

UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON

LONDON COLLEGE OF FASHION

Fashion Business School

Clothing as a Shield: The Use of Clothing in Anticipatory Anxiety Situations

by

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Thesis for the degree of Master of Science in Applied Psychology in Fashion

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12th September 2024

Wordcount: 10914

Abstract

Clothing plays a crucial role in individuals' emotional and psychological well-being, particularly in situations which are marked by heightened apprehension about future events. Therefore, this study explores how individuals use clothing for psychological self-protection in anticipatory anxiety inducing situations, and how the need to belong influences their clothing choices. Emotion Regulation Theory and Enclothed Cognition were proposed as a theoretical framework.

A mixed-methods approach was used, starting with a focus group of 8 participants (4 male, 4 female; ages 21 to 26) identifying three common anticipatory anxiety situations: first dates, meeting friends' friends, and starting university, school, or a new job. In the second phase, a quantitative survey of 78 participants (mean age =33.54) assessed clothing preferences in these scenarios, in addition to one comfortable scenario.

In line with Hypothesis 1, clothing preferences varied across situations. Hypothesis 2 was mostly supported, with participants more likely to choose thick and covered clothing in high anticipatory anxiety situations. Furthermore, colourful, vibrant clothing was generally preferred except in professional or academic settings, where neutral tones dominated. Hypothesis 3, which proposed that individuals with a high need to belong would show greater variation in clothing choices, was not supported.

This study highlights the emotional protective role of clothing in everyday anxiety-inducing situations. Findings could inform therapeutic practices, helping individuals manage social anxiety through strategic clothing choices, and guide the fashion industry in designing clothing for emotionally stressful scenarios. Further research should explore age and gender differences in anticipatory anxiety and clothing preferences to enhance ecological validity.

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Statement of Originality

I, Lill Anna Maria Forster, certify that:

- This is an original and individual piece of work, and no part of this has been written by anyone else.
- I have acknowledged (appropriately referenced using the APA referencing system) all sources and citations.
- No section of this assignment has been plagiarised.
- This work has not been submitted for any other assessment.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lill Anna Maria Forster' in a cursive script.

12-09-2024

Acknowledgements

This work would not have been possible without the unwavering support of so many people in my life, to whom I owe immense gratitude.

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my family. Your steadfast belief in me, through every challenge and success has been a source of constant motivation. From the earliest days of my academic journey to the culmination of this master's degree, your encouragement, patience, and love have made it all possible. Without your sacrifices and unwavering confidence in my abilities, this achievement would have remained a distant dream. Thank you for always being my greatest cheerleader, supporting me through the ups and downs, and reminding me of my potential when I doubted myself.

I would also like to extend my deepest appreciation to my supervisor and course leader, Dr Young-Jin Hur, whose expertise and insightful guidance have been instrumental in shaping both my research and personal growth throughout this year. Dr. Hur, your ability to inspire creativity, critical thinking, and confidence in my work has been invaluable. Thank you for sharing your knowledge so generously and for challenging me to push my limits. I am sincerely grateful for your support throughout this year, especially in the past few months.

In addition, I would like to acknowledge my friends, who have been a constant source of inspiration, motivation, and emotional support. Thank you for standing by me through every late-night study session, research hurdle, and moment of doubt. Your understanding, encouragement, and companionship have been invaluable throughout this journey.

Lastly, I would like to thank all my participants. Without their time and contributions, this thesis would not have been possible.

1. Clothing as a Shield: The Use of Clothing in Anticipatory Anxiety Situations

Anticipatory anxiety is a form of anxiety marked by heightened arousal and apprehension about future events, underscoring the importance of exploring effective coping strategies (Boehme et al., 2013). Often elicited by social situations which the individual perceives to be high stake, anticipatory anxiety has been shown to have detrimental effects on the individual's well-being (Asher, 2020; Donaldson et al., 2023; Helbig-Lang et al., 2012; Hinrichsen & Clark, 2003; Hope & Heimberg, 1990). Given that clothing is an integral part of daily life, worn by almost every individual worldwide, it plays a pivotal role not only in physical protection but also in emotional and social domains (Corner, 2009).

Recent discussions suggest that fashion may serve as a valuable tool for emotional regulation, particularly in mitigating the effects of anticipatory anxiety. Individuals may turn to clothing as a coping mechanism during stressful situations (Woodward, 2005). In such instances, clothing may serve the function of providing an emotional shield, protecting the individual from external psychological stressors (Fluegel, 1930). While research has touched on the use of clothing for emotional self-protection in high-threat situations (Gruber et al., 2023) and for individuals with general anxiety and bodily anxiety (Bynum, 2022; Hinrichsen & Clark, 2003), the topic is still widely underexplored, especially when looking at situations that individuals face on a more regular basis. Specifically, it is argued that individuals with a high need to belong will be even more sensitive to the situations presented as, for them, the experience of social rejection is especially detrimental (Leary & Schlenker, 1982; Leary, 2021).

Therefore, the following sections will employ a mixed methods approach to explore the link between anticipatory anxiety situations and fashion. Additionally, the role of need to belong in this relationship will be discussed. The paper will begin with a literature review, which is followed by Study 1 (Qualitative). This study will utilise a focus group to determine

in which situations individuals experience anticipatory anxiety beforehand and why. These findings will subsequently inform Study 2 (Quantitative). In this study, a quantitative approach is used to assess the clothing features individuals prefer in the social situations determined in Study 1 and whether their need to belong influences their choices. Finally, theoretical and practical implications are discussed, as well as limitations and suggestions for future research. This research aims to contribute to the application of fashion psychology in everyday life while offering insights for individuals on coping with anticipatory anxiety through fashion.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Anticipatory Anxiety and Appearance Management as Coping Mechanism

Anxiety is characterised by feelings of tension, worry, and physiological changes, such as increased blood pressure (APA, 2020). Anticipatory anxiety, a commonly experienced, specific form of anxiety, is marked by apprehension and a heightened emotional state in light of a future event (Boehme et al., 2013). Compared to other forms of anxiety, it is marked by a focus on future-oriented worries and chronic anticipation of distressing events, often resulting in avoidance behaviours, hypervigilance, and heightened physiological arousal, even in situations that may have not yet occurred (Grupe & Nitschke, 2013). This experience, which is primarily tied to social interactions, is felt by individuals worldwide on a daily basis, leading to increased distress, rumination about potential negative outcomes, and psychopathological consequences, such as panic attacks (Donaldson et al., 2023; Helbig-Lang et al., 2012; Hinrichsen & Clark, 2003).

Within the literature, a multitude of situations eliciting anticipatory anxiety have been identified. For instance, individuals may experience heightened anxiety before a first date, where they aim to make a positive impression (Asher, 2020; Hope & Heimberg, 1990), or before starting a new job, where they seek to fit into a new social environment (Muschalla et

al., 2013). In these situations, the anxiety stems from the individual's anticipation of not being accepted by others or being judged negatively (London et al., 2007). Since social rejection has been found to significantly affect an individual's confidence, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and mental health, the consequences of this anxiety are considerable (Niu et al., 2022).

To deal with their anticipatory anxiety, individuals may use a variety of strategies for managing their emotions. For instance, Woodward (2005) proposed that anxieties may sometimes be eased, exaggerated, or manifested through clothing. Since individuals experiencing anticipatory anxiety are often concerned with making a good impression, appearance management - pertaining to the management of one's outward appearance, for instance, using clothing and beauty rituals - may be one of the strategies they use as coping (Cash & Smolak, 2011; Clarke et al., 2013; Leary & Kowalski, 1995 pp. 94-107). This was supported by evidence, as a positive association between social anxiety and appearance management was found (Cash et al., 2004). Here, appearance management can be argued to be a form of coping strategy for dealing with one's negative emotions when faced with a dreaded event (Cash et al., 2004; Reilly & Rudd, 2009).

By curating their appearance, individuals may attempt to make a positive impression and reduce the likelihood of negative judgment, thereby mitigating their anxiety. Thus, this indicates that managing one's appearance may be an important coping strategy for dealing with anticipatory anxiety.

2.2. Clothing as Protective Agent

The use of appearance management as a coping strategy in response to anticipatory anxiety highlights the emotional function that clothing can serve. This not only supports the idea of appearance management for emotional relief but also highlights a broader psychological role that fashion plays. This broader psychological role of clothing was

postulated early on by Fluegel (1930), stating that fashion serves three primary purposes: decoration, modesty, and protection, each reflecting the complex ways in which clothing influences and is influenced by societal and individual needs. While decoration involves the adornment of the self and modesty pertains to the covering of skin in socially appropriate ways, the concept of protection is particularly multifaceted, encompassing both physical and psycho-emotional dimensions (Fluegel, 1930).

While fashion's role in physical self-protection, such as against weather or physical harm, is evident, it also transcends mere physical armour to serve as emotional protection. To further strengthen the argument that fashion serves an emotionally protective function, Fluegel (1930, p.79) denoted: "Perhaps it (clothing) can best be said to be a protection against the general unfriendliness of the world as a whole; or expressed more psychologically, a reassurance against the lack of love." This quote highlights how fashion may serve as protection against anxieties and emotional vulnerabilities, such as the fear of social rejection or the need for reassurance.

2.3. Psychological and Emotional Protection

Previous research has empirically examined the use of clothing as a method for providing psychological security. For instance, a qualitative study by Yates and Smith (2018) found that individuals use fashion to manage their moods and make themselves feel better, showcasing how fashion can be used to regulate emotions. Moreover, one of the few quantitative studies on this topic found that individuals who experience appearance anxiety tend to select clothing for its ability to camouflage perceived flaws and provide assurance (Kang et al., 2013).

Additionally, it was found that individuals tend to lean more into gender-coherent clothing choices during situations of high existential threat, thereby situations where they experience strong feelings of fear and anxiety, as these choices provide them with a sense of

security (Gruber et al., 2023). Furthermore, another study revealed that women tend to show more skin in anxiety-inducing situations, which can be attributed to self-objectification through fashion as a coping mechanism (Morris et al., 2014). In contrast to that, another study found women to wear more layers in an anxiety-inducing situation, physically shielding themselves by “disappearing beneath more layers” (Gruber et al., 2023).

These studies provide evidence that clothing is used for emotional self-protection in situations involving emotions such as threat and fear, which are strongly related to anticipatory anxiety and anxiety more broadly (Blanchard et al., 2001). However, in daily life, individuals are rarely exposed to these kinds of extreme situations and instead encounter non-live-threatening events that may still lead them to experience anticipatory anxiety (Eysenck & Derakshan, 2005; Grupe & Nitschke, 2013).

2.4. Psychologically Protective Clothing Features

The research on the clothing features individuals may be drawn to when anticipating that they will face anxiety inducing situations has been sparse. Fluegel (1930) proposed that thickness, for instance, relates to both literal physical protection and may also extend to the emotional sphere. Similarly, tightness may be associated with both physical and emotional support, as it physically holds the individual up. Dark colours are associated with seriousness in comparison to light colours, which Fluegel (1930) connects with innocence and freer play of emotions.

One of the few studies on this topic, a qualitative study, found that individuals who suffer from anxiety prefer clothing that is comforting and thick (Bynum, 2022). Further studies found females specifically to wear more revealing clothing in high-anxiety situations (Morris et al., 2014), which was contrasted by another study revealing women to be drawn to more covering fabrics when experiencing bodily anxiety (Hinrichsen & Clark, 2003). In line

with this, another study found that individuals prefer multiple layers, again, drawing parallels between physical and emotional self-protection (Gruber & Kachel, 2023).

While these studies provide an insight into the fashion features such as thickness, comfort, and layering that individuals may prefer in situations involving anticipatory anxiety, the findings remain sparse and partially inconclusive, necessitating further investigation.

2.5. Emotion Regulation Theory

Emotion regulation theory (Gross, 1998) provides a broad framework for understanding how individuals cope with their emotional experiences, including anticipatory anxiety, using various strategies. These strategies, as outlined below, range from situation selection and modification to cognitive change and response modulation and play a central role in how people navigate emotionally charged situations (Gross, 1998). This theory may explain the mechanism of the aforementioned psychological self-protection via clothing.

2.5.1. Situation selection

Situation selection involves choosing to enter or avoid certain situations based on their potential emotional impact (Gross & Thompson, 2007). By anticipating how they may be impacted by a situation, individuals can proactively decide whether they would want to attend or not (Park & Slepian, 2020). For instance, a person who anticipates experiencing anxiety during a social event might choose to avoid it, thereby reducing the likelihood of experiencing distressing emotions (Gross & Thompson, 2007). While this strategy may seem effective to the individual in the moment, there is not always the possibility of avoiding a situation, therefore limiting its usefulness (Aldao et al., 2010).

2.5.2. Situation Modification

Situation modification refers to the actions taken to alter a situation to change its emotional impact (Gross, 2015). This could involve making adjustments to the environment, engaging in problem-solving, or altering interactions with others to create a more favourable

outcome (Gross, 2015; Van Bockstaele et al., 2019). For instance, by dressing up in a certain way, individuals can affect how other people perceive them (Efremov et al., 2021). While situation modification empowers individuals to shape their environments in ways that promote emotional well-being, it also requires a level of control over external circumstances, such as control over the notion's others have linked to specific types of clothing, which is not always feasible (Park & Slepian, 2020).

2.5.3. Response Modulation

Response modulation encompasses strategies that influence the physiological, experiential, or behavioural responses once an emotion has already been generated (Gross, 2002). This includes efforts to suppress or enhance emotional expressions, using techniques like deep breathing to calm oneself during stressful situations, or deliberately smiling to improve mood (Gross, 2002). While response modulation can be a useful way of providing immediate relief from distressing emotions, it may not always be useful for feelings such as anticipatory anxiety as there is too much uncertainty as to how an event plays out, therefore making it hard to calm oneself (Hofmann et al., 2009).

2.5.4. Cognitive Reappraisal

Cognitive reappraisal, or cognitive restructuring, involves changing the way one interprets a situation to alter its emotional impact (Gross & John, 2003). This strategy is particularly useful when individuals face circumstances that cannot be easily avoided or modified (Ochsner & Gross, 2005). By reframing a situation and how one views oneself in it, individuals can reduce the intensity of negative emotions like anxiety (Gross & John, 2003). For instance, by creating a literal physical shield with clothing may make the individual feel more secure and confident. Cognitive reappraisal is associated with more adaptive emotional outcomes and is a central component of many therapeutic interventions, such as cognitive-behavioural therapy (Ochsner & Gross, 2005).

These strategies help individuals influence the intensity, duration, and expression of their emotions, such as anxiety (Gross, 1998). Given that situation selection, situation modification and response modification are not always possible, cognitive reappraisal has been found to be the most useful technique for emotion regulation both before and during an event, making it also useful for events eliciting anticipatory anxiety (Gross & John, 2003; Ochsner & Gross, 2005).

Linking back to clothing and appearance management, this framework may explain how individuals modify their emotional states in anticipation of stressful or anxiety-inducing events. In cases where these strategies aren't feasible, cognitive reappraisal allows for a reinterpretation of the situation, potentially empowering the individual to change their emotional response by shifting their perspective.

2.6. Enclothed cognition

The concept of enclothed cognition (Adam & Galinsky, 2012) further ties together appearance management and emotion regulation through cognitive reappraisal. As discussed earlier, individuals who manage their outward appearance through fashion most likely do so because it impacts how they feel and how others perceive them (Reilly & Rudd, 2009). This can be explained by the fact that one's outward appearance is something that can be easily changed while having a significant impact on how the individual feels and is perceived by others (Scott, 2018). Enclothed cognition supports this idea, as it argues that clothing choices can influence cognitive processes, behaviours, and feelings, potentially altering self-appraisal (Adam & Galinsky, 2012; Adam & Galinsky, 2019). For instance, individuals have been found to perceive themselves to be more competent and rational when wearing formal clothing (Peluchette & Karl, 2007). Another study found that individuals describe themselves in either more formal or more casual adjectives depending on their clothes (Hannover & Kühnen, 2002)

These studies suggest that clothing can alter how the individual views themselves in a given situation, indicating that clothing can modify cognition. In line with emotion regulation theory, this cognitive shift, powered by clothing, can be viewed as a form of cognitive reappraisal. By reinterpreting their emotional experiences based on how they present themselves, individuals can mitigate anxiety and bolster self-confidence.

Thus, these studies, as well as the studies outlined earlier, showcase the link between fashion and the individual's cognition and emotion. This provides evidence for the notion that cognitive reappraisal through clothing serves as a form of emotion regulation. Here, it can be argued that fashion acts as a protective emotional shield, helping the individual feel more secure in an otherwise daunting situation.

