



Fashion is a Form of a Self-Expression

Atabi Mandal¹, Rajeev Kumar²

¹Under Graduate Student, Amity Institute of Biotechnology, Amity University Chhattisgarh

²Amity Professor, Amity School of Fashion Technology, Amity University Chhattisgarh

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ABSTRACT

Clothing and fashion allow the multiplication of multiple personalities into one human being. The tendency to be “someone else”, even if it is only with some detail in the clothes, is based on the possibility of transformation of the individual. That transformation is done by masking man, more precisely, the aspiration of one person to transform at least for a short period of time. The possibilities offered by fashion, that a person can be someone else with the help of clothes, cosmetics or make-up are great. One of the most important functions of clothing and apparel is to achieve a sense of spiritual balance. In fact, with the help of clothing, certain shortcomings of a person are compensated, and, in that way, a certain psychological balance is achieved. The extent to which following fashion reduces the feeling of inferiority is seen in the fact that in most countries fashion is most closely followed by young people and immigrants, because it seems to them that dressing according to the latest fashion equals them with others.

KEYWORDS- Fashion, Clothing, Personality, Socio-cultural environment, Psychology.

INTRODUCTION

Fashion is very subjective. For everyone style and fashion can be different. What I may call fashion, may look like fashion faux pas and vice versa. In my opinion, fashion can be seen as a form of self-expression. When it comes to fashion, one cannot wear everything that is considered as 'fashion'. Fashion means what you're comfortable with yet it makes you look good/stand out. Through means of fashion and clothes, you can describe your personality. You can describe what type of person you are. Your clothes speak a lot for the person you are. Once Marc Jacobs said, "There are hints about who you are in what you wear." "When you wear something that is comfortable, cute, or fancy, it makes you feel good about yourself. It's self-knowledge and self-confidence expressed through what you choose to wear. Fashion is in the clothes, but style is in the person." fashion is a form of self-expression. You can switch it up according to how you feel, how you want to present yourself. You can switch up your styles, freestyle a little bit. It's not only a form of self-expression, but it's art!"

The clothes that we wear have a practical purpose. They keep us warm and comfortable at the very least. Our clothes also become a part of our identity. Whether we like it or not, what we wear gives off signals that help people to form an impression of us. Physical appearance is a kind of language, a subtle communication. Clothing can't tell people who you are deep down, but it is part of the slim profile of information that a person has about you on first meeting. As a form of self-expression, fashion can make us feel empowered and more in touch with our inner self. We can feel more confident if the clothes we are wearing and the way we present ourselves matches up with our personality, identity and mood. These signals about the “self” are also sent to others, but there are elements of this expression that are more about belonging to a specific group or conforming to expectations within our culture and society. Clothing is not only a great way to express yourself, but researchers suggest the types of clothing we wear can affect our behaviours as well as our confidence. By wearing clothes, we love, we feel confident in ourselves, and this is particularly important to wellbeing of the elderly. The positive impact that fashion has on the elderly doesn't stop there! Items in our wardrobes can hold many memories, whether it's a vintage piece that transports the owner to an era from their youth or an item that reminds them of a particular time in their life. Fashion is a great way to get the elderly to reminisce, which has a positive impact on their wellbeing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. FASHIONING THE SELF: PERFORMANCE, IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE

Fashion illustrates the various facets of individual identity; however, this perspective is often ignored or left unexplored in communications scholarship outside of a superficial overview of fashion, identity, and the self. By examining scholarship further, both within and outside of the study of communications, we find that there are methods used within a Western context that push the envelope, working toward a holistic approach to the study of fashion and communication, especially in relation to identity construction. This literature review explores various texts in both human and cultural communication scholarship in addition to interdisciplinary work from cultural studies, fashion theory, and anthropology that can be applied to the study of constructing identity. More specifically, an analysis of these texts will work towards understanding the negotiation of clothing to assemble and

maintain intersecting identities and enabling agency within larger structures of power. Fashion and communication have been of interest for quite some time, with authors such as Barnard and Davis writing on fashion methods to communicate culture and identity.³ There has been, to some extent, an examination of fashion and its communicative characteristics outside of clothing's functional, protective purposes.

