the design process without losing to much of my freedom of creativity. More and more different thoughts came into my mind during the research process which I had to bring together so that the customer can understand the topic to be able to build their own garment. As mentioned previously there are different forms of customization which however are not always easy to implement or not required as for a single designer or supplier. Even though it is said that there are no limits of company size however big or small enterprises can offer mass customization. But often there is a lack of important knowledge, skills, technology and equipment which can keep from offering the service of mass customization. The simple form of customization like the label M.a.p.h.i.a is supplying can be used and offered by everyone because the customer only can customize a small number of options and only in the last phase of the developing process. However, I found the idea of M.a.p.h.i.a was expandable and decided to give customer more scope to express their individuality through fashion. It was my personal goal to find a way to satisfy the target group and to keep them interested in this project.

In the beginning when making the customer survey it was really interesting for me to analyze the results and so some confirmed my expectations

and ideas again other outcomes surprised me. Like for example the research showed that Germany is a frontier in customization but only view participant ever heard or have known about this opportunity. For the collection I learned that the customer needs advice and a skilled person to lead them through the creating process and support them with the realization of their ideas. Also it was important to limit the choice options because to many opportunities can confuse the customer.

Because the four girls of the target group for this collection were different and had different knowledge level of material, patterns and design I had to deal with them in different ways. In the first place I had to explain to my target group the idea of customization in general and later my concept of the custom made fashion collection. Also it was not always so easy to understand and create exactly what the target group wanted because they sometimes changed their minds and also see them self often in a different way than their surroundings do. When it came to the designing part I had already to follow different requirements which limited the options for creations from the very beginning. Thereby I had to change the way of designing like I used to do before. I could not start with finding a silhouette and experiment with different styles and ideas because this part was taken by the customer. The target group knew exactly what they wanted to be customized and when I made new or different suggestions they sometimes became disappointed and felt like they might not get what they really wanted. This case forced me to overthink my concept and made me realize that even with customization it is impossible to satisfy every single customer. But it is possible to offer a greater product range with different style options by using the principle of modularity. However, this case implies already available patterns so the order can be produced on time.

After presenting the visualization paper with the customizable garments to the target group I have got mixed feelings about the idea of customization. On the one hand it disappointed me that some customers chose the most simple and ordinary variation of the particular outfit. I as designer like to experiment with styles and material to create something innovative. But the customers were careful and reserved when building their fashion outfit. On the other hand I could create many different styles and details for each of the six garments. It was interesting for me to see how one special cloth can change its lookout by changing small parts.

Summarizing, I enjoyed the work of this thesis from background research till the realization of the fashion collection. From the beginning till the end it was an exciting journey with many important findings. I would have liked to develop more garments such as jackets or accessories but I realized the way of customization I chose for this work is very time-consuming because for many decisions I have to consult the customer. In my opinion the idea of customization in all its forms is an exciting and interesting method to meet customer demands. When it comes to launch this idea in the future I would change the way of customer integration. After this experience I believe that although it is important to communicate and interact closely with customers to get to know what exactly they wish and need it is not recommendable to integrate every single customer in the

whole process of design. I liked the idea of getting inspired by the individual personalities and stories but when it comes to masses it can get more deconstructive then benefiting. In my experience of this work I believe too much involvement of customer into the developing process of a product can not only reduce designers´ creativity but also overstrain the consumer. For me as a designer it is important to find new, innovative or exciting ideas and creation therefore I would like to work more free without limitations given by customers. In this case I think the best way is it to create fashion lines which give the end-user the opportunity of modifying and playing with the product in the end of the developing process.

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Appendices

APPENDIX 1
Customers Survey Result – Custom-made fashion English July 2012 (9/9)

APPENDIX 2
Customers Survey Result – Custom-made fashion German June 2012 (9/9)

APPENDIX 3
Customers Survey Result – Collection target group July 2012 (7/7)

APPENDIX 3
Survey Result – Customization at M.a.p.h.i.a (2/2)

Custom - made fashion (personalization)   (shorten version)

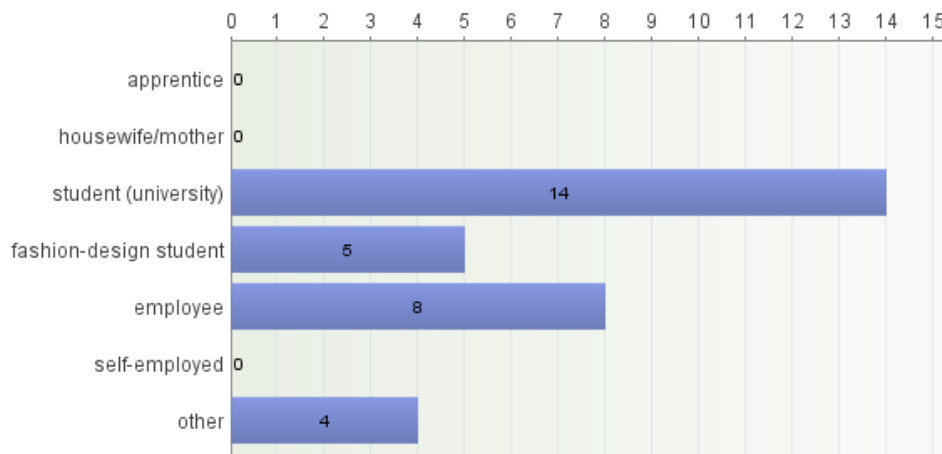**1. Age**   **Anzahl der Befragten: 31**   minimum   age: 15
maximum age: 40   average: 23,74
-    26
-    20
-    23
-    24
-    20

2. Education   **Anzahl der Befragten: 31**


3. Nationality   **Anzahl der Befragten: 31**
-    Russian
-    Finnish
-    Canada
-    Bulgarian
-    Sweden
-    Finland/UK
-    Estonian
-    British
-    Japan
-    Iran
-    Italian
-    Irish

10. What kind of fashion trend do you like the most? (any, past, present or future)
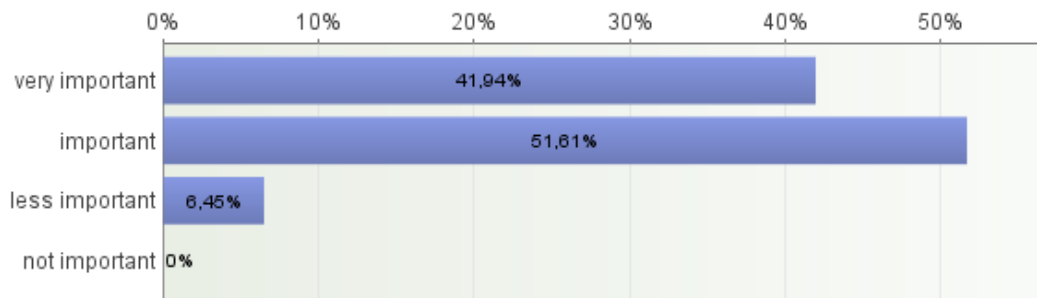
Anzahl der Befragten: 25
-    every new one
-    Street and hiphop
-    cruise fashion, 50's, 60's,70's.
-    50's and present
-    Present. Cause you can mix the past the future anything. Its very interesting and individual. People are interesting and beautiful
-    Studs, leather and rock style in general
-    50´s style
-    80's/90's
-    classic style
-    Mixed. Personal, natural and futuristic
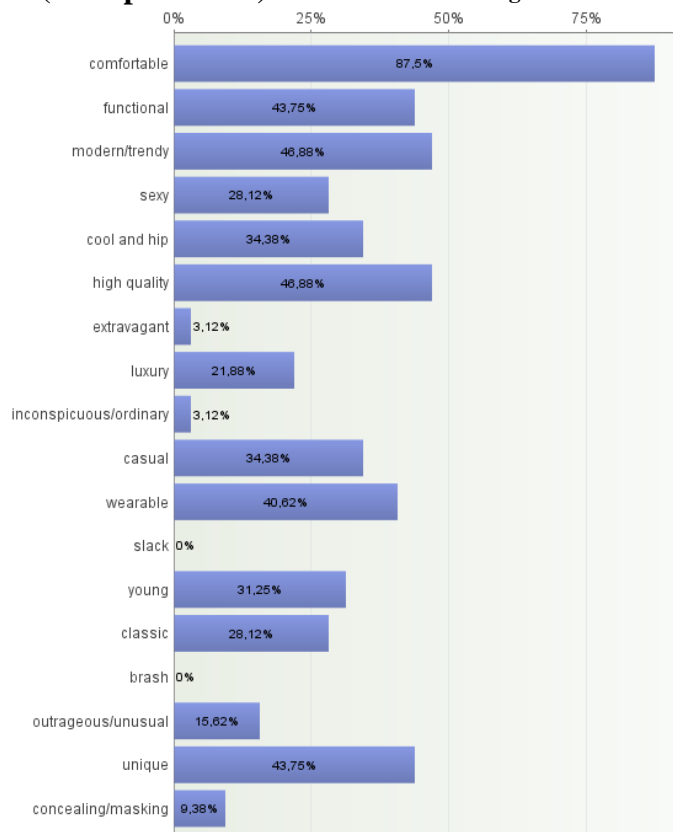-   punk rock

15. Do trends have any impact on how you dress?   Anzahl der Befragten: 31

yes, always	3,23%
often	25,81%
sometimes	45,16%
rarely	22,58%
never	3,23%
it depends	0%
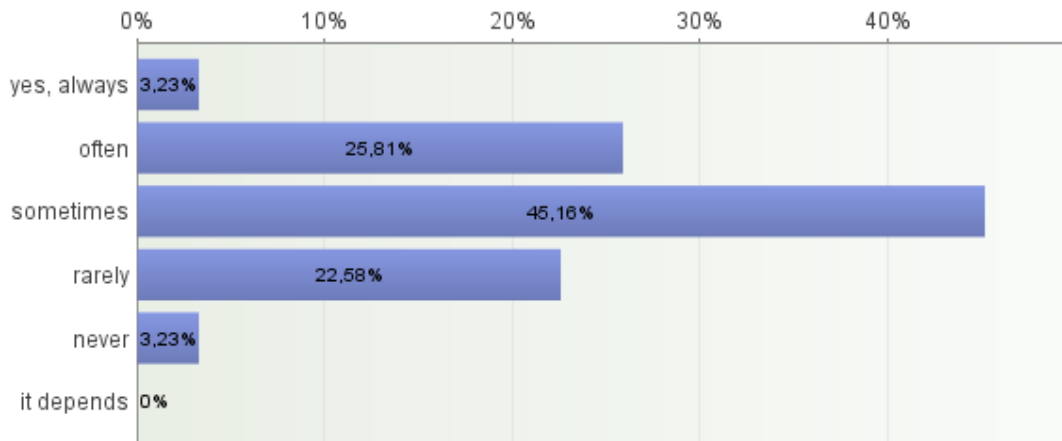
16. How important is clothing for you?   Anzahl der Befragten: 31

very important	41,94%
important	51,61%
less important	6,45%
not important	0%

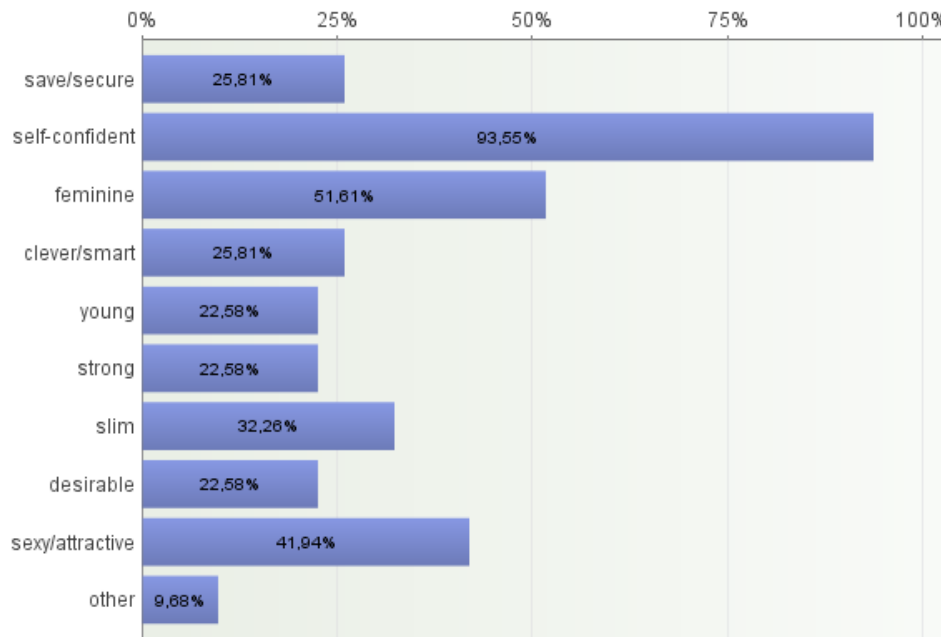## 17. Which aspects of clothing do you value most? How does your clothes should be? (multiple choice)   Anzahl der Befragten: 32

|	
comfortable	87,5%
functional	43,75%
modern/trendy	46,88%
sexy	28,12%
cool and hip	34,38%
high quality	46,88%
extravagant	3,12%
luxury	21,88%
inconspicuous/ordinary	3,12%
casual	34,38%
wearable	40,62%
slack	0%
young	31,25%
classic	28,12%
brash	0%
outrageous/unusual	15,62%
unique	43,75%
concealing/masking	9,38%

