

# Appraisal of the Influence of Moral Standard on the Clothing Selection of Female Undergraduates in Selected Nigeria Universities

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**Abstract:** This study focused on the appraisal of the influence of moral standard on the clothing selection of female undergraduates in north-west universities of Nigeria. Specifically the study is aimed at identifying the influence of female students' moral value and sexual morality on their clothing selection. This research work adopted descriptive survey design with a population of 17,116 female undergraduates. A sample size of 375 students was used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The research questions was analysed using mean and standard deviations. Findings revealed that the moral value and sexual morality of female students influenced their clothing selection. Hence, the null hypotheses are hereby rejected. Based on the findings, it was recommended among other things that university authorities should continue to orientate and re-orientate new and old students on good clothing selection practice and maintain high moral value.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Clothing is both an important part of material possession and pattern of behaviour that constitute ones lifestyle. It is one of the fundamental needs of individuals all over the world. Johnson and Foster (1996) described clothing as the different garments worn by people in order to protect, adorn or to communicate intent. Clothing apart from garments also include body decoration such as the use of cosmetics, tattoos, hair colour and attachment, ornaments, badges among others (Nchekube, 2009).

Clothing can be used as a medium of self expression. Kiran, Malik and Riaz (2002) stated that clothing reflects the cognitive, moral and social aspects of human life. Bill (1990) described clothing as a mark of identity and a means of non-verbal communication which can indicate a person's age, gender, marital status, religion and place of origin.

Different people are often faced with making of clothing selection on a regular basis. According to weber (1995) individual clothing choices are influenced by ones lifestyle, personality, values, family, friends and other groups. A person's personality; value and interest are expressed through the preference for certain styles, colour and fabric. Wallace (1983) pointed out that clothing behaviours of students are usually flexible. Wallace maintained that students fall more towards the displaying of sporty and daring styles however

they occasionally adopt other clothing styles. Students can be influenced by their parents teachers, friends, school, communities, social, media. However each person develops his own value in accordance with the strongest influence of all which in most cases result to that of peers.

Moral standard is a set of rules which guides an individual on how to evaluate right or wrong behavior. Morality is simply the level of quality of behaviour of human beings and how they relate with others and the world. Attitude is expression of feeling, thoughts or behaviour. Attitude is often learnt from family and peer group and is included overtime by societal and educational experience (Marsha et al 2000). According to Ejila (2014) most of the attitude and behavior of female undergraduates in many tertiary institutions do not confirm moral standard.

Collaborating with Ejila, Okeh (2009) maintained that the dress pattern of younger population has totally departed from what was obtainable in the past and can be best described as weird and embarrassing. Orakwe (2002) is of the view that the quests for immodest dressing among female students clearly suggest sexual manipulation, domination and exploitation. In the same vein, Esiowu and Igbo (2008) report that many campus girls copy and wear such indecent provocative clothes meant for commercial sex workers. Ozogwu and Anyakoha (2005) believe that indecent dressing can induce sexual urge and sex scandal; a contributory factor to the spread of HIV-Aids scourge and other sexually transmitted infections.

### *Objectives of the Study*

1. To assess the influence of female undergraduates moral value on their clothing selection
2. To examine the influence of female undergraduates sexual morality on their clothing selection.

### *Research Questions*

1. Does female undergraduates moral value influence their clothing selection
2. Does female students sexual morality influence their clothing selection

## II. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a survey research design. The research was conducted in two universities in north-west Nigeria. These universities are Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and Bayero University Kano. The population for the study was made up of 17,116 female students obtained from the record offices of the universities used for the study. A sample size of 375 female students was drawn through simple random sampling from the total population. The choice of sample was in line with Kerjcie and Morgan (1970) who recommended sample size of over 300 for a population below 20,000.

Table 1: Population/Sample Size of Study

S/N	Name of Institutions	Population	Sample size
1	Ahmadu Bello University Zaria	9,277	203
2	Bayero University Kano	7, 839	172
	<b>Total</b>	<b>17,116</b>	<b>375</b>

Field Survey, 2020

A structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire was made up of two sections. Section A was used to get demographic information from the respondents while section B contains 20 items with response options of strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, and strongly disagreed. Items with the mean up to 2.50 were regarded as agreed while mean below 2.50 was regarded of as disagreed. The drafted version of the questionnaire was validated by experts from Home Economics department in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. Croubach's Alpha reliability was used to estimate the internal consistency reliability of the multiple choice items. Reliability co-efficient of 0.81 was obtained indicating that the instrument was reliable. The structured questionnaire was administered to respondents by both the researcher and two research assistants in the universities where the study was carried out.

