

Understanding predictors of clothing preferences:

individual differences and the mere-exposure effect

 Individual differences
Do traits and demographics shape clothing preferences?

 Exposure effect
Does repeated exposure increase liking for clothing items?

 Other influences
What additional factors drive clothing preference formation?

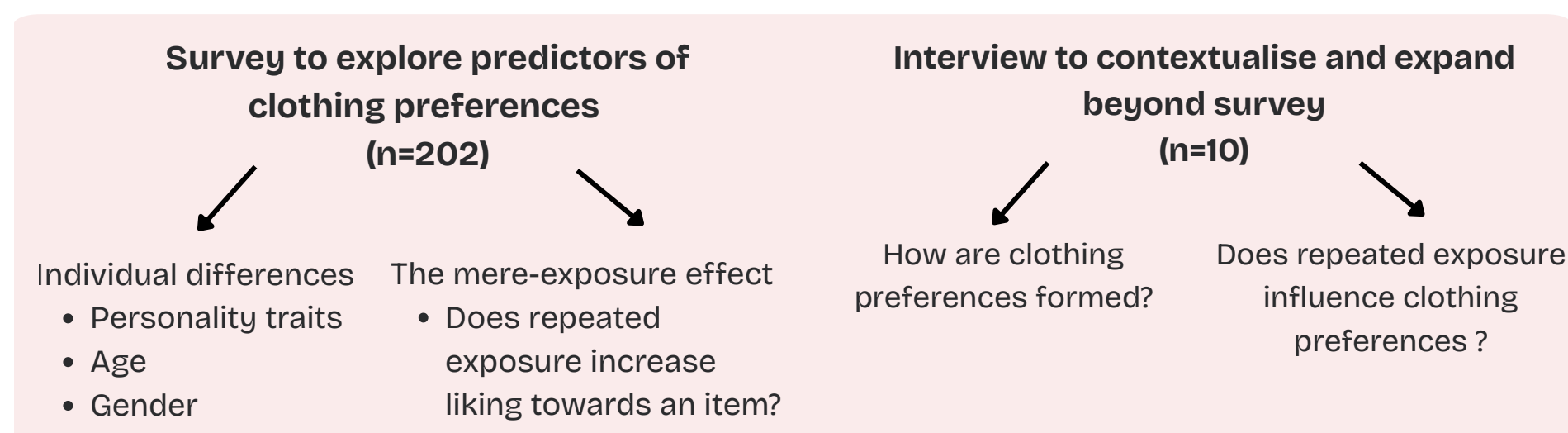
INTRODUCTION

Despite fashion and clothing being one of the most common aesthetic activities, little research has examined the mechanisms underlying clothing preference formation compared to other aesthetic domains. Clothing preferences are shaped by a range of physiological, psychological, and environmental factors, some of which are stable (e.g., age, personality) while others are situational and influenced by social and cultural contexts. As clothing reflects personal identity and shapes first impressions, studying preferences provides important insights into the links between the self and the social environment.

RESEARCH AIMS

This current mixed methods study investigated predictors of clothing preferences. Specifically, it examined whether repeated exposure to clothing items (boilersuits and coats), based on the mere-exposure effect, alters preferences, while also considering the role of individual differences and demographic factors.

METHODOLOGY



KEY FINDINGS



Survey Findings

Individual differences factors:

Personality traits and Gender partially influence clothing preferences
Age does not impact clothing preferences

Exposure effect:

Preference towards an item remains stable before and after repeated exposure

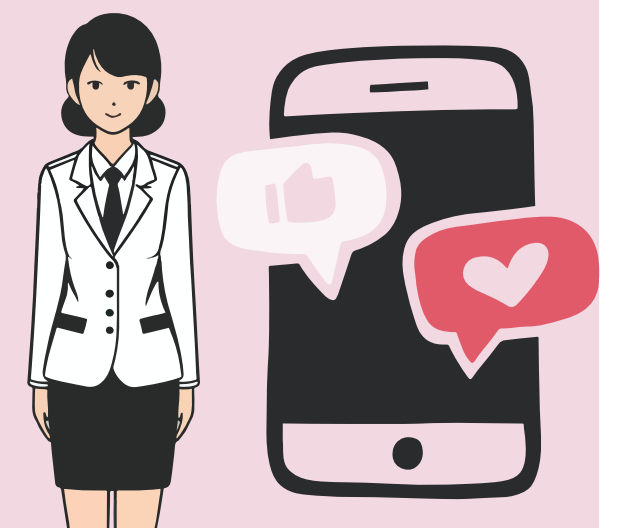
Interview Themes

Predictors of clothing preferences:

- Context Dependent dress codes - Workplace
- Social media exposure

Effectiveness of repeated exposure

- Depends on the initial impression of the item
- Desire for uniqueness and individuality undermine the exposure effect



CONCLUSION & IMPLICATIONS

This mixed-methods study investigated predictors of clothing preferences with a focus on the mere-exposure effect. Survey findings showed partial influences of gender and personality traits, while age and repeated exposure had no significant effects. Qualitative analysis identified three themes: (1) workplace dress norms, (2) the influence of social media, and (3) the effectiveness of exposure. Together, these findings highlight the interplay between individual differences, contextual factors, and exposure in shaping preferences.

This study adds to the growing field of fashion psychology. Findings encourage individuals to adopt sustainable fashion practices, while offering practical insights for marketers to design trend-based strategies, leverage social media, and create visually appealing designs to resonate with wider audience.