



# Dressing Dilemmas: A Comparative Analysis of College Boys and Adult Male

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## ABSTRACT

This research aims to explore the relationship between clothing preferences, fashion behaviors, and identity creation among college boys and adult males. The study also, recognizes the significance of fashion in self-expression, social affiliation, and non-verbal communication, investigating how clothing choices reflect personal style, societal trends and cultural influences, providing individuals with a means to visually communicate their identities and aspirations.

By uncovering the relationship between college boys' fashion and adult male clothing styles, fashion trends and clothing styles undergo continuous evolution, and understanding the dynamics between different age groups can provide valuable insights into consumer behavior and market trends. The findings will contribute to a deeper understanding of how fashion preferences evolve over time and can benefit apparel marketers and fashion professionals in developing tailored strategies to target different consumer segments.

**Keywords:** Fashion behaviors, college boys, adult male, identity creation and self-expression.

## 1. Introduction

Fashion is an ever-evolving realm that reflects personal style, societal trends, and cultural influences. The choices individuals make in their clothing style often serve as a means of self-expression and can vary significantly across different age groups. In particular, the fashion preferences of college-aged individuals, commonly referred to as college boys, are known to be shaped by various factors, such as peer influence, social trends, and personal identity exploration.

This study is to investigate clothing preferences of college boys and adult men, and to study the relationship between different clothing behaviours and styles, to know the importance of clothing and fashion for identity creation and communication.

The clothing style preferences of adult males, often influenced by maturity, lifestyle, and personal experiences, may differ from those of their younger counterparts. As college boys venture into adulthood and their fashion tastes continue to evolve, it becomes essential to understand how their clothing style resonates with the perceptions of adult males.

Fashion is filled with meanings and symbols through which people can visually communicate with one another in a rapid or direct manner. Fashion provides individuals with a means to convey their self-perception and personal identities through their choice of attire as it serves as a visual language that enables people to communicate like, who they are, who they want to be and what type of social groups they want to belong to. Each individual has their own positive reference point or a negative reference point that they use to achieve their desired identities.

Clothing and fashion play a significant role in the creation and communication of one's identity. Some key points to highlight the importance are:

*Self-expression:* The clothing choices allow individuals to express their unique personalities, tastes, and values and to showcase their individuality and creativity.

*Cultural and Social Identity:* Clothing can reflect cultural heritage, traditions, and social affiliations, which helps people connect with their cultural roots and express their belongingness to specific communities or groups.

*Personal Empowerment:* Wearing clothes that make individuals feel confident and comfortable can boost self-esteem and empower them.

*Non-Verbal Communication:* Clothing choices often send non-verbal messages about one's personality, profession, interests, and social status.

*Adaptation and Integration:* Clothing choices can help individuals adapt to different social environments and conform to specific dress codes or norms.

*Trends and Innovation:* Fashion constantly evolves, reflecting societal changes and new trends. It allows individuals to stay updated, experiment with new styles, and embrace innovation.

People can convey themselves through dress and fashion that's creating their social identity. Social identity theory suggests that an individual's self-concept is formed and influenced by their membership in various social groups.

Clothing plays an important role in elderly people's life as they are much concerned about their appearance and clothing. Clothing serves to maintain a positive self-image for elderly people. Elderly people change to experience some sort of psychological trauma due to their diminished role in society and at home, their declining physical and mental ability, financial difficulties and reduced social exchanges, and in particular they suffer uniquely from their clothing life.

Life satisfaction and appearance satisfaction also explains the clothing behavior of the people. Satisfaction with physical look, social participation, social status and academic background are important variables of appearances satisfaction. Clothing behavior has been found to significantly impact life satisfaction among elderly individuals, regardless of gender. The more educated and higher-class people are more concerned about their appearance. Men's fashion offers a growth in selecting a diverse and gender-blurring clothing for mainstream male consumers.