Fashion acts as a language of sorts, a medium through which the individual can speak. Eco explored this concept, claiming that one can, 'speak through' his clothes... using clothes to do the same sorts of things as he uses the spoken word to do in other contexts... [Lurie finds] that there are many different languages of dress, each having its own vocabulary and grammar (Barnard 29). Using this understanding as a template, my thesis explores how fashion is essentially used as a language: telling stories; providing agency; and building identity, representations, and notions of difference. In order to dissect impressions of fashion as language, this literature review will examine three thematic elements of fashion in relation to producing agency, narrative through clothing, and the role of fashion in representing difference and identity. The first thematic element is "Fashion as Agency", which will define fashion and agency in relationship to communications scholarship. I will then examine arguments made by foundational feminist scholars on the oppressive, non-functional role of fashion. The second thematic element of the literature review is "Representations, Identification, and Difference". This section will first incorporate work found in cultural and anthropological studies of dress norms in different cultural milieus. The text will also explore Jake Simmons' definition and use of disidentification in challenging dominant systems of power, as well as Lars Svendsen's examination of fashion as philosophy. (JESSICA L. NEWMANN, UNIVERSITY OF DENVER DATE: 1-1-2011)

2.STYLING THE SELF: CLOTHING PRACTICES, PERSONALITY TRAITS, AND BODY IMAGE AMONG ISREALI WOMEN

Most psychological research on clothing focuses on social and cultural perceptions of the clothing that people choose to wear. It is conducted primarily in workplaces and reflects how people perceive and judge others' professionalism and reliability based on their clot. The effect of clothes on the wearer is thus examined in the context of the relationship between formal or informal style of dress and the person's self-perception in the workplace. There is a paucity of research on the idiosyncratic meanings of clothes and the emotional functions performed by daily choices of clothing—even though earlier theorists propose that clothing is the external manifestation of the self. Expressions such as "the second skin" and "the visible self" suggest both the physical contiguity between clothing and the body and the psychological proximity of clothing to the self. Sontag and Lee define the psychological closeness of clothing as determined by the extent to which clothing is (1) perceived as one with the self or as a component of the self; (2) recognized as an aspect of appearance by which the self is established and validated; (3) recognized as a significant symbol of one's identity, mood, or attitude; (4) perceived as an expression of self-regard or self-worth, (5) recognized as an element of an effective response to self-evaluation; or (6) related to body cathexis. The psychological effect of clothes on the wearers themselves was demonstrated by Adam and Galinsky's research, which found that simply donning a white lab coat increased performance on attention-related tasks and selective attention. The researchers coined the term "encloded cognition," which differs from embodied cognition because the link between physical experience and its symbolic meaning is indirect: it is the item of clothing that carries the symbolic meaning. This concept of clothing's symbolic and emotional may shed light on the question: Why do people in the same social cultural environment choose certain clothing styles and not others? Kwon's research suggests that individuals' clothing choices can reflect how they feel about themselves, and not only about how they want others to feel about them. Other studies have shown that individuals reinforce their mood and express their feelings through their clothing. Mood can be altered because the clothes selected may be perceived as fashionable, enhancing individuality and confidence, or providing physical comfort. The sample of female shoppers studied by Tiggemann and Lacey primarily chose clothes for the positive functions of assurance, fashion, and comfort. To date, psychological research on dress and clothing practices has focused almost exclusively on Western women. One rationale for this focus is that Western men have been shown to express less interest in clothing and fashion than women; millennials of all genders are likely to enjoy shopping, but women are still more involved with fashion than men. However, men have come under increasing pressure to conform to the cultural ideal of a lean, well-toned, muscular body, and they, too, manage their appearance and body image through clothes.

