

UNIJERPS
Unizik Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies Vol.4;
https://unijerps.org
2021 Impact Factor: 5.641; 2020 Impact Factor: 5.355.
January-June, 2021
Indexing and Impact Factor URL: http://sjifactor.com/passport.php?id=21363

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INDECENT DRESSING AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN NIGERIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING.

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Abstract
This paper explores the problems of indecent dressing that has pervaded among undergraduate students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Dress pattern that is common among students of higher institution of learning in Nigeria. The various forms that these dresses appears, reasons why these students dress indecently, use of the internet, fading values as well as demonic influence among others. The negative repercussions include rape, HIV/AID and other venereal diseases/infections as well as armed robbery, lying and poor academic performance and prostitutions. Indecent dressing is one of the major problems that is eating up our youths, both male and female undergraduate students. There has been public outcry among Muslim, Christians and traditional leaders, parents and scholars on the mode of dressing of young boys and girls in Nigeria societies especially in the tertiary institutions. These are fathers and mothers of tomorrow and the ones to whom the legacy of training and nurturing leaders of this country is to be leaved. Does it suggest the dearth of Nigeria culture and morality that is the symbol of Nigeria identity, continuity, security and unity? This paper discusses the meaning and types of indecent dressing, possible reasons why some undergraduate student dress indecently in Nigerian tertiary institutions and its effects and consequences among undergraduate students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Possible strategies to indecent dressing in Nigerian tertiary institutions were also discussed. It was recommended, among others, tertiary institutions should adopt dress codes for their students.

Keywords: Indecent dressing, peer group influence, fading value and possible strategies.

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Introduction

Recently, it has been observed that Nigerian tertiary institutions are battling with the wave of indecent dressing among male and female students. The reign of skimpy dresses on campus has turned many campuses to fashion runways. However, besides wearing short skirts, some male and female undergraduate students throw caution to the wind by displaying their boobs and earrings as a cheap means of getting attention. Dress to kill who is now a popular slogan in lecture halls with the intention of looking sexy or classy, forgetting that they ought to look responsible (Obilo & Okugo, 2013).

A dress is therefore said to be indecent when it has provocative or stimulating influence on almost all those that happen to view it on the user (Egwim (2010). Although, there are no universally acceptable ways of dressing, dresses are meant to serve some definable purposes, notwithstanding one's country or region. They are part of people's culture and they define their tribal or ethnic identity. Apart from dresses being a means for cultural identity, they are for ornamental or aesthetic purposes, for protection of the body against harsh weather conditions as well as for covering the intimate part of the body (Omede, 2011). These purposes are important especially as they form major aspects of a person's personality.

Indecent dressing has come to characterize the dress pattern of many students on the campuses of higher learning in Nigeria. Some undergraduate students in Nigerian tertiary institutions, especially the female students are almost going nude all in the name of fashion. They have invented a strange sub-culture of nudity in public places through their desperate attempts to be fashionable. Most campuses are drowning in morally offensive and sexually provocative dressing. One can hardly differentiate between some male and female undergraduate students and hard-core urban street thugs and prostitutes respectively.

The researcher noted that amorous indecent dressers are sexually seductive, but often avoid real intimacy. They simply play games by deceptively seducing their preys for economic purposes. The unprincipled indecent dressers on the other hand are unscrupulous, deceptive, arrogant and exploitative. In contrast to the others, the compensatory indecent dressers do so to cover up for their feelings of inferiority. They only try to create illusions of being

UNIJERPS

superior and exceptional on campus by dressing indecently.

There is hardly any higher institution of learning in this country that is not faced with this nauseating problem. Students on these campuses of learning particularly, the female ones, dress seductively leaves much to be desired. What the girls call skirts that they wear is just "one inch" longer than their pants. This category of female find it difficult to pick things on the ground, sit down, climb and mount on motor cycles and cross gutter. This makes it difficult for them to do things. Moreover, dresses are transparent and essential parts of the body could be seen through them.

In the case of boys, they have their form of indecent dressing. There is what they call "low waist" where their trousers are made below their buttocks with the boxers or pants exposed. Often, they look unkempt, dirty and unattractive. Some male students walking drag their legs on the ground when walking. This has led to cultural adulteration as it erodes our religious and moral values and norms which is the very essence of the African society. The trend is fast spreading to even the secondary school students in both private and public schools.

