

## **Motivational Factors Influencing Female Undergraduate Students' Pattern of Dressing: A Case Study of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka**

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### **Abstract**

The study investigated the motivational factors influencing female undergraduate students' pattern of dressing in the University of Nigerian Nsukka. Specifically, it identified the sociological; psychological and physical motives underlying the dressing patterns of the students. Descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population for the study was 22895 female undergraduate students. Stratified random sampling techniques were adopted to select six Departments and 50 female students from the six departments. This gave a total sample size of 300 female undergraduate students. Questionnaire was used for data collection. The reliability was determined using Cronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) coefficient score of 0.83 was obtained. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Findings reveal 14 sociological motives that underly the dressing pattern of the students. These include, to: draw attention of rich males in parties/clubs, appear younger in age, exhibit greatness, meet the pressure of fashion trend and among others. There also seven psychological motives. These include, to: please self, influence others, camouflage personal flaws, satisfy peer members and, others. Other findings are seven physical motives which include to: be admired by males, show body shapes, look good and attractive, appear more beautiful, and others. Based on the findings five recommendations were made, including that Nigerian universities should have dress code for female undergraduate students, among others.

**Keywords:** Motivation, Factors Influencing, Female, Undergraduate, Dressing Pattern

### **Introduction**

Dressing involves the putting on of clothes. Various factors motivate the clothes people choose and wear. Such motivational factors could be social,

emotional and physical, among others (Kyung, 2013). Clothing is anything worn or placed on the body in order to cover, protect or adorn it and is one of the basic needs of man (Anyakoha,

2015). It is an important component of physical appearance which expresses cultural identity, class distinction, profession class, costumes and gender differences (Diyaola 2010 in Fabusuyi and Igbo, 2019). Clothing constitutes visual communicators which give varied impressions about the wearer and the dress of an individual is a kind of sign which projects the personality of the wearer, it can also affect the person's comfort and self-confidence (Ozor, Olubiyi and Okeke, 2019). Clothing's are articles such as dresses, hand bags, wrist watches, hair covers, belts, jewelries hairdo, make up among others. Clothing are the totality of what an individual puts on from head down to the sole of the feet (Uzozie, Ezike and Eze, 2014). Clothing influences the impression people have about one, dressing can impair or enhance health. For example, dirty clothes can harbor germs, which can cause skin infection and tight clothing can affect free movement and blood circulation (Anyakoha, 2015).

Clothing is worn for numerous reasons, it plays many functional and aesthetic function which include protection from the environmental hazard, enhancement of personality as well as role identification. Again it has been noted that the type of clothing worn by an individual is dependent on the physical, social and geographical considerations which include figure types, status and position held in the society and weather condition among others (Ozor, Olubiyi and Okeke, 2019). Clothing serves many purposes; it can serve as protection from sun and

rainfall, it also enhances safety during hazardous activities. It protects humans from rough surfaces by providing a barrier between the skin and the environment (Aji, 2015). Nwadi and Anyakoha (2011) stressed that when clothes are selected to meet the wearer's psychological, sociologically, cultural and physical needs; they are subjected to a variety of stressors such as dirt and pollen, moisture such as perspiration and rain, environmental pollutants, wrinkling, stains from contact with food or perfumes, sunlight, stretching from movement and abrasion. Again Ohaka, Lemchi and Ozor (2018) noted that clothing power should not be underestimated and that it is something people use to realize and validate themselves as they communicate their thoughts, values, attitude or feelings to others and receive responses from others both verbally and non verbally. The clothing choices of the family members tell others whether the wearer is conservative or not, out-going or reserved, casual or organized, conflict or unsure. The most important consideration of dressing mode should be what makes one comfortable and gives the wearer confidence. No matter how well clothes are, no person is ever well dressed unless those clothes are given appropriate maintenance. This implies that at every clothing selection, it must be serving a purpose on the wearer. Clothing plays important roles for female undergraduate students in Universities of Nigerian Nsukka since they have to protect and cover their

bodies for several reasons. Clothing is constantly consumed and valued by women, female undergraduate students inclusive and increasing clothing consumption may lead to impulse buying and unhealthy competition (Fabusuyi and Igbo, 2019). Ibrahim (2013) stated that change in clothing/dressing is inspired by fashion designers who decide to showcase their products in magazines, catalogues, newspapers and travels, cultural events such as stage play or life performance and art exhibition or a costume exhibit is also an inspiration. 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. Careful planning is the first step to being well dressed. It is difficult to build entirely new wardrobe, the individual has to start with what she has, determine what she needs and how to get the clothing articles (Forster, 2014). An individual should take stock of what is in the wardrobe, remove what is not needed and find out what can be altered to suit a new clothing need. For instance, a blouse with an out mounded puff sleeve can be changed and the money spent on other important needs or even saved.

