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### How Others Perceive Personality Traits Through the Clothing you Wear

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# How Others Perceive Your Personality Traits Through the Clothing You Wear

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## Background

- We wanted to study how one's clothing type affects others' perception of them. Initial research showed the following:
- Perception of men's trustworthiness can be affected by changes in attire. (Howlett, Pine, Orakçioğlu, & Fletcher, 2013).
- Clothing tends to be a reflection of one's self-image or perception. (Moody, Kinderman, & Sinha, 2010).
- There tends to be consistency between people when judging personality traits based on clothing type, especially with extraversion and conscientiousness. (Feinberg, Mataro, & Burroughs, 1992).

### 5 personality traits:

- Extraversion: Characterized by being energized from social engagement
- Agreeableness: Characterized by friendliness and kindness
- Conscientiousness: The quality of wishing to do one's work well
- Openness to experiences: Quality of open-mindedness
- Emotional Stability: Ability to balance emotions effectively

### Hypotheses:

- We hypothesized that perceived conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability will be highest when paired with formal wear.
- Also, that perceived openness to experience won't be affected by clothing type.

## Method

### Participants

- Participants were 52 female Ouachita students between the ages of 18 and 22 some who were compensated with extra class credit.
- Participants were shown three different pictures of three separate genres of clothing and tasked with answering a 30-question survey on perceived personality traits of the wearer after viewing the pictures.

### Measures

- Each picture contained a level of the independent variable: formal wear(FM), everyday wear(EW), and athletic wear(AT).
- The survey was based on the Ten Item Personality Inventory (Gosling, 2003).
- Participants were asked to rate perceived personality traits based on the type of clothing in the photos

## Results

### • Agreeableness

- A significant difference was found between clothing styles and perceptions of agreeableness,  $F(1.80, 91.72) = 6.76, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .12$ .
- Everyday wear ( $M = 6.86, SD = 1.37$ ) was revealed to score significantly higher than athletic wear ( $M = 5.83, SD = 1.61$ ) ( $p < .01$ ). (See figure 1)

### • Conscientiousness

- results found a significant difference of perceptions in conscientiousness and clothing styles,  $F(1.70, 86.44) = 5.87, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .10$ .
- Everyday wear ( $M = 7.32, SD = 1.67$ ) to score significantly higher than athletic wear ( $M = 6.42, SD = 1.98$ ). (See figure 2)

### • Openness to experiences

- Significance was found within clothing style and perceptions of openness to experience,  $F(2, 102) = 5.45, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .10$ .
- Formal wear ( $M = 6.74, SD = 1.83$ ) was scored significantly more than athletic wear ( $M = 5.73, SD = 1.72$ ). (See figure 3)

### • Extraversion and Emotional stability

- No significance differences were found between clothing styles and extraversion ( $p > .05$ ).
- No significance was found between changing clothing styles and perceptions of emotional stability ( $p > .05$ ).

## Conclusions

- Throughout the study there were significant differences between two of the three clothing types for each of the personality types except for perceived extraversion and emotional stability, which had no significance.
- We recognize that our lack of participants and alpha inflation from the series of ANOVA's cause our numbers to be not exact; however, the results that we do have led us to believe that what one wears does affect how others view them.
- In general, those wearing everyday clothing were seen in a more positive light, being more agreeable and conscientious, than those wearing athletic clothing.
- Future studies should replicate with more participants. As well, these studies should do multivariate testing instead of a series of one-way repeated measures ANOVA's to avoid alpha level inflation.
- As well, future studies should explore other fashion types as well as replicate the same levels of fashion we did, with other outfits. By doing so, many confounds of color, person's body type, etc. can be diminished or eliminated by replicating formal, everyday, and athletic wear as we did with alterations.
- We predict that these studies will show more significant results between formal wear and athletic wear, as well as some possible significant differences between formal wear and everyday wear.

