

Poncho Outdoors and Texas A&M:

A MULTI-METHOD STUDY OF APPAREL TRENDS AND CAMPUS OPPORTUNITIES

RESEARCH INTEGRATING STUDENT AND ALUMNI PERSPECTIVES THROUGH INTERVIEWS, SURVEYS, AND SECONDARY DATA



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MEET THE RESEARCH TEAM

Our mission: decode student insights to help Poncho Outdoors connect with the Aggie community.



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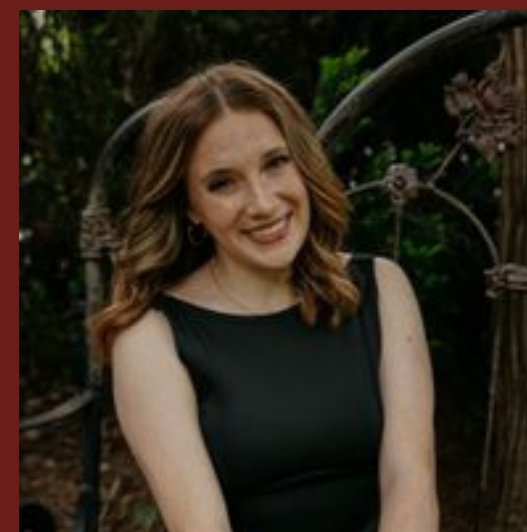
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OBJECTIVES

Structured approach to creating clear and actionable development requirements



Consumer Behavior

Understand how students and young alumni buy and wear outdoor/gameday apparel



Design

Identify preferred colors, logos, and brand traits for an A&M collection



Perception

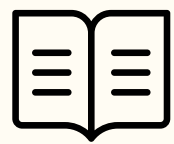
Measure awareness and perception of Poncho Outdoors



Engagement Strategy

Find the best campus touchpoints and incentives to drive purchase

ORIGINAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS



Q: How should Poncho build out their A&M offering?



Specifically, what color style (original vs pearl snap western), sleeve (long vs short), color (maroon, white, black, etc.), and logo (throwbacks, standard A&M) combo would work best?

METHODOLOGY

Data Collection



- Phased mixed-method approach
- Structured interviews: to identify early themes
- Secondary data review: high-level industry & academic sources
- Structured online survey



Target:

