



## A study of psychological effect of fashion on the personality of teenage girls: A study from Indore

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### Abstract

**Background:** Fashion is an essence, where an individual is comfortable with his own way of appearance and translates this ease into a personal style. Fashion is a reflection of a mood that can be useful in understanding many aspects, culturally, socially and psychologically. Fashion refers to a distinctive and typical trend in the style with which a person dresses, as well as to dominant styles in behavior.

**Aim and Objective:** To study the psychological impact of fashion on the personality of teenage girls

**Materials and Methods:** It was a cross-sectional study carried over a sample of 50 teenage girls' age ranging from 14 to 18 years. Two sets of questionnaire were used to record the emotions, mood, and personality of subjects before wearing and while wearing the eight selected outfits.

**Results:** Subjects have exhibited overall negative emotions with loose fitted, old fashioned, dull colored, low-quality material, poorly designed clothes. Subject has exhibited overall positive emotions with fitted clothes, bright color, good fabric like silk, well designed, reviling and in trend.

**Conclusion:** Results of this study reveals strong associations among mood and personality and clothing style preference. Whilst personality was a moderate, mood comes out as a significant predictor of clothing preference.

**Keywords:** fashion, psychological effect, teenage girls

### Introduction

Fashion and clothing are the most commonly used to convey and reflect the inner self of one's personality. Clothing is a strong predictor of self-image, state of mood, social and political affiliations and aspirations<sup>[1]</sup>.

There are three dominant factors in the choice of clothing; physical features of clothes like skin response, size and shape, thermal comfort and fitting; revealing levels and visual features and the wearers' self-appearance, associated reasons and memories. All of these factors would generate an emotional response<sup>[2]</sup>.

Fashion preferences have two major components i.e. cognitive and effective. The effective factor is the emotional and overall positive and negative reaction towards the object, due to the nature of it. The cognitive factors are the product aesthetic, social features inherent in the object based on previous experiences and usefulness. All these factors work at decision-making<sup>[3]</sup>.

Studies revealed that that product attributes are the major factors in deciding what to buy. Attributes are either extrinsic like price, brand name, and store image or intrinsic i.e. style, color, fabric, fit or quality<sup>[4]</sup>.

Clothes are a tool of self- aesthetic and body image management and phenomena for mood alteration. Clothing is also the connection between clothing satisfaction and self-perception of sociability, emotional stability and sense of dominance<sup>[5]</sup>.

During trial or wearing clothes and its attributes have an

effect on positive, negative moods and emotions of an individual, due to various aspects of social factors and symbolic associations of them with the clothing<sup>[6]</sup>. Hence, in the present study we have tried to find out the effect of fashion on the personality of the teenage girls of the Indore region.

### Material and Method

A sample of 50 teenage girls was constituted based on the formal and written consent. Subjects were given two questionnaires to answer.

The Positive and Negative Mood Affect Scale (PANAS) has a 20-item self-completion scale. The PANAS describes different feelings and emotions related to positive affect (PA) - (10 words), and negative affect (NA) - (10 words). The NEOAC was designed to measure the five factors of personality in a test-booklet format containing 60 questions. Scores can range from very high to medium, to very low on each of the five factors.

A cross-section of eight different outfits was selected with differences in fit, colour, revealing factors, and brand and fabric types. They represented possible relationships with personality, e.g. formal and casual, evening wear. Brand labels were kept in place as it was anticipated that brand factors would have an impact on their response. An experiment room was set up with a changing room and full-length for subjects to try, experience and make a decision about the clothes.

**Table 1:** Outfits used for the experiment

Outfit	Description
1	Loose, fitted pink trousers of cotton and linen mix, and lightweight striped pink dress of cotton.
2	Loose green flared combat made of coated cotton and dark blue soft zipper made a blend of cotton and polyester.
3	Fitted, black dress with white stripe (old fashioned) with a heavy transparent net.
4	Loose fit, orange and green print apron lined dress (silk)
5	The fitted, navy suit made of viscose and polyester blended, with a white shirt of linen.
6	Fitted, ruby long dress made of silk.
7	Fitted, beige crotchet lined dress with leather and diamond broach feature made of viscose.
8	Loose, black layered abstract top and a long skirt made of silk and jersey.

