Relationship of Personality to Preference for Representational Versus Non-representational Art

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Abstract

The relationship of personality to aesthetic preference has been previously researched. The present study uses the "Big Five" personality inventory, which includes Neuroticism, Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extroversion and Agreeableness to explore the relationship between personality and Representational versus Non-representational art. There were 372 Nipissing University undergraduate participants involved in this study, across a variety of majors. Of these participants 33.3% were male and 66.6% female. Each participant completed the "Big Five" inventory that was created by John (1991) at Berkeley University. Following this, they viewed 20 randomized pieces of art, displayed on a projector with 10 being Representational and 10 Non-representational.

Aesthetic experience was positively correlated with overall preference ratings (+0.32; $p<0.001$) as well as for preference ratings for both the Representational (+0.24; $p<0.001$) and Non-representational art (+0.29; $p<0.001$). Openness was the only trait to be found to correlated with Aesthetic Experience (+0.48; $p<0.001$).

Openness was also the only trait to show a simple direct correlation with increased overall preference ratings (+0.38; $p<0.001$), and was more strongly correlated with Representational (+0.35; $p<0.001$) than Non-representational ratings (+0.28; $p<0.001$).

However, a Split Plot Analysis uncovered some other significant interactions. When participants were categorized by dominant personality trait, a significant difference in preference for Representational over Non-representational art was found for those whose dominant personality trait was either Extroversion ($p<0.001$), Agreeableness ($p<0.001$), Conscientiousness ($p<0.001$) or Neuroticism ($p<0.001$). Also, those who were dominant for Extroversion $p<.025$)

and Openness (p<.043) were found to prefer Non-representational art significantly more than those high in Conscientiousness. When looking at sex differences, females had significantly higher Neuroticism (p<.001) and Conscientiousness (p<.019) scores than did males. Finally, those high in aesthetic exposure preferred all art more than those who had neutral aesthetic exposure in their life, not a lot, or no exposure.

1. Introduction

Experimental investigations of aesthetics and personality have been conducted to reveal fundamental factors which contribute to differences in artistic preference. Although it may seem that this is a relatively new field of interest, scientific research regarding the connection between personality and artistic preference dates back more than 70 years. One of the earliest studies in this field was carried out by Burt (1933), which involved a series of artistic post cards that his participants ranked in order of preference. Not long after this study, Eysenck (1940, 1941) continued this research, extending the presented art to preferences of modern art. Furnham and Walker (2001) proposed a series of questions relating to the connection between personality and art. Can a person's choice of fine art be an unobtrusive measure of personality? Which personality traits are most clearly related to art ratings, and why? Finally, does personality account for more of the variance in art rating than art education or interest? These are all relevant questions that continue to be studied by personality psychologists and those interested in art. This current study examines the connection between personality and artistic preference through a close examination of participants' results of Berkley Personality Lab's BFI, preference for Representation versus Non-representation art, and key demographic characteristics. The importance of participants' art education or aesthetic exposure will also be taken into account, which may be an important factor in revealing individual differences in artistic preference.

1.2 Scales Used to Study Personality and Artistic Preference

In many scientific reports about the connection between artistic preference and personality, a common method used is a previously established and tested personality scale. The Big Five model of personality has often been used to correlate the relationship of personality and

art (Chamorro-Premuzic 2009), as well as a scale of Sensation Seeking –SS (Furnham 1988).

Furnham and Walker (2001) also used a new version of the Sensation Seeking Scale –SSS VI in

a later study when looking at personality and Abstract, Pop Art and Representational paintings.

Finally, a scale of ambiguity tolerance was used by Furnham and Avison (1997) when looking at

personality and Representational and ambiguous paintings. Several other scales appear in

personality and artistic preference literature, but the previously mentioned scales are used more

frequently, therefore resulting in more conclusive data.