- Current Texas A&M students
- Recent Texas A&M alumni

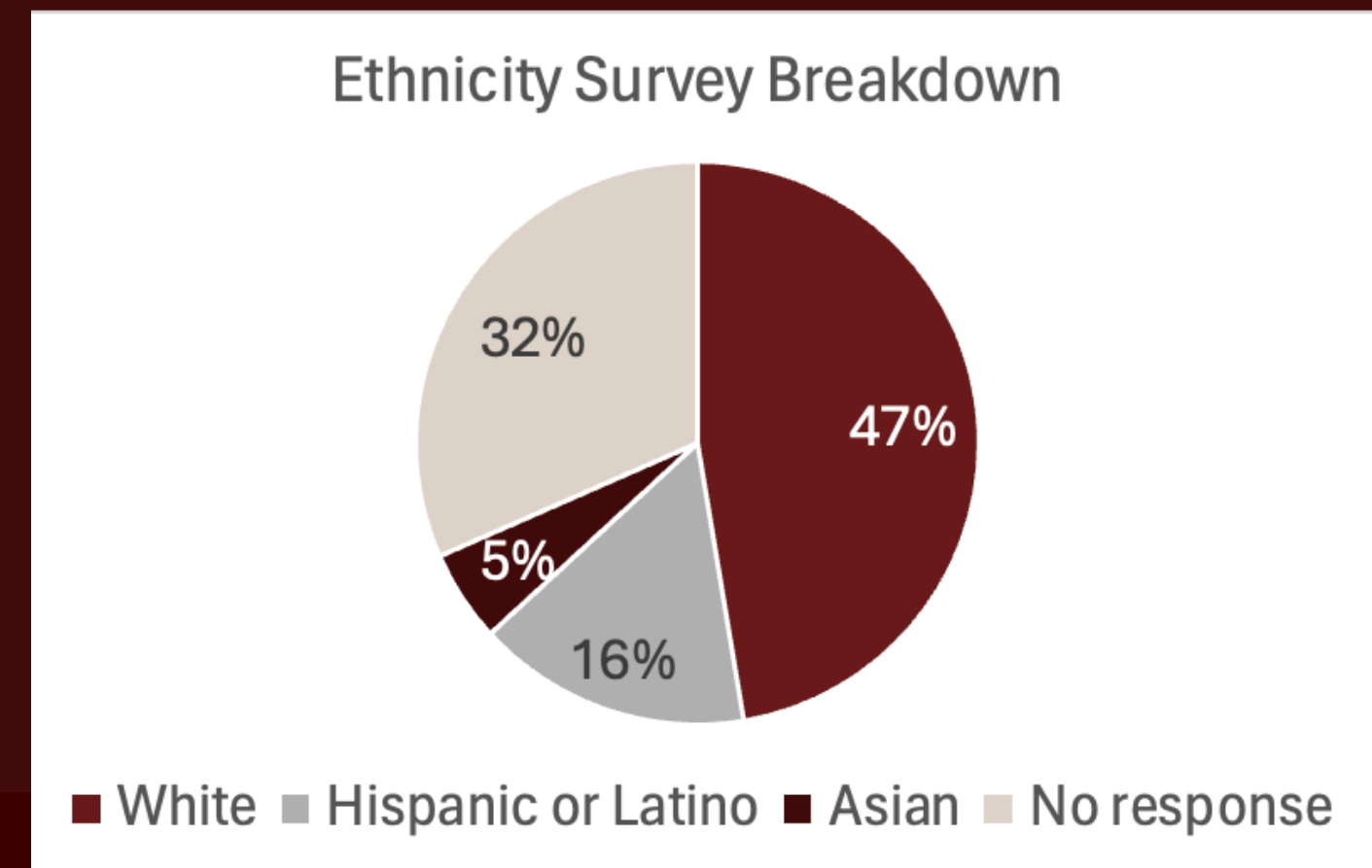
