

LECTURERS' PERCEPTION OF FASHION REFORMS AGAINST SKIMPY DRESSING AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS IN ABIA STATE UNIVERSITY: THE COUNSELLING IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract

This study investigated Lecturers' Perceptions of Fashion Reform against Skimpy Dressing among Female Students' in Abia State University. Three research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested. The design of the study was survey, the sample comprised 2637 lecturers made up of 1642 male and 995 female lecturers. The instrument used in collecting data was questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and Z-test analysis. The findings of the results showed that lecturers agreed with the major reasons listed for reforms of skimpy dressing among female undergraduates and consequences as perceived by lecturers in Abia State University, Uturu among others. The findings further showed that there was no significance difference between male and female lecturers on reforms and consequences of skimpy dressing among female undergraduates in Abia State University, Uturu. The counselling implications of the findings of the study include ideas in rebranding Nigeria agenda which was highlighted. It was recommended, among others, that the University authorities should urgently begin to sanction students for violation of the University's dress code.

Keywords: skimpy dressing, Reforms, Undergraduate Students, transparent nature, counselling implications.

Introduction

Indecent and skimpy dressing is gradually becoming a norm in the dressing pattern of most students in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. The private and public secondary schools are fast joining in this ugly trend of indecent dressing and this is threatening the moral values of the Nigerian society bearing in mind that the youths are the major drivers of development and greater tomorrow (Akpan, 2018). Faculty of law students and some universities have made effort in implementing dressing code to counter the ills and to improve the quality of education and moral values. Religious groups, government workers, bankers, nursery/primary and secondary school students, marriage and burial ceremonies all have dress code to depict the occasion (Ewulo 2016). Some university authorities agree that the

mode of dressing is an important factor in determining student's strength of performance and thus should be subject of consideration.

Most of students struggle to pursue fashion rather than academic excellence and what they see as fashion embodies to nakedness and obscenity (Anadi, Egboka & Anierobi, 2011) The mode of dressing of undergraduate students in Nigerian universities is becoming eyesore most of them seem to have become so addicted to dressing indecently, which they also perceive as part of the business of university education. According to Anadi, Egboka and Anierobi (2011) some candidates seek admission into the universities so as to join others in the fashion of nakedness, skimpy and crazy dressing. They further highlighted that complaints by students themselves, visitors, lecturers, staff other persons about the provocative dressing of students in tertiary institutions especially the girls have been loud and regular. The girls wear skimpy skirts, only about one inch longer than their pants to attend lectures and other social gatherings in and outside the campus.

According to Yohanna, Sababa and Filgona (2020) apart from the skimpy and tight-fitting nature of these dresses, their transparent nature also helps in exposing their thighs and other vital parts of their bodies for public view. This makes them find it difficulty in sitting comfortably, climbing machines, crossing a gutter, and even bending down to pick something. As if this is not enough, the girls again wear very tight trousers called 'shinnies', thereby showing the contours of their body ostensibly to entice the opposite sex (Selase & Mawuli, 2013).

Some boys are also guilty of indecent dressing (Omede, 2011; Ewulo, 2016; Ojogbane, Amonjenu & Hussein, 2020). However, their dress pattern is different from that of the girls. Their dressing makes them look dirty and very unattractive with unkempt hairs and dirty jeans having pockets of holes deliberately created around the knees and lower parts of the trousers (Ewulo, 2016). The waist of their trousers is lowered in the middle of their two bottom lobes, revealing their pant which is called —low waist or sagging (Akpan, 2018). With this type of dressing they (the boys) walk by dragging their feet on the ground which is very embarrassing for any gentleman.

