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THE THEORY OF ENCLOSED COGNITION: HOW THE TACTILE PROPERTIES OF FABRIC AFFECT A WOMAN'S CONFIDENCE AND SELF-PERCEPTION

Summary. *The article is devoted to the theory of enclosed cognition and describes in detail how the tactile properties of fabric affect a woman's confidence and self-perception. It examines various sensory characteristics of materials, such as softness, roughness, density, elasticity, weight, and temperature, and their ability to form emotional reactions and cognitive attitudes. The author shows that skin contact with certain textures can enhance a sense of security, inner stability, bodily comfort and social expressiveness. It discusses how clothing, due to its physical properties, activates deep associations, affects behavioral scenarios, the quality of self-attitude and the manifestation of confidence in social situations. The article presents practical conclusions that can be useful for psychology, the fashion industry, and women's well-being.*

Key words: *enclosed cognition, tactile properties of fabric, confidence, female self-perception, psychology of clothing, sensory experience, physicality.*

Relevance of the study. The relevance of studying the theory of enclosed cognition, which examines the influence of tactile properties of fabric on a woman's confidence and self-perception, is due to a growing interest in the psychology of appearance, physicality, and sensory experience.

A modern woman lives in a society where her every move remains in plain sight. Due to constant communication and the growing burden on self-esteem, any little thing that can give a sense of inner harmony becomes especially important.

The fabric in contact with the body turns not just into an element of clothing, but into a powerful psychological stimulus, that affects the emotional state. It can calm or cause tension, determine the level of self-acceptance and confidence in social contacts.

Understanding the mechanisms of such influence not only deepens our understanding of the processes of self-regulation, but also opens up new horizons for psychology, the fashion industry, style consultations and practices aimed at improving the quality of life.

The scientific novelty of this study lies in the fact that it systematizes the impact of tactile-sensory characteristics of clothing on cognitive and emotional processes, based on the theory of enclosed cognition. Unlike other works that mainly focus on the symbolic and visual aspects of clothing, this work focuses on the physical interaction of the material with the body as an independent and most important psychophysiological factor.

The purpose of the study. The purpose of this study is to understand and describe in detail how the physical properties of fabrics, such as softness, density, texture, elasticity, temperature and weight, affect a woman's psycho—emotional state and sense of confidence through mechanisms related to self-perception in clothing (enclosed cognition).

In the course of the study, we hope to uncover how sensory sensations that arise when wearing clothes form cognitive associations, change the perception of one's own body, and influence self-esteem and behavioral reactions. We will also try to understand why some materials enhance the feeling of strength and concentration, while others cause a feeling of relaxation or vulnerability.

Materials and research methods. This study uses theoretical concepts from various fields: cognitive psychology, perceptual psychology, body-oriented practices, and modern fashion psychology.

The analysis includes data from scientific papers on enclosed cognition, studies of sensory and tactile experience, as well as descriptions of neuropsychological mechanisms related to bodily stimuli.

The research methodology is a comprehensive theoretical and analytical approach that includes a study of academic literature, a comparison of existing empirical data, and an interpretation of the psychological effects of tissue exposure on self-perception. In addition, observations and qualitative descriptions of women's sensory reactions recorded during style consultations are taken into account.

The uniqueness of this research lies in the fact that it is not limited only to theoretical and empirical data, but also includes the author's practical experience in the field of fashion design. Over the years, the author has worked with women's collections, which included experimental materials with different densities, structures, and textures. This approach allows us to consider the theory of enclosed cognition through the prism of applied design practice, rather than solely within the framework of an abstract psychological model.

The results of the study. The study of the phenomenon of enclosed cognition arose in the early 2010s, when scientists Adam and Galinsky put forward the idea that clothing can influence not only behavior, but also human cognitive processes.

In their key 2012 experiment, they demonstrated that the associative connections that arise when wearing certain clothes and the very fact of their presence could enhance attention increase a sense of competence, and influence self-esteem [1]. This discovery marked the beginning of a systematic study of how bodily and sensory factors shape psychological experience.