Apart from dresses being a means for cultural identity, they are for ornamental or aesthetic purposes, for protection of the body against harsh weather conditions as well as for covering the intimate parts of the body (Answer.com, 2011; Articlesbase.com, 2011). These purposes are important especially as they form major aspects of a person's personality. But as important as these purposes are, they have been defeated by the generation of Nigerian youths (Articlesbase.com, 2011). Their dress patterns are most times anti-African, and are invented. They usually dress in a manner that does not show that they are responsible (Nigerianfilms.com, 2009). The African culture and particularly that of Nigeria encourage modesty in appearance as do the Christian and Islamic religions where the larger population of these youths claim to be worshipping God. This un-African dress pattern among the youths of this generation has generated lots of concern and worry among the citizenry of the country. Religious institutions as well as institutions of learning are not resting on their oars to watch this immoral act being perpetuated, but they speak against it. For instance, Akpan (2018) reported that at the University of Uyo rules were made that any students who dress indecently to lecture halls should be

sacked by their lecturers. But on this very campus students still dress indecently by uncovering their body part including stomach, belly button, back shoulders, chest and the legs below the knees, small earring and light makeup, low heeled noiseless shoes, clean hair, etc. In the same vein, in Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe, Anambra State where this study is focused, it seems that the introduction of a dress code was misinterpreted by some undergraduate students to mean they should dress indecently. This is because what became obvious with undergraduate students in this college after the introduction of this dress code was the alarming and arrant ways that they began to dress indecently. One is not however surprised because what is typical of most Nigerian administrators is always a wide gap between policy formulation and execution. Indecent dressing even though is not accepted as the normality, is seen to be gaining ascendancy. One then wonders what becomes of the society tomorrow with the calibre of students that are being trained. If rules are made for people, they supposed to be adequately informed why such rules are made. It is for this very reason that this paper attempts to counsel undergraduate students about the cause and effects of dressing indecently as well as suggests solutions that could remedy the further spread of this immoral act on campuses of learning in Nigeria.

Meaning of Indecent Dressing

Dressing is an action of putting on clothes as a way of covering our nakedness as human being (Owojaiye & Afolabi, 2013). The authors also noted that indecent dressing is any way of dressing that failed to fulfill the major objectives of dressing. Indecent dressing is the improper and provocative way of dressing relative to the society or culture of the students (Kwanuba, Subaba & Filgona, 2020). Fareo and Jackson (2018) noted that this form of dressing is provocative, improper, and morally unacceptable. Ewulo (2016) opined that indecent dressing is any form of dressing that does not conform with the acceptable moral standard of decent dressing. Oluwadare, Otunaiya, and Opeoluwa (2020) added that indecent dressing means any type of dressing that is not in conformity with the socially acceptable mode of dressing in the particular community of reference. Fareo and Jackson (2018) referred to indecent dressing as the attitude of someone, male or female that dresses to show off parts of the body such as the breasts, buttocks, or even underwear that need to be

UNIJERPS

covered. Hence indecent dressing is concerned with the exposure of vital parts of the body to the public, and flaunting it everywhere.

Egwim (2010) defined indecent dressing as an attitude of someone, male or female that dresses to show off parts of the body such as the breasts, buttocks or even the underwear particularly those of the ladies that need to be covered. Osagiogbare, Ekwukoma and Ekomaru (2015) added that indecent dressing is any form of dressing that is likely to shock/offend others, or elicit sexual provocation. It is any form of dressing that does not properly cover the sexually sensitive parts of the body such as the armpit, cleavage, breast, thighs, buttocks, navel, the chest of a male, the back of a female, and so on. Omede (2011) remarked that a dress is said to be indecent when it has a provocative or stimulating influence on almost all those that happen to view it on the user. Ako and Igbo (2013) sadly noted that most tertiary institutions in Nigeria are replete with dresses that can be described as indecent. For instance, some females put on trousers that expose their underwear when they bend down or take a sitting position.

Sola (2018) defined Indecent dressing is the mode of dressing or appearance that is disruptive and distractive. The author also noted that the mode of dressing or appearance includes; trousers and skirts worn below the waist (sagging), singlet, spaghetti blouses, low neck blouses exposing the breasts, skirts with slit above the knees, transparent dresses, shirts and blouses, attire printed with offensive or obscene wordings, revealing attires mini-skirts and so on.

