FACTORS AFFECTING ADOPTION OF FASHION AMONG FEMALE UNDERGRADUATES IN UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR

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ABSTRACT

The research focused on factors affecting fashion adoption among female undergraduates at the University of Calabar. The study aims to determine the effect of economic factors, social class, and country of origin on fashion adoption among female undergraduates of the University of Calabar. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design and a convenient sampling technique. The questionnaire was adopted as the instrument for Data collection. Taro Yamene's approach (finite) was used to determine the sample size. Data were analyzed using a simple regression model and were computed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results from the test of hypotheses showed that economic factors, social class, and country of origin were significant variables. Thus, they are factors affecting fashion adoption among female undergraduates at the University of Calabar. Some of the recommendations include: Fashion designers should be encouraged to introduce and design decent clothes because whatever comes out from them to their target consumers is considered fashionable and would be accepted by the consumers.

Keywords: fashion, social class, country of origin, economic factors
JEL: M3, M30, M39

INTRODUCTION

Fashion is defined as a process of social contagion by which a new style or product is adopted by the consumer after introduction by the designer or manufacturer (King, 1964). Fashion is regarded as the going trend of style obtainable in any society and at a particular time. According to Jack (1989), a person attempts to dissociate himself from his on social class and identify himself with high class by initiating the dress of the privilege group. In the 21st century, traditional African societies like Nigeria have experienced an influx of western dressing instead of typical traditional wears as can be seen in the current fashion of female trouser skirt, ties and the dominant dressing in the urban area as well as the rural villages; no wonder the Economist San (1961), defined fashion as a pursuit of novelty sake. Again, Horn (1968) in his opinion defined fashion as the manifestation of collective behaviour and as such represent the popular accepted prevailing style at any given time.

According to Jack (1989), fashion is more widespread than ever before as clothing are produce in mass quantities and people learn about it through new method of rapid communication and more people can afford new clothing. Hurlock (1929) sees fashion as series of recurring changes in the choice of group of people which though they may be accompanied in utility, are not determined by it. The rapid change in fashion in the manifestation and a drastic shortening and fighting of

government from above knee-level to before knee level for gown and skirts and transparent extremely tight trousers and exposing tops that barely can cover the burst and the buttocks are common dressing features/attribute of the female students and even ladies outside the university community/environment (Brawdel, 1981). According to Fold (2013), the formal traditional attires are kept for traditional and religious functions whereas the trousers and skirts tht are most times far above the knee level, sleeveless, blouses/tops which exposes the breast and other sensitive body parts are considered formal wears for office and school.

Expatiating on fashion theories of varied epochs and perspective, the assumption of this study is that fashion is constructing different sort of meanings, pleasure and identity in our daily lives. Female undergraduates have become victim of fashion. An observation of the various Style of clothing won by female undergraduates indicates that they have become fashion victims without regards to their cultural ideals. A walk around some selected faculties in the University of Calabar reveals that fashion is being applied by female students as a symbol of fads and trends. To them, fashion is socially a belief from bourgeoisies and petit bourgeoisies' boredom, or a distraction from important matters for the idle rich. However, factors affecting fashion adoption among female may be economical factors such as income, culture, psychological, social class identity and country of origin factors could be possible factors for the western fashion adoption among female students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Hence, the study seeks to unravel the factors behind fashion adoption among female undergraduates.

Religious leaders, teachers' good moralists of some Christian faith have found the dressing code of the female youth immoral and lustful. Peters, Shetton and Thomas, (2011) stated that even individuals above 40 years of age are found in the same dressing code of the youths and teens. Preaching against the "sex-appeal" as a way of addressing semi- nudity dressing of the western fashion has still not really show the trend of such dressing on the street of southern cities in Nigeria. Instead, it suggests the trend is rapidly increasing. Whether such clothes are worn because of economic factors, psychological factors social class identity factors or country of origin factors is what the study seek to discovered and thus it forms the reason for the study.

