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Social Media and Dressing Pattern Among Female Undergraduate Students in the University of Ilorin

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Abstract

This study investigated the impact of social media on dressing patterns of female undergraduate students at the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. A structured questionnaire comprising a 4-point scale was the instrument used for data collection. A population of 16,391 female undergraduates was obtained from the university. Sample size of 300 female undergraduate students was randomly selected for the study using Multi-stage and simple random sampling but only 280 subjects filled and returned their questionnaires. The data collected were statistically analysed using simple percentages. The findings of the study among others revealed that the female undergraduate students dressing patterns are greatly influenced by imitation of celebrities, western dress styles, peer influence, mass media and fashion in vogue. The findings of the study also showed, among others, that female students were exposed to rape/sexual harassments; the image of such students/family were perceived as tarnished; they are also addressed as prostitutes and they are related with poor academic performance. The study recommends, among others, that parents, school authorities, lecturers, media houses, etc, should make both individual and joint effort to curb indecent dressing in the institutions of higher learning in Nigeria.

Keywords: Celebrities, Dressing pattern, Female undergraduates, Social media, Tertiary institutions

Introduction

Historically, fashion plays a significant role and has greatly influenced the “fabrics” of societies all over the world. What people wear often depicts the social life of the people across the world (Anyakoha, Eluwa, 2008). The quest to cover the nakedness of mankind plays a significant role in defining the original purpose and intent of dressing. Thus, dressing is not just for clothing purposes but for adornments (Schall & Appiah., 2016). Clothing can be described as something worn on the body and this includes materials such as garments, shoes, jewellery, cosmetics, and others. It is also a form of cultural expression that depicts every aspect of human life (Kiran, Malik, Riaz, 2010). The human dress is a kind of “symbolic” way of communication and is usually the basis on which immediate impressions are formed (Uwakwe, 2010). The style of clothing that people wear, the fabrics, designs and colours can speak largely, the way an individual thinks and lives (Uwakwe, 2010). Ibrahim (2013) opined that the display of fashion

designer's products via social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp etc. often inspire and influence changes in the clothing of the people.

Similarly, clothing choice and practices are an important human activity that constitutes the selection, acquisition and utilization of clothes. These activities are affected by social reasons, values, goals and self-concept (Wole, Ibrahim, Shehu, John, et al, 2001). The way we dress is a significant way of revealing our culture and its differences in other societies. Unfortunately, the value of dressing and its purposes have been defeated by the current generation of youths in Nigeria (Omede, 2011). Over the years, there have been trends at which fashion and dressing have changed and evolved so to say. There is a new trend in dressing among young ladies which is in vogue at the moment, especially among students of the tertiary institution. This involves dressing in provocative or see-through outfits that expose the inner parts of the female body such as bare breast, tummy or the waistline among others (Azu, 2005). Currently, dressing to expose the sacred part of the body has become a modern dressing style (Mohammed, 2015). Culture, foreign influence, institutions, peer pressure and the media are the major factors, which influence the recent trend of dressing (Mohammed, *et al.*, 2015).

In Nigeria, for example, young girls, particularly students of tertiary institutions wish to be classy. Thus, they purchase any dress that is in vogue, these they get through social media and the social personalities they choose as role models, (Chukwudi & Gbakorun, 2011). On social media, celebrities are well-known personalities who are famous because of their achievements. According to Schlecht (2003), Celebrities are individuals who are recognized publicly by a great number of people. This recognition and achievements are usually known both locally and internationally. These celebrities and their display of fashion statements influence the dress culture of youth and the fashion industry, which is evident in specific fashion replications (La Ferla, 2009). Local and international celebrities, with a mode of dressing, which is usually that of Western wears often take pictures, record videos and published them on social media. The youth observe the celebrities closely and imitate every aspect of their social life, particularly dressing style. The youth pay attention to their advice even more than their parents, teachers and well-wishers (Norton, 2006).