According to Anyakoha (2015), there are different activities or occasion that determine what people wear which includes: school uniforms, sportswear and party wear among others. Students attend parties, social gatherings and in these kinds of

occasions, female undergraduate students seem to look their best and all these motivate the dressing pattern of female undergraduate students. Human beings have some inner drive which cause them to act. The impetus or force that drives human beings into setting and attaining significant goals in life is motivation. Chauhan (1983), defined motivation as the process of arousing movement in the organism, it impels an organism to action or adjustment. Motivation is the internal urge or drive or tension that spurs an organism into action, it pushes one towards achieving a goal. This implies that before one ever does anything, there must be a force or inner urge or drive that is stimulating the person. This also applies to pattern of dressing and these needs motivate female undergraduate students in their pattern of dressing in order to protect their bodies from such dangers. Social needs will lead to social interaction, social acceptance, love and acceptance. Female undergraduates are not left out in the society. They want to belong and be loved by others. This can motivate them to dress in such a way to attract this social acceptance without considering their figure types (Obunadike 2016). Esteem need - These include self-respect, recognition of status. This can also motivate female undergraduates in their pattern of dressing, who will want to be respected by their friends and people around them. Akubua (2002), revealed in his findings, that some of the motivational factors influencing the dressing patterns of female

undergraduate students are fashion trend, societal influence, one's philosophy of dressing, educational qualification, money available, cultural background, weather condition, age and psychological aspect of it. According to Amonoo (1979), the totality of any culture has influence on the popularity of their dressing pattern. When a particular style of dress comes in vogue or used by film stars and models, it is blindly followed/copied by university students (Pathak, 2013). Fashion trend today does not give precedence to comforts and practicality. Sometimes the dress, that goes beyond modesty and simplicity, which does not allow someone to sit or walk properly, is attracted by youth.

Most of Nigerian females have dropped their traditional pattern of dressing to foreign styles (Obete and Uwah, 2015). According to Akubua (2002), the female undergraduates are not exempted from these dressing practices. He observed in his findings that some female undergraduate students of universities have completely shifted to these crazy clothing practices which make them appear half naked most of the time. These students' put-on see-through blouses show your belly, topless dresses. Obunadike (2016), equally listed some of the scandalous dresses in the church as miniskirts, leggings, hipstars, hug-me/half cut, kiss me, Onitsha-show-your-back, show your chest parade blouses/gowns, off shoulder, spaghetti blouse/gowns, see-through-air-condition dresses,

sleeveless gowns/blouses, one-hand blouse, fish blouse, fly over, body hug, short gowns, boys and half trousers. They noted, that the females embarrass people with their mode of dressing, female undergraduates inclusive. These patterns of dressing have taken the place of a blouse and two wrapper for Igbo women and ladies, a blouse and a wrapper for Hausa women, and iro and buba for Yoruba women and ladies. According to Ohaka, Lemchi and Ozor (2018) dressing smartly is not a matter of having a lot of clothes or wearing expensive clothes nor is it necessarily wearing the latest fashion. The secret to be well dressed lies in choosing clothes that are right for one's body shape and activities. Anyakoha (2015) noted that there are different figure types and that what one wears depends on her unique body shape. No two persons are exactly the same in terms of figure type. One should not choose a dress because a friend or the other person is putting it on rather the figure type and occasion should be considered.

The female undergraduate students have been known to dress immodestly and this affects the way they are approached, addressed and regarded in the society. For instance, from personal observation, Reverend father Onoyima in St. Peter's catholic chaplaincy in the University of Nigeria Nsukka in the year 2001 to 2002 sent so many female undergraduate students out of the chapel, because of indecent dressing. The pressure of current trend of dressing mode, every female undergraduate student wanting to be

like others. Female undergraduate students are dressing carelessly without considering their figure types (Egwim, 2010). People with different figure types have styles and designs that they should wear and the ones to avoid in order to avoid embarrassment. As a result of current dressing, some females like to be like others and this brings about conflict between what they already know about modest dressing. While trying to meet up with this social factors, they tend to forget their physiology all in the bid to meet up with the trend in fashion and to be like others.

