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An Exploratory study: Relationships between Trying on Clothing, Mood, Emotion, Personality and Clothing Preference

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Abstract

Purpose: the focus of this study was on exploring the application of psychological research methods (as yet not applied) in the fashion arena. The aim of this project was to quantify, formalise and explore the causal relationships between clothing style, preference, personality factors, emotions and mood with a view to better understand the psychological profile of the fashion consumer.

Design Methodology/approach: using a uniformly composed sample of females, explorative, quantitative research was carried out. Two sets of questionnaires were administered to the sample to examine emotion, mood and personality before trying on a set of eight garments categorized according to style, and again after to examine emotion and mood while wearing each outfit. Photographs of them were taken wearing each of the outfits. They then ranked the eight outfits into order of preference. SPSS analysis identified relationships and preference indicators.

Findings: the results indicated strong relationships between mood and significant relationships between three out of five personality factors and clothing style preference; mood was a significant predictor of preference, whilst personality was moderate.

Research limitations/implications: the research methodology necessitated lengthy time commitments from the participants and therefore limited the sample size making generalization difficult. Based on the findings, the research requires further exploration of methods for practical application with a larger sample size.

Practical implications: personality, emotion and mood were shown to be managed and reflected through clothing with implications for assistance in consumer clothing decisions, service training, and strategies for personal shoppers, market segmentation and design.

Originality/value of the paper: the methodology derived from a combination of research methods coupled with actual wearing experience, previously not studied together. This is original and demonstrates how important this combination is to fully appreciate the psychological profile of the fashion consumer.

Keywords: mood, emotion, personality, clothing preference

Classification: Research paper

Introduction

It is widely accepted that clothing has the potential (and is commonly used) to reflect and convey the inner self; e.g. self image, mood, political affiliations, social aspirations, etc, (Entwistle, 2000; Kaiser 1997; Sproles, 1979); but also that consumers prefer products that are consistent with their identity (Feinberg, et al 1992). Many studies have investigated mood and personality but are out of date, inconclusive, and do not consider the causal relationships. Experiments have also generally not explored the wearing or trying on experience of clothes (the anticipation stage of the shopping experience), when emotions and moods are heightened. Nor have they investigated these factors in relation to preference for clothing styles. As the fashion market continues to fragment, a deeper understanding of the consumer's psychological profile would help develop more targeted strategies for retailers.

Background Literature

Clothing Preference

Raunio (1982) identified three factors in the preference of clothing: physical features of clothes including skin response, size and shape of the clothes, thermal comfort, and fit (looseness and over-sized), revealing levels and visual features; the wearers' self-appearance; and associative reasons and memories. All of these factors would generate an emotional response.

According to DeLong et al (1986), preferences are composed of two components: cognitive and affective. The affective component is the emotional and overall positive and negative mood response to the object, which due to the very nature of clothing, is a very intimate experience. The cognitive component or schema, are product, aesthetic and social attributes inherent in the object which are evaluated through previous experiences, concepts and situations of use - all components of decision-making rules (Tselepis & de Klerk, 2004); e.g. the garment will only be purchased if the jacket is in a particular colour or shape and appropriate for one's career.

It appears that product attributes are the important factor when deciding what to buy (Solomon & Rabolt, 2004). Product attributes may be either *extrinsic*, (e.g. price, brand name, and store image) or *intrinsic*, (e.g. style, colour, fabric, care, fit and quality); but tend to be style category specific, e.g. casual wear (Chae et al, 2005; Casselman-Dickson & Damhorst, 1993; Feather et al, 1996; Lowe & Weitz 2003). Eckman et al (1990) demonstrated that only 2.7%-10.9% of the variance for preference of clothing is accounted for by aesthetic evaluation.

