

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF STYLE: THE INTEGRATED LINK BETWEEN ATTIRE AND BEHAVIORS

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ABSTRACT

The Psychology of Style: The Integrated Link Between Attire and Behaviors" investigates how clothing influences psychological states and interpersonal interactions. The study explores "enclothed cognition," revealing that attire affects self-perception and behavior. For instance, formal attire boosts authority and cognitive performance, while casual clothing promotes relaxation and creativity. Conducted in India, this research employs both quantitative (via Google Forms) and qualitative methods to analyze how fashion impacts mood, self-esteem, and social dynamics. Statistical tools like SPSS and Excel, along with techniques such as regression and ANOVA, are used to assess the influence of attire on behavior. Findings suggest that clothing is not only a form of self-expression but a psychological tool that shapes their experiences and social interactions. This research underscores the significant role of fashion in personal and professional contexts, highlighting the importance of mindful dressing for enhancing self-perception and achieving goals.

Keywords: Fashion Psychology, Attire, Behavior, Behavioral Influence of Dress, Fashion, Self-Expression.

Introduction

"The Psychology of Style" explores the profound connection between what they wear and how they perceive themselves and are perceived by others. This study examines how clothing choices influence psychological states, behavior, and interpersonal interactions. From boosting self-confidence to affecting mood, attire plays a crucial role in shaping people's identity and social presence. Research in this area reveals that style can impact everything from job performance and social interactions to mental health and self-esteem (Worringer, W. 1997). For instance, wearing formal attire can enhance one's sense of authority and competence, while casual clothing might foster relaxation and creativity. Understanding these dynamics helps individuals harness the power of fashion to achieve personal and professional goals. Ultimately, "The Psychology of Style" underscores that people's clothing is not just a matter of personal expression but a psychological tool that affects how people experience and navigate the world around them.

The integrated link between attire and behavior is a fascinating area of study that delves into how what people wear influences actions, attitudes, and interactions. Clothing is not merely a form of self-expression; it significantly impacts psychological and social experiences. Research indicates that people's attire can alter self-perception and behavior, a phenomenon often referred to as "enclothed cognition." For instance, wearing professional or formal attire can enhance cognitive performance and convey a sense of authority, leading to more assertive and confident behavior. Conversely, casual or relaxed clothing may promote comfort and creativity, influencing how they approach problem-solving and

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social interactions (van Lange, P. A. 2024). This connection also extends to how others perceive and respond to us; people often make judgments based on attire, which can affect social dynamics and professional opportunities. Furthermore, attire can impact emotional states, with certain styles evoking feelings of empowerment or relaxation. Understanding this integrated link helps individuals make more informed choices about their clothing, recognizing its potential to shape their behavior and interactions. Overall, the relationship between attire and behavior underscores the profound impact that clothing has on psychological and social lives, highlighting the importance of mindful dressing.

Literature of review

- **Psychological theories of self-perception and identity: Explore theories such as social identity theory, self-discrepancy theory, and self-verification theory to understand how clothing can influence our self-concept.**

In their study, Goldstein et al. (2007) found that according to self-perception theory, people frequently infer their qualities from the behaviors they deliberately choose to exhibit. In addition, they postulated that, as if watching one's behavior, people might deduce their characteristics from the autonomous choices made by those with whom they share an identity. Participants use perspective-taking techniques to create a sense of merged identity with an actor. People learned that their brainwave patterns were similar to the actor's. To no one's surprise, participants internalized characteristics associated with the actor's actions; however, this impact was limited to situations in which participants had a sense of merging identity with the actor and in which the actor's actions seemed to be autonomously selected. People changed how they acted due to these changes in how they saw themselves. To comprehend perspective-taking, self-concept evolution, and compliance, the study analyzed the consequences of these vicarious self-perception processes. The research conducted by Szostak Michał (2021) how managers' and artists' professional identities overlapped, casting doubt on the idea that these identities were fundamentally at odds with each other. This study set out to define the artist-manager identity with qualitative research that included in-depth interviews with 22 informants from around the world. Despite the seeming incompatibilities between being an artist and a manager, the results showed that people who acted out both personas frequently used paradoxical reasoning to their advantage. To discover creative solutions and decrease internal conflicts, artist-managers should embrace the positive elements of these contradictions. Findings from the study showed that better comprehension and integration of these overlapping identities may reduce conflicts and improve individual and group performance.

