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Importance Of Proper Dressing In Modern Living In Nigeria

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Introduction

Dressing is an act of putting on clothes and usually a means of expressing our individuality. Thompson (2005) citing Kaiser (1997) opined that dressing is the total arrangement of all outward detectable modification of the body and all material objects added to it. The implication of this is that dressing which is an aspect of clothing is the external covering put on the body for different purposes. The way an individual dresses is a tangible expression of an individual's unique value system. Arubayi (2004), enumerated the followings as reasons why people wear clothes: to protect, to cover their nakedness, to enhance their beauty, to act as a form of camouflage, to attract and seduce the opposite sex, to express individual status, to conform, to manipulate, and to act as a form of identity. Vanderhoff (1988), John and Foster (1998), stated that the dressing pattern of an individual is a "Sign language" that communicates a complex set of information and is usually the basis on which impressions are formed. What the individual wears also communicates moods, feelings, emotions, values and ideas through the pervasive effects of art elements.

To be properly dressed means wearing the right dress for the right occasion. CESAC (1980) pointed out that correct dress sense means dressing appropriately at all times and knowing how to use clothes to enhance or accentuate good figure points and be suitably or properly dressed. It also means that the individual's choice, colour and style of dress is right in relation to the figure, complexion, the time of the day or occasion. Explaining further the individual's ability to harmonize dressing accessories like shoes, bags, belt, scarf, tie and broche are also part of proper dressing.

The clothing behaviour of an individual is influenced by social psychological, economic, physical, environmental resources and the ability to use these resources. Latzka and Quintan (1998), explained that the value pattern of an individual also influences the way the individual dresses. For example, teenagers attach greater importance to clothing as a means of gaining acceptance and approval than matured persons. Thompson (2005), citing Solomon and Douglas (1989), stated that the way an individual dresses reveals the self identity and taste of the wearer. They further explained that dressing is an expression of our individuality and usually provide psychological security and confidence. When confidence increased, the sense of beauty is satisfied.

Globally, dressing pattern has become more complex, societal roles are changing, individualization and technological advancement have prodded more people to take interest in the way they look. However, society has become dynamic, therefore some people find it difficult to express their values and aspirations correctly especially in the area of dressing. Good dress sense is knowing what to wear, when and how to wear it.

It also entails applying the elements of arts such as lines, colours, texture, shape and form and the principles of design to create a pleasing combination. In trying to distinguish one's self through dressing, many people run into problems of not been able to distinguish between adequate and expensive dressing. For example it is common to find people wearing shiny or highly beaded clothes to

office, excessive ornaments round the wrist or fingers just to go to the office, very revealing clothes or sheer fabric for church service, or wearing colours that do not blend. Arubayi (2003), explained that it is also common to find people who are short and plumpy wear lines horizontally, which rather makes the wearer shorter and fatter. Explaining further, people with this figure type should use lines vertically, to create an illusion of height. Other common mistakes people make is the use of lines vertically for a slim tall figure, who ought to use these lines horizontally to make the wearer look fatter and shorter for a more pleasing look. It should be noted that adequate dressing points at suitability while expensive dressing points at the cost of the fabric. An outfit whether cheap or expensive will be appreciated on the wearer if it is properly or correctly used.

The importance of been properly dressed at all times cannot be over emphasized. Good dress sense commands respect to the wearer and gives confidence and approval. The choice of clothes, accessories or ornaments worn by individuals communicates an intent. Ozoagwu and Anyakoha (2005), observed that the clothing items worn by an individual present suitable cues to the characteristics of the wearer. Through such clothing, a negative or positive impression of the wearer could be formed.

The desire to look good and well dressed has brought new changes on the already existing dressing pattern of the individuals. Some of the innovations in the area of dressing are progressive while others are retrogressive. For example at a very tradition activity like “New Yam” festival we find people dressed up in three piece suits – this is retrogressive to culture, though some are done out of ignorance. Fame magazine (2000), enumerated the following as some common mistakes people make in dressing:

- Men wearing flowered shirt with a tie
- Men wearing a tie without socks
- Women wearing hat over wrapper or boubou
- Wearing shiny or glittering clothes during the day
- Wearing of skirts and trousers by fat people, except if it is worn with long loose tops.
- Wearing of skinny pants by knocked knees people.
- Highly beaded or decorated dresses as office wears.
- Formal traditional attire for ladies without head gear.
- Short people wearing waist length blouses or jackets.
- Men wearing suits with loafers
- Women wearing flowing garments as office wears.
- Wearing very low neckline and revealing clothes for church service.
- Men wearing traditional attire with laced shoes.