The dressing pattern of some female undergraduate students in Universities of Nigeria Nsukka is quiet embarrassing and disgusting, these students have completely shifted to immodest clothing practice that make them appear half naked most of the time. This has resulted to rape, sexual harassment, seduction of the males, kidnapping, killing and the vices (Obunadike, 2016). In Nigeria, tertiary institutions have been battling with the challenge of how students appear on campus and attend school functions especially the female undergraduate students. Many institutions tried adopting measures such as dressing code in order to curtail such dresses which institution feel is absolutely inappropriate to wear in public but these measures have not solved the problem because student still look strange in some of their outfits and even accessories which they use to compliment the outfits (Obunadike, 2016 and Omede, 2011). These dress

sense gives the authority a source of concern. These female undergraduate students attend lectures with dresses that expose sensitive body parts likes low necklines showing their burst, skinny jeans trousers below waistline which is tight-fitting down to the ankle and skimpy tops revealing pubic hair and pants. Use of time is also an issue of concern to the study because students so much engaged with beauty and fashion hardly have good time management, most times female undergraduate students are so much engrossed in what is trending and social activities in institutions at the expense of their studies.

#### **Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the motivational factors influencing female undergraduate students' pattern of dressing in University of Nigerian Nsukka. Specially, the study:

1. Identified the sociological motives underlying the dressing pattern of female undergraduate students.
2. Determined the psychological motives underlying the dressing pattern of female undergraduate students.
3. Identified the physical motives underlying the dressing pattern of female undergraduate students.

#### **Methodology**

*Design of the study:* The study adopted a descriptive survey design.

*Area of the study:* The study was carried out in University of Nigeria Nsukka. University of Nigeria is

owned by the Federal Government of Nigeria, it is situated in Nsukka town in Enugu state, Nigeria. The university has 17 faculties and 102 departments.

**Population for the study:** The population for the study was 22895 female undergraduate students 2018/2019 (obtained from ICT Department University of Nigeria Nsukka). This population comprised of all female undergraduate students from the 17 faculties in the university.

**Sample for the study:** Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted to select 50 female undergraduate students from six departments. In the first stage of the Multi-stage sampling, Balloting technique was used to select the six departments, the names of the 102 departments were written on a slip of paper separately, after writing their names on the slip of paper, the researcher had 102 slips of paper. All the 102 slips of paper were then placed in a closed box. A random male undergraduate student was called to select six slips of paper randomly from the box containing all the 102 slips of paper. The six slips of paper chosen randomly by the student contained six departments and they are: Psychology, Sociology, Home Science and Management, Home Economics and Hospitality Management Education, Fine and Applied Art and Mass Communication. Simple random sampling technique was used in the

second stage to randomly select 50 female undergraduates from each of the six departments, this gave a total sample size of 300 female undergraduate students.

**Instrument for data collection:** A questionnaire was used for data collection. It contained 36 items on the motivational factors influencing the dressing pattern of female undergraduate. It was developed based on the specific purposes of the study and review of related literature. The instrument was divided into three sections. It was validated by three Economists lectures. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) coefficient and a score of 0.83 was obtained.

**Data collection:** Three hundred copies of questionnaire were administered. Only 295 copies were completely filled and returned. This represents about 98% return rate.

**Method of data analysis:** The data were analyzed using means and standard deviation. The mean scores were used to determine motivational level on 5 - point rating scale for each of the item. Any item with mean score of 3.00 was considered a motivational factor influencing the dressing patterns of female undergraduates in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

## Results

**Table I: Mean Responses on Sociological Motives Underlying the Dressing Pattern of Female Undergraduate Students of UNN.**

