Clothing References of Undergraduate Students and the Consequences: Case Study of Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki

Akubue B.N.

Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki

Abstract

This study focused on the clothing preferences of students of Ebonyi State University, and the related consequences. Three research questions guided the study. A survey was used. The population for the study was 33491 students of 2011/2012 academic session. A sample of 400 was selected. Findings include that males prefer tight clothing that sag such as tight sagging trousers, pencil jean and earrings while female prefer body revealing clothing such as spaghetti sleeves, high heeled shoes, tight tubular trouser among others. Consequences include, among others, prostitution, sexual harassment, premature death. It is recommended among others, that Deans of various faculties in Ebonyi State University should approve a standard set of clothing styles for students with appropriate consequences for violation.

Key words: Clothing, Preferences, Students, Consequence, Case Study.

Introduction

Clothing is anything used to cover the body from nakedness' Johnson and Foster (1990) stated that clothing is anything places on the body to adorn, protect and communicate intent. Clothing appear to control the psyche and general attitude of individual to life. Gililan (2010) opined that clothing is informative and tells the kind of a person individual is. Nwadi and Anyakoha (2011) noted that clothing and accessories such as shoes, bags among others constitute visual communication which gives varied impressions about the wearer.

Clothing according to Kaka and Agwa (2008) is very important in the personal appearance of an individual. Clothing communicates culture and personality of individual. Ozougwu and Anyakoha (2005) opined that clothing communicates characteristics of individuals such as individuals' personality, attitude, temperament, trustworthiness among others. According to Esiowu and Igbo (2008), there are various styles of clothes and numerous accessories that go with them. Clothes include Skirts, blouse, gowns, shirts, trousers among others. Accessories are shoes, handbags earrings, bangles, finger rings, hairstyles, and necklace. Hence clothing are used for adornment, identification of traditional, social and occupational status. Kaka and Agwa (2008) also stated that clothing play role of communication by expressing the individual unique personalities for modesty, attraction, social status and identification of roles in the society. Kelven (2003) opined that clothing talk about the wearer and give other people clues about values and how individuals should be treated. Hadden (2010) noted that clothing contribute to establishing and

maintaining identification with social role, information of self-image and sense of self-esteem. Students should therefore choose clothing styles to express their integrity in the society. The dress code of student should reflect their personality, religion, culture and distinguish the professions the students are studying.

Students in higher institutions are often very conscious of their physical appearance. Students spend reasonable amount of money and time on clothing. The self-concept of both male and female students depends largely on how attractive their clothing styles appear.

It is amazing and difficult to understand why most of the students dress the way they do. Most students in the area of study are not ready to blend tradition with modernity rather they become fashion freaks. The modern provocative dressings have become the priority of dress code among students. Such students may look slutty and hazardous to the public, fellow students and even to the lecturers. The increase in rape in the country is as a result of indecent dressing among students (Ezugwu 2013). Wrongful and improper dressings of students in tertiary institutions have a high tendency of negative impact on their academic performance. Afamara (2012) noted that students in higher institution wear clothing which distract both students and lecturers during lecture. This phenomenon is not uncommon in Ebonyi State University Abakaliki. Moreover, students in the area of study spend a lot of money on their outfit in expense of their studies. The study was therefore, undertaken to study the type of clothing styles students of Ebonyi State University wear and the consequence of the clothing on the students. The study will reveal to the students, school authority and the entire society the consequences of students' manner of clothing styles. This may subsequently lead the University authority to take necessary steps to check clothing style of students in Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. Yahay (2013) stated that school authority has vital role to encourage students to dress modestly. Gbadegbe and Quashies (2013) also noted that government policies and humanitarian activities of non-governmental organization could help in the effective control and modernization of today's students' wears.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the clothing preferences of students of Ebonyi State University and the consequences specifically, the study sought to determined;

1. Clothing preferences of male students in Ebonyi State University.
2. Clothing preferences of female students in the area of study.
3. The Perceived consequences of the clothing preferences of the students.

Research Questions: The study sought answers to the following Research Questions;

1. What are the clothing preferences of male students in Ebonyi State University?
2. What are the clothing preferences of female students in Ebonyi State University?
3. What are the perceived consequence of the clothing preferences on the students?

Methodology

Area of the Study: The study was conducted in Ebonyi Sate University Abakaliki. The University has four campuses (college of Agricultural School (CAS), Permanent Site, Ishieke and Presco.

Design of the study: The design of the study was descriptive survey design. This type of design was used because the finding from these data are expected to be generalized to the entire population using appropriate sampling technique to ensure that resultant sample is sufficiently representative of the population.

