

Parental Involvement and Peer Influence as Predictors of Indecent Dressing among Adolescent Secondary School Students in IMO State

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Abstract

The current study investigated the influence of parental involvement and peer influence as predictors of indecent dressing among secondary school adolescents in Imo State. The study adopted the correlational research design and was guided by two research questions and their corresponding null hypotheses. Data for the study was collected using two self-developed questionnaires which measured the variables under consideration. Data was analyzed using multiple regression coefficient, as well as t-test and ANOVA associated with multiple regression. Result revealed that both parental involvement and peer influence has joint significant joint prediction on indecent dressing, while independently it was shown that peer influence had a higher influence on indecent dressing than parental involvement. Based on this result, appropriate recommendations were made including that parents should endeavor to know the company (peer group) their children and loved ones keep and relate with in order to properly guide and direct their dress sense.

Keywords: Parental Involvement; peer influence; indecent dressing

INTRODUCTION

Many psychologists have defined the word "adolescence" in different ways. Generally, adolescence refers to the period of transition from

childhood to adulthood (Ikediashi 1998, Stenberg & Morris 2007). Its age limit is not specified, but it extends roughly from age twelve to the late teens, when physical growth is nearly complete. Adolescence is essentially a period of physical, mental and social changes. The rate of growth curve shows a sudden marked spurt around adolescence, which in boys is accompanied by a pronounced increase in strength and muscularity. Indeed, the muscular strength of the average boy tends to double itself within a two-year period during adolescence. The acceleration in growth occurs in girls around two years earlier but is accompanied by the same muscular changes. The many physical changes, which occur at this time, cause adolescent to be more aware of him/herself, more self-conscious in a literal sense. The maturation of the secondary sexual characteristics, and the reawakening of the long dormant sexual drive intensify this new awareness of the adolescents (Ekeruo, Ikediashi, Ekwe and Nwamuo 1999).

Cari Rogers views it as a process (rather than a time or period) of achieving the attitudes and beliefs needed to function and participate effectively in the society without losing balance. It is actually this disequilibrium that was the concern of Sigmund Freud. He argues that adolescence is a period of 'storm and stress', as an adolescent tries to maintain a balance within his personality structure. He further postulated that the behavior of adolescents is directed by the need to gratify basic biological needs and instincts as a result of the various functioning of hormones and physiological changes. How adequately youngsters learn to control and direct their Sexual feelings partially depends upon the present and past attitude of others around them, particularly their parents. Erickson sees adolescence as a period of identity formation and search for the self. He argues that this is a period when an individual makes important decisions that will influence his life as an Adult. However, from whatever perspective adolescence is viewed, it signifies a period of physical, mental, psychological, social, biological and emotional development and changes that should be handled very skillfully and carefully. Adolescents are observed with exotic trends in dressing including indecent dressing.

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 etc. Dressing

refers to a distinctive and often habitual trend in the style with which a person dresses, as well as to prevailing styles in behavior (Odeleya 2002), Wikipedia 2013). It is also a deliberate act of an individual combining cloths and its accessories to fit a predetermined occasion. Therefore, a combination of the right wares should conform to the occasion which it will be used for.

Dressing in contemporary terms refers to clothing and the study of it. Dresses can be a sign and semblance of one's honor, 'You are addressed the way you dress'. Dressing tells a lot of stories about the wearer. It sends a lot of signals about the person putting it on. Through the medium of dresses, the adolescence communicates their ideas, creative power, beliefs system and also their perception of the society (Rowland 1992). Information like moral stands, culture, family values are observed through what one puts on E.g. Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa men are identified through their dressing (Odeleya 2002).

Adolescence dressing pattern therefore can be the systematic way in which persons within the adolescent age put on cloth. This is formed over a period of time consciously and unconsciously. The adolescents are veering from our cultural and traditional mode of dressing to modern day redefinition of dressing. They wear weird and embarrassing cloths, perhaps in an attempt to exert their identity.

