PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF FABRIC TEXTURE AND COMFORT ON HUMAN BEHAVIOUR

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ABSTRACT

Textiles are crucial to human life. They provide physical protection and influence mental well- being. The properties of fabric, like texture, softness, breathability, and comfort, have a significant impact on emotions, behaviour, and mental satisfaction. The tactile sensations created by fabric touching the skin can lead to various emotional responses, from relaxation and comfort to irritation and stress. Soft and smooth fabrics tend to evoke feelings of calmness, while rough or uncomfortable materials can cause psychological distress. Factors such as moisture management, fabric weight, flexibility, and garment fit affect confidence, self-esteem, and emotional stability. This review examines the psychological effects of fabric texture and comfort by analysing existing research in textile science, clothing comfort, and consumer psychology. The study underscores the need to incorporate psychological comfort in the design of textiles, home goods, and healthcare applications. By understanding how fabric properties relate to psychological reactions, designers and manufacturers can create textiles that improve user satisfaction, comfort, and overall quality of life.

Keywords

Fabric texture, clothing comfort, textile psychology, human behaviour, emotional response, tactile perception.

1.INTRODUCTION

Textiles are an essential part of daily life. They go beyond basic protection and aesthetics to impact physical and psychological comfort. Clothing and textile products are in constant contact with the human body, making their sensory properties crucial for comfort perception and emotional response. In recent years, researchers have increasingly focused on the psychological aspects of textiles, particularly the texture and comfort of fabrics.

Fabric texture affects our sense of touch. The skin has sensory receptors that respond to surface features such as softness, smoothness, roughness, and stiffness. These sensations can lead to psychological responses that influence mood, emotions, and behaviour. Soft and smooth fabrics often bring feelings of calmness, security, and relaxation, while rough textures can lead to discomfort, irritation, and stress.

Comfort is another essential factor that impacts mental well-being. It includes breathability, moisture absorption, temperature regulation, flexibility, and fit. Comfortable clothing boosts confidence, emotional stability, and satisfaction. In contrast, uncomfortable textiles can harm mood and focus. Therefore, psychological comfort is vital in modern textile and apparel design.

This review aims to analyse the psychological effects of fabric texture and comfort on human behaviour by examining existing literature. The study highlights the importance of including psychological comfort in textile development to improve user well-being and quality of life.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies have looked into the connection between textile properties and psychological responses. Research in textile science and consumer behaviour shows that fabric texture and comfort significantly impact emotional satisfaction and behaviour.

Studies on fabric texture reveal that soft and smooth textiles like cotton, silk, and knitted fabrics are linked to positive emotional responses such as relaxation and calmness. Tactile comfort directly influences consumer preferences and satisfaction when choosing clothing. On the other hand, rough and stiff fabrics can cause irritation and discomfort, leading to negative psychological reactions like stress and dissatisfaction.

Research on clothing comfort defines comfort as a multi-faceted concept involving thermal comfort, moisture management, flexibility, and fit. Breathable, lightweight fabrics reduce thermal stress and improve emotional well-being. Poor comfort can negatively affect concentration, confidence, and mood, especially during long wear.

The literature also points to the link between clothing and self-perception. Comfortable clothes enhance self-confidence and body image, while uncomfortable garments may foster emotional unease. In healthcare and home textile settings, soft and comfortable fabrics help reduce anxiety and promote relaxation. These studies collectively highlight a strong connection between textile properties and psychological well-being.

3. PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF FABRIC TEXTURE

Fabric texture pertains to surface features perceived through touch, such as softness, smoothness, roughness, and stiffness. The tactile interaction between fabric and skin creates sensory responses that affect emotions and psychological states.

3.1 Soft and Smooth Textures

Soft and smooth fabrics are linked to positive psychological effects. Materials like cotton, silk, modal, and fine knitted fabrics offer pleasant tactile experiences that encourage relaxation and emotional comfort. These textures minimize skin irritation and are commonly preferred in clothing, bedding, and baby textiles.

3.2 Rough and Stiff Textures

Rough or stiff fabrics often lead to negative psychological responses. Coarse surfaces can cause itchiness and irritation, resulting in discomfort and stress. Such materials are generally avoided in garments designed for extended skin contact.

3.3 Tactile Perception and Emotional Response

Tactile perception is crucial in emotional processing. Pleasant fabric textures evoke feelings of safety and comfort, enhancing overall emotional health. Designers are increasingly paying attention to fabric feel to ensure psychological comfort.

4. PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF FABRIC COMFORT

Fabric comfort strongly affects psychological satisfaction and behaviour. It includes elements like breathability, moisture management, fabric weight, flexibility, and fit.

4.1 Breathability and Moisture Comfort

Breathable fabrics allow air circulation and absorb moisture, reducing discomfort from sweat. Fabrics like cotton and linen help maintain temperature balance, positively impacting mood and mental comfort.

4.2 Fabric Weight and Flexibility

Lightweight and flexible fabrics allow for ease of movement and emotional comfort. Heavy or stiff fabrics can be restrictive and irritating, negatively influencing psychological comfort.

4.3 Fit and Psychological Comfort

A proper fit boosts confidence and body satisfaction. Tight or poorly fitting clothing can cause anxiety and self-consciousness, affecting social interactions and emotional stability.

5. APPLICATION AREAS OF TEXTILE PSYCHOLOGY

5.1 Clothing and Apparel

Comfortable and soft fabrics enhance wearer satisfaction, confidence, and emotional stability. Apparel designers prioritize tactile comfort to improve consumer acceptance.

5.2 Home Textiles

Home textiles like bedding and cushions aid relaxation and promote better sleep quality. Soft textures create a cozy and secure environment.

5.3 Medical and Healthcare Textiles

Comfortable medical textiles help reduce patient anxiety and improve emotional well-being, especially in long-term care situations.

5.4 Workplace and Uniform Textiles

Comfortable uniforms decrease stress and boost productivity by increasing physical and psychological ease.

6. DISCUSSION

The studies reviewed demonstrate that fabric texture and comfort significantly impact psychological responses and behavior. Soft textures and breathable fabrics foster relaxation and confidence, while uncomfortable textiles can lead to stress and dissatisfaction. Integrating psychological comfort into textile design is essential to improve user satisfaction and quality of life.

7. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

This review underscores the significance of fabric texture and comfort in shaping human behaviour and mental well-being. Softness, breathability, flexibility, and the right fit contribute positively to emotional comfort and confidence. Future research can explore experimental studies, smart and therapeutic textiles, and sustainable fabrics that promote psychological well- being.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author thanks Ms. THENMOZHI KR, Assistant Professor, Department of Fashion Technology and Costume Designing, Jamal Mohamed College, for her valuable guidance, encouragement, and ongoing support throughout the preparation of this review paper.

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