Forms of Indecent Dressing

Some institutions of higher learning in Nigeria have prescribed dress code which students are required to adhere to. Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe, Anambra State, in her student's Handbook and Academic Regulations stated that "As an Academic Training Institution, the Management decided not to condone indecent dressing on campus. Towards this end, a dress code has been recommended by the Academic Board and approved by Council for students' compliance as follows:"

Female Students:

According to this Handbook, no female students' is to put on any of the following attire on the campus of the college:

1. Topless
2. Body hugs
3. Short Knickers
4. Backless
5. Head gears e.g. Canopy head ties
6. Bogus fashion jewelleries
7. Tattoo with provocative writing or picture
8. OFF shoulders
9. Non-natural coloured hair
10. Mono Straps
11. Mini Skirts
12. Dress and Skirt with slit above the knees
13. Tight trousers and dresses
14. T-Shirts and jean which carry immoral messages
15. Noisy shoe heels
16. Rosy Chicks
17. Eye Shadow
18. Excessive Lipsticks
19. Front bottom dressed
20. Nail attachments
21. Bathroom slippers or bare foot
22. Men must bow
23. Hot pant
24. Low-slug snacks

Male Students:

Male students are not to wear the under-listed on campus:

1. Slacks, shorts, pants or jeans
2. Permed hair
3. Head ties
4. Earrings
5. T-Shirts and jeans which carry immoral messages
6. Kaftans without trousers
7. Long and bushy hairs and beards
8. Braiding
9. Jerry curls
10. Plaited hairs
11. Dreadlocks
12. Jerry curls

The lists of prohibited attires above on this campus reveal what was earlier pointed out that the concept of indecent dressing is relativistic.

Possible Reasons Why Some Undergraduate Students Dress Indecently In Nigeria Tertiary Institutions

This behaviour is of a hydra-headed origin. It is not just a behaviour that developed overnight, but an accumulated behavioural pattern that could be attributed to the home (neglect and or poor parenting), the effect of globalization arising from wrong values' exportation and importation, a reflection of the high rate of moral decadence in the larger society (corruption and high rate of indiscipline among the leaders and the led), peer pressure and the desire to belong as well as fading values and demonization or demonic influence.

Each of these factors is discussed in detail below.

Poor Parenting

A child in a community whether good or bad has a home as well as parents. The environment has greater influence in the development of any child. The influence of home environment on the development of children is not in any way doubtful (Omede, 2011). The home is every child's first window to the outside world. What the parents do with the child at this level in terms of training and orientation go a long way to determining what the child becomes tomorrow. Children live or die, thrive or wither, due to the decision of their parents (Egbule, 2013). It is from the parents that the child is taught these through instructions, observations and practices from parents and other siblings particularly the senior ones. The implication of this is that parents must be seen to be morally exemplary.

Negative Influence of Internet

The invention of information and communication technology (ICT) is of great benefit to the society as a whole. It has helped to revolutionize the community tremendously. It comprises internet communication, satellites and mobile phones which help to bring people gather, distance or culture or language notwithstanding. In as much as ICT is good for the development of our nation, there are lot of evil associated with indecent dressing. Most of the youths and children that are exposed to some of their contents are most times negative to quickly fall vulnerable. The parents of these children and their senior siblings in Diasporas are the ones promoting indecent and immoral practices and they are relayed through videos, pornography and music as well as advertisement and fashion parade. In as much as ICT is good and beneficial to humanity. The associative evil needs to be checked and resisted (Omede, 2011).

Peer Pressure

The pressure of peers holds sway if the child does not have good parental upbringing. Youths always desire to belong. Peer pressure is a force that gravitate friends together and most times for evil or negative tendencies (Omede, 2011). The desire to belong and the fear of rejection have led many youths into evil or immoral acts sometimes against their will. Some of them lack the strong will to say no to evil for fear of being isolated. However, a child with healthy home training should be able to say no to evil and then maintain his integrity and the good name of the family. The

UNIJERPS

pressure of the peers will have little or no effect when there is healthy parental upbringing and the fear of God in the life of any youth.

The Society

The environment has greater influence in the development of a child. A child living in a society will be learning what is going on in the society directly or indirectly. The moral decadence in the forms of corruption, indiscipline, prostitution, bribery and other forms of social vices in the community affects the child. Nobody but a few can be exempted from this morality problems. It is an ugly situation for the judge to cheat his accused, the teacher his students, the doctor his patients and the ruler his subjects (Sola, 2018). The youths are learning fast from what is going on in the society around them, therefore the society must be careful the way they exhibit things.