Clothing, Emotion and Mood

Clothing, as an aesthetic self and body image management tool and mood altering phenomena for healthy people is not a new idea (Cash, 1990), but clothing as mediating the relationship between clothing satisfaction with self-perception (of sociability, emotional stability, and dominance) is more recent (Cosbey, 2001). It is our contention that clothing, clothing attributes or garment features can affect positive and negative moods and individual emotions, especially during the trying on stage and during wearing because of the multi-sensory aspects, social factors and symbolic associations of clothing, (Moody et al, 2001; Ryan, 1953).

As early as 1949, the link between clothing, emotions and mood revealed that the emotionally and socially maladjusted were more concerned about their clothing choices and appearance than those who were not (Stepat, 1949, in Johnson et al, 2007). Humphrey, Klaasen, & Creekmore (1971), and Worrell (1977) showed how clothing can be used to express positive emotions or as a coping mechanism to overcome negative self-concepts. Although depression has been linked to a lack of concern for personal appearance, (Beck, 1970; Fisher, 1973; Mendels, 1970), studies have shown that closer interest in clothing correlated with increased depression but also that over even short periods after dressing, clothes can lift or change a low mood (Dubler & Gurel, 1984; Worrell, 1977).

Raunio (1982) also found that we choose clothing daily to cope with social circumstances and one's feelings. She observed that expressive features of favourite

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clothes helped to create a feeling of togetherness with other people, to stand out, produce an impression and control feelings, images and impressions of others. She indicated that favourite clothes are important for controlling one's environment and one's emotions and so may have regulative purposes. Furthermore, Kwon (1991) demonstrated the relationships between the perception of mood, self-consciousness and the selection of clothing concluding that females were more sensitive to mood than men, which affected their clothing choices; and that negative moods affected their choices more than positive moods. Kwon (1991, 1994) also showed how much how one feel's about themselves (their emotional baseline), can affect their choices and behaviour, e.g. sociability and work competency. These findings therefore indicate the emotional management functions of clothing.

Studies demonstrate that positive and negative moods are independent dimensions (Watson, Clark & Tellegen, 1988) and are the most superior level at which emotion can be defined (Laros & Steenkamp, 2003). However they go on to say that a set of basic emotions may have greater explanatory power than overall positive and negative affect. This suggests that research should show the relationships between clothing, mood and individual emotions. Watson, et al (1988) developed a scale based questionnaire to measure high and low positive and negative mood, called the PANAS (Positive and Negative Mood Affect Scale). This is used widely by clinicians for patients suffering from depression and anxiety disorders and provides a reliable and simple way to measure mood. PANAS characteristics are displayed in Table 1.

Take in Table (No.1)

We have used the PANAS as a practical tool to understand the relationship between clothing preference, emotion and mood.

Personality and Clothing
Personality traits can be defined as self and interpersonal perception for an individual across situations over time (Cattell, 1943; Matthews & Deary, 1998). Personality traits

influence personal values and attitudes (Olver & Mooradian, 2003); predict cognition, emotion and mood affect, and behavioural patterns (Pervin, 1996). Selecting clothing and fashion is about reflecting and managing these factors and so are clearly related to personality. For example Kwon (1994) showed that the wearing of suits for women enhances occupational or managerial attributes more commonly associated with men, (Kwon, 1994). Dress has been shown to express personality however clothing choice has also been viewed as overt behaviour, thereby being influenced by and a reflection of an individual's personality profile (Gurel et al, 1972).

Previous research methods have included drawings, photographs personality traits and factor models, and clothing interest questionnaires. These have generally been conducted on UG students or clinical patients due to access to participants or time constraints (Flügel, 1930; Evans, 1935; Hartman, 1949; Silverman, 1945; Aiken, 1963; Creekmore, 1971; Gurel et al, 1972). The research methodology for this study was developed from a combination of these studies in addition to two more recent studies: Paek's (1986) study about garment styles and its effects on the perception of self and another person's personal traits, (using drawings of clothing); and Feinberg et al (1992) in their use of photographs of actual clothing (wearers own clothes), and drawings of branded jeans.

