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The Effects of Styles of Dress on First Impressions

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Literature Review

Previous research found that first impression may be influenced by many factors.

➤ Cloth

- Individuals' cloth may influence other's first impressions, and even subtle changes to clothing could make a different impression (Howlett, Pine, & Orakcioglu, 2013).
- People also use clothes to express certain characteristics (Weiss & Feldman, 2006).

➤ Similarity

- While it is easy to form generic impressions of people, similarity will create a more positive and personal outlook (Gueguen, Martin, & Meineri, 2011)
- When two people have similarities, the odds of them finding each other attractive are greater than if they have several differences (Michinov & Michinoc 2011).

Research Focus

Would people find those who wear the same styles of dress as their own more attractive?

Predictions:

- People would find others who wear the same styles of dress more attractive than those who don't.

Method

Participants:

- 552 undergraduate students participants (358 females and 194 males). The age range mostly consisted of the ages 18-22. All students over age 18 were eligible to participate, regardless of their race, year, or gender.

Procedure: A survey was sent via a campus-wide email.

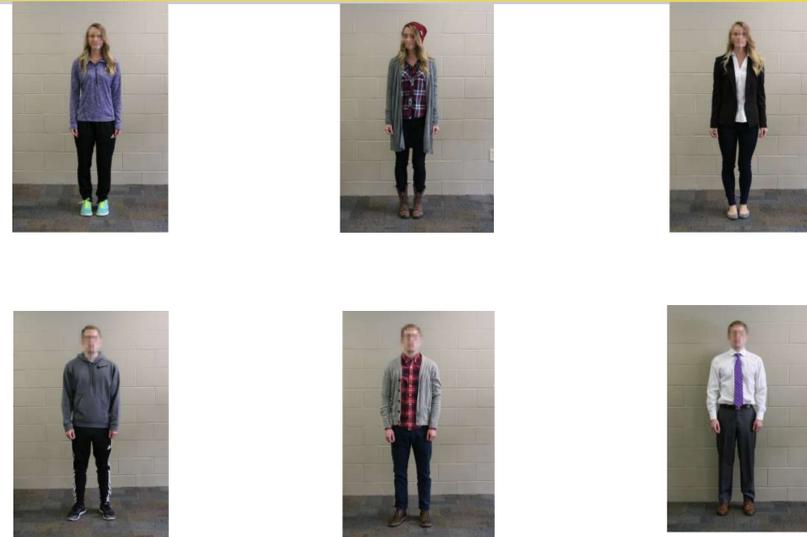
Survey:

- Section I: Six pictures of a male and a female wearing three styles of dress were randomly shown to participants one at a time. The participants were asked to rate the level of agreement on seven statements of the traits of the models on a 7 point Likert scale with 1 being "strongly disagree," and 7 being "strongly agree." For example, the statements viewed by participants were: "This person is attractive."
- Section II: Pairs of two pictures of a model wearing two outfits were randomly shown side by side to participants. The participants were asked to choose which outfit they prefer.
- Section III: Demographic questions and questions on participants own styles of dress on both a typical day and a typical night out with friends. The styles of dress were choose between Classy, Athletic, and Hipster styles.

Material:

- Six pictures of a male and a female model wearing three outfits representing three different styles of dress, including Classy, Athletic, and Hipster.

Styles of Dress

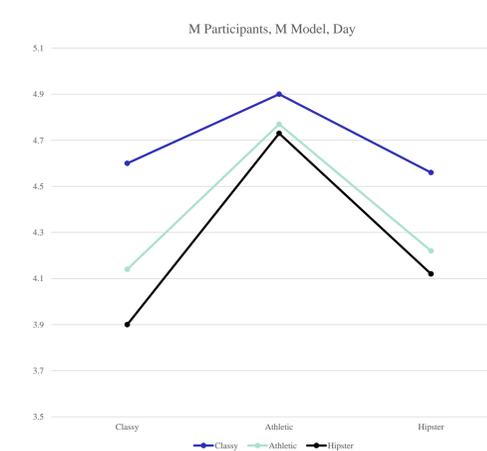
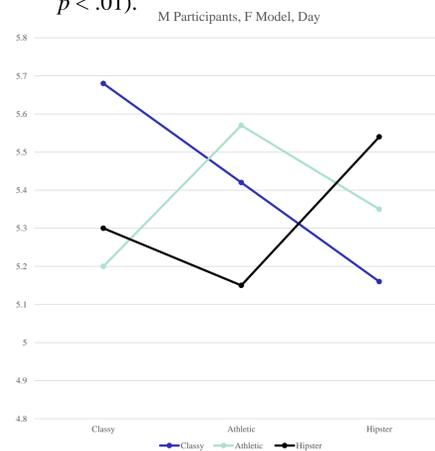


Results

Preliminary analysis indicated that there were significant interaction between styles of dress, participants own style of dress, and gender and significant main effects of the models, and gender of the participants. Therefore, further two-way ANOVA analyses were conducted to compare male and female participants' rating on the two models attractiveness based on the styles of dress separately.

Male participants

- The female model received the highest rating on attractiveness when she shared the same dress style as the participants (Interaction between model's style and own style, $F(4, 358) = 4.977, p < .01$).
- However, the male model received the highest rating on attractiveness when he wore the athletic style of dress regardless of the participants own styles of dress (Main effect of model's style, $F(2, 358) = 32.13, p < .01$).

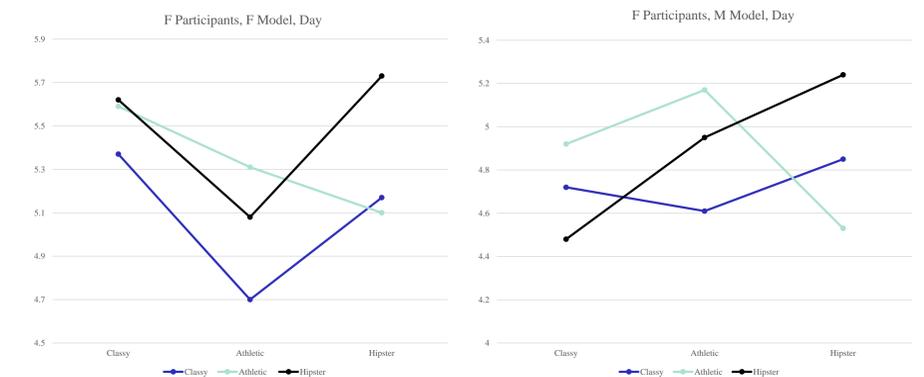


*Lines on graph represent what style participants identify with

Results (Cont.)

Female participants

- Female model received the highest rating on attractiveness when she shared the same styles of dress as the participants in the Classy ($F(2, 194) = 12.87, p < .01$) and Hipster ($F(2, 326) = 33.07, p < .01$) groups, but not the participants in the Athletic group.
- Male model received the highest rating on attractiveness when he shared the same styles of dress as the participants in the Athletic ($F(2, 169) = 7.44, p < .01$) and Hipster ($F(2, 326) = 25.07, p < .01$) groups. But participants in the Classy group give similar scores in the model in three different styles.



*Lines on graph represent what style participants identify with

Conclusions

Our hypothesis that people perceive others with a similar dress style as more attractive was partially supported.

- Males view females with the same styles of dress as more attractive
- Females view males with the same styles of dress as more attractive when they are in Hipster or Athletic styles.
- Limitations
 - Limited age range and racial diversity, due to the fact that it was only sent to a small, private university
 - Because our study only had three styles, participants may have had to choose a style they would not identify with if given more options.

References

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