Fading Value

Nigeria has a very rich culture that she needs to be proud of and preserve for posterity. But the unfortunate situation is that most cherished Nigerian values are fast fading due to non-patronage and modernization or acculturation (Sola, 2018). Today's youths cannot tell very well what these values are. For instance, the beautiful hair braiding typical of Nigerians ladies are being traded for hair "roasting" in saloons, modern and dignifying dress patterns are giving ways to the skimpy, transparent and provocative dresses found all around today. Many of these youths that dress immodestly may not even know what is wrong with the way they dress because nothing suggests to them that is wrong. Their parents applaud them in those dresses, do not even ask how they came about those dresses and when they appear in public, they are cheered by their mates and friends and to make the matter worse, all around them, what they see on people is not reasonably different from what they wear. Their home videos, televisions and internet programs do not differ when the society has no good moral values as legacies to bequeath to them? It is odd for a vulture to look different in the midst of other vultures (Omede, 2011).

Effects and Consequences of Indecent Dressing among Undergraduate Students in Nigeria Tertiary Institutions

Indecent dressing could lead to the following; Sexual harassment, ritual killing, tendency to steal, unwanted pregnancy, lying, contraction of

UNIJERPS

HIV/AID, poor performance in school work and prostitutions

Sexual Harassment

Indecent dressing is the major cause of the various assault and sexual harassment recorded in the society over time. There is like likelihood that ladies who dress indecently or provocatively could be prone to sexual harassment and or rape. Sola (2018) stated that skimpy, transparent and sexy dresses worn by female undergraduates elicit sexual responses in males; such dresses were dresses that expose the legs, dress that expose the breast and dresses that show the exact size and shape of the buttocks. These forms of dresses suggest that such ladies need attention and that they are irresponsible and so there are always irresponsible men to dialogue, lure or force them to bed for sex.

Ritual Killing

Some female undergraduates who dress indecently have fallen victims of ritual killers. Many of them based on their mode of dressing had been invited for a supposed sex only to be murdered by ritual killers.

Stealing

In attempt to look modern and be like other, many of these youths had taken to stealing and armed robbery. The boys for instance, under financial pressure from their girlfriend could resort to armed robbery to square up to this demand to impress and keep their "babes". Many boys have been arrested as armed robbery just because of the way they dressed.

Unwanted Pregnancy

A female student who dresses indecently may be raped or forced into sex and pregnancy may result. Such pregnancy is unwanted and this may hinder the student's academic studies. Some of these students who are faced with unwanted pregnancies resort to abortion. In some cases, they lose their lives as a result of dangerous abortion.

Lying

The home background of some of these students may not allow for prostitution, stealing or armed robbery but to keep afloat and up to date with what is in vogue, they may resort to lying "the lesser sin", to obtain the money they need from their parents.

Contracting of HIV Aids

This is another risk factor that immodestly dressed ladies could be prone to when such ladies are forced in to sex against their will. They may be

exposed to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIVS because of lack of protection (Omede, 2011).

Poor Academic Performance

Most undergraduate students who dress indecently have poor academic record because they pay more attention to their appearance than their academic work. Their concern is mostly how to look good and appear in the latest stuff. Several of them battle with carry over courses with the consequences of staying longer in the school then is normal graduate, graduate with very weak grades and some may not ever graduate at all having outlived their studentship in the institution and not being to pass some prescribed courses. Oli (2018) noted that some of these undergraduate students get frustrated and they become armed robbers, prostitutes, home or marriage breakers, drug addicts or traffickers.

Prostitutions

Skimpy transparent and body exposing dresses are known to be the dress pattern of prostitutes. Most ladies found in such dresses are always negotiated for sex or social intimacy because they are most often thought to be without husbands. Apart from this notion, most ladies that dress this way engage in prostitution and commercial sex to be able to sponsor or sustain these forms of dresses. The cumulative effect of this is unwanted pregnancies, HIV/AIDS infection and death.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on theory of social influence.

Social Influence Theory

Social influence theory is propounded by Kelman in 1958. He stated that social influence occurs when ones emotions, opinions or behaviours are affected by others which can be seen in conformity, socialization, peer pressure, leadership and marketing. He furthered identified three broad areas of social influence;

1. Compliance; which is when people appear to agree with others, but actually keep their dissenting opinions private.
2. Identification; is when people are influenced by someone who is liked and respected, such as a famous celebrity.
3. Internationalization; is when people accept a belief or behaviour and agree both publicly and privately.