Hauge (2007) looks at place-identity theory, social identity theory, and identifying process theory as three theories that explain how architecture and the physical environment affect identity. Place-identity theory clarifies how the physical environment affects self-perception, which has made significant progress in psychology and social science research. However, there is a dearth of empirical data to support this theory, and it is unclear what exactly this theory adds in contrast to previous identity theories. The connection between identity and place is explained by the ideas of social identity and identity processes theory, which have been overlooked by mainstream psychology. However, the notion of "place-identity" might still be relevant in more comprehensive identity classifications because identity manifests itself in multiple levels, including location. It is suggested to use a novel integrative model of position in both artificial and natural areas. Self-discrepancy theory suggests that self-related structures hold steady despite differences in particular self-beliefs, emphasizing the emotional ramifications of the gap between self-concept and optimal or ought to self-guides. The degree of self-discrepancy and fundamental characteristics persisted over time, despite participants' self-descriptions changing, according to Strauman's (1996) research, bolstering the theory's predictive importance about self-regulation and identity.

- **Research on the psychology of color: Investigate the psychological effects of different colors and how they can influence our emotions and behavior.**

According to Srivastava (2011), colors have long been powerful in shaping people's emotions, sensations, moods, and perceptions, and they allow for multiple interpretations instead of just one. They elaborated on how consumers' perceptions, emotions, and choices were impacted by the interplay of several indications in a product's experience, such as how colors did not work independently but through many references. Colors were crucial in marketing and advertising because of this. Srivastava further emphasized that demographic characteristics, age, gender, personality, income, and personal experiences all have a role in how people perceive and use color, which makes it difficult to employ effectively in marketing. Color, however, could be a powerful marketing weapon due to its ability to draw

in viewers, soothe or irritate their eyes, and affect the legibility of writing. In general, a well-executed color scheme may do wonders for a marketing campaign, product, service, or even an interior design project, while a haphazard color selection might spell disaster. Beyond its aesthetic implications, Maier (2014) examined theoretical and empirical studies on color that focused on its connections to psychological functioning. By mentioning previous methodological hurdles, they set the stage for this investigation. New empirical evidence on the effects of race in settings like affiliation, achievement, consumer behavior, and food evaluation were highlighted in the study. Color had profound symbolic value and an effect on emotion, thought, and action.

Color has a profound effect on people's feelings, actions, and perceptions of people's private places, as said by Hassabo et al. (2024). They discovered that color was very therapeutic, with the power to both calm and cure. By combining a literature study with a new survey, authors were able to validate earlier findings that cool colors, such as greens and blues, helped people feel calm, content, and clean. These results might be used to plan new medical offices or improve current ones, and they were critical in creating ideal medical settings. A broad model of color and psychological functioning was developed by Maier (2007) to address the dearth of scientific research regarding the effects of color on affect, cognition, and behavior. Drawing on this concept, they postulated that the color red had an effect in accomplishment contexts and detailed research that proved the color's ability to stimulate avoidance motivation and impair intellectual performance—often unintentionally and without knowledge. Finally, Maier stressed the importance of doing more thorough scientific studies in color psychology.