2.7 Need to Belong

When considering individual differences contributing to the experience of anticipatory anxiety, the individual's need to belong stands out as a factor influencing its intensity. One of the main reasons individuals experience anticipatory anxiety is the fear of making a bad impression or being rejected in a social situation (Asher, 2020; Hope & Heimberg, 1990; London et al., 2007). Within the literature, the individual's need to belong, which refers to a drive to form and maintain lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships has been identified as one of the major drivers of this fear of rejection (Leary & Schlenker, 1982; Leary, 2021). Furthermore, rejection has been shown to have a greater impact on the self-esteem of individuals with a high need to belong (Tyler et al., 2016). Accordingly, it was found that individuals with a high need to belong are more sensitive to cues and situations where they may face social rejection or disapproval (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Leary, 2010). In line with that, it can be argued that individuals with a high need to belong may also experience higher levels of anticipatory anxiety in social contexts, therefore also increasing their need for emotion regulation.

Given the inherently social nature of clothing as a form of non-verbal communication, individuals with a high need to belong may strategically use their attire to navigate situations where they anticipate anxiety for emotional self-protection (Gozalova et al., 2016; Goedhart, 2020). In line with the theories outlined above, clothing may allow these individuals to exert some control over how they feel in the situation, which is critical in managing their anxiety in light of potential social rejection (Kaiser, 1997). Here, the strategic use of clothing can serve as a protective shield, enabling individuals to feel more confident and secure by literally physically “shielding themselves”, which might reduce their anxiety (Gruber & Kachel, 2023).

The research on this topic shows that the individuals’ need to belong severely affects clothing choices. For instance, it was found that individuals with a fear of embarrassment, which stems from a need to belong, use clothing to avoid social rejection (Miller & Leary, 1992). Another study found that consumers may buy items which align with societal expectations to prevent the negative consequences of non-conformity (O’Cass & McEwen, 2004).

These studies demonstrate how need to belong affects clothing choices in a variety of situations. It can be inferred that the stronger the need to belong, the more likely that the individual adjusts their clothing to the social situation to avoid social rejection. However, while fear of rejection has been identified as one of the causing factors of anticipatory anxiety (Drury, 2010), there has been little research on the effects of need to belong on clothing choices in anxiety inducing situations.

3. Overview of the Research Approach

3.1 Approach and Design

The present study employed a mixed-methods approach, which involves a systematic process of collecting, analysing, and integrating both quantitative and qualitative data within

a single research framework (Guetterman & Fetters, 2018). Numerous scholars argue that conducting mixed-methods research enhances the reliability and ecological validity of the findings, the depth and breadth of understanding and interpretation in addressing the research question, and the trustworthiness of the analyses (Turner, 2017; Hafsa, 2019; Harrison, 2020). In addition to these advantages, mixed-methods research was deemed the most effective approach, given that research on this topic is sparse, particularly concerning everyday situations. Additionally, as the questionnaire assessing clothing features was specifically developed for this study, qualitative research was employed to further validate and refine the items, thereby enhancing the overall validity of the research.

The study utilised a sequential exploratory design. This design refers to a process wherein the research begins with the exploration of a topic through the collection of qualitative data, which then informs the development of instruments for subsequent quantitative examination (Guetterman et al., 2015; Mason et al., 2021). Given the limited prior studies and literature on this research topic, this design was selected to allow for the initial gathering of relevant insights from qualitative data collection, which then guided the identification of key variables for quantitative measurement.

3.2 Overview of Present Research

As this study employed a mixed-methods approach and a sequential exploratory design, it was conducted in two phases: (1) qualitative and (2) quantitative. The research followed six stages: (1) qualitative data collection, (2) qualitative data analysis, (3) survey development based on qualitative findings and existing literature, (4) quantitative data collection, and (5) quantitative data analysis.

3.3 Guiding Research Questions

After reviewing relevant literature and the selection of appropriate methods and design, the following research questions were formed: ***RQ1*** What are non-threatening social

situations where individuals experience anticipatory anxiety (Qualitative); **RQ2.** What clothing features are individuals drawn to in these kinds of situations? (Quantitative); **RQ3.** How does an individuals need to belong affect the relationship between the situations and clothing choices? (Quantitative)

3.4 Hypotheses

Based on the literature outlined above, the following expectations can be discerned (largely limited to the quantitative part of the study):

H1: There will be a difference in the way individuals dress for the different high anticipatory anxiety situations in comparison to the comfortable situation.

H2: Individuals lean towards more tight, thick and covered clothing in high anticipatory anxiety situations in comparison to the comfortable situation.

H3: The individuals' need to belong will moderate whether individuals dress differently across situations in a way where the difference is bigger when one's need to belong is higher.

4. Study 1: Qualitative Phase

The qualitative phase of this research comprised a focus group. The outcomes were used as a baseline for the quantitative part of the research. The study aimed to identify multiple situations in which the majority of individuals experience anticipatory anxiety. Furthermore, the focus group was used to generate fashion features for the questionnaire created for the quantitative phase of the research, thereby validating the items developed from the literature.

4.1. Methods

4.1.1. Participants

The qualitative study utilised a sample of eight individuals (four males and four females, aged 21 to 26) who were recruited from the researcher's personal network.

Participants were selected based on availability and diversity. The aim hereby was to obtain a

broad sample so that a most accurate representation of the population was achieved. The number of participants was based on previous literature suggesting that six to ten participants are ideal for a focus group, as this size ensures diversity of opinions while still enabling all participants to share their thoughts (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). Throughout the analysis, participants will be referred to by their assigned number (see Table 1 below).

Table 1

Participant number, gender, age and whether they are studying or working.

Participant Number	Gender	Age	Working/Student
Participant 1	Male	21	Student
Participant 2	Female	22	Student
Participant 3	Female	23	Student
Participant 4	Male	24	Student
Participant 5	Male	26	Working
Participant 6	Female	25	Student
Participant 7	Female	25	Student
Participant 8	Male	25	Working

4.1.2. Materials.

The qualitative phase of this research involved a focus group. Here, the participants were first provided with a definition of anticipatory anxiety before being asked four open-ended questions (Appendix B). These questions aimed to explore social situations where individuals experience anticipatory anxiety, reasons contributing to this experience, as well as a broad question to brainstorm the most salient everyday fashion features. The interview schedule was divided into two parts. First, the group brainstormed situations that induce anticipatory anxiety, followed by a discussion on the reasons why these situations provoke

anxiety. Subsequently, participants were asked to discuss which of the previously brainstormed situations they could all agree upon. In the second part of the focus group, participants were asked to brainstorm fashion features.

While the focus group was primarily guided by predetermined questions, the researcher encouraged flexibility in the discussion, allowing participants to share any thoughts that came to mind, even if they extended beyond the questions asked.

4.1.3. Data Collection & Analysis.

Data collection took place on 14th July 2024. Before data collection commenced, participants received an information sheet detailing the research. Additionally, they were provided with a consent form, which they were required to read and, if applicable, agree to the terms of the research (Appendix B). The focus group was conducted online using Microsoft Teams and lasted approximately 45 minutes. It was audio-recorded and transcribed. Afterwards, participants were provided with a debriefing sheet outlining the aims and implications of the study, along with a list of health resources in the unlikely event that any harm was experienced. Data collection concluded once saturation was reached.

After all the data had been gathered, the audio recordings were transcribed following the guidelines set out by the Jefferson transcription system (2004). To safeguard participants' identities and ensure their anonymity within the study, pseudonyms were assigned to each individual. An open-coding approach was employed to maintain an inductive analysis, allowing the data to be explored directly without any preconceived biases (Mohajan & Mohajan, 2022). The data underwent manual analysis using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis (TA), as outlined by Braun and Clark (2006), is a qualitative method used to identify, code, analyse, and interpret recurring patterns and ideologies within the data. The six steps of thematic analysis were followed, which included: (1) familiarisation with the data; (2) initial coding; (3) identifying themes; (4) reviewing themes; (5) defining themes;

and (6) writing the report. This study primarily focused on the emergence of semantic themes, emphasising the explicit content of the data rather than delving into the potential underlying subtext associated with latent-driven processes (Boyatzis, 1998).

4.1.4. Reflexivity

Due to the partly qualitative nature of the present research, including a reflexivity statement is essential. I first acknowledge my privilege as being a white, middle-class, cisgender, and able-bodied female, which may have influenced my perspectives and evaluations towards situations that I perceive as socially threatening. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that I have acquainted relationships with the participants selected for the focus group, which could have potentially biased the results. For instance, a participant bias could have occurred, which pertains to the phenomenon where participants respond accordingly to what they believe the researcher desires to hear rather than responding with their personal opinions (Brito, 2017). To mitigate this, I tried to avoid disclosing any information regarding my research aims with the participants before the focus group. Additionally, I aimed for objectivity while coding and tried to ensure that the prior research I conducted did not influence my analysis.

4.2. Results

This section focuses primarily on anticipatory anxiety. Fashion features (used for survey development) will be discussed later in Study 2.

Theme 1: Anxiety in New Social Encounters

The most prominent theme identified is the anxiety that participants feel in new social situations, particularly when they have to meet unfamiliar people who are somehow connected to them through a social link.

This was reflected by Participant 3, who mentioned: " Meeting new people in any sort of social setting makes me feel a bit anxious, especially if I'm visiting a friend and she's

saying: ‘Oh, we’re going out with my group of friends here where I live and I don’t know these people’.” Here, the anxiety can be attributed to uncertainty about whether one would get along with the people one meets as well as the pressure to fit into a new group of individuals who already know each other.

Adding to that, Participant 4 stated: “Probably like large groups of people that I don't know, and I have to just like introduce myself and tell them, hey, here's me. That's kind of awkward.”. Again, this highlights the previously determined fear of unknown people.

Especially a party context was brought up as anxiety-inducing several times by individuals for instance, Participant 5 mentioned: “If you are invited to a birthday party, but you only know the person whose birthday it is, and you don’t know anyone else”, and “I'd say like a group of people that like going to a party where you don't know anyone would be at the top of situations that make me nervous (...)”. (Participant 6). These sentiments were agreed upon by the other participants and reflect how being in new groups with only one social link is especially daunting.

As reasons for these situations being so nerve-wracking, it was mentioned multiple times that participants find it hard to find a balance between being themselves and making a good impression. This was evidenced, for example, by Participant 1 stating, “ You are sort of pushed to become a product of your surroundings, so I think staying true to yourself versus. Fitting in or blending in with the crowd, especially in bigger groups of people who you haven't met before.” This statement reflects the anxieties related to finding a balance of being oneself while also wanting to be accepted.

Furthermore, participants mentioned that their anxiety is even worse if they know only one of the people and they are meeting their friends with whom they want to get along as they do not want to make a bad impression. This was reflected by Participant 7, for instance, who stated, “Like, for example, it's your friend's friend, so you really want to

present yourself in the correct way.” Participant 3 said, “That (meeting one’s friends friends) makes me feel a bit anxious because, you know, like, you want to, you want to be like a fun person, you know, like, you don't want to, you want to socialise and, like, meet all of your friends friends.

I think that gives gives me a bit of anxiety.”

Theme 2: First-time experiences in professional/academic settings

This theme reflects the anxiety related to first-time experiences. Here, the situation that was brought up multiple times was the first days at either university, school or at a new job.

Participants mentioned, “I would say also the first day of school” (Participant 7), which was followed by “Yeah, or meeting your new colleagues for the first time at work” (Participant 8). Here, it was highlighted that these situations seem especially anxiety-inducing as they are linked to social consequences such as having friends in the workplace or at university, so making a good impression is of the essence. As one participant stated, “But when it's a big consequence like the first day of university,(...) those are more scary.” (Participant 1) This was further confirmed by another participant, adding,” If it's like if it's more of a social thing and like, yeah, like making friends or whatever, then that scares me more.” (Participant 4). The other participants agreed with this sentiment.

Similarly to the prior situation, here one of the reasons for this situation seeming so daunting was the pressure related to fitting in in comparison to the others while also not denying one’s true self. This was reflected in Participant 7, stating: “ Like first days for everything. Like first day of school, first day of Work, First day of, like, getting to a new place, for example. I don't know. You have that pressure of being yourself, but at the same time, not being like too different to what, like the people that you're going to meet?.” This also reflects a need to be similar to others.

Again, here it was shown the individuals needing to be liked by others and belonging to their new social environment was strengthening their anxiety regarding situations such as the first day at a new job or university.

Theme 3: High-Stake Social Interactions – First Dates and Job Interviews

Furthermore, participants mentioned situations that they perceive to be high stakes where they feel like they are evaluated for their performance as daunting to them. Here, first dates and job interviews were mentioned particularly often, as for both of these situations, individuals are getting evaluated by a person and are trying to make a good impression on them.

One participant (Participant 1) stated: “But when it's a big consequence or has bigger implications such as dating or whether you're going to get a job after an interview, those are more scary.” This sentiment reflects the participant perceiving these two situations to carry a heavier emotional weight due to their potential impact on one's personal or professional life.

Dating, in particular, was frequently mentioned as a source of anxiety, especially when participants were meeting someone in person for the first time after having established a connection online. Participant 2 shared: "Dating is also one of these situations that I am really anxious about before." Participant 7 added: "Yeah, especially if I am meeting them for the first time but really liked them over text." These quotes highlight the uncertainty and pressure associated with transitioning from online to face-to-face interactions and anxiety regarding the uncertainty of how a person is going to be in real life.

The anxiety in these situations often stems from the pressure to make a good impression while remaining authentic. One participant noted: “You may feel that pressure of portraying yourself and at the same time be liked by the other person, and you don't know what to expect.” (Participant 6) This quote highlights worries regarding the uncertainty of this

situation as well as the pressure to perform in a way where you are liked but can still be yourself.

Job interviews were another significant source of anxiety, with participants expressing concerns about the high stakes involved. Participant 2 shared: “I think for me personally, like even if I really like the job, it's more nerve-wracking just because you know you want to make a good impression and then you really want to be an individual. But yeah, this, like it's I'll always get nervous about it even if I like really want the job or even if I'm like nah, it's just a job, I'm still going to get nervous.” This statement reflects the persistent anxiety participants feel, regardless of their level of interest in the job, due to the evaluative nature of the interview.

However, not all participants perceived job interviews as anxiety-inducing. For instance, Participant 4 stated: “For me, job interviews are not that scary because the motivation to get this job is so high that I don't really like get scared. I guess I'm like, I just have to do this, I really want it. I have like the, you know, the drive to make it happen.” This quote highlights how personal motivation and confidence can mitigate anxiety in high-stakes situations, illustrating the variability in how individuals experience social anxiety.

Additionally, it was noted by participants that practice decreases anxiety before job interviews, making them less daunting. This was reflected by Participant 3, saying: “I think the more I I do like job interviews, and I guess practice in the way of what I'm saying this, and.

practise answers to the most common questions. Then, I would feel like a bit I I feel like more at ease because I'm confident in what I'm going to say. “

Theme 4: Factors influencing anxiety

The final theme explores the contextual factors that influence the intensity of social anxiety in the situations discussed. Participants identified several factors, including the

formality of the event, the time of day, and the amount of information available about the situation, as significant contributors to their anxiety.

Participants noted that informal daytime interactions tend to be less anxiety-inducing than more formal evening events. Participant 8 remarked: "I guess it's a bit more commitment meeting people at night or in the evening, also just a coffee at work. In the afternoon or noon, it's just easier, and we talk for like 15-30 minutes, and then you go and work again. But in the evening, it's more formal, like you said." This quote suggests that the increased formality and duration of evening events add to the participants' anxiety.

Another participant expanded on this by saying: "If it's like in the night and you're going out and you have to dress up like a little bit more or like the situation might be like a little bit more formal, then it's like. A little bit more of anxiety there, if that makes sense." (Participant 8) The expectation to dress up and adhere to social norms in more formal settings increases the pressure to perform socially, thereby heightening anxiety.

The degree of uncertainty in a situation also emerged as a key factor influencing anxiety levels. Participant 6 shared: "I get anxious when it's a more organic social situation versus something where there is a social script that you can sort of follow, like in a job interview." This quote highlights the comfort that participants find in structured situations where social expectations are clear, as opposed to unstructured, spontaneous interactions where the social script is less defined.

The availability of information about a social situation was another significant factor. Participant 3 noted: "If I have more information about, um, the situation or just how I'm supposed to act, then I think that makes me feel a little less anxious because I know, you know, like the uncertainty that makes me more anxious." This statement underscores the importance of being able to anticipate what is going to happen and how one is expected to behave to alleviate anxiety.