Dressing is a very important part of man's culture and life which defines his tribe or ethnicity. The way a people dress is by and large related to their norms, values, weather, and resources obtainable in their geographical location. The mode of dressing could define one's status and his/her role in society (Birhan, 2019). Continuing Birhan posited that the way one dresses gives information about the cultural group that one belongs to and also linked to ones' specific culture. This was so, but the dressing mode these days does not respect any cultural norms, values or ethnic considerations. Unlike the past, however, today's youths have been trying every fashion especially that of dressing, haircuts and leaving aside their traditional values (Amankwah, Howard & Sarpong, 2012).

According to Akpan (2018), though there is no universally accepted ways of dressing, dresses are meant to serve some definable purposes, country or region notwithstanding. Odeleye (2008) stated that proper dressing is a normal socio-cultural standard that required no authority to enforce compliance. There are different patterns of dressing as there are certain patterns or appearances that are considered indecent or unacceptable in society. Like other

social vices such as drug abuse, prostitution, and cultism, indecent dressing has become major moral misconduct among students in not only the tertiary institutions but the country Nigerian at large. A dress is considered to be indecent if it deviates from the one acceptable by the community, and if it affects the value of that community (Birhan, 2019). According to Akpan (2018), a decent dressing is part of human life, because it elicits respect and protects the person's dignity. Continuing, Akpan considered decent dressing to be the proper way of dressing or the generally accepted way of dressing without exposing vital parts of the body. Supporting this assertion Ewulo (2016) opined that decent dressing is that done in an orderly manner which is considered morally acceptable for a proper standard of living. Ewulo added that decent dressing not only creates covering for decent attraction, but it also paves way for favourable remarks from other people. Decent dressing avoids unnecessary self-exposure. It does not course distractions neither is it suggestive of sex or violence.

Decent dressing, according to Anadi, Egboka and Aniorobi (2011); Akpan (2018) should ensure that the clothing covers body parts including the stomach, belly button, back, shoulders, chest and the legs below the knees, small earring, and light makeup, low heeled noiseless shoes, and clean hair. Decent dressing by students attracts respect from lecturers, guardians, classmates, and most significantly protects them from being the target of rape and failure (Ewulo, 2016; Ojogbane, Amonjenu & Hussein, 2020; Chigbu, Oguzie & Obi, 2021). Indecent dressing on the other hand is the improper and provocative way of dressing relative to the society or culture of the students. Corroborating this view, Fareo and Jackson, (2018) added that this form of dressing is provocative, improper and morally unacceptable. Ewulo (2016) opined that indecent dressing is any form of dressing that does not conform with the acceptable moral standard of decent dressing.

Oluwadare, Otunaiya and Opeoluwa (2020) add that indecent dressing means any type of dressing that is not in conformity with the socially acceptable mode of dressing in the particular community of reference. Fareo and Jackson (2018) referred to indecent dressing as the attitude of someone, male or female that dresses to show off parts of the body such as the breasts, buttocks, or even underwear that need to be covered and exposure of vital parts of the body to the public and flaunting it with recklessness. According to Ojogbane et al., (2020), indecent dressing simply means the deliberate exposure of one's body to the public. This practice is contrary to the acceptable norms and the values of society. Selase and Mawuli, (2013) described indecent dressing in respect of a situation of dressing or wearing of clothes that are not appropriate for a particular occasion or situation. This is because as explained by the author, it is not indecent to be naked in the bathroom, in the labour room, or the bedroom with your spouse. It is appropriate defining indecent dressing in isolation with the societal norms (Akpan, 2018). That is why Ojogbane et al., (2020) describes indecent dressing as a way of dressing that is likely to shock or offend others.

Researches posited that wrongful and improper dressings of the undergraduate students have the tendency of impacting negatively on the academic performances of the students. Some male lecturers have been infected and reduced by finding themselves concentrating and watching the provocative and skimpy dressings during lectures (Amoo & Adeyemi, 2017). Akpan (2018) opined that indecent dressing is the mode of dressing or appearance that is disruptive and distractive to the approved norm.