From the forgone, the study aims
1. to evaluate the impact of economic factors on fashion adoption among female undergraduates in university of Calabar.
2. to determine the effect of social class identify on fashion adoption among female students in university of Calabar.
3. to evaluate the influence of country of origin on the fashion adoption among female students in university of Calabar.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Theory of Conspicuous Consumption
The theory of conspicuous consumption was postulated by Veblen (1912) which similarly focus on fashion as a symbolic expenditure practice most factitively by the most- wealthy social stratum. Though the Veblen theory deal with the symbolic value of consumption, the intuitive simplicity of the upper-class fashion leadership approach has historically generated a broad basis of support for this so-called 'trickled down" fashion process in contemporary analysis, however a number of alternative conceptualizations are emerging most interesting of these are the horizontal flow or

mass market theory, Youst theory and the lower innovation theory. As in the case of the trickled down concept, each of these alternative theories is based on a social class conceptualization of the fashion process. The horizontal flow concept as structured by King (1963), represents a major conceptual framework of contemporary fashion theory. In essence, this concept suggests that in a mass production and mass communication environment, fashion tend to spread simultaneously within each social class over time. Key argument supporting this position is that mass production makes new fashions almost simultaneously available at all price levels, and that mass communication rapidly disseminates information and influence on new fashion offerings. The remaining conceptualization of the fashion process focus on the youths influence on fashion and on cultural or social class minorities as transmitters of fashion ideals. These conceptualizations of fashion are not significantly documented in literature but are rather based on observation of contemporary fashion adoption movement of these latter approaches.

Greenwood and Murphy (1990) theories of fashion behavior best served the purpose of this study, the trickle-up theory (or Bottom-up theory was considered). This theory postulates that a fashion pattern occurs where style first becomes popular at lower social economic level and flows upward to become popular among higher levels. Youth definitely play a role in this theory; this could perfectly represent the Nigerian situation. The diffusion process could be likened to that of 'osmosis' in the elementary study of biology. In the bottom-up theory, the diffusion process of fashion moves from the lower to the higher level. However, in view of the factors affecting adoption of western fashion in the University of Calabar environment, it is suggested that the populist theories of fashion best convey the social group factor as a source of fashion inspiration. The theory was conceived by anthropologist Ted Polhemus in his Book" Street style" published in 1994 (Michelle, 2003).

The youth in fashion is highly visible in the consumer market, whereas the impact of the lower socioeconomic and minority segments of the population are less well defined. These models of fashion adoption appear to perform complementary roles in conceptualization the fashion process. However, the theoretical emphasis on a socioeconomic a base point for a move inclusive behavior theory. Contemporary fashion may be expended around these key conceptual structures, but with a move details focus on the behavioral mechanism of fashion innovation and different will social and cultural system. The life cycle for fashion is quite short. Since the 1980's, a typical life cycle for fashion apparel has four stages: introduction and adoption by fashion leaders, growth and increase in public acceptance, mass conformity (maturation), and finally the decline and obsolescence (Bhardwaj &Fairhurst, 2010). Marketing and capital investment are the driving forces of competitiveness in the fashion apparel industry. The fashion market is very competitive and the constant need to update product ranges means that many retailers are trying to extend the number of seasons. Fashion retailers are encouraging consumers to visit their stores more frequently by launching small collections of clothes with the use of the expression limited edition. This leads to a shorter life cycle and higher profit margins from the sale of fast selling clothes. The desire to have variety and instant gratification is motivating consumers to buy their clothes less expensive (Bhardwaj &Fairhurst, 2010). The fashion industry has an established interest in developing new products for the customers at the expense of existing ones. This process is called planned obsolescence, a phenomenon also recognized from the electronics and automobile industries. Furthermore, legislative changes, the expansion of the EU, the gradual removal of trade barriers on a global scale and the growth of the Internet have turned the fashion industry into a

competitive global business (Easey, 2009, Julia and Rebecca, 2010).