Knowing what, how and when to clothes has created some difficulty to the individual. This creates a problem in the mind of the researcher, are people aware of the importance of proper dressing to modern living? This leads to the statement of problem of this study.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Many people are not aware of the value of good dressing. They do not

seems to know how to dress properly or suitably for different occasions and seasons. The society is losing most of its standard way of dressing as a result of fashion. It is increasingly becoming difficult to differentiate between a person going to the office and another going to the party. To give direction to this research study, the following research questions were raised.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Why is it important to be properly dressed?
2. What are some common mistakes people make in dressing?

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study is to find out if individuals are aware of the importance of proper dressing. To bring to the knowledge of individuals some common mistakes people make in dressing.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This research study adopted an ex-post-facto design in which the events were studied as they occurred, there was no manipulation of variable, because the events had already occurred.

The target population consisted of all male and female members of academic board of studies of the Faculty of Education, Delta State University, Nigeria. A random sampling technique was adopted to select a sample of 120 subjects comprising of 80 males and 40 females from the target population of 145 people. The instrument used for the collection of the data was a structured questionnaire that required the participants to agree or disagree with the statements made with relevance to the research questions raised. The questionnaire was administered personally by the researcher, the completed questionnaires were collected and collated. The data collected were analysed using simple descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, means and percentages and the findings presented in tabular form.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 : Percentage Response on the importance of proper dressing.

S/N	ITEMS	AGREED	%	DISAGREED	%
1	To be properly dressed gives self confidence	118	98%	02	1.6%

2	Proper dressing commands respect	115	96%	05	0.4%
3.	To be properly dressed commands approval	99	82.5%	21	17.5%
4	To be properly dressed gives satisfaction	102	85%	18	15%
5	To be properly dressed conveys the value of the wearer	94	78.3%	26	21.6%
6	Proper dressing communicates positive or negative feeling of the wearer.	110	91.%	10	8.6%
7	Wearing the right dress at the right time is an important attribute of proper dressing.	107	89.%	13	10.8%
8	Good feeling of self is an important point in proper dressing	98	81.6%	22	18.3%
	Mean of %	105	85%	14.6	15%

Results presented in Table 1, indicated that all 8 (eight) items were identified as important to proper dressing. Results in Table 1 showed that 98% of the respondents agreed that to be properly dressed gives self-confidence, this item had the highest percentage followed by item 2, with a percentage response of 96% which stated that proper dressing commands respect. Item 6, with a percentage of 91 stated that proper dressing conveys or communicates positive or negative feeling about the wearer. Item 7, revealed that 89% said wearing the right dress at the right time is an important attribute of dressing. Item, 4 on table 1, showed that 85% said that to be properly dressed gives satisfaction. Findings from table 1, item 3, revealed that 82.5% said to be properly dressed command approval. Finding from table 1, item 8, showed that 81.6% said that having good feeling about self is an important point in dressing, while findings on table 1, item 5 with a percentage of 78% ranked the least and that to be properly dressed conveys the value of the wearer. Findings from table 1, indicated that all 8. statements made to measure research question 1, were significant, with an overall mean percentage of 85.

Table 2 : Percentage Response of the common mistakes people make in dressing.

S/N	ITEMS	AGREED	%	DISAGREED	%
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1	Men/women wearing suits for traditional occasion	90	75%	30	25%
2	Wearing of flowing gown like boubou for office wear	70	58%	50	41.6%
3	Men wearing of traditional attire with laced shoes and socks.	80	66.6%	40	33.3%
4	Wearing of hat over wrapper of boubou	90	75%	30	25%
5	Men wearing suits with loafers	98	81.3%	22	18.3%
6	Ladies wearing highly beaded or decorated dresses as office wear.	100	83,3%	20	16.66%
7	Fat ladies wearing clothes with lines running horizontally.	99	82.5%	21	17.5%
8	Tall slim figure wearing dresses with lines running vertically.	96	80%	24	20%
9	Men wearing Kaftan with socks	98	81.6	22	18.33%
10	Men wearing flowered shirts with tie	84	70%	26	21.66%
	Mean of %	90.5	95%	28.50	25%