The unique relationship of Western women to clothes develops on the background of their socialization into roles that are preoccupied with appearance and how others see them. Women may use clothes to display or disguise their bodies. Clothing thus affects the degree to which women are objectified and appraised. It was found that women selected clothes more for camouflage and less for individual self-expression when they felt "fat" than when they felt thinner. Higher body mass index (BMI) and body dissatisfaction were related to the use of clothing as camouflage. Tiggemann and Andrew's findings also show interrelationships between women's attitudes toward clothing and their attitude toward their bodies. (TALI STOLOVY, 2021)

3.SELF EXPRESSION THROUGH FASHION

Did you know on average a person makes 35,000 decisions per day? And you may not realise deciding what to wear is one of the most important daily decisions you make that helps you to express your self-identity. Through our clothing, we can non-verbally communicate a part of our personality. Whether that be expressing your sensitive side by wearing floral print or indicating you're an extravert by wearing an eye-catching statement piece. Here at brighter kind, we encourage our residents to continue expressing themselves through their personal choices including their sense of fashion. Getting older does not mean you stop caring about how you present yourself. The smell of a favourite scent or aftershave, the feeling of fabric, the sparkle of jewellery or completion of an accessory all has a huge impact on individualism and feeling like 'you'.

Clothing is not only a great way to express yourself, but researchers suggest the types of clothing we wear can affect our behaviours as well as our confidence. By wearing clothes, we love, we feel confident in ourselves, and this is particularly important to wellbeing of the elderly.

The positive impact that fashion has on the elderly doesn't stop there! Items in our wardrobes can hold many memories, whether it's a vintage piece that transports the owner to an era from their youth or an item that reminds them of a particular time in their life. Fashion is a great way to get the elderly to reminisce, which has a positive impact on their wellbeing.

4.FASHION, SELF EXPRESSION AND MENTAL HEALTH

Researchers from America's North western University found that wearing specific articles of clothing impacted the wearer's psychology and performance. The study suggested that some clothes are imbued with symbolic meaning. And when we wear these clothes, they can influence our psychological state and performance. This is called, 'enclothed cognition'. An example of this is changing from your work clothes into a little black dress for a big night out. Because the black dress has symbolic meaning (seductive, formal, exciting) then there may well be a measurable impact on our mental state and subsequent behaviour. Another interesting study published in 2019, found that women tend to dress to reflect their emotions, whereas men dress for how they want to be perceived. This means that women assess how they're feeling and dress in accordance. For them fashion is self-expression. But men are more likely to dress to impress others, particularly their peers at work. The world's first self-styled fashion psychologist, Dr Dawnn Karen, has coined the phrase dopamine dressing. This means dressing to feel happier and stronger. I'm aware how frivolous and fickle this all sounds. However, it's worth noting that Dr Karen's first foray into fashion was following a serious sexual assault by her former fiancé. After this devastating event, she employed clothes as her armour, which allowed her to face the world looking like a woman in control. If you're interested, Dr Karen shares more about the restorative power of fashion in her Ted x talk. And, if you've ever been depressed, or overwhelmed, then you'll understand how your sense of style can just disappear. As a new mum, I emerged from my cocoon of sleepless nights and endless breast feeding with no idea what to wear. My body has changed, my lifestyle had altered, and my sense of self had deserted me. And this isn't an unusual experience. But trying to find the brain power to dress authentically, when your inner self has changed dramatically, can feel impossible. (ANNA, 2021)

5.SELF EXPRESSION THROUGH NON – CONFIRMITY IN FASHION

Fashion has always encouraged people to play dress up to look and feel good. However, fashion is based on trends, popularity or the reigning pop culture. This does not truly allow a person to express his/her/them personality. There are many self-styled fashion gurus however, what we see is almost the same, with very few people trying to break the mould that has been passed off as norms. *Self-expression* is about non-conforming and needs to truly resonate with the wearer.

What is self-expression? Is too little just right? Or just right is the way to go? Or do we go, all out? Does fashion truly allow you to express yourself? Do people who dress differently, condoned as freaks? Should we hate on them?

People like Daniel Lismore, Pandemonia, (Late) Leigh Bowery have embraced their true self without caring for the opinions of others and have bravely trodden on the path to *non-conformity*. These mavens have dedicated themselves as living works of art.