- **Studies on the impact of clothing on social interactions: Review research on how clothing can influence social judgments, attraction, and interpersonal communication.**

Cristani (2017) explored how clothing sends distinct social cues that affect others' perceptions and behaviors. His research showed that clothes influenced personality features, both self-assessments and strangers' views. Research has shown that clothing can identify groups and influence decision-making. Their conclusions were limited by arduous and expensive manual annotations on tiny sample sets. Cristani used social signal processing to study the communication and interpretation of clothes and social cues. They wanted to find visual patterns across garment kinds using sophisticated human parsing technology backed by deep learning. This method captured statistical associations from a bigger corpus of information to validate and expand sociological studies. Damhorst (1985) examined how interpersonal context—the clothes people have affected perceptions of people and relationships. His study examined how 64 male and female employees interpreted four office scenarios with formal and informal business clothes. A custom system categorized descriptions. The statistics showed that men and women in suits were more likely to be managers than those in casual clothes. Furthermore, dressing professionally versus casually has different outcomes: 1) When coupled with others in casual clothing, men and women in suits were frequently viewed as having a higher status; 2) Men in suits were thought to be more directive, fulfilling, or punitive regarding women in casual dress; 3) Men in suits felt more positive emotions when paired with women in casual clothing; 4) Men were given more "activity" traits when paired with formally wearing women; and 5) dyads feature a man in a suit and a woman in casual clothing. People's comprehension of how clothes impact social interactions has increased as a result of this study.

Kaiser (1983) used cognitive social psychology and symbolic interactionism to investigate clothing behavior. Cognitive theorists see clothing as clues for perceiving people, while symbolic interactionism sees dress as a social communication channel for both wearers and perceivers. Kaiser claimed that these techniques are complementary and share an interest in how clothing affects interpersonal assessments. They proposed a social-psychological study of clothes utilizing various methods to test ideas about dress's social and cognitive aspects in different contexts. Lower (2018) noted that clothing can reveal personality, mood, education, culture, financial level, and social status. Research shows that appearance strongly influences first impressions and total impressions (Richmond, McCroskey, & Payne, 1991). Lower quantitatively examined how dress styles affected workplace judgments of women. The study used expectation violation theory to examine workplace gender bias and if different women's clothing prompted different replies. Women dressed in feminine clothes were rated lower in dominance and expertise, whereas men were rated lower in warmth and friendliness.

- **Research on the emotional impact of fashion: Explore studies that have investigated the relationship between clothing choices and mood, self-esteem, and emotional well-being.**

Heinze (2020) noted an increasing trend among fashion entrepreneurs to implement sustainable methods, including the use of eco-friendly materials and the establishment of transparent supply chains. Notwithstanding this advancement, conventional fashion methods persisted in being unsustainable, and

the trajectory towards a wholly sustainable fashion industry remained ambiguous. Through the analysis of qualitative data derived from comprehensive interviews among sustainable fashion business owners, the study investigated the practice of environmentally friendly fashion design and its significance in the industry's transition towards sustainability. Utilising social practice theory, they saw the handling of emotional labour as a vital element, shaped by the entrepreneurs' altruistic intentions, financial uncertainty, entrepreneurial hazards, and the ethical intricacies associated with sustainable fashion. Heinze contended that the necessity of managing emotional labour restricted the widespread implementation of environmentally friendly design, thereby hindering the shift towards a sustainable fashion system.

In light of fast economic and technical progress, Weihua (2009) said that consumers began to place more value on emotional experiences than on product features. With this shift, the focus shifted from logical demands to emotional ones, with an emphasis on material comfort, spiritual fulfillment, and a sense of one's superiority. As a result, clothing styles shifted from emphasizing practicality to highlighting cultural and spiritual values. The features of fashion design were examined by Weihua within the framework of emotional consumption, and pertinent methodologies and approaches were summarized. By delving into the effects of trends in emotional consumption on the fashion industry, this study sought to offer direction for emotional fashion design. Electronic word-of-mouth and repurchase intention were two positive behavioral outcomes that Sama (2024) sought to examine about customers' emotional attachment to fashion apps. Considerations such as e-services scape, consumer experience, and the perceived worth of online purchasing were also investigated in the study. There were strong correlations between e-services scape, emotional attachment, perceived value, customer experience, and the two end consequences for consumers. This study lends credence to the idea that users' propensity to repurchase and exhibit positive behavior is inversely proportional to the strength of their emotional connection to fashion apps. These results highlighted the significance of e-services scape, perceived value, and customer experience in creating an emotional connection with fashion applications. The study's practical takeaways for e-WoM and repurchase intents could come from fashion app developers and online retail managers fostering emotional ties with customers in these spaces.