The Five Factor Model of Personality

The Five Factor Model of personality based on traits, derived from Cattell's (1943) 35 bipolar clusters, is currently viewed as the most comprehensive model. It is strongly supported by empirical evidence (Digman, 1990; Goldberg, 1993; McCrae & Costa, 1996; O'Connor, 2002), and is used in clinical, organisational and other applied research (Bozionelos, 2004; Johnson et al, 2007). This model consists of five major dimensions of personality (NEOAC): Neuroticism (N), Extraversion (E), Openness (O), Agreeableness (A) and Conscientiousness (C). Each of the five factors consists of six dimensions or facets of behaviour (Pervin, 1996). The characteristics of each factor and implications for the individual are displayed in Table 2.

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Take in Table (No.2)

Purpose of Study

Questions remain about how personality, emotion and mood impact on clothing preference and choices generally. There are no studies that have investigated together the relationships between the Five Factor Model, clothing preference for different styles, emotion and mood. From the literature review it was observed that research methods had employed the use of UG students or clinical patients due to access and time constraints upon the participants. In most cases the clothing used already belonged to the participants. A better understanding of how the fashion consumer uses clothing to reflect and manage personality, emotion and mood when making decisions about what to buy, may help us identify causal relationships between these factors. Focus in our study on one stage within the buying experience ('trying on') was important as this is the anticipation stage of the decision making process where emotions would be more genuine. The buying experience was mimicked by categorising the clothing into formal, casual and evening wear as displayed in stores; and using unfamiliar clothing styles. Moreover, unfamiliar compared to familiar/one's own clothing (as used in most studies discussed), would produce heightened emotions which would help clarify the relationship between clothing preference and the management and predictive value of emotion and mood in a consumer's decision making process. The objectives of the study were to (i) identify how these factors were managed or reflected/expressed; and (ii) their significance for predicting clothing preference. This would enable quantification of the emotional response and self perceptions which could prove useful for predicting choice in a retail environment, with implications for the fashion retail organisation. The following hypotheses were proposed:

H1. Positive and negative mood whilst wearing clothing, controlled for at baseline, will predict clothing preference.

H2. Personaltiy will moderately predict clothing preference.

H3 There will be predictive relationships with personality and positive and negative mood whilst wearing clothing, controlled for at baseline.

Methodology

The Sample

The sample consisted of 27 female undergraduate students, at Liverpool John Moores University. Consent was given in accordance with ethics guidelines. It was decided to keep the sample controlled for as many factors as possible to ensure that examination of mood, personality and emotional factors was not complicated by the need to consider other factors. The sample was therefore all women, similar age and educational background, and dress size 12 in order to fit the clothing samples (which were restricted to a size 12). During a 20 minute briefing session prior to the study sizing information was recorded to ensure the stipulation of size 12 was maintained.

This study was a part of a three year doctoral study and involved four sets of research methods: wearer trial and psychological questionnaires, an FMRI self-perception project using clinical scanning equipment and technology, a 10-day wearing diary project and a design and personality project. In this paper the results of the wearer trials and psychological questionnaires are discussed. Some of the photographs and participants from this experiment were also used in an FMRI experiment and 10-day wearing diary project. Participants were recruited through emails and posters, and experiments were conducted over a 6 month period. Significant factors that determined the sample size were: (i) some participants took part in three of the experiments - considerable time commitment; (ii) equipment hire, expenses and availability of equipment; (iii) dress size 12 restrictions; (iv) material preparation for individual participants.

Materials

Participants completed two questionnaires. The Positive and Negative Mood Affect Scale (PANAS) short version, (Watson, Clark & Tellegen, 1988), is a 20-item self-completion scale. The PANAS describes different feelings and emotions related to positive affect (PA) - (10 words), and negative affect (NA) - (10 words). The NEO FFI (Costa & McCrae, 1985), short version, was designed to measure the five factors of personality in a test-booklet format containing 60 questions (Neuroticism, Extraversion,

Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness). Scores can range from very high to medium, to very low on each of the five factors.