Looking at history, fashion runways and fashion shows have been the biggest inspirations for the fashion industry. These shows were primarily restricted to designers, buyers and other fashion managers. From 1999 and onwards, fashion shows and catwalks became a public phenomenon, where photographs of the recent fashion shows could be seen in magazines and on the web shortly after the show. Fashion- conscious consumers are therefore exposed to exclusive designs and styles inspired from runways. Retailers such as Zara, H&M, Mango and Top Shop adopt the designs rapidly to attract consumers, and they introduce interpretations of the runway designs in store in about three to five weeks after the show (Bhardwaj & Fairhurst, 2010). With the increased importance of quick responsiveness, the fashion industry shifted from forecasting future trends into using real-time data to understand the needs and desires of the consumers. Consumers are becoming more demanding, which is forcing fashion retailers to provide the right product at the right time. Information and trends are moving around the globe at high speed, resulting in more options and thus the consumers shop more often. The consumers need for uniqueness forces fashion retailers to constantly renew their styles. (Bhardwaj &Fairhurst, 2010) The end of the Multi Fibre Arrangement in 2005 increased the amount of bargain in supermarkets for clothing. The establishment of, for instance, Topshop's flagship store on Oxford Street signalled that something was happening in fashion. Along came Zara and H&M, and just as Topshop they sell fashionable clothes at a price that almost everyone can afford. Since chain stores like H&M and Zara have such a quick turnaround they can sell trendier clothes than the more expensive design houses. (Tungate, 2008).

Economic factors and fashion adoption among female undergraduates

According to Lawal and Ramat (2013), Consumer economic situation has great influence on his/her buying behavior. The smaller the consumer's family size or dependents, the higher the income and savings of such consumer, this will in turn influence the consumer to favour more expensive products. On the other hand, a person with low income and savings will purchase inexpensive products (Shah, 2010). (Myers, Stanton, and Haug, 1971) also provided support for the predictive power of economic factors such as income, family size and consumer budget over other social factors in explaining expenditure patterns for low-priced goods. They concluded that economic factors are a major determinant of buying behaviour and can be used to predict the type of clothes consumer is likely to buy. Keiser and Kuehl (1972) also shows the influence of economic factors on buyer behaviour, when it comes to brand identification. The study revealed that adolescents with high earnings and in the upper class were able to identify more brands than other adolescents. A very comprehensive and valuable research was conducted by Schaninger (1981) in the analysis of both usage/non-usage criteria as well as frequency of use data for a large variety of products, where it was concluded that economic factors are the most important factors in explaining the consumption of low social value products and services that are not related to class symbols, he opined that it is irrational and wrong to deny the influence that income has over buying behavior, (fashion adoption) both on type and prices of clothes purchased.

According to Julia and Rebecca (2010), during recent years there has been a deflation in the clothing industry. Sales growth in volume is exceeding sales growth in value. This does not mean that people are buying fewer clothes, but clothes are becoming cheaper. In this fast-evolving industry even the best plans and activities can be undermined by economic change and the actions

of competitors. The fashion industry is well known for the high failure rate of new businesses and the forced price reductions on products that have not sold (Easey, 2009). The latest generations in the western world have been socialized into consuming very early, and therefore fashion consumption starts at earlier ages. The new intelligent fashion consumer is not afraid to buy things from different layers of the fashion pyramid. She might have a bag from Chanel, a top from H&M and a skirt from a new young designer. When she brings these items together they send a message to others that she is an intelligent consumer in charge of her own image (Tungate, 2008). The perception of fashion varies among different generations. Younger people generally prefer a higher number of low qualities, cheap and fashionable clothes, compared to the older generation which prefers to purchase a fewer number of higher quality clothes. The older consumers will see fast fashion as a waste since it means buying several clothes of low quality and then throwing away older clothes as soon as the new ones hang in the closet. (Bhardwaj &Fairhurst, 2010). Thus, the study hypothesizes that;

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between economic factors and the adoption of fashion among female students in University of Calabar.