1.3 Expansion of Personality Scales

There are two versions of the Sensation Seeking Scale that appear in many papers about

art and personality. Furnham and Bunyan (1988) used this scale, which was originally created

by Zuckerman (1972), who defined sensation seeking as an individual's need for novel stimuli

that can be a complex sensation. According to Zuckerman (1972) sensation seeking also involves

the willingness to take social risks for the sake of experiencing these novel sensations. Furnham

and Bunyan (1988) explained the SS model and its four subscales. The first of these subscales is

"Thrill and Adventure Seeking", the second being "Experience Seeking", the third being

"Disinhibition", and the final scale being "Boredom Susceptibility". Zuckerman (1994)

explained a new version of the Sensation Seeking Scale which contains only two subscales:

Thrill and Adventure Seeking (TAS) and Disinhibition (DIS). These two subscales are used in

many studies pertaining to aesthetic preference and personality, such as a study by Furnham and

Walker (2001**).** The Ambiguity Tolerance Scale as described by Furnham and Avison (1997)

relates to the manner in which an individual perceives and interprets ambiguous stimuli or

situations where the elements can be incongruent, unfamiliar or complex. Lastly, the Big Five

Inventory has been widely used to determine various participants' personalities in relation to

many different variables. In recent literature it has often been used when comparing aesthetic preference to personality.

1.4 The Big Five Personality Inventory

Particularly relevant to this study is a description of the components of the Big Five, as well as research that has linked the Big Five to aesthetic preference. McCrae and Costa (1992) stated that there is an increasing consensus among psychological researchers that personality can be reduced to five fundamental factors. The Big Five factors used in this model to measure personality are "Openness", "Conscientiousness", "Extraversion", "Agreeableness" and "Neuroticism". Chamorro-Premuzic et al. (2009) defined each of these personality traits. They define Extroversion as a measure of quantity and intensity of interpersonal interaction, activity level and external stimulation. Conscientiousness, as defined by Chamorro Pre-muzic et al (2009) measures the degree of organization, persistence, dependability and goal directed behavior. Furnham and Avison (1997) described the trait of Openness as Openness to experience, consisting of actively seeking and appreciation of varied experiences for ones' own sake. Chamorro Pre-muzic et al (2009) defined Neuroticism as emotional instability, easily distressed, and a predisposition to have unhealthy coping strategies. Furnham and Walker (2000) described the Big Five measure of personality, Agreeableness, as good natured individuals who posses qualities of helpfulness, altruism, and are more likely to have a forgiving nature. As McCrae and Costa elucidate, personality can be reduced to these five factors. Schmitt (2007) explained in one study that the NEO-PI-R, which is a version of the Big Five, encompasses multiple traits within each Big Five category. For example, Extroversion contains the following: warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, positive emotions, activity and excitement seeking.

1.5 Artistic Genres Previously Studied

Studies that investigate the relationship of personality and artistic preference examine a wide range of artistic genres. There have been numerous studies that have found a relationship with personality using various scales as discussed above. These scales are often correlated with artistic genres such as Surrealism (Furnham & Avison ,1997), Impressionism (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2009), Ancient art (Mastandrea, 2009), Cubism (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2009), Abstract (Furnham 2000; Furnham 2001; Furnham, 1988), Representational (Furnham 2000; Furnham 2001; Furnham, 1988), and even aesthetic activities, such as drawing, painting, reading, going to see films, etc. (McManus, 2006). There are many other artistic genres that have been studied in the past, for example Burt's (1933) artistic postcards, but recent literature has focussed on the genres mentioned above.

1.6 Support for Using Representational Versus Non-representational Art

Representational art encompasses all pieces of art that can be clearly understood by the viewer. If the piece of Representational art presents an object, the viewer should be able to undoubtedly recognize what is being presented. Non-representational art on the other hand, is open to interpretation and is not presented as clearly to the viewer. Furnham and Walker (2001) determined the relationship between personality and three types of art: Representational, Abstract and Pop Art. Furnham and Walker (2001) found that Disinhibition was associated with positive ratings of Abstract and Pop art, Neuroticism was positively correlated with positive ratings of Abstract and Pop art, while Conscientiousness was linked to a liking of Representational art. Openness to experience was linked to positive ratings of all three art genres. Agreeableness on the other hand, was linked negatively to a liking of Pop art. These results are a

key component in the current study, which attempts to replicate findings pertaining to

Representational and Abstract art from Furnham and Walker's (2001) "Personality and

Judgments of Abstract, Pop Art, and Representational Paintings". In the current study, abstract

pieces are included in the Non-representational art section, but Pop art is excluded. Aside from

Pop art's negative relationship with Agreeableness, the results for Pop art are similar to the

Abstract results and therefore are not included in the present study. Also, in Furnham and Walker

(2001), personality variables were least related to ratings of Pop art, hence not included in this

study. The current study attempts to find the relationship between artistic preference and

personality by using two categories that are vastly different, Representational and Non-

representational art.

