nature portfolio

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Reporting Summary

Nature Portfolio wishes to improve the reproducibility of the work that we publish. This form provides structure for consistency and transparency in reporting. For further information on Nature Portfolio policies, see our Editorial Policies and the Editorial Policy Checklist.

Statistics

For all statistical analyses, confirm that the following items are present in the figure legend, table legend, main text, or Methods section.

n/a	Confirmed	
☐	☒	The exact sample size (*n*) for each experimental group/condition, given as a discrete number and unit of measurement
☐	☒	A statement on whether measurements were taken from distinct samples or whether the same sample was measured repeatedly
☐	☒	The statistical test(s) used AND whether they are one- or two-sided *Only common tests should be described solely by name; describe more complex techniques in the Methods section.*
☐	☒	A description of all covariates tested
☒	☐	A description of any assumptions or corrections, such as tests of normality and adjustment for multiple comparisons
☐	☒	A full description of the statistical parameters including central tendency (e.g. means) or other basic estimates (e.g. regression coefficient) AND variation (e.g. standard deviation) or associated estimates of uncertainty (e.g. confidence intervals)
☒	☐	For null hypothesis testing, the test statistic (e.g. *F*, *t*, *r*) with confidence intervals, effect sizes, degrees of freedom and *P* value noted *Give P values as exact values whenever suitable.*
☒	☐	For Bayesian analysis, information on the choice of priors and Markov chain Monte Carlo settings
☒	☐	For hierarchical and complex designs, identification of the appropriate level for tests and full reporting of outcomes
☐	☒	Estimates of effect sizes (e.g. Cohen's *d*, Pearson's *r*), indicating how they were calculated

Our web collection on statistics for biologists contains articles on many of the points above.

Software and code

Policy information about availability of computer code

Data collection	We subcontracted Qualtrics for data collection to obtain nationally representative samples for each of the four countries. Qualtrics' software was used for programming and execution of the survey.
Data analysis	The data analysis was conducted using R (version 1.4.1103).

For manuscripts utilizing custom algorithms or software that are central to the research but not yet described in published literature, software must be made available to editors and reviewers. We strongly encourage code deposition in a community repository (e.g. GitHub). See the Nature Portfolio guidelines for submitting code & software for further information.

Data

Policy information about availability of data

All manuscripts must include a data availability statement. This statement should provide the following information, where applicable:

- Accession codes, unique identifiers, or web links for publicly available datasets
- A description of any restrictions on data availability
- For clinical datasets or third party data, please ensure that the statement adheres to our policy

The dataset analyzed in the present study is not publically available due to data protection policies specified by the funding projects. The dataset is available from the corresponding author upon request.

Field-specific reporting

Please select the one below that is the best fit for your research. If you are not sure, read the appropriate sections before making your selection.

☐ Life sciences ☒ Behavioural & social sciences ☐ Ecological, evolutionary & environmental sciences

For a reference copy of the document with all sections, see nature.com/documents/nr-reporting-summary-flat.pdf

Behavioural & social sciences study design

All studies must disclose on these points even when the disclosure is negative.

Study description	We assessed self-reported clothing purchasing and psychological factors using an online cross-sectional survey conducted in Germany, Poland, Sweden, and the United States. The survey was administered by the marketing research company Qualtrics. Qualtrics recruited adult participants (aged 18-65) from each of the four countries based on age, sex, education, and region with the aim of achieving representativeness, although full representativeness was not achieved. The survey consisted of two parts presented at two to four-week intervals between October 2016 and January 2017, and participants received an incentive for participation (e.g., gift cards). The questionnaire was first developed in English and then translated into German, Polish, and Swedish by ISO17100 certified translators.
Research sample	Recruitment for the two-part survey was quota-based, with the aim of obtaining a representative samples from Germany, Poland, Sweden, and the United States. We only included participants taking both survey parts, which meant that full representativeness was not achieved due a self-selection in who completed both survey parts. This resulted in N = 4,591 of which 186 participants were removed for the present study because they reported never purchasing clothing for themselves. The final sample consisted of 4,405 participants (Mage = 42.23, SDage = 13.53; 56.7% female) with the following country breakdown: Germany (n = 1,140), Poland (n = 1,090), Sweden (n = 1,125), and the United States (n = 1,050).
Sampling strategy	For the survey, sample sizes were determined based on a trade-off between the costs of obtaining responses and having sufficient observations in each of the quotation groups (e.g., in each age, sex, education, and region combination cell).
Data collection	We subcontracted Qualtrics for data collection. They administered the online survey via their software and recruited participants through their national panels. Qualtrics is well-known for ensuring high quality and ethical research practices in data collection. The survey was designed by researchers who at the time worked at Copenhagen Business School, which was conveyed to participants. The survey did not include any experimental conditions and the research questions were blind to participants.
Timing	The survey consisted of two parts presented at two to four-week intervals between October 2016 and January 2017.
Data exclusions	The survey employed numerous quality measures to maximize data quality and to screen out careless responses, including instruction-based attention filters ("Please select strongly agree"), bogus items ("I always sleep less than one hour per night"), response pattern indicators (e.g., straight-lining), time filters, and self-reported data quality checks (e.g., "I gave this study enough attention"). Participants failing the instruction-based attention filters were eliminated automatically while those failing multiple quality checks were replaced. For the present analysis, 186 participants were removed because they reported never purchasing clothing for themselves.
Non-participation	There is no such information available for the survey.
Randomization	The study did not include any experimental conditions.

Reporting for specific materials, systems and methods

We require information from authors about some types of materials, experimental systems and methods used in many studies. Here, indicate whether each material, system or method listed is relevant to your study. If you are not sure if a list item applies to your research, read the appropriate section before selecting a response.

Materials & experimental systems

n/a	Involved in the study
☒	☐ Antibodies
☒	☐ Eukaryotic cell lines
☒	☐ Palaeontology and archaeology
☒	☐ Animals and other organisms
☐	☒ Human research participants
☒	☐ Clinical data
☒	☐ Dual use research of concern

Methods

n/a	Involved in the study
☒	☐ ChIP-seq
☒	☐ Flow cytometry
☒	☐ MRI-based neuroimaging

Human research participants

Policy information about studies involving human research participants

Population characteristics	See above and Supplementary Table 1.
Recruitment	Qualtrics contacted members of their online panel via e-mail wherein they were asked to participate in a two-part survey. The e-mail contained a link to the online survey. Qualtrics then monitored completed responses to ensure that the pre-specified quotas were met in each the four countries. These quotas were met for the first survey part. But because survey participation was voluntary, participants were free not to complete the second part of the survey, resulting in a final sample that did not completely meet the pre-specified quotas. The data collection process may consequently have been subject to a self-selection bias in who completed both survey parts. However, in an effort to preemptively minimize selection effects, we offered participants financial incentives for completing both survey parts in line with best practice for survey-based research.
Ethics oversight	No ethics approval was obtained for the present study as this was not common practice nor institutionally available at Copenhagen Business School at the time of data collection. The study did, however, not pose any risks to the participants or include any form of deceipt, and an informed consent was obtained from all participants.

Note that full information on the approval of the study protocol must also be provided in the manuscript.