A cross-section of eight different outfits was selected and categorised into various styles, ranging from casual, formal or eveningwear (with differences in fit, colour, revealing factors, brand and fabric types), (see Figure 1). They represented possible relationships with personality, e.g. formal and (tailored, uniformed, disciplined and utilitarian values associated with formal clothes); casual, (unrestricted, undisciplined and relaxed values associated with casual wear); evening wear, (social enhancement, revealing, diverse and expressive values associated with evening wear). Brand labels were kept in place as it was anticipated that brand factors would have an impact on their response. The focus of this study was clothing; hair was tied back; two neutral shoe types were used (flat and heeled shoes, worn as appropriate).

Take in Figure (No.1)

Procedure
An experiment room was provided with a changing room area, full-length mirror and table. The eight unfamiliar outfits were presented on a rail in an environment mimicking a shopping experience. The interviewer was present to manage the study, and provide instructions.

The study took approximately one hour and 30 minutes per participant, a total of 85.5 hours (11 days). Participants were asked to fill in a NEO FFI personality questionnaire. and then asked to complete a PANAS sheet of how they felt in terms of their mood, 'generally most of the time'. As a general 'baseline', this indicated their positive and negative mood prior to trying on the outfits. Participants were given the outfits in random order to try on. Having seen themselves in the mirror and while wearing each outfit, participants were asked to complete the PANAS again. We refer to this response as 'dynamic mood', changed from the baseline already taken. A photograph was taken

of each participant wearing each outfit. At the end of the experiment they were then asked to provide a rank order of preference for the eight outfits.

Results

The results below are illustrated using the abbreviations for variables, as detailed in Table 3.

Take in Table (No.3)

Emotional Profiles

We then identified key emotions and created an emotional profile for each outfit. They show the variable degrees of individual emotion through wearing each outfit and therefore how powerful clothing is in modifying emotional states. The positive and negative profiles are shown in Figure 2.

Take in Figure (No.2)

Mood at Baseline and Dynamic Mood

The mean value of PM at baseline was 36.04, (SD 3.95). The mean value of NM at baseline was 16.50, (SD 4.76). These results showed that the group was 'healthy', and not depressed. Dynamic PM scores (mood whilst wearing an outfit) for each participant per outfit ranged from a mean value of 21.52 to 28.33. Dynamic NM scores ranged from a mean value of 13.15 to 16.74. The minimum score possible is 10 and the maximum is 50. This data is illustrated in Figure 3.

Take in Figure (No.3)

Mood at Baseline and Dynamic Mood Correlations

In order to examine in more detail the relationship between P and N mood scores at B; and dynamic P and N mood recorded when wearing each outfit (D), Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated for PM at B and D PM. Similar analyses were conducted for

NM. Four out of the eight outfits showed significant positive correlations, as shown in Table 4. All other correlations were non-significant.

Take in Table (No.4)

Mood and Preference Partial Correlations

To control for mood at baseline, partial correlation coefficients were calculated examining the relationship between D PM while wearing an outfit and P for that outfit, while controlling for PM at B. Similar analyses were conducted for NM. As shown in Table 5., three of the eight outfits (1, 5 and 6), showed a positive correlation between PM and P, and two of the eight outfits (3 and 7) showed a negative correlation between NM and P. All other correlations were non-significant.

Take in Table (No.5)

Personality and Preference Correlations

Pearson correlation coefficients were then calculated for the five personality factors (NEOAC) and P ratings. Preference ratings for just three out of the eight outfits showed a significant correlation with the five personality factors, as shown in Table 6. All other correlations were non-significant.

Take in Table (No.6)

Personality and Mood at Baseline Correlations

In order to examine the relationship between personality and P and N mood scores at B, Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated. As shown in Table 7., out of the five personality factors, two significant relationships were found. All other correlations were non-significant.

