



# **Influence of Parents' Attitude and Peer Pressure on Dressing Pattern among Undergraduates of Federal Universities in North Central Nigeria: Implications for Counselling**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study was carried out to assess the influence of parents' attitude and peers pressure on dressing pattern among undergraduates of federal universities in north central Nigeria with Counselling implications. The study was conducted using survey research design with the population of 150,014 undergraduates in north central Nigeria. A sample size of 400 students was obtained using multi-stage sampling procedures. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire titled Parent and Peer Factors Influencing Dressing of Undergraduates' Questionnaire (PPFIDUQ). The reliability of the instrument was 0.85 using Cronbach Alpha. Two specific objectives and corresponding research questions guided the study. Two hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Data collected were analyzed using chi square goodness of fit using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). The result revealed that, parents' attitude and peer group pressure has significant influence on undergraduates dressing in Federal Universities in North-central Nigeria. Hence the two null hypotheses were rejected. Based on the findings, the study recommends among others that, parents should serve as role models, inculcate right values and dressing sense in their wards and university authorities should intensify awareness campaign on the importance of abiding by the stipulated dress code.

**Key words:** Influence, Dressing, Parents' Attitude, Peer Group Pressure.

## **Introduction**

University is a place where a systematically organized and scientifically oriented education is offered. It is through such an education that discipline, knowledge, skill and desired attitude or behaviour of the learner is developed. Discipline especially in terms of decent dressing pattern is an essential ingredient of an enabling environment. The university environment is described as both an academic and social institution. However, it is observed that the attitude and behaviour towards dressing particularly among undergraduates do not conform to moral standard of the school environment. Nigerian universities are battling with waves of indecency. This situation the researcher thinks could be as a result of factors which include those social factors that influence dressing of the students both in the home and school. Otunaiya, Opeoluwa & Akinbola (2020) pointed out that behaviour of students with respect to dressing is affected by a large number of intra-personal, inter-personal and demographic factors such as institute, culture, policies among others.

Dressing in general terms refers to all forms of popular style and practice, especially in clothing, footwear, accessories, makeup /haircut /hairstyle, handbags, watches, body piercing among others. It is also an act of putting on clothes. It is also a deliberate act of an individual combining cloths and its accessories to fit a predetermined occasion. In its widest sense, it includes a great range of material that man wears or applies to the body which includes dresses, shoes, jewelry, hairdo and make- up and others.

The purpose of dressing includes covering, protecting, beautifying or adorning the body. Clothes are one of the basic necessities of man. Dresses can be a sign and semblance of one's honour and it tells a lot of stories about the wearer thus the saying, 'You are addressed the way you dress'. This implies that dressing sends a lot of signals about the person putting it on; information such as moral stands, culture, family values. Therefore, dress that someone decides to wear determines the impression people have about such an individual. Dresses are also for protection of the body against harsh weather conditions as well as for covering the intimate parts of the body. These purposes are important especially as they form major aspects of a person's personality. Though, according to Imoh (2015), there are no universally acceptable ways of dressing; dresses are meant to serve some purposes, irrespective of nationality or race. This means that there are basic norms and behaviours that guide human dressing; which suggest decent pattern or indecent pattern.

Decent dressing is the proper way of dressing or the generally acceptable way of dressing without exposing vital parts of the body (Sadiq, 2015). It elicits respect and protects the person's dignity. Decent dressing pattern should ensure that the clothe covers body parts including stomach, belly button, back, shoulders, chest and the legs below the knees. It also includes small earring and light makeup, low heeled noiseless shoes and clean hair. In addition, Ewulo, (2016) added that a combination of the right wears should conform to the occasion which it will be used for. Due to influence of peers and other environmental pressure in higher institutions of learning, they have exaggerated need to appear and belong thereby giving rise to indecent dressing pattern among the undergraduates

Indecent dressing can be implied as when someone, male or female dresses to show off parts of the body such as the breast, buttocks or even the underwear particularly those that need to be covered (Ozobo, Olomu and Ayinmoro 2014). Yahaya, (2013) considered indecent dressing as improper and provocative way of dressing relative to the society or culture in which it is being perpetrated. This is to say indecent dressing cannot be properly defined in isolation of the societal norms. Indecent dressing is any form of dressing that does not conform with the acceptable moral standard of decent dressing and any type of dressing that is not in conformity with the socially acceptable mode of dressing in the particular community of reference. These dress patterns are morally offensive and reveal high rate of moral decadence in the society of our time. A dress is therefore said to be indecent when it has provocative or stimulating influence on almost all those that happen to view it on the user.