Celebrities seen on television and other relevant social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook are all powerful tools for communicating dressing and clothing styles to students (Kiran, Malik, Riaz, 2010). The act of copying celebrity's dressing style evolving among students often leads to over-exposure of the inner body and this has implications such as rape, sexual harassment, being tagged as prostitutes, molestation and poor academic performance and other vices (Folagbade, 2009). The causes of indecent dressing among female students can be traced to several forces such as fashion, value system, civilization and infiltration of Western dresses, the effect of the media, peer pressure, family orientation and poor parentage (Omede & Odiba, 2000).

Dress to kill has become a common phenomenon in the school of higher learning as students strive to look sexy or classy, forgetting that they ought to look responsible (Antonia and Bridget, 2015). Most Nigerian girls have dropped their traditional dressing styles for foreign styles as their dress patterns are most times against African culture (Omede, 2010). This form of dressing is provocative, according to Olori, (2003). Improper and unacceptable dress patterns are morally offensive and reveal the high rate of moral decadence in the society. Oji (2007) noted that the use of internet unscrupulously for anti-social activities other than academic activities has become a growing concern in Nigerian institutions. Universities in Nigeria are seriously struggling with incessant indecent dressing particularly among female students (Obilo and Okugo 2013). Many parents and institutions are worried about the students' habits on Facebook and other social media sites because they believe that the students now hardly have time for their studies and other responsibilities.

It is on this premise that this research intends to examine the influence of social media on dressing patterns among female undergraduate students at the University of Ilorin. Studies have been conducted on related issues; nonetheless, not much empirical work has yet addressed the issue thoroughly.

Theoretical Framework

The theory adopted for this study is the Social Learning Theory which was developed by Albert Bandura postulates that behaviour is a learning process. The theory posits that if humans were motivated to learn a particular behaviour, that particular behaviour would be learned through

clear observations. By imitating these observed actions, the individual observer would solidify that learned action and be rewarded with positive reinforcement (Miller & Dollard, 1941). The proposition of social learning was expanded upon and theorized by Albert Bandura from 1962 to the present. This theory posits that people learn from one another through observation, imitation and modelling. According to Bandura (1977), people learn through observing others' behaviour and attitudes and the outcomes form an idea of how new behaviours are performed and on later occasions, this coded information serves as a guide for action. Social learning theory explains human behaviour in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioural and environmental influences.

It is a theory of learning and social behaviour which proposes that new behaviours can be acquired by observing and imitating others. Social learning theory also known as social cognitive theory is the idea that people learn by watching what others do and human thought processes are central to understanding personality. In applying the social learning perspective to dressing patterns, indecent dressing is learned through role models, celebrities' dressing styles, and peer influence (Mihalic & Elliot cited in Igwe, 2013). In relating social learning theory to indecent dressing among female undergraduates, one can rightly say that these female adolescents learn the dress pattern from peers and social media celebrities by observing, imitating and modelling. They learn these Western values of dressing from the internet, television, magazine and newspaper.

Methodology

The research study made use of a descriptive survey design using quantitative techniques of data collection to examine social media and dressing patterns of female undergraduate students of the University of Ilorin. The population of the study is made up of all the female undergraduate students from all the 15 faculties that make up the University of Ilorin. The population of female undergraduates in this institution is about 16,391. To get a truly representative sample, a convenient sampling technique was first used to select the University of Ilorin to participate in the study; a multi-stage sampling technique was used in dividing the institution into faculties and stages. A simple random sampling technique was further used to select the sample population from each faculty where data was elicited for the study. Participants selected were female undergraduates from all the departments under each of fifteen faculties making up the institution.

A total of twenty participants (female students) were drawn from each faculty making it three hundred respondents drawn from fifteen faculties which made up the sample size for the study. Although the population of female undergraduate students in each faculty is unequal for equal representation, the same sample of 20 female students from each faculty was selected. Students who were present at the time of this research were sampled. The research instrument was the structured questionnaire designed to capture all relevant information using a variety of question types. The questionnaire items were constructed based on the information gathered from the review of related literature. It contained twenty-eight (28) questions and was validated by experts in related fields. The test-and-retest method was used to test for the reliability of instruments.

A total of 300 copies of the questionnaires were distributed by hand to the participants who made up the sample by the researcher and three research assistants. After thorough checking for omissions and other inconsistencies, out of the three hundred questionnaires taken to the field, fourteen were not returned while six were not appropriately filled.