Some of the wears that are provocative include trousers and skirts worn below the waist (sagging), singlet, spaghetti blouse, low neck blouses exposing the breasts, skirts with a slit above the knees, transparent dresses, shirts and blouses, attire printed with offensive or obscene wording revealing attires, mini-skirts, bathroom slippers of a barefoot, clothing including t-shirts which displays sex, violence, drug, tobacco, alcohol, death, gang or hate, slogans or pictures, tight trousers, shirts, dresses or skirts, baggy trousers, non-natural coloured hair, body piercing jewelery except the ears of women, chains tattoo with provocative writing or picture, and noisy shoe heels (Yohanna, Sababa, Filgona, 2020).

Whatever one's interpretation may be, the practice does not conform to the norms and values of the society, particularly the African society. Skimpy dressing also known as "dress to kill" is becoming rampant among universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education students particularly the female students (Akpan, 2018).

Statement of the Problem

Fashion reforms or dress code called for emancipation from the dictates of fashion which expressed desire to cover the limbs as well as the torso adequately and promote rational dressing mode. Dressing reforms aim at persuading women to adopt simplified garments and regulations to be strictly followed by the students. Institutional arrangement requires certain norms know as the code of conduct of dressing designed by the good dressing habit. The societal value has broken down completely and adult and youth alike act without moral restriction. This study focused on lecturer's perception of fashion reforms against skimpy dressing among students in Abia State University, Uturu. This study exposed the acceptability or rejection of this reform on the part of lecturers who are in the position of knowing the best for the students. This is the uniqueness of this study.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is to ascertain lecturers' perceptions of fashion reform against skimpy dressing among female students' in Abia State University. Specifically the study tends to determined

1. The major reasons for the reforms of skimpy dressing among female undergraduates as perceived by lecturers in Abia State University, Uturu.
2. The perception of lecturers on the negative consequences of skimpy dressing on students' academic achievement in Abia State University, Uturu.
3. The difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on fashion reforms of skimpy dresses in Abia State University, Uturu.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed and answered.

1. What are the major reasons for the reforms of skimpy dressing among female undergraduates as perceived by lecturers in Abia State University, Uturu?
2. What are the perceptions of lecturers on the negative consequences of skimpy dressing on students' academic achievement in Abia State University, Uturu?

3. What is the difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on fashion reforms of skimpy dresses in Abia State University, Uturu?

Hypotheses

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

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on reforms of skimpy dresses among female undergraduates in Abia State University.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on the consequences of skimpy dresses on students' academic achievement in Abia State University Uturu.

Method

The study is a survey carried out in Abia State University, Uturu, Nigeria. The population comprised all the lecturers in eight faculties in the University. The population of the lecturers in the eight faculties was 2,637 (1642 males and 995 females). To compose the sample of the study, 20% of the lecturers from each gender category in each faculty were drawn. This gave a total of 527 (328 males and 199 females) of the respondents. This number constituted the sample of the study. Composition of the sample followed the random process particularly, the stratified and simple random processes.

A questionnaire titled Lecturers' Perceptions of Fashion Reforms against Skimpy Dressing among Female Students (LPFRSD) was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire contains two sections, A and B. Section A sought information on selected personal-data of the respondents. Second B of the LPFRSD sought information relevant for answering research questions one, they were altogether a total of twenty items.

Teachers were required to respond to each of the question item. It adopted a 4-point response mode of Strongly Agree (SA = 4 points), Agree (A = 3points), Disagree (D = 2points) and Strongly Disagree (SD = 1 point). The validation of the set of questionnaire was done by giving them to three experts, one in educational guidance and counselling, one in educational measurement and evaluation, the other in educational psychology at Abia state university. They were asked to assess the items in terms of clarity and relevance. Their inputs were reflected in the final production of the questionnaire.