Population for the Study: The population for the study consisted of all the students in Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The Population is made up of 33491 students of 2011/2012 academic session. This information is obtained from Planning Unit office, Ebonyi State University Abakaliki.

Sample and Sampling Techniques: Four hundred students where selected from the population. Convenience sampling technique was used to select fifty (50) male and fifty (50) female students from each of the four campuses in the area of study.

Instrument for Date Collection: The instrument used for data collection was structured questionnaires. The questionnaire was developed based on the specific purposes of the study and research questions. The instrument was validated by three experts, one expert in Home Economics Department, one in Technology and Vocational Education and one expert in Education Foundation Department, all in Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis: Four hundred copies of questionnaire were administered by hand to the students. Two hundred questionnaires where administered to male and female students respectively assistants on the respondents. Hundred and eighty (380) copies of questionnaire were properly filled and returned. This represents 95 percent return of the questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed using means. Based on 4 point scale of strongly agree (SA) agree (a), disagree (d) and strongly disagree(SD) with value of 4,3,2, and 1 respectively, a mean rating of 2.50 and above was regarded as accepted while any item with a mean rating below 2.5 was regarded as unaccepted.

Findings

1. Male students in Ebonyi State University wear among others parts with open chest tops, sags trousers.
2. Female students in the area of study wear mini skirts, short tight knickers, high heeled shoes, bold and long earrings among other.
3. The perceived consequences from males, females, lectures and administrators of the clothing styles on the students include pre-marital sex and pregnancy, sexual harassment such as rape, roguery, prostitution among others.

Research Questions 1: What are the clothing preferences of male students in Ebonyi State University?

Table 1: Mean responses of the clothing preferences of male students. (N=400)

S/N Male students clothing styles include	$\bar{x}$	Remarks
1. Jean trouser with long sleeve shirts.	3.5	Preferred
2. Pant trousers with open chest vest.	3.00	Preferred
3. Three quarter trouser with body fitting shirts	2.54	Preferred
4. Baggy trousers with short sleeve shirt.	2.52	Preferred
5. Plain trouser with body hung tops.	2.55	Preferred
6. Pencil jean trouser with t-shirts	2.51	Preferred
7. Suit trouser.	1.8	Not preferred
8. Jerry curl hair.	2.56	Preferred
9. Earrings and jewelry.	2.84	Preferred
10. Various trimmed hairstyles.	2.68	Preferred
11. Baggy jean trousers with open-chest shirts	3.21	Preferred
12. Saggy trousers.	3.24	Preferred
13. Tofa made with Nigeria cotton wax	1.91	Not preferred
14. Sweat shirt.	1.85	Not preferred
15. Suttan style clothes.	2.25	Not preferred
16. Safari suit style.	1.95	Not preferred
17. Senator suits style.	2.22	Not Preferred

Table 1 showed that male students wear jean trousers with long sleeve skirts, pants trousers with open chest vest, three quarter trousers with body fitting shirts, earrings and jewelry, coiled hair, saggy trousers and baggy, jean trouser with shirts that expose their chest. The table also showed that the students do not wear suit trousers, tofa style, safari and senator styles.

Research Question 2: What are the clothing styles of female students in Ebonyi State University.

Table 2: Mean responses on the clothing styles of female students. (N-400)

S/N Female students' clothing styles include	$\bar{x}$	Remarks
1. Long skirt with long sleeve blouse.	2.41	No preferred
2. Mini skirt with tiny sleeve blouse.	3.32	Preferred
3. Short tight nicker with low neck blouse.	3.00	Preferred
4. Knee length skirt with raglan blouse.	2.65	Preferred
5. Skirt suit.	2.32	Not Preferred
6. Tight tubler trouser.	3.41	Preferred
7. Saggy trouser with short fitted blouse.	3.58	Preferred
8. Full trouser with long sleeve blouse	2.41	Not Preferred
9. Gathered gown and skirt.	1.52	Not Preferred
10. Loose fitting gown.	1.83	Not Preferred
11. Skin tight short blouse with legging trouser.	3.12	Preferred
12. High heeled shoes.	3.25	Preferred
13. Bold and long earrings.	3.42	Preferred
14. Long coloured weavon attachment.	2.81	Preferred
15. Four gore skirt with long sleeve top.	1.56	Not Preferred
16. Transparent and fishnet clothing.	3.01	Preferred

Table 2 shows that female students wear mini-shirts, short tight nicker, tight blouse with legging trousers, high-healed shoes, bold and long, coloured weavon attachment. The table further revealed that the female students do not wear long skirt with long sleeve, gathered gown and skirt, full trouser, skirt suit, loose fitting gown and four gore skirts.

Research question 3: what are the consequences of the clothing styles on the students.

