Dressing Code and Sexual Characteristics of Younger Population in South Eastern Nigeria

U.M. Okeh
Department of Industrial Mathematics and Applied Statistics,
Ebonyi State University Abakaliki, Nigeria

Abstract: Younger populations' period is characterized by various incidences. This allows for confirmed inferences of different magnitude. This study looked into contemporary dressing code and sexual characteristics of younger populations in the South Eastern Nigeria with a view to establish whether there is a relationship between younger populations' dressing codes and their sexual characteristics and also, what influences their clothing habits. A total of 520 younger population students were randomly selected using quota-sampling method from available higher institutions in the South Eastern Nigeria. Dressing Code and Sexual Characteristics Questionnaire (DCSCQ) was used to collect data, which was analyzed by t-test statistics inference at a 0.05 level of significance. The result shows that there is no significant difference in the factors influencing younger populations' dressing habits and also the fact that there is relationship between dressing code and their sexual characteristics. Dressing codes should be introduced to the tertiary institutions while dressing style specifications should be adopted at the post primary institutions where style and kind of uniform are dictated. Schools should teach family life education that is all encompassing as a compulsory subject in schools and government should orientate the whole public on the need to be wearing body friendly clothes instead of uncomfortable, tight-fitting types as presently worn by younger populations and some elders.

Key words: Younger population, sexual characteristics, dressing code

INTRODUCTION

In the history of fashion and costumes, there is always a reason why cloth is worn. In man's early history, he wore clothes simply to keep warm, and the materials available – animal skins and furs then determined kinds of cloth. For example, Ice Age cave dwellers wore animal skins for extra warmth as some Inuit (Eskimo) hunters and Laplander reindeer herders still do – while many native African people wore and still wear very little. Then, if a man wore a lion's skin, you could be sure he was a brave hunter. Tribal chiefs liked to wear something (a crown, a hat or a cloak of a special color, perhaps) which no one else was allowed to have or wear. Younger population have long recognized the significance of clothing. To signal, connectedness and to distinguish themselves from others, groups of young people adopt styles of dress that express their particular distinct identity. It was observed that in making clothing choices, younger populations are demonstrating awareness that a style or mode of appearance has meaning (Hebdige,1979; Odeleye,2000). In then same manner, another researcher also corroborated this by asserting that clothing in any culture is a means of communication (Rowland-Warne,1992). This assertion, point to the fact that clothing conveys messages when members of a society who share a given culture have learned to associate types of clothing given customary usage. Through this customary association, certain types of clothes become symbols of mood, social role, socio-economic status or political class.

In the recent time, it has been observed that a change is occurring in the mode of dressing and clothing style of the younger population. This change as observed is noticed both in the rural and the urban area of the society. It is a common knowledge that with respect to our Igbo culture in the Eastern Nigeria, the mode of dressing and clothing is such that a young woman wears Akara, Aka and Ichafu Isi while the young man puts on Akara, Okpu Memme, Akupe and Aka. The observed little change or shift noticed in the past has the incursion of European mode of dressing brought about by the colonization of the Nigerians by the Whites which made young woman to wear skirts and blouse or gown while young man clad in a combination of shirt and trousers. But amongst the younger population, there is now a new mode of dressing and clothing. The younger population are desperately veering from the past mode of dressing be it the original Igbo mode of dressing or the type of dressing brought about by colonization. The younger populations' way of dressing has departed totally from the past. They dress weirdly and embarrassingly. The female younger population mostly dresses half nude; they prefer to wear trousers and skimpy shirts or tee-shirts that reveals their tummy, body hug which shows all the contours in their body frames or mini-skirt with a see – through tops while the boys although still wears shirt and trousers but which are always in various bigger sizes compared to their nominal sizes. This observed dressing code is not limited to a specific class of younger population. It cut across the entire socio-economic status, irrespective of their