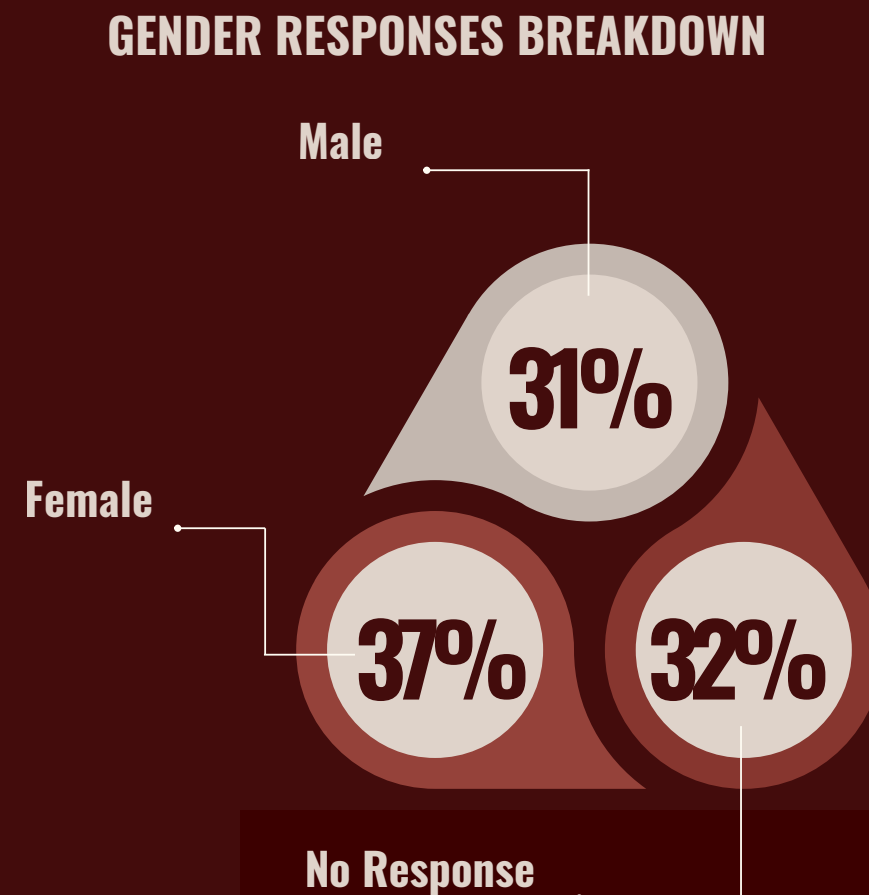
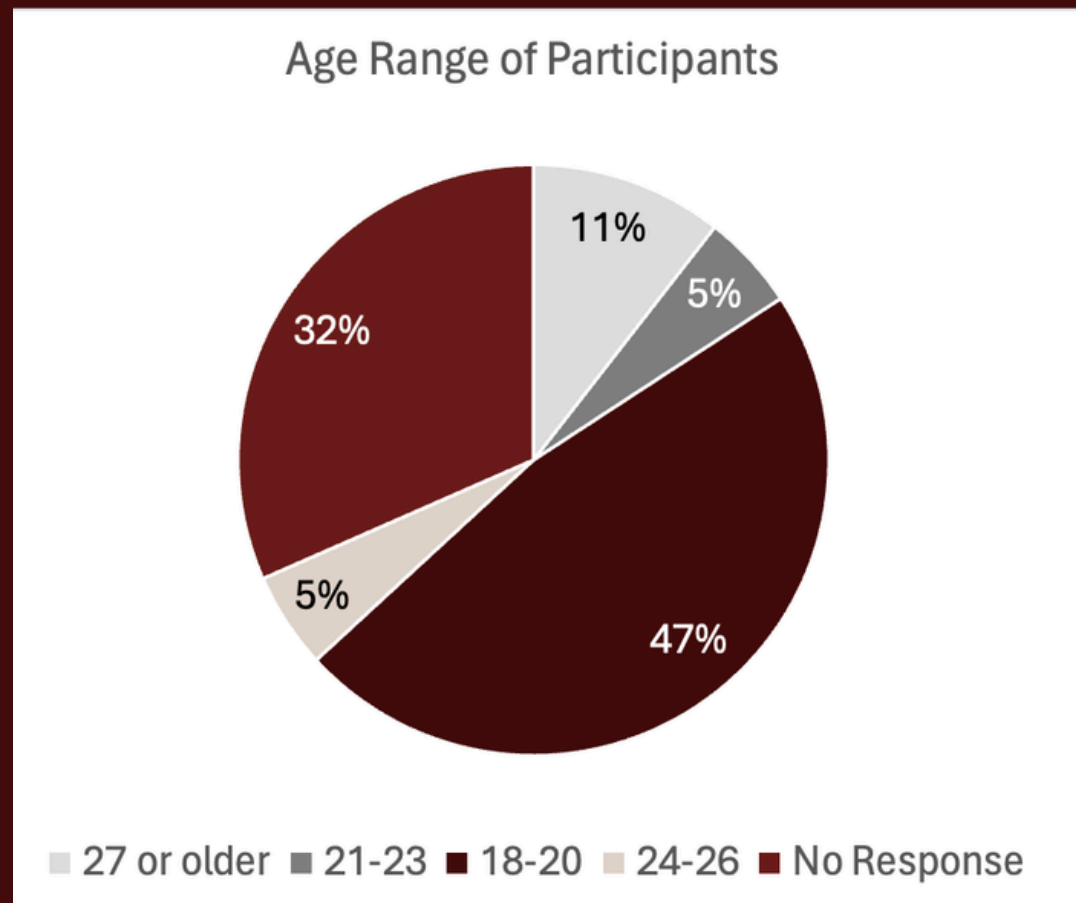
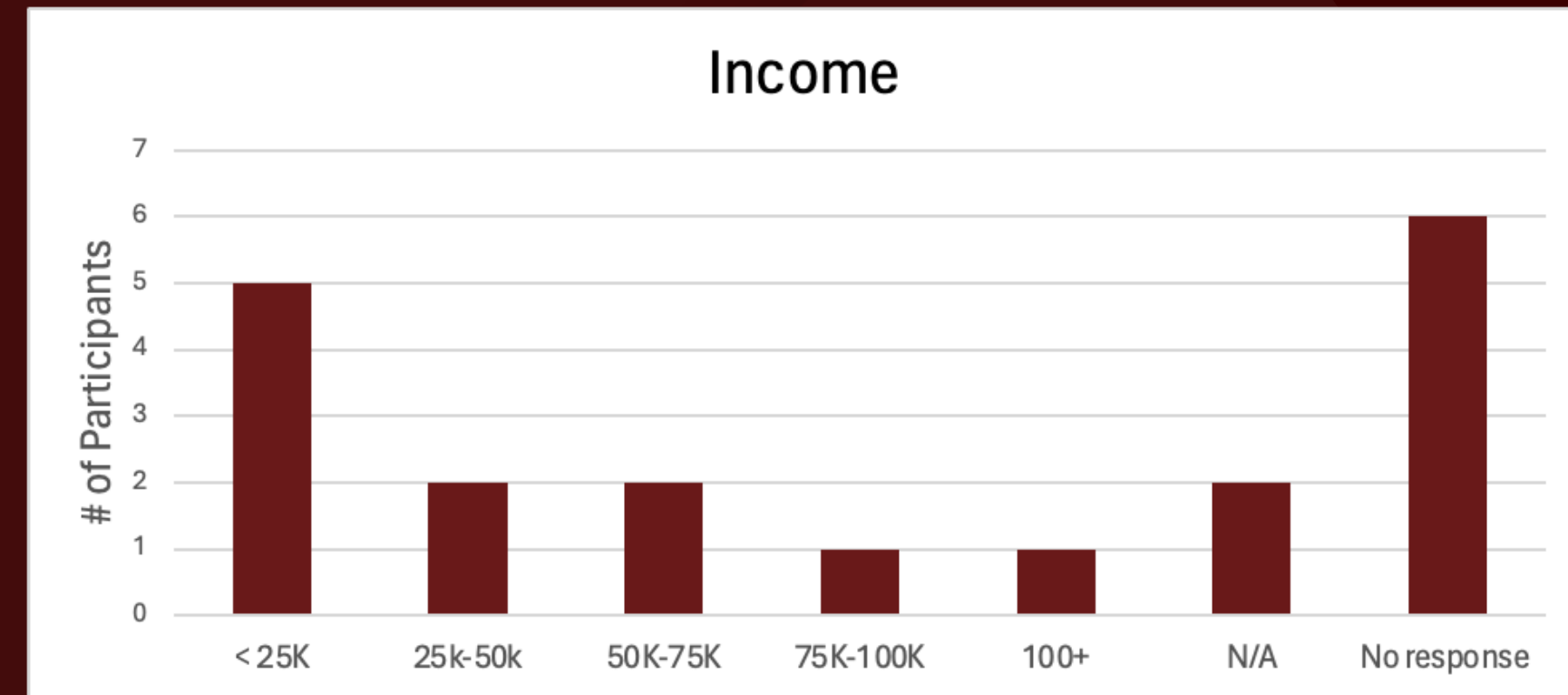