A total of two hundred and eighty (280) questionnaires duly completed were, therefore, analysed using descriptive statistical tools which are: frequency tables and percentages. The study adopted a Likert modified four-point response scale. The copies of the questionnaire were coded and analysed using the simple descriptive statistical analysis.

This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. A consent form that was explained to all participants was signed to allow them to voluntarily participate in this study. Participants were assured that their names and identities would not be stated in this paper to ensure confidentiality and maintain their anonymity.

Results

This section presents the analysis of the gathered data and the discussion of major findings. Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents by age, marital status and academic level of the students (respondents). On the issue of age, the table indicates that 52.15% (146) of the respondents are between the ages of 16-20, 34.64% (97) of the respondents are between the ages of 21-25, 9.64% (27) of the respondents are between the ages of 26-30, while 3.57% (10) of the respondents are between the ages of 31-35.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variables	Frequencies	Percentage (%)
Age		
16-20	146	52.15%
21-25	97	34.64%
26-30	27	9.64%
31-35	10	3.57%
Total	280	100.0%
Marital Status		
Single	263	93.93%
Married	17	6.07%
Total	280	100%
Level		
100	60	21.4%
200	89	31.8%
300	68	24.3%
400	63	22.5%
Total	280	100.0

(Source: field survey, 2019)

This figure indicated that majority of the respondents are between the ages of 16-20. This shows that majority of the respondents is still young. On marital status, the table indicates that 93.93% (263) of the respondents are single while 6.07% (13) of the respondents are married. This showed that almost all respondents were single. This is highly expected given the fact that the population of this study was students. On the issue of the academic level of respondents, the table shows that, out of the 280 students that participated in the study, 60 (21.4%) were in 100 level, 89 (31.8%) were in 200 level, 68 (24.3%) were in 300 level, and 63 (22.5%) were in 400 level. This revealed that the respondents were fairly distributed across levels.

From the table above, 68.9% (193) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that they prefer to dress in the latest fashion while 31.1% (87) of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed that they prefer to dress in latest fashion. This shows that majority of the respondents prefer to dress in the latest fashion introduced by the social media. 93.6 % (262) of the respondents agreed that most students nowadays dress to current trends.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents on Female Dressing Pattern in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria

Do you prefer to dress in the latest fashion observed from social media?	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Agree	44	15.7
Agree	149	53.2
Disagree	64	22.9
Strongly Disagree	23	8.2
Total	280	100.0
Most students of nowadays dress to current trends	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Agree	135	48.2
Agree	127	45.4
Disagree	14	5.0
Strongly Disagree	4	1.4
Total	280	100.0
The popular form of dressing among students is now in tandem with international standard	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Agree	98	35.0
Agree	144	51.4
Disagree	28	10.0
Strongly Disagree	10	3.6
Total	280	100.0
Students do dress by civilisation	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Agree	102	36.4
Agree	134	47.9
Disagree	27	9.6
Strongly Disagree	17	6.1
Total	280	100.0
Female students often dress against dress code rules in the university	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Agree	67	23.9
Agree	138	49.3
Disagree	53	18.9
Strongly Disagree	22	7.9
Total	280	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2019

On whether the popular form of dressing among students is now in tandem with international standard, only 13.6% (38) disagreed and 86.4% (142) agreed to the idea of international standard. This result shows that the popular form of dressing has been fuelled by Western culture. On the issue of civilization, 84.3% (236) of the respondents supported that students do dress by civilisation while 15.7% (44) disagreed that students do dress by civilisation. From the results, students do dress by civilization. 73.2% (205) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that female undergraduate students now dress against the school rules and regulation

while 26.89% (75) of the respondents disagreed that female students dress against the school regulations. The results revealed that there is a high-level deviation from the dress code of the University of Ilorin.