4.3 Summary of Study 1

To summarise, study 1 explored the different kinds of social situations where individuals experience anticipatory anxiety beforehand. Here, the following three situations were found to be the most mentioned and agreed upon scenarios: 1) Meeting the friends of your friend for the first time; 2) Going to the first day at university or a new job; 3) Going on a first date. Here, the main reason mentioned as a cause of this anxiety was a need to get along with people, may it be due to a common social link which one does not want to disappoint, or a fear of being without friends for university. Furthermore, uncertainty and a lack of social script were mentioned multiple times.

5. Study 2: Quantitative Phase

Once Study 1 concluded, the results were used to inform and design a survey to be analysed quantitatively amongst a general sample. Here, the social situations which evoke anticipatory anxiety discerned in the focus group were used as a framework. Furthermore, the results of the second part of the focus group were used to inform the items of the fashion features questionnaire. The overall purpose of study 2 was to quantitatively assess what clothing features individuals are drawn to in social situations high in anticipatory anxiety. Furthermore, the moderating influence of the individual's need to belong on the variance in clothing per social situation was assessed.

5.1. Methods

5.1.1. Sample.

The present sample consisted of 133 participants from Northern Europe (e.g. Germany, England, Sweden, The Netherlands). The participants were recruited using convenience sampling, meaning that they were collected based on availability via email, Instagram, and WhatsApp. This is standard practice, given the size of the sample (Etikan et al., 2016; Sedgwick, 2013). The sampling was aimed to be random as this allows for a more

representative cohort while also limiting the potential interference of unknown confounding variables (Etikan & Bala, 2017). In line with the ethical guidelines of the Ethics Board of London College of Fashion, the participants had to be over the age of eighteen to participate. Of the 133 responses, only 78 were valid. However, a G*Power analysis revealed this number to be sufficient as it revealed 24 to be a sufficient sample size given an appropriate effect size and confidence interval of 95% ($f^2=.085$, $\alpha=.05$, $1-\beta=.8$).

The mean age of the final sample ($N=78$) was 33.54 ($SD=16.45$), with a range of 19 to 74. The distribution of genders was skewed, with 74.40% female ($N=58$), 21.80% male ($N=17$) and 2.6% non-binary/other participants ($N=2$). One participant preferred not to disclose their gender.

5.1.2. Materials

The quantitative part of the present study consisted of multiple questionnaires which were presented in the following order: 1) Clothing choices in social situations predetermined by the qualitative part of the study, 2) Perception of protectiveness of clothing, 3) Assessment of one's need to belong, 4) Demographics.

Clothing Features Questionnaire. To assess the individual's tendency towards wearing specific clothing features during the qualitative part of the study, determined social situations (1) Going on a first date, 2) Meeting your friends, 3) Going to the first day of school/university/job) as well as an added comfortable situation: "Imagine you are meeting your best friend", a questionnaire was newly developed for the present research.

The 17 items were created in collaboration with another student at the London College of Fashion (and were validated by an independent researcher) based on clothing features outlined in Fluegel's (1930) book "Fashion Psychology" and items used by Na and Agnhage (2013). Furthermore, during the qualitative part of this study, participants were asked to brainstorm and generate clothing features to further cross-validate the items chosen.

Participants were asked to score the clothing features on a five-point semantic differential scale, a scale represented by two opposing extremes (Osgood, 1964). For instance, light vs dark, tight vs oversized or stiff vs flowy. The remaining items and full instructions for each situation of the final questionnaire can be found in Appendix C. This scale was presented four times for each respective scenario.

Based on an exploratory factor analysis, three subscales were determined: 1) Aesthetic/Expressive Features (Pattern, Coloured, Vibrant, Light) 2) Structural Features (Soft, Light, Flowy, Stretchy); 3) Comfort and Volume Features (oversized, comfortable, covered, opaque, thick), (see results section for full explanation). For these subscales, the reliability was moderate to good ($\alpha=.68$ for Aesthetic/Expressive Features; $\alpha=.70$ for Structural Features; $\alpha=.69$ for Comfort and Volume Features)

Need to Belong Scale. To assess the individual's need to belong, the Need to Belong Scale (Leary, 2013) was used. The ten items assessed need to belong on an individual level with response options "1 = *strongly disagree*" to "5 = *strongly agree*" on a five-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating a higher need to belong. Items 1, 3 and 7 are reverse coded. Example items are "If other people don't seem to accept me, I don't let it bother me (R)"; "I have a strong need to belong"; and "My feelings are easily hurt when I feel that others don't accept me." The remaining items can be found in Appendix B. This questionnaire is one of the most validated and widely used questionnaires assessing one's need to belong, which is why it was selected for this study (Leary et. al., 2013). Furthermore, it is comparably short, which is favourable, as fatigue effects, which refer to the participant's loss of attention due to fatigue when answering questionnaires, can be prevented (Ashley, 2020). A moderate but acceptable reliability was found ($\alpha=.66$).

5.1.3. Data Collection

For the quantitative part of this study, the cross-sectional survey was distributed online through an anonymised Qualtrics link during a 2-week period at the end of July and beginning of August 2024. This procedure is standard for online surveys, given the size of the sample and the nature of the data collected (Miller et al., 2020). First, respondents were presented with an information sheet regarding the study and reminded that their participation was voluntary. Respondents were also required to provide their consent and were asked to agree to the terms of the research.

Once completed, the respondents were presented with the four social situations determined in the qualitative part of the present research (1. First Date; 2. Meeting your friends for the first time; 3. First day at university/job/school) and one control situation (Meeting your best friend) in randomised order. For each situation, participants were asked to imagine what their outfit would most likely look like (when neglecting temperature). Then, respondents were asked to rate the clothing features. Subsequently, participants were presented with the items assessing their perception of the emotional protectiveness of clothing and the need to belong scale. After that, demographics were assessed by asking about the participant's age and gender.

The survey concluded by presenting respondents with a debriefing statement outlining the aims and hypotheses of the research alongside a list of health resources for the unlikely event that any harm was experienced. On average, the survey took approximately ten to fifteen minutes to complete.

5.1.4. Data Analysis Plan

Following data collection, the dataset was transferred to an Excel file and subsequently imported into IBM SPSS Statistics 29 for both descriptive and inferential analyses. Before the main analysis was conducted, a Factor Analysis was conducted to reduce

the 17 clothing features into smaller dimensions. This procedure of reducing variables over multiple scenarios was adopted from Soranzo and colleagues (2018). Specifically, a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with a Varimax Rotation was applied. The factor loadings can be found in Table 2. This analysis allowed for the items to be grouped into three distinct clothing feature dimensions: Aesthetic/Expressive Features, Structural Features, and Comfort & Volume Features.

The variables can be interpreted the following way: 1. High scores on the Aesthetic/Expressive Dimension indicate a higher likelihood of wearing patterned, Coloured, Vibrant, Light and Frilly clothing, while low scores indicate a likelihood of wearing no patterns, neutral, muted and dark colours and plain clothing. 2. High scores on the Structural Dimension indicate an increased likelihood of wearing hard and heavy clothing that is stiff and rigid while lower scores indicate an increased likelihood of wearing soft, light, flowy and stretchy clothing; 3. High scores on the Comfort and Volume Dimension denote a higher likelihood of wearing oversized, opaque, covered, comfortable and thick items, while low scores can be interpreted as a higher likelihood of wearing tight, see-through, revealing, uncomfortable and thin items.

The primary analytical approach involved a 3 (clothing feature dimensions) x 4 (scenarios) Repeated Measures ANOVA. This analysis focused on assessing the main effects and interaction effects to determine whether significant differences existed across the four scenarios and the various clothing features. To further explore these effects, pairwise comparisons were conducted to examine the interactions between each scenario and the corresponding clothing dimensions.

Additionally, to investigate the moderating effects of Need to Belong, a separate model was added. The reason for adding a separate model was that the primary focus of the research was on the relation between the scenarios and the fashion features. For this analysis,

a mixed-design ANOVA was performed. For this purpose, the Need to Belong measure was transformed from a continuous measure into a categorical variable (high vs. low scores) before being included in the mixed-ANOVA model.

Table 2

Results From an Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Fashion Feature Questionnaire.

PCAT item	Factor loading		
	1	2	3
Factor 1: Aesthetic/Expressive Features			
1. Pattern vs. No Pattern	-.71		
2. Neutral vs. Coloured	.70		
3. Muted vs. Vibrant	.66		
4. Dark vs. Light	.58		
5. Frills vs. Plein	-.57		
Factor 2: Structural Features			
1. Soft vs. Hard		.72	
2. Light vs. Heavy		.66	
3. Stiff vs. Flowy		-.65	
4. Stretchy vs. Ridgit		.65	
Factor 3: Comfort & Volume Features			
1. Tight vs. Oversized			.70
2. Seethrough vs. Opaque			.59
3. Covered vs. Revealing			-.58
4. Comfortable vs. Uncomfortable			-.55
5. Thick vs. Thin			-.48

Note. $N = 78 \times 4$ (scenario) = 312. The extraction method was principal component analysis with a varimax rotation. Factor loadings above .5 are in bold

5.2 Results

The purpose of Study 2 was to (1) gain insights into the use of fashion across anticipatory anxiety situations determined in Study 1 and (2) to examine whether need to belong affects how individuals use fashion in high anticipatory anxiety situations. To gain insights into these aspects, descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted.

5.2.1 Descriptive Statistics

Prior to the inferential data analysis, descriptive statistics were derived. The means and standard deviations for each combination of clothing features and social scenarios are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3*Means and Standard Deviations for Clothing Features Across Social Scenarios.*

Social Scenario	Clothing Feature	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
First Date	Aesthetic/Expressive	3.03	0.58
	Structure	2.64	0.41
	Comfort & Volume	3.29	0.41
Meeting Best Friend	Aesthetic/Expressive	3.10	0.49
	Structure	2.39	0.64
	Comfort & Volume	3.37	0.37
Meeting New People	Aesthetic/Expressive	3.10	0.58
	Structure	2.84	0.44
	Comfort & Volume	3.42	0.48
First Day at University/Job/School	Aesthetic/Expressive	2.70	0.44
	Structure	2.62	0.61
	Comfort & Volume	3.59	0.39

Note. *N* = 78. *M* = Mean; *SD* = Standard Deviation.

5.2.2. Assumption Checks for Inferential Statistics Tests

Before interpreting the main effects and interaction effects, assumptions of the 3x4 Repeated-Measures-ANOVA and the Mixed-Measure ANOVA were checked. Since the Central Limit Theorem states that normality can be assumed for a sample size above 30, normality can be assumed in the present study (Kwak & Kim, 2017). Mauchly's test of sphericity was used to assess the assumption of sphericity for the within-subject factors. The test indicated that the assumption of sphericity was met for the interaction between the

Scenario and Clothing Features ($\chi^2(20) = 28.36, p = .101$). Due to the nature of the study, independence of observations was provided. Additionally, extreme outliers were controlled for. Though some were detected, they were kept in the dataset, as no irregular response patterns were found, and they allowed for a more accurate representation of the sample.

5.2.3. Main Effects of Clothing Features and Social Scenario

Clothing Features

The analysis revealed a significant main effect of clothing feature ($F(3) = 89.54, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .54$). This indicates that participants' ratings significantly differed based on the clothing feature being evaluated. Specifically, the highest average score was for the Comfort and Volume Dimension ($M=3.42, SD=0.03, 95\% CI \{3.35; 3.49\}$), followed by the Aesthetic/Expressive Dimension ($M=2.96, SD=0.04, 95\% CI \{2.88; 3.05\}$), and lastly average scores were the lowest for the Structure Dimension ($M=2.62, SD=0.04, 95\% CI \{2.53; 2.71\}$).

Social Scenario

There was also a significant main effect of social scenarios ($F(3) = 9.84, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .11$). This finding suggests that participants' clothing preferences varied significantly across the different scenarios. The highest average scores were in the Meeting ones Friends Friends Scenario ($M=3.12, SD=0.04, 95\% CI \{3.05; 3.19\}$), followed by the First Date Scenario ($M=2.99, SD=0.03, 95\% CI \{2.92; 3.06\}$), then the First Day of University/School/Job Scenario ($M=2.97, SD=0.03, 95\% CI \{2.92; 3.02\}$), lastly average scores were the lowest in the Meeting Ones Best Friend Scenario ($M=2.92, SD=0.03, 95\% CI \{2.86; 2.98\}$).

5.2.4. Interaction Effect: Do people choose different features according to different scenarios?

The interaction between the clothing feature and social scenario was also significant ($F(6) = 15.06, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .16$), indicating that the three clothing feature dimensions are differentially associated with the four scenarios.

Therefore, a series of pairwise comparisons were conducted. Here, it was explored whether there is a significant difference in participants' ratings of clothing features (Aesthetic/Expressive, Structural, Comfort & Volume) across the four social scenarios (1. First date; 2. Meeting one's best friend, 3. Meeting one's friend's friends; 4. The first day at university/school/new job). The analysis revealed several significant differences. The difference scores and significance levels for each scenario compared with the highest-scoring scenario will be reported below. Figure 1 will display a visualisation, and the full results can be found in Appendix D.

Aesthetic/Expressive Dimension

The scores on the Aesthetic/Expressive Dimension were similarly high in the Meeting ones Friends Friend's Scenario ($M = 3.10, SE = 0.07$), First Date scenario ($M = 3.031, SE = 0.07$; Mean Difference = 0.07, $SE = 0.07, p = 1.000$) and the Best Friend Scenario ($M = 3.01, SE = 0.06$; Mean Difference = 0.09, $SE = 0.07, p = 1.000$). In comparison, the scores on this dimension were significantly lower for the First Day at University scenario ($M = 2.70, SE = 0.05$; Mean Difference = 0.40, $SE = 0.07, p < .001$). This indicates that the first three scenarios did not differ from each other. However, individuals prefer more neutral, muted, dark and plain clothing in an academic or professional setting, compared to other settings where more colourful, vibrant, light and patterned items are preferred.

Structural Dimension

Within the Structural Dimension, the four scenarios significantly differed from each other at $p < .05$. Specifically, scores were the highest for the Meeting one's Friend's Friend's Scenario ($M = 2.84$, $SE = 0.05$), followed by the First Date Scenario ($M = 2.64$, $SE = 0.05$; Mean Difference = 0.20, $SE = 0.05$, $p = .003$), then the First Day of School/University/Job Scenario ($M = 2.62$, $SE = 0.07$; Mean Difference = 0.22, $SE = .07$, $p = .025$), and, finally, the Meeting One's Best Friend Scenario ($M = 2.39$, $SE = 0.07$; Mean difference = 0.45, $SE = 0.07$, $p < .001$). This indicates that participants showed only a slight preference for wearing hard, heavy, stiff and ridged clothing when meeting the friends of a friend for the first time, going on a first date and the first day of university, school or a new job. Since the scores were lowest for the meeting one's best friend scenario, this indicates that individuals prefer wearing soft, light, flowy, and stretchy clothing in this setting.