Based on the forgoing, therefore, indecent dressing refers to dresses which are offensive and socially unacceptable to the society. It creates a bad image or perhaps personal identity for persons wearing them. There are dresses that are not morally acceptable by the society. Unfortunately, most Nigerian adolescent students indulge in indecent dressing. In the case of the female students, the breast appears to be at the center of this exposure. There is the gaping that dresses which is cut straight in the middle has, exposing the chest and its constituents. Blouses are cut neckline and the upper part of gowns are cut to show part of the breast through the armpit areas. There is also the spaghetti style, the cup dress and the sleeveless. In wearing these dresses, a little attempt of the female adolescents to perhaps bend down usually expose their nakedness.

The male adolescents engage in 'sagging' and unbuttoning of their shirts to show off the big neck chains and chaplets (Edeh 2013). The child's first place of contact is the family. The parents are the child's first teacher. They acquire initial training from their parents

and significant persons in the family. The parents are one of the most important Factor that influence the dress habit of the adolescent. As they say, 'charity begins at home'. At home, parents serve as models to their children. Their actions affect the general behavior of those under their care. They help in teaching their children the dressing habit accepted by their immediate environment. They assist in correcting and disciplining their adolescence when they dress wrongly. They can also help to make these adolescents understand the growth stage which they are passing through. Available and accessible research evidence have indicated that students with parents who are involved in their rearing and wellbeing, tend to have fewer behavioral problems and are less likely to be involved in antisocial behavior like indecent dressing than those whose parents are not involved in their training and wellbeing (Odeleya 2002, Breward 2003). Corroborating the above findings, Stainberg and Morris (2007) demonstrated that a significant relationship existed between parental involvement and child rearing and antisocial behavior. The major focus of the present study is to find out if parental involvement and peer influence can predict indecent dressing in adolescents. Apart from the parent involvement, peer influence is another factor that can strongly influence a child's dress pattern. This could be great when the adolescence is actually with their peer group. They tend to adopt the same views on dress actually share the same dress models.

No wonder they say 'show me your friends and I will tell you who you are'. Naturally, birds of the same feathers will always flock together. The problem therefore is that indecent dressing has assumed an alarming dimension especially among our adolescent male and female students. Clearly evident is that the so-called modern dressing of our students particularly the female adolescent had become a cause for serious concern. One cannot rule out the incessant cases of rape and molestation of female adolescent students as a result of indecent dressing. The aim of the study is to find out the extent to which parental involvement and peer pressure influence indecent dressing of adolescent students. Make recommendations for greater parental influence in eradicating or curbing indecent dressing among adolescent students.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the study:

- (1) What is the joint contribution of parental involvement and peer influence on indecent dressing among adolescent students?
- (2) What is the relative contribution of parental involvement and peer influence on indecent dressing among adolescent students?

HYPOTHESIS

The following hypothesis are formulated to guide the study and they are tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- (1) The two independent variables (parental involvement and peer influence) have a joint effect on indecent dressing of the adolescent students.
- (2) Each of the two variables (parental involvement and peer influence) made different but significant contributions on indecent dressing among adolescent students.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The design of the study is multiple regression analysis. The study is conducted in among secondary schools in Owerri West Area council of Imo state. The sample of the study were 218 adolescent secondary school students (SS 3). They were randomly selected from 8 secondary schools in Owerri West Local Government Area. Their ages ranged between 15 - 20 years. The instrument for data collection were two questionnaires constructed by the researcher and they are:

Adolescent Indecent Dressing Questionnaire (AIDS) used to establish indecent dressing and Determinants of Indecent Dressing Questionnaire (DIDS) to measure the:

- (1) Parental involvement and;
- (2) Peer influence.

The two instruments (AIDS & DIDS) were a four-point rating scale. The face validity was determined. The reliability was established through internal consistency measure. The instrument was given to selected twenty SS3 students, in a secondary school that is not part of the study. The internal consistency of the instrument was calculated using “**Cronbach Alpha**” and a reliability scores of **0.81** for (AIDS) and **0.78** for (DIDS) were established. The data was analyzed using

multiple regression coefficient and analysis of variance associated with multiple regression. The results are presented in Table 1 and 2 in line with the stated research questions.

RESULTS

Table 1: Summary of Regression Analysis on the joint contribution of parent involvement and peer influence on indecent dressing among adolescent students:

MULTIPLE R	R2 SQUARE	ADJUSTED R SQUARE	STANDARD ERROR
0.91	0.83	0.83	4.2

Table 2.