18. How should clothing make you feel? (multiple choice)   Anzahl der Befragten: 31
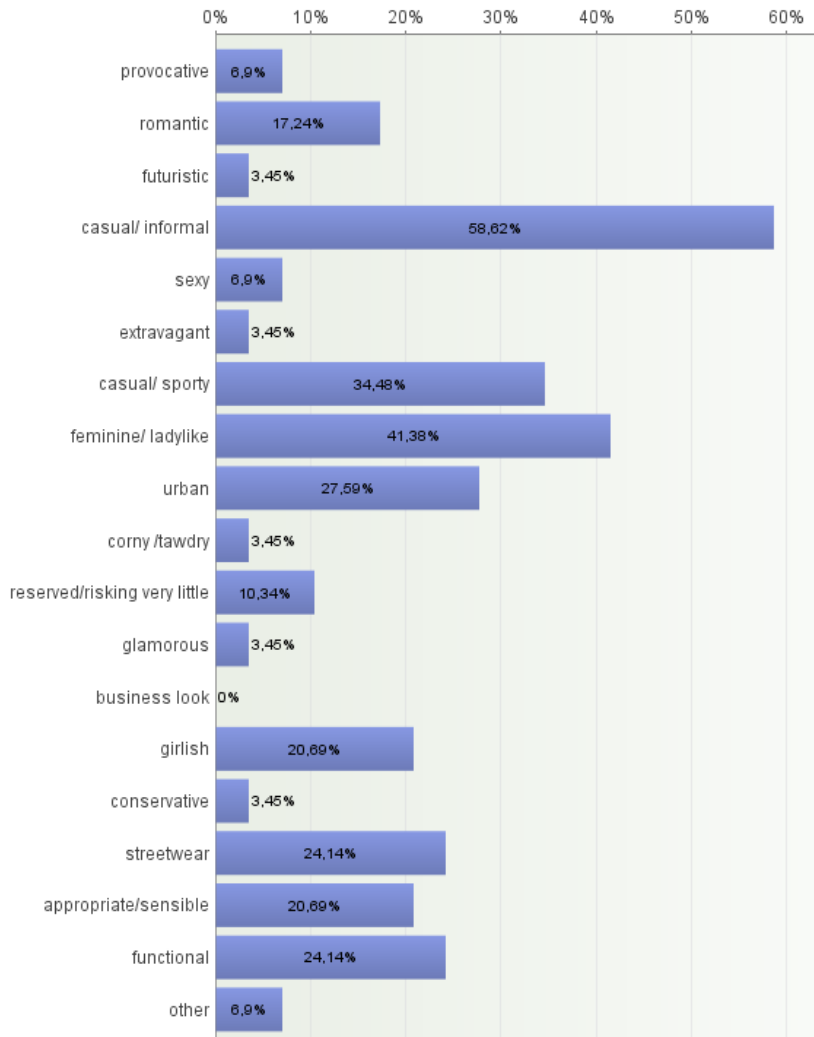

20. What do you express through your clothing? (multiple choice)
Anzahl der Befragten: 31
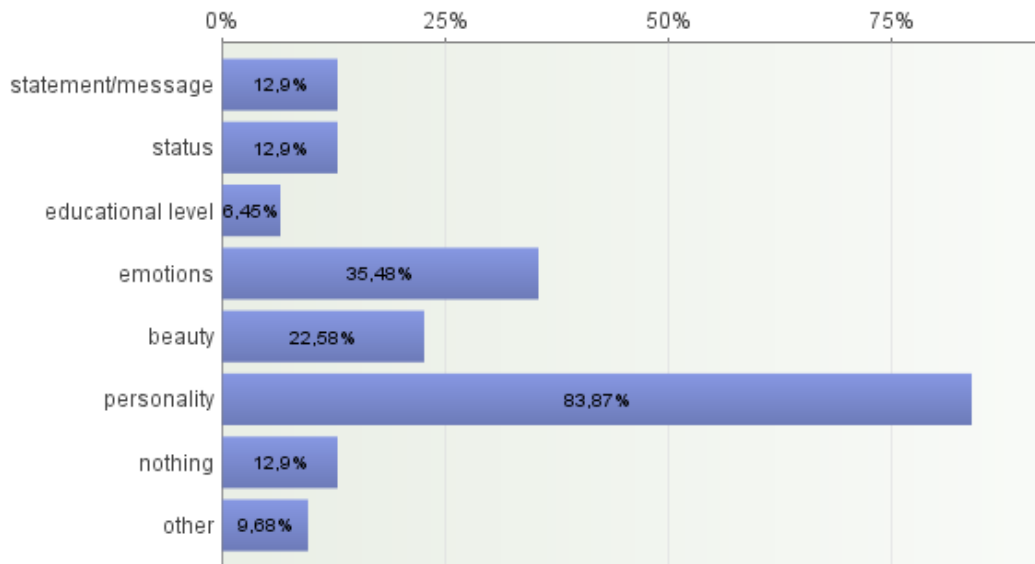
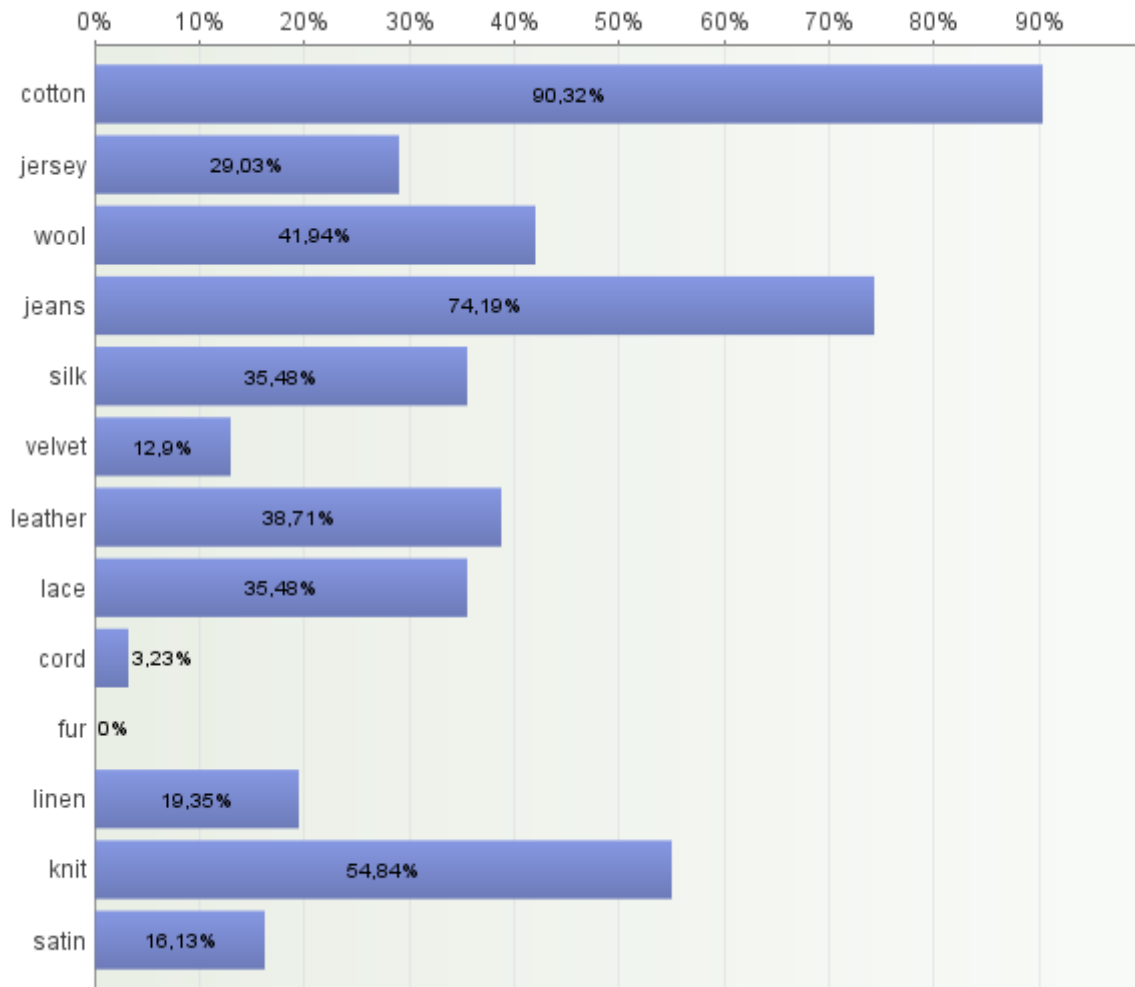## 21. What is your general fashion style? (multiple choice)   Anzahl der Befragten: 29

23. What is your favorite item of clothing (in your wardrobe)? And why?
Anzahl der Befragten: 29
- jersey dress, funktional, colorful
- White, loose fitting shirt. I like it because it's casual and sporty and the material is nice.
- Cardigans, easy to wear
- Little Black Dress. Wearing it, I always feel sexy.
- one-piece dress - definite item for ladies and girls! I can feel I am a woman or a lady. And also, it is handy and easy to dress. we don't need to be in trouble what I should coordinate with in the busy morning.
  jeans - heavy-rotation item for me. it's necessary for me. easy, casual, smart, comfortable!
- Leggings - comfortable good for most weather and can be paired with almost anything
- Bright blue jeans. They're really comfortable, look good and they bring some colour to the outfit.
- Shirts, you can change them many times in a day and keep the same jeans or whatever you are wearing.
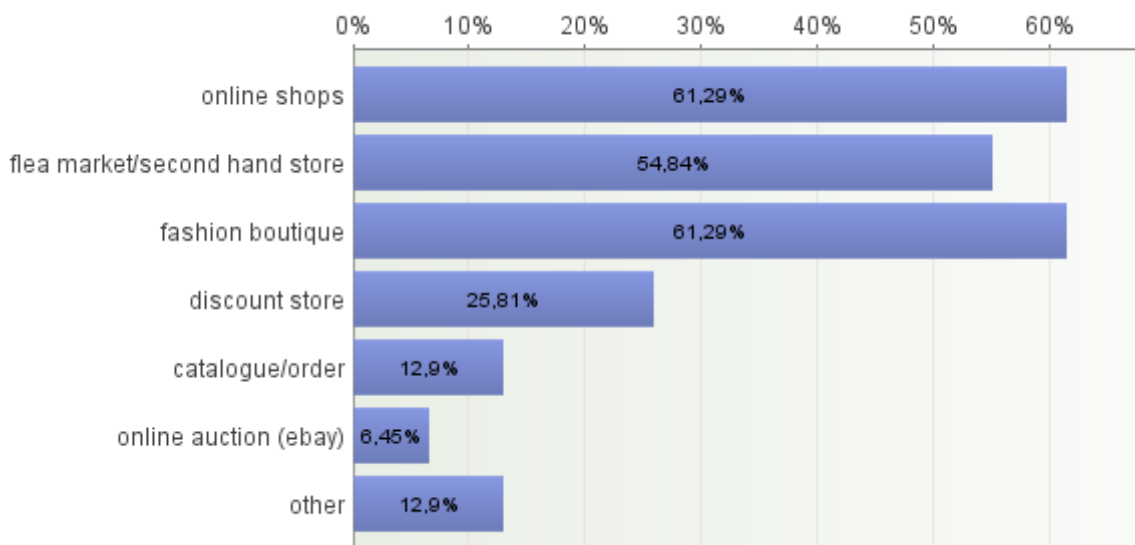- Black leather bag from Spain. It's beautiful, handy and always stylish.