The reliability of the instrument LPFRSD was determined through the test-re-test method. The second administration was done two weeks after the first one on, 15male and15female lecturers at Abia State University, Uturu. Sets of scores from the two administrations were correlated using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient statistic. The value of 0.86 was obtained. The two sets of questionnaire were administered on the respondents by the researchers with the help of (16) sixteen research assistants, two of whom were assigned to each faculty. Lecturers were met at their office to respond to the questionnaire in their various faculties.

All the copies of the questionnaire administered were retrieved on the spot because the administration was done faculty by faculty. For analysis of data, the data collected in respect of research questions one and two were subjected to statistical analysis were analyzed using both descriptive of mean, standard deviation and inferential statistics using Z-test

respectively. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while Z-test statistic was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The mean cut-off for accepting or rejecting any item was 2.50 based on the 4-point scale used. The decision rule was that any item with means core from 2.50 and above would be accepted while items with mean scores below 2.50 would be rejected. The decision rule for the hypothesis was that if the calculated Z-test was greater than the critical Z-value, the null hypothesis would be rejected, but if the calculated Z-value was less than the critical Z-value, the hypothesis would not be rejected.

Results

The results of the research questions are presented as follow

Research Question One

What are the major reasons for the reforms of skimpy dressing among female undergraduates as perceived by lecturers in Abia State University, Uturu?

Table 1: Major Reasons for Skimpy Dressing Reforms among Female Undergraduates.
 N=2637

S/N	Item Specification	N=2637	$\sum X$	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remarks
1.	Instil standard of dress considered right, proper and appropriate.		7463	2.83	0.98	Agree
2.			7331	2.78	1.01	Agree
3.	It is considered a healthy practice to put on clothes that adequately cover some sensitive part of the body.		8096	3.07	0.85	Strongly Agree
4.	Sensitive area for a woman, her breast, armpit, buttock and thigh are to be covered especially in public		7858	2.98	0.99	Agree
5.	The role played by clothing in stimulating or diminishing sexual urge is symbolic of the moral standard of a given culture		6751	2.56	1.09	Agree
6.	Indecent dressing exposes the body parts of female and attracts an undue attention from male which lead to sexual harassment and rape.		8201	3.11	0.78	Strongly Agree
7.	Female undergraduates have shifted from the socially approved mode of dressing to offensive and provocative styles.					
	It is supposed that at the end of the programme, the graduate should be found worthy in character and learning		8227	3.12	0.77	Strongly Agree

Table 1 presents the lecturers perceptions on reasons for skimpy dressing reforms among female undergraduates. The result showed that all the items were rated high as reasons for reforms on skimpy dressing. However, item numbers 3, 6 and 7 were rated higher as

constituting the major reasons for skimpy dressing reforms among female undergraduates as perceived by lecturers in Abia State University, Uturu.

Research Question Two

What are the perceptions of lecturers on the negative consequences of skimpy dressing on students' academic performance in Abia State University Uturu?

Table 2: Negative Consequences of Skimpy Dressing on Students' Academic Performance

S/N	Item Identification	N=2637	ΣX	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remarks
1.	Spending much time in parties/other social functions.		8043	3.05	0.93	Strongly Agree
2	Loss of respect for lecturers and class activities.		6724	2.55	1.03	Agree
3	Loss of time for studies and writing of assignments.		8227	3.12	0.87	Strongly Agree
4.	Awarding marks for sexual favours to skimpy girls		7647	2.90	0.97	Agree
5	Low school grades and failures in exams		8201	3.11	0.88	Strongly Agree
6	Separation from learning goal and withdrawal from school		7937	3.01	0.95	Agree
7.	Examination malpractices.		8174	3.10	0.89	Strongly Agree

Table 2, presents some of the negative consequences of skimpy dressing on students' academic performance in Abia State Universities. The result showed that all the items were rated high implying that the items listed are negative consequences of skimpy dressing on students' academic performances. The result also showed that item numbers 1, 3, 5, 6 and 7 are rated very high showing that lecturers perceived these items as unfavorably and negative consequences of skimpy dressing on students' academic performance in Abia State University, Uturu.