Comfort and Volume Dimension

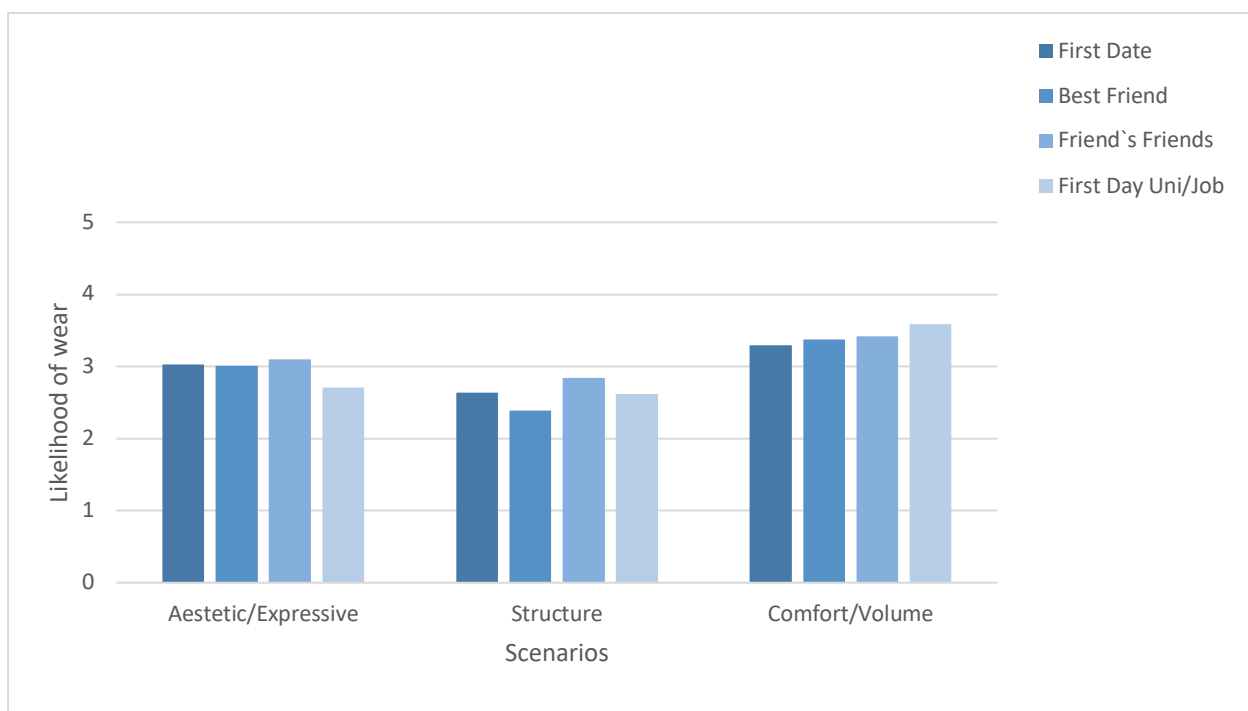
Within the Comfort and Volume Dimension, the four scenarios significantly differed from each other at $p < .05$. Specifically, scores were the highest for the First Day at University Scenario ($M = 3.59$, $SE = 0.04$), followed by the Meeting Ones Friends's Friends' Scenario ($M = 3.42$, $SE = 0.06$; Mean Difference = 0.16, $SE = 0.06$, $p = .030$) and then the the First Date Scenario ($M = 2.64$, $SE = .05$; Mean Difference = 0.20, $SE = 0.05$, $p = .003$), then, and, finally, the Meeting One's Best Friend Scenario ($M = 3.37$, $SE = 0.04$; Mean Difference = 0.21, $SE = 0.05$, $p < .001$). This indicates that participants prioritized comfort, thickness, and coverage the most for more formal or academic settings, followed by the other anxiety inducing situations. In the more comfortable situation, individuals had a higher preference for thinner, more see-through, uncomfortable and revealing items.

To summarise, the results mostly provide support Hypothesis 1 and 2, indicating that there is a difference in how participants dress across social situations (H1); and further, participants preferred oversized, thicker, and more covered clothing in high-anxiety

situations, compared to the more soft, thin and revealing clothing chosen for meeting a best friend. This mostly supports Hypothesis 2. The only exception was that participants scored higher on the dimension, indicating a preference for oversized clothing, which is opposite to what was expected for the anticipatory anxiety situations. Preferences for vibrant and expressive clothing were higher in social scenarios like meeting new people but decreased in formal or academic settings. The consistent preference for thicker, more covered, comfortable items in situations eliciting anticipatory anxiety stands in comparison to soft, light clothing when meeting a best friend (H2). For full results, refer to Appendix E.

Figure 1

Comparison of Fashion Feature Dimensions Across Scenarios.



Notes. N=78

5.2.5 The Moderating Effect of Need to Belong on the Relationship Between the Situations and Clothing Choices.

To test Hypothesis 4, which postulates need to belong as a moderating factor on the relationship between anticipatory anxiety inducing situations and the use of fashion for emotional self-protection as indicated by a larger variance of clothing features, a between situations, mixed-measures ANOVA was used. First, Need to Belong was converted into a categorical variable with two levels (high vs. low) and then inserted into the statistical model. Here, no significant three-way interaction between Need to Belong and the relationship between Scenario and Clothing Features was found ($F(6)=1.096$, $\alpha=.364$). This indicates that one's need to belong does not affect clothing feature preference across situations, indicating that there is no sensitivity to it. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 can be refuted, meaning that it makes no difference for fashion feature preference whether individuals score high or low on Need to Belong regarding how they use fashion in high anticipatory anxiety situations.

5.3 Summary of Study 2

To summarise, Study 2 used a quantitative approach to determine which fashion features individuals are most likely to wear in the three qualitatively predetermined anticipatory anxiety inducing social situations (as well as one comfortable situation). Hypothesis 1 suggested that there will be differences between the fashion feature choices in the anticipatory anxiety situations and the more comfortable situation. Additionally, Hypothesis 2 proposed that individuals are likely to prefer wearing thick, covered and tight clothing in anticipatory anxiety situations. Support for both hypotheses was mostly found, as individuals consistently reported a higher likelihood of wearing items with these attributes, except for tightness, in the anticipatory anxiety situations in comparison to the comfortable situation. No support for Hypothesis 3, which proposed need to belong as a moderating factor, was found.

6. Discussion

6.1. Integrated Findings

The objective of this mixed-methods study was to first find out for which social situations individuals experience anticipatory anxiety and then gain insights into the use of clothing for psychological self-protection in these situations. Furthermore, it was aimed at finding out how need to belong affects how individuals use clothing in these kinds of situations.

In Study 1 (qualitative), three social situations were identified which are the most likely to cause anticipatory anxiety in individuals: 1) Going on a first date, 2) meeting you friends friends for the first time, 3) the first day of university/school/ a new job. The participants noted fear of judgement or rejection, feeling pressure to make a good impression while still being true to oneself, a fear of uncertainty and a lack of control as underlying reasons for these situations eliciting anticipatory anxiety. Additionally, the casualness of the situation and perception of the importance of the consequences of the event were mentioned as important factors enhancing anxiety.

In Study 2 (quantitative), In line with the literature and the proposed theoretical framework consisting of the Emotion Regulation Theory and Enclothed Cognition, Hypothesis 1 posited that individuals are going to differ in their clothing choices for the anticipatory anxiety situations in comparison to the comfortable situation. Further, Hypothesis 2 proposed that individuals are more likely to prefer thick, covered, tight and structured items in situations where they experience anticipatory anxiety. Here, the following was found for the different fashion feature dimensions:

Overall, oversized, thick, comfortable and covered clothing was the most preferred by individuals across all scenarios, but especially the anticipatory anxiety scenarios.

Furthermore, patterned, coloured, vibrant, light and frilly clothing was preferred for all

situations except professional and academic settings where more neutral, dark and muted, non-patterned tones were more likely to be worn. While individuals overall rated the likelihood of wearing hard, heavy, stiff and rigid clothing the lowest, there were still differences across situations, with individuals being more likely to wear stiff, rigid and heavy clothing when meeting their friend's friends as well as for the other anxiety situations in comparison to when they are meeting their best friend. In this situation, individuals showed a strong inclination to wear soft, stretchy clothing.

Lastly, Hypothesis 3 postulated that individuals who have a high need to belong will vary more between situations. This was not confirmed by the data, as need to belong did not make a difference in the way people dress across situations.

6.2 Theoretical Implications

The findings of the focus group are in line with the literature on anticipatory anxiety. Individuals perceive social situations which are thought to be high stake or of evaluative nature to be daunting, leading them to experience anticipatory anxiety (Asher, 2020; Donaldson et al., 2023, Helbig-Lang et al., 2012; Hinrichsen & Clark, 2003; Hope & Heimberg, 1990). This was confirmed in this study, as the participants noted that they experience anticipatory anxiety before situations where they want to make a good impression, feel like they are getting evaluated, face social consequences such as potentially getting rejected and where they perceive they have a lack of control or structure in the event.

While previous literature mainly focused on researching a single specified situation and its implications (Gruber et al., 2023; Kang et al., 2013; Morris et al., 2014; Yates & Smith, 2018), the present research expanded upon that by first exploring a variety of situations where individuals experience anticipatory anxiety qualitatively to then use that as a base for further quantitative research. Here, the additional qualitative layer adds increased

ecological validity to the research as the situations used are not merely based on the assumption that they are perceived to be eliciting anticipatory anxiety (Creswell et al., 2006).

The present paper proposed Emotion Regulation Theory and Enclothed Cognition as theoretical frameworks. By integrating the two theories, the present study proposed that using clothing to feel differently about oneself within a situation can be viewed as a form of cognitive reappraisal, making one feel more secure in an anxiety inducing situation. In line with that, previous literature suggested that individuals will likely prefer thicker, more structured and harder fabrics in situations where they anticipate or experience anxiety or similar emotions, drawing parallels between physical and emotional self-protection (Bynum, 2022; Fluegel, 1930; Gruber & Kachel, 2023; Hinrichsen & Clark, 2003; Morris et al., 2014). This was confirmed in the current study as here it was found that individuals' preference for thick, structured, and comfortable items was consistently higher in the situations found to be eliciting anticipatory anxiety in comparison to the more comfortable situation of meeting one's best friend.

It must, however, be noted that colourful, patterned and vibrant items were overall preferred for every setting except for the scenario where individuals had to imagine themselves to be going to the first day of school, university or a new job. This finding can be explained by the finding that there is an association between neutral colours and professionalism, which may have impacted the results in this setting, as individuals most likely would like to be perceived as professional here (Furnham et al., 2013).

Furthermore, the current research added to the literature as it was, to the best of our knowledge, the first quantitative study which focused on the use of fashion for emotional self-protection in situations that are experienced by all kinds of individuals regularly and which are not focused on existential threat or individuals with a diagnosis of social anxiety.

Contrary to what was expected based on the literature, the present study participants did not vary in their clothing choices across situations depending on their need to belong. While the literature suggests that individuals with a high need to belong may adapt their clothing more strongly to each situation, the present study did not replicate this sensitivity (Miller & Leary, 1992; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004). Since it was found that the comfort and volume attribute was consistently high across situations, it may be possible that situational factors outweigh the moderating factor, meaning that the need for comfort in these situations outweighs the need to belong. This would also be in line with prior findings of individuals with anxiety preferring comfortable clothing, especially when faced with anxiety inducing situations (Clarke & Miller, 2002). Furthermore, general current trends in fashion may have made an impact. In recent times, oversized and more comfortable clothing has become the default, largely replacing more rigid and tight clothing (Bonilla, 2024).

6.3 Practical Implications

The findings of the current study add to the sparse literature on Fashion Psychology. As highlighted multiple times, fashion is an integral part of most people's everyday lives, affecting emotion, cognition and behaviour. Therefore, expanding upon this field is essential as it opens up new possibilities for both the industry and the individual.

The findings regarding what clothing individuals favour in situations where they experience anticipatory anxiety may also be transferable to a clinical setting. For instance, for individuals who suffer from social anxiety, fashion may be a useful tool to manage their emotions by making them feel more comfortable. Thus, therapists may use this by making individuals aware of the effect clothing can have on how they feel, helping them create a sort of uniform based on the items that were deciphered as preferred for situations eliciting anticipatory anxiety, which they can wear in situations where they feel anxious. This may help them feel more secure and confident.

From an industry perspective, these findings may be used by creating designs and marketing campaigns aimed at individuals headed into anxiety inducing situations. For instance, they could produce a line for each situation using specific fabrics which make the individual feel more secure and shielded while also looking appropriate for the situation. However, more research may be needed to fully be able to use these findings.

6.4 Limitations and Future Directions

Despite the aforementioned contributions to the field of fashion psychology, the present study is not without its limitations.

Firstly, it could have been beneficial to add a scale assessing the anticipatory anxiety for each situation in the quantitative part of the study. Although the situation-based effect was evident, this additional measure would further validate the manipulation of different types of perceived anxiety. Furthermore, it would have allowed for a better ability to infer the exact link between the strength of anxiety and clothing feature preference. However, since the current study included a qualitative part where the situations were deciphered and cross-checked with what was found in the literature using a focus group, the evidence for the chosen situations is quite strong. Furthermore, adding four more scales into the study potentially could have led the participants to experience fatigue effects, which refers to the experience of tiredness and boredom when filling out surveys, as it would have increased response time significantly (Karlberg, 2015). This could have potentially increased the dropout rate, leading to a decrease in statistical power (Cohen, 2014). Nonetheless, future research may want to consider accounting for this.

Additionally, the mean age of the focus group sample was quite young. This may have impacted the results, as there may be age differences in terms of concerns and situations individuals perceive as anxiety inducing. Here, future research could account for this by adding a second focus group with a different age range or to ensure greater diversity in age.

This will help strengthen the ecological validity of the research as it provides for an even more enriched viewpoint (Cicourel, 1982). However, due to time constraints and availability, this was not possible for the current study.

Another possible limitation can be found in the quantitative part of the study. Participants were asked to imagine that they were going to the scenario mentioned. Here, an issue arises as it was found that only imagining oneself in a scenario does not always reach the same strength in emotional response as actually having to attend such an event in real life. Thus, it is possible that participants did not experience the same kind of anxiety, therefore having a lowered need for emotion regulation. Nonetheless, this method is standard practice in psychological research due to a lack of resources needed to create these scenarios and time constraints and has been shown to have quite similar results (Zabelina & Condon, 2019).

Furthermore, while the study aimed to generate generalizable results, the sample was highly skewed, with a majority of the participants being female. This could potentially affect the ecological validity of results as there might be gender differences in terms of fashion preferences as well as differences in situations in which one may experience anticipatory anxiety. Nonetheless, the focus group determining the situations where individuals experience anticipatory anxiety beforehand had a balanced gender distribution, accounting for gender differences. Still, future research on this topic should be mindful of this by aiming for a more balanced gender distribution.

6.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the present mixed-methods study extended the field of fashion psychology, specifically looking at clothing and anticipatory anxiety, which has been largely unexplored. In the qualitative part of this study, three situations eliciting anticipatory anxiety were discerned: 1) First Date; 2) Meeting one's friend's friends; 3) First day at university, a new job or school. Based on these findings, quantitative research assessing which fashion

features individuals are likely to wear in these kinds of situations was conducted. In line with the Emotion Regulation Theory and Enclothed cognition, it was found that individuals were consistently more likely to favour thick, comfortable and structured items, drawing parallels between physical and emotional self-protection. Lastly, need to belong was introduced as a moderating variable. Here, however, no differences between individuals with high or low need to belong were found. These findings add to the existing literature and can be used in clinical, personal and industry settings.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Learning Agreement

Masters Project Learning Plan	
Student Name	Lill Anna Maria Forster
Title of Project	Clothing as a Shield: The Use of Clothing in High Anticipatory Anxiety Situations
Name/s of collaborators if applicable	There was a collaboration with Zoe Dawson for the development of the fashion feature questionnaire.
Supervisor/Tutor	Dr Young-Jin Hur
Aim of the project:	• The general aim of this research is to determine situations where individuals experience anticipatory anxiety, and to find out how fashion is used in these situations. Furthermore, the role of need to belong in this relationship will be assessed. • The following research Questions will be discussed: ○ RQ1 What are non-threatening social situations where individuals experience anticipatory anxiety (Qualitative); ○ RQ2. What clothing features are individuals drawn to in these kinds of situations? (Quantitative); ○ RQ3. How does an individuals need to belong affect the relationship between the situations and clothing choices? (Quantitative) • This research aims to find generalizable results, applicable to the general public and useful for the individual, clinical settings and the industry. • In the long term, this research paper aims to be published
Objectives (max 5)	• Before starting the actual study design, it is essential to review literature and create a plan which will help structure the project. Here, soft and hard deadlines will help conducting the research effectively. • To answer the research questions, a mixed-method approach will be utilized. Here, it is essential to first conduct the qualitative part of the research, as it is needed for the quantitative survey design. Thus, a focus group will first be conducted, which will inform the quantitative part of the study. • The aim of this study is to investigate how fashion is used in situations where individuals experience anticipatory anxiety beforehand. For this, a focus group and a

	quantitative survey will be conducted. Further, the quantitative results will be analysed using a series of descriptive and inferential statistics.					
Agreed outcomes	• The final outcome will be an original independent empirical research report. The report will be 10,000-12,000 words long and further and contain evidence of ethical clearance in the appendices. • The project will demonstrate evidence based critical thinking through providing a literature review, research questions and hypotheses. • Suitable methods for data collection and analyses should be applied. These should aim to address the research questions, while also accounting for ethical considerations. • Produce and discuss relevant findings through referencing relevant literature, contributing to the advancement of the field of fashion psychology, critically evaluating the study, and addressing implications/application •					
Formats	Dissertation					
Research away from College	Where? -		Why? -		Dates : -	
Agreed contact points/Tutorial dates	14 th June	16 th July	25 th July	16 th August	3 rd Septemb er	6 th Septemb er
Project Timeline	Timeline (backwards) ● Final submission: September 12 th , 3pm ● Write up (3 weeks): August 19 th ● Data analysis (2 weeks): August 5 th ● Data collection (4 weeks): July 20 th ○ Stage 1 - Qualitative Interviews (1 day): July 14 th ○ Stage 2 - Quantitative Survey (2 weeks): August 3 rd ● Study development (3-5 weeks): June 22 nd ○ Ethics form (up to 2 weeks): July 6 th *Dates indicate the day each stage must begin*					
Ethics Form Attached	Yes		Risk Assessment Attached		No	
Learning Outcomes			How you will evidence attainment of the outcome (max 200 words per outcome)			
1. effective self-directed research (primary and secondary) at an advanced level using appropriate			• This research will take a mixed-methods approach to investigate the use of clothing in situations eliciting			

and innovative methods and demonstrating strong organisational skills (<i>research, analysis, subject knowledge, personal and professional development, collaborative and/or independent professional working</i>);	anticipatory anxiety. • Previous research has investigated the use of clothing in high threat situations, for individuals experiencing bodily anxiety and how clothing is used as a shield when feeling upset. • These studies provide an indication that fashion may be a relevant tool for emotional self-protection. • While the link between clothing and emotional self-protection was established by prior studies, the research mostly looked at extreme situations. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap by examining the use of clothing in situations established as anticipatory anxiety inducing. • For this, a mixed-method approach, a focus group and a quantitative survey will be utilized.
2. an advanced level of critical understanding and analysis in the specialist area that enables the formulation of informed conclusions and an individual approach (<i>analysis, subject knowledge, communication and presentation, collaborative and/or independent professional working</i>);	• The data from the focus group will be analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006). The quantitative data will be analysed using a series of inferential data analyses including a Factor Analysis, a Repeated Measures ANOVA, and a Mixed-Measures ANOVA. • As this field is relatively unexplored, this research aims to develop a base for future research and therefore is quite broad in nature. • As previous research mostly focused on very specific situations, the present research aims to find generalizable results. For this, a mixed-methods approach is used as this enables higher ecological validity. • Prior to conducting any research, literature and theory were extensively examined and evaluated. Then the study was built on theory and literature reviewed. • The strengths and weaknesses of this paper will be evaluated by critically looking at the methodology, sample and data analysis.