The social class and fashion adoption

Classical fashion theory focuses on a social class orientation of consumers fashion behavior with specific emphasis on fashion leadership as strictly upper-class leadership of texts and morals is frequently evident in the early sociological and economic literature, one of the description statement of class leadership in fashion was offered by the sociological. The whole style of human expression is constantly transformed by fashion Simmel, (1904). However, that fashion in all the things effect only the upper classes turn away from this style and adopt a new one which in turn differentiates them from the masses and thus the game goes merrily on. Perhaps even more will know is Veblen (1912) theory of conspicuous consumption which similarly forces on fashion as a symbolic expenditure practiced most actively by the wealthy social stratum. Through the Veblen theory deals very much with the class fashion leadership argument is no less explicit. Intuitive simplicity of the upper-class fashion, leadership approach has historically generated a broad basis of support for this so-called tricked down fashion process.

In contemporary analysis however, a number of alternative conceptualizations are emerging. Most interesting of these is the horizontal concept as structured by King (1963), represent a major. In essence, this concept suggests that in a mass production and mass communication environment fashion trend to spread simultaneously with each social class over time. Key arguments supporting this proposition are that mass predicting make new fashion almost simultaneously available at all price levels and that mass communications rapidly disseminates information and influence on new fashion offerings. The remaining conceptualizations of the fashion process focus on the youth influence on fashion and cultural or social class mortise as transmitters of fashion and on cultural or social class mortise as transmitters of fashion ideals these conceptualization of fashion are not significantly documented in the literature but are rather based on observations of contemporary of fashion adoption movements of these latter approaches, the youth influence in fashion is highly visible in the lower socio-economic and minority segments of the population are lee well defined.

These models of fashion adoption appear to perform complementary roles in conceptualizing the fashion process. However, the theoretical emphasis on a socioeconomic demographic explanation

of fashion represents only a base point for a more inclusive behavioural theory. Contemporary fashion may be expanded around these key conceptual structures, but with a more detail focus on the behavioural mechanisms of fashion innovation and diffusion within social and cultural system. Thus, the study hypothesizes that:

H_{02}: There is no relative significant relationship between social class identity and fashion adoption among female students in University of Calabar.

Country of origin effect and adoption of fashion
Country of origin effect is used by consumers to predict quality and performance of products (Hamin & Eliot 2006, Olins, 2004) and to understand the rationality of their purchasing decision. Lai (2004), Khachaturian & Morgan, (1990) previous studies on country of origin indicate that the image of countries where products are manufactured is used by consumers as an external cue to evaluate products. The information regarding country of origin would not only help to form preferences and purchase decision, but also elicits emotions, feelings imagery and fantasies. Many countries utilize country of-origin stereotypes to appraise products. For example, "Japan electronics are reliable "German cars are excellent", Italian Pizza are Superb" and made in Nigeria shoes inferior" Therefore, country of origin effect may be the reason to avoid patronage (Sameer, 2014). Although, there are many parameters that consumers consider when they want to buy something such as brand, colors, design, quality, researchers cannot ignore extrinsic factors like country of origin. The international marketing literature shows that consumer uses this extrinsic factor for evaluating products.

In the late 1970, the apathy of local consumers towards product produced locally for the market knew no bounds with consumers preferring foreign products ones over and above the locally products ones (clothes), Aire (1973). Again, past studies Aire (1973) Kalegha (1983) and Okechukwu (1999) has revealed that the Nigerian consumers possessed a negative attitude towards made in Nigeria goods. Okechukwu (1999) showed that Nigerian made goods, shoes, clothes, cars &Tv were rated lowest by Nigerians when compared with alternatives from overseas. Based on this, it is suggested that consumer (female students) are aware of the made in Nigeria shoes(clothes) but choose not to patronize the shoes because they do not trust and have confidence on the country, (Margaret, 2016). Thus, the study hypothesizes that:

H_{03}: Country of origin effect does not have any effect on adoption of fashion among female students in University of Calabar.