Like other social vices such as drug abuse, cultism and prostitution, indecent dressing has become a major moral misconduct among students of Nigerian tertiary institutions. Ahmed (2015) and Akpan, (2018) noted that indecent or crazy dressing is rampant among University, Polytechnic and College of Education students, all in the name of wanting to look "sexy", "stimulating", and "belonging" forgetting that they ought to look responsible instead. Many young people who leave their homes for university believe they are free from control and have the liberty to dress freely. As a counsellor who has had interactive experience with students, the researcher has met with students who often argue that as adult, the undergraduates should be allowed to wear whatever they feel like putting on.

The parents' attitude to dressing is one of the most important factors that influence the dressing of students. At home, the parents are the child's first teacher. The students acquire initial training from their parents and other significant persons in the family. The parents or guardians of the students are responsible for providing the right home environment that will facilitate the right dressing sense for their wards. Their actions and dressing affect the pattern of dressing of those under their care. Notably, (Oli 2017) opined that what the parents do with the child in terms of training and orientation go a long way to determining what the child becomes tomorrow. How many of them give attention to their children? Children are kept incommunicado as a result of perpetual and prolonged absence of either or both parents from home, business and other engagements. Most parents have no time to check their children's wardrobes and the implication of this is that they can wear anything in form of dress. Improper home upbringing is a major factor responsible for this moral problem. When right values, beliefs and attitude are concretely laid at the childhood stage such a child is more likely to grow and develop later in life healthy.

Peer group (school mates), as an agent of socialization has an overwhelming and tremendous influence on young people (Obeta & Uwah 2015). The desire to belong and the fear of rejection have led many youths into evil or immoral acts sometimes against their will. Some of them can be influenced by their peers that dress indecently leading them to do the same because they want to belong to the group. They most likely influence one another to change their attitudes and values in order to conform to group norms. Some of them lack the strong will to say no to evil for fear of being isolated. In corroboration, Longjohn and Osondu, (2020) added that peers strongly determine preferences in way of dressing among students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

The foregoing demonstrates that indecent dressing among undergraduates is becoming the order of the day. This is in direct agreement with many researchers such as (Longjohn and Osondu, 2020), (Bua and Tsav, 2014) who opines that there is hardly any higher institution of learning in this country that is not faced with this nauseating problem. Therefore, the current study is set out to determine how parents' attitudes and peer groups influence dressing of undergraduate students in North Central, Nigeria.

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## Statement of the Problem

The home and school environments are the most influential agents in students socialization. Apart from academic pursuit, students are supposed to receive several other training including one that has to do with their appearance which includes pattern of dressing both at home and school. Dressing is one pieces of material that has great relevance in the life of human beings. It is seen as a person's second skin which continues to be used from the time an individual is born to the time he dies. Clothing is basically meant to provide protection and beautification to the wearer.

In recent time, clothing is being misused by many undergraduates. Researchers reported that many undergraduate students use clothing that reveal some sensitive parts of their bodies. The researcher also observed that many undergraduates wear seductive, scandalous and sexual provocative clothing. These indecent dressing has characterized the dressing styles of many undergraduate students in federal universities in north central Nigeria, to the extent the any-one who has secured University admission seem to be accountable to this trend which is fast becoming norm among students in North Central Nigeria. These forms of dressing were alleged to different factors such as poor parenting, modeling artists and low self- esteem, among others as causes of indecent dressing among undergraduates today. Interaction with some of the students further revealed that their clothing preferences are modeled after their parents and latest fashion trend among peers. Some of these students maintained that conforming to the dressing patterns of their peer give them sense of belonging.

Institutional arrangement requires certain norms known as the code of conduct of dressing designed for the good dressing habit. Many University administrations have put in place certain rules to curtail this menace through the introduction of dressing code and moderation of use of certain body accessories such as weave-on, nose ring, tattoos, make-ups among others yet indecent dressing is observed to be gaining ascendancy.

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### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to determine the influence of parents' attitude and peer pressure on dressing among undergraduates in North Central Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

1. determine how parents' attitudes influences dressing pattern of undergraduates of Federal Universities in the North Central Nigeria.
2. determine how peer pressure influence dressing pattern among undergraduates of Federal Universities in North Central Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How do parents' attitudes influence dressing pattern of undergraduates of the Federal Universities in North Central Nigeria?
2. How does peer group influence dressing pattern among undergraduates' in the federal universities of North Central Nigeria?