educational level and status. This, has been going on for quite some time and therefore what used to be regarded as fashion which is described to be a period's desired appearance(Odeleye, 2000) is being turned to clothing which is regarded as an established patterns of dressing (Jennifer and Molly, 2002). However, looking at the modern day dressing code and the younger populations' sexual characteristics, one may tend to conclude that the former is an encourager of the former and also that it is the relationship between the two that is entrenching this fashion as dressing code among the younger population. The younger populations' sexual characteristics in the past few years has been a source of concern to many parents and researchers. Younger populations have been confirmed to be involved in series of sexual activities ranging from premarital sexuality or Coitus experimenting (Odujinrin,1991), multi-sexual partners (Oronsaye and Odiase, 1983), heterosexual breast stimulation and genital stimulation (Schoofield,1967; Ojo, 2000) which always lead to adolescent pregnancy (Akingba, 1977; Makinde, 1978) abortion (Olugbenga and Fasubaa,2005; Okonofua,1996; Fasuba and Ojo,2004) teenage maternal mortality (Abiodun, 1984), sexually transmitted diseases (Okonofua and Kaufmanm, 1999) and contracting of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome–AIDS (Eshiet,1995). The research therefore aims at investigating the factors that influences the dressing code of younger populations' and the impact which dressing code have on the sexual characteristics of the younger population and also establish the relationship between dressing code and sexual characteristics with a view to determine whether dressing is an extension of human personality, and if so, consider its implication for psychological development and younger populations' characteristics counseling.

Research Questions:

• What are the factors influencing the younger populations' dressing code?
• Is there relationship between the younger populations' dressing code and younger populations' sexual characteristics?
• Do the perception of the relationship between the populations' dressing code and younger populations' sexual characteristics among males and females tally?

Research Hypotheses:
• There will be no significant difference in the perception of male and female younger populations' as regard the factors influencing dressing code of the younger populations.
• There will be no significant difference in the perception of male and female adolescents as regards the relationships between the younger populations' dressing code and younger populations' sexual characteristics.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The descriptive survey method was used for this study. The sample for the study consisted of male and female younger population of students from Nigeria higher institutions located in the South-Eastern Nigeria. The students were drawn by quota sampling method from Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka in Anambra State, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu, Institute of Management and Technology Enugu, Abia State University,Uturu, Federal University of Science and Technology, Owere Imo State,and Ebonyi State College of Education, Ikwo. A total of 100 students who were in either part II or III were selected from each institution. This was done by a random distribution of questionnaires in the schools of education (IMT, Enugu and Ikwo College of Education), faculties of Law, Agriculture, and Natural Sciences (EBSU and NAU) and Social Sciences and Commerce – Banking, Finance, Marketing and Insurance (ESUT) and Arts and Administration (ABSU). The questionnaires was a simple paper and pencil type and were administered by the investigators assisted by lecturers, who were teaching large classes in parts II and III in each of the institutions used for the study. The questionnaires were administered and collected immediately. Thus, the total subjects that participated in this study were 600 but the Questionnaires found usable were 520. This was made up of 346 female younger population and 174 male younger population. 80 were discovered because they were badly completed.

Instrument: The research instrument. Dressing Code and Sexual Characteristics Questionnaire (DCSCQ) used for this study was designed by the researchers. It has two sections. Section A was designed to collect demographic data such as sex, age, religion, level of education of parents and the marital status (divorced, separated or intact) of parents. Section B consisted of 15 four-point Likert type items, which were made to reflect the focus of study. The subjects were required to respond to each item by choosing whether Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD).The instrument was validated by expert in Test and Measurement in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka while the reliability of the questionnaire was determined by the use of test re-test method using twenty part II younger population students of the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University,Awka. The re-test was done after a two-week interval. The coefficient was found to be equal to 0.62 and significant at 0.05 level of significance.

Scoring: Each respondent was rated numerically from 1-4 on each item. A respondentwho say "Strongly disagree" to a negative item obtains a high score (4) just as he does when he say "strongly disagree" to positive statement which attracts a score of 1. A response of "strongly disagree" to a positive statement attracts to the same scoring process as above.

Data Analysis: The two hypotheses raised for the study were tested and analyzed. For the hypotheses, t-test inferential statistics was employed in order to establish whether there is significant difference between the drawn means. Based on the t-test data, null hypotheses were rejected or accepted at 0.05 level of significance. Below are Table 1 and 2 showing the results of analysis.