1.7 Demographic Variables – Gender

Demographic variables have been shown to have an impact on the relationship in an

individual's artistic preference. In Furnham and Walker (2001), their Regressional Analysis

shows about a fifth of the variance can be accounted to personality and demographic variables.

Sex has been seen as a possible variable that can provide a difference in artistic preference.

McManus (2006) states "it might be expected that there will be differences in aesthetic activities

and attitudes, which are related either to sex itself (in the biological sense) or to gender (in the

psycho-social sense)". Although this seems to be what is expected, McManus (2006) found that

sex has no relationship to aesthetic activity and no direct relationship to aesthetic attitudes. On

the other hand, when looking specifically at paintings, Frumkin (1963) females have higher

preference in general than males in his study. More recently, Furnham and Walker (2000)

discovered that females have a higher preference for abstract art than males. This may be

because females score higher in Neuroticism in the Big Five than do males (Costa & McCrae,

1992), and there has been a relationship between Neuroticism and Abstract art found in previous studies (Knapp & Wulff, 1963).

1.8 Demographic Variables – Age

Another demographic variable that has been correlated with artistic preference is the age of the participant. Furnham and Walker (2000) found that age displays a relationship with preference for Representational paintings. Chamorro-Premuzic (2009) also found that overall preferences were positively influenced by age. This study examines if the age group sampled (approximate 18-21) has a preference for Representational or Non-representational art, as well as supports the results from previous literature.

1.9 Previous Exposure to Art

Gorden (1951) found that people who display art expertise, compared to those who do not, judge paintings according to different criteria. Recent studies explore the impact of aesthetic exposure and art education on artistic preference. Furnham and Avison (1997) stated that one's familiarity with paintings is an important factor in a study that uses paintings or pieces of art by relatively well known artists. This further implies the importance of uncovering a participant's aesthetic exposure in a study like this, to see the relationship that lies with their artistic education/exposure and their preference. It is also possible that the amount of one's art education or aesthetic exposure can be related to one's personality. Much of literature does not include any connection to a participant's educational major or degree focus in relation to their artistic preference. This study attempts to see if there is an impact on one's artistic preference in relation to the participant's major or degree focus.

1.10 *Hypothesis and Support From Other Sources*

Many significant results have been found relating to the relationship between the Big Five Personality Inventory and preference for Representational and Non-representational or Abstract art. These findings are particularly relevant to the current study which will attempt to replicate, expand, and confirm some of these findings. The following hypothesis was tested and detailed results can be found in later sections of this paper.

1. Individuals who rate high on Openness will show a preference for art in general. They also will show a preference, specifically for Abstract art, which in this study is contained in the Non-representational art pieces (Fiest and Brady (2004).

2. Extraversion has been associated both negatively and positively with artistic preference in the past (Chamorrow-Premuzic 2004), and will likely display no significance.

3. Conscientiousness will show a relatively stable positive relationship with Representational art (Furnham & Walker, 2001).

4. Neuroticism will be positively correlated with Non-representational art, as it has been positively correlated with Abstract art in previous studies (Furnham & Walker, 2001).

5. Agreeableness will show a negative relationship with Non-representational art and a greater preference with Representational art (Furnham & Avison, 1997).

6. Females will have a higher preference for Non-representational art than will males (Furnham & Walker, 2000).

7. Females will also have a higher rating of general artistic preference than will males (Frumkin, 1963).

8. Females will score higher on the Neuroticism measure than will males (Costa & McCrae, 1992) .

1.11   *Current Study*

The current study focuses on Representational and Non-representational art forms, and uses the Big Five to explore any possible relationship between personality and artistic preference. Along with Representational and Non-representational art, general art preferences will also be examined. Since familiarity with art has been seen to play a prominent role in artistic preference, a self-rated aesthetic exposure scale will be completed by the participants. Demographic variables such as sex, age and major or degree has been collected and analyzed to see if there is any connection between these characteristics and artistic preference.