Daniel Lismore, wears many hats that of a fabric sculptor, designer, campaigner, creative consultant, writer and Creative Director of Sorapol. Through his work explores and shares cultures to highlight his sculptural approach to clothing. While creating a look he is guided by colour, texture, and shape. His collection boasts of 6000 pieces ranging from 2000-year-old roman rings to ancient Buddhist artifacts, *vintage* fabrics, found objects, ribbons, feathers, shells, and chain mail, intricate headdresses, art history inspired frocks, and a bevy of trinkets. Lismore combines these varied materials and accessories that highlight his multidimensional personality. The ensemble is supported by vivid makeup to complete the dramatic look. All the looks are documented through self-portrait photography.

However, his path of self-expression did not come easy and has tackled his share of downturns. This perseverance has made him the subject of a book titled *Daniel Lismore: Be Yourself, Everyone Else is Already Taken*. It features 30 ensembles that portray historical, social, and cultural themes from around the world along with a prominent feature at some prestigious museums. Lismore's distinct style of dressing also earned him the moniker as "London's Most Outrageous Dresser" by Vogue.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- Why is self-expression important in fashion?
- What are the benefits of self-expression?
- How is fashion a form of expression?
- How do you use fashion to express yourself?
- How does fashion affect your self-image?
- What is self-expression strategy?
- Why is self-expression and creativity important?
- How does self-expression help students?
- How does fashion shape our identity?
- How does fashion influence your personality?
- What is self-concept in fashion?
- Is fashion important in our life?
- Does fashion determine your personality?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

When evaluating information, it is useful to identify if it's a *Primary, Secondary, or Tertiary source*. By doing so, you will be able recognize if the author is reporting on his/her own first-hand experiences or relying on the views of others.

Primary

A first person account by someone who experienced or witnessed an event. The original document has not been previously published or interpreted by

anyone else.

- First person account of an event
- First publication of a scientific study
- Speech or lecture
- Original artwork
- Handwritten manuscript
- Letters between two people
- A diary
- Historical documents, e.g., Bill of Rights

Secondary

One step removed from the primary original source. The author is re-examining, interpreting and forming conclusions based on the information conveyed in the primary source.

- Newspaper reporting on a scientific study
- Review of a music CD or art show
- Biography

Tertiary

Further removed from a primary source. It leads the researcher to a secondary source, rather than to the primary source.

- Bibliography
- Index to articles
- Library catalog

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Fashion Designer

They create the new products with respect to the latest trends that are currently prevailing in the marketplace. In this role, fashion designers are the key players when it comes to the fashion industry. If you are creative, can think out of the box, hardworking and can handle all kinds of pressure with a positive attitude, then you are going to be suitably rewarded for your talent with a fulfilling career as a fashion designer.

Fashion Illustrator

A fashion illustrator's responsibility is to prepare the primary sketches of the idea expressed by the fashion designer. In order to prepare the sketches, the designers explain to the illustrator what they really want. An illustrator is someone who helps in bringing to life the ideas and creations of the fashion designer.

Fashion Stylist

The job of the fashion stylist is to maintain the makeup, dress code, hairstyle, etc. for making sure that the models participating in a fashion show look their part. They are the people who help the models dress and prepare for showcasing the creations of designers in different fashion shows. Given the increase in fashion shows in India and abroad, fashion stylists are in great demand these days.

Fashion Coordinator

The fashion coordinator has the responsibility of managing the arrangements and the marketing policies of a fashion designing house or company. They are in no way related with the task of designing. Their responsibilities include organizing fashion shows, advertising products, etc.

Fashion Consultant

They are individual consultants who help their clients enhance or develop their personal and professional images. A fashion consultant needs to be fully aware of the trends and the transitions happening in the industry and should also have knowledge of fashion designing to help the clients achieve the required personal or professional image through fashion makeover.

Fashion Merchandiser

Fashion merchandisers need to study fashion trends for determining various strategies through which a provider of fashion product or a retail store can merchandise. Analysing the past and the latest trends along with the sales data are some of the key deliverables of this role. These professionals need to possess the knowledge of fabrics, fashion trends, hues, textures, market demand of fashion products, production procedures etc.