Over time, research has moved beyond the symbolic elements of clothing and focused on the tactile properties of materials. In the psychology of perception, works have appeared that have shown that the skin is one of the most sensitive sensory organs, and the touch of tissue directly affects the nervous system,

activating areas of the brain responsible for safety, pleasure and a sense of body integrity. During this period, scientists began to study the relationship between the texture and density of tissues and emotional reactions. Soft materials create a feeling of relaxation and tenderness, while dense and structured fabrics provide stability and a sense of control.

As the psychology of fashion has developed, the focus of research has shifted towards social and gender aspects (Table 1). A woman began to be perceived as a person for whom clothes serve not only as a way of self-expression, but also as a tool to help maintain confidence in the face of social pressure and cultural expectations [3].

Table 1

The main components of fashion psychology

| № | Indicator | Characteristic |
|---|----------------------------|--|
| 1 | Identity | Clothing is a way for people to express their uniqueness and demonstrate their belonging to a certain social group. A style can convey social status, cultural traditions, and personal beliefs. |
| 2 | Emotions | Clothes can have a significant effect on our mood. For example, bright and stylish outfits can boost self-esteem and create a more positive attitude. |
| 3 | Perception of others | Our clothes have a significant impact on the perception of us by others. Research shows that people often judge others by their appearance, which can affect our career prospects and social interactions. |
| 4 | Social norms | Fashion is often associated with social norms and expectations. What is considered "decent" in one society may be completely unacceptable in another. |
| 5 | The psychology of shopping | People often make purchases based on emotions rather than logical reasoning. Fashion can create an atmosphere of comfort, confidence, and even a sense of status. |

At this time, qualitative research began to appear on how the tactile properties of the fabric affect the body's sense of self, a sense of security, and the ability to show energy and set boundaries. Practitioners of stylists, coaches, and

body-oriented therapists have supplemented scientific knowledge with their observations on how women intuitively choose materials that help them feel more confident, feminine, or free.

Current research in this field includes cognitive psychology, neuroscience, and the sciences of perception. It has been found that different tissue textures can affect stress levels, the quality of contact with one's own body, and the formation of self-esteem. In addition, tactile experience can enhance or neutralize the symbolic effects of clothing.

The history of studying the phenomenon of enclosed cognition has led to a deep understanding that the material in contact with the skin plays a key role in shaping a woman's confidence and self-perception. He is able to turn clothes into a powerful source of psycho-emotional well-being (Fig. 1).

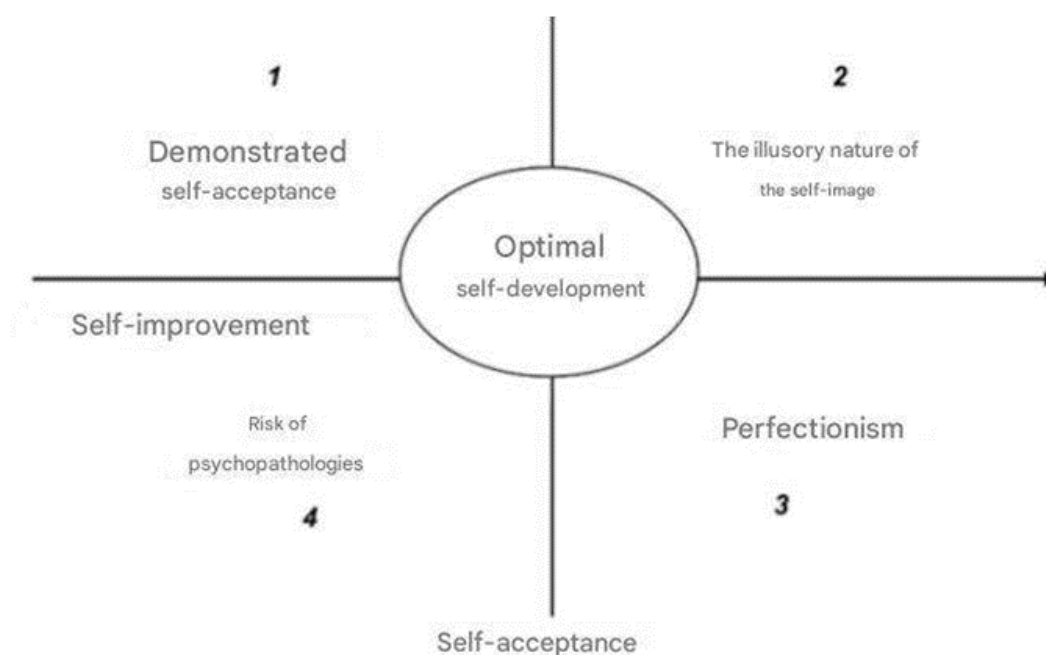


Fig. 1. A model of the relationship between self-improvement and self-acceptance in the system of self-development of a personality