Take in Table (No.7)

Personality and Dynamic Mood Partial Correlations

To control for mood, partial correlations were calculated between the five personality factors and D PM recorded when wearing each outfit, controlled for using PM scores at B. Similar analyses were conducted for NM. As shown in Table 8., three out of the eight outfits showed a positive correlation between personality and PM, and two a positive correlation between personality and NM. All other correlations were non-significant.

Take in Table (No.8)

Discussion

Emotional Profiles

The results and the emotional profiles in Figure 2 and 3 demonstrate how clothing can be used to regulate and manipulate emotion and mood, and indicate relationships with personality.

Positive Emotions

All 8 outfits elicited the following strongest emotions: interested, excited, strong, alert. Outfits 5 and 6, (4th and 3rd most preferred) had a significant affect across all positive emotions. Outfit 6, made participants feel the most inspired, concurring with Hall 1905 (in Ryan, 1953) who found that being well dressed led to greater sociability, power and worth. Outfits 1 and 2 (5th and 6th preference ratings) were both casual, and made them feel more active than the other outfits. This is consistent with Hall 1905 (in Ryan, 1953) who also found that casual dress led to feelings of freedom and an animal spirit. Proud was the least felt positive emotion except for outfit 5 and 6 where the value was higher.

Negative Emotions

Emotions were moderate overall; guilty was the least felt negative emotion. Outfits 3, 4 and 7, (all varying levels of revealing, fit and style) elicited strongest emotions of jitteriness and nervousness. Interestingly outfit 7 was the 2nd most preferred outfit indicating that factors other than emotions play a part in preference. Additionally, ashamed was another key emotion for outfit 4 and outfit 8 (least preferred), and

generated stronger feeling of distress. These results may have been due to the unusual design of the outfits t or styling of wearing garments together (outfit 8).

Mood

The results also indicate that some of the clothes had a strong affect on both positive and negative mood, as shown in Table 9.

Take in Table (No.9)

For example participants' moods were reflected whilst wearing outfits 5 and 8. In contrast, outfits 2 and 4 improved the mood for those with high negative mood baseline scores, but reduced the mood for those with high positive mood baseline scores, thereby managing mood. These results are consistent with Beck (1970), Cosbey (2001), Dubler & Gurel (1984), Fisher (1973), Humphrey, Klaasen, & Creekmore (1971), Mendels (1970), Raunio (1982), and Worrell (1977).

With reference to the hypothesis postulated at the beginning of the study, we have concluded the following.

H1. Dynamic Positive and Negative Mood Will Predict Clothing Preference
The results showed that once baseline positive and negative mood ratings are controlled for, the higher the positive mood (PM) when wearing each outfit, the higher the preference rating for the outfit worn (and vice versa, e.g. low PM and low preference). This was evident for three out of the eight outfits (high PM and high preference ratings), and again for two other outfits for negative mood (NM) (high NM and low preference ratings). The remaining correlations for positive and NM were relatively high but not as significant. The results for PM also showed that all the relationships except for one outfit, even though not all significant, were in fact positive, whereas the results for NM, all relationships were negative. Interestingly, only preference for Outfit 4 and PM showed a negative correlation, indicating that preference increased as PM decreased. This highlights the subverted effect of the unusual outfit in the conflicting response to the

garment colour, features, fit, style, design or fabric. These findings indicate that both PM and NM have measurable, predictive and important relationships with preference.

The results also showed that mood is a very strong predictor for preference, with PM being to some extent more predictive. This is highly significant when trying to explain clothing preference considering the changes in self-perception that clothes can generate.

H2. Personality (NEOAC) Will Moderately Predict Clothing Preference
Some relationships between the NEOAC personality factors and preference were found, but for only three of the eight outfits indicating that personality had a low to moderate predictive relationship with preference for the clothes used in this study. Table 10. illustrates the relationships between garment styles 2, 5 and 6 and A and N scores.