### **Statement of Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and to be tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. Parents' attitudes do not significantly influence dressing pattern of undergraduates in federal universities of North Central Nigeria.
2. Peer group do not significantly influence dressing pattern among undergraduates in federal universities of North Central Nigeria.

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### **Methodology**

Survey research design was adopted for this study. Survey research design involve data collection from a given population in an attempt to explore their opinions on existing conditions, practices, attitudes and trends that are developing. The study was carried out in North Central Nigeria. The population of the study consist 150041 undergraduates in North Central Nigeria. A sample size of 400 undergraduates was randomly selected using taro yamen size formula. A research instrument known as parents and peers factors influencing dressing of undergraduates' questionnaire (PPFIDUQ) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts, two in Guidance and Counselling and one in Measurement and Evaluation, all from the Department of Educational Foundations and General Studies, Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi. Cronbach Alpha was used to establish the internal consistency of the instrument. Reliability coefficient of 0.85 was obtained which was considered high enough and reliable to be used for the study. The researcher administered instrument with the help of two research assistants. Data obtained from the respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The hypotheses were tested using chi-square goodness of fit at 0.05 level of significance.

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### **Results and Discussion**

Data collected for the study have been analyzed and interpreted as shown below

#### Research Question 1

How do parents' attitudes influence dressing pattern of undergraduates of the Federal Universities in North Central Nigeria?

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on Influence of Parent Attitudes on Dressing Pattern of Undergraduates**

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	My parents appreciate modern fashion on me	400	2.68	0.74	Agree
2	My parents likes dressing pattern that highlight my features		2.82	0.85	Agree
3	I wear saggy trousers at home and my parents do not complain		2.44	0.75	Disagree
4	My parents dislike it when I dress indecently		2.85	0.85	Agree
5	My parents do not mind when I wear short clothes		2.48	0.91	Disagree
6	I copy revealing dress styles from my parents		2.47	0.84	Disagree
7	Since I came to campus, I buy dresses as I like.		2.44	0.85	Disagree
8	My parents have no time to check my wardrobe hence I wear anything I like		2.44	0.76	Disagree
9	My parents condemn immodest dressing		2.94	0.97	Agree
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>		<b>2.61</b>		<b>Agree</b>

Table 1 shows how parent attitudes influences pattern of dressing of undergraduates of the Federal Universities in North Central Nigeria in Mean and Standard Deviations. From the table as presented, except for items 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8 with mean values ranging from 2.44 to 2.48 which are below the benchmark of 2.50, the respondents agreed on all other items (1, 2, 5 and 9) with Mean values ranging from 2.68 to 2.94 which are above the benchmark of 2.50. The cluster Mean of 2.61 shows that parent attitudes influences pattern of dressing of undergraduates of the Federal Universities in North Central Nigeria. The Standard Deviation of all the items range from 0.74 to 0.97 and this is an indication that the respondents were homogeneous in their responses.

Research question 2

How does peer group influence pattern of dressing pattern among undergraduates' in the federal universities of North Central Nigeria?

**Table 2: Influence of Peer Group on Undergraduates' Dressing Pattern**

S/N	Items	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
10	I dress the way I see my fellow students dress	400	2.57	0.97	Agree
11	I follow current trends in dressing on campus		2.78	0.98	Agree
12	In order to be noticed in the school, I end up indecently dressed		2.42	0.71	Disagree
13	My major models in dressing are my fellow students especially my friends.		2.77	0.80	Agree
14	My wardrobe change as new sexy dress pattern appears on campus		2.51	0.93	Agree
15	My friends despise me if my dressing is not in vogue		2.61	0.69	Agree
16	I normally adjust my dressing to look like that of my new friends		2.71	0.81	Agree
17	I change my pattern of dressing in order to conform to that of my friends on campus.		2.88	0.97	Agree
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>		<b>2.66</b>		<b>Agree</b>

Table 2 shows how peer group influences pattern of dressing of undergraduates of the Federal Universities in North Central Nigeria in Mean and Standard Deviations. From the table as presented, except for items 27 with mean value 2.42 which is below the benchmark of 2.50, the respondents agreed on all other items (25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31 and 32) with Mean values ranging from 2.51 to 2.88 which are above the benchmark of 2.50. The cluster Mean of 2.66 shows that peer groups influences pattern of dressing of undergraduates of the Federal Universities in North Central Nigeria. The Standard Deviation of all the items range from 0.69 to 0.97 and this is an indication that the respondents were homogeneous in their responses.

Hypothesis 1

Parents' attitude do not significantly influence dressing pattern of undergraduates in federal universities of North Central Nigeria.

**Table 3: Chi-square Goodness of Fit on the Influence of Parent Attitude on Dressing Pattern of Undergraduates in Federal Universities of North Central Nigeria**

	Observed N	Expected N	Df	Chi-square	Asymp.	Sig. value
SD	48	96.0	3	53.79	0.00	0.05
D	94	96.0				
A	112	96.0				
SA	146	96.0				
Total	400					

df= degree of freedom

The data presented on Table 6 shows that the Asymp. Sig value of 0.00 is less than the set significant value of 0.05 and this shows that the test of hypothesis is significant. This implies that Parent attitude significantly influence dressing pattern of undergraduates in federal universities of North Central Nigeria. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

### Research Hypothesis 2

Peer group do not significantly influence pattern of dressing among undergraduates in federal universities of North Central Nigeria.

**Table 4: Chi-square Goodness of Fit on the Influence of Peer Group on Dressing Pattern of Undergraduates of Federal Universities in North Central Nigeria**

	Observed N	Expected N	Df	Chi-square	Asymp.	Sig. value
SD	64	96.0	3	35.56	0.00	0.05
D	146	96.0				
A	98	96.0				
SA	92	96.0				
Total	400					

df= degree of freedom

The data presented on Table 9 shows that the Asymp. Sig value of 0.00 is less than the set significant value of 0.05 and this shows that the test of hypothesis is significant. This implies that Peer group significantly influence dressing pattern of undergraduates in federal universities of North Central Nigeria. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

## Discussion of Major Findings

The finding of this study based on research question one and hypothesis one revealed that parent attitude significantly influence dressing pattern of undergraduates in federal universities of North Central Nigeria. The findings showed that; parents appreciate modern fashion on their children; dislike it when their children dress indecently and condemn immodest dressing among their children. The findings of this study agree with that of Longjohn & Osondu (2020) who conducted a study to examine parental involvement and peer influence as predictors of indecent dressing among adolescent secondary school students in Imo State and found that parental involvement and peer influence made significant contributions to indecent dressing among adolescent students

The finding of this study revealed that peer group significantly influence dressing pattern of undergraduates in federal universities of North Central Nigeria. The findings showed that; some students dress the way they see their fellow students dress; follow current trends in dressing on campus; some students major models in dressing are their fellow students especially friends; some wardrobe change as new sexy dress pattern appears on campus; some friends despise themselves if their dressing is not in vogue; some normally adjust their dressing to look like and conform to that of their new friends. The findings agree with that of Longjohn & Osondu (2020) who conducted a study to examine parental involvement and peer influence as predictors of indecent dressing among adolescent secondary school students in Imo State and found and found that peer influence had a higher influence on indecent dressing pattern of students. The findings of this study also agree with that of Obeta & Uwah (2015) who investigated the determinant of dressing patterns of female undergraduate students in Abia state and found that peer pressure or social group, Mass Media and following popular style in fashion at present has greater influence on the dressing patterns of female undergraduates.

## COUNSELLING IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this research work have the following implications for counselling:

1. Parenting of students and the divergent family backgrounds, pose challenges to the students overall behaviour. Counsellors, universities administrators and stake holders should mount serious intensive media awareness to help educate parents properly on importance of being good role models for their children especially in terms of dressing and inculcating proper dressing sense in the children upbringing.
2. Peer groups can exert a powerful influence dressing choices and this can be both positive and negative implications. On one hand, peers can provide social support and help mate develop sense of identity through their fashion choices. On the other hand, peer pressure can lead to negative consequences, such as low self-esteem, body image issues and even dangerous fashion trends. Counsellors can help students navigate the complex world of peer pressure and dressing by providing a safe space to discuss these issues and offering guidance on making healthy choices.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the study, it is concluded that home and school factors relates to dressing of undergraduates in north central Nigeria. Also, parents' attitudes influence dressing of undergraduates' right from the home. Again, it also revealed that peer group influence undergraduates dressing. The university environment has been identified as the major zone where all forms of dressing are exhibited. It is therefore necessary that all stakeholders of education in Nigeria be proactive in coming out with measures to promote proper dressing in federal universities in north central Nigeria.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this research work, the following recommendations are made:

- i. As role models, parents should dress decently. The behavior of parent impacts on their children more greatly than what they tell them to do or not to do. Parents should encourage their wards to be of good behavior, use clothes that are decent
- ii. Regular guidance programmes on topics such as dressing for success, keeping good companies and so on is very important to guide the students in the campus and to prevent succumbing quickly to pressure from peers.

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