METHODOLOGY
The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research method. This research design solicits responses from persons believed to have the desired information on factors affecting fashion adoption among female undergraduates at the University of Calabar. A sample of 200 female students and a convenient sampling technique were used for the study. The questionnaire was used to obtain data from the respondents. The questionnaire was structured as closed-ended; statements were made on each independent and dependent variable. Each respondent was allowed to tick every statement on a Likert scale of measurement, which comprises a five-point scale: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. Respondents were asked to tick their level of agreement or disagreement with each statement in the factors affecting the adoption of fashion

among female undergraduates of university of Calabar. Data were analysed using simple regression

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Model summary showing the relationship between economic factors and fashion adoption

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.458[a]	.210	.201	2.65098

   a. Predictors: (Constant), income, religion and background

Table 2: ANOVA[a] showing the relationship between economic factors and fashion adoption

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	334.777	2	167.389	23.819	.000[b]
1	Residual	1257.953	179	7.028		
	Total	1592.731	181			

   a. Dependent Variable: Patronage
   b. Predictors: (Constant), income, religion and background

Table 3: Coefficients[a] showing the relationship between economic factors and fashion adoption

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	2.318	.984		2.355	.021
1	Economic factors	.233	.044	.507	5.259	.000

   a. Dependent Variable: Fashion adoption

Interpretation

In the test of hypothesis one, R = 21, this means the correlation relationship between economic factors and fashion adoption is significant. The R – square has a value of 20 percent, therefore economic factors influences fashion adoption among female undergraduates by 20 percent. The F – statistic was 23.819 significant at .005, the table shows that .000 < .005. This implies the model capacity to predict the relationship between economic factors and fashion adoption. The relationship between economic factors and fashion adoption. The coefficient of relationship shows that the economic factors had a t – 5.259. 5.259 < .005. This shows a positive relationship between economic factors and fashion adoption among female undergraduates in the University of Calabar.;

Table 4: Model summary showing the relationship between social class and fashion adoption

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.474[a]	.224	.211	2.61718

   Predictors: (Constant), social class

Table 5: ANOVAᵃ showing the relationship between social class and fashion adoption

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	342.738	3	114.246	16.679	.000ᵇ
	Residual	1184.990	173	6.850		
	Total	1527.729	176			

a. Dependent Variable: Fashion adoption
b. Predictors: (Constant), social class

Table 6: Coefficientsᵃ showing the relationship between social class and fashion adoption

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.400	1.109		3.065	.003
	Country of origin	.171	.046	.381	3.705	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Fashion adoption

Interpretation

The test of hypothesis two shows that R = 50; this means the correlation relationship between social class factors and fashion adoption had a significant relationship. The R – square had a value of 22 percent. It means that social class influences fashion adoption by 22 percent. That is, the variable statistic accounts for only 22 percent change on female undergraduate adoption of fashion. The F – 16.679 significant at .005; the table shows that F significant .000 < .005 which implies the model ability to predict the relationship between the two variables. The coefficient of relationship shows that social class factors had a t = 3.065 < .005, hence positive relationship between social class factors and female undergraduate fashion adoption in the University of Calabar.

Table 7: Model summary showing the relationship between Country of origin and fashion adoption

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.510ᵃ	.260	.250	1.96379

a. Predictors: (Constant), country of origin

Table 8: ANOVAᵃ showing the relationship between country of origin and fashion adoption

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	100.149	1	100.149	25.969	.000ᵇ
	Residual	285.378	74	3.856		
	Total	385.526	75			

a. Dependent Variable: Fashion adoption
b. Predictors: (Constant), country of origin

Table 9: Coefficientsᵃ showing the relationship between country of origin and fashion adoption

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.147	1.155		1.858	.067
	Country of origin	.655	.129	.510	5.096	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Fashion adoption

Interpretation

In the test of hypothesis three, R = 51, this means the correlation relationship between country of origin factors and fashion adoption had a significant relationship. The R – square has a value of 26 percent. It means that country of origin factors influences fashion adoption by 26 percent. That is, the variable statistic accounts for only 26 percent change on female undergraduate adoption of fashion. The F – statistic 25.969 significant at .005, the table shows that .000 < .005 which implies the model ability to predict the relationship between the two variables. The coefficient of relationship shows that country of origin factors had a t = 5.096 < .005, hence, positive relationship between country of origin factors and fashion adoption among female undergraduates in the University of Calabar.