3. the ability to identify and define issues and demonstrate use of analytical and evaluative skills throughout the project (<i>research, analysis, subject knowledge, experimentation, technical competence, communication and presentation, personal and professional development</i>);	- Options will mostly be evaluated independently. Here, literature, notes from classes and theory will be consulted. Furthermore, there will be weekly to bi-weekly meetings with the supervisor to ensure that the research is going in the right direction. - Supervision Record forms will be filled out which will contain a summary of the work that has been done independently as well as any points that have been discussed during the supervision.
4. the ability to produce an original body of work executed to professional standard (<i>communication and presentation, personal and professional development, collaborative and/or independent professional working</i>);	- To complete the research report, it is important to have knowledge on methodology (quantitative and qualitative), academic writing skills as well as the ability to analyse data. Additionally, it is important to consider ethical implications. - The researchers prior studies (BSc Psychology at the University of Amsterdam) as well as the current course have equipped the researcher with a strong set of tools needed for conducting both quantitative and qualitative research. - The researcher collaborated with another student of the same course to create the items for the questionnaire assessing fashion features. - The research will be appropriate for a Masters level dissertation as it strives for independence in design, methodology selection, analysis and writing.

5. the ability to reflect upon your personal development and understand the relevance and context of the project at a vocational or professional/academic level (<i>research, analysis, subject knowledge, communication and presentation</i>);	• Since the researcher has identified a gap in the current literature on Fashion Psychology, specifically the relation between fashion and anxiety, this research will be relevant in the sense that it aims at starting to fill that gap, and potentially providing inspiration for future studies on the topic. • As the research covers the link between fashion and anxiety, the research will be interesting for individuals in clinical and non-clinical settings as well as the fashion industry which may use the results for design or marketing purposes. • To reflect upon the researcher's personal development, extensive notes will be kept as well as a journal documenting the process.
6. Project and time management skills (<i>personal and professional development, collaborative and/or independent professional working</i>).	Workback Timeline • Final submission: September 12th, 3pm • Write up (3 weeks): August 19th • Quantitative Data Analysis (2 weeks): August 18th • Quantitative Data collection (2 weeks): August 5th • Qualitative Data Analysis & Quantitative Survey Development (3 Weeks): July 15th • Qualitative Data Collection (focus group): July 14th • Study development (3-5 weeks): June 22nd ○ Ethics form (up to 2 weeks): July 9th

Signed Tutor: 

Date: 10.09.24.

Signed Student: 

Date: September 10th, 2024

Students should **normally** expect a response to an email by your supervisor within five working days. You will be informed if a supervisor is going to be on leave or out

of the country, in which case the inquiries should be sent to the Psychology Support Admin team.

Appendix B – Ethics Form

Research Ethics Approval Form – Student Research Psychology Research Ethics Panel (PREP)

Guidance:

- **Please ensure that you have read the UAL Code of Practice on Research Ethics, UAL Code of Practice on Educational Ethics, and the BPS Code of Human Research Ethics before completing this form.**
- Please complete this form electronically. While completing it, delete all the text in green font, which is meant to guide you.
- **Section A** is to be completed by the student and Supervisor / Unit Leader.
- **Section B** is for PREP and UAL Sub-Committee use only.
- Once Section A has been completed, the form should be submitted to the relevant staff member (e.g., Unit Leader, Course Leader) by the student. Instructions on who to submit the form to will be given in each unit.
- **Incomplete applications which are missing question responses, signatures, documents for the participants (Participant Information Sheet, Consent Form, Debriefing Sheet), or relevant appendices (e.g., study advert, questionnaires, instructions, interview questions, tasks, stimuli such as images) will be returned to the student for completion. This will delay the review and approval process.**

SECTION A

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT

Name:	Lill Anna Maria Forster
College:	London College of Fashion
Course and year (if applicable):	MSc Applied Psychology in Fashion
Unit for which this study is being conducted:	Master Thesis
Study title:	Clothing as Shield? The relationship between non-threatening high anticipatory anxiety social situations and individual clothing choices.

The UAL codes of practice set out four key areas for ethical consideration. Which one or more of these ethical principles does this application for ethical consideration relate to?

a. An ethics of care is supported by the Educational Ethics Sub-Committee as a positive ethic that is the University's responsibility to foster in relation to students, educational content, educational process including material resources, and in students' relations with anyone who participates or interacts with their work.	<u>Yes</u> / No
b. The principle of social justice obliges the student to identify the risks and benefits of participation in creative or investigative practice. Any risks to persons participating should be weighed against any potential benefits – to the participants or the student, and also the wider benefits to society of the knowledge gained. As with the principle of respect for persons, there is a need to promote equality and racial justice and protect vulnerable groups.	<u>Yes</u> / No
c. Respect for persons recognises the capacity and rights of all individuals to make their own choices and decisions. It refers to the autonomy and rights to self-determination of all human beings, acknowledges their equality, dignity, freedom, and rights. An important component of this principle is the need to provide special protection to vulnerable persons, both students and in student activity involving others.	<u>Yes</u> / No
d. Beneficence is the principle of acting for the good and well-being of others. It requires students to serve the interests of others. In so doing, students comply with the principle of neither doing, nor permitting, any foreseeable harm as a consequence of creative or investigative practice. This is the principle of non-maleficence , it is the principle of doing no harm.	<u>Yes</u> / No
The specific duties of promoting equality and good relations are assumed under these principles, as defined by the Equality Act 2010.	

1. Please provide the rationale behind your study, including a brief literature review, the gap in the existing literature that the study will address, study aims / research questions, and hypotheses (if the study has a quantitative component). Indicate whether the study is qualitative or quantitative and what design it will use. (600 words max, excluding references)

Within the literature, clothing has been described to serve multiple purposes. The three main ones which mostly reappear are the following: 1. Decoration, 2. Modesty and, 3. Protection. While decoration and modesty hereby refer to the adornment of the self and the hiding of skin that may be viewed as appropriate, protection is a twofold concept (Fluegel, 1930). Clothing not only serves the function of protecting the individual physically from the outside world, but also provides a barrier against real or imaginary dangers which are of mostly of psychological nature (Fluegel, 1930). Therefore, hinting at the use of clothing as armour against sources of anxiety and emotional pain such as a fear of not being liked. This was further confirmed in Fluegel (1930)

stating: “Perhaps it (clothing) can best be said to be a protection against the general unfriendliness of the world, as a whole; or expressed more psychologically a reassurance against the lack of love.”

Looking at the history of fashion, the use of clothing for its protective nature becomes evident. The development of armour out of steel in the Middle Ages or the more recent developments of bulletproof vests clearly show the use of fashion as a physical shield against outside forces (Bukowiecka et al., 2014; Zhou et al., 2005). Looking at the psycho-emotional aspect, one of the most prominent uses of fashion as shield is the use of amulets or other little good luck charms to protect against bad spirits (Howie, et al., 2001).

While most people nowadays do not believe in witchcraft anymore, the concept of clothing serving a shieling function is still prevalent. Especially in light of events where the individual’s performance is perceived and evaluated by others such as job interviews, first dates or the meeting of a new friend group individuals engage in rituals or wear specific items (Howie et al., 2001;). One of the potential purposes of this may be to reduce anticipatory anxiety, which refers to the individual’s apprehension and heightened emotional state experiences in anticipation of a future event (Boehme et al., 2013).

In line with that, a study has found that individuals tend to lean more into gender coherent clothing choices during high existential threat situations (Gruber et al., 2023). Additionally, another study revealed that women specifically tend to show more skin which can be attributed to self-objectification as coping mechanism (Morris et al., 2014). While existential threat is an extreme form of threatening situation which most individuals in Western societies are not exposed to on a daily basis, this study provides a first indication of the link between anticipatory anxiety and the use of clothing for psychological protection.

As Schlenker and Leary (1982) argued that social anxiety, often stems from an individual’s doubt that they will make a good impression on others, fuelled by their need to belong, it can be inferred that one’s need to belong plays a vital role for anticipatory anxiety before social situations as well (Leary, 2021). Thus, wearing items with specific attributes one deems as protective can be seen as a way of decreasing anticipatory anxiety, especially for those individuals who have a high need to be liked.

While the research outlined above provides a first indication of the use of clothing for self-protection purposes in high threatening and very specific situations, no scientific research has been done looking at everyday situations. Therefore, this research will use a mixed method approach to not only discern social situations where individuals experience anticipatory anxiety qualitatively, but also quantitatively assess the relationship between these situations and different clothing facets. Furthermore, situational appropriateness will be assessed as potential mediating factor, and ones need to be liked will be assessed as potential moderating factor. In doing so, the following research questions will be answered: What non-threatening social situations do individuals experience anticipatory anxiety in, and what clothing aspects do individuals typically lean into wearing in these kinds of situations?

Based on the literature outlined above, the following expectations can be discerned:

1. There will be a difference in the way individuals dress for the control (low anticipatory anxiety situation) in comparison to the each of the high anticipatory anxiety situations.
2. Individuals may lean towards more tight, thick and neutral coloured fabrics in high anticipatory situations in comparison to the control situation.

References

- Bukowiecka, D., Górski, S., Jarosław Horoszkiewicz, Piotr Łuka, & Wojciechowski, M. (2014). Police Physical Security — Structure for Individualization of Ballistic Vests. *Internal Security*, 6(2), 165–178. <https://doi.org/10.5604/20805268.1157187>
- Boehme, S., Ritter, V., Tefikow, S., Ulrich Stangier, Strauss, B., Wolfgang, & Straube, T. (2013). Brain activation during anticipatory anxiety in social anxiety disorder. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 9(9), 1413–1418. <https://doi.org/10.1093/scan/nst129>
- Flugel, J.C. (1930). *The Psychology of Clothes*. Hogarth.
- Gruber, R., Häfner, M., & Kachel, S. (2023). Dressing up social psychology: Empirically investigating the psychological functions of clothing using the example of symbolic protection. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 63(2), 1003–1035. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12700>

- Howie, L., Sattin, M., Coutu, S., Furlong, M., Wood, M., & Petersson, E. (2011). Some Thoughts on Magic: Its Use and Effect in Undergraduate Student Life. *The University of Western Ontario Journal of Anthropology*, 19(1).
- Leary, M. R. (2021). Emotional reactions to threats to acceptance and belonging: a retrospective look at the big picture. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 73(1), 4–11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00049530.2021.1883410>
- Morris, K. L., Goldenberg, J. L., & Heflick, N. A. (2014). Trio of terror (pregnancy, menstruation, and breastfeeding): An existential function of literal self-objectification among women. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 107(1), 181–198. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0036493>
- Schlenker, B. R., & Leary, M. R. (1982). Social anxiety and self-presentation: A conceptualization model. *Psychological Bulletin*, 92(3), 641–669. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.92.3.641>
- Zhou, W., Reddy, N., & Yang, Y. (2005). Overview of protective clothing. *Textiles for protection*, 3-30.

2. Does your research involve participants?

	No*
☒	Yes

***If you answer 'No', you do not need to complete Questions 3 to 11. Instead, please go to Question 12 and continue from there.**

3. Who will the participants be? Please tick as appropriate.

☒	Students at University of the Arts London
☒	Staff at University of the Arts London
☒	Other*

***If you answered 'Other' please specify below.**

Students and Staff from UAL may be recruited. Members of the general public can be recruited (they may or may not be known to the researcher). All participants will be aged 18 and over and from a European Country, or have been living in an European Country for the past year.

4. How will participants be recruited and how many will be involved?

Participants will be recruited via social media such as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, as well as via the researcher's personal network and connections. It is also possible that snowball sampling will be used with certain groups. Furthermore, participants may get approached by the researcher in person, asking them to take

part in the study. The minimum number of (valid) participants for the quantitative part of the study is aimed to be around 50; the minimum number of valid participants for the qualitative part of the study is aimed to be aimed at a minimum of five. (Poster/Text will be attached in the Appendix)

5. What will participants be asked to do and for how long? Describe the entire study procedure, including the measures (e.g., questionnaires) or the interview questions that you will ask them to complete or answer.

For the Qualitative Part:

Individuals will be receiving a participant information and consent sheet the day before the focus group via email. On the day of the study, the participants will be sent a link for a Microsoft Teams meeting room via email. After a short introduction of the study, the participants will be asked the questions outlined in the Appendix and are asked to discuss their thoughts and opinions. The focus group should take around 30-50 minutes, depending on the talkativeness of the participants. Participants will also be asked about their age and gender.

For the Quantitative Part:

Prior to answering the main questions in the survey, each participant will be given a participant information sheet and a consent form.

After agreeing to the consent form, each participant will take part in an online survey via Qualtrics (lasting around 10-15 minutes). Specifically, participants will be asked a group of questions that correspond to the research questions outlined in the study summary above. The structure of the online survey (along with the source of questions) is attached as part of the appendix.

Additionally, participants will be asked demographic information such as age and gender and whether they have lived in a European Country for the past year or are from Europe.

Debriefing will be provided at the end of the study.

Given the nature of the online survey, there are no restrictions regarding where and when the study will take place.

6. What potential risks to the interests of participants do you foresee and what steps will you take to minimise those risks? How will you inform participants of the risks and the steps you are taking to address them? The BPS defines risk as the ‘potential physical or psychological harm, discomfort or stress to human participants that a research project may generate.’ It includes risks to participants’ well-being, self-esteem, social standing, values, privacy and reputation, beliefs, employment / livelihood, personal relationships, freedom, commercial interests (e.g., intellectual property), and so on.

According to the University of the Arts London (UAL) and the British Psychological Society’s (BPS) ethics codes, the study is considered minimal risk. For the study, informed consent will be gained from each

participant before commencing with data collection. The questions that will be asked are not considered to be of a sensitive nature. Both studies do not pose any risks to participants' reputations, commercial interests, or livelihoods. Although unlikely, if any participant experiences some form of discomfort with the topic of the study or images shown in any part of the studies, they will be advised to contact their GP or use resources such as: www.mind.org.uk, www.mentalhealth-uk.org

For the Qualitative Part:

All mentions of names will be replaced with pseudonyms starting from the data transcription stage of the analysis. Any identifying data will be masked in the transcription stage as well. The focus group will be done online. It must be noted that participants will be submitting their consent forms (which include their email addresses) separately, before the actual interview. These consent forms will be dealt with in a way that is specified in the last paragraph of this section. Participants will be able to withdraw their data up to two weeks after they have completed a study. Furthermore, participants are able to skip questions if they wish and they can stop the focus group at any timepoint without any detriment by leaving the Microsoft Teams session.