S/N	Sociological motives underlying dressing	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	SD	Remarks
<b>Dressing to:</b>				
1	Draw attention of rich males in parties/ clubs.	4.02	2.02	Agreed
2	Appear younger in age.	3.68	1.85	Agreed
3	Follow fashion trend of the time.	4.26	1.98	Agreed
4	Appear half naked makes one to be attractive	2.28	0.96	Disagreed
5	Meet the pressure of fashion trend	3.28	1.78	Agreed
6	Society now accepts poor pattern of dressing	2.27	0.88	Disagreed
7	Get a suitor before age mates	2.08	0.92	Disagreed
8	Show family affluence/ wealth	3.52	1.64	Agreed
9	Be as actresses seen on television	4.33	1.90	Disagreed
10	Have many friends	4.01	1.87	Agreed
11	Be seen as the best dressed among friends	4.55	2.02	Agreed
12	Exhibit greatness	3.55	0.98	Agreed
13	Show civilization/ modernization	3.00	0.77	Agreed
14	Please friends in the same class	3.23	0.94	Agreed
15	Appear like some famous footballers	2.67	0.69	Disagreed
16	Be outstanding in any gathering	4.32	0.11	Agreed
17	Show the dressing styles seen on television advertisement	3.42	0.96	Agreed
18	Show the dressing styles on magazines/catalogue	3.99	0.90	Agreed
19	Model dress styles on billboard advertisement	3.22	0.92	Agreed
20	Attract opposite sex for immoral act	2.01	0.66	Disagreed

$\bar{X}$  = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; A = Agreed; D =Disagreed..

Table 1, shows the mean ratings of the respondents on fourteen out of the twenty sociological motives as factors that influence female undergraduate students pattern of dressing which had mean of 3.00 to 4.55 which are  $\geq$  the cut off value which is 3.00. This showed that the respondents agreed that fourteen motives influence female undergraduate students' pattern of dressing in University of Nigeria Nsukka. The mean ratings on items 4,

6, 7, 15 and 20 respectively which are less than the cutoff point 3.00, showed that the respondents disagreed with the six items as sociological motives that influence female undergraduate pattern of dressing in University of Nigeria Nsukka. The standard deviation (SD) values of the entire twenty items ranges from 0.66 to 2.02. This indicate that the responses of the respondents are close to one another.

**Table 2: Mean Responses on Psychological Motives Underlying the Dressing Pattern of Female Undergraduate Students of UNN**

S/N	Psychological motives underlying dressing pattern	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	SD	Remarks
	Dressing to:			
1	Please self	4.12	1.48	Agreed
2	Camouflage personal flaws	4.12	1.85	Agreed
3	Influence others	4.04	0.99	Agreed
4	Make people happy	4.1	1.86	Agreed
5	Make people angry	2.84	0.65	Disagreed
6	Make people laugh	4.52	1.87	Agreed
7	Entertain others	3.12	0.89	Agreed
8	Satisfy peer members	3.74	1.43	Agreed

$\bar{X}$  = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; A = Agreed; D =Disagreed..

Table 2, shows the mean ratings of respondents on seven out of the eight psychological motives as the motives that influence female undergraduate students pattern of dressing in University of Nigeria Nsukka which mean scores are  $\geq 3.00$  which is the cutoff value. They are therefore accepted as psychological factors influencing the female undergraduate

students dressing pattern in Universities Nigerian Nsukka. The respondents disagreed with item 5 as a psychological motive that influence female undergraduate pattern of dressing in University of Nigeria Nsukka. The standard deviation ranges from 0.89 to 1.87. This indicates that the responses of the respondents are close to one another.

**Table 3: Table 2: Mean Responses on Physical Motives Underlying the Dressing Pattern of Female Undergraduate Students of UNN.**

S/N	Physical motives underlying dressing pattern	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	SD	Remarks
	Dressing to:			
1	Camouflage defects	3.18	0.95	Agreed
2	Be admired by males	2.98	0.77	Disagreed
3	Appear more beautiful	4.26	1.68	Agreed
4	Follow fashion trend just to cover up	3.42	0.88	Agreed
5	Look good and attractive	4.20	1.90	Agreed
6	Show body shapes	4.56	2.20	Agreed
7	Be accepted by others	3.42	0.76	Agreed
8	Fit an event	3.64	0.88	Agreed

$\bar{X}$  = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; A = Agreed; D =Disagreed..