Table 3: Factor Responsible for Indecent Dressing Among Female Undergraduate Students

Do you believe that social media is a great factor to student's indecent dressing?	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Agree	128	45.7
Agree	110	39.3
Disagree	30	10.7
Strongly Disagree	12	4.3
Total	280	100.0
Does your wardrobe change as new dress appears on social media?	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Agree	104	37.1
Agree	125	44.6
Disagree	42	15.0
Strongly Disagree	9	3.3
Total	280	100.0
TVs, Magazines, Posters also contribute to indecent dressing	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Agree	117	41.8
Agree	116	41.4
Disagree	34	12.1
Strongly Disagree	13	4.7
Total	280	100.0
Do Peer pressure, Poor parenting, and others also contribute to indecent dressing pattern?	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Agree	140	50.0
Agree	109	38.9
Disagree	25	8.9
Strongly Disagree	6	2.1
Total	280	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2019

The table above shows that 85% (238) of the total respondents support that social media is a great factor to students' indecent dressing in University of Ilorin. On whether wardrobe changes as new dresses appear on social, 81.7% (229) of the respondents strongly agreed and agree that social media influences the change in their wardrobe while 18.3% (51) disagreed. This shows that social media influences the choice of clothes of most female students in the university. On what type of social media contributes to indecent dressing among students, 83.2% (233) acknowledged that TVs, Magazines, Posters, Internet and the social media like Facebook, Twitter contribute much to indecent dressing while 16.8% (47) of the respondents disagreed that the types of social media did not contribute to indecent dressing. 88.9 (249) agreed that peer

pressure, poor parenting, wrong use of the internet, fading value contributes much to indecent dressing pattern while 11% (31) disagreed that peer pressure, poor parenting, wrong use of the internet, fading value contribute much to indecent dressing.

Table 4: Implications of indecent dressing among female students

Indecent dressing often leads to rape, sexual harassment or molestation	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Agree	91	32.5
Agree	113	40.4
Disagree	53	18.9
Strongly Disagree	23	8.2
Total	280	100.0
Students who dress indecently are mostly seen as prostitutes	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Agree	176	62.9
Agree	78	27.9
Disagree	26	9.2
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	280	100.0
Indecent dressing can tarnish the image of the student and their family	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Agree	64	22.9
Agree	140	50.0
Disagree	62	22.1
Strongly Disagree	14	5.0
Total	280	100.0
Indiscriminate use of social media often leads to poor academic performance	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Agree	153	54.7
Agree	95	33.9
Disagree	16	5.7
Strongly Disagree	16	5.7
Total	280	100.0
Indecent dressing can lead to punishment and suspension	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Agree	106	37.9
Agree	115	41.1
Disagree	39	13.9
Strongly Disagree	20	7.1
Total	280	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2019

The table above shows that 72.9% (204) of the total respondents supported the idea that indecent dressing often leads to rape, sexual harassment and sexual molestation while 27.1% (76) strongly disagreed and disagreed that indecent dressing leads to sexual molestation. This implies that the majority of female students believe that indecent dressing can lead to sexual harassment. 90.8(254) supported the idea that female students who dress indecently are often seen as prostitutes while 9.2 (36) rejected the notion. On the image of the student and their families,

77.9% (204) strongly agreed and agreed that indecent dressing can tarnish the student image and that of their families while 27.1% (76) declined the notion. 88.6% (248) submitted that indecent dressing often leads to poor academic performance while 11.4% (32) strongly disagreed and disagreed with the idea. On the issue of punishment, 79% (221) believed that indecent dressing could attract school punishment while 21% (59) strongly disagreed and disagreed that indecent dressing can lead to punishment or suspension. From the table above, female students believe that indecent dressing can lead to sexual molestation, tarnished image, poor academic performance and even suspension from the school authority. Most female students have this belief and still dress indecently against the school rules and regulation.

Discussion of Findings

This study has established that social media influence the dressing pattern of female students at the University of Ilorin in a negative way. The findings revealed that the majority of the students emulate the Western style in their dressing pattern. It was also discovered that social media influenced the students' choice of dressing pattern in Nigeria. This is in line with Kiran (2002) who stated that people of many countries have abandoned their cultural dressing styles and adopted Western dress styles for everyday wear. This is manifested in the dressing pattern and styles these students adopt which is very embarrassing.