- **Cultural and societal factors influencing fashion choices: Examine how cultural norms, values, and expectations shape fashion trends and their impact on individuals.**

Stephen (2006) analysed the principal determinants affecting fashion apparel purchases among girls aged 12-13, emphasizing the significance of parental and peer endorsement, as well as the substantial influence of brand names and their connotations. The research indicated that young customers were prepared to pay a premium for branded apparel, highlighting the product's "cool" appeal. This information can assist fashion retailers, marketers, and advertising agencies in devising effective media campaigns aimed at this group. Likewise, Stephen (2005) examined the purchasing behaviours of girls aged 12 to 13 regarding fashionable clothing, emphasizing branding and factors influencing their purchases. The research indicated that parental and peer endorsement were essential, and brand names considerably influenced purchasing choices. Participants expressed a willingness to invest more in name-brand clothing, highlighting the significance of the product's appeal. These findings are significant for merchants and marketers in developing targeted advertising for this demographic.

Undergraduate students' consuming behavior of fashion was studied by China (2022) utilizing the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) framework to examine socio-cultural aspects. A total of 278 students from two institutions in Nigeria's South-East and South-South Zones participated in the study, of which 256 provided valid answers. Culture, opinion leadership, socioeconomic class, family, and ethnicity were determined to have substantial impacts on students' fashion consumption in a study that utilized a Likert scale questionnaire and Simple Regression Analysis (SRA) in SPSS version 21. The study concluded that fashion marketers would do well to keep a close eye on the social and cultural climate in which their target audience lives in order to predict how their customers will behave and to make educated decisions that will benefit their company and its clients. The hijab is a cultural and religious emblem of Muslims, and Akhtar (2018) investigated its role. Taking into account the impact of media, the internet, ads, fashion shows, and bloggers, the study investigated how women who don the hijab view fashion and how they dress. The study's primary objectives were to (1) determine the influence of celebrities on these women's fashion choices and (2) identify the sources from which these women learn about fashion, such as friends, family, and social media. Celebrities have a substantial impact on consumer tastes, and one's fashion sense is a reflection of one's lifestyle and personality, according to the study. It was determined that a questionnaire would be the most suitable tool for this experiment, therefore that is what the researchers did.

Research Question

How do fashion choices influence our behavior, mood, and self-perception?

Objectives

- To explore the psychological mechanisms underlying the relationship between clothing and behavior.
- To investigate how fashion choices can shape our identities and self-esteem.
- To examine the impact of clothing on our social interactions and relationships.
- To explore the emotional effects of fashion choices and how they can influence our mood and well-being.
- To investigate the cultural and societal factors that influence the relationship between clothing, behavior, and mood.

Hypothesis

- Different styles of attire significantly influence an individual's self-perception and behavior with formal attire enhancing confidence and perceived professionalism while casual attire may foster relaxation and approachability.
- The perception of an individual's self, with formal attire leading to more respectful and professional interactions and casual attire leading to more relaxed and informal interactions.
- Psychological mechanisms such as social identity and impression management mediate the relationship between attire and behavior with individuals using attire as a tool to align with desired social identities and manage impressions.

Methodology

In this study, the author focused on India to investigate "The Psychology of Style: The Integrated Link Between Attire and Behaviour." University college students in India were chosen as the target population due to their knowledge and preference for clothing and style. A sample of 384 participants was selected using Simple Random Sampling. The author chose the quantitative method of primary data collection and made a questionnaire with the help of Google Forms. Participants gave their opinions on the psychology of style and the integrated link between attire and behaviours using five options included in the questionnaire (Strongly disagree), (Disagree), (Neutral), (Agree), and (Strongly agree). Data analysis was carried out using SPSS, and results were presented with Excel, employing regression and ANOVA techniques. The findings shed light on how clothing affects behaviours among the students, revealing significant patterns and correlations within this demographic.