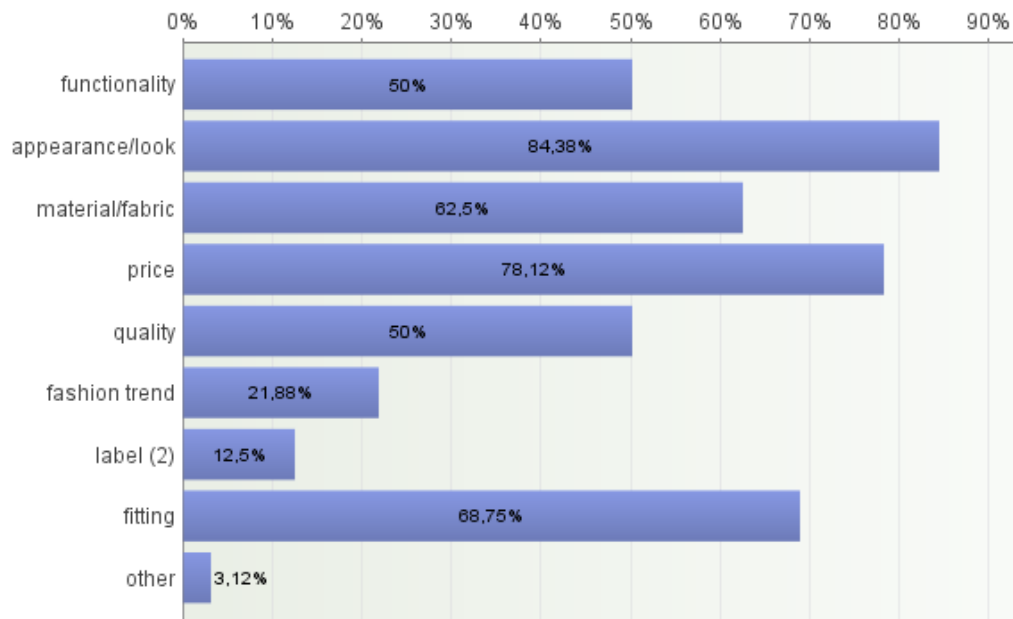**24. What fabric do you prefer to wear? (multiple choice)**   **Anzahl der Befragten: 31**

Fabric	%
cotton	90,32%
jersey	29,03%
wool	41,94%
jeans	74,19%
silk	35,48%
velvet	12,9%
leather	38,71%
lace	35,48%
cord	3,23%
fur	0%
linen	19,35%
knit	54,84%
satin	16,13%

26. Where do you purchase clothing? (multiple choice)   **Anzahl der Befragten: 31**

Place	%
online shops	61,29%
flea market/second hand store	54,84%
fashion boutique	61,29%
discount store	25,81%
catalogue/order	12,9%
online auction (ebay)	6,45%
other	12,9%

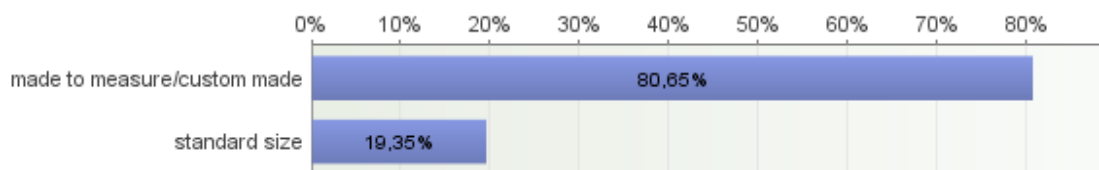## 27. What aspects do you consider important when purchasing clothing? (multiple choice)   Anzahl der Befragten: 32

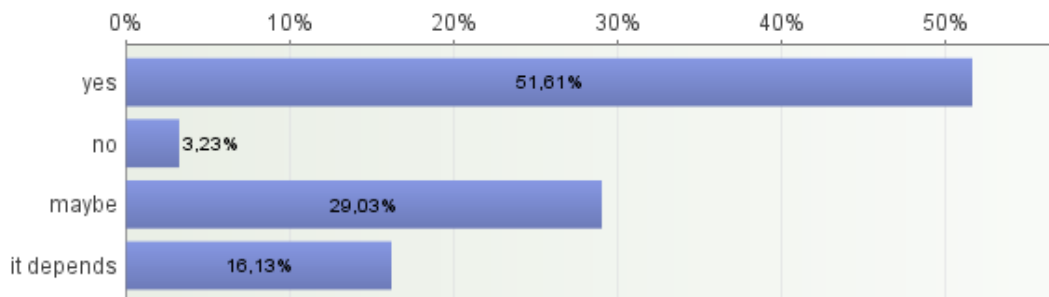| aspect	percentage
functionality	50%
appearance/look	84,38%
material/fabric	62,5%
price	78,12%
quality	50%
fashion trend	21,88%
label (2)	12,5%
fitting	68,75%
other	3,12%

28. Are you satisfied with the selection available in shops? (clothing)   Anzahl der Befragten: 30

answer	percentage
highly satisfied	3,33%
satisfied	46,67%
less satisfied	43,33%
not satisfied	6,67%
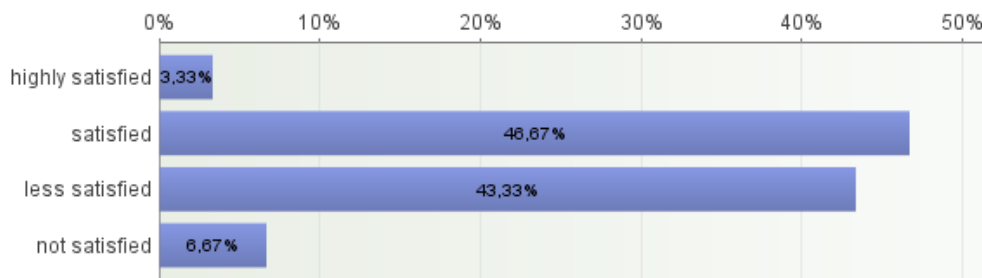
29. Which of the following would you prefer? (clothes)   Anzahl der Befragten: 31

answer	percentage
made to measure/custom made	80,65%
standard size	19,35%

30. Would you pay more for made to measure/tailor-made clothing? Anzahl der Befragten: 31

answer	percentage
yes	51,61%
no	3,23%
maybe	29,03%
it depends	16,13%

31. Are you creative?   Anzahl der Befragten: 31
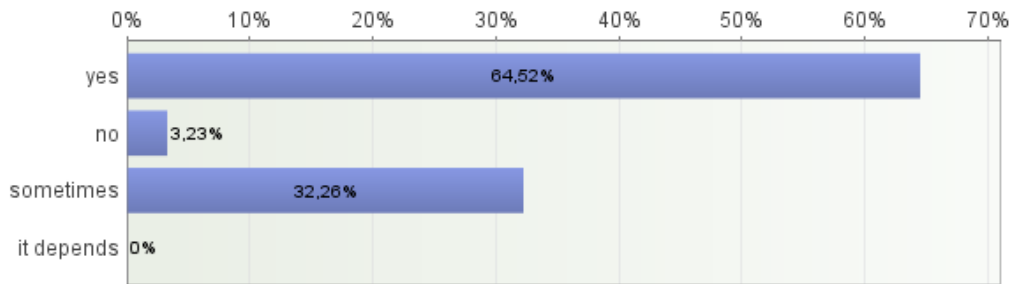
yes	64,52%
no	3,23%
sometimes	32,26%
it depends	0%

32. How do you think about the idea of designing your own clothes?   Anzahl der Befragten:

very well	51,61%
good	29,03%
moderate	9,68%
less	0%
not good	0%
not interested	9,68%

33. Would you like to create/design your own clothes?   Anzahl der Befragten: 31
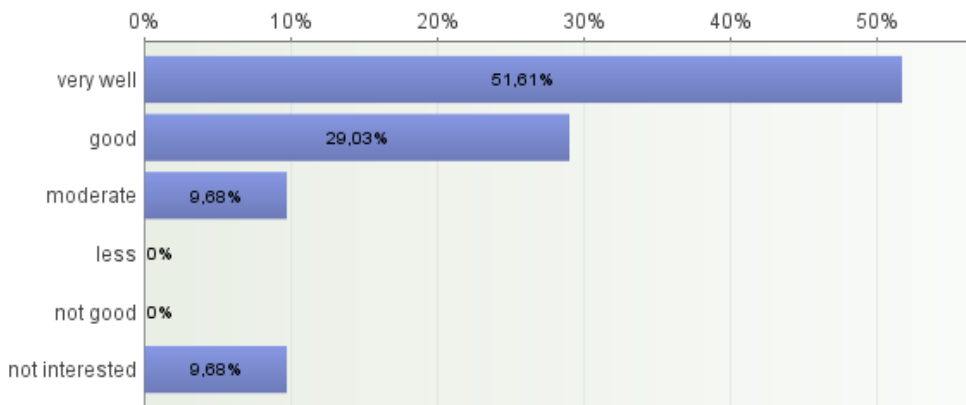
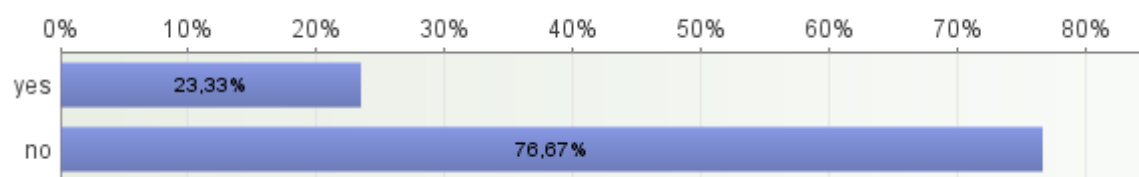|	
yes	61,29%
no	12,9%
maybe	25,81%
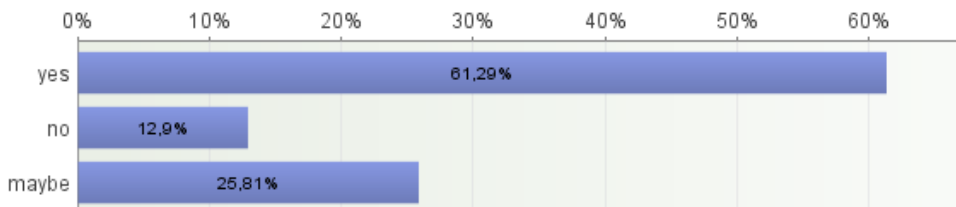
34. Have you ever heard about custom-made fashion? (clothes made to the customer's specifications/customer can create own clothes at special websites)   Anzahl der Befragten: 30

yes	76,67%
no	23,33%
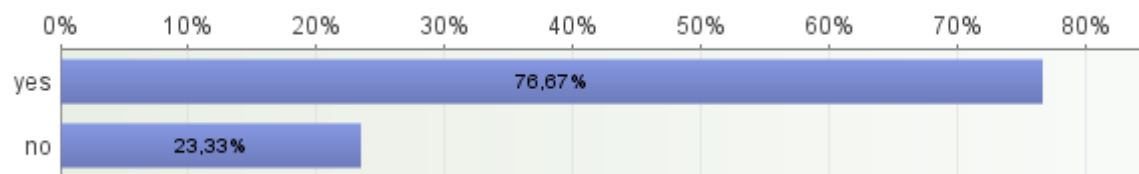
35. Have you ever bought custom-made clothes? (customization)   Anzahl der Befragten: 30