It is also noteworthy that this work further agrees with the view that factors such as social media, peer pressure, poor parenting and the wrong use of the internet are responsible for indecent dressing among female students of Nigerian universities. This can invariably establish that the social media have become one of the fastest means of communication in recent times due to the great level of (ICT) rapid development. This is in line with Olori (2003) who opined that the dressing pattern of female undergraduate students is determined by factors such as mass media, peer pressure, religion, and culture among others.

This has greatly influenced their indulgence into "Sexting" which promotes unethical sexual behaviours (Prather and Vandive, 2014). According to Wilcox (2012), the use of clothing ought to be based on needs such as physical need (protection), psychological needs (adornment and identification) and social needs (modesty and status). Female children are often left to themselves and they become rudderless because most parents have no time to check their children's wardrobes and the implication of this, is that, they can wear anything in the form of

dress (Omede and Omede, 2004). Peer pressure and poor parenting have also been implicated as some of the factors responsible for indecent dressing among female undergraduate students. This is in line with A.O. Obeta's (2010) earlier findings that some people tend to follow the change of fashion wrongly. She further enjoined that people should wear suitable dresses at all times and should stop the imitation of the Western style of dress. The mode of dressing pattern by students in tertiary institutions is a thing of concern, because of the alarming influence of celebrities' dressing patterns on youths; and this has become the apparent dress code for students on campuses today. The findings also revealed that the dressing pattern of female undergraduate students affect other students on the campus.

Unfortunately, because some the Western styles these female undergraduate students have adopted were not accepted by society, it is viewed as anti-African. In line with the findings above, Omede (2011) pointed out that the forms of dresses suggest that female students are craving for attention and in the process, become irresponsible. Indecent dressing among female students often leads to rape, sexual harassment, poor academic performance punishment and suspension from school. According to Nigerian Films.Com (Campus Dress Code..., 2009), when the parts of the body that are supposed to be closed are exposed, some students or men may be tempted and can employ all means including rape to get the students and have carnal knowledge of such student. Unprotected sexual intercourse may result and the victims may be exposed to all forms of venereal diseases, including HIV/Aids. These dressing patterns have so much tarnished the image of our society and have consequently, turned the society into a home for frustrated persons (Obeta & Uwah, 2015).

Conclusion

The study investigated the influence of social media on the dressing pattern of female undergraduate students in the University of Ilorin; the study examined the female dressing pattern, factors influencing indecent dressing pattern, and the implications of indecent dressing pattern among female undergraduates. The results indicated that imitation of Western celebrities' style, peer pressure, social media and poor parenting has a greater influence on the dressing patterns of female undergraduates. The dressing pattern of most female undergraduates in tertiary institutions is embarrassing and mostly unacceptable. Most Nigerian female students in higher institutions of learning often dress immodestly. Most female students are more interested

in putting on clothes that can easily seduce the opposite sex than to have good academic achievement. The recent dressing pattern of most ladies has implications such as sexual harassment, rape, and other venereal diseases that can be contracted through sexual intercourse; the trend has also resulted in students being addressed as a prostitute, unwanted pregnancies, poor academic performance, dented family image, punishment and suspension from school among others.

Recommendations

Based on the above findings and discussions, the following recommendations were made:

- There is need for undergraduate students to be encouraged to use social media platforms to promote decent dressing and academic excellence.
- The university authority should be actively involved in the control of dressing patterns of the female students within the school premises. The senate, the university council, student affairs, heads of departments and lecturers should re-orientate the students on good clothing practices to discourage using controversial, confused and uncultured clothing within the campus environment to avoid provocation, harassment, and distractions of all sorts.
- Students should practice good dress sense irrespective of fashion trends which can be achieved when they are conscious of their structures and dress to conceal their figure faults.
- Students should have a good relationship with each other irrespective of individual outfits and clothing should not be the basis of determining the social status of their fellow students.
- Celebrities should be encouraged to dress decently at all times and no matter their kind of programs they should know that they are role models and whatever they can be easily copied by the young ones.
- There should be moderation in the way celebrities dress.
- Good dress sense should also be motivated by the formation of campus brigade, this brigade or club is to stand against indecent dressing by sanitizing and promoting good moral values particularly, the modest African dress patterns.

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