Table3: Mean responses of the students on the perceived consequences of males and females students, lecturers administrators of the clothing preferences on the students. (N= 400)

S/N	Item statement: The students may be involved in;	$\overline{x}$	Remarks
1	Pre-marital sex and pregnancy.	2.75	Consequence
2.	Sexual harassment such as rape.	2.85	Consequence
3.	And consequent explosion of HIV/AIDS	2.52	Consequence
4.	Exposes students to pre-mature death such as ritual killing.	3.31	Consequence
5.	Lying to their parents and guardians	2.91	Consequence
6.	Roguery and prostitution.	2.61	Consequence
7.	Lack of concentration during lecture.	3.41	Consequence

Table 3 shows that students are influenced by the six identified consequence of clothing styles among the students. The mean value of all the six items on the consequences of clothing styles on the students are above 2.5 bench mark set out for the study.

Discussion of the Findings
The findings in Table I reveals the clothing styles of male students in Ebonyi State University. It indicated that male students wear pant trouser with vest that show their chest, wear earrings and jewelry. This finding disagrees with Ojija (2012) suggested that low necked shirt and earrings are indecent wears for males. He maintained that clothing style that exposes the body, attracts and induces opposite sex to sexual immorality and that such clothing styles are unacceptable in the school environment. The findings also revealed that male students wear baggy trousers, sag tight fitting trousers and curl their hair. This finding disagrees with

Ron (2012) who noted that sagged trousers and tight fitting dresses that reveal contour of the body are not only seductive but rebellion to the society. Omede (2011) also noted that males will neither perm, plait nor curl their hair while in school. The findings thus revealed that both male and female students in the area of study dress indecently.

The findings in Table 2 reveals the clothing styles of female students in Ebonyi state University, Abakaliki. The findings showed that the students wear mini skirts with tiny sleeve blouse, and tight beach wear. This finding agrees with Egwim (2010) who noted that body hugs, mini skirt and tight trousers are common wears among Nigerian Students. Egwim also maintained that clothes that reveal sensitive part of the body such as bust, belly and buttocks are indecent dress in the society. The finding also agrees with Omede (2011) who stated that students wear short knickers, excessive lipsticks, nail attachments and Rastafarian hairstyles

to lectures. The finding portrayed that female students in the area of study wear high-heeled shoes, sag trousers, transparent and fishnet clothes. Gbadegbe and Quashie (2013) stated that students wear skimpy skirts only about one inch longer than their pants to lectures. Oreri (2013) also maintained that female students in high institutions wear transparent fishnet clothing which exposes their thighs and other vital part of the body for lecturers and students' view.

Ron (2012) stated that transparent clothes are unacceptable attire for all professionals: Ron further stated that skirt length that is more than two inches above the knee is not allowed in school premises. One earring from the same pair in each ear may be enough for female student (Ron 2012).Hadden (2010) stated that one pierce per ear for earrings is enough for students' grooming. Other accessories such as jewelry, bangle, shoes and hair-style according to Hadden (2010) must be simple and neat. These immoral acts of indecent dressing by students in the area of study have influenced the students in many ways.

The findings in table 3 revealed some consequences of clothing styles on students in Ebonyi State University. The finding indicated that the student involve in premarital sex and pregnancy as a result of their clothing styles. The finding agreed with Ojija (2012) who opined that the mode of dress of adolescents exposes them to sexual immorality and consequence unprepared pregnancy. Pregnancy outside matrimonial home is always abnormal and shameful in the society. The finding also indicated that clothing style of the students in the area of study may lead them to sexual harassment such as rape which may lead to explosion of HIV/AIDS. This

agrees with Egwim (2010) who noted that clothing styles increase the chances of sexual harassment and in most cases contracting of sexually transmitted disease and HIV/AIDS.

Exposition of part of the body that is supposed to be hidden could be prone to sexual harassment and abuse. The finding showed that roguery and prostitution are not uncommon in the area of the area of the study because of their clothing styles. Students steal and prostitute to dress and look like others (Ojijha 2012). The Finding also agrees with Onoyima (2013) who noted that indecent dressing among students lure their potential customers to prostitute with them. Gbadegbe and Quashie (2013) also maintained that students' strange way of dressing can result to sexual harassment of the wearer, abortion, contraction of sexually transmitted disease and poor academic performance. Gbadegbe *et al* (2013) also noted that mode of dressing by students could lead to homo-sexuality and lesbianism and increase their desire to steal. Students lie to their parents and guardians in order to buy the clothing styles in vogue. The study is in line with Omede (2011) who stated that students lie to their parents to keep afloat and be up to-date with clothing styles in vogue which are often incident wears. He noted that students never take such clothes home, the clothes are always kept in school while traveling to home. The finding indicated that clothing styles of students in Ebonyi State University affect students' concentration in lecture hall and consequently result to poor academic performance. The finding agrees with Ononyima (2013) who stated that most students who dress indecently often battle with carry over courses. The students

according to Ononyima tend to have little or no serious time for their studies. The consequence is staying in the University more than expected and going out with poor grade.