2. Methodology

2.1 *Measures & Stimuli*

As mentioned previously, the current study examines the relationship of Representational and Non-representational art preference in connection to personality. Twenty images were presented to the participants of which 10 were Representational and 10 Non-representational. Each time new participants viewed the images, they were randomized in a different order to minimize the chance of a sequence effect. The images selected were works created by significant artists and were limited to those of the 20th century. In the selection of art images there was an avoidance of works that might confound the study, such as works involving nudity or violence or religious pieces. The participant's task was to mark down their individual preference on a 5 Point Likert Scale (ranging from 1 ="strongly dislike" to 5 = "strongly like"), after viewing each image for 20 seconds. The "Big Five Personality Inventory" (BFI) was used to acquire their personality score. Specifically, the BFI used in this study was obtained from Berkley Personality Lab (John, O. P., 1991). The personality inventory contains 44 questions ranging across each of

the Big Five categories: Openness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and finally, Neuroticism. Each question was answered, once again based on a 5 Point Likert Scale (ranging from 1= "disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree").

2.2 Participants

There were 372 participants who completed the BFI survey portion and the visual art preference rating task. Those participants who did not finish both tasks administered were not used in data analysis. These participants were tested during various lectures at Nipissing University. The participants were from 1 of 7 majors: business, fine arts, physical education, psychology, other social sciences, humanities or science. Once the participants completed the BFI inventory and their raw scores for each Big Five personality trait were calculated, they were placed categorically according to their highest scored trait. Of these participants 18% were dominantly Extroverted, 42.6 % of the participants were categorized as dominantly Agreeable, 21.2 % as dominantly Conscientious, 12.9% as dominantly Neurotic and 5.1% as dominantly Openness. The model for the participants self-rated scale of aesthetic exposure or art education was 2, which refers to "no extensive amount of aesthetic exposure".

2.3 *Procedure*

Data collection for the current study took on average 20 minutes and remained constant over several data collection sessions. The same set of instructions was given to the participants in each session. Data collection consisted of two parts. First, participants filled out their demographic information which included: major, age, sex and year at university. Following this, they filled out the "Big Five Inventory" that was passed out prior to testing. The lights were dimmed and the participants viewed 20 pieces of art on a projector, each piece displayed for 20 seconds. After the two parts of data collection were completed the students began their lecture.

2.4 *Analysis*

Demographic variables were examined in terms of mean and standard deviation, to identify the basic parameters of the participants. To identify the differences between the males and females across various scales, independent measure t-tests were conducted, as well as a Holmes sequential Bonferonni to control for type one error. Following this, a Pearson's correlation coefficient was conducted to determine the potential relationships between personality and artistic preference.

3. Results & Analysis

3.1 Split Plot Analysis 25.2 Results

A Split Plot 25.2 design was used with two between-subject factors (sex and personality) and one within-subject factor (art preference). The art by personality interaction was significant, Wilk's λ = .958 $F_{(4,362)}$ = 3.975, $p < .004$, η^2=.042, as well as the between-subject interaction of personality and sex $F_{(4,362)}$ = 3.292, $p<.011$, η^2=.035. Finally, aesthetic exposure, a between-subject variable was significant by itself, $F_{(4,367)}$ = 10.614, $p < .001$, η^2=.104. Firstly, the simple main effects of the personality and art interaction will be analyzed.

Table 1. Cell Means Broken Down by Art Preference and Personality

	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness
Representational Art Preference	31.403	30.862	31.331	32.542	32.474
Non-representational Art Preference	28.433	25.899	24.569	27.708	30.159

For those with an Extroverted personality, art preference was significant, Wilk's λ = .841 $F_{(1,66)}$ = 12.432, $p < .001$, η^2=.159. In order to control for familywise error, with an original alpha level of 0.05, it has been adjusted according to the Holmes Sequential Bonferonni.

Adjusted alpha is set at .0125 (.05/4=.0125). Since art preference is a within-subject factor, a paired sample t-test was conducted to test the differences between Representational art and Non-representational art within Extroverted individuals. The pairwise comparisons revealed that in Extroverted individuals, Representational art (M=31.403) was preferred significantly more than Non-representational art (M=28.433), t(371)=-3.526, P<.001.