Take in Table (No.10)

A scores:
Low A scores: preference for outfit 2 (casual style), is to some extent consistent with Hall, (1905, in Ryan, 1953) who found that casual clothes enhanced a sense of freedom and animal spirit; and Gurel et al (1972) who observed relationships with the Hippy reference group and low conforming attitudes.
High A scores: preference for outfit 6 (evening style), is to some extent consistent with Aiken, (1963) who found that decoration in dress correlated with uncomplicated and socially conscientious people; also Paek (1986) who observed relationships with the daring garment style and social traits; and finally, Hall (1905, in Ryan, 1953), who found that being well dressed led to greater sociability, power and worth.

N Scores:
Low N scores (positive facets): preference for outfit 5 (formal style), is consistent with Gurel et al (1972) who showed a lack of colour, design and a more uniform apparel of the Greaser reference group (and so less emotional affect within the clothing), indicated

relationships with conventional and conformist attitudes. It is also worth remembering that, the wearing of suits for women has shown to enhance occupational or managerial attributes more commonly associated with men, (Kwon, 1994). In this case reducing emotional affects commonly associated with the N factor.

In all cases these factors are involved in aspects of socio-emotional control that can be observed in low N. This is compared to those with high N scores who may prefer less fitted or tailored and more stimulating clothes, to manage or avoid negative facets and so susceptibility to experiencing NM. From our results we also surmise that those with high A scores may prefer less casual styles, and those with high A scores may prefer more daring or evening wear styles.

The A personality factor was highlighted more often than the others, and shows that friendly or unfriendly social characteristics were important for this sample group. With the relationships found, results showed how much personality is reflected whilst investigating preference. No relationships were found with the E, C or O factors. This may be due to the clothes presented not being familiar or preferred by the participants' in terms of age and lifestyle, or that they do not wish or need to reflect their O, C or E levels through dress.

H3. There will be Predictive Relationships between Personality and Mood
Consistent with (Costa & McCrae, 1991), significant relationships were found between high N scores and NM; and High E scores and high PM. Results also showed relationships, although not strong, between the NEOAC personality factors and positive and negative dynamic mood, controlled for at baseline for five out of the eight outfits. In all cases, the clothes may have increased or improved these facets, or reflected and sustained them for the wearer, thereby improving mood:
Outfit 2 (casual style): may have helped to sustain high N levels. Due to high PM this outfit may have helped combat NM, or maintained emotional stability related to the high N facets.

Outfit 3 (evening/casual style): may have helped to reflect, sustain and improve personality facets for A, and so also PM.

Outfit 5 (formal style): may have helped to reflect, sustain or improve C personality facets, and so also PM.

Results indicate that for those with low A and N, outfit 2 would not be a good choice in enhancing mood.   Similarly for those with low C, outfit 5 would not be a good choice. Outfits 1 and 4: those with high A scores experienced increased NM during wearing. For both outfits the results show that they would not be good choices for those with high A but good for low A.

Three out of the five personality factors showed a significant relationship, implying that personality facets can be managed and are reflected to some degree. Features such as colour, fit and fabric weight and texture, revealing factors within each style are likely to indicate why.   Correlating personality and mood helps us to understand how they are reflected and managed, especially if we consider the relationships between N and NM. From another perspective, dynamic mood through wearing clothing can be managed because of individual personality factors. The strongest personality factor in relation to mood appears to have been A. Interestingly all of the outfits (except outfit 8) showed a negative correlation with E and PM even though they were not significant.   C, which has disciplinary functions could be useful for enhancing career objectives and could have a role in controlling NM for some people. The A factor has obvious social enhancement value.

The results indicate that personality had a low to moderate predictive relationship with positive and negative mood whilst wearing the outfits used in this study.