|	
yes	23,33%
no	76,67%

36. If you already bought custom-made fashion, what did you like or dislike about it?

Anzahl der Befragten: 7

- I like the fact that i can design it myself and so it represents my own personal style the best, and the second thing i really loved is that it fits me perfectly. Down side is of course that it is more expensive but i am able to deal with that.
- Good in every way.
- N/A
- I like that I can have, what I imagine to have. Dislike that my model had to be change, so it fits me better, but it lost it's functionality.
- i could feel it is special for me. It was nice to use special and valuable fabrics not on ready-made clothing market usually which I got for my clothes.
  But, it was not good that the size was not suitable for me. I was disappointed that old-fashioned or strange design because the designer and the dress maker could not understand my taste and put their own taste. Some designers and dress makers force to clients too much their own sense and taste. I think it is not for clients, it is like for themselves.
- Like: they fit well and are unique.
- Because there was not a size for at the webstore, a dress was specially made for me. I really liked that it was possible to get that dress in my size.
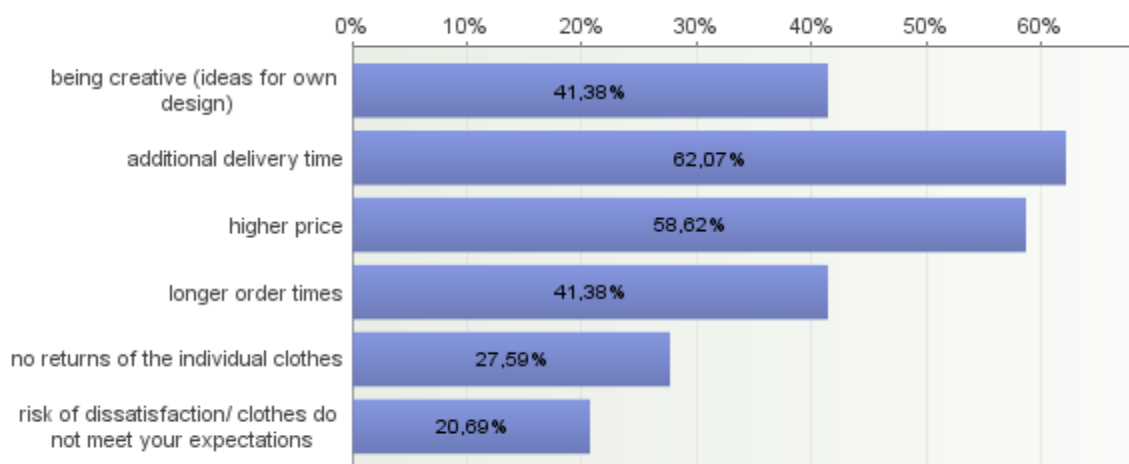
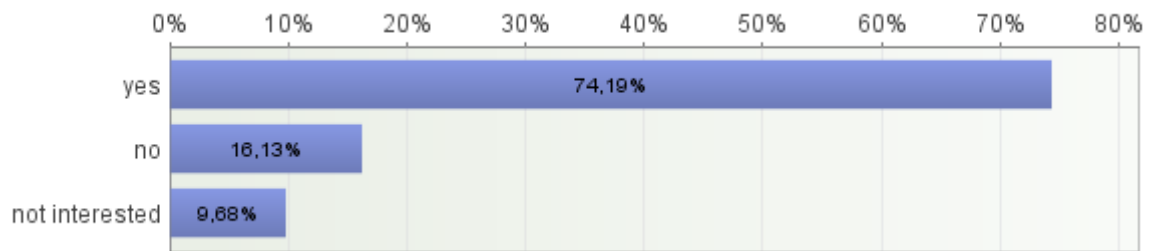**37. If not, would you like to buy custom-made fashion?**　　　　**Anzahl der Befragten: 24**
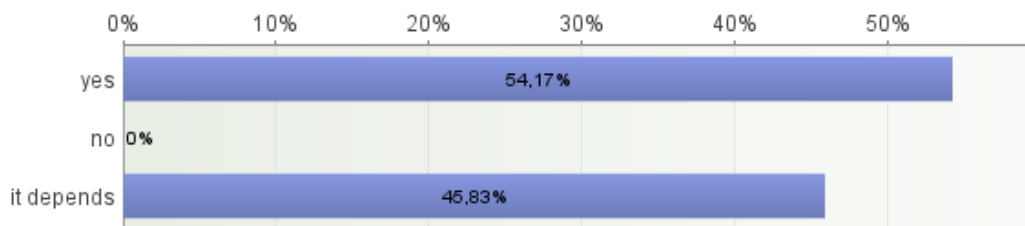
38. For your own design and perfect fit which of the following would you be willing to sacrifice/accept? (multiple choice)　**Anzahl der Befragten: 29**

39. Would you like to have more influence in the process of designing fashion?

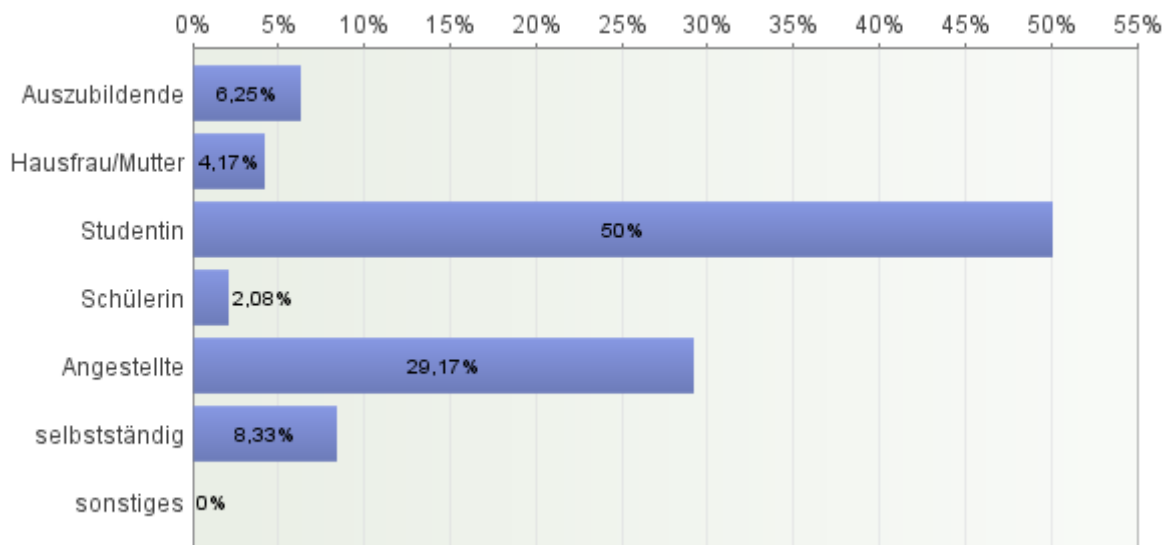**Anzahl der Befragten: 31**

Custom-made fashion   (shorten version)   German

1. Alter   **Anzahl der Befragten: 47   Minimaler Wert: 16   Maximaler Wert: 36   Durchschnitt: 25**
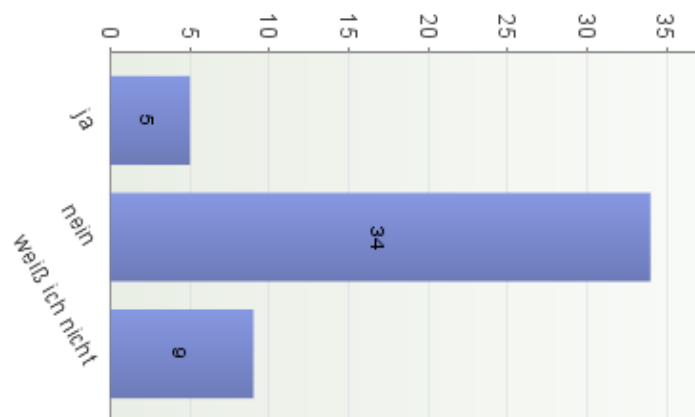- 25
- 25
- 27
- 32
- 25
- 33
- ……………

2. Bildung/Tätigkeit   **Anzahl der Befragten: 48**

Bildung/Tätigkeit	Prozent
Auszubildende	6,25%
Hausfrau/Mutter	4,17%
Studentin	50%
Schülerin	2,08%
Angestellte	29,17%
selbstständig	8,33%
sonstiges	0%

3. Nationalität   **Anzahl der Befragten: 47**
- german
- deutsch

8. Hast du ein Modevorbild?   **Anzahl der Befragten: 48**

Antwort	Anzahl
ja	5
nein	34
weiß ich nicht	9

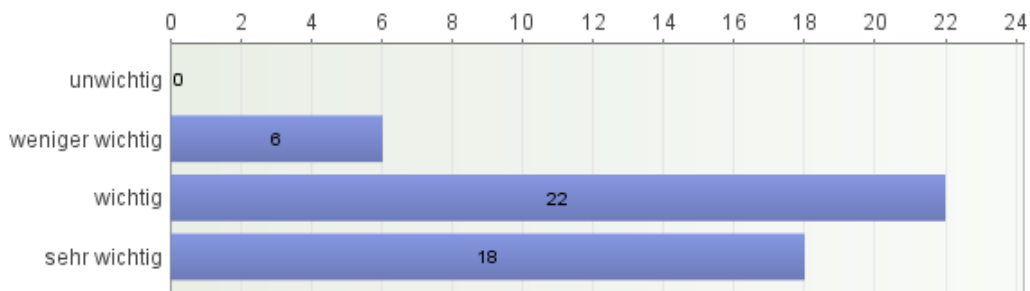## 10. Kleidest du dich immer nach eigenem Geschmack und Gefühl? Anzahl der Befragten: 47
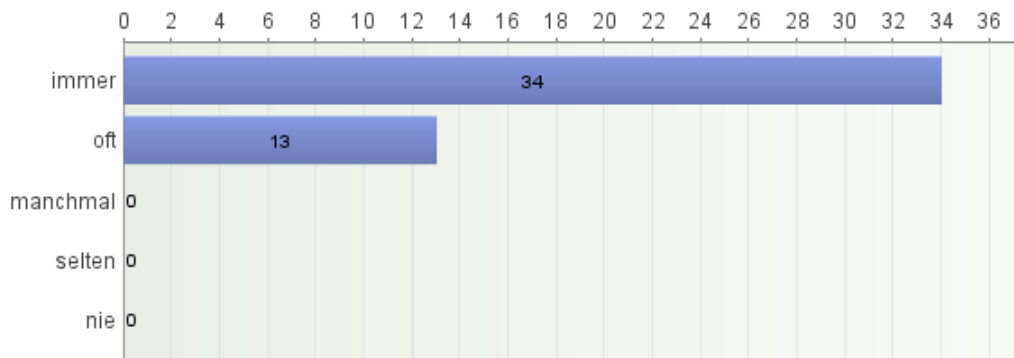
11. Welcher Modetrend gefällt dir am besten? Anzahl der Befragten: 35

- Esprit
- romantisch und zart
- leggings
- röcke, röhrenjeans, alles was sexy ist
- taillierte Klamotten
- 20er, 80er
- streetwear, girly
- Chino Hosen und einfarbige Shirts
  Rock und Leggins
- stilvoll, elegant
- -
- rockiger stil
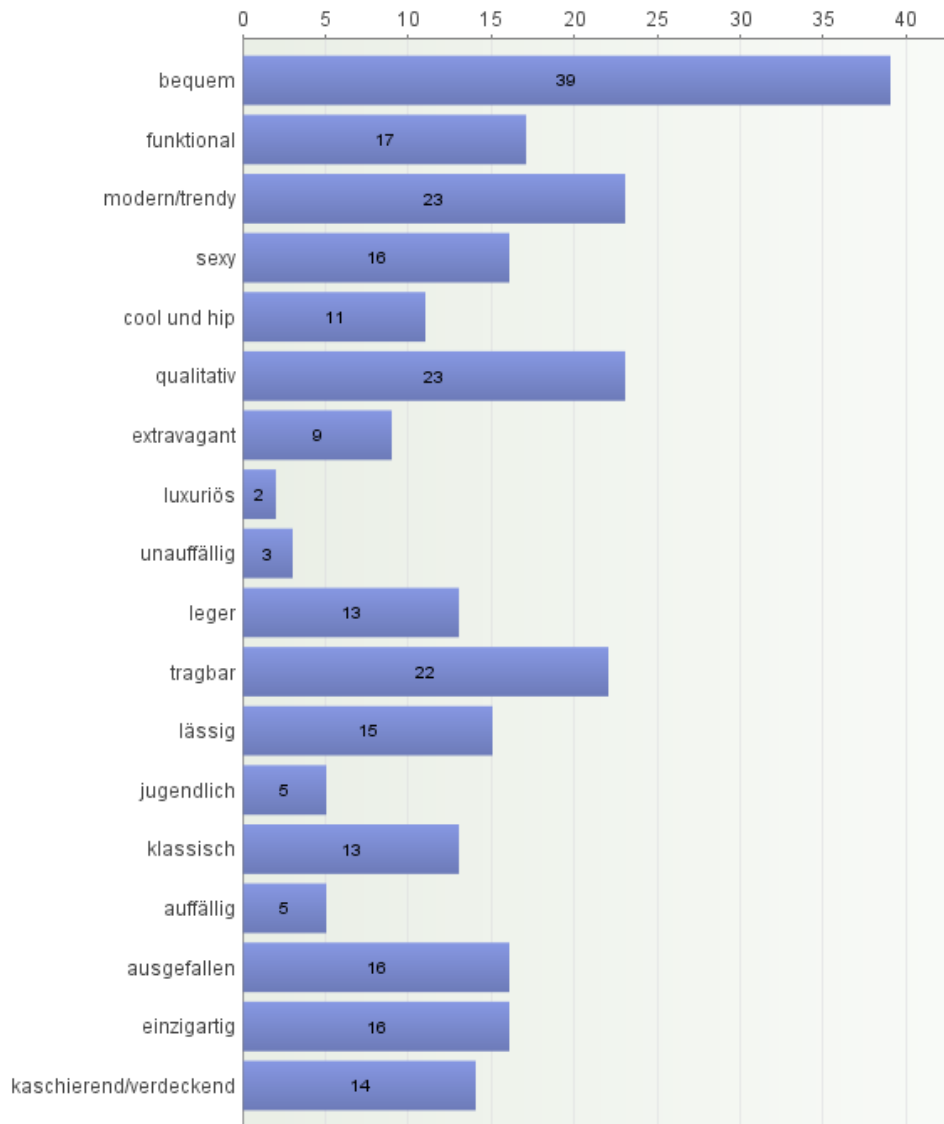- Zur zeit rockig und Chick kombiniert
- …………..