For the Quantitative Part:

The study will be entirely anonymized at all stages – no personal or identifying information will be collected. Among other things, the Qualtrics settings will be amended to ensure that IP addresses are not collected.

Given the anonymous nature of the collected data, participants will not be able to withdraw from the study once they have completed the survey (the researchers won't be able to identify the participant).

Compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a legal obligation. All data will be stored on UAL-managed systems, such as my UAL email address and OneDrive folder. Recordings, transcripts, and any other form of data will be stored on OneDrive or other UAL-managed systems throughout the research process (even during data analysis). All the anonymised transcripts and raw data will be passed on to those directly relevant for the project.

The anonymised transcript from the voice recording of the focus group and data from the quantitative research that will be kept will be securely stored on the UAL server until 3 years after the final use (e.g. conference presentation, publication, or usage/demonstration of data for teaching purposes) of the data. The voice recording itself, the email addresses and the consent forms will be deleted after they are no longer needed for the study (recording – after transcription; other data – after the Exam Board has confirmed the dissertation grade). Please note that should the present work be published in a scientific peer-reviewed journal, the anonymised, non-identifiable version of the raw data of the quantitative part of the study may be shared with the readers, in accordance with the Transparency and Openness Promotion (TOP) Guidelines, also, per request the anonymised transcript of the focus group may be made available as well (Nosek et al., 2015).

8. Please attach a copy of the Participant Information Sheet, Consent Form, and Debriefing Sheet you plan to give participants.

☒	Please tick here if the Participant Information Sheet, Consent Form, and Debriefing Sheet are attached in the appendix at the end of this form.
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9. Does your project involve children / minors (anyone under the age of 18) or vulnerable adults? The BPS states that vulnerable populations include ‘children, persons lacking capacity, those in a dependent or unequal relationship, people with learning or communication difficulties, people in care, people in custody or on probation, people who have suffered physical or psychological trauma and people engaged in illegal activities, such as drug abuse.’	
☒	No. Go to Question 10
	Yes*
*If you answer ‘Yes’, you may need to obtain a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and seek ethical approval from the relevant UAL ethics sub-committee. Discuss this with your Supervisor, Unit Leader, or Course Leader. Please be aware that a DBS check normally takes 4 weeks, but can take longer.	
	I confirm that I have obtained a DBS check.
	I understand that I need to go through the PREP review and the UAL ethics review process.

Please Note:
It is a presumption of academic research that, wherever possible and feasible, the information on which the research is based should be preserved, so that it can be made available to future researchers. However, the privacy of participants must be respected. Please refer to the UAL and BPS ethics codes before answering Question 10.

10. Will you be obtaining personal information (e.g., name; postal, email, or IP address; recorded images or audio; date of birth) from the participants?	
	No. Go to Question 11
☒	Yes*
*If you answer ‘Yes’, please give details. In your response, please indicate: Why do you need to collect personal information from participants? How will you store and use this information during the course of your research in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)? What parts of this information will need to be confidential? How will you ensure that no one can link participants’ identity to the rest of their data? Will you exhibit or publish the information? Who will have access to the data? Will you retain information after the research is concluded? If yes, how? If information is to be destroyed, explain why this is appropriate.	

Participants will be providing their personal opinions as part of the study. However, the study aims to keep personal data minimum and there won't be any questions regarding identifiable personal data except their initials and signature on the consent form. Furthermore, recordings of the focus group will be done. Again, while personal opinions will be asked, no names or any other identifying information will be recorded, and the resulting audio recordings will be handled as described in Section 6. As mentioned in Section 6, the qualitative part of this study will involve the collection of participants' email addresses – these email addresses will be handled in the way explained in the last paragraphs of Section 6. It must be emphasised that pseudonyms will be used, and no identifying information will be present in the final report. The qualitative stage will also include audio data, which is counted as personal data. The raw audio file will be deleted after data transcription.

See section 6 for further details regarding the management of data.

11. Will payments to participants be made?

x	No. Go to Question 12
	Yes*
*If you answer 'Yes', please state amount and whether payment is for out-of-pocket expenses or a fee.	

12. If the project is to receive financial support from outside the University, please give details. Include any restrictions that have been imposed on the conduct of the research by the funding body or sponsor. Both financial propriety and the protection of commercial rights are important for you, the University, and other third parties (e.g., sponsors, participants).

N/A

13. Will any restrictions be placed on the publication of results?

x	No. Go to Question 14
	Yes*
*If you answer 'Yes', please state the nature of the restrictions (e.g., details of any confidentiality agreement).	



Student Declaration:	
15. I confirm my responsibility to deliver the project in accordance with the Code of Practice on Research Ethics and the Code of Practice on Educational Ethics of the University of the Arts London (the University), as well as the BPS Code of Human Research Ethics. In signing this form, I am also confirming that: a) The form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief. b) There is no potential material interest that may, or may appear to, impair the independence and objectivity of the researchers conducting this project. c) I understand that I cannot start data collection until I have received ethical approval from the relevant ethics body (e.g., PREP). d) I undertake to conduct the study as set out in this application unless deviation is agreed by the University and to comply with any conditions set out in the letter sent by the relevant ethics body (e.g., PREP). e) I understand that, if I decide to make substantial changes to the study method (e.g., the design, participant recruitment method, procedure), I will need to submit a revised ethics form. f) I will store data on UAL-managed systems and will follow the data protection principles at all times. g) I understand and accept that the ethical propriety of this project may be monitored by the relevant College Research body and/or Educational Ethics Sub-Committee.	
Signature of Student:	
Date (dd/mm/yyyy):	5th of July 2024

Unit Leader or Supervisor Declaration:	
16. I support this project and have reviewed and approved the current ethics application.	
Name:	Young-Jin Hur
Signature of Unit Leader or Supervisor:	
Date (dd/mm/yyyy):	05.07.24.

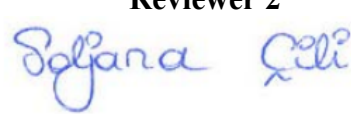
SECTION B

FOR UAL COMMITTEE USE ONLY

Approval of Psychology Research Ethics Panel:

- The Psychology reviewers recommend that:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ☒ | This student's Ethics Approval Form is approved as minimal ethical risk . |
| ☐ | This student's Ethics Approval Form is approved as more than minimal ethical risk and so will be forwarded to the University's Educational Ethics Sub-Committee for final approval. |
| ☐ | This student's Ethics Approval Form must be resubmitted after the student has made the required modifications indicated in the PREP's feedback. |

Name of Reviewer 1 (Psychology Team Member / Unit Leader / Supervisor)		Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	
Name of Reviewer 2 (PREP Chair / Deputy Chair)	Dr Soljana Çili	Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	09/07/2024
Signature	Reviewer 1 Reviewer 2 		

Approval of University's Educational Ethics Sub-Committee (EESC): All 'more than minimal risk' documents will be sent to EESC.

- The Educational Ethics Subcommittee (EESC) recommends that:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| ☐ | This student's Ethics Approval Form is approved as minimal ethical risk |
| ☐ | This student's Ethics Approval Form is approved as more than minimal ethical risk |
| ☐ | This student's Ethics Approval Form must be resubmitted, and the following modifications should be made (see below): |

Required Modifications List (if applicable)	1)
Suggested Modifications List (if applicable)	1)

Name		Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	
Signature <i>Chair of EESC</i>			

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Version 1 (Qualitative), Dated July 8th, 2024

Study title: Clothing as a shield: The use of clothing for psychological self-protection in anticipatory anxiety evoking social situations

Introduction

My name is Lill Forster, and I am a student at London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London (UAL). You are being invited to take part in the above research study. Before you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand what the study involves. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information. If you are happy to take part, you will be asked to provide consent before engaging with the study.

What is the purpose of the study?

The aim of this study is to investigate qualitatively in what kinds of social situations individuals experience anticipatory anxiety in, and furthermore, it will investigate what individuals deem clothing properties.

Who can take part in this study?

This study is open to anyone above 18 years of age who is from a European country or has lived in one for the past year. You do not have to be particularly interested in fashion to take part in the study – in fact, we encourage participants of a wide range of interests and backgrounds.

Do I have to take part?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You do not have to take part if you do not wish to.

What will I be required to do if I take part?

For this study you will be asked to participate in a focus group with other individuals on Microsoft Teams. Here, you will be asked to discuss several questions with the group. The focus group should take around 30-50 minutes maximum and will be audio recorded. You will also be asked to provide some demographical data such as your age and gender.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

This proposed study is a minimal-risk study according to the UAL and the British Psychological Society ethics guidelines. However, there can be unexpected psychological

distress, as you will be talking about social situations that are non-threatening but concern anticipatory anxiety. Experiencing distress is very unlikely, but you will still be provided with a list of online helplines at the end of the study. You will also be able to avoid answering any questions that elicit discomfort or anxiety during the focus group. Furthermore, you can leave the focus group discussion at any time without detriment.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There will be no financial payment involved in the study. However, by taking part, you are contributing to the scientific understanding of fashion psychology. The study may also provide you with an opportunity to reflect upon your everyday fashion choices.

How will my information be used?

Any data obtained will be used solely for research purposes. This also applies to personal data, which will be used with your consent.

You can stop taking part in the study at any time while completing it, without giving a reason, and without experiencing any detriment. You can ask for your data to be withdrawn and destroyed within 2 weeks after completing the study. You can do this by emailing me.

All data will be accessible to me and relevant staff at London College of Fashion. The data will be analysed while stored on UAL-managed systems. The anonymised data will be stored on systems managed by UAL for a period of 3 years after the end of the project. Personal data will also be stored on UAL-managed systems, separately from the rest of your data, and will be deleted after this research has been assessed and the grade has been confirmed by London College of Fashion. No one except me and relevant staff at London College of Fashion will be able to link any identifying information to the rest of your responses. The raw audio file from the focus group will be deleted after data transcription. The anonymised transcript of the focus group may be made available to other researchers upon request should this research be published.

You can find more information about UAL and your privacy rights at www.arts.ac.uk/privacy-information.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The results will be published as part of a dissertation for the MSc Applied Psychology in Fashion at London College of Fashion. The results may also be published in a peer-reviewed academic journal or presented at an academic conference. In any of these presentations and reports, there will be no information that may lead to your personal identification.

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions, require more information about this study, or would like to receive a summary of the study results when they are ready, please email me, the researcher, at l.forster0220231@arts.ac.uk

What happens if there is a problem?

This study has been approved by the Psychology Research Ethics Panel at London College of Fashion, UAL. If you have any concerns about the study, you can contact Dr. Young-Jin Hur at y.hur@fashion.arts.ac.uk. They will do their best to answer your query. If you have further concerns or wish to complain about the study, please contact researchethics@arts.ac.uk.

Thank you for reading this Information Sheet and for considering taking part in this research.

Version 2 (Quantitative), Dated July 8th, 2024

Study title: Clothing as a shield: The use of clothing for psychological self-protection in anticipatory anxiety evoking social situations

Introduction

My name is Lill Forster, and I am a student at London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London (UAL). You are being invited to take part in the above research study. Before you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand what the study involves. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information. If you are happy to take part, you will be asked to provide consent before engaging with the study.

What is the purpose of the study?

This survey will quantitatively assess what kinds of clothing individuals lean towards in different kinds of situations.

Who can take part in this study?

This study is open to anyone above 18 years of age who is from a European country or has lived in one for the past year. You do not have to be particularly interested in fashion to take part in the study – in fact, we encourage participants of a wide range of interests and backgrounds.

Do I have to take part?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You do not have to take part if you do not wish to.

What will I be required to do if I take part?

To take part in this study you will be required to fill in an online form in Qualtrics which will take around 10-15 minutes. Here you will provide information regarding some psychological as well as demographic data such as your age and gender and information regarding your personal style.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

This proposed study is a minimal-risk study according to the UAL and the [British Psychological Society ethics guidelines](#). However, there can be unexpected psychological distress, as you will be asked to think about what you would wear for specific kinds of situations. Distress is very unlikely. Nonetheless, you will be provided with a list of online helplines at the end of the study.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There will be no financial payment involved in the study. However, by taking part, you are contributing to the scientific understanding of fashion psychology. The study may also provide you with an opportunity to reflect upon your everyday fashion choices.

How will my information be used?

Any data obtained will be used solely for research purposes. Furthermore, no personal data will be collected.

You can stop taking part in the study at any time while completing it, without giving a reason, and without experiencing any detriment. You can withdraw from the study by simply closing your browser window. All incomplete responses will be deleted. It will not be possible for you to withdraw your data after you submit your responses. This is because the study is anonymous, and it is therefore impossible to identify your responses among those of other participants.

All data will be accessible to me and relevant staff at London College of Fashion. The anonymised file containing no personal data may be analysed using specialised software on a password-protected computer. When this is the case, the data file may be stored temporarily on the password-protected computer and deleted immediately afterwards. The anonymised data will be stored on systems managed by UAL for a period of 3 years after the end of the project. Please note that, should the research be published in a scientific peer-reviewed journal, the anonymised raw data may be shared with other researchers in accordance with the Transparency and Openness Promotion (TOP) Guidelines.

You can find more information about UAL and your privacy rights at www.arts.ac.uk/privacy-information.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The results will be published as part of a dissertation for the MSc Applied Psychology in Fashion at London College of Fashion. The results may also be published in a peer-reviewed academic journal or presented at an academic conference. In any of these presentations and reports, there will be no information that may lead to your personal identification.

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions, require more information about this study, or would like to receive a summary of the study results when they are ready, please email me, the researcher, at l.forster0220231@arts.ac.uk

What happens if there is a problem?

This study has been approved by the Psychology Research Ethics Panel at London College of Fashion, UAL. If you have any concerns about the study, you can contact Dr. Young-Jin Hur at y.hur@fashion.arts.ac.uk. They will do their best to answer your query. If you have further concerns or wish to complain about the study, please contact researchethics@arts.ac.uk.

Thank you for reading this Information Sheet and for considering taking part in this research.

CONSENT FORM

Version 1 (Qualitative), Dated July 8th, 2024

Study title: Clothing as a shield? The relationship between anticipatory anxiety before non-threatening social situations and individual clothing choices.

Researcher's name: Lill Forster

Please complete this form after you have read the Participant Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research. If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to participate.

If you decide to participate, please tick each of the boxes below to consent to different elements of this study. Please note that you may be deemed ineligible to participate if you do not consent to any of the elements.

Item no.	Item	Tick
1.	I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information and asked questions which have been answered satisfactorily.	
2.	I confirm that I am 18 years or older.	
3.	I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary.	
4.	I understand that I will be able to withdraw my data up to 2 weeks after my participation in the focus group without giving a reason, and without suffering any adverse consequences or penalty.	
5.	I understand how my data will be stored and consent to the processing of all data for the purposes explained to me.	
6.	I understand the potential disadvantages and risks of participating and the support that will be available to me should I become distressed during the course of the research.	
7.	I understand that confidentiality will be maintained, and it will not be possible to identify me in any reports or publications.	
8.	I consent to my contribution to the focus group being audio recorded.	
9.	I consent to my data, including anonymised quotes, being used in written up or published work resulting from this research.	

10.	I agree to maintain the confidentiality of focus group discussions.	
11.	I understand that honesty is important to the research and will do my best to answer the questions accurately and honestly.	
12.	I agree to take part in this study.	

Qualitative:

Initials of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher

Date

Signature

CONSENT FORM

Version 2 (Quantitative), Dated July 8th, 2024

Study title: Clothing as a shield? The relationship between anticipatory anxiety before non-threatening social situations and individual clothing choices.

Researcher's name: Lill Forster

Please complete this form after you have read the Participant Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research. If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to participate.

If you decide to participate, please tick each of the boxes below to consent to different elements of this study. Please note that you may be deemed ineligible to participate if you do not consent to any of the elements.

Item no.	Item	Tick
1.	I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information and asked questions which have been answered satisfactorily.	
2.	I confirm that I am 18 years or older.	
3.	I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary.	
4.	I understand that this study is anonymous and therefore I will not be able to withdraw my data after submitting them.	
5.	I understand how my data will be stored and consent to the processing of all data for the purposes explained to me.	
6.	I understand the potential disadvantages and risks of participating and the support that will be available to me should I become distressed during the course of the research.	
7.	I understand that anonymity will be maintained, and it will not be possible to identify me in any reports or publications.	
9.	I consent to my data being used in written up or published work resulting from this research.	
11.	I understand that honesty is important to the research and will do my best to answer the questions accurately and honestly.	