The relevance of the theory to the present study is that Kelman affirmed that some undergraduate students'

UNIJERPS

especially female students want to grow towards independence and strive to express it in their dressing pattern while others have a strong desire to confirm to group dress code

Possible Strategies To Indecent Dressing In Nigerian Tertiary Institutions

The problem of indecent dressing requires an integrated approach because of its multifaceted causes. The following suggestions are discussed:

Parents as Role Models

Children watch their parents and copy their ways of behaviour. The behaviour of parents impresses on their children more greatly than what they tell them either to do or not to do. Parents are to be obligated to their children by bringing them up properly and in the fear of God. Parents more especially women should spend time with their children and counsel them on the type of clothes to buy.

The Mass Media

The mass media is one strong agent of socialization. Radio houses, televisions, newspapers and magazines should confront rather than support indecent dressing. The display of some indecently dressed young girls for adverts and attraction should be discouraged. Radios and television jingles that promote moral values and the sanctity of sex should be aired and relayed. Programs that sample opinions of Nigerians on indecent dressing should be regularly put in place in addition to debates on the issue by youths in institutions of learning as means of effective sensitization.

Enlightenment Programme, Campaign, Seminar/ Workshop

Enlightenment campaign and seminars can be introduced as weekly by religious groups and other various youth's empowerment programme, social clubs on campuses with concern on the issues of dressing, sexual harassment, morality and effects of the ungodly behaviour on the youths and on their future. This seminar will be organized even in primary and secondary schools to encourage our younger women to dress better. People should be instructed to be original and attractive even without being naked and they can be admired.

Dress Code

Some colleges, polytechnics and universities in Nigeria have introduced dress codes for their students. The problem is not just in making the rules but in their enforcements. For these rules to be enforced, lecturers should be made

to collaborate with the college/polytechnic/ university management staffs and their security personnel's. Lecturers are to be empowered to prevent indecently dressed students from attending their lectures, refuse to attend to such students in their areas of needs. Administrative staff should disallow such students from their offices while the security staff should serve as watchdogs. They should be allowed to open a record in their offices for immodestly dressed students and forward such names particularly those who are not first offenders to the disciplinary committee of the school for appropriate sanction that the code must have spelt.

Religious Institutions

Through regular sermons or preaching, the religious leaders must preach against indecent dressing, counsel and deliver those under demonic influences.

Censures of Nigerian Films

The Nigerian celebrities especially the female ones are to be cautioned by the film production regulatory bodies to be modest and dress like the Nigerians that they are. Nigeria have very rich heritage of cultures that we should be proud of and also promote. The wrong dressing pattern of our artists and the way they openly show love making in their films even though not real, do not suggest that they are Nigerians. They should domesticate their films by reflecting and promoting the rich culture of Nigeria-her dress pattern, sanctity of sex and so on.

Conclusion

The mode of indecent dressing among undergraduate students in Nigeria tertiary institutions is worrisome and unacceptable. The rate at which indecent dressing has infiltrated into the moral fibre and academic progression of undergraduate students in tertiary institutions is alarming. The indecent dress pattern among the undergraduates such as wearing of trousers and skirts worn below the waist (sagging), singlet, spaghetti blouses, low neck blouses exposing the breasts, skirts with slit above the knees, transparent dresses, shirts and blouses, attire printed with offensive or obscene wordings, revealing attires mini-skirts and so on. This dress pattern has negative consequences that may still not be known to those who dress immodestly. It is in the light of this that this paper examined the causes and effects of indecent dressing among undergraduate students in Nigeria tertiary institutions and suggested possible strategies that could reduce the rate of spread of this immoral act.

UNIJERPS

Recommendations

Recommendations made at addressing indecent dressing among undergraduate students in Nigerian tertiary institutions are as follows;

1. Tertiary institution should adopt dress codes for their students.
2. Counsellors should use cognitive restructing techniques and reality to help indecent dressing student rediscover their self-worth and potentials. Also such clients should be taught to discard their irrational beliefs of exposing their breast and dressing half naked in order to be attracted to men and thus get married to them. They should also be led to re-orientate their beliefs towards positive self- esteem.
3. Governments' laws both in Federal, State and Local government to regulates' our dressing.
4. Our religious institutions should strongly condemn it.
5. Parents should help checkmate their Ward's before leaving homes.
6. All learning institutions should have dressing code must especially higher institutions.
7. There should be public enlightenment.
8. Civil society groups sensitization campaign.

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