Table 1: t-test of Difference in Perception of Adolescents as regards factors influencing Clothing Habits.

Adolescents	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit
Male	174	37.81	27.36	518	1.48	
Female	346	39.62	29.75		NS	

NS: Not significant at P >0.05

Table 2: t-test of difference in perception of male and female adolescents as regards the relationships between the adolescents dressing habits and sexual behavior

Adolescents	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit
Male	174	77.58	4.10	518	1.36	NS
Female	346	80.02	3.86			

NS: Not significant at P>0.05

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1: This stated that there would be no significant difference in the perception of male and female young population as regards the factors influencing dressing code of the younger populations. The scores of the 346 female young population and 174 male population were collated and analyzed using t test statistics for comparison of their means.

Hypothesis II: This stated that there would be no significant difference in the perception of male and female younger populations as regards the relationship between the younger populations' dressing code and younger populations' sexual characteristics. The null hypothesis comparing female and male younger populations is accepted. From table 1 above, t-calculated (1.48), df = 518, P >0 is smaller than the t-value. This means that there is no significant difference in the perception of younger populations as regards factors that influences the dressing code of the younger population. The null hypothesis is accepted. From table 2 above, t calculated value (1.36), df=518, P>0.05 is smaller than the t-value. This confirms that there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female adolescents as regards the relationship between the younger populations dressing code and younger populations sexual characteristics.

DISCUSSION

The result of the data analysis for the first hypothesis indicates that there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female as regards the factors that influences younger populations dressing code. It confirms that the two sexes dressing code are influenced by the same factors. Both the male and female younger populations acceded to influencing factors such as social approval, anxiety, and exhibitionism and modernity as the factors that influence their dressing code. The two sexes desire social approval of what they put on although female younger population may incline to their gender native and formation. The two sexes are not also anxious about whatever they put on. They are not anxious to conform to the dressing code of their culture but are anxious to put on latest in vogue dresses. They regarded the cultural clothing styles to be archaic. They are ready to exhibit themselves and what they have without being bothered by the originality of the clothing style provided that what they put on is the current styles in the western world (thanks to western films, Nigerian travelers, the Internet, and CNN; Style: a dressing exhibition programme which is regarded as an outlet for people to be aware of modern day clothing trend). Female younger population like male younger population now wear trousers of different shapes, colors and sizes. They prefer wearing trousers and skimpy dresses to skirts and gowns, which are regarded as ladies wear from time immemorial. These days when gown or skirt is worn, it will either be a mini length dress or body hug (tight) that will reveal their legs or the natural curves and shapes of their bodies. The result of the second hypothesis shows that there is no significant difference in the perception of both male and female younger population as regards the relationship between younger population dressing code and their sexual characteristics. This, thus confirm that the younger population themselves are aware of the fact that the current kind of dressing code and styles they regarded as fashion exposes them to opposite sex and also ignite and encourage libidinous (libido) intentions. Looking at the sexual characteristics of the younger population, several studies have confirmed the high incidence of premarital sexuality among unmarried youth (Odujinrin,1991; Feyisetan and Pebble, 1998; Makinwa-Adebusoye,2002). Other variations in foreplay and coitus such as kissing, breast / genital fondling (Owuamaman, 1982; Oyeneye and Kawonise, 1993; Diepold and Young, 1979; Alzate,1977; Soyinka,1979) and the high prevalent rate of adolescent pregnancies and contracting of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS (Ojo, 2000; Olugbenga and Fasubaa, 2005; Okonofua,1996; Eshiet, 1995) a resultant effect of unprotected sexual activity of the younger population. Evidence from the 1990 Nigeria Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) has not only confirmed the high incidence of all these younger populations' characteristics and happenings in urban centers, it also revealed that the incidences are not only limited to urban centers, but that rural areas are now inclusive. Considering the relationship of intent between the current dressing code of younger populations and the confirmed sexual characteristics, it could be infer that it is the un-waiver high incidences of younger populations' sexual characteristics that encourage the kind of dressing code the characteristics now display. It may also be vice versa. This, therefore connote that there is relationship