Similarly, art preference was significant in individuals high in Agreeable personality, Wilk's λ = .658 F(1,158) = 82.089, p < .001, η^2=.342. In order to control for familywise error, with an original alpha level of 0.05, it has been adjusted according to the Holmes Sequential Bonferonni. Adjusted alpha is set at .016 (.05/3=.016). Since art preference is a within-subject factor, a paired sample t-test was conducted to test the differences between Representational art and Non-representational art within Agreeable individuals. The pairwise comparisons revealed that in Agreeable individuals, Representational art (M=30.862) was preferred significantly more than Non-representational art (M=25.899), t(158)=-9.060, P<.001.

When looking at individuals high in Conscientiousness, art preference was significant, Wilk's λ = .558 F(1,78) = 61.818, p < .001, η^2=.442. In order to control for familywise error, with an original alpha level of 0.05, it has been adjusted according to the Holmes Sequential Bonferonni. Adjusted alpha is set at .025 (.05/2=.025). Since art preference is a within-subject factor, a paired sample t-test was conducted to test the differences between Representational art and Non-representational art within Conscientious individuals. The pairwise comparisons revealed that in Conscientious individuals, Representational art (M=31.331) was preferred significantly more than Non-representational art (M=24.569), t(78)=-7.862, P<.001.

For those with a Neurotic personality, art preference was significant, Wilk's λ = .708 F(1,47) = 19.371, p < .001, η^2=.292. In order to control for familywise error, the alpha has been adjusted according to the Holmes Sequential Bonferonni. Adjusted alpha is set at .05 (.05/1=.05). Since art preference is a within-subject factor, a paired sample t-test was conducted to test the differences between Representational art and non- Representational art within Neurotic individuals. The pairwise comparisons revealed that in Neurotic individuals, Representational art (M=32.542) was preferred significantly more than Non-representational art (M=27.708), t(47)=-

4.401, P<.001. When looking for differences in Representational and Non-representational art, there was no significant interaction within Openness.

One final, subsequent analysis regarding the within-subject main effects was conducted to see what differences appear in personality differences within each art preference. Using an ANOVA, a significant relationship was found in personality when looking at Non-representational art, $F_{(4,367)}=4.817$, $p<.001$. No Significant differences were found between personality types when looking specifically at Representational art.

To control for type one error, a Holmes Sequential Bonferonni was conducted, using the original alpha level of .05. Adjusted alpha for Extroversion is .025 (.05/2-.025), and the adjusted alpha for Conscientious is .05 (.05/1=.05). Extroverted (M=28.433) individuals were found to have significantly higher Non-representational art preferences than were Conscientious (M=24.569) individuals, p<.025. Also, Conscientious (M=24.569) individuals were found to have significantly lower scores than those who fall into the personality type of Openness (M=30.159), p<.043.

3.2 Analysis of between subject factors

Table 2. Cell Means Broken Down by Sex and Personality

	Extroversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness
Males	3.303	3.681	3.464	2.640	3.011
Females	3.339	3.993	3.616	3.072	2.994

As stated in the beginning of this analysis section, between-subject interaction of personality and sex $F_{(4,362)} = 3.292$, p<.011, $\eta^2=.035$ was significant. Using independent sample t-tests, these results will be further analyzed.

Levene's test for equality of variances was found to be insignificant across all personality types when looking at sex, thus homogeneity of variance assumption is satisfied and we can presume equal variances.

In order to control for familywise error, with an original alpha level of 0.05, it has been adjusted according to the two significant results found in this t-test. Adjusted alpha is set at .025 (.05/2=.025) by using the General Bonferonni. A significant difference was found when comparing males and females across the personality scale of Neuroticism. There were significantly more Neurotic females (M=3.072) than there were Neurotic males (M=2.640), p<.001). Also, there were significantly more Conscientious females (M=3.464) than there were Conscientious males (3.616), p<.019.

Aesthetic Exposure

A subsequent analysis was conducted on aesthetic exposure exploring pairwise comparisons. In overall art preference scores, it was found that those who had "extensive aesthetic exposure" preferred all art significantly more than those who were "neutral" (MD=3.797), "not much exposure" (MD=4.567), and "none or little exposure" (MD=6.108), all lying at the significance level of p<.001.