Distribution:

- Online survey distributed using organizational emails, LinkedIn networking, peer-to-peer texting, & Facebook posts

DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

- Mix of undergraduate and graduate students + some former students
- **Gender:** combination of male and female
- **Ethnicity:** majority White, with Hispanic/Latino and other groups represented
- **Age:** primarily early 20s, with several slightly older respondents





CHALLENGES IN DATA COLLECTION

Challenges Faced

- Ensuring enough data was collected to support meaningful analysis
- Maintaining consistency and reliability across different data sources
- Difficulty gathering complete information from data sources
- Managing gaps or missing data that limited certain parts of the analysis

Impact on Analysis

- Reduced ability to fully validate certain patterns or trends
- Some findings may rely on smaller or less representative subsets of data
- Increased uncertainty in conclusions due to missing or inconsistent inputs
- Need for cautious interpretation and clear acknowledgment of limitations

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY FINDINGS

Finding #1

Awareness

Social media is the primary driver of brand awareness, trust-building, and student purchase intent.

Finding #2

Brand Identity

Gen Z responds most strongly to brands that feel authentic, affordable, and aligned with their personal identity.

Finding #3

Experiential Marketing

Campus pop-up events generate excitement, encourage immediate purchases, and drive additional online engagement afterward.

Finding #4

Market Demand

Collegiate apparel demand remains high, with schools like Texas A&M representing top-performing university merchandise markets.