Figure 1:

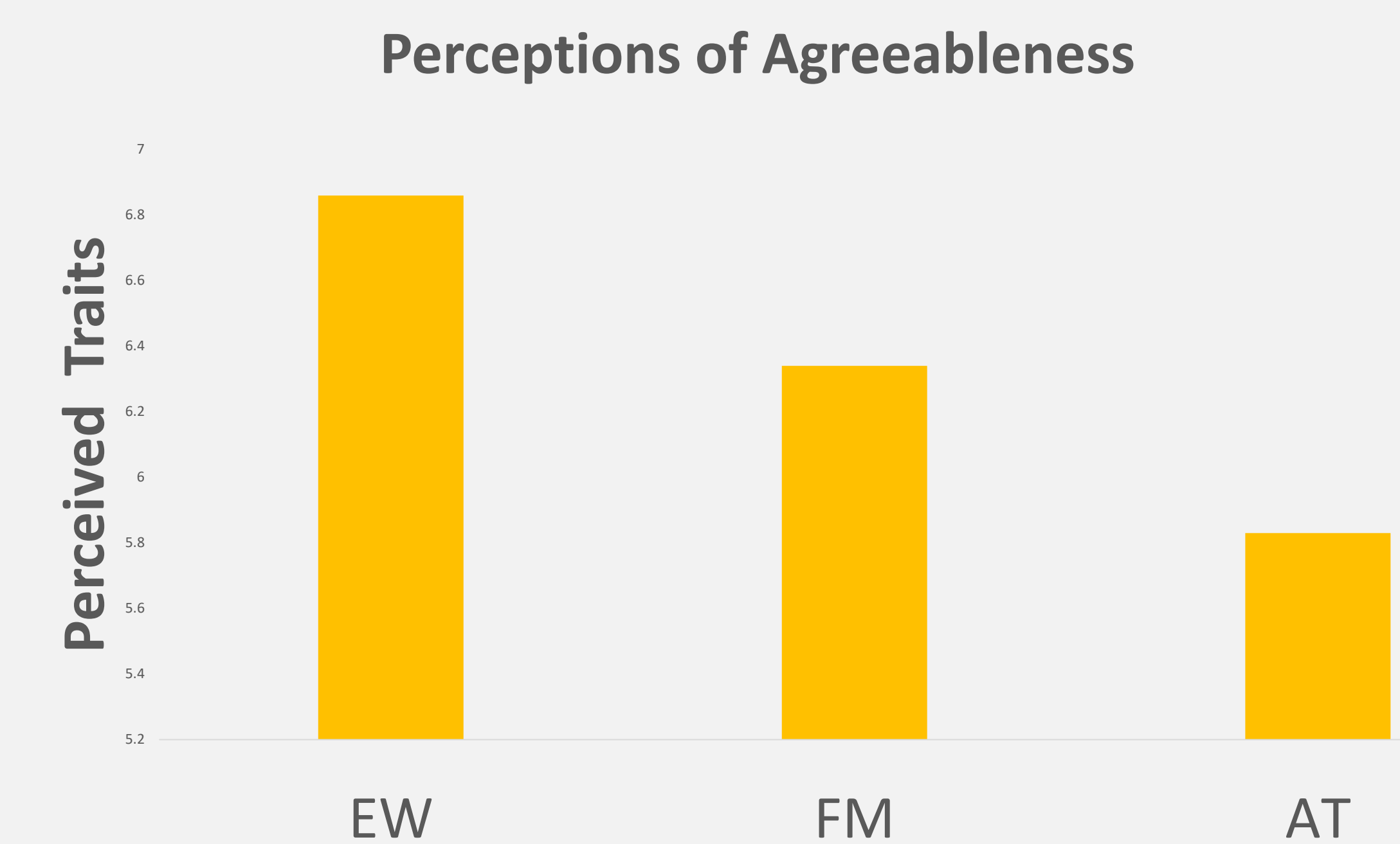


Figure 2:

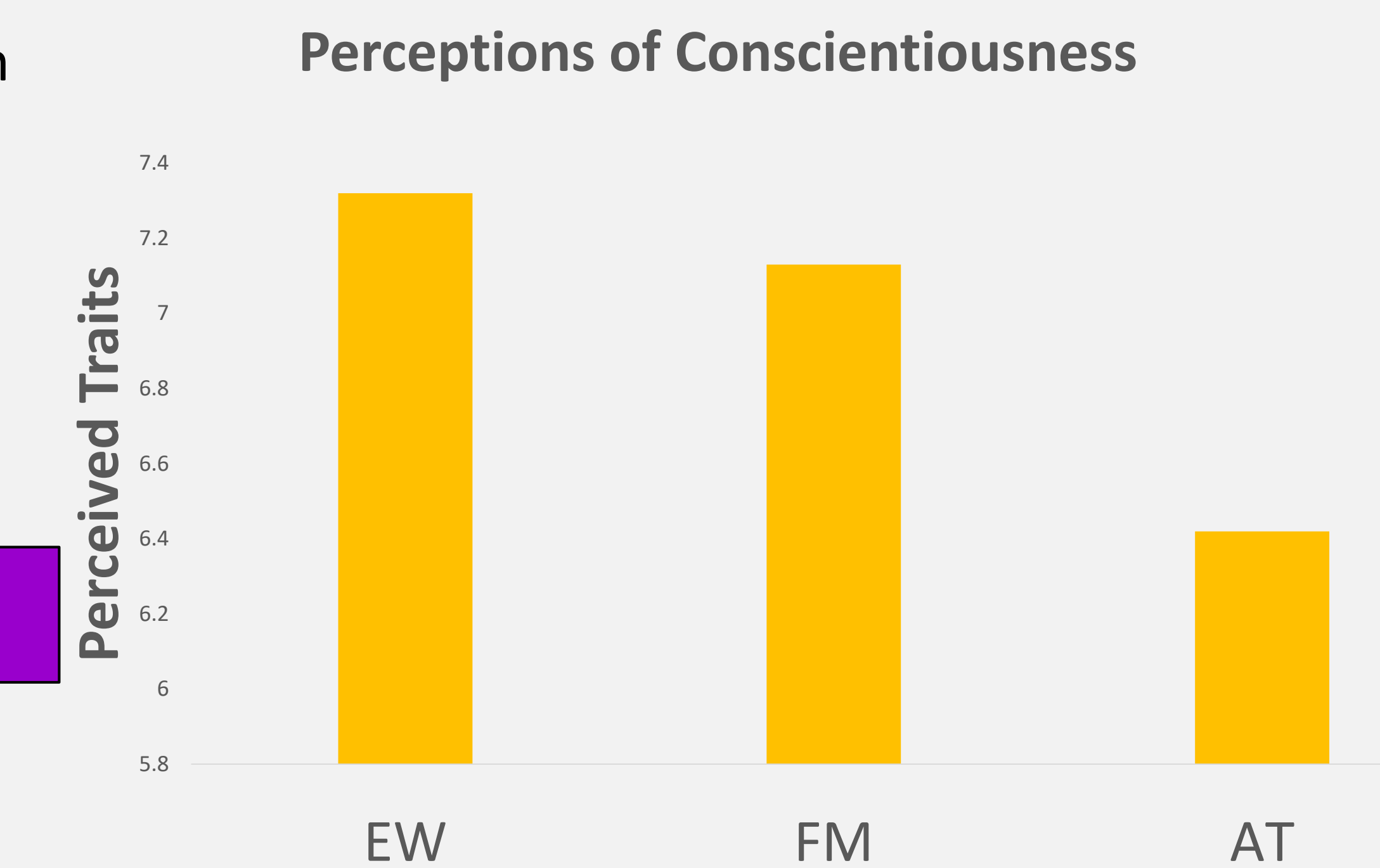


Figure 3:

