

Exploratory Excitability and Sensation Seeking as Moderating Factors on the Mere Exposure Effect

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The *mere exposure effect* (Zajonc, 1968) proposes that repeated exposure to a stimulus enhances one's attitude towards it. The present study examined the moderating effects of sensation seeking and exploratory excitability on the mere exposure effect. Eighty-five females were exposed to photographs of faces subliminally. Participants completed the *Sensation Seeking Scale* (SSS-V) and the *IPIP Variety-seeking questionnaires* and provided liking and recognition ratings for faces previously viewed 0, 1, 2, 5, 10, or 25 times. Liking ratings did not vary as a function of exposure frequency. Sensation seeking failed to moderate the effect of exposure on liking for facial stimuli. Exploratory excitability appeared to interact with frequency of exposure, such that higher variety-seeking was associated with an increased liking for novel faces and a decreased liking for repeatedly exposed faces but the significance of this finding was questionable. Interpretation of these results, methodological limitations and directions for future research are discussed.

Keywords: personality, exploratory excitability, sensation seeking, mere exposure effect

Efek paparan sederhana (Zajonc, 1968) mengusulkan bahwa paparan berulang pada suatu stimulus meningkatkan sikap seseorang ke arah paparan. Penelitian ini meneliti efek kendali dari pencarian sensasi dan rangsangan eksplorasi pada efek paparan sederhana. Delapan puluh lima perempuan ditunjukkan foto-foto wajah secara terselubung. Peserta menyelesaikan *Sensation Seeking Scale* (SSS-V) dan kuesioner *IPIP variety-seeking* dan memberikan tingkat pengakuan dan keinginan untuk foto-foto wajah yang dilihat sebelumnya sebanyak 0, 1, 2, 5, 10, atau 25 kali. Tingkat menyukai tidak bervariasi dalam fungsi dari tingkat paparan. Mencari sensasi gagal mengendalikan pengaruh paparan terhadap keinginan untuk rangsangan wajah. Rangsangan eksplorasi terlihat berinteraksi dengan frekuensi paparan, seperti dalam hal ragam keinginan yang lebih tinggi dikaitkan dengan meningkatnya keinginan menyukai wajah yang baru dan menurun menyukai paparan wajah yang berulang, tetapi kemaknaan dari temuan masih dipertanyakan. Interpretasi dari hasil, keterbatasan metodologi dan arah untuk penelitian lanjutan dibahas dalam studi ini.

Kata kunci: kepribadian, rangsangan eksplorasi, pencarian sensasi, efek paparan sederhana

Repeated exposure to a stimulus enhances one's attitude towards the stimulus. Further exposure to the stimulus strengthens the exposure effect but only up to a saturation point, where additional exposures then causes decreases in positive affect and increases in negative affect. This is known as the mere exposure effect (Zajonc, 1968). Previous studies have focused on how methodological variables affect the strength of the exposure effect and

have largely ignored the influence of subject variables (Bornstein, 1989; Harmon-Jones & Allen, 2001). This study sought to address this gap by investigating the effects of personality differences on the mere exposure effect. Knowledge in this area could lead to practical implications in everyday life, such as explaining differences in susceptibility to advertising, differing attitudes towards ethnic minorities, and the development of interpersonal relationships.

The mere exposure effect postulates that initial exposure to a stimulus increases one's positive affect towards the stimulus, even in the absence of reinforcement (Zajonc, 1968). Further exposure to the stimulus strengthens the

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