Variables of the Study

- **Fashion Psychology**

The field of fashion psychology studies how people's emotions, behaviors, and identities are reflected and impacted by their clothes and style choices. It delves into how one's clothing affects their sense of self, their self-assurance, and their interactions with others. How cultural norms and standards impact personal style is another area that this field investigates. The field of fashion psychology links an individual's sense of style to their mental health and social interactions by bringing attention to the power of clothing to influence one's sense of identity and how others view one.

- **Attire and Behavior**

When people talk about "attire and behavior," they're referring to the correlation between what people wear and what they do. It delves into how one's attire might impact their disposition, sense of self-worth, and interactions with others. The author's dress influences how they see themselves and how others see them, which in turn influences their actions in a wide range of circumstances, from business casual to the more formal. This idea emphasizes the relationship between one's style choices and the results of those decisions in terms of behavior.

- **Behavioral Influence of Dress**

The "behavioral influence of dress" describes how people's attitudes, behaviors, and interactions are shaped by the clothes they wear. It investigates the effects of clothing on confidence, self-perception, and behavior in a variety of settings. Some people find that dressing formally or professionally helps them concentrate and feel more in control, while others find that wearing more

casual or comfortable clothes helps them relax and be more creative. How they dress affects behavior and the dynamics of social environments, according to this idea.

- **Fashion and Self-Expression**

The term "fashion and self-expression" describes how people show their unique personalities, feelings, and experiences via their clothes and personal style choices. The way one dresses is a reflection of their individuality, their beliefs, and their cultural background. People express themselves creatively and expressively through their dress choices, which in turn convey their moods, social status, and personal tastes. This ever-changing dynamic highlights the potency of fashion as a medium for expressing and molding one's sense of self.

Results Analysis

- **Demographic**

Table 1: Demographic Breakdown and Personal Style Preferences of the Respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Age	18-34	119	31.0
	35-44	187	48.7
	45 and above	78	20.3
Gender	Female	188	49.0
	Male	167	43.5
	Others	29	7.6
Occupation	Professional	193	50.3
	Self-employed	50	13.0
	Unemployed	62	16.1
	Other	79	20.6
Marital Status	Married	161	41.9
	Unmarried	133	34.6
	Divorce	90	23.4
Annual income	Below 3,00,000	110	28.6
	3,00,000-6,00,000	128	33.3
	6,00,000-9,00,000	60	15.6
	12,00,000-to above	86	22.4
How would you describe your personal style?	Casual	90	23.4
	Formal	168	43.8
	Trendy	73	19.0
	Other	53	13.8
How do you generally choose your attire?	Based on comfort, personal preferences	93	24.2
	Based on professional, social or cultural norms	202	52.6
	Other	89	23.2

The respondents' personal style preferences and demographic breakdown are shown in Table 1. The data indicates that a significant proportion of participants are between the ages of 35 and 44 (48.7%), with a smaller number aged 45 and above (20.3%) and a noteworthy amount in the 18-34 age bracket (31.0%). The proportion of genders is roughly equal, with 49.0% of people being female, 43.5% being male, and 7.6% being other. Professionals comprise the greatest occupational category, at 50.3%, followed by the jobless (16.1%), independent contractors (14.0%), and other workers (20.6%). According to marital status, there are 41.9% married people, 34.6% single people, and 23.4% divorced people. The bulk of people (33.3%) make between 300,000 and 600,000 per year, followed by 28.6% who earn less than 300,000, 22.4% who earn more than 1,200,000, and 15.6% who earn between 600,000 and 900,000. When it comes to personal style preferences, formal wear ranks highest at 43.8%, followed by casual (23.4%), trendy (19.0%), and other types (13.8%). A sizable majority (52.6%) base their clothing selections on social, professional, or cultural conventions; comfort and personal preferences are given priority by 24.2% of respondents; other considerations account for 23.2% of respondents.