Analysis of Variables	DF	SUM OF SQUARE	MEAN SQUARE	F-COMPUTED	F-CRITICAL	LS	PROB	DECISION
Regression	2	18361.13	6120.38	344.96	2.65	0.05	0.00	Reject Null
Residual	215	3796.86	17.74					
total	217	22157.99						

Table 2 revealed that F-calculated (344.96) is greater than F-critical (2.65) and level of significance (0.05) is greater than prob (0.00) which implies that the adjusted R2 value was significant at 0.05. This showed that the adjusted R2 value was not due to chance.

Table 3: Summary of regression analysis on the relative contribution of parental involvement and peer influence on indecent dressing among adolescent students.

Variable	B	SFB	Beta	Rank	t-comp	t-crit	Prob	Decision
Parental Involvement	1.015	0.068	0.442	2 nd	14.85	1.96	0.00	Reject Null
Peer Influence	1.021	0.064	0.471	1 st	15.93	1.96	0.00	Reject Null

Table 3 showed that each of the two independent variables, parental involvement and peer influence made different but significant contributions on indecent dressing among adolescent students. This was evident from the Beta weights. The Greatest contribution was made by peer influence (B=0.442, T=14.85, P<0.05). This contribution was found to be significant at 0.05. The second contribution was made by parental involvement (B=0.442, T=14.85, P<0.05). This contribution

was found to be significant at 0.05. The order of magnitude of these variables are peer influence > parental involvement.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of the first research question revealed that the two independent variables, parental involvement and peer influence, of the study have a joint effect on indecent dressing of adolescent students. The magnitude of the effect of the two independent variables was reflected in the value of $R=0.91$ and R^2 (adjusted)= 0.83. The result thus showed that 83% of the variable in indecent dressing of adolescent students is accounted for by the linear combination of the two variables of the study. The result was further reinforced by the value of F -computed (3.44.96) is greater than F -critical (2.65).

What the result is showing is that the Capacity of the two independent variables to predict indecent dressing could not have been by chance. The significance aspect of parental involvement on indecent dressing is best understood when it is realized that even though it is the desire of some parents that their children dress decently, there are some parents who do not care much about what their children wear. Besides, some children lack proper supervision and this is related to poor relationship between parents and children (Adeyemi, B. L 2007).

According to Stenberg et al (2007), adolescents whose parents are less-effective mentors are likely to have conduct problems and show lower levels of psycho-social competence. The trend of result is perhaps not surprising. On the peer influence, the adolescent students want to identify with their peer group in order to have a sense of identity and acceptance. They will want to appear in dresses that give them some sense of belonging and confidence especially when they are with their peers. Peer group influence can motivate adolescents to dress decently if his/her group does so and vice versa.

The second research question is on the relative contribution of parental involvement and peer influence on indecent dressing among adolescent students. The significant aspect of the relative contribution of each of the independent variable revealed that the greatest contribution is made by peer influence ($B=0.471$, $T=15.93$, $P<0.05$). This contribution was also found to be significant at 0.05. The second

contribution was made by parental involvement ($B=0.442$, $T=14.85$, $P<0.05$) and it was found to be significant at 0.05.

COUNSELLING /EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that:

- (1) Parents should be good role models and must be careful of what they wear.
- (2) Parents should endeavor to know the company (peer group) their children and loved ones keep and relate with in order to properly guide and direct their dress sense.
- (3) Movies /films watch by adolescents be censored and monitored by parents. This is to say that pornographic films and websites that show nudity films should be banned or sanctioned so that our Youths will not have access to watch them.
- (4) Government should come up with a law banning indecent dressing by the popular legislation.
- (5) And most importantly, religion /moral instructions should be taught in our homes so as to curb this menace that is ravaging the entire society at large.

CONCLUSION

The way you dress is the same way you will be addressed. Decent dressing is regarded as our cultural value. Our culture does not allow nudity or flaunting of bodies as it is a product that is being put up for sale. Some of these clothing and what they portray is alien to our culture. Nudity does not only attract men, but rapists as well. Good /decent dressing allows for healthy personal identity, love, good name and positive self-image. Adolescents that dress decently enjoy respect and prestige from all. Adults see them as good children from responsible homes while younger ones see them as their role model.

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