## IV. RESULTS

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Influence of Female Undergraduates' Moral Value on their Clothing Selection

S/N	Female students clothing selection may result to	$\bar{X}$	SD	REMARKS
1	Having respect	3.96	560	Agreed
2	Being Discipline	3.31	573	Agreed
3	Being Honest	2.79	640	Agreed
4	Avoiding unhealthy dressing competition	1.94	608	Disagreed
5	Minimizing Indecent Dressing	3.31	526	Agreed
6	Having Sense of responsibility	3.26	577	Agreed
7	Promoting dignity of womanhood	3.37	574	Agreed
8	Shunning cultism in school	2.61	681	Agreed
9	Braking school rules and regulation	2.46	707	Disagreed

10	Avoid Bad gang	2.70	662	Agreed
	Cumulative mean	3.08		Accepted

Field Survey, 2020

Table 2 revealed that all items with the expectation of items 4 and 9 were agreed upon by the respondents as having significant influence on female students clothing selection. The cumulative mean of 3.08 clearly showed that the respondents' moral value has significant influence on their clothing selection.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation Rating on the Influence of Female Students' Sexual Morality on their Clothing Selection

S/N	Female students clothing selection mean result to	$\bar{X}$	SD	REMARKS
1	Campus prostitution	3.19	592	Agreed
2	Promiscuity among Students	2.98	610	Agreed
3	The spread of HIV/AIDS	2.54	694	Agreed
4	Sexual harassment	1.94	608	Agreed
5	Incidence of rape	3.40	562	Agreed
6	Debasing of womanhood	3.17	584	Agreed
7	Unplanned pregnancy	2.89	634	Agreed
8	Cases of abortion	2.75	655	Agreed
9	Wayward lifestyle	3.06	600	Agreed
10	The spread of STI	2.59	685	Agreed
	Cumulative mean	3.00		Accepted

Field Survey, 2020

Table 3 revealed that items 1-10 are all in agreement that female students' sexual morality has significant influence on the on their clothing selection. This is further confirmed with the cumulative mean of 3.00 which is above 2-50

## V. DISCUSSION

The finding of the study in table I revealed that 8 out of 10 items agreed that female students moral value has significant influence on their clothing selection. This clearly showed that the selection of decent clothing by students will promote self-respect, discipline, responsibility, disunity of womanhood among others. This study is in agreement with Ozougwu and Anyakoha (2005) who opined that female students' mode of dressing should communicate such favourable intents as self respect, sense of responsibility, sound moral value and respect for dignity for womanhood. Similarly Ejila (2014) is of the view that negative trend in dressing is an indication of poor parental upbringing, low level of cultural and religious values.

The finding of the study in table 2 clearly showed that the 10 items agreed that female students' sexual morality has significant influence on their clothing selection. The items indicated that indecent dressing among female students may lead to campus prostitution, promiscuity among students, sexual harassment, rape, unplanned pregnancy, wayward

lifestyle among others. This is in agreement with Esiowu and Igbo (2008) who stated that clothing messages could, expose sexual harassment, health problem, STI/AIDs and cultism.

Boyo (2008) pointed out that some of the deviate behavior cases reported in Nigeria Universities such as sexual harassment, rape, UI health, examination malpractice have sometimes been attributed to the type of clothing selected and worn by female students.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, It can be inferred that the moral decadence ravaging our society, can be traced to the way youths particularly female students behave and dress. Sound moral virtues and good dress sense are therefore imperative in order to have sanity in the educational institutions and society at large.

#### VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. University authorities should continue to orientate new and old students in good clothing selection practices.
2. Parents should encourage their wards to be of good behaviour and use clothes that are decent and promote cultural heritage
3. Curriculum planners should include the study of moral education and clothing education in primary and secondary school in order to instill good behavior and good dress sense.

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