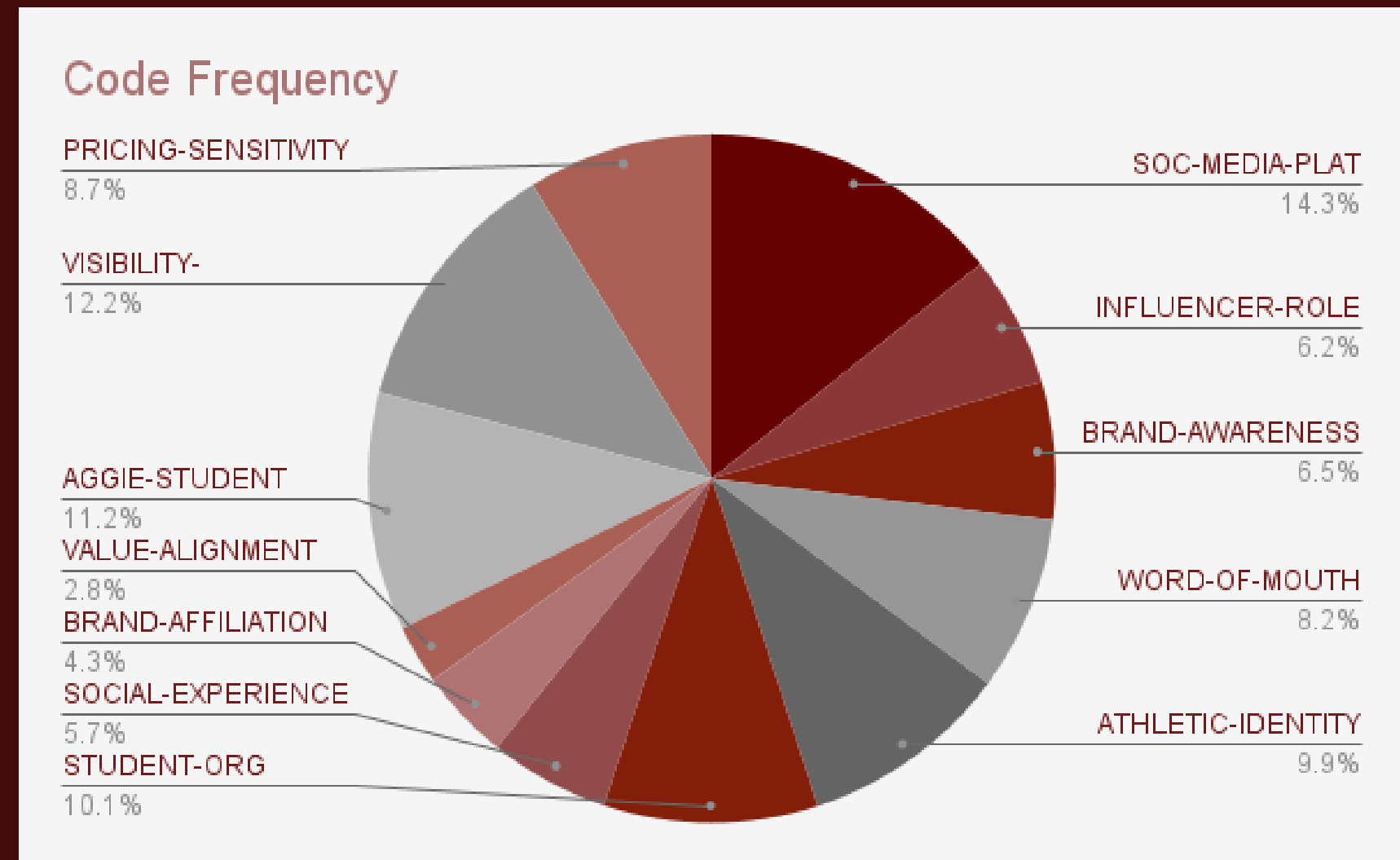
Finding #5

Strategy

A combined channel approach leveraging digital platforms, campus partnerships, and pop-up experiences best fulfills student expectations and buyer behavior.

INTERVIEWS: THEMES

The most common themes were athletic identity, Aggie pride, and word-of-mouth influence, indicating that students most often discussed brands in the context of sports culture, campus traditions, and peer-driven discovery. These patterns suggest that brand relevance among students is strongly shaped by shared experiences and community connections.



WHAT MATTERS MOST



TOP IMPORTANCE

Style/Design

Comfort



MODERATE

Price

Brand Reputation



MIXED/LOWER

Sustainability

Ethical Production


"Clothing is seen as moderate to strong self-expression—what they wear says a lot about who they are."

WHERE THEY SHOP

Apparel Shopping Insights:

- Primary purchase points included Aggieland Outfitters, followed by online brand websites influenced by social media. Local retailers like Maroon U and The Warehouse showed moderate selection, while the campus bookstore and pop-up markets were chosen less frequently, indicating emerging awareness potential but lower direct purchase reliance.

COMMON LOCATIONS

-  Aggieland Outfitters (Top Choice)
-  Online brand websites / Social
-  Local stores (e.g., The Warehouse, Maroon U)

*Campus bookstores and pop-up markets were less frequently selected.

Q: Where do you typically shop for Texas A&M apparel? (Select all that apply)



BRAND TRAITS

Most influential:

- Unique/trendy designs
- Availability/ease of purchase

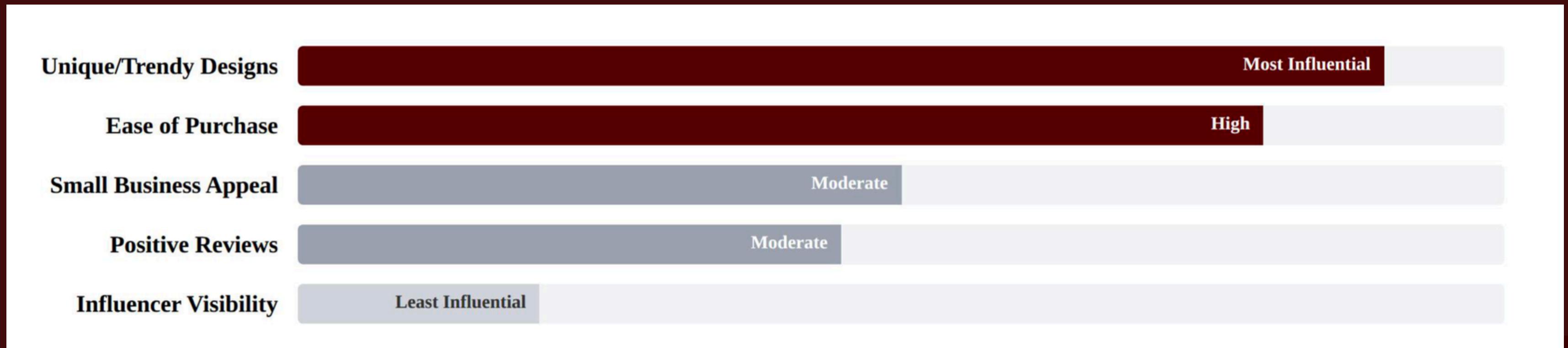
Moderate:

- Local/small business appeal
- Positive reviews
- Alignment with values

Least influential:

- Social media presence / influencer visibility (often ranked last)

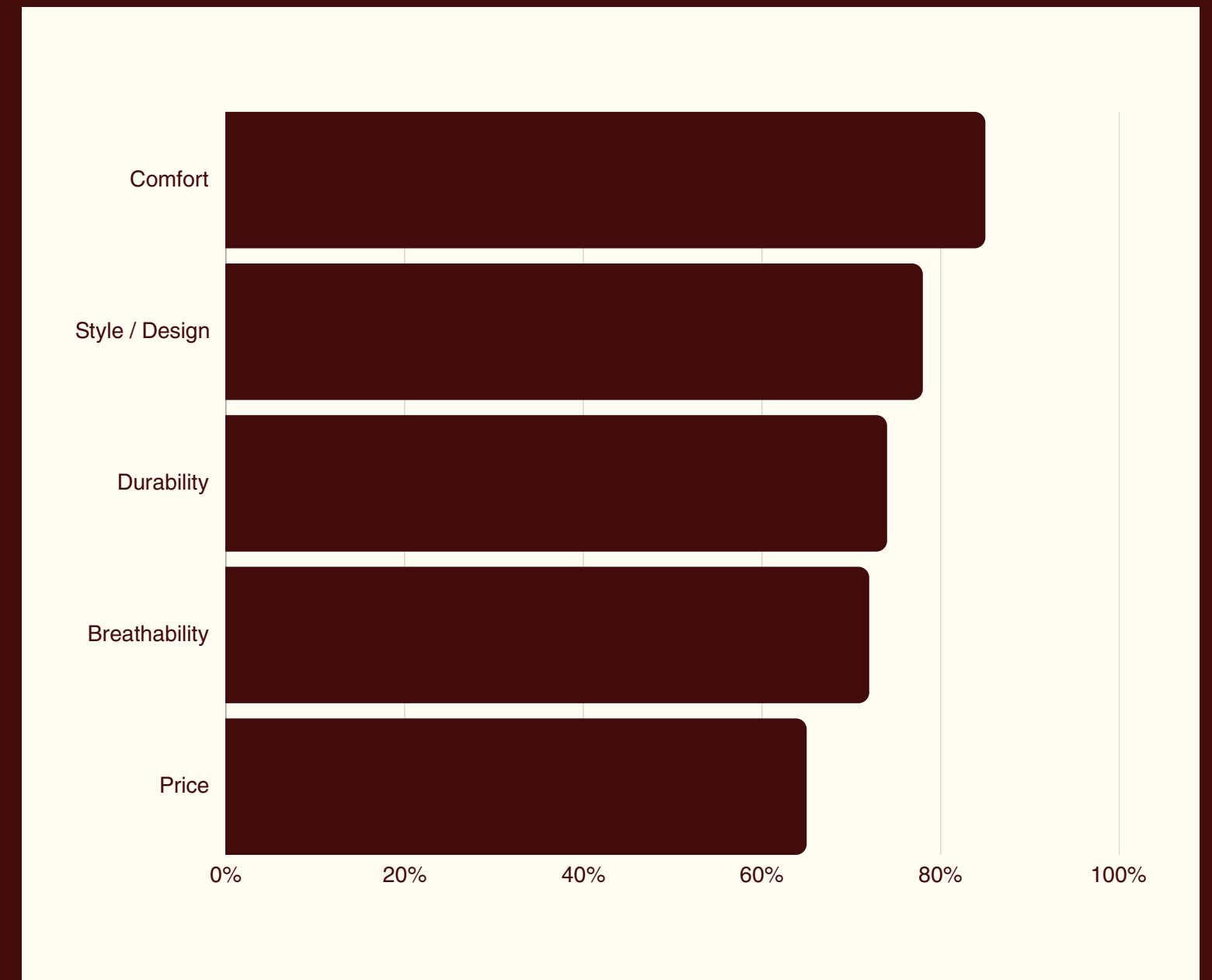
Q: Rank the following characteristics of a gameday apparel brand from most influential (1) to least influential (6) when deciding where to buy.