12.	I agree to take part in this study.	
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DEBRIEFING SHEET

Version 2, Dated July 8th, 2024

Study title: Clothing as a shield? The relationship between anticipatory anxiety before non-threatening social situations and individual clothing choices.

Researcher's name: Lill Forster

Researcher's email address: l.forster0220231@arts.ac.uk

Thank you for taking part in this study! Below is some more information about the aims of the study and what happens next.

What are the aims of this study and what are we expecting to find?

The aim of this study was to investigate what kinds of clothing individuals lean towards in situations where they experience anticipatory anxiety beforehand. Here, it was expected that individuals wear thicker, more structured and neutral colours for situations identified as anticipatory anxiety inducing, and more soft and vibrant colours and oversized items for settings where they are comfortable.

What are some of the benefits that may result from this study?

While there is a multitude of newspaper articles etc telling individuals how they should be dressing in certain situations, this study is one of the first that quantitatively assesses what individuals actually wear in these situations. Thus, by participating you have helped further the field of fashion psychology and the understanding of human dress.

What should you do if you need support at the end of the study?

The following are contacts you can make, in the unlikely event that you experience persisting negative emotions during or after the study:

1. If you are registered with a GP in the UK, please contact your GP and explain the difficulty you are facing.
2. You can also contact MIND, which is a charitable organisation helping people to deal with mental health issues, to obtain suitable support for a range of situations
https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services/?gclid=CjwKCAiAp4KCBhB6EiwAxRxbpI2KnCoyR5hAUt-Fo2gBFRW0zC8LTVenFHYSiyUmetOjTG8xCiYA_BoCNikQAvD_BwE
3. If you are not a resident in the UK at present, please contact a mental health specialist or general health practitioner in your country of residence or use the resources on the following page: <https://unitedgmh.org/support/>

4. If you are an employee of UAL, please consider contacting confidential counselling and advice <https://canvas.arts.ac.uk/documents/sppreview/39cf5125-b575-45ec-abb4-223f3bbb3b18>
5. If you are a student at the UAL, please consider contacting UAL Counselling, Health Advice and Chaplaincy by emailing studenthealth@arts.ac.uk or phoning +44 (0)20 7514 6251.

Contact details

If you have more questions about the study or would like to request a summary of the findings when they are ready, please contact me using the email address provided above. If this study has harmed you in any way or you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the study, you can contact researchethics@arts.ac.uk.

Thank you once again for your contribution to the study!

- Lill

APPENDICES

(Study Advert, Questionnaires, Instructions, Interview Questions, Tasks, and/or Stimuli Such as Images)

Interview Schedule

Anticipatory Anxiety is defined as the individual's apprehension and heightened emotional state experiences in anticipation of a future event.

Introduction and instructions:

- Hello everyone,
thank you so much for coming and participating in this focus group.
The aim of this would be to get an overview of the kinds of social situations that you experience anticipatory anxiety beforehand. Anticipatory anxiety hereby refers to excitement and heightend emotions you experience before an event.
For this focus group, I will ask you a question to the group that everyone is encouraged to share their opinions on and discuss. Please be aware that there are no right or wrong answers, and that every opinion is valued. Also, please let everyone finish what they are saying and don't interrupt them as this should be a safe space for everyone.
Again, thank you so much for participating!

Identifying Situations

- What types of non-threatening, low risk social situations do you find yourself feeling slightly nervous or anxious about in advance?
- If you do feel comfortable, would you mind sharing very briefly why that is?
- Now that you have heard about different social situations from the group, can you as a group discuss which ones seem the most common to you?

Now let's move on to another topic, and talk about fashion, specifically fashion features.

- Can you think of physical features of clothing which are the most important to you (to give you some examples of what I mean by features: tight vs oversized, feminine vs. masculine, soft vs. hard fabrics)?

Qualtrics Questionnaire

The following questionnaire will be presented for 4-5 different scenarios (these will be discerned after the focus group) including one control scenario (Imagine you are meeting your best friends in a comfortable setting such as at home, assuming the temperature is room temperature, how would your clothes most likely score on the dimensions below)

Clothing Features Scale

1. Muted vs vibrant colour
2. dark vs light colour

3. neutral vs coloured
4. covered vs revealing skin
5. sheer/ seethrough vs opaque fabrics
6. thick vs thin fabrics
7. light vs heavy (weight of fabrics)
8. stiff vs flowy fabrics
9. Tight vs oversized
10. masculine vs feminine
11. Soft vs rough fabrics
12. Frills/Decorative vs Simple/Plain
13. comfortable vs uncomfortable
14. shiny vs matt
15. Multilayered vs One layer
16. Strechy vs ridgid/non-strechy

(Note: These items will be rated on a bivariate scale with 5 Points in between)

(These items were self-developed in collaboration with Zoe Dawson)

Need to Belong Scale

1. If other people don't seem to accept me, I don't let it bother me.
- (R)2. I try hard not to do things that will make other people avoid or reject me.
3. I seldom worry about whether other people care about me.
- (R)4. I need to feel that there are people I can turn to in times of need.
5. I want other people to accept me.
6. I do not like being alone.
7. Being apart from my friends for long periods of time doesn't bother me.
- (R)8. I have a strong "need to belong."
9. It bothers me a great deal when I am not included in other people's plans.
10. My feelings are easily hurt when I feel that others don't accept me.

Note. Respondents indicate the degree to which each statement is true or characteristic of them on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all, 2 = slightly, 3 = moderately, 4 = very, 5 = extremely).(R) indicates that the item is reverse-scored.

Leary, M. R. (2013). *Need to Belong Scale (NTBS)* [Database record]. APA PsycTests.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/t27154-000>

Clothing As Self-Protection Scale

Instructions: Please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements, using the scale below:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

1. Clothing provides me security
2. Clothing protects me from emotional harm
3. Clothing acts as a shield between me and the outside world
4. Clothing provides me with confidence in uncertain situations
5. I do not think that clothing makes a difference in how I feel
6. I perceive clothing to be protective

(Self-developed)

**Study Advertisement Post for Quantitative Part (LinkedIn, Instagram, Reddit etc);
 maybe also poster with same text but QR Code instead of link**

Participate in a Fashion Psychology Study!

Hello,

For my MSc Applied Psychology in Fashion at the London College of Fashion I am conducting research on the use of clothing as psychological protection in social situations. Your insights would be invaluable for my academic research and by participating you would actively contribute to me graduating my from Masters!

To participate and for more information please visit the link below:
 (insert Qualtrics link)

Thank you!!

Appendix C- Final Questionnaire

Scenario 1: First Date

Please imagine that you are going on a first date, when neglecting temperature, how would your outfit most likely look like?

Scenario2 : Meeting your best friend

Please imagine that you are going to **meet your best friend**, when neglecting temperature, how would your outfit most likely look like?

Scenario 2 : Meeting your friend`s friends

Please imagine that you are going to a party where you meet your friend`s friends that you have never met before, when neglecting temperature, how would your outfit most likely look like?

Scenario: First day at university/job/school

Please imagine that you are going to the **first day of university/your job/school (whichever is the most applicable)**, when neglecting temperature, how would your outfit most likely look like?

Note: For each of these scenarios the following scale was presented:

Rate on 5-Point Likert Scale

1. Muted vs vibrant colour
2. dark vs light colour
3. neutral (black, white, beige, grey) vs coloured
4. covered vs revealing skin
5. sheer/ see-through vs opaque fabrics
6. thick vs thin fabrics
7. light vs heavy (weight of fabrics)
8. stiff vs flowy fabrics
9. tight vs oversized
10. masculine vs feminine
11. soft vs rough fabrics
12. frills/decorative vs Simple/Plain
13. comfortable vs uncomfortable
14. shiny vs matt
15. Multilayered vs One layer
16. Strechy vs ridgid/non-strechy
17. Patterned vs no pattern

Appendix D – Transcript of Focus Group

Transcript

14 July 2024, 10:36am

Researcher

Hello,

Thank you for coming. OK, let's get started. Just to walk you through what we what we're doing.

So basically the aim of the study is to kind of get an overview of the kind of social situations that someone experiences anticipatory anxiety in. Anticipatory Anxiety is defined as the individual's apprehension and heightened emotional state experiences in anticipation of a future event. So basically, what are situations where you would feel nervous before feel a bit of like heightened emotions and are a bit of like scared I guess, but that are not necessarily scary per se. So they're not like life threatening or anything, but more like.

But like, oh, oh, no, I don't know what's gonna happen.

So yeah, and they have to be social situations.

Just to like give some ground rules for the group. Please let everybody finish what they're saying. It would be great if everybody can participate and like, say whatever they think of. Everything is obviously valuable. Please don't like judge anyone for what they're saying, but to respect whatever comes up and.

Yeah, please don't interrupt anyone. And if you do want to, please also recommend the consent form. But if you do want to have your data erased at one point, just send me an e-mail and just let me know that you don't want your things that you said in the study. Yeah. Any questions before we get going.

Participant 7

Super clear.

Researcher

OK. So the first question and maybe you guys can just discuss it in a group and kind of like everybody shares their opinions and then we can kind of like talk about it or you guys can talk about it like the what types of non threatening low risk like social situations. So the situations that I was describing earlier, do you find yourself feeling nervous or anxious about in advance?

Participant 4

Probably like large groups of people that I don't know, and I have to just like, hey, here's me. That's kind of awkward.

Participant 5

Yes!

Participant 3

Yeah.

Participant 6

Yeah

Participant 3

I think meeting new people in any sort of social setting makes me feel a bit anxious, especially if I'm visiting a friend and she's saying, oh, we're going to, we're going out with my group of friends here where I live and I don't know these people. That makes me feel a bit anxious because, you know, like, you want to, you want to be like a fun person, you know, like, you don't want to, you want to socialise and, like, meet all of your friends friends. So. I think that gives gives me a bit of anxiety.

Researcher

Yeah.

Participant 7

Yeah. Think like. Oops, sorry.

Participant 5

Yes, for example, if you are invited to a birthday party, but you only know the one person who has birthday and you don't know anyone else, and then it's as well a bit interesting, yeah.

Participant 7

I feel like it's when you have to present yourself to new people, but I feel like there's a difference between when that new people kind of people see you. Like, for example, it's your friend's friend, so you really want to present yourself in the correct way, like as Palomas said. Like you want to be like yourself. But then later, if it's like random people that you're probably not caring about, then it's not that kind of situation.

Participant 3

Mmhm.

Participant 1

Yeah, I would say similar. I think being in the setting, which is unfamiliar around people that you don't know and it's sort of that fine line I find between trying to keep true to yourself, but also when you're in certain social situations.

You're sort of pushed to become a product of your surroundings, so I think staying true to yourself versus.

Fitting in or blending in with the crowd, especially in bigger groups of people who you haven't met before.

Participant 3

Mm hmm.

Participant 1

Yeah, I agree that that's one thing that sparks a lot of anxiety in me.

Participant 2

I think for me. I just get a lot of anxiety just in any kind of new situation where there's new people involved. So whether that's a meeting of friends, like in a new environment or maybe something a bit more formal like something in academia or like a job like putting yourself in a situation that isn't as comfortable with unfamiliar people, I think it can be really. And you know what you're going into that situation that definitely.

That can make me a lot nervous beforehand.

Participant 7

Oh, also first dates are very scary

And like first days for everything. Like first day of school, first day of Work, First day of, like, getting to a new place, for example. I don't know. You have that pressure being yourself, but at the same time, not being like too different to what, like the people that you're going to meet?

I feel like, yeah.

Yeah. First days are a big thing.

Participant 8

I think it's for me also going into a room where you're not exactly knowing who's going to be in there and in what kind of setting they're gonna be in there.

For example, going to I don't know an evening networking event. I had it recently where I first of all I didn't know what.

Researcher

Hmm.

Participant 5

Dress code. Age of all the others are what kind of background they have.

And that's that was one evening where I was like, hesitating, do I even go there or just not show up?

Researcher

Yeah, fair.

Any other kinds of situations that you can think of that maybe you were recently exposed to where experiencing anticipatory anxiety before?

Participant 4

I think for me also when.

I have like nothing in common with the people I'm talking about. I kinda just.

I'm I'm not able to talk about things that you know or I don't know, not my interests as much.

And then I get awkward and weird about it.

Researcher

Yeah.

Participant 2

Dating is also one of these situations that I am really anxious before. Like first dates, or if I think like one specific example. So like I don't know, let's say you're, I don't know, dating someone, and I think you're meeting your parents for the first time. So or it's like someone you let you really care about and you're meeting someone like some someone really important in their life. I feel like that's really nerve wrecking 'cause like you want to make a good impression. But then it's like.

I do I be formal? Do I not be? Especially if it's fine because you know every parent can be different. So yeah.

Participant 6

Yeah.

Participant 7

Yeah, especially if I am meeting them for the first time but really liked them over text

Participant 6

An important like situation where you may feel that pressure of yeah, like.

Portray yourself at the same time, be liked by the other person and you don't know what you have to expect is you don't know anything about them. Basically like especially now that most times you are meeting people from the Internet.

You don't know what to expect, and you also.

Know what to deliver, but no.

Researcher

Yeah.

Participant 6

If I know that somebody doesn't approve of me

Researcher

Just to kind of like narrow it down even more. So basically what I'm looking for is more so like situations because right now what we're talking about is more so the feelings that you have linked to it.

So I'd rather like what I'm looking for.

On this question.

Settings specifically, so that's not necessarily. So what you were saying earlier about the data, something that's for example, a setting. And I'm looking more for like settings right now.

So if you can maybe just think about the past few like months or so. I've never like very specific kinds of situations and settings where beforehand you were like, oh, this is kind of nerve racking.

Somewhere. So like imagine that you have to go somewhere. What would be some some place that you'd be nervous for?

Participant 1

OK.

Participant 2

Job interviews definitely

Participant 1

I think meeting your partner's family and friends even like they're close friends.

Participant 5

Yes, definitely, yeah.

Participant 4

Or just friends of friends, family of friends meeting.

Researcher

Yeah. **Participant 4:**

Like somebody's to somebody that you know, I guess.

Participant 7:

Yeah, I would say also first day of school.

Participant 8:

Yeah, for meeting your new colleagues for the first time too, in work.

For meeting.

For me, it's more meeting random people and not so much people. If I know it's people like friends, friends, it's already that I at least have something in common with them.

Participant 1:

Good.

Interviewer:

Hmm.

Participant 5:

It's rather going to a place or event or whatever where it's people that might have nothing in common.

Participant 7:

I'm also thinking like another specific situation. When you're doing viewings for like housing, like that could be also it.

Participant 1:

I think maybe the common thing, the sort of common thing I'm finding is that when something has bigger consequences or bigger implications, that is more nerve-wracking. That's more scary than maybe random, like I don't mind too much. Maybe it's personal to me, but meeting people in the street, like I don't mind too much that. But when it's a big consequence like the first day of university, whether you're going to get a job for an interview, those are more scary. So.

Interviewer:

Is there any?

Yeah.

Yeah. No, that would have been.

Participant 4:

I can't. I disagree a little bit.

Like not fully, but I think.

Interviewer:

Oh really?

Participant 4:

For me, job interviews are not that scary because the motivation to get this job is so high that I don't really like get scared. I guess I'm like, I just have to do this, I really want it. I have like the, you know, the drive to to make it happen. But if it's like, if it's more of a social thing and like, yeah, making friends or whatever, then I that scares me more because.

I'm like, OK, I don't have to make friends with these people, so I don't have the drive, but it's just then the fear about kinda.

You know, yeah.

Interviewer:

What is the best deal about job interviews? Is that something that you speed up or is that something you're more chill about?

Participant 2:

I mean, that's something that I I'm, I guess, more scared of. I think for me personally, like

even if I really like the job it's more nerve-wracking just because you know you want to make a good impression and then you really want it just like individually. But yeah, it's like I'll always get nervous about it even if I like really want the job or even if I'm like Nah, it's a job like I'm still going to get nervous.

Participant 3:

I think the more I do job interviews and I guess practise in a way of what I'm saying and. Practise like answers to the most common questions. Then I would feel like a bit more at ease because I'm confident in what I'm going to say, but it's still. I still get anxious and nervous about the whole aspect of my interviewer judging me and seeing whether.

Participant 1:

Oh.

Participant 3:

I'm a right fit or like I'm a good candidate. Like I'm always gonna be nervous about that because obviously I do want the job.

So I think it's really always that aspect of like someone is evaluating me in a sense, I guess.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Anything else they can ask?