3.3 Correlation Analysis

Table 3. Cell Correlations for Significant Findings

	BFI Extroversion Raw Score	BFI Openness Raw Score
Amount of Aesthetic Exposure	.005 .928	.484** .000
Non-representational Art Preference	.096 .065	.346** .000
Representational Art Preference	.106* .040	.283** .000
Total Art Rating Preference	.121* .020	.382** .000
** Correlation significant at the .01 level * Correlation significant at the .05 level		

A Pearson's correlation matrix was conducted to examine the relationship between artistic preference (including aesthetic exposure, Representational art, Non-representation art and

total art rating), and the Big Five personality traits (including Extroversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness). This analysis indicates several significant linear positive relationships. There is a significant positive relationship between Extroversion and Representational art $r(372)=.106$, $p<0.040$ as well as Extroversion and total art rating $r(372)=.121$, $p<0.20$. When looking at the significant correlations with the Big Five personality trait Openness, there are several significant interactions; Openness and aesthetic exposure $r(372)=.484$, $p<0.001$, Representational art $r(372)=0.346$, $p<0.001$, Non-representational art $r(372)=0.283$, $p<0.001$ and total art rating $r(372)=0.382$, $p<0.001$.

Discussion of Results

4.0 Major Findings

This study examined the relationship between one's personality, using the Big Five personality inventory in relation to their preference for Representational and Non-representational art. Along with personality and artistic preference, the amount of aesthetic exposure of each individual, their gender and school concentration were also looked at to see the effects that these factors have in relation to their preference for Representational and Non-representational art. Overall results show that individuals whose dominant personality traits are Extroversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness or Neuroticism prefer Representational art significantly more than Non-representational art. There is no significant difference in the preference between Representational and Non-representational art when specifically looking at participants who possess a dominant personality trait of Openness. However, Openness displayed a significant positive relationship with art in general, Representational art and Non-representational art. The Openness scores of participants also displayed a positive relationship with "aesthetic exposure". Therefore, there were significantly more individuals who rated high

on the Openness scale, who fell into the categories "a lot of aesthetic exposure" and "extensive exposure". When looking specifically at Non-representational art preferences, those who fell under the dominant personality trait of Extroversion or Openness have significantly higher Non-representational art preferences than did those who are Conscientious. The relationship between sex and personality is evident, females scoring higher on both Neuroticism and Conscientiousness scales than did males. Finally, it was found that those who have "extensive exposure" prefer Representational and Non-representation art more than those who fall into the other categories of the "Aesthetic Exposure Scale".

These findings support the notion that there is indeed a significant and strong relationship between personality and artistic preference. The statistical support that has been examined in this study provides evidence of three key relationships. Firstly, there is a stable relationship shown between personality and artistic preference. Representational art is strongly preferred across all personality domains of the Big Five inventory, with the exception of Openness. These significant findings support the view that personality can predict a wide range of characteristics in an individual. Secondly, personality not only predicts differences in individual's art preferences, but personality differs significantly between males and females. As stated above, in this study females are significantly higher than males in Conscientiousness scores as well as Neuroticism scores. Finally, the amount of aesthetic exposure or art education pertaining specifically to visual art that one has received in their life impacts one's view and art preference. Although this needs to be examined further, "aesthetic exposure" is a crucial part of this study, and perhaps a critical predictor in artistic preference which will be discussed further at a later point in this paper.

4.1 Similar Findings From Previous Research

There are several similarities as well as differences from previous research presented in this study. In previous research, it has been found that individuals who rate high in Openness show a preference for art in general. Individuals high in Openness also show a preference for Abstract art (Fiest & Brady, 2004). In the current study, individuals who rate high in Openness were positively correlated with art in general, Non-representational art and Representational art. Although these individuals do not show a preference for Abstract art (which would be contained in Non-representational art in this study) over Representational art, they do indeed show a significant positive correlation with general art preference. Furnham and Walker (2001) found that Conscientiousness showed a relatively stable positive relationship with art preference that was classified as Representational art. This accurately depicts the findings analyzed in the Split-Plot Design in this study, where it was found that when individuals are dominant in Conscientiousness, they prefer Representational art significantly more than Non-Representational art. While examining the same relationship of personality and artistic preference, Furnham and Avison (1997) found that Agreeableness showed a negative relationship with Non-representational art and a greater preference for Representational art. Although there are no significant negative correlations with Non-representational art when looking at Agreeableness in this present study, it shows that individuals high on Agreeableness prefer Representational art significantly more than Non-representational art. Finally, Costa and McCrae (1992) found that females scored higher than males in Neuroticism when looking at the results of their Big Five personality factors. Similar findings are seen in this study, where females score higher than males in not only the Neuroticism measure, but also females scored significantly higher on the Conscientiousness measure.