APPAREL PERCEPTION INSIGHTS

What Students Value Most:

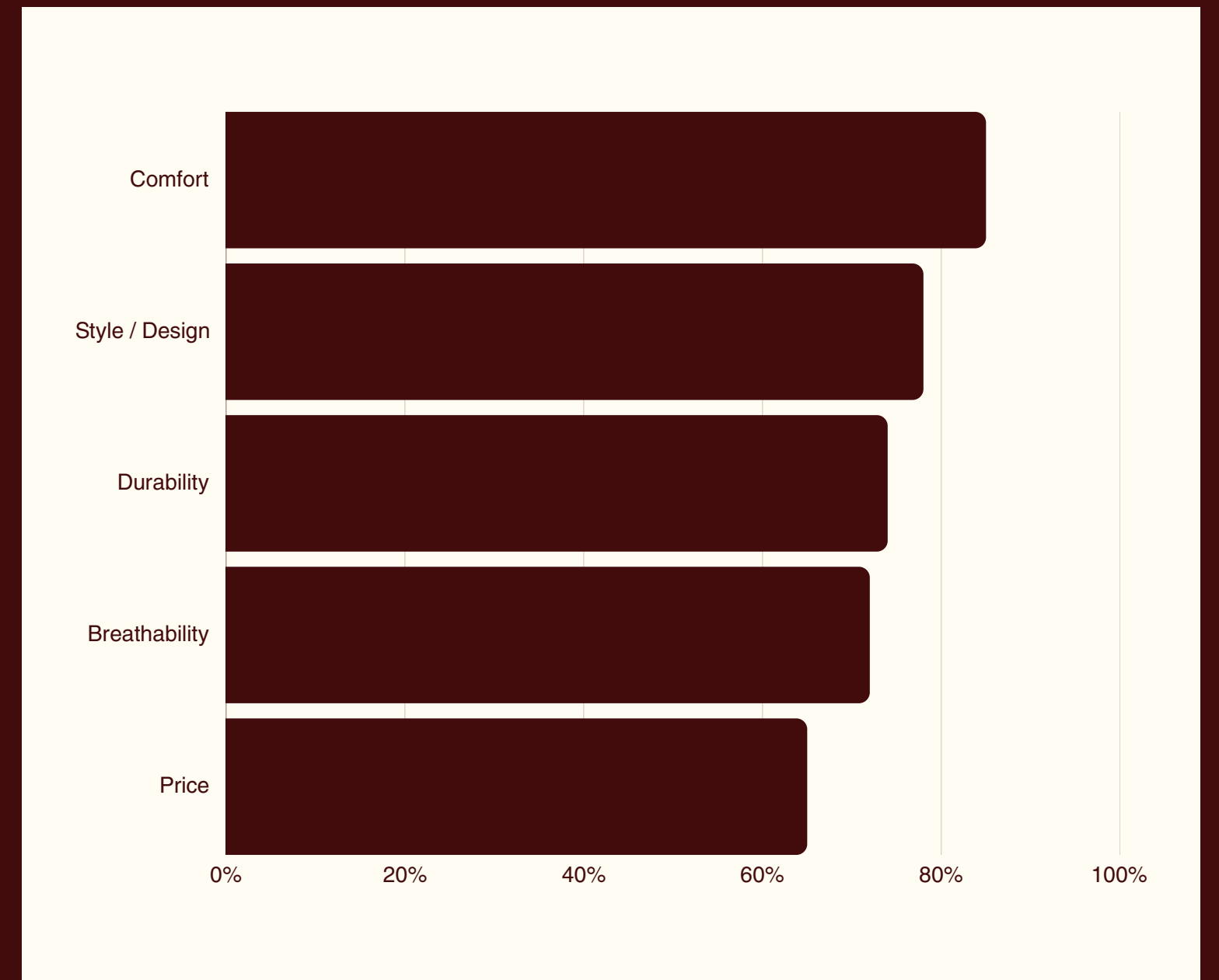
- High comfort and mobility
- Trend-driven designs
- Durable materials suited for Texas weather
- Versatility (can wear to class, tailgates, casual outings)



APPAREL PERCEPTION INSIGHTS CONT.

Perception of Premium Apparel:

- Students strongly associate higher price with higher quality, but ONLY when the value is visible.
- Performance features (breathability, stain resistance, UV protection) increase willingness to pay.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Informed by our research, these are the strategic recommendations and decisions we advise for the next phase.