Discussion of findings

Findings from the study revealed that economic factors had a significant relationship. Income, religion and background are all factors that propel either the rejection or adoption of western fashion among female undergraduates. According to Deidre (2012), Kiran, Riaz, and Malik (2002) a wide diffusion of wealth and an increase in family income is one of the most important factors in speeding up the change in clothing pattern and styles. According to them, another factor that affects change in styles is that the middle class always tries to copy the higher class, while the higher class is always changing their styles to stand out from the middle class. Again, the findings support the opinion of McDermott and Pettijohn, (2011) in their study "the influence of clothing fashion and race on the perceived socioeconomic status and person perception of college students." When they opined that social perception can be derived from the brands of clothing a person might own. The findings further support the findings of Ida and Catherine (2014) in their work, "Factors that influence clothing selection of students", it was recorded that economic factors were important sub- factors that influenced their clothing selection. Almost 38% of the respondents mentioned cost or affordability as a factor that influenced their clothing selection.

Secondly, the study reveals a strong significant relationship between social class factors and fashion adoption among female undergraduates in University of Calabar. This also implies that social class factors affect fashion adoption among female undergraduates. This is in supports of McDermott and Pettijohn, (2011) in their study "the influence of clothing fashion and race on the perceived socioeconomic status and person perception of college students." When they opined that social perception can be derived from the brands of clothing a person might own. Again, on the findings of Ida and Catherine (2014) on their work, "Factors that influence clothing selection of students" they found out that about 8% indicated that they wished to preserve campus clothes therefore did not wear them at home. They also were of the view that campus clothes were not suitable enough to be worn at home. This however explained the fact that some of them were aware of the provocative nature of campus fashion and therefore could not wear them at home but only wear it to school to define the class they belong to. Again, the findings agreed to the saying of Schiffman and Kanuk [2004] on their book 'Consumer Behaviour' which they noted that social class also depicts the shopping fashion and clothing behavior of consumer.

Finally, the study shows that there is a significant relationship between country of origin factors and fashion adoption among female undergraduates in University of Calabar. It means country of origin factors affects fashion adoption among female undergraduates by 26 percent which means that female undergraduates adopt western fashion because of the various western countries that

manufactures clothes and they have a favourable mindset towards those western clothes since they are invoke and no longer the traditional wears. This is in support to the report of Sameer {2014} in his work that "The effect of country of origin effect image on consumer's purchase behavior", he opined that country of origin effect may be the reasons to avoid patronage. further concord the findings of Hamin and Eliot [2006] in their study "A less developed country perspective of consumer ethnocentrism and country of origin effect", they discover that country of effect is used by consumers to predict quality and performance of products and finally attest to the facts that images of countries where products are manufactured is used by customers as an external cue to evaluate product (clothes).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The importance of clothing to the entire universe cannot be over emphasized. The need for clothing has however be from the beginning of creation after Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the garden and ran to seek cover for their nakedness. Since then, clothing took another phase of it and thus the quest for fashion was obvious as individuals no longer seek to be clothed for its basic functions but to display the amount of income/money possessed by an individual, distinguished himself/herself from one another through by dress code and travelling from one country to another to purchase the best quality, well design fabrics from their preferred countries. However, the female undergraduates are not left out in this fashion-conscious area s it is envisage in the campus as some dress half naked to classes exposing parts of the body meant to be properly covered.

Recommendations arising from this study's outcome follow thus;
1. University board authorities should research into the views of students on campus fashion in attempt to educate them more on moderate fashion adoption.
2. Fashion designers should be encouraged to introduce and design clothes that are decent because whatever comes out from them to their target consumers is considered fashionable and would be accepted by the consumers.
3. University Authorities should pass a law that welcomes only decent and moderate fashion on campus and strict security measures should be put in place to check and monitor students dress on campus and defaulters should be punished according.
4. Consumers should be encouraged to go back to the traditional way of dressing that covers all parts of the body and shun the western fashion adoption that exposes the body.

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