Research Question Three

What is the mean difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on fashion reform of skimpy dresses in Abia State University Uturu?

Table 3: The Mean Difference in the Perception of Male and Female Lecturers on Fashion Reforms of Skimpy Dresses

Item Specification	N	Mean	SD	Mean Diff.	Remarks
Male Lecturers	1642	24.67	4.32	0.36	Difference not significant
Female Lecturers	995	25.03	4.13		

Significant at 0.5

Table 3 presents the mean difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on fashion reform of skimpy dresses in Abia State University Uturu. The result showed that male lecturers (Mean = 24.67 and SD = 4.32) and female lecturers (Mean = 25.03 and SD = 4.13). The mean difference is 0.03 which is low and insignificant. These result therefore showed that the mean difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on fashion reforms of skimpy dresses showed no remarkable difference. Hence the perception of male and female lecturers on fashion reform of skimpy dresses in Abia State University Uturu is not different.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on fashion reforms of skimpy dresses among female undergraduates in Abia State University.

Table 4: Z-test Analysis of Perception of Male and Female Lecturers on Fashion Reforms of Skimpy Dresses among Female Undergraduates

Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	t-cal	t-tab	Sign level
Male Lecturers	1642	24.67	4.32	2635	1.73	1.96	0.05
Female Lecturers	995	25.03	4.13				

Table 4 presents the Z-test analysis of the perception of male and female lecturers on fashion reforms of skimpy dresses among female undergraduates. The result showed that male lecturers (Mean = 24.67 and SD = 4.32) and female lecturers (Mean = 25.03 and SD = 4.13). It was found that Z-calculated is 1.73 and Z-table was found to be 1.96 at 2635 degree of freedom and significant level of 0.05. Since the Z-calculated is less than Z-table, we accept the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on fashion reforms of skimpy dresses among female undergraduates in Abia State University

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on the consequences of skimpy dresses on students' academic performance in Abia State University Uturu.

Table 5: Z-test Analysis of Perception of Male and Female Lecturers on consequences of skimpy dresses on students' academic performance

Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	t-cal	t-tab	Sign level
Male Lecturers	1642	23.06	5.02	2635	1.61	1.96	0.05
Female Lecturers	995	23.03	5.01				

Table 5 presents the Z-test analysis of the perception of male and female lecturers on consequences of skimpy dresses on students' academic performance in Abia State University Uturu. The result showed that male lecturers (Mean = 23.06 and SD = 5.02) and female lecturers (Mean = 23.03 and SD = 5.01). It was found that Z-calculated is 1.61 and Z-table was found to be 1.96 at 2635 degree of freedom and significant level of 0.05. Since the Z-calculated is less than Z-table, we accept the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on the consequences of skimpy dresses on students' academic performance in Abia State University Uturu.

Discussion

The results as presented in Table I showed that, item numbers 3, 6 and 7 rated higher as constituting the major reasons for skimpy dressing reforms among female undergraduates as perceived by lecturers in Abia State University, Uturu. This means that the lecturers supported the reasons for reforms of skimpy dressing among female undergraduates as perceived by lecturers in Abia State University, Uturu. They were of the opinion that instilling standard of dress is considered right, proper and appropriate. A woman dress should adequately cover some sensitive part of the body. For example sensitive area of a woman like; her breast, armpit, buttock and thigh are to be covered especially in public. The lecturers supported the role played by clothing in stimulating or diminishing sexual urge as symbolic of the moral standard of a given culture. Among other reasons for the reforms include the ugly fact that indecent dressing exposes the body parts of female and attracts an undue attention from male which lead to sexual harassment and rape.