between the younger populations dressing code and their sexual characteristics. One could be regarded as the resultant effect of the other, that is, sexual habits can be considered as the resultant effect or the end product of the dressing code. The younger populations' kind and mode of dressing is out to entice and arouse the opposite sex for sex and other related sexual behaviors irrespective of whatever opinion they have about it. A researcher remarked that the first non-verbal message a person clad in black shirt and black trousers passes is death, or rather mourning (Odeleye,2000). He also asserted that differentiating the sexes, and arousing sexual interest are facilitated by the employment of categories of clothing signs. Respondents' responses to some items in the questionnaire show the feelings and thought of younger populations as regards their clothing style, type and habits. 482 (92.7%) strongly agreed to 'dressing to attract the attention of the opposite sex is only proper', 474 (91.1%) strongly agreed to 'there is nothing offensive in exposing part of the body' 470 (90.4%) agreed to 'I would do anything to wear the latest fashion in vogue', 418 (80.4%) agreed to 'dressing up is a major hobby in my life' and 461 (88.7%) also agreed to "it does not matter to me what others feel about my dressing". Also, 396 (76.2%) strongly agreed to 'I dress to please my admirers' while 402 (77.3%) and 417 (80.2%) respectfully agreed to 'I like to show off whatever I am wearing' and 'flashy designs are my choice when it comes to clothes'. These high positive responses also go for the item that says 'Dressing to attract the attention of the opposite sex is proper' and 'It does not matter to me what others feel about my way of dressing'.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively, the item-by-item analysis of the respondents' response to some items from the questionnaire has virtually corroborated the inference drawn as regards the establishment of relationship between dressing code of younger populations and their sexual characteristics. This further confirmed the fact that there is relationship between the two variables. This, thus reinstate the fact that clothing habits depict partly the kind of behavior and attitude a person could exhibit at any time and that clothing is an extension of personality since it is possible to infer the kind of person one is from one's attitude and dressing code. Candidly, there is nothing wrong in dressing the way one wants but sanity and moral justification should be parts of the variables to be considered along with ones culture when putting on some attitudes. There should not be any agitation if a young Briton lady or an American lady dresses according to the dictate of her culture with the hindsight of her weather but it will be abnormal for a young African lady to dress in contrary to the dictate of her culture and without respect for the weather in the name of fashion and vogue. The implication of the results of the study is that there is tendency for increase in the rate of adolescent rape and

pregnancy and also contracting of infections and HIV/AIDS apart from other sexual behaviors. The mode of dressing of the adolescents is an open invitation to these repercussions. In other to reduce and avert the resultant effect of these dressing code, it would be recommended that government; parents and school authorities should act decisively towards stopping the continued growth of all attitudes and behaviors that increases the immoral behaviors among the adolescents. Some of these dressing codes and what they portray is alien to our culture. Our culture does not support nudity or flaunting of bodies as if it is a product that is being put up for sale. Nudity does not only attract men, but also rapists. Good dressing is regarded as a cultural value. In this side of traditional setting, women who go to fetch water from the streams are not allowed to leave their hair uncovered, young girls are taught to sit properly early in their upbringing. Women do not climb palm trees and women do not throw their legs anyhow while men do not just cross the legs of women. This is sufficed to say that modernity is not a license for young girls and women to feel they are free to dress anyhow. Dressing codes should be introduced to the tertiary institutions while dressing style specifications should be adopted at the post primary institutions where style and kind of uniform are dictated. Schools should teach family life education that is all encompassing as a compulsory subject in schools and government should orientate the whole public on the need to be wearing body friendly clothes instead of uncomfortable, tight-fitting types as presently worn by younger populations and some elders. Lastly, guidance counselors should be employed in both the post-primary institutions and the higher institutions available in the southeastern Nigeria. These professionals in all ramifications have a lot to contribute to the personality growth and development of the youths in the school settings. They have a lot to offer if they are properly equipped to function effectively and efficiently. They will assist in helping out adolescents in schools.

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