4.2 Different Findings From Previous Research

Along with several similarities to previous research, there are variations from previous research presented in this study. Chamorrow-Premuzic and Furnham (2004) explained that Extroversion has been associated both negatively and positively with artistic preference in previous studies. However, there is a stable significant difference between Representation art and Non-representational art shown in this study. Findings reveal that when high in Extroversion, one will likely prefer Representational art over Non-representation art. Furnham and Walker (2001) found Neuroticism to be positively correlated with Abstract and Pop art in their study. In the current study, there is no significant correlation between Neuroticism and Non-Representational art, and in fact those who scored high in Neuroticism significantly prefer Representational art more than Non-representational art. This difference can be explained in the categorizing of the art images. In Furnham and Walker (2001), they examined Representational art, Abstract art and Pop art. In the current study, "pop art" would be categorized under "Representational art". Since there is a significant relationship between pop art preference and Neuroticism in the previous study, it could explain the link between Neuroticism and Representational art preference in the current study. In past comparisons of males and females while looking at artistic preferences, females had higher preferences for Non-representational art than did males (Furnham & Walker, 2000). Also, females tend to have higher ratings of art preferences in general than do males (Frumkin, 1963). Although there are differences in personality between males and females, there are no differences pertaining specifically to art preferences in this study. This could be due to unequal sample sizes, since 33.3% of participants were male, while 66.6% of participants were female. If sample sizes between males and females had been similar, it is likely that there may have been differences in artistic preference as seen in the past.

4.3 Implications for the "Aesthetic Exposure" Scale

The Aesthetic Exposure Scale was implemented in this study to examine the effect of how one's exposure to art, art education and/or art experience impacts an individual's preference for Representational and Non-representational art. In the results, we see that there is a significant difference between "extensive exposure" and "neutral", "not a lot of exposure" and "no exposure", with those falling into the category of "extensive exposure" preferring all art significantly more than those in the other categories. The reason this scale was such an important part of this study was to see if the effects of aesthetic exposure can predict preference as much as, or even more than personality. It was found that personality has a relationship with aesthetic exposure, as we see in the correlation portion of the results. Those who rated themselves as "extensive exposure" in the aesthetic exposure scale are high in the Openness category of the Big Five personality inventory.