According to the reasons for the reforms for skimpy dressing among female undergraduates, the female undergraduates have shifted from the socially approved mode of dressing to offensive and provocative styles and undergraduates are no more found worthy in character and learning. This work supported Olabisi (2021) who researched on indecent dressing; a serious encroachment on our moral values. This research looks at indecent dressing, causes and the societal effects on our moral value. The result showed that indecent dressing has negative effect on students in tertiary institution and the society at large. Several measures in dealing with the menace were discussed and part of which encouraged parent to be good moral examples to their children, give attention and regulate the films they watch at home. The present work is related to Olabisi's study in terms of the findings but differs in location and sample size.

The second research questions addressed the negative consequences of skimpy dressing on students' academic performance in Abia State University Uturu. The result showed that item numbers 1, 3, 5, 6 and 7 are rated very high showing that lecturers perceived these items as

unfavourably and negative consequences of skimpy dressing on students' academic performance and there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on the consequences of skimpy dresses on students' academic performance in Abia State University Uturu. These are some of the negative consequences of skimpy dressing on the academic performance of the students; spending much time in parties/other social functions, loss of respect for lecturers and class activities, loss of time for studies and writing of assignments and awarding marks for sexual favours to skimpy girls. Other unfavourable consequences of allowing skimpy dresses include; low school grades and failures in exams, separation from learning goal, withdrawal from school and examination malpractices. This finding supports the work done by Yohanna, Sababa and Filgona (2020) on Students' Perception of Indecent Dressing in Adamawa State Citadel of Higher Learning, The results showed that the students agreed with the 12 negative consequences of indecent dressing on academic performance. Also, the study revealed that the students demonstrated a negative attitude towards decent dressing on campuses and the lecturers advocated for strict implementation of the dress code policy in Adamawa State citadel of higher learning. The present study is in line with the work done by Yohanna, Sababa and Filgona in the areas of the findings and design of the study. These studies differ in terms of their topics. The present study investigated lecturer's opinions while Yohanna, Sababa and Filgona worked on student's opinion on the consequences of indecent dressing.

The result of the third presentation indicated that male and female lecturers' opinions on fashion reform of skimpy dresses did not differ and hence, there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on fashion reforms of skimpy dresses among female undergraduates in Abia State University. They agreed with the studies that indecent dressing among female undergraduates disturbs male students' ability to assimilate in class, disturb the flow of thought of male lecturers during lectures, and lead to falling standards of education in tertiary institutions. More so, a man can be aroused by merely seeing sensitive parts of a mature lady (Ogidefa, 2008; Obi, Chigbu, Oguzie, & Icha, 2020).

Conclusion

The study has shown that lecturers, both male and female perceived the need for major the reforms of skimpy dressing among female undergraduates in Abia State University, Uturu. They also opined that there are unfavourably and negative consequences of skimpy dressing on students' academic performance in Abia State University, Uturu. Hence, there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on fashion reforms of skimpy dresses among female undergraduates and the negative consequences in Abia State University

Counselling Implications

Undergraduates are in the university to learn and not just issuing out certificates. They ensure that those that are being turn out of the institution are responsible people. The undergraduates from the universities after graduating into the workforce and manpower needed are supposed to make impact in the structures and socio-politico-economic conditions of the society and attract trade, tourism and investments in the country. It is quite inappropriate to graduate out as certificated irresponsible and mischief instead of rebranding Nigeria agenda.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. The in-flow of foreign films should be regulated and there should be monitoring of the internet by blocking some sites that contain nudity, pornography, and indecent materials.
2. Government should domesticate Nigerian films and promote the African culture, values and norms through conferences, seminars, and even television programmes.
3. Conferences, seminars, and workshops should be organized for both the students and staff to create public awareness on the importance of dress code. The management should give rewards for decent dressers and penalty for indecent dressing should be spelled out and strictly implemented.
4. Home Economics Education lecturers should be trained to get exposure to teaching skills on modest and proper dressing for more positive styles in dressing for students.
5. Home Economics Education lecturers should be playing the advisory and referral roles of sending such students for counseling.

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