Table 3, reveals the mean ratings of respondents on seven out of the eight physical motives as the motives that influence female undergraduate students pattern of dressing in University of Nigeria Nsukka which mean scores are  $\geq 3.00$  which is the cutoff value. They are therefore accepted as physical factors influencing the female undergraduate students dressing pattern in Universities Nigerian Nsukka. The respondents disagreed with item 2 as a physical motive that influence female undergraduate students pattern of dressing in University of Nigeria Nsukka. The standard deviation ranges from 0.76 to 1.90. This indicates that the responses of the respondents are close to one another.

### **Discussion of Findings**

Findings in Table 1 revealed that dressing to draw attention of rich males in parties/ clubs, dressing in skimp wear to appear younger in age, dressing to follow fashion trend of the time, Current pressure of fashion trend, showing family affluence/wealth, showing family affluence/wealth, to have many friends, to be seen as the best dressed among friends, to exhibit greatness, to show civilization/modernization, to please friends in the same class, to be outstanding in any gathering, to show the dressing styles seen on television advertisement, to show the dressing styles on magazines/catalogue and to model dress styles on billboard advertisement are the motivational factors influencing female

undergraduate pattern of dressing. This is consistent with Pathak (2013) that noted that when a particular style of dress comes in vogue or used by film stars and models, it is blindly followed by college students. It is also in line with Aji (2015) who observed that fashion trend today does not give precedence to comforts and practicality. Sometimes the dress, that goes beyond modesty and simplicity, which does not allow someone to sit or walk properly, is attracted by youth more especially female undergraduate students just because they want to impress and appear like others. It is in line with Orekwe in Ejila (2014) and Akubua (2002) who observed that Nigerian Universities, do not provide any uniform or dress codes, the students are permitted a relative amount of freedom in their clothing choices and selections. The female undergraduates dress to sexually attract the male counterparts, to be admired and to seduce people (Egwim, 2010). It was also stressed that the females are more desirous of attracting the males with their clothing at the adolescent age. Again, the findings agreed with Ijaz (2011) that location, advertisement and peer among others influence clothing budget and expenditure of consumers including female undergraduates in Nigerian Universities which sometimes expose them to dangers in the hands of ritualist while trying to meet up with the demand.

Table 2 showed that dressing to please self, dressing to camouflage personal flaws, dressing to influence

others, dressing to make people happy and dressing to make people happy among others are the motivational factors that influence female undergraduates pattern of dressing. This is in consonant with Akpan, Nkan and Usoroh (2012) that the influence of others is a determinant factor in the attitudes, behavior and the purchase decision of individuals. It is also in line with Obeta, &Uwah, (2015) who observed that most times many of the adolescent undergraduate students' dress to make their peers happy without considering their figure types, occasion and weather condition.

Table 3 revealed that dressing/wearing sexy out-fit to camouflage defects, dressing in order to appear more beautiful, dressing to look good and attractive and dressing to show body shapes are the motivational factors influencing female undergraduate pattern of dressing among others. This is in agreement with Anyakoha (2015) that noted that people with different figure type and complexion vary. People should choose clothing article depending on the body shape not choosing what another person puts on. This disagreed with Obunadike(2016) who noted that female undergraduates dress in such a way to attract social acceptance without considering their figure types just to appear like others which has exposed some these indecently dressed female undergraduate students to rape and kidnapped among others.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that sociological, psychological and physical motives influence female undergraduate pattern of dressing. The female undergraduate students have some wrong motives for their pattern of dressing as they decide to appear half naked and seductive on campus just wanting to model actresses and impress peers. This has exposed many of the female undergraduate students to sexual harassment, rape and kidnapping among others. This can be put to check and control with proper guidance starting with parents at homes (especially mothers) and the school authorities. There is therefore need to educate female undergraduate students on the correct pattern of dressing.

### **Recommendation**

1. Based on the findings of these surveys the researcher recommends that societal norm and culture should be a great determinant factor of dressing pattern of female undergraduate students in Nigerian universities.
2. Parents should teach their daughters the appropriate dressing pattern mode while they are young and check what they wear both in the school and at home.
3. Religious leaders in Nigerian should help to direct theses youths in their pattern of dressing during worship.
4. The senate, the University Council, the student affairs, the head of departments and lecturers should

see the correction of ugly dressing styles of the female undergraduates as a serious abnormality that needs urgent attention and action.

5. Curriculum planners should integrate decent dressing code in the curriculum

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