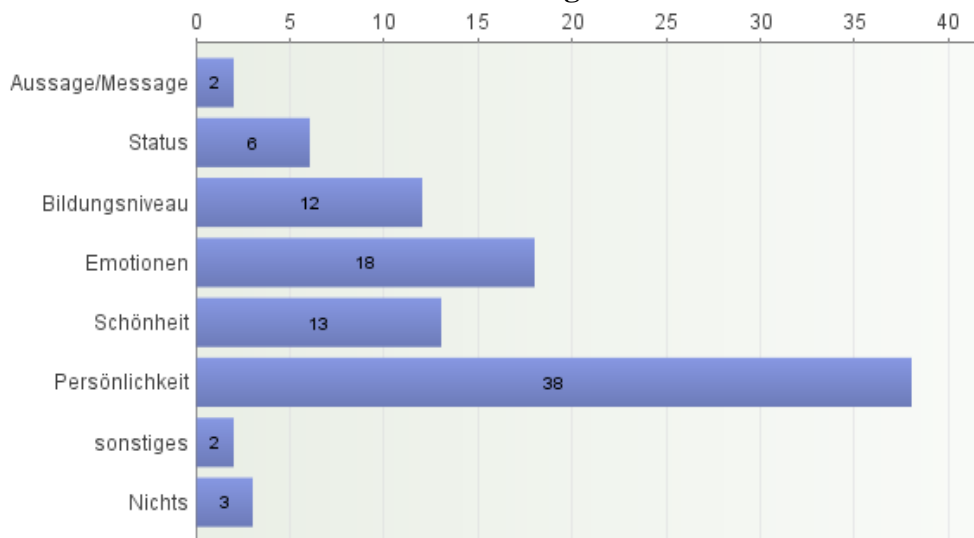## 15. Welche Bedeutung hat für dich persönlich Kleidung? Anzahl der Befragten: 46

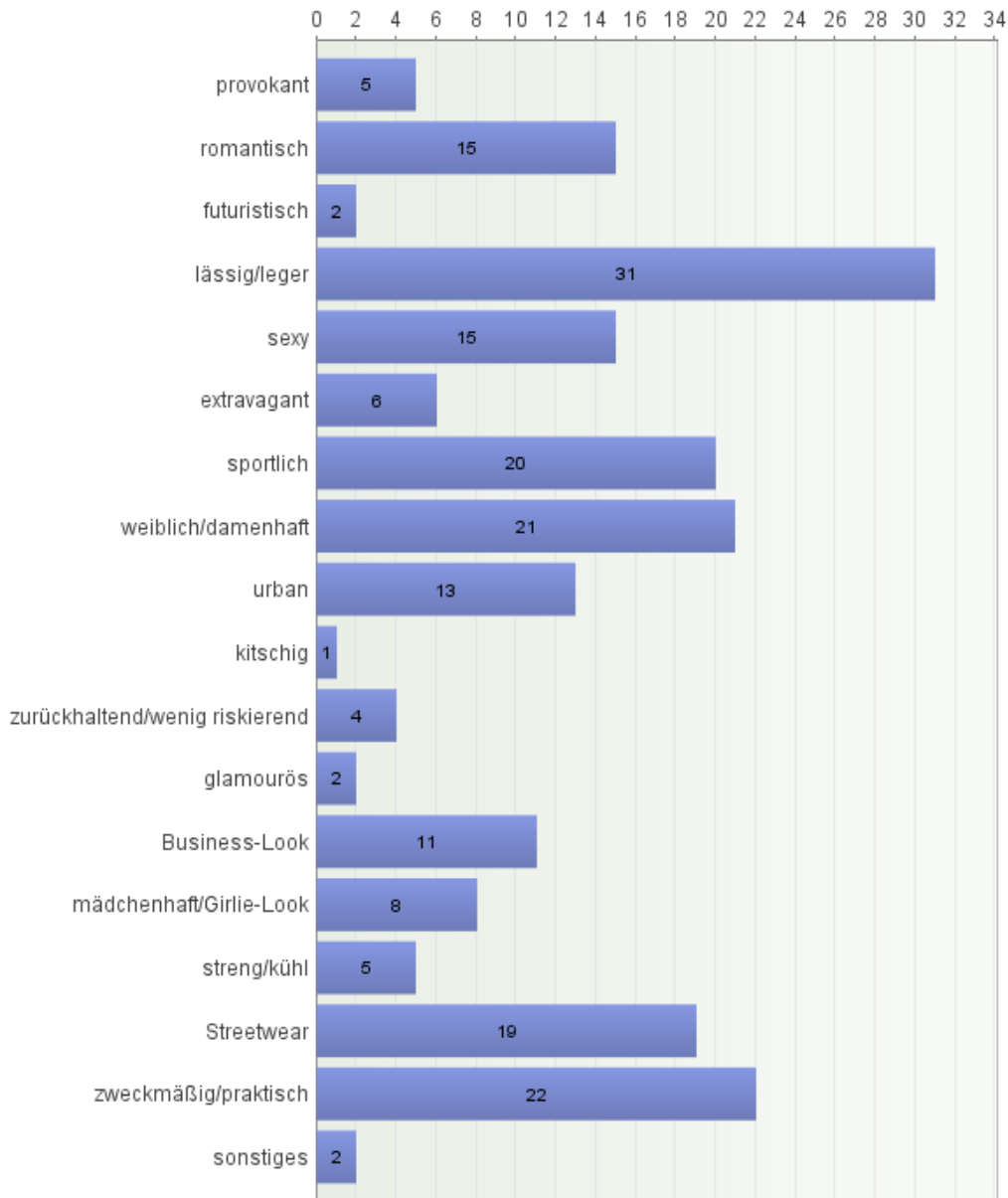## 16. Wie soll deine Kleidung vor allem sein?   Anzahl der Befragten: 48

Eigenschaft	Anzahl
bequem	39
funktional	17
modern/trendy	23
sexy	16
cool und hip	11
qualitativ	23
extravagant	9
luxuriös	2
unauffällig	3
leger	13
tragbar	22
lässig	15
jugendlich	5
klassisch	13
auffällig	5
ausgefallen	16
einzigartig	16
kaschierend/verdeckend	14

19. Was drückst du mit deiner Bekleidung aus?   Anzahl der Befragten: 47

Ausdruck	Anzahl
Aussage/Message	2
Status	6
Bildungsniveau	12
Emotionen	18
Schönheit	13
Persönlichkeit	38
sonstiges	2
Nichts	3

20. Welche dieser Kleidungsstile trägst du häufig? Anzahl der Befragten: 48

Kleidungsstil	Anzahl
provokant	5
romantisch	15
futuristisch	2
lässig/leger	31
sexy	15
extravagant	6
sportlich	20
weiblich/damenhaft	21
urban	13
kitschig	1
zurückhaltend/wenig riskierend	4
glamourös	2
Business-Look	11
mädchenhaft/Girlie-Look	8
streng/kühl	5
Streetwear	19
zweckmäßig/praktisch	22
sonstiges	2

22. Was ist dein Lieblingskleidungsstück im Schrank? Und warum? Anzahl der Befragten: 44

- Ein XL-Schal mit Feder Motiv, weil ich ihn Liebe
- ein blauer trenchcoat, weil er einen tollen schnitt hat.
- kleid, bequem und feminin
- schwarze leggings, weil diese einfach zu allem passen und sie total bequem sind.
- jeans, passen immer..
- meine grünes Jäckchen, entspricht meiner Augenfarbe, passt zu jeder Gelegenheit
- Mutters alter Schal
- 80er Jahre Lederjacke mit Schulterpolstern und allgemein Secoundhandware,
  da die Kleidung damit fast zum Einzelstück wird
- 80er uebergrosser Mohair Cardigan. Warm, funktionell und leute kommentieren immer darauf.
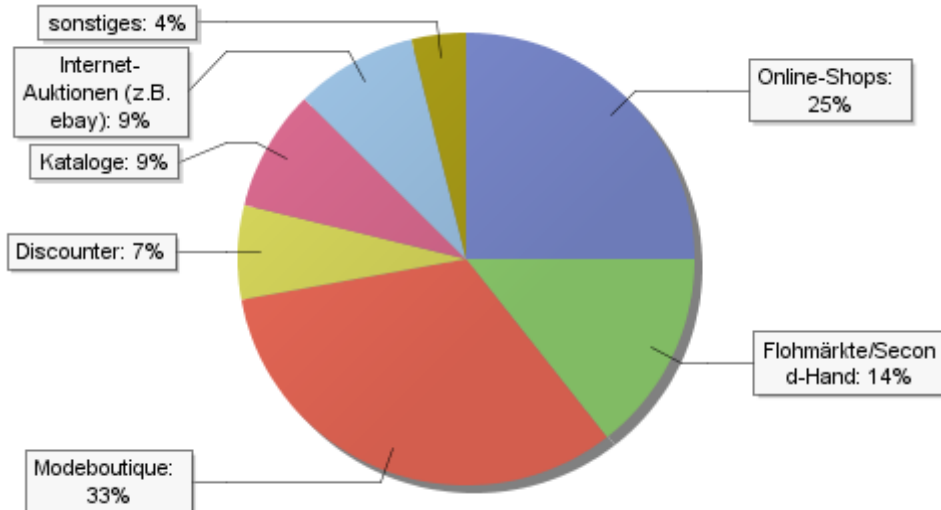 Ich kann einfache Turnschuhe, Jeans und T-Shirt darunter tragen und fuehl mich trotzdem ausgeh
  fertig.

23. Welche Stoffe trägst du am liebsten?   **Anzahl der Befragten: 48**
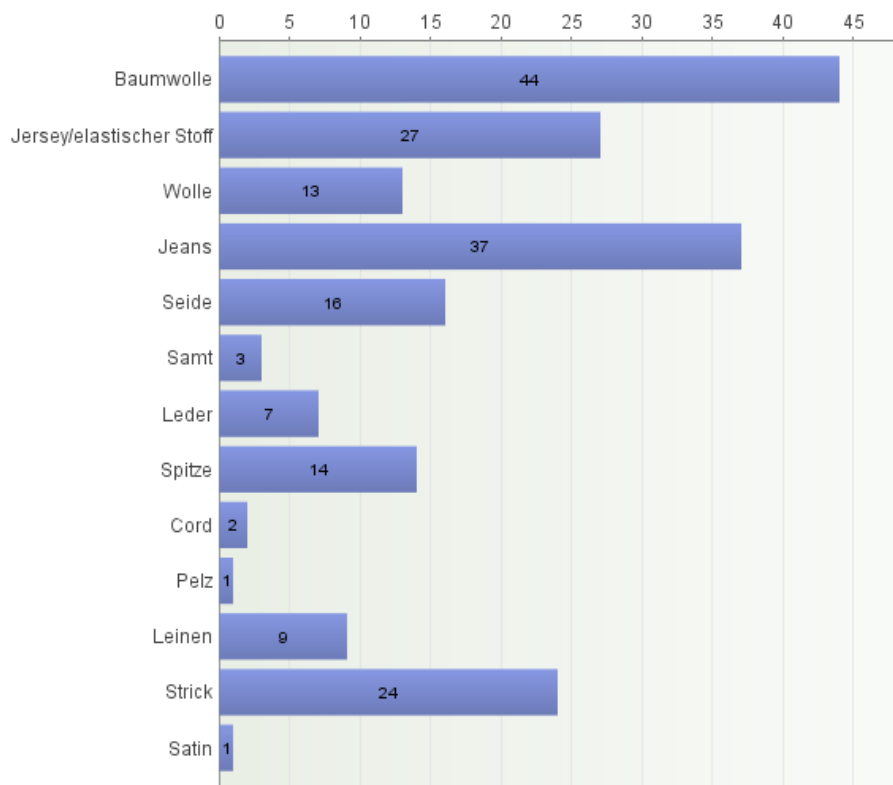
25. Wo kaufst du deine Kleidung?   **Anzahl der Befragten: 48**
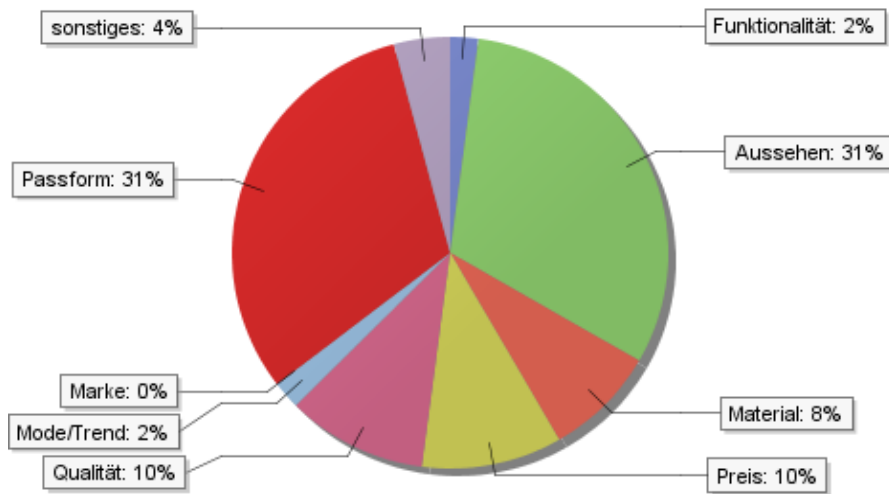