It is worth noting that the theory of clothing perception, known as enclosed cognition, is located at the intersection of psychology, neuroscience and the

fashion industry. Modern research confirms that women are not only aware of the symbolic meaning of clothing, but also directly experience its tactile sensations.

One striking example of this is the choice of dense structured fabrics such as tweed, costume wool or hard cotton. Women who wear such clothes often describe an instant feeling of composure, confidence, and control over the situation.

The fabric, which does not give in to the body, but rather sets its shape, creates the effect of an "exoskeleton", thereby strengthening the inner framework of confidence. Neurophysiological observations show that dense materials can reduce the level of somatic anxiety, as they create a sense of stable boundaries and security [2].

As an opposite example, soft and delicate fabrics such as cashmere, viscose, dense knitted yarn made of viscose or silky modal can be cited. Contact with these materials causes activation of areas of the brain associated with a sense of security and emotional warmth.

Women note that these tissues help them move into a state of calm confidence, acceptance, and self-confidence, as opposed to intense concentration. Many modern studies show that under conditions of emotional stress, soft tactile surfaces can reduce cortisol levels and increase a sense of bodily comfort, which is directly related to self-esteem and inner stability.

Smooth and cool materials, such as natural silk or satin viscose, deserve special attention. Their sliding on the skin creates a feeling of lightness and fluidity, which many women interpret as an increase in sensuality, status and self-importance.

In modern fashion psychology, there is an opinion that silky surfaces of clothes contribute to a more conscious attitude towards one's body, which, in turn, increases one's sense of self-worth and attractiveness. This effect is especially noticeable in situations where a woman needs to simultaneously demonstrate confident femininity and inner composure.

No less revealing is the example of compression or moderately tight-fitting fabrics, such as sports knitwear and corrective products. Modern research shows that gentle, even pressure on the body not only increases the feeling of strength and involvement in one's own body, but also reduces anxiety levels. Many women note that in such clothes they feel "holding themselves", which, in turn, contributes to psychological stability. This is especially noticeable in work or stressful situations, where physical concentration directly affects confidence.

Research in the field of enclosed cognition is actively developing in the international scientific and professional space. They are joined by scientists from Europe and America, as well as fashion industry practitioners. This indicates that the revealed patterns are universal and can be applied everywhere in the modern fashion world.

Modern research in the field of enclosed cognition shows that the tactile properties of fabric play a key role in shaping a woman's sense of self. Dense materials promote a sense of structural confidence, soft materials promote emotional stability, sliding materials emphasize value and sensuality, and compression materials support bodily awareness. As a result, clothing becomes a powerful psychological tool that can influence a woman's inner state as well as her appearance.

It is worth noting that, despite the popularity of the concept of enclosed cognition, modern science faces some difficulties, especially when it comes to the impact of the tactile properties of fabric on women's confidence and self-perception.

The main difficulty lies in the fact that the perception of materials is very individual. The same tissue can cause both a feeling of strength and a feeling of discomfort, which makes it difficult to reproduce the research results. Soft tissues, which are usually associated with emotional comfort, sometimes create a sense of vulnerability or informality in some women, which can reduce their professional confidence. On the other hand, dense or structured materials can

simultaneously cause a feeling of composure and physical tension, which can be perceived as anxiety or pressure.

Another difficulty lies in the fact that tactile sensations are closely related to cultural and social norms. A woman can perceive a fabric not only based on its physical properties, but also through internal installations. For example, she may find smooth silk too provocative or associate wool with "hardness" in a social context. These factors complicate the analysis, as tactile sensations become secondary compared to symbolic meanings. In addition, research shows that women with high body sensitivity react to textures differently than women with low sensory sensitivity. This creates variability that is difficult to standardize.