Results from table 2, indicated that all items were identified as some common mistakes people make in dressing. The commonest mistake with the highest percentage of 83 is that some ladies wear highly beaded or decorated dresses as office wears, while the commonest mistake with the least percentage of 58 is the wearing of flowing gown like “boubou” for office wear. Other items 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9 and 10 (details on table 1) had high percentages of 75, 67, 75, 81 82.5 80, 81.6 and 70 respectively. An overall mean percentage of 75 was recorded showing that all items listed were common mistakes people make in dressing.

Results presented in Table 1, indicate that all 8 (eight) items were identified as importance of proper dressing.

Discussion of Results

The findings from the study showed that many individuals were aware of the importance of proper dressing. All statements made in table 1, were highly rated and agreed upon. Findings from table 1, item 1, showed that most of the respondents agreed that to be properly dressed gives self confidence. This finding supports Arubayi's (2003) assertion that good dress sense gives the wearer self-confidence. Findings from table 1, item 2 also showed that a high majority of the respondents agreed that proper dressing commands respect and that an individual's dressing pattern conveys positive/negative feelings about the wearer. These findings were in support of Ozoagwu and Anyakoha's (2005), observation that the clothing worn by an individual present visitable cues to the characteristics of the wearer, by which positive or negative impressions are formed.

Another notable finding from the result showed that a high majority of the respondents agreed that to be properly dressed meant wearing the right dress for the right occasion. This finding is in agreement with that of CESAC (1980) that to be properly dressed meant wearing the right dress for the right occasion. Other notable findings indicated that 85% of the respondents agreed that to be properly dressed revealed that status of the wearer, 83% agreed that proper dressing gave good feeling and command approval. 78% said that good dressing revealed the value of the wearer. These findings have been supported by Vanderhoff (1988); Johnson and Foster (1990) and Latzka and Quintan (1998). Thompson (2005) citing Solomon and Douglas (1989) reiterated that the way an individual dresses revealed self identity, taste, value and usually provide psychological security and self – confidence.

Findings from the response to the importance of proper dressing showed that proper dressing gave self confidence, commands respect and approval to the wearer, gave satisfaction, exposes the value of the wearer and gives cues as to the personality of the wearer. Dressing is an art that must be learnt and carried out to help portray and give the impression of who we are.

Findings from Table 2, on common mistakes people made in dressing, indicated that the respondents agreed with all the 10 statements about the common mistakes people make in dressing. These findings confirmed the report in Fame Magazine (2000), that the following were some common mistakes people made in dressing. Men wearing flowered shirt with tie, men wearing tie without socks, women wearing hat over wrapper or "boubou", wearing shiny or glittering clothes during the day, wearing of tight skirts and trousers by fat people, and a whole lot more. Findings from table 2 indicated that a lot of people are ignorant and confused about what to wear, how and when to wear some clothing items. It is ridiculous to find a woman dressed in "boubou" or "wrapper" with a hat or a man dressed in Kaftan with laced shoes.

The value of dressing properly at all times cannot be underestimated. The way an individual dresses gives cues about who they are, what they do and usually a sign language that communicates complex information about the wearer, this confirms Vanderhoff (1988) John and Foster (1998) earlier assertion. Dressing properly cannot be over emphasized as CESAC (1980) puts it, a person with good sense of dressing knows what, how and when to wear it.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research study was to stress the importance of proper dressing. The findings

revealed that:

- Most people are aware of the importance of proper dressing.
- Most people appreciate the value of good dressing.
- Most people are still ignorant about what, how and, when to wear clothes hence many common mistakes abound in the dressing style of many people.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the findings, some recommendations were made by the researcher which she hopes will improve the individual's attitude to dressing. These include:

- Keeping your dressing simple and ensure that your choice of clothing fits your figure and reflects your personality.
- Keeping your wardrobe simple to suit all your activities rather than expensive and inadequate wardrobe.
- Always dressing to suit the occasion for example special traditional or English occasions should be reflected in one's mode of dressing to give self confidence and a sense of belonging.
- Always dressing the way you will like to be addressed, your choice of clothing give cues that enable people form negative or positive impressions about you.

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