Generation Y men, who are highly engaged in fashion and appearance management, present an opportunity to examine the influence of self-esteem and body dissatisfaction on clothing-related behaviors. Generation Y consumers, also known as Millennials, have a significant interest in fashion and apparel products and are among the largest population segment that shops at fast fashion retailers. Self-esteem has been found to have a negative relationship with body dissatisfaction, and men's body dissatisfaction encompasses dimensions of weight, muscles, and height. However, it is proposed that individuals who are dissatisfied with their bodies may engage in clothing-related behaviors to enhance their appearance and communicate their self-identities.

Market segmentation is crucial for retailers and academics to understand consumer behavior and develop effective marketing strategies. Market segmentation based on benefits sought is a valuable tool for understanding consumer behavior and shopping orientations. However, there is a need for more comprehensive research that combines shopping orientations, brand preferences, and demographic characteristics to provide a holistic understanding of college students' apparel shopping behavior.

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## 2. Methodology

The methodology of the study will be done by collecting the data through primary and secondary research.

Primary data includes, collecting data through surveys and interviews.

Secondary research includes, collecting data from the studies done by the researchers and their published research papers.

Also, a mixed-method approach will be employed with the combination of, quantitative and qualitative survey or analysis, which is aimed to explore the interplay between college boy's fashion choices and the clothing style preferences of adult males (Primary Research Methodology).

Quantitative aspects involves, distribution of a survey to males of different age groups, asking them about their fashion preferences and clothing behaviors and the style they go for.

Whereas, the Qualitative component of the survey can provide richer insights into the reasons behind the observed quantitative trends, which can benefit them with the required solution as per their preferences and identities.

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## 3. Result and Discussion

From the secondary source of research, it was found that, the clothing behaviors, satisfaction level and demographic variables associated by college boys and adult males can suggest companies to develop a well customized tailored garments to meet the specific needs and preferences of the growing consumer segment.

The survey provides an initial theoretical contribution to the field of fashion and textiles, through the information gathered on relationship between college-aged men's and adult male identities and their clothing choices.

The survey results indicated that both college boys and adult males showed a preference for casual and trendy clothing styles, which suggests a shared appreciation for contemporary fashion trends and a desire to express individuality through clothing choices.

However, adult males displayed a slightly stronger preference for formal clothing styles as compared to college boys, indicating more maturity and required attire as individual's progress into adulthood.

Everyone individual has its own clothing preferences depending on the type of attire they want and according to their budget-friendly brands. People also mentioned that their clothing choice gets affected with whomever they go on shopping, as they are quick at picking up the style, rather being confused while on solo shopping.

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#### 4. Conclusion

The research summarizes that, clothing and fashion plays a significant role in identity creation and communication. The choices college-aged individuals, make are influenced by peer influence, social trends, and personal identity exploration. Their fashion preferences reflect their desire to showcase individuality and creativity, often leaning towards casual and trendy styles.

On the other hand, adult males, shaped by maturity, lifestyle, and personal experiences, may have different clothing style preferences. Their fashion choices are influenced by factors such as professional requirements, social expectations, and personal values.

Clothing and fashion allow individuals to express their unique personalities, cultural affiliations, and social identities. It serves as a form of non-verbal communication, conveying messages about one's personality, interests, and social status. Fashion also empowers individuals by boosting self-esteem and providing a means of adaptation and integration into different social environments.

Understanding the importance of clothing and fashion for identity creation and communication can inform marketers, designers, and researchers in developing strategies that cater to the specific preferences and needs of different age groups. By recognizing the unique fashion behaviors and styles of college boys and adult males, companies can tailor their products and marketing approaches to effectively engage and connect with these consumer segments.

Overall, clothing and fashion serve as powerful tools for self-expression, social affiliation, and communication, allowing individuals to visually convey their identities and aspirations. The ever-evolving realm of fashion continues to play a vital role in shaping individual and collective identities across various age groups.

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