The Causal Relationships between Clothing Style, Preference, Personality Factors, Emotions and Mood

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Purpose/With more emphasis on exploring research methods developed by psychologists and not yet used in this type of research, the aim of this project was to quantify, formalise and explore the causal relationships between clothing style, preference, personality factors, emotions and mood with a view to better understand the psychological profile of the fashion/clothing consumer.

Design Methodology/approach explorative quantitative research was carried out on a sample of 27 dress size 12 females. They were administered two questionnaires examining mood and personality prior to being presented with a set of eight garments to try on, categorized according to style. While wearing the outfits they were then asked to fill out the mood questionnaire again. Photographs of them were taken wearing each of the outfits. They then ranked the eight outfits into order of preference. SPSS analysis identified relationships and linear regression analysis identified preference indicators.

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

Research limitations/implications/the limitations are with the small sample size, however the study established valuable insight into the psychological profiling of consumers using personality, emotion and mood, which now requires further exploration of methods for practical application and a larger sample size.

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

Originality/value of the paper:As retail strategies begin to further explore the future of retail, personalisation and personal shopper strategies, and their target consumers, it is anticipated that consumer profiling will prove to be of growing value to retailers. Academic interest in this area of research is only starting to reemerge. The methodology used has not been used before in this area of research and the areas focused upon in this study have not previously been studied together.