To calculate the correlation among various behavioral variables; moods and emotions were recorded for every outfit. The Five Factor Model of personality established on traits, derived from Cattell's (1943) bipolar clusters, is currently regarded as the utmost broad model. It is also reinforced by empirical evidence and used in clinical, organizational and applied researches.

Five major dimensions of personality (NEOAC) are Neuroticism (N), Extraversion (E), Openness (O), Agreeableness (A) and Conscientiousness (C). Each of these five factors has six dimensions of behavior. <sup>7</sup>

**Table 2**

Abbreviation	Description
D	Dynamic
NM	Negative Mood
PM	Positive Mood
B	Baseline
P	Preference
N	Neuroticism
E	Extraversion
O	Openness
A	Agreeableness
C	Conscientiousness

All the data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS ver. 20 software. Person correlation was used to obtain a relation between factors. P value of <0.05 is considered as significant.

**Result**

Results of this study were recorded in as the degree of impact of clothing on various aspects of behaviors like emotion, mood, personality, and preferences.

Subjects showed a varied degree of emotions after wearing each outfit and therefore clothing is powerful in modifying emotional states. Subject has exhibited overall negative emotions with loose fitted, old fashioned, dull colored, low-quality material (thicknet or cotton), poorly designed clothes. (Negative emotions include, upset, hostile, scared, nervous and afraid). Subject has exhibited overall positive emotions with fitted clothes, bright color, good fabric like silk, well designed, reviling and in trend. (Positive emotions include, interested, excited, strong, proud, alert, and active, inspired).

**Table 2:** Showing Correlations for Mood and Preference

Outfit No	Variable	Correlation
1	PM & P	r = 0.48, p < 0.05
5	PM & P	r = 0.48, p < 0.05
6	PM & P	r = 0.43, p < 0.05
3	NM & P	r = -0.46, p < 0.05
7	NM & P	r = -0.68, p < 0.05

PM; positive mood, NM; negative mood, p; preference, r; person correlation coefficient, P value of <0.05 is considered as significant

Three of the eight outfits (loose fitted pink trousers, fitted suit and long silk dress), showed a positive correlation between positive mood and preference and two of the eight outfits (Fitted, black dress with transparent heavy net and Fitted, beige crotchet lined dress with viscose) showed a negative correlation between Pearson correlation coefficients were then calculated for the five personality factors (NEOAC) and preference ratings. Preference ratings for just three out of the eight outfits showed a significant correlation with the five personality factors. All other correlations were non-significant.

**Table 3:** Showing Correlations for Personality and Preference

Outfit No	Variable	Correlation
2	A & P	r = -0.49, p < 0.05
6	A & P	r = 0.38, p < 0.05
5	N & P	r = -0.56, p < 0.01

A; Agreeableness, N; Neuroticism, p; preference, r; person correlation coefficient, P value of <0.05 is considered as significant

**Discussion**

All 8 outfits provoked positive emotions like interested, excited, strong, and alert. Fitted, navy pinstripe suit and white shirt (FTS) and Fitted, a ruby long dress of silk (FLD) was the 4th and 3rd most preferred dresses and had a significant impact on all positive emotions. Outfit FLD, made the subjects feel inspired, which concurring with Hall GS, found that being well dressed led to greater sociability, power, and worth <sup>[8]</sup>.

Emotions were moderate overall; guilty was the least felt negative emotion. Outfits with varying levels of revealing, fit and style elicited strongest emotions of jitteriness and nervousness. Additionally, ashamed was another key emotion for loose, layered and long outfits, which causes a feeling of distress. These results may have been due to the unusual design of the outfits or styling of wearing garments together. Participants' moods were reflected with the clothing, whilst wearing full fitted or layered and long subjects exhibited negative mood in contrast positive mood was recorded in case of light, loses and bright colored clothes. These results are consistent with Cosbey *et al.* <sup>[5]</sup> The results also revealed that mood is a very good predictor of preference, with the positive mood being more predictive. This is highly significant when trying to explain clothing preference considering the changes in self-perception that clothes can generate.

## Conclusion

Fashion and clothing have a direct correlation with the mood, emotions, and personality, personality can be judged by seeing the clothing or clothing preference can be predicted by the mood of the person. This is a sample controlled study and more research is needed in this field understand this relation better.

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