Freitext-Antworten öffnen: sonstiges
- aus finaziellen Gründen H&M, Promod, bei den Ketten halt; man weiß, was man kriegt
- Einkaufszentren
- TKmaxx, zara
- Einkaufscenter

Custom - made fashion

26. Was ist beim Kauf deiner Bekleidung für dich entscheidend? **Anzahl**
der Befragten: 48

sonstiges: 4%
Funktionalität: 2%
Passform: 31%
Aussehen: 31%
Marke: 0%
Mode/Trend: 2%
Qualität: 10%
Material: 8%
Preis: 10%

27. Bist du zufrieden mit der Auswahl an Bekleidung in den Geschäften?
Anzahl der Befragten: 48

sehr zufrieden 4,17%
zufrieden 56,25%
weniger zufrieden 35,42%
nicht zufrieden 4,17%
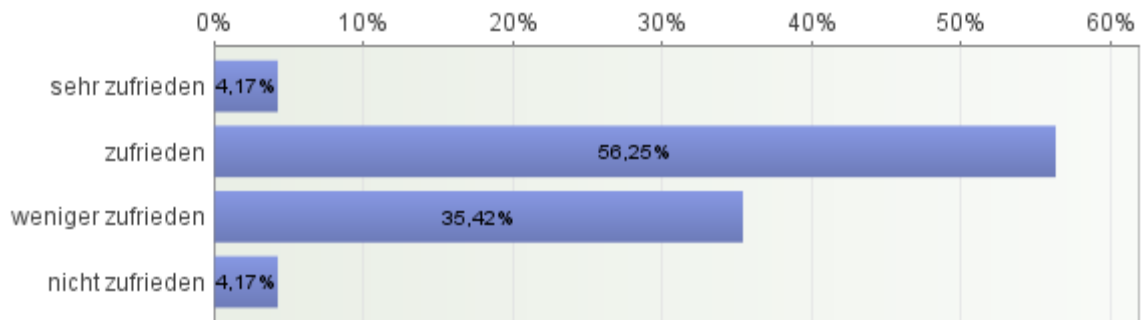
28. Welches der folgenden würdest du bevorzugen? **Anzahl der Befragten: 47**

Maßanfertigung/individuell gefertigt 76,6%
Standard-Größen 23,4%
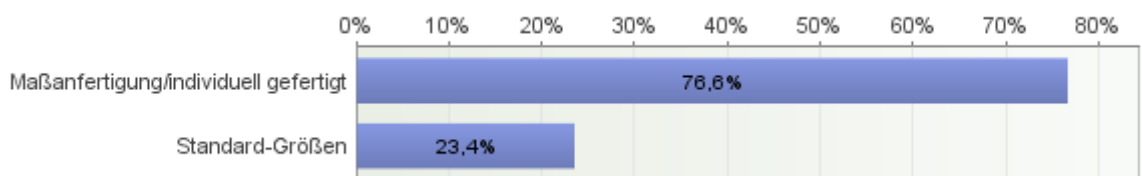
29. Würdest du für Maßanfertigung mehr bezahlen?   **Anzahl der Befragten: 48**

kommt drauf an: 25%

ja: 40%

vielleicht: 31%

nein: 4%
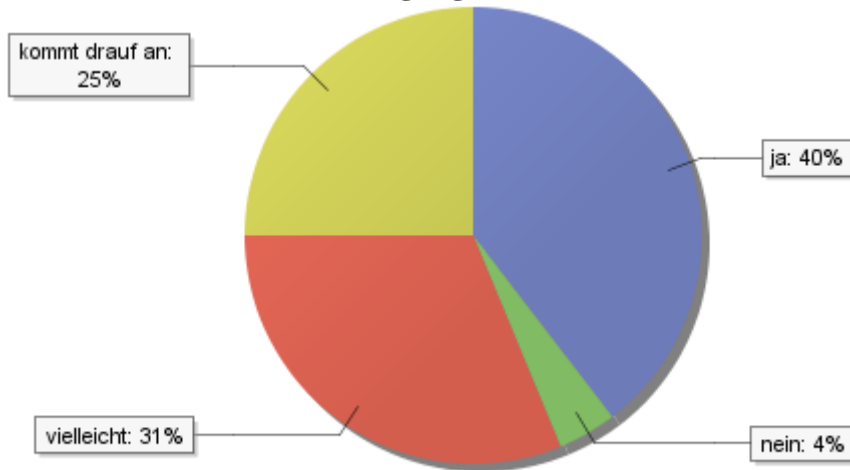
30. Bist du kreativ?   **Anzahl der Befragten: 48**

ja	79,17%
nein	10,42%
kommt drauf an	10,42%
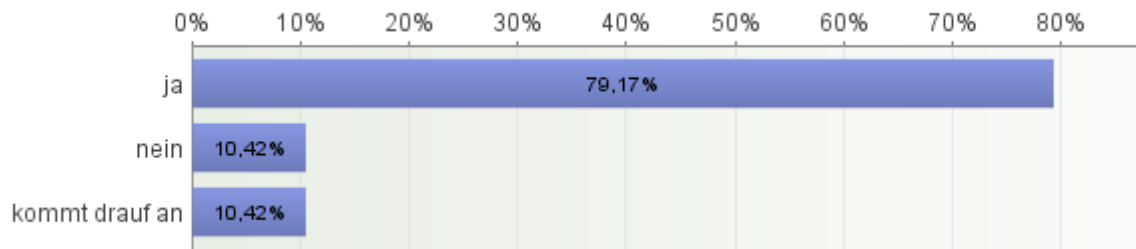
31. Wie findest du die Idee, deine eigene Kleidung kreieren zu können?
Anzahl der Befragten: 48

interessiert mich nicht: 2%

schlecht: 0%

nicht gut: 2%

weniger gut: 4%
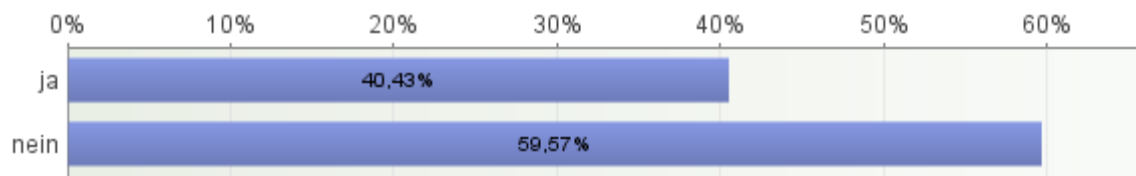
gut: 29%

sehr gut: 62%
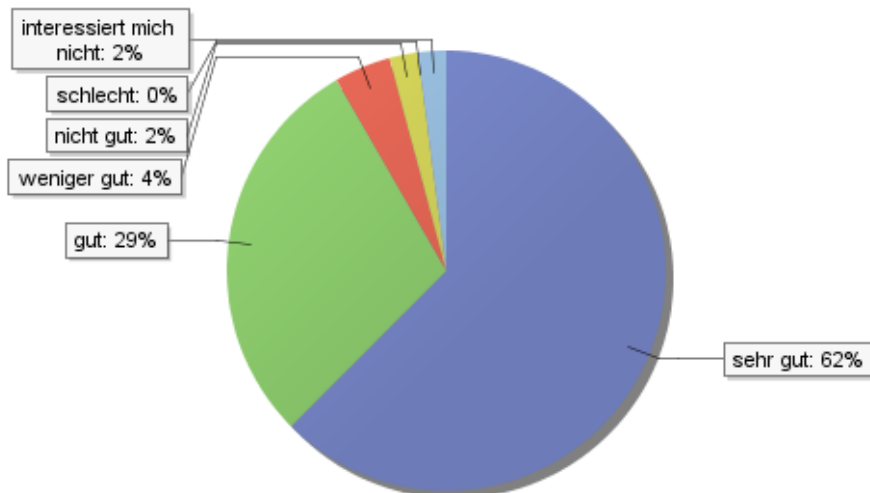
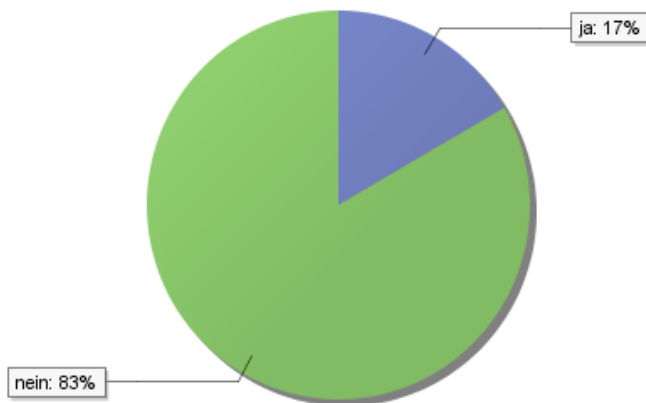**32. Würdest du gerne eigene Kleidung kreieren?**　Anzahl der Befragten: 48
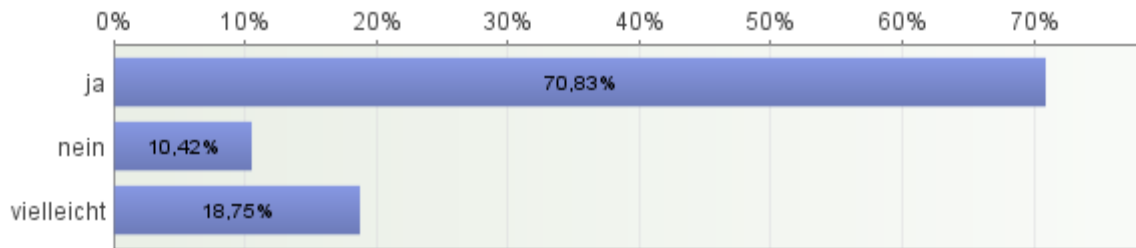
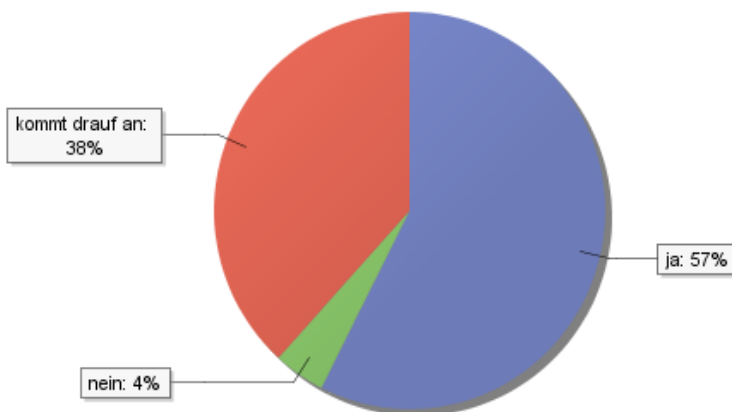**33. Hast du schon einmal von personalisierter Mode (custom-made fashion)gehört?**
Anzahl der Befragten: 47

34. Hast du schon mal personalisierte Kleidung gekauft? (Kunden können, z.B. online, ihre ganz persönliche Kleidung selbst gestalten)　Anzahl der Befragten: 48
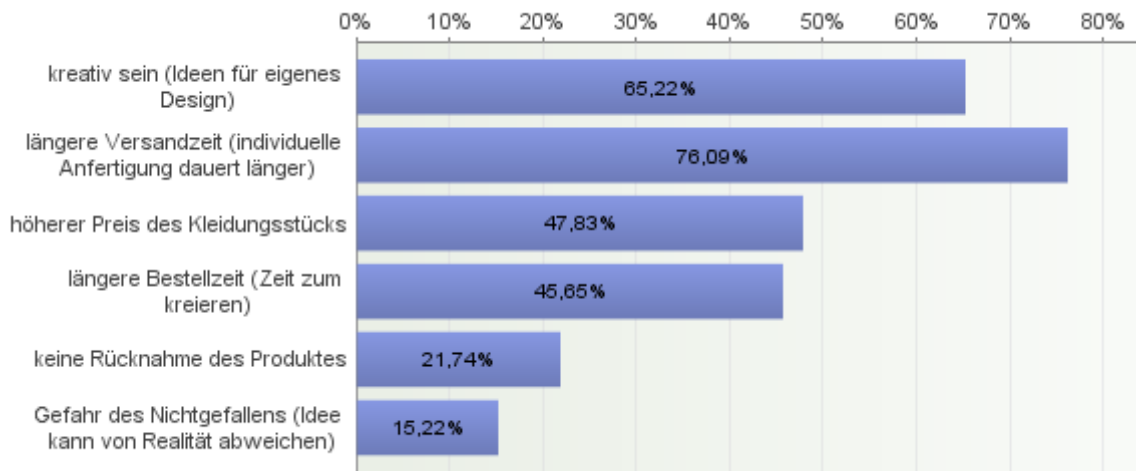

