



## INDECENT DRESSING A PANACEA TO RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE AMONG STUDENTS IN KOGI STATE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (TECHNICAL), KABBA

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### ABSTRACT

This study examined the ideal dressing and the dress code in Kogi State College of Education (Technical), Kabba. The study employed descriptive survey design. The population comprised the entire students of Kogi-State College of Education (Technical) Kabba. The population was stratified into year of study i.e., NCE 1, 2 & 3. The respondents comprised of forty students from each of the three arms making a total population of one hundred and twenty (120) students. Questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was duly validated and piloted, and the reliability coefficient was found to be 0.82. The questionnaire was then administered to the respondents. Data collected from the administration of the questionnaire were analyzed through frequency distribution table and percentage chi-square ( $X^2$ ) was used to test the hypothesis at alpha level of 0.05. The findings of the results of the chi-square test showed that there is a statistically significant relationship between mode of dressing and sexual abuse. The study concluded that rape and other incidences of sexual abuse could be seen exactly how they are on our campuses. There is the probability towards rape, and it is a clear manifestation of personality disorder. The study recommended among others that dress code should be integrated into the school curriculum as a subject to further enhance the practices.

**Keywords:** Indecent Dressing, Panacea, Rape, Sexual Abuse

### Introduction

Sexual abuse is rampant among the youth in Nigeria, although the adults too are fond of indulging in sexual abuse especially the school age young girls and ladies. In some of our tertiary institutions, it has been reported severally among the lecturers who have raped or attempted to rape students. Hence, the slogan of “sex for mark”.

Mikki (2016) suggested that the idea that clothing has anything to do with assault is global and persistent. In 1999 for example the supreme court of Appeals in Roma was said to have ruled out that a woman wearing jeans dress could not be raped, the reason behind this idea being that the rapist cannot forcibly remove a pair of pants, following the police questioning victims of sexual assaults about what they were wearing as though the size and length of their skirt is an indication of consent.

Claire (2021) cited example of her daughter’s school principal who banned the wearing of spaghetti straps and halter tops on the school campus. It was observed that this could go a long way to prevent the males from touching the female students without their permission. It was just a beginning of dress code battles, it was difficult to adjust, but the impression was that the students were being taught to dress professionally.

From ages dressing code has been an important issue in the human society. The first created man and woman (Adam and Eve) were said to have used leaves to cover their nakedness. The essence of dressing should not be for fashion alone but to cover nakedness and also indicate a professional and good moral behaviour; among the learned. It is true by virtue of the slogan that “The way you dress is the way you are addressed”. You can easily be predicted who you are by virtue of what you put on

your body. Jagboro (2022) while addressing the new set of 2021 employed teaching and non-teaching staff observed among the staff that it is good to wear beard, but should be made moderate, and ensure a dressing culture that indicate professionalism

Exposing a female breast is not the only way by which a woman can be seductive. Sporting T-shirt, styles or fashions that exposes sensitive area of the body is a suggestive of open invitation to the opposite sex to as well participate in the scenario. Panay (2022) suggested that there is no dress code that predisposed an individual to rape. The victim-blaming and using a woman clothes to justify the act of rape was outright condemned. Rape is said to be an act of violence and aggression. People across all ages, sexualities, genders, appearances, cultures, religions, and ethnicity can be raped. Suzannah (2016) viewed it that sexualizing the female students' bodies through certain school dressing codes, the school directly or indirectly teach the students that a woman who doesn't dress conservatively enough is asking for opposite sex attention, and not the fault of the opposite sex if an unwanted attention is given, and the young woman is only being defied by what she wears.

Nancy (2021) mentioned the case of an uproar in a university where a sign post read "indecent dressing leads to sexual harassment and rape". The advert was placed at the university main gate, the poster described "acceptable dress code with the examples of woman wearing such outfits. The university community was under fire over such poster that linked rape to such an indecent dressing. The belief was that the co-operative university of Kenya was already showing a red signal to the rapist, and the tendency to commit such menace among the female students of the campus. The way women dress is routinely cited as an incitement to rape. References to sheer and clinging fabrics, how slung jeans and low-cut tops, bare midriffs, short skirts, and liberally applied make-up are common in the context of rape trials. The assumption that the choices of clothes style can predisposed to rape – that clothes can speak for women who say no – are ludicrous and extremely damaging

NGRCampus (2018) opined that dressing the way one wants to be addressed has long existed in Nigeria, it also a major issue in Nigeria campus because students always crave for freedom to dress the way they want without being addressed inappropriately. It was mentioned that in some campuses in Nigeria "indecent dressing has been linked to sexual harassment and a clarion call for dress codes in our tertiary institutions.