The duration of the effect is also difficult. Many tactile reactions turn out to be short-lived: the fabric can give confidence in the first minutes of wearing, but as the body adapts, the effect disappears. This makes it difficult to understand exactly how the physical properties of clothing affect sustainable self-perception. It is important to note that some tissues can enhance self-criticism. For example, the prickliness of wool or the excessive smoothness of synthetics can cause irritation, which a woman perceives as her "unsuitability" or insecurity, although the reason for this is purely physical.

Thus, the main problem of enclosed cognition in the context of tactile properties is its high subjectivity, short duration, and strong dependence on cultural norms, sensory sensitivity, and personal experience. Instead of looking for universal patterns, we are faced with a huge variety of individual reactions. This makes the study of the effect of fabrics on women's confidence difficult, ambiguous and requiring more precise methods.

In our opinion, one of the key solutions is the standardization of methods. It allows you to reduce the subjectivity of reactions to materials. This is achieved with controlled sensory scales, where participants describe their sensations according to predefined parameters such as softness, temperature, or compression ratio.

This approach helps to bring personal experience and scientific interpretation closer together. An important step in this direction is to separate cultural and symbolic aspects into separate categories of analysis. This allows you to separate physical sensations from social associations, which makes the data more transparent and reproducible.

Another way to solve the problem is to take into account individual sensory sensitivity. Conducting preliminary sensory tests helps to divide participants into groups and compare the results within similar profiles. This reduces the spread of data and allows you to identify more accurate patterns that are not distorted by individual characteristics.

In addition, more and more attention is being paid to the duration of the effect. Research is conducted in such a way as to track the response to the tissue over time, including the stages of adaptation. This approach allows us to distinguish long-term changes in the emotional state from short-term outbursts.

Technological advances also contribute to improving the quality of research. For example, the use of wearable sensors that detect micro-reactions, such as changes in skin temperature or muscle tension, allows you to compare subjective reports with objective data. This significantly increases the accuracy of conclusions about how exactly the tissue affects the emotional state. At the same time, materials with predictable tactile properties are being developed, which greatly simplifies the control of experimental conditions.

In practice, the solution to the problem may include increasing the number of educational programs dedicated to body awareness and the role of clothing. When women understand their feelings better, they can consciously choose materials that not only do not reduce their confidence, but also help it grow. The design industry can also contribute by creating fabrics that combine comfort, structure, and positive associations, reducing the conflict between physical sensations and social expectations.

The problems of enclosed cognition are solved through a combination of standardization of techniques, consideration of individual differences, technological support and the formation of a new level of bodily awareness. This allows for a deeper understanding of how the tactile properties of the fabric affect women's self-confidence and self-perception. As a result, the research becomes more reliable and practice-oriented.

Conclusions

Research shows that the interaction between the physical properties of fabric and the symbolic meaning of clothing creates a complex but predictable mechanism that affects women's confidence.

Tactile sensations such as softness, density, temperature, and texture of the fabric directly affect body comfort, stress level, and emotional state. At the same time, symbolic associations associated with clothing activate cognitive attitudes that can strengthen or weaken an inner sense of strength, professionalism, or attractiveness. When these two levels - physical and symbolic - coincide, the effect becomes most pronounced. A comfortable fabric that supports positive expectations promotes a more stable sense of confidence.

Modern scientific research is gradually overcoming the previous limitations. The standardization of sensory assessments, consideration of individual perception characteristics, and the use of new technologies make it possible to draw more accurate and practically meaningful conclusions. Understanding these processes is important not only for science, but also for the fashion industry, psychological practice, and everyday clothing choices. This allows us to consider clothes not only as a decorative element, but also as a powerful psychological resource capable of maintaining emotional stability and improving the quality of life.

A comprehensive analysis of the tactile-sensory properties of clothing within the framework of the theory of enclosed cognition allows us to perceive a suit as an active tool that affects psychophysiological processes and a person's

sense of self. The author combines scientific analysis with practical experience, which makes it possible to form a holistic approach that is important both for further interdisciplinary research and for the development of the modern fashion industry.

The results obtained can be useful for designers, stylists and fashion brands, as they allow them to consciously take into account the tactile properties of materials when creating collections. Using these findings helps to create clothes that not only meet aesthetic requirements, but also support women's psychological stability, confidence, and social identity in their daily and professional lives.

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