35. Würdest du personalisierte Kleidung kaufen?　Anzahl der Befragten: 47

36. Was würdest du für dein eigenes Design und perfekte Passform in Kauf nehmen? (personalisierte Kleidung) Anzahl der Befragten: 46

kreativ sein (Ideen für eigenes Design)	65,22%
längere Versandzeit (individuelle Anfertigung dauert länger)	76,09%
höherer Preis des Kleidungsstücks	47,83%
längere Bestellzeit (Zeit zum kreieren)	45,65%
keine Rücknahme des Produktes	21,74%
Gefahr des Nichtgefallens (Idee kann von Realität abweichen)	15,22%

37. Würdest du gerne mehr Mitspracherecht beim Design von Bekleidung haben?
Anzahl der Befragten: 46

ja	65,22%
nein	19,57%
interessiert mich nicht	15,22%
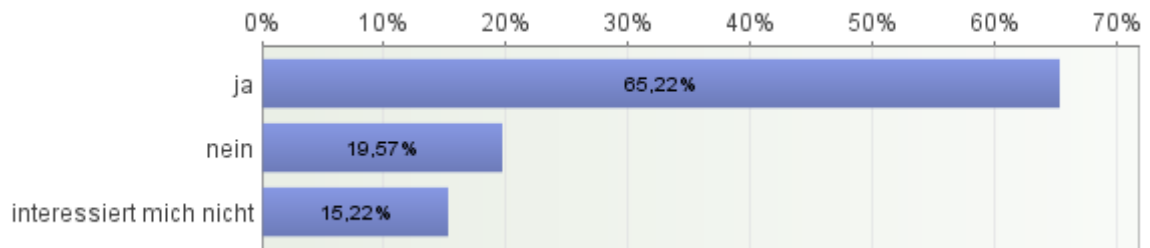
Custom - made fashion (shorten version)   Customer

1. Age
-        25
2. Education

Studend Fashion Design
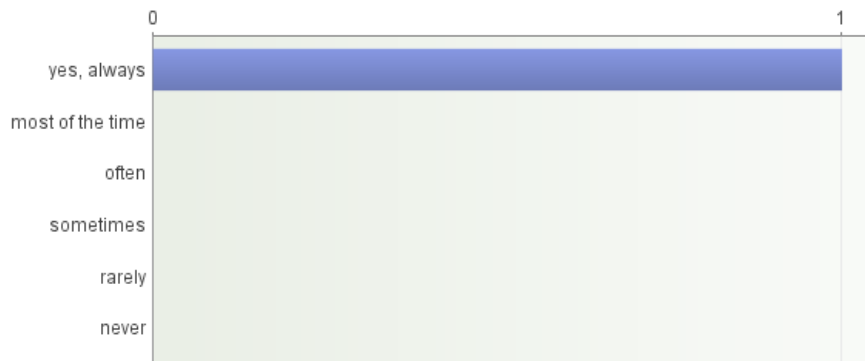
3. Nationality
-        Finnish

4. What is your favourite colour?
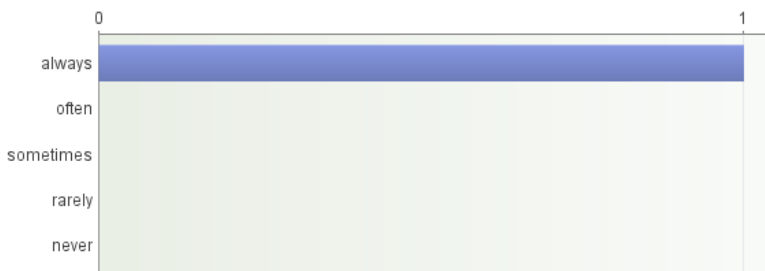-   Black, light blue

5. What colours do you usually wear? (clothes)
-        Black, blue, natural white

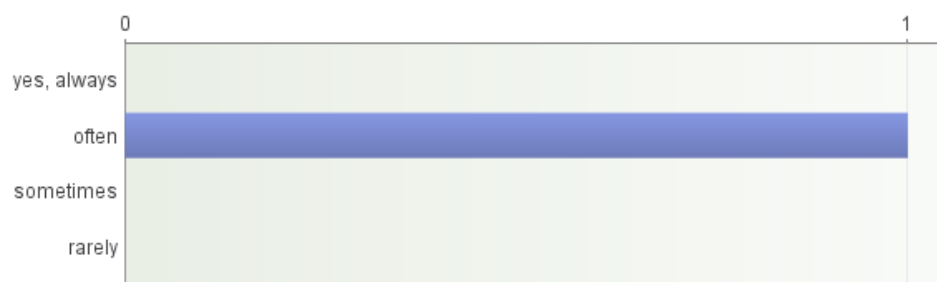6. Do you feel good with the choice of your colours? (clothes)

9. Do you dress according to your feelings and taste?

10. What kind of fashion trend do you like the most? (any, past, present or future)
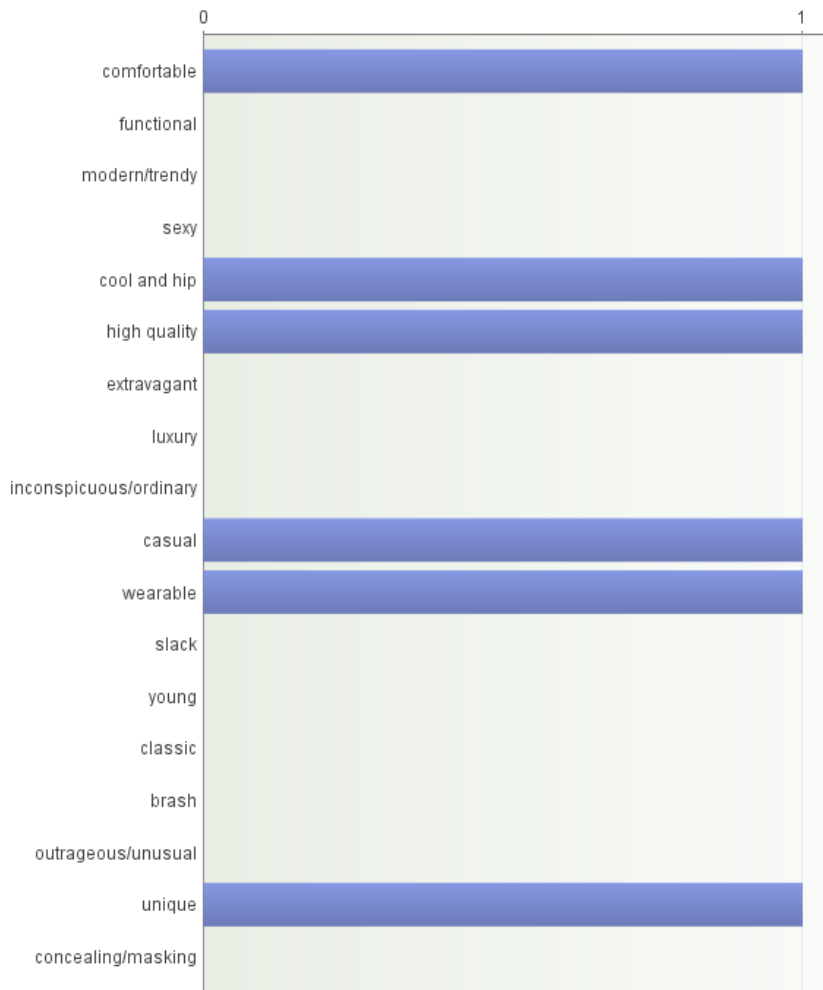-   Casual clothes, vintage

15. Do trends have any impact on how you dress?

16. How important is clothing for you?

	0	1
very important		
important		
less important		
not important		

17. Which aspects of clothing do you value most? How does your clothes should be? (multiple choice)

|	0	1
comfortable		
functional		
modern/trendy		
sexy		
cool and hip		
high quality		
extravagant		
luxury		
inconspicuous/ordinary		
casual		
wearable		
slack		
young		
classic		
brash		
outrageous/unusual		
unique		
concealing/masking		

18. How should clothing make you feel? (multiple choice)
- Self-confident

20. What do you express through your clothing? (multiple choice)
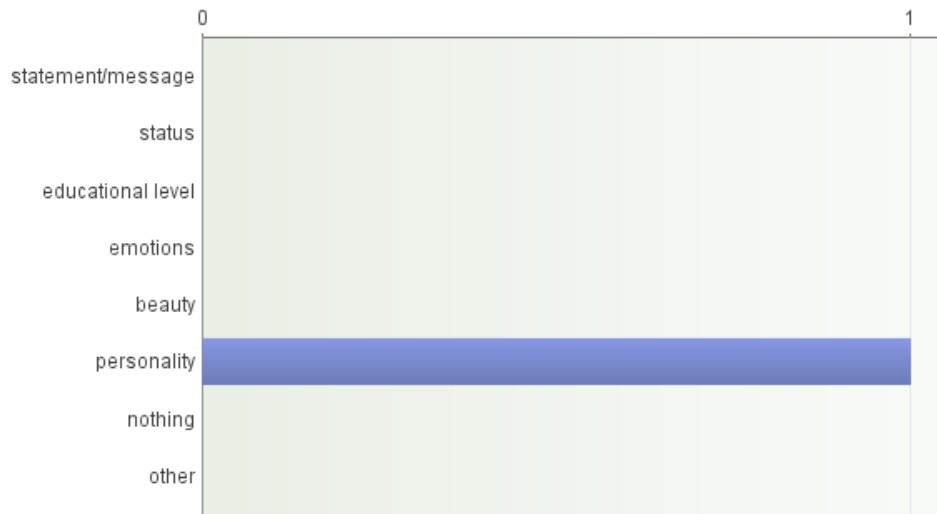
21. What is your general fashion style? (multiple choice)
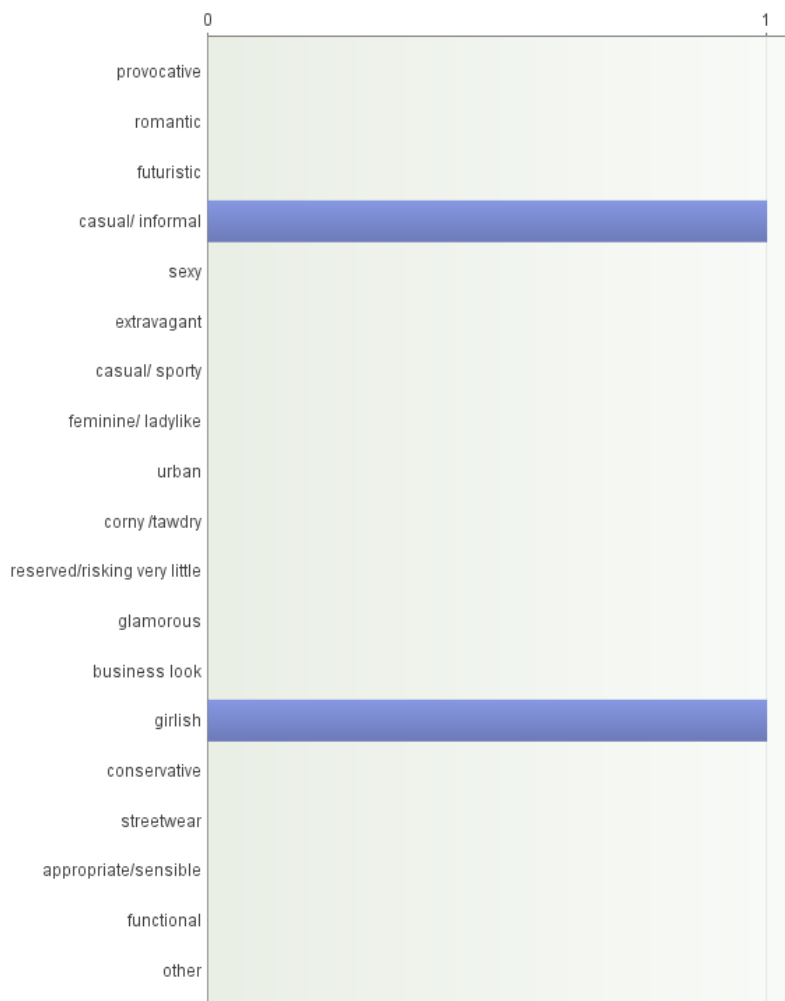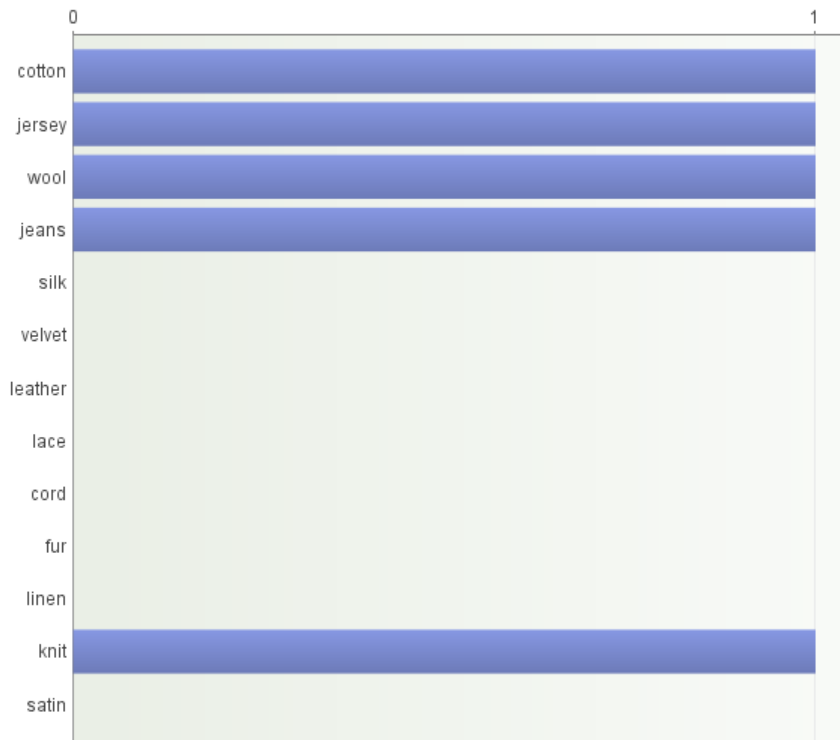