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Fashion can change and shape lives through its personal connection to us all. We all must wear clothes and every piece of clothing we buy represents a personal choice – it is this intrinsically human relationship between us and our fashion that makes it political. Fashion stands for liberalism, individualism, and open culture. It is an expression of one's personality and a symbol of freedom. Some dismiss fashion as superficial, and it suggests that those with this attitude have never given serious thought to the history and symbolism of wardrobe.

Self-expression allows us to understand ourselves and process our emotions. Research conducted at the Georgetown Behavioural Health Institute confirms that self-expression in the arts positively affects mood, function, cognition, and behaviour.

RESEARCH ANALYSIS

Clothes reflect who you are, how you feel now and sometimes even what you want to achieve in life? Always remember whatever you wear should reflect the real you. Your dressing sense reflects your personality, character, mood, style and what you are as an individual. Fashion shape's identity in a multitude of different ways; from the colours we pick, to the stores we frequent, who we are is ingrained in our style. Anything we wear, from hair dye to tattoos, is a part of our style. Our individual personalities influence whether we want to dye our hair or get a new piercing. Self-perceptions such as sociability, emotional stability, dominance, and work competency vary based on whether a person had a positive or negative feeling about their own dress. When a person indicates high clothing satisfaction, they have higher levels of sociability than those who experienced low satisfaction. The colour, comfort, fit and style of our clothes can directly affect our confidence levels. More than 96 per cent of people report a change in their emotional state with a change in their style of dressing. Fashion stands for liberalism, individualism, and open culture. It is an expression of one's personality and a symbol of freedom. Some dismiss fashion as superficial, and it suggests that those with this attitude have never given serious thought to the history and symbolism of wardrobe.

WORK DONE ANALYSIS

People have been using fashion as a form of self-expression for a very long time. But with originality comes judgment from others, making it difficult for those who want to dress differently from society's standards. "Don't be into trends. Don't make fashion own you but you decide what you are, what you want to express by the way you dress and the way you live. But society traditionally has restricted many people from expressing themselves creatively with fashion. For example, blue has traditionally been associated with men; pink with women. This gender-restricted mentality was installed in people's minds since they were young. A boy wearing pink would be labelled "gay" or get questioned about wearing this "feminine" colour. Today, thankfully, some are working hard to break down those barriers, and let people feel free to wear whatever they feel most comfortable in. Man, United's pink tops as part of their kits is a perfect example of people being more accepting, as football is seen as a "man's sport." And the Duchess and the Duke of Sussex decorated their son's room using a neutral scheme palette. Seeing people with such influence partake in breaking down these barriers is a step towards a better future.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY ANALYSIS

1. You buy clothes you like, regardless of the current fashion.

Nowadays, we live in consumerism advanced era in which whether following fashion trends or not has become a debatable issue, especially, among the young generation. Some people believe that pursuing this trend is a good way of improving people's lifestyles, while many others argue that people should dress something more comfortable. I advocate the latter group at least for two main reasons elaborated below.

The first group claim that currently, wearing in vogue clothes enhances the sense of pride and self-confident among the people. In addition, it is a necessary task for celebrities and famous individuals. Of course, they are right to some extent, but I am of the conception that the drawbacks of following this trend outweigh its benefits.

Firstly, it is obvious that fashion is a changeable trend by its nature. Consequently, following this dynamic procedure cost so much and it is kind of wasting people's money and time. Moreover, it should be mentioned that the main purpose of wearing clothes is to protect humans' body from different weather conditions rather than showing off.

Secondly, people's clothes should illustrate their own personality and uniqueness instead of mocking someone else who works for the film or fashion industry. To be more precise, people should appreciate their own tastes, believes. However, the predominant feature of fashion is being against the traditions and cultures of many societies.

2. You buy new fashion looks only when they are well accepted.

Consumers are exposed each season to a multitude of new styles created by **fashion designers**. Some are rejected immediately by the press or by the buyer on the retail level, but others are accepted for a time, as demonstrated by consumers purchasing and wearing them.

The way in which fashion changes is usually described as a fashion cycle. The fashion cycle is usually five stages: introduction, rise in popularity, peak of popularity, decline in popularity, and rejection. Fashion cycle is a period or life span during which the fashion exists, moving through the five stages from introduction through obsolescence.

