

## INTRODUCTION

- Enclothed cognition is the idea that the clothes we wear influence our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.
- Understanding the psychological impact of clothes can be a powerful tool when deciding what to wear.
- Enclothed cognition has been studied in the field of social psychology, but, to date, no researcher has looked at its effect on fitness performance.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to determine if the choice of workout clothes affects peak performance in fitness.

## METHODS

- A 20-question electronic survey consisting of open- and closed-ended questions relating to workout clothes and peak performance was administered via email to 117 certified personal trainers at a franchise fitness facility in Northern Virginia.
- Descriptive analyses were conducted on the quantitative survey data.
- Peak performance was defined as performing a task at the optimum level of an individual's physical and/or mental abilities. For the qualitative data, survey answers were coded for common themes.

## KEY FINDINGS

Workout clothing positively influenced confidence and motivation, with qualitative insights revealing deeper effects on focus and performance than quantitative data showed.

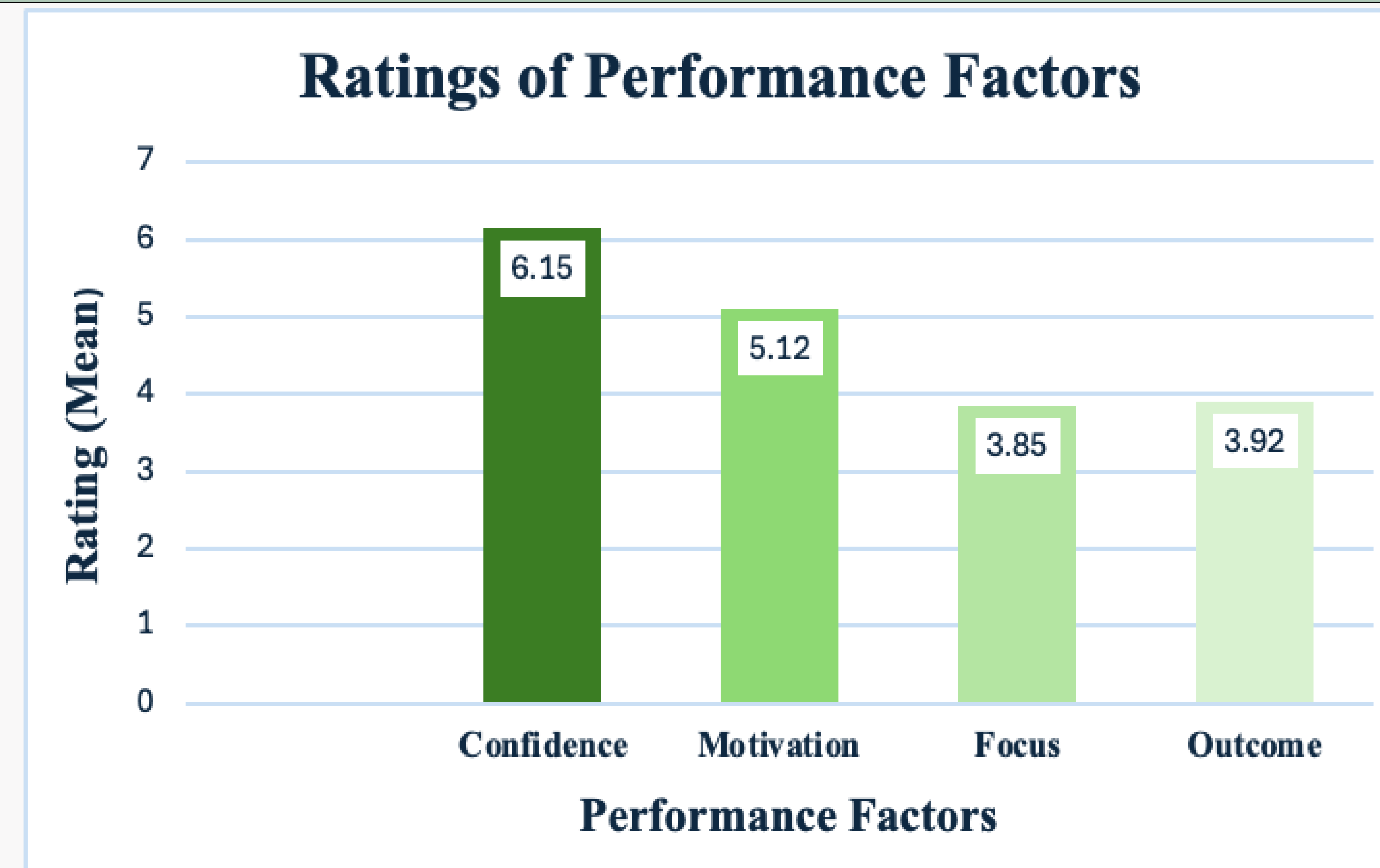


Figure 1. Mean ratings of the perceived effects of workout outfits on performance factors. Subjects reported that their workout clothing most strongly influenced confidence and motivation, while the effects on focus and outcome of performance were rated lower.

## RESULTS

- Of the 26 (22.2%) who completed the survey, there were 10 (38.4%) females (age=30.0±7.2 years) and 16 males (61.5%) (age=36.8±10.5).
- A descriptive analysis of the responses using a 0-10 Likert scale was conducted, where a score of 10 represented the highest possible rating.
- Subjects rated confidence (mean=6.15±2.48) and motivation (mean=5.12±2.82) the highest, while focus (mean=3.85±2.93) and outcome of performance (mean=3.92±2.62) were rated the lowest (Figure 1).
- The qualitative data did not support the quantitative data in the areas of focus and performance outcome because the common themes showed that the subjects' focus and performance outcome were affected by their choice of workout clothes.

## CONCLUSIONS

- There was a positive trend showing that the subjects' workout clothes affected their fitness performances in the areas of confidence and motivation, but there was discrepancy between the quantitative and qualitative data in the areas of focus and outcome of performance.
- The quantitative data revealed that the subjects' choice of workout clothes did not affect their focus or out of performance, but the common themes found in the qualitative data showed that it in fact did.
- Future research should continue to explore this theory, since this study only had 26 participants.
- It would also be beneficial to collect data on general fitness participants as opposed to personal trainers.

## PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

- Individuals should understand how their clothing may affect their exercise performance and mindset.
- Additionally, apparel brands should understand the psychological impact of clothing when designing and marketing their collections.