23. What is your favorite item of clothing (in your wardrobe)? And why?

- Tights. The most feminine item I have and I like to wear. I can wear very manly clothes such as collar shirts etc. but still keep the look feminine because of tights. :)
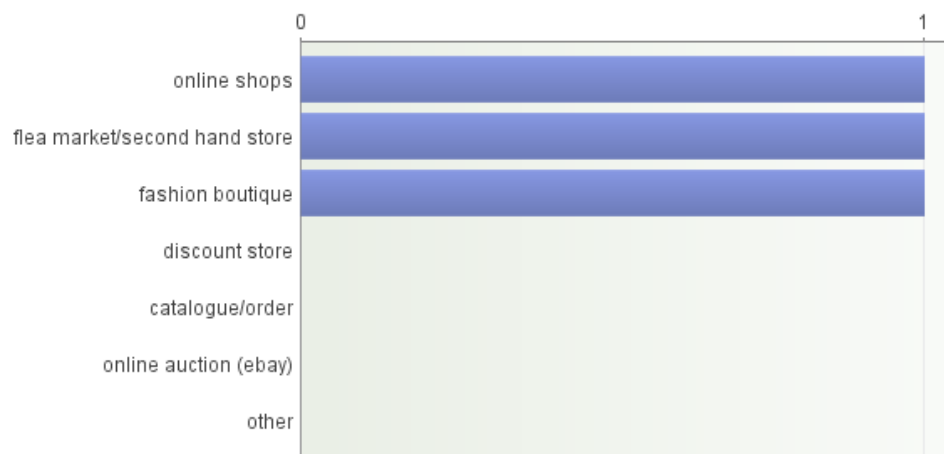
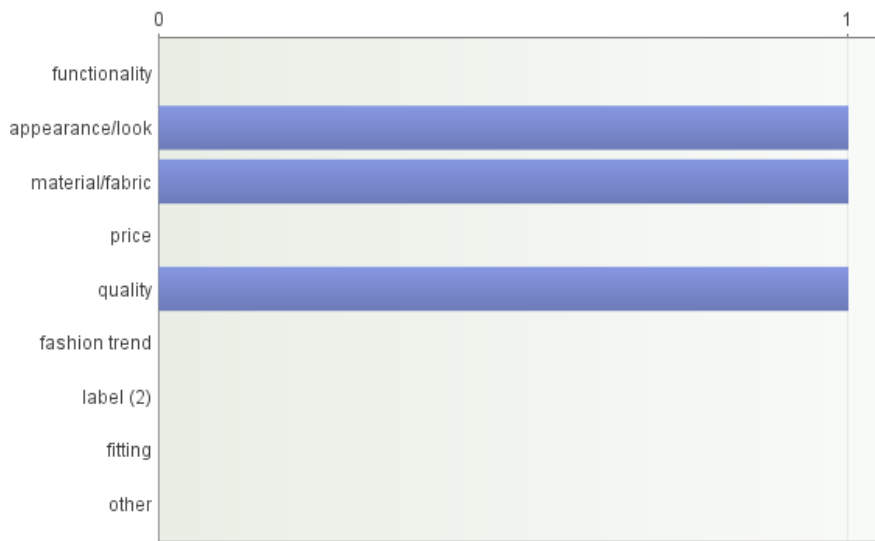24. What fabric do you prefer to wear? (multiple choice)
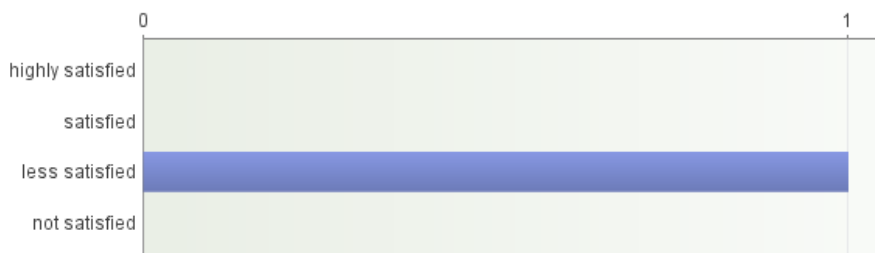

25. What is your current dress size?

26. Where do you purchase clothing? (multiple choice)

27. What aspects do you consider important when purchasing clothing? (multiple choice)

Chart (values 0 to 1):
- functionality: 0
- appearance/look: 1
- material/fabric: 1
- price: 0
- quality: 1
- fashion trend: 0
- label (2): 0
- fitting: 0
- other: 0

28. Are you satisfied with the selection available in shops? (clothing)

Chart (values 0 to 1):
- highly satisfied: 0
- satisfied: 0
- less satisfied: 1
- not satisfied: 0

29. Which of the following would you prefer? (clothes)

Chart (values 0 to 1):
- made to measure/custom made: 1
- standard size: 0

30. Would you pay more for made to measure/tailor-made clothing?

Chart (values 0 to 1):
- yes: 1
- no: 0
- maybe: 0
- it depends: 0

31. Are you creative?
- Yes

Custom - made fashion

32. How do you think about the idea of designing your own clothes?
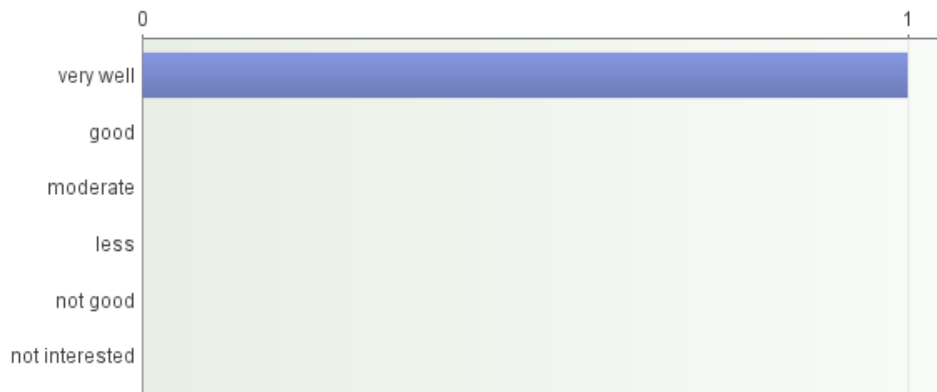
33. Would you like to create/design your own clothes?

34. Have you ever heard about custom-made fashion? (clothes made to the customer's specifications/customer can create own clothes at special websites)

35. Have you ever bought custom-made clothes? (customization)
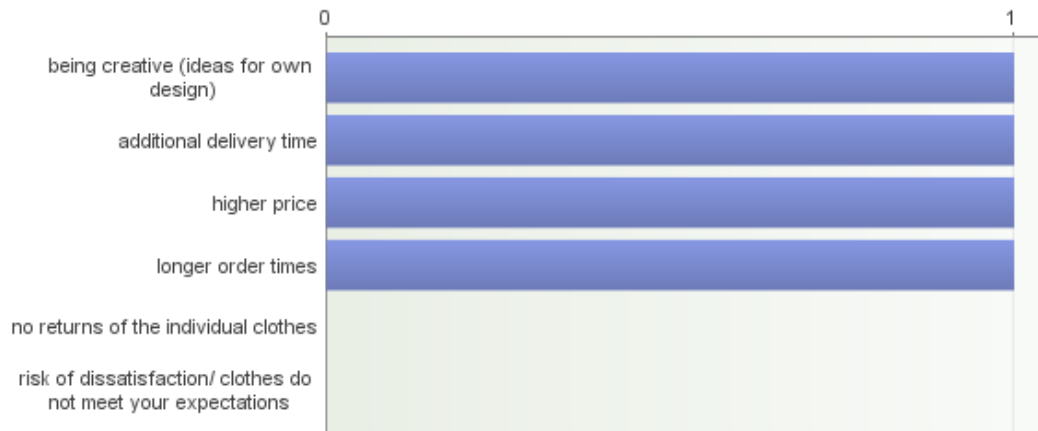

36. If you already bought custom-made fashion, what did you like or dislike about it?

Keine Antworten

37. If not, would you like to buy custom-made fashion?

38. For your own design and perfect fit which of the following would you be willing to sacrifice/accept? (multiple choice)

39. Would you like to have more influence in the process of designing fashion?

40. What do you like in fashion business? (in general)
- "They" are closer and closer to an ecological point of view, but not all of them. High quality and endurance of a garment is important.

41. What do you dislike in fashion business? (in general)
- It is so hectic and hard to create something new because everything has been done already.

Customization Designer Survey 12.08.2012

1. Company name:
m.a.p.h.i.a - Modeatelier

2. Head of the company:
Anne-Franziska Gleinig

3. Position/function in the company:
Designer & Owner

4. Type of company:
Fashion design for ladies and maternity wear

5. Type of purchased products:
Skirts, dresses, shirts, coats, trousers

6. Number of employees:
2

7. Service of customization:
Anything customer wants and needs, adjusting of fitting, material, color, details

8. What type of customization does the company offer?

Individual customization, perfect fit

9. When and why did you start to offer the service of customization?
Almost right from the beginning, because I realized quite quickly that loads of different types do no fit into four standard sizes (such as XS,S,M,L)

10. Where do you offer the service of customization? (online shop, physical store)
At physical store and online shop

11. How does your company offer this service and how does it implement?
Online shop: customer can ask for free textile samples which are sent via mail and they choose textile and color they like. They send photo and measurements and clothes are fitted for them

12. What exactly can be customized?
Almost everything, material, colour, cutting, fit

13. How long does it take to produce a customized garment?
That really depends on the piece of garment, a very basic skirt can be made in one hour and a very special bridal dress can take some days.

14. How do you get customers measurement?
When they come to shop I measure. Internet they measure themselves and I ask for photos after years of experience I can see if measurements are probably taken right and if proportions of measurements and foto match

15. Does the idea of customization change your way of designing clothes? If so, how does your way of creating fashion looks like?

Yes, while designing I already start thinking: what can be customized and could it easily be done? Usually I create for my ideas and taste and think later about customizable features, sometimes the idea of customization comes during the designing process too but never before.

16. What is the customer reaction about customization of products?

They enjoy the "couture feeling", having something which is only made for them
Also many customers start to realize the advantage of well fitting clothes

17. By offering the service of customizable clothing, what are the main advantages for your clients?

Customers of mass production clothes are so used to always make compromises when shopping

18. What are the main advantages for your company?

Close relation to customer, customer feels special, since there is high attention paid to their needs and desires It is eco friendly, like going to organic supermarket: you pay a little more but everything is produced locally and customer can see how and were there products are made

19. What are the main disadvantages for your company?

Can be time consuming but that´s ok

20. What are the main disadvantages for your clients?

Not sure if there are any, but I remember one client said, they feel there are involved and also have to do some work instead of browsing through ready made products they have to think about what it actually is they really want and that can be a process, too.

21. Resume:

For small labels it is definitely a way of competing against mass production
Having design and production so close, precise customization can be realized in short period of time
Most customers enjoy the experience

Anne-Franziska Gleinig   Berlin, August 2012
_____   _____
Name   Date, Place