Table 2: Domain

Domain	Maximum score	Total score (Mean±SD)	Sig. (2-tailed)
Fashion and Attire	25	19.31±4.8	<0.001
Identities and Self-Esteem	25	18.75±2.5	0.005
Social Interaction and Relationships	25	19.11±2.3	0.002
Mood and Well-being	25	19.45±2.53	<0.001
Behavior	35	26.61±3.9	<0.001

The scores for each domain are shown in Table 2, together with the statistical significance and average performance. With a maximum potential score of 25 in the Fashion & Attire domain, the mean score is 19.31 with a standard deviation of 4.8, suggesting a statistically significant outcome ($p < 0.001$). With a maximum score of 25, Identities and Self-Esteem likewise exhibit statistical significance ($p = 0.005$), with a mean score of 18.75 and a standard deviation of 2.5. With a mean score of 19.11 and a standard deviation of 2.3 for social interaction and relationships, the outcome is statistically significant ($p = 0.002$). The average score in the Mood and Well-Being category is 19.45, with a standard deviation of 2.53. This is a highly significant result ($p < 0.001$). Finally, behavior, which has a higher maximum score of 35, also indicates a statistically significant result ($p < 0.001$) with a mean of 26.61 and a standard deviation of 3.9. The results for each domain show statistically significant variations in the aspects that were measured.

- **To investigate how fashion choices can shape our identities and self-esteem**

Table 3: To Investigate how Fashion Choices can Shape our Identities and Self-Esteem

		Identities and self-esteem
Fashion and attire	Pearson Correlation	-0.034
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.505
	N	384

The relationship between identities and self-esteem and fashion and attire is seen in Table 3. There is a very slight negative association between these two variables, as indicated by the Pearson correlation coefficient of -0.034. The p-value, or significance level, is 0.505, over the typical cutoff of 0.05. This implies that there is no statistically significant correlation between identities, self-esteem, and fashion and wardrobe. Based on a sample size of 384, the findings suggest that differences in dress and style do not significantly affect identities and self-esteem in this group.

- **To examine the Impact of Clothing on our Social Interactions and Relationships**

Table 4: To examine the IMPACT of Clothing on our Social Interactions and Relationships

		Social Interactions and Relationships
Fashion and attire	Pearson Correlation	0.005
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.929
	N	384

The association between attire and fashion and social interactions and relationships is displayed in Table 4. There is a very slight positive link between these variables, as indicated by the Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.005. The p-value, or significance level, is 0.929, much higher than the traditional significance threshold of 0.05. Thus, the correlation that has been detected is not statistically significant. The findings, which indicate that there is practically no association between the two variables in this context, with a sample size of 384, indicate that differences in fashion and dress have little effect on social interactions and relationships within this group.

- **To explore the emotional effects of fashion choices and how they can influence our mood, behavior, and well-being.**

Table 5: To Explore the Emotional Effects of Fashion Choices and how they can Influence Our Mood, Behavior, and Well-Being

		Mood and well-being	Behavior
Fashion and attire	Pearson Correlation	.139**	.478**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.006	0.000
	N	384	384

The association between fashion and attire and two distinct variables-behavior and mood and well-being-is depicted in Table 5. The Pearson correlation value for mood and well-being is 0.139, indicating a weak but statistically significant positive link ($p = 0.006$). This implies that there may be a weak but moderate correlation between mood and well-being and changes in dress and fashion. On the other hand, the behavior component's Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.478, signifying a highly significant ($p < 0.001$) moderate to strong positive link. This implies a stronger and more significant correlation between fashion, dress, and behavior, i.e., alterations in apparel have a more noticeable effect on behavior. The larger correlation seen in behavior highlights a more significant influence. Both correlations are based on a sample size of 384.

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