3. You prefer to buy well-known designer labels rather than take a chance on something new.

There's never an easy time to build a new fashion label. But these rising brands made big moves—like making their runway debuts or launching a new womenswear category.

4. Are you confident of your taste in clothing.

A great taste in fashion means that someone has discovered what they look good in while also reflecting current fashion trends. Looking good is not only about looking presentable but also being comfortable in what you are wearing. Dressing well allows one to gain self-confidence and that's an important aspect of communication. Good communication skills can be obtained easily if one decides to choose what to wear wisely.

5. Do you like clothes that highlight your features.

The type of clothes you wear and the colours you choose all send out subliminal messages on the type of person you are. Additionally, research has shown that the way you dress not only conveys the type of person you are but can also influence the way you think. A person's first impression of you is influenced by your appearance. This is why clothing and grooming can be so important in interviewing for jobs, making new friends, and many other life situations. The way you look may make another person or group want to know more about you or lose interest in you.

6. What you think of yourself is reflected by what you wear.

Your dressing sense reflects your personality, character, mood, style and what actually you are as an individual. People wearing gaudy clothes with loud make up are generally extroverts and love partying. You really can make out what sort of person an individual is by his/her dressing. Clothes have developed from a practical asset to a social marker: they affect the way we see ourselves. They help us to be seen in the light that we wish to be, and exude our personalities and social status. In many societies, dress sense embodies personal wealth and taste. Many people use fashion to express themselves. Wearing clothing that doesn't match your personality can make you feel awkward and disconnected. Those with a strong sense of self typically experience higher self-esteem and improved confidence.

7. You dress well to suit the event and place.

The dress code is also important because the first impressions give a large impact in the future if he/she will meet the people for the second time, and we only get one and only chance to have a positive impression. First impressions are formed about how they dress on a particular situation. People are also likely to pay attention to what you are saying if you are dressed appropriately for the function or event. Whether it is an interview, political campaign, television show, business meeting, or social event, proper attire can help you achieve your personal and professional goals. The act of getting dressed also prepares our mind and body for a day of work and separates the home space from the work, so you don't end up getting too comfortable with the latter. Clothes can have a direct impact on our mental wellbeing, too.

8. Do you agree how you look is an integral part of your personality?

When you look good, people admire you and when they admire you, you start feeling confident. A confident person always attracts the crowd. Looking good gives, your enormous confidence. When you look good you feel good from within, and when you feel good that energy reflects in the entire space around you. Physical appearance is a major factor in the development of personality, because people form opinions by what they see in a person physically and respond to that person accordingly. In turn, people tend to fulfil the expectations they believe others have for them. Your appearance can affect the way people treat you, you can learn to manage how these people are reacting to you. Additionally, there are things that you can do to deal with the prejudice that you face.

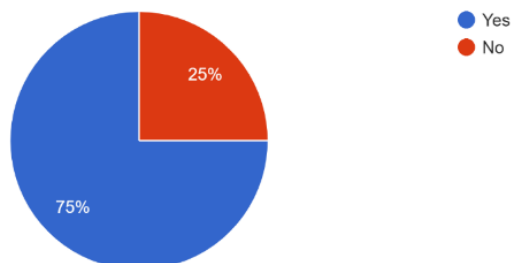
9. Which type of outfit you feel confident in it.

Fashion not only enhances your appearance, but also helps you feel good. Clothes improve your appearance which in turn makes you feel better and keeps you in a good mood. Another reason is that people are emotionally attached to their clothes. Scientists term this effect of fashion on our mood as "enclothed cognition". Confidence is about how you carry yourself when you're out in the world + that includes how you choose to dress. Dressing confidently is a combination of so many factors, such as - fit, personal taste, colour, body shape, skin tone, lifestyle, + even what society says an outfit means.

TABULATION AND GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION

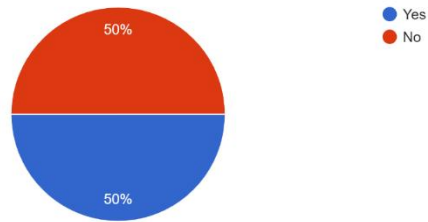
You buy clothes you like, regardless of the current fashion.

