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# The Perception Of Tattooed People In Hospitality Sphere

Tattoos have been around for a long time. They are a form of individual, cultural, and artistic expression. Recently, there has been a large disconnect with tattoo culture. Many negatively perceive individuals with tattoos because they have learned and carried on adverse stereotypes. The researchers wanted to observe the changes in perception when an individual has tattoos. Does people's perceptions of an individual change depending on the amount of tattoos on the individual? The researchers hypothesized that (H1) participants will have a negative perception upon individuals that are heavily tattooed. Along with that, (H2) participants will have a positive perception upon individuals that have fewer tattoos. Additionally, (H3) participants with no tattoos will have a negative view upon those with tattoos. In regards to being heavily tattooed, that is defined as having tattoos that cover 50% of the body and are visible. Having fewer tattoos is defined as having tattoos that cover 25% of body and are either visible or not visible. The researchers established the independent variable (IV) to be the amount of tattoos on the individual and the dependent variable (DV) to be the perception of the individual.

## Theoretical Development: Social Stigma (teach more about theory)

Erving Goffman was a Canadian-born social psychologist and was considered a very influential man. He made a lot of advances in the study of human interaction. He created many concepts that have had a major influence in sociology and psychology fields. He especially studied and contributed to concepts in social psychology and how individuals interact within a community.

Social stigmas, according to Goffman are "a situation of [an] individual who is disqualified from full social acceptance" (Goffman, 1963). He explained that a stigma was outlined by 3 factors: "abominations of body, blemishes of character and tribal" (Goffman, 1963). These were also followed by the relevance of the situation, visibility, obtrusiveness and publicity. These factors would cause an individual to be rejected and feel undesirable. Being stigmatized could lead to psychological distress and could be a negative concept. There is such thing as a positive sigma in which Goffman describes it to be too rich or too smart. A stigma is made by stereotyping because it is discrimination based on perceivable characteristics.

This theory is relevant to the study because it provided an understanding of what the outcomes of the current study may be. The researchers have identified that individuals with tattoos may be at a higher risk of being "disqualified from full social acceptance" (Goffman, 1963). The researchers have hypothesized that the absence of tattoos on an individual will provide a positive effect and cause the individual to be more socially desirable. The theory of social stigma further explains why it is that tattoos may be viewed in a negative way.

## Differences In Personality Attributions Toward Tattooed and Nontattooed Virtual Human Characters

Body modifications are very widespread, like tattoos, and although that is so, the researchers found that there was very scarce research that studied the perception of tattoos. In this study,

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researchers wanted to look at the characteristics that would be attributed with tattooed individuals. They hypothesized that that images of individuals with tattoos would have higher sensation-seeking scores, there would be low scores on boredom susceptibility, and that it would be likely they got perceived as having a higher number of previous sexual partners than non-tattooed characters. Their study was composed of 145 men and 133 women between the ages of 18-39. The researchers used convenience sampling at the University of Goettingen. Participants were asked to join a study in which they were dealing with the perception of attributes.

The study used 3 female and 3 male virtual human characters that were made on a software. The researchers found that the advantage in creating their own characters was that they did not vary so they did not have confounding variables. The participants were randomly shown one of the six characters and then had to rate them based on characteristics using Sensation Seeking Scale and Sociosexual Orientation Inventory (SOI). The characters were rated for boredom susceptibility, disinhibition, experience seeking, and thrill and adventure seeking. The researchers found significance in their study. They found that tattooed characters were rated as less inhibited, but they were higher in sensation-seeking, and also having more sexual partners.

The researchers found that the generalizability of this study is very limited in the sense that they were using virtual characters that they could heavily manipulate. The reality of finding similar results in the real world would vary because they would have confounding variables. The results provide guidelines for future researcher to build on the study and explore the topic further.

These findings are related to the current study because of the exploration of individuals with tattoos. This research looked at the different characteristics that are perceived when tattoos are present on an individual. The data correlated specific characteristics with tattoos and that data would be useful for future studies.

## **Perceptions Of Visible Tattoos and Piercings In The Service Industry**

This study looked at three different points to gather numerous perceptions. The researcher analyzed managers, everyday customers at establishments such as hotels and airlines and visibly tattooed or pierced professionals. The researcher used qualitative and quantitative methods to gather data.

With the managers, the researcher interviewed 12 of them between the ages of 26-55. The researcher gave the managers various pictures and resumes of fictitious individuals with and without tattoos that had plenty of experience in the field. Then there was an interview with the manager to see what perceptions the managers had and if there were any bias.

Next, the researcher interviewed professionals that had been working in the field for a long time that had tattoos. They interviewed 8 professionals with the ages between 23-44. This interview was done to understand the perceptions of them in the working field.

The last part of the study was a survey that was conducted through a link that was posted on Facebook and consisted of 21 questions. The researcher had it advertised to three different facebook groups: foreigners in Vienna, ex-Emirates airlines crew, Modul University Vienna

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community/ M.B.A group. There were 188 participants.

The results showed that many of the managers did notice the tattoos and made a comment about covering the tattoo up and one even went on to say that the individual was not up to their “grooming standards”. The professionals that were interviewed generally stated that they had positive feedback in their own interviews to get their current positions but that they did feel that there was still a very large stigma towards the tattoos that they had. Some even expressed that they felt regret with tattoos and would cover them up. The survey showed that in general the participants did not feel neither positive or negative toward people with tattoos.

Some limitations the researcher ran into was realizing that the questions they had for the interviews were not formed well enough to gather enough data. Therefore, the interviews would steer off into a tangent about body art and other related topics that were not directly related to the study. Another limitation was that in the survey there were no essay responses to understand why the participant chose their answer. The researcher would have liked to get an explanation on some of the questions.

This research relates to the current study because of the data collected on the perception of individuals with tattoos. The findings were insightful for the researchers because it was a current study that shows that there was a shift in perception that not everyone viewed tattoos as negative.

## **Criminal stereotypes in the courtroom: Facial tattoos affect guilt and punishment differently**

Perceptions and judgements are made rapidly. In this study, the researchers were looking at factual tattoos and the stereotypes of criminal activity and judgements. They hypothesized that “an activated criminal stereotype would reduce doubt about whether the defendant actually committed the crime” ( Funk &Todorov, 2013). They defined criminal stereotype as criminal appearance and the likelihood of committing the crime again.

The researchers used a picture of two different men in which they said one had a more “trustworthy” face. They manipulated the picture by either having a tattoo on their face or not. They recruited 286 Amazon Mechanical Turk participants. The participants were asked to imagine they were in a court hearing and then shown the picture of either the untrustworthy/trustworthy man with or without a facial tattoo. They were then asked to read a scenario and rate how likely the man was guilty and if he would likely commit the crime in the future. The participants were also asked if they had their own tattoo.

The results showed that there was criminal stereotyping involved and that the tattoo offender would be more likely to commit the crime again. They did not find that the untrustworthy or trustworthy individuals made a difference in the study. One of the limitations was that the researchers would have liked to know how severely the participant would have punished the offender for their crime.

This study relates to what is being researched because it showed that appearance matters. The researchers would present pictures in their current study therefore this study showed that the current study should have looked at how they would present their individual.

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