STRENGTHENING PRESENCE

INSIGHTS

- PEAK MOMENTS → Football weekends & gameday culture
- HIGHEST ENGAGEMENT → Athletics merchandise purchase patterns
- TOP VISIBILITY → Tailgates (#1 location for brand awareness)

RECOMMEND

- Gameday Pop-Ups
- Student Organization Collaboration
- Limited Gameday Drops





INCREASE RETAIL IMPACT

INSIGHTS

- AUTHENTICITY WINS → Students prefer local + Aggie-owned feel
- LOCAL TRUST BUILDS → Retail partnerships strengthen perceived authenticity
- SURVEY SIGNAL (Q6) → Local boutiques = moderate interest, not yet primary

RECOMMEND

- Retail-Exclusive Limited Drops
- Curated products only at key local stores
- Stronger In-Store Visibility
- Updated signage, product storytelling, visual displays
- Co-Promote Launch Moments
- Joint marketing push online + on campus

KEY RETAIL PARTNERS

- Maroon U
- The Warehouse





EXPAND ACTIVATION

INSIGHTS

- EXPERIENCE INFLUENCES → Students describe event shopping as fun + authentic
- EMOTIONAL STICKINESS → Events increase engagement & brand recall
- SURVEY SIGNAL (Q13) → Aggie Park = #2 visibility location

RECOMMEND

- Show Up at Campus Festivals
- High-foot-traffic cultural moments
- Activate Outdoor Markets
- Gameday-adjacent retail environments
- Prioritize Student-Led Events
- Advisor-approved pop-ups at Aggie Park





LIMIT INVESTMENT

SUPPORTED BY

- NEGATIVE PERCEPTION → Students describe bookstore apparel as basic + overpriced
- GEN Z SHIFT → Traditional campus bookstores show declining relevance
- SURVEY SIGNAL (Q6 & Q13) → Bookstores & pop-ups ranked lowest for use & visibility

RECOMMEND

- Short, High-Traffic Use Only
- Activate only during peak event windows
- No Ongoing Retail Focus
- Avoid sustained investment or product stocking
- Treat as Awareness, Not Sales Channels
- Limited, advisor-approved activations only

CHANNELS TO LIMIT

- Campus Bookstore





MESSAGE ADOPTION DRIVERS

SUPPORTED BY

- REND-FIRST EXPECTATION → Students want apparel that feels modern + unique
- GEN Z BEHAVIOR → Individuality & convenience guide brand trust
- SURVEY SIGNAL (Q7) → Trendy design & easy purchase ranked #1 & #2 traits

RECOMMEND

- Lead With Uniquely Designed Drops
- Styles that signal campus individuality
- Reinforce Fast, Simple Checkout
- Friction-free online purchasing
- Position as Modern, Not Traditional
- Culture-aligned, trend-confident messaging

CHANNELS TO FOCUS

- Domestic, everyday online use through versatile point redemption and travel-friendly purchasing with products from major brands



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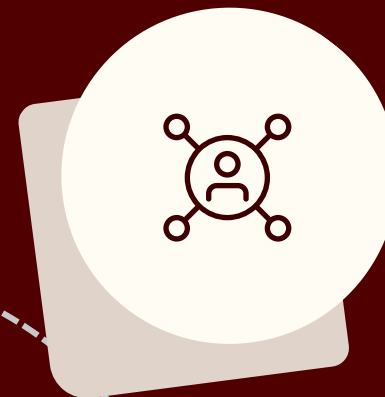
PRODUCT

Classic maroon/white/black A&M line with high comfort and vintage.



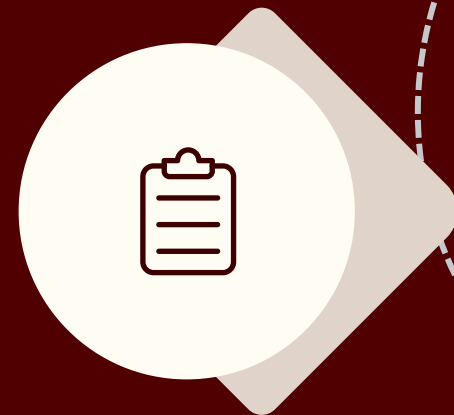
PROMOTION

Emphasize design, comfort, and student value; use social to support events, not as the primary influence tactic.



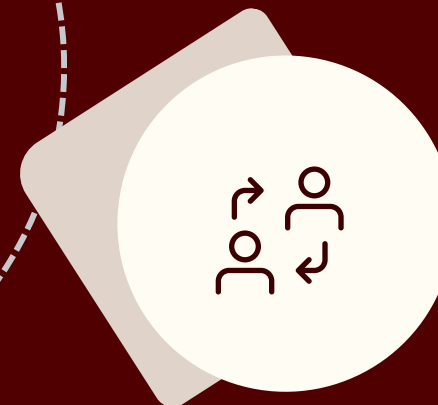
PRICING

Visible student discounts and bundles to correct “too expensive” perception.



RESEARCH

Conduct a larger, Phase II study to validate insights, test designs/pricing, and identify the strongest campus activation points.



PRESENCE

Prioritize gameday/tailgate activations and local retail partnerships; test on campus pop ups.



THANK YOU

FOR YOUR ATTENTION