Otherwise, I'm gonna move on to the next question. Let me kind of touch upon this before, but basically the question would be like what are the kind of practises that play into you guys feeling nervous for these situations, but I feel like that was kind of already answered and so you guys were mentioning a lot of like there being uncertainty, there being high stakes, and like meeting people that you would want to like you. But do you have anything to add to that?

Participant 1:

And.

Come.

The only other thing I was...

Participant 2:

Where?

Participant 1:

It's kind of a maybe it's just me, but I find that anything in darkness or like at night time for me stimulates like more anxiety. Like if I'm meeting people for a night out, that would frighten me more than meeting new people for a coffee or brunch. You know, I don't know if that's just me, but I find anything which is already anxiety inducing, ridden with darkness is even more scary.

Interviewer:

OK.

Participant 1:

But a very random observation.

Participant 7:

I think I can kind of relate to that, but rather than darkness I would say like the casualness. Well, the occasion is like if it's like a coffee in the morning, then it's probably going to be super casual and it's like...

Participant 1:

I...

Participant 7:

Less nerve-wracking, but if it's like at night and you're going out and you have to dress up a little bit more or the situation might be a little bit more formal, then it's like...

A little bit more anxiety-inducing there, if that makes sense. I don't know.

Participant 8:

I guess it's a bit more commitment meeting people at night or in the evening. Also, just a coffee at work in the afternoon or noon, it's just easier, and we talk for like 15-30 minutes, and then you go and work again. But in the evening it's more formal like you said.

Participant 3:

Maria (Participant 6) put in the chat that she gets anxious when it's a more organic social situation versus something where there is a social script that you can sort of follow, like in a job interview.

Participant 2:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Some more, the uncertainty of it.

Participant 3:

I think that makes sense. Like if I have more information about the situation or just how I'm supposed to act, then I think that makes me feel a little less anxious because I know, you know, it's the uncertainty that makes me more anxious.

Participant 7:

That's true.

Interviewer:

Makes a lot of sense.

Anything anybody else wants to add to that?

Participant 7:

Yeah, I would agree on uncertainty. Like when you don't know what to expect.

Interviewer:

OK.

Let's move on to the next question, unless somebody else has something to say to it.

No?

OK. So we kind of talked about a few different kinds of situations.

We kind of talked about first dates, I think, or like dates was something that came up. Then meeting new people, I think, was something that was the most common, agreed upon. Also, meeting the partner's family or friends I think was also another one.

And job interviews were mentioned.

Do you guys, as a group, maybe discuss a little, what are the kinds of situations that you would agree upon, maybe the top three or four choices? Why are you saying that? OK, this is why this really comes up.

Participant 7:

Does anyone have like a favourite?

Participant 4:

Sorry, what was the question?

Interviewer:

Can you do like a top three? Maybe as a group discuss and put up like a top three of kinds of situations where you feel...

Participant 2:

Hello.

Interviewer:

Like just kind of uncertainty that we wrote earlier discussing.

So kind of the situations that we already talked about: meeting new people, meeting partners' family or friends, job interviews, dating, and obviously if you can, you discuss and kind of talk about which ones are maybe like top three situations that you feel anxious about?

Participant 5:

Hmm.

Participant 6:

I'd say like going to a party where you don't know anyone would be at the top of situations that make me nervous, you know, at least for me.

Participant 3:

Yeah.

Participant 7:

I think everyone was noticing that, and also almost everyone talked about like first days at something, so maybe we could say like first day at a new job or first day at school. I don't know what you guys think.

Participant 4:

First day at a new school I think is the most nerve-wracking for me, at least.

Participant 3:

Where would we put job interviews? Because I feel like we were talking about how it makes some people more anxious than others.

Participant 2:

Oh.

Participant 3:

Like some people feel less anxious about job interviews because there's a specific script to follow and like, you kind of know what to say. So I don't know where we would put that. Would that be kind of like on the bottom of the ranking?

Interviewer:

Not necessarily ranking. It's just about the situations that are the most agreed upon.

Participant 3:

OK.

Participant 7:

Maybe, maybe. Since not everyone was like on that line, we can avoid it. But I was just thinking also like...

Participant 3:

OK.

Participant 1:

Thank.

Participant 7:

We kind of talked at the beginning about how meeting someone who is close to someone that you are close with, like meeting the friends of your friend or the family of your friend. I think we touched on that several times. So maybe that could also be included.

Participant 5:

Thank you.

Interviewer:

One more situation. What do you guys think is like the last one there? You guys agreed upon the most?

Can be new situations if something pops into your mind, like, "Well, actually, that was really scary recently."

Participant 5:

So we currently have first stuff of something and...

Interviewer:

Yes, like the first day of...

Participant 5:

Entering.

Interviewer:

Yes, so currently it's like the first day of something, meeting parents or friends or the partner, and job interviews vs dating is undecided.

Participant 7:

Yeah, I was going to say like going to a party where you don't know anyone.

Participant 3:

Yeah.

Participant 2:

Yeah, I think maybe just like any type of social situation. I mean, I don't know if you need something really specific, but I think what we all kind of agreed upon was like any type of social situation, whether that's a party, a networking event...

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Participant 1:

Yeah, OK.

Participant 2:

...whatever, where you don't know anyone.

Participant 5:

Maria just wrote a new point. I guess this is important.

Participant 3:

Mm hmm.

Participant 5:

Then you have to live with them for the next...

Interviewer:

Yeah. Fair enough.

OK. I would say maybe let's move on to the next question, which is actually completely unrelated to that.

Participant 1:

And...

Interviewer:

This question is about fashion features.

Basically, this is for the development of my questionnaire, and I just need to validate fashion features. To give you kind of an indication of what I mean by that, features could be, for example, oversized versus fitted, or masculine versus feminine.

So, can you come up with any kind of clashing features that you can think of?

Participant 4:

What's his name? Fashion features?

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Participant 4:

So you said oversized versus fitted, and then like masculine versus feminine?

Participant 1:

OK.

Interviewer:

Yeah, for example, but it can relate to...

Participant 2:

Do you like life as...

Participant 7:

Maybe colourful versus neutral?

Interviewer:

That can relate to anything, I'm very safe.

Participant 3:

Like...

Participant 7:

Oh.

Participant 3:

High quality versus low quality.

Participant 4:

So... software assistance.

Participant 5:

Formal and casual looking.

Participant 7:

Maria is saying formal versus casual and modest versus sexy.

Participant 3:

Hmm.

Participant 5:

Somewhat conservative work.

Participant 1:

Maybe warm versus cold.

Interviewer:

In terms of colours or in terms of like thickness, but like warmth, temperature?

Participant 1:

Temperature. Like if you wear more clothes.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Participant 1:

Bright versus dull.

Participant 7:

Then comfy versus, I don't know, not comfy? Yeah.

Participant 2:

Or like multilayered versus single-layered in terms of how many layers of clothing are worn.

Participant 4:

I don't know if this counts as a feature, but like style, like if you're dressing like punk because, I don't know.

Participant 3:

Maybe like...

Interviewer:

Yeah, that is clothing style. That's not necessarily features.

Participant 4:

Oh, OK, never mind then.

Participant 3:

I don't know if minimalist and maximalist would be something, or like plain and patterned.

Participant 5:

Sporting.

Participant 2:

Like shiny versus matte in terms of how the fabric looks.

Participant 7:

Mm hmm.

Participant 1:

Would plain versus expressive count?

Participant 4:

Comfortable versus uncomfortable, I don't know.

Interviewer:

Yeah, I think it was already said.

Participant 4:

Oh, never mind.

Participant 7:

Maybe fun versus more modest.

Participant 1:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Is there anything else you can think of?

Participant 3:

Would flattering and unflattering work? I know it's subjective, but...

Interviewer:

Yeah, we don't have like right or wrong answers.

Participant 2:

Hmm.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Anything else that comes to mind?

Participant 4:

Heavy versus light.

Interviewer:

No.

Participant 2:

Yeah.

Participant 4:

I don't know... rainproof, maybe? Rainproof.

Interviewer:

Oh yeah. Let's see, do you guys have anything else to add? That would actually be it.

Participant 3:

I'm thinking trendy versus not trendy.

Interviewer:

OK.

Participant 1:

Old versus new maybe? However, that's interpreted.

Participant 7:

Oh, so maybe like something you cherish versus something that doesn't have that meaning to you?

Participant 3:

Oh, also...

Participant 5:

Mon...

Participant 3:

Like easy to care for, like cotton versus silk.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Participant 1:

Maybe trust in others versus trust for yourself?

Interviewer:

I think that's more of the emotional value of it rather than a feature of an item.

Participant 1:

Good.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Unless you have anything else to add, that would actually be it. Any final questions or thoughts?

Participant 7:

I don't think so.

Interviewer:

Thank you so much for participating. Your participation was invaluable. I will send you the debriefing sheet later by email.

Thank you so much. Have a good Sunday!

Appendix E- Quantitative Output

Assumption Checks for Main Analysis

Mauchly's Test of Sphericity^a

Measure: MEASURE_1

Within Subjects Effect	Mauchly's W	Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig.	Greenhouse-Geisser	Epsilon ^b	
						Huynh-Feldt	Lower-bound
Scenario	.810	15.924	5	.007	.896	.931	.333
ClothingFeatures	.802	16.723	2	<.001	.835	.851	.500
Scenario * ClothingFeatures	.684	28.357	20	.101	.883	.956	.167

Tests the null hypothesis that the error covariance matrix of the orthonormalized transformed dependent variables is proportional to an identity matrix.

a. Design: Intercept

Within Subjects Design: Scenario + ClothingFeatures + Scenario * ClothingFeatures

b. May be used to adjust the degrees of freedom for the averaged tests of significance. Corrected tests are displayed in the Tests of Within-Subjects Effects table.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Date_DarkMuted	3.0308	.57937	78
Date_LightFlowy	2.6410	.41205	78
Date_TightRevealing	3.2970	.41233	78
BF_DarkMuted	3.0103	.48660	78
BF_LightFlowy	2.3878	.63661	78
BF_TightRevealing	3.3744	.37620	78
FF_DarkMuted	3.1026	.57727	78
FF_LightFlowy	2.8365	.43920	78
FF_TightRevealing	3.4231	.48475	78
FirstDay_DarkMuted	2.7038	.44091	78
FirstDay_LightFlowy	2.6186	.60935	78
FirstDay_TightRevealing	3.5859	.39244	78

Inferential Statistics

Tests of Within-Subjects Effects

Measure: MEASURE_1

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Scenario	Sphericity Assumed	5.000	3	1.667	9.842	<.001	.113
	Greenhouse-Geisser	5.000	2.687	1.861	9.842	<.001	.113
	Huynh-Feldt	5.000	2.794	1.790	9.842	<.001	.113
	Lower-bound	5.000	1.000	5.000	9.842	.002	.113
Error(Scenario)	Sphericity Assumed	39.118	231	.169			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	39.118	206.912	.189			
	Huynh-Feldt	39.118	215.106	.182			
	Lower-bound	39.118	77.000	.508			
ClothingFeatures	Sphericity Assumed	100.330	2	50.165	89.542	<.001	.538
	Greenhouse-Geisser	100.330	1.670	60.073	89.542	<.001	.538
	Huynh-Feldt	100.330	1.703	58.921	89.542	<.001	.538
	Lower-bound	100.330	1.000	100.330	89.542	<.001	.538
Error(ClothingFeatures)	Sphericity Assumed	86.276	154	.560			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	86.276	128.600	.671			
	Huynh-Feldt	86.276	131.114	.658			
	Lower-bound	86.276	77.000	1.120			
Scenario * ClothingFeatures	Sphericity Assumed	13.676	6	2.279	15.056	<.001	.164
	Greenhouse-Geisser	13.676	5.298	2.582	15.056	<.001	.164
	Huynh-Feldt	13.676	5.735	2.385	15.056	<.001	.164
	Lower-bound	13.676	1.000	13.676	15.056	<.001	.164
Error (Scenario*ClothingFeatures)	Sphericity Assumed	69.944	462	.151			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	69.944	407.915	.171			
	Huynh-Feldt	69.944	441.595	.158			
	Lower-bound	69.944	77.000	.908			

Assumption Checks for Moderation

Mauchly's Test of Sphericity^a

Measure: MEASURE_1

Within Subjects Effect	Mauchly's W	Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig.	Greenhouse-Geisser	Epsilon ^b Huynh-Feldt	Lower-bound
Scenario	.818	15.042	5	.010	.900	.949	.333
ClothingFeatures	.829	14.102	2	<.001	.854	.883	.500
Scenario * ClothingFeatures	.661	30.584	20	.061	.874	.959	.167

Tests the null hypothesis that the error covariance matrix of the orthonormalized transformed dependent variables is proportional to an identity matrix.

a. Design: Intercept + NTB_CAT

Within Subjects Design: Scenario + ClothingFeatures + Scenario * ClothingFeatures

b. May be used to adjust the degrees of freedom for the averaged tests of significance. Corrected tests are displayed in the Tests of Within-Subjects Effects table.

Moderation Analysis

Error(ClothingFeatures)		Linear	25.173	76	.331			
		Quadratic	56.282	76	.741			
Scenario * ClothingFeatures	Linear	Linear	6.327	1	6.327	45.811	<.001	.376
		Quadratic	.359	1	.359	2.817	.097	.036
	Quadratic	Linear	2.096	1	2.096	13.763	<.001	.153
		Quadratic	.453	1	.453	3.006	.087	.038
	Cubic	Linear	1.057	1	1.057	7.456	.008	.089
		Quadratic	3.333	1	3.333	16.929	<.001	.182
Scenario * ClothingFeatures * NTB_CAT	Linear	Linear	.011	1	.011	.079	.780	.001
		Quadratic	.062	1	.062	.483	.489	.006
	Quadratic	Linear	.000	1	.000	.002	.965	.000
		Quadratic	.505	1	.505	3.351	.071	.042
	Cubic	Linear	.299	1	.299	2.110	.150	.027
		Quadratic	.118	1	.118	.598	.442	.008
Error (Scenario*ClothingFeatures)	Linear	Linear	10.497	76	.138			
		Quadratic	9.695	76	.128			
	Quadratic	Linear	11.574	76	.152			
		Quadratic	11.445	76	.151			
	Cubic	Linear	10.776	76	.142			
		Quadratic	14.962	76	.197			

Tests of Within-Subjects Contrasts

Measure: MEASURE_1

Source	Scenario	ClothingFeatures	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Scenario		Linear	.230	1	.230	1.376	.244	.018
		Quadratic	.444	1	.444	2.509	.117	.032
		Cubic	4.335	1	4.335	26.442	<.001	.258
Scenario * NTB_CAT		Linear	.326	1	.326	1.946	.167	.025
		Quadratic	.148	1	.148	.837	.363	.011
		Cubic	.017	1	.017	.102	.750	.001
Error(Scenario)		Linear	12.725	76	.167			
		Quadratic	13.442	76	.177			
		Cubic	12.461	76	.164			
ClothingFeatures		Linear	32.762	1	32.762	98.911	<.001	.565
		Quadratic	66.608	1	66.608	89.944	<.001	.542
ClothingFeatures * NTB_CAT		Linear	.009	1	.009	.027	.870	.000
		Quadratic	4.812	1	4.812	6.498	.013	.079
Error(ClothingFeatures)		Linear	25.173	76	.331			
		Quadratic	56.282	76	.741			
Scenario * ClothingFeatures	Linear	Linear	6.327	1	6.327	45.811	<.001	.376
		Quadratic	.359	1	.359	2.817	.097	.036
	Quadratic	Linear	2.096	1	2.096	13.763	<.001	.153
		Quadratic	.453	1	.453	3.006	.087	.038
	Cubic	Linear	1.057	1	1.057	7.456	.008	.089
		Quadratic	3.333	1	3.333	16.929	<.001	.182
Scenario * ClothingFeatures * NTB_CAT	Linear	Linear	.011	1	.011	.079	.780	.001
		Quadratic	.062	1	.062	.483	.489	.006
	Quadratic	Linear	.000	1	.000	.002	.965	.000
		Quadratic	.505	1	.505	3.351	.071	.042
	Cubic	Linear	.299	1	.299	2.110	.150	.027
		Quadratic	.118	1	.118	.598	.442	.008
Error (Scenario*ClothingFeatures)	Linear	Linear	10.497	76	.138			
		Quadratic	9.695	76	.128			
	Quadratic	Linear	11.574	76	.152			
		Quadratic	11.445	76	.151			
	Cubic	Linear	10.776	76	.142			
		Quadratic	14.962	76	.197			