12 responses



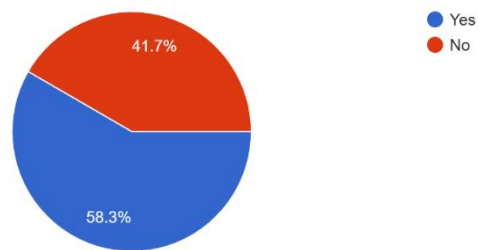
You buy new fashion looks only when they are well accepted.

12 responses



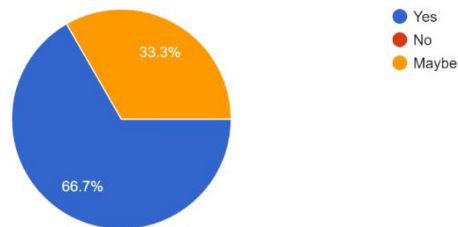
You prefer to buy well-known designer labels rather than take a chance on something new.

12 responses



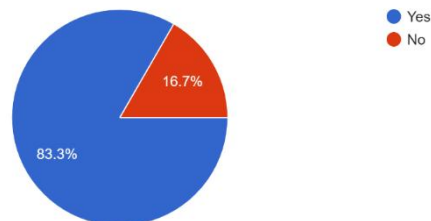
Are you confident of your taste in clothing.

12 responses



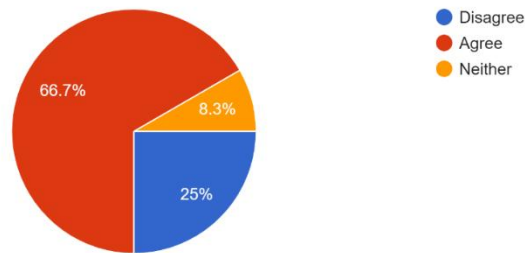
Do you like clothes that highlight your features.

12 responses



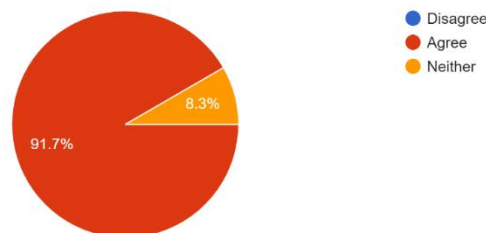
What you think of yourself is reflected by what you wear.

12 responses



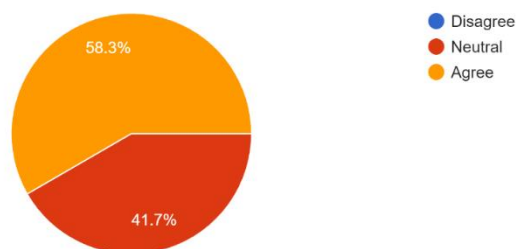
You dress well to suit the event and place.

12 responses



Do you agree how you look is an integral part of your personality?

12 responses



CONCLUSION

Fashion is a form of self-expression. When you wear something that is comfortable, cute, or fancy, it makes you feel good about yourself. It's self-knowledge and self-confidence expressed through what you choose to wear. Fashion is in the clothes, but style is in the person. Fashion stands for liberalism, individualism, and open culture. It is an expression of one's personality and a symbol of freedom. Some dismiss fashion as superficial, and it suggests that those with this attitude have never given serious thought to the history and symbolism of wardrobe. Your wardrobe is a form of self-expression and allows you to be creative every day. It should reflect your personality, say something about who you are as a person and your values. Clothing that doesn't fit well or fails to flatter one's silhouette can lead to a poor body image, and that can do significant damage to one's self-esteem. Wearing clothing designed to complement your unique figure, will help you can experience improved body image and confidence. Fashion has a powerful way of boosting one's self-confidence. Knowing your style, the colours you look best in, and the pieces that radiate your personality and lifestyle can create a unique ensemble that will leave you placid and fearless no matter the occasion. Fashion transforms your self-perception.

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