Inappropriate clothing styles therefore present an unhealthy situation in school and in the society at large. Maintaining student like appearance especially in clothing choice is very important to the success and protection of the image of studentship. In other word, flawless appearance can bring inner peace and a sense of security to the students' academic performance and general well being.

Conclusion

The results of the study have shown that students of Ebonyi State University do not dress well. The students wear such clothing styles that induce lust and encourage seduction. Male students wear pant tight trouser with open chest vest, earrings, sagged trousers and so on while female students wear skin tight short sag trousers' transparent fishnet clothes, skin tight shorts among others.

The findings also revealed that the clothing style worn by the students of Ebonyi State University influence the students in various ways. The consequences of the clothing styles include premarital sex and pregnancy among the students, sexual harassment, prostitution, ineffective concentration in the lecture room and among others. Good wear promotes good citizenship, provide safe and comfortable environment conducive to learning. Good grooming among students help to create positive climate in the school environment. Appropriate clothing style also prepares youths to adult professional life. Students should therefore embrace right clothing choice.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Dean of each faculty in Ebonyi State University should appropriate consequences for violation.
2. Lecturers should collaborate with Ebonyi State University management staff to enforce the formulated dress style/code.
3. Lecturers should be empowered to prevent ill-dressed students from attending their lectures and offices.
4. The Ebonyi State University administrative staff should in the same vein refuse the students who are wrongly dressed in their offices.
5. The guidance and councelling with unit in collaboration with clothing and textile unit of Ebonyi State University should educate students during freshmen school orientation on the dangers of incident dressing and possible influence on their studies and general well being.

References

Afamara, J.(2012). Alarming indecent dress code among Gambia youths. Retrieved on 14th April, 2013 from www.wikihow.com >home>categories>youth.

Esiowu, A.P. & Igbo, C.A. (2005). Clothing for Self-Expression by female undergraduates in Universities in the South Eastern State of Nigeria. *Journal of Economics Research 9(1) 138-149.*

Ewgim, C. (2010). *Incident dressing among youths.* Accessed August 14, 2013 from http/www.es/networld.com/webpages/features.

Ezugwu, A. (2013). Crazy wears Among youths. Retrieved 14th April, 2014.

Gbadegbe, R.S. & Quashie, M. (2013). The impact of Indecent Dressing on the Academic performances of students in Tertiary Institution, a case study if Ho Polytechnic in Ghana. Journal of education and practice vol.4; pg(1-2)

Gililan, L. (2010). The Prehistoric Development of Clothing. Archaeological Implication of a Thermal Model. *Journal of Archaeological mode and Theory, 17 (1) 15-18.*

Hadden, R. (2010). *Professional Dress Code.* Accessed on 05/08/2013 from www.ubs.com

Johnson, I.G. & Foster, A.G. (1990). Clothing Image and Impact. Cincinmati: Ohio South Western Publishing Co.

Kaka, H.J. & Agwa, S.I. (2008). Challenges of emerging technology innovations in dress and textiles. *Journal of Home Economics Research of Nigeria* (HERAN) 9 (1) 176-184.

Klevin, B.J. (2013) clothing your family. *Journal of American Clothing* Association, 5 (20) 80-91.

Molly, A.A. (2011). Students Dress Code. Accessed on 06/08/2013 from www.aisd.net/board.

Oji, A.C. (2012). *Indecent Dressing and the culture of prostitution in the society; the theory of clothing Development.* Ibadan: Ilinejere publishers.

Olori, T. (2003). Culture-Nigeria: "Incident" dressing banned on the campuses. Accessed August 14, 2013 from http/www.ipsnew.net/Africa/interna.asp?idnews=20018.

Omede, J. (2011). Indecent Dressing on Campuses of High Institution of Learning in Nigeria. Implications for counseling. *Journal of emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies* (JETERAPS) 2($) 228-223.

Ononyima, T.O. (2013). Picking the right husband/wife. Nsukka Chuka Educational Publishers.

Ozogwu S.U. & Anyakoha, E.U. (2005). Beholders' perception of female undergraduates clothing in selected Nigeria Universities. *Journal of Home Economics Research 6(1) 171-178.*

Ron, B. (2012). *Students Dress Code.* Accessed on 05/07/2013 from www.rbanner@cioverpark.k12.wa.us.