

## The Effects of Tattoo Type and Attractiveness on Trustworthiness and Employment Suitability

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This study aimed to look at the different perceptions people make regarding characteristics about individuals with visible tattoos and also whether or not attractive people with these tattoos have an advantage over unattractive people with similar tattoos. This study is important because the stigma of tattoos can have negative implications for people in real life such as looking for jobs or in an academic setting due to stereotypes. This study differs from previous research because it combines the effects of perception formation, tattoo styles, and attractiveness whereas previous research has looked at these variables separately. The independent variable was tattoo style (positive tattoos, negative tattoos, or no tattoo). There was two positive tattoo images (flower and butterfly) and two negative tattoo images (dagger and gun). The dependent variables measured were intelligence, job suitability/hireability, trustworthiness/honesty, and conscientiousness. The materials used included a job description for an educational assistant, a resume for the person applying, a photograph of the candidate, a main questionnaire, and personal questionnaire. The results showed no significant effect of tattoo style on any of the dependent variables for the three conditions. There was a slight favour for positive tattoo and no tattoo conditions when extending a job offer to the candidate and rating the candidate positively compared to the negative tattoo group, but this relationship was not significant. A supplemental analysis was also done to assess the relationship between perceived attractiveness and each of the dependent variables. The results showed a significant relationship between perceived attractiveness of the candidate and honesty, trustworthiness, comfortability, job suitability, hireability, and conscientiousness. There was no significant relationship between perceived attractiveness and perceived intelligence. There was also a significant relationship between perceived attractiveness and rating the applicant positively, but no significant relationship between perceived attractiveness and extending a job offer. Note that all of the models were rated similarity on attractiveness, each participant read the same job advertisement, and each participant read the same resume. Manipulation checks show no significant relationship between tattoo style and noticing the tattoo on the job applicant, but there was a significant relationship between tattoo style and how the participant interpreted this tattoo. Therefore, the participants were aware of the tattoo (or no tattoo), but participants in the negative tattoo condition were more likely to label the negative tattoo as a positive image (resulting in an error for this manipulation check). Although there was no significant effect of tattoo type on the dependent variables, we can not conclude that tattoo styles do not influence job suitability; Job suitability for each candidate should have been the same considering that each participant received the same job description and resume. More research would need to be done with a larger sample size. Future research should use a larger sample size, a more diverse population, and a pilot study to determine what tattoos would be considered negative.