Personality and Artistic Preference

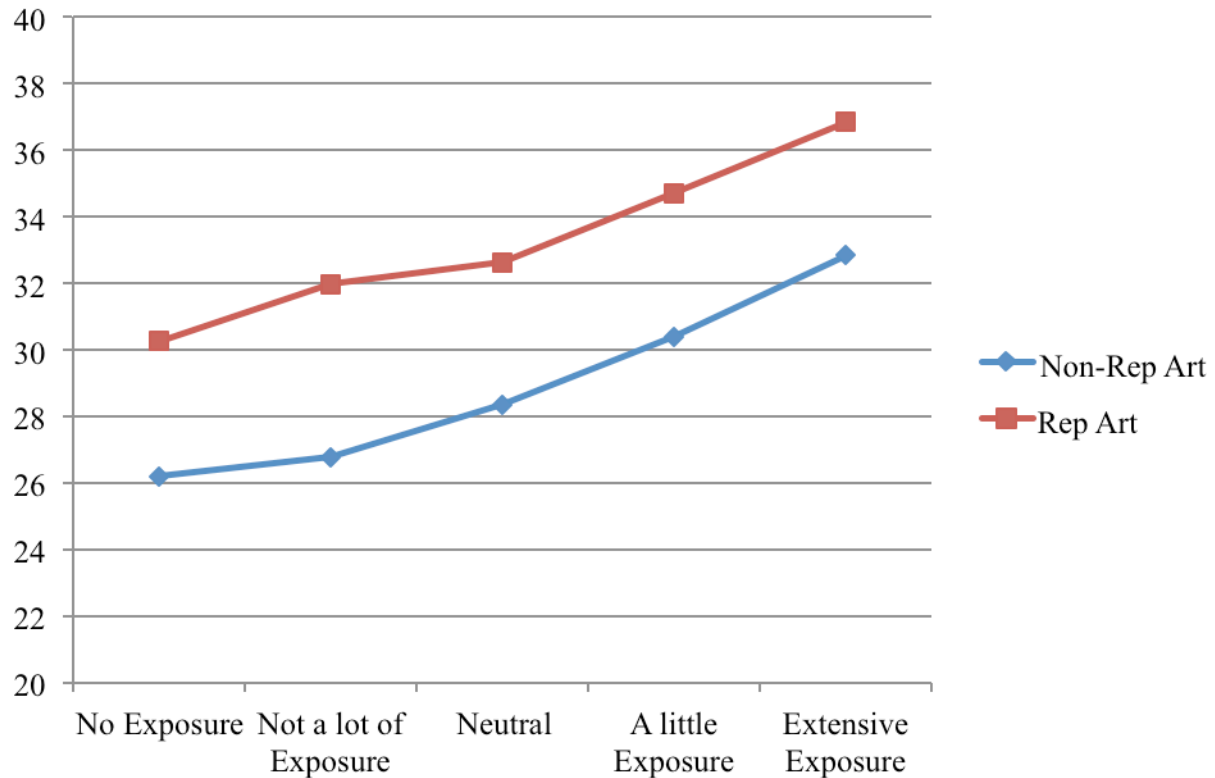Chart 1. Line Plot Displaying Means for Aesthetic Exposure Art

Chart 1 displays participants' aesthetic exposure score and their corresponding preference for Representational and Non-representational art. It is seen that as an individual has more aesthetic exposure, their art scores increase for both types of art viewed. This is an example of the mere exposure effect. When one receives more exposure to a certain stimuli, liking for that specific stimuli increases as well. In this study, only 7.2% of the participants categorized themselves as "extensive exposure". With such a small sample number of aesthetically exposed individuals, we still see an obvious effect of aesthetic exposure and artistic preference scores increasing. It is interesting to note however, that Representational art is still preferred more within those who are aesthetically exposed.

4.4 Limitations and Future Research

Since this experiment was conducted during lectures at Nipissing University, there are clear limitations present pertaining to participants of this experiment. The age of the participants were on average 20 years of age, due to the young adult population of the university. As well as age, cultural background was likely not diverse. In total, 5.1% of participant's concentration at Nipissing University was categorized as fine arts, which could explain the low percentage of participants with extensive exposure on the Aesthetic Exposure Scale in this study. A final potential limitation to this study would be the inherent subjectivity to selecting only ten Representational and ten Non-representation pieces of art. It is difficult to define a typical demonstration of Representational and Non-representational art. It would be beneficial to use a larger number of samples from each artistic genre.

Future research would likely benefit from a larger sample of aesthetically exposed individuals, and allow for more statistical analyses conducted on these variables. In order to closely understand the impact of aesthetic exposure, a larger sample of aesthetically exposed individuals would be beneficial. Finally, although this study attempted to gather as much data from a diverse group of students by collecting data in multidiscipline lectures, a larger range of disciplines could assist in supporting a diverse sample of participants.

4.5 Conclusion

This study illustrated the importance of defining personality, and the implications we can draw regarding the impact that personality has on many facets of our daily lives. Personality can be seen as a predictor of a variety of interests, and as shown in this study there is a strong relationship between personality and artistic interest. Art is often seen as ambiguous and difficult to categorize, which could explain differences seen in many studies regarding the relationship

between personality and artistic preference. Identifying strict guidelines for certain genres of art could be helpful in strictly examining this relationship. Regardless, there lies a clear relationship between personality and artistic preference. However, further research is needed to understand how aesthetic exposure impacts artistic preference, and why certain personality traits seem to facilitate the urge for aesthetic exposure.

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