Conclusions, Implications and Further Research

The sample used was small in number and as such cannot be assumed to be representative of the population, for which a much larger research study would be necessary. However, from this small sample, the findings imply that when trying on

unfamiliar clothing (e.g. whilst shopping), clothing is used as an appearance and mood management tool by reflecting or managing positive or negative mood. The results also showed the varying levels of emotion an outfit can generate and the power of clothing on individual emotions. Consistent with Feinberg et al (1992), the results also showed to some degree how much personality is reflected, expressed or managed in clothing choice. The personality trait or mood the wearer wishes to communicate, (i.e. reflect or manage) will affect their behavior, whether it is consistent with the wearer's personality or experimenting with a desired/ideal personality trait. While more research is needed to investigate the remaining variance for preference and build on the current methodology used here, the findings quantified and formalised emotional response to clothing and the relationships to personality factors.

These results have implications on practical applications of a larger scale study in retail service training and provision, strategies for personal shoppers and market segmentation, assistance in consumer clothing decisions, and the potential of predicting choice in a multi-channel retail environment. Through additional development, there is also the potential of developing further understanding between the relationships of design and psychological profiling.

Retail Service Training and Provision
This research is significant in terms of the imperative to understand the need to maintain or induce a positive mood and reduce negative mood whilst making buying decisions. In her study on service quality and emotions, Wong (2004) found that emotional satisfaction is positively associated with customer loyalty and relationship quality. In particular a customer's enjoyment of the shopping experience served as a predictor for loyalty, and happiness as a predictor for relationship quality. Her recommendations were for staff training to develop emotional intelligence as a key component in customer-contact training, to be observant of customer's evoked emotions and to focus on store environment, as well as merchandise on shop floor. This would be especially useful for retailers offering personal shoppers.

Market Segmentation and Design

The findings indicate that quantifying emotional response and self perceptions could prove useful for predicting choice in a retail environment. A study by Christensen and Olson (2002) created a collective map for groups of customers to gain greater insight into consumer's product knowledge structures and consumer's perceived personal relevance of a product, service or brand. Also, Forney et al, (2005) found that major factors to consider about predicting purchase behaviour were related to the inner self: the personal shopping experience, personal fashion sensitivity and needs of personal dress. An understanding of the relationship between the design of (and product attributes thereof), consumer needs and fashion functions to the inner self may help in developing personal shopper, market segmentation and brand extension strategies for a retailers target market.

Psychological Management

More investigation is needed looking at the full variance for preference. According to Eckman (1990) aesthetic evaluation has shown to account for just 2.7-10.9% of preference. Further research needs to investigate how all of the five factors of personality and the individual traits within each of these factors, with mood, interact or influence each other on a sensory and behavioural level with the styling and wearing of clothing. Furthermore, as to whether all these factors are related to the identity of the wearer. These factors are important during decision making when buying or choice of daily attire which has implications for product development as product attributes will be used by the consumer to make these decisions (Zhang et al, 2002).

Previous researchers have indicated the importance of understanding the meaning of products to consumers in order to understand their behaviour (Feinberg et al, 1992). Leigh & Gabel (1995), in discussions about product symbolism suggested that when the consumer lacks knowledge about how to perform a required role, the more complete and consistent set of product symbols they have for that role, the higher the probability of successful role performance. This has obvious relationships in enhancing and managing personality traits and will help us to continue to understand the impact

clothing has on social interaction and effective impression management strategies (Paek, 1986). In terms of self and other person perceptions it may then be valuable to explore particular sensory variables or product attributes categorised into different seasons, clothing categories, clothing styles, body and appearance perceptions, brand or product range, that may help predict reflection or management of individual emotions, mood and personality. Further research should also explore different demographics and/or brands and their target consumers.

The use of the psychological questionnaires before, during and after the wearing of unfamiliar clothes may be extended to be used by retailers as part of their customer relationship programmes to help them ensure products are targeted uniquely to each customer. A customer management software program may, indeed, be envisaged for independent retailers as part of developing and building upon their competitive advantage.

As retail strategies begin to further explore the future of retail, personalisation and personal shopper strategies, and their target consumers, it is anticipated that consumer profiling will prove to be of increasing value to retailers in a changing and considerably competitive industry.

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