In the year 2019, the Kogi State College of Education (Technical), Kabba introduced a dress code for the students on the campus. The dress code according to the college authority would go a long way to tame the indecent dressings among the entire campus students. Indecent dressings according to the college management was sketched on a signpost pasted conspicuously for anybody to read at a far distance and simple enough to understand by everybody passing by the post board. As a professional teachers'-based training institution, a teacher mode of dressing as well as a students' teacher way of dressing can signal or spell a danger to the young ones' that are being taught by the modeled teacher. A primary pupil painted her nail beds one time, having been challenged why she painted her nail bed with biro ink, said that was how auntie (meaning the female teacher) teaching them in children Sunday school painted her finger nails as well.

Lawal (2019), opined that the conversation is age old that indecent dressing is the cause of sexual harassment on campuses. Though presently no empirical facts to support that as experiences have shown that randy teachers in higher institutions usually prefer to go for well dressed, vulnerable female students. Yet, the crises-though often seen as a female problem- of indecent dressing and grooming is not something educational institutions in Nigeria are taking lying down. Male students

have also been guilty by their sloppy, indecorous dress and grooming. It is against this backdrop in 2018 that the University of Ilorin constituted a committee look into the modalities for the enforcement of a dress code for members of staff and students of the institution. The committee however changed all staff and students to always abide by the rules and regulation governing depressing on campus as sensations will be applied on erring staff and students.

Moreover, Premium Times Media report (2018) indicated that controversy trailed the attempt by the authority of the University of Ibadan to foist a dress code on the Institutions which was particularly targeted at female students' resident at Queen Elizabeth II Hall. After allegations of indecent dressing was leveled against some female students in the hostel. The school management issued a notice of warning and sanctions.

Sahara (2022) reported a banner placed in front of the school gate, where the management banned a wide range of fashion choice common amongst its student. The Federal Polytechnic, Ado- Ekiti, Ekiti-State released a new dress code that rendered the wardrobes of some of their students obsolete. It warned that the listed items and forms of behavior would no longer be condoned. The school listed number of fashions statements that include coloured hair, baseball caps, tattoos, folded sleeves, pencil trousers, bushy beards, and bizarre hair styles.

The polytechnic joins other Nigerian Higher Institutions such as Bayero University, University of Ilorin, University of Lagos, and few others that have in the past released dress codes for male and female students. This particular study of the students of Kogi-State College of Education (Technical) Kabba, Kogi State considering the ideal dressing code was now predicted upon the assumption that there will be no significant relationship between mode of dressing, and incidence of sexual threat and social menace. It was on this basis that the researcher intended to investigate into the indecent dressing a panacea to rape and sexual abuse among students in Kogi State College of Education (Technical), Kaaba”.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the socio-demographics characteristics of the respondents?
2. Do the respondents comply with the institution dress code?

### **Research Hypothesis**

There will be no significant relationship between mode of dressing and sexual abuse students in Kogi-State College of Education (Technical) Kabba, Kogi State.

### **Materials and Methods**

The study employed descriptive survey design. Descriptive research design was used to obtain relevant information on the ideal dressing and the dress code from the respondents.

#### ***Population and Sample***

The entire students of Kogi-State College of Education (Technical) Kabba, Kogi – State were selected. The population was stratified into year of study i.e., NCE 1, 2 & 3. The respondents comprised of forty students from each of the three arms making a total population of one hundred and twenty (120) students. They were randomly selected in each of the year of the respondents i.e., NCE 1, 2, and 3.

#### ***Procedure for Data Collection***

Data was retrieved based on the year of study of the respondents i.e., NCE 1, 2, and 3. The assistance of class representatives was solicited in the course of administering the questionnaires to the respondents.

The researcher administered the questionnaire to respondents (students) after their lecture in each of their level of studies

### **Procedure for Data Analysis**

The data collected for the study was analyzed through frequency distribution table and percentage chi-square ( $X^2$ ) was used to test the hypothesis at alpha level of 0.05 degree of freedom.

### **Results**

#### **Socio-Demography of the Respondents**

Social demography of the respondents was considered in this study. Among the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents considered were sex, age, education level. Summary of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

**Table1:** Socio-Demography of the Respondents

Characteristics	Frequency		Percentage (%)
<b>Age</b>	15-20	83	69.17
	21-25	37	30.83
<b>Sex</b>	Male	56	46.67
	Female	64	53.33

Table 1 shows the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents. Table 1 revealed that one hundred and twenty (120) respondents participated in this study. The age range of the respondents was 15–19-year-old, with a mean age of 36.69. The most represented age group were those aged 15 to 20 years who made up 69.17% ( $n = 83$ ) of the study group. There were 56 male participants and 64 female participants with 46.67% and 53.33% respectively.

**Table 2:** Relevance of Dress Code on Campus

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Relevant	110	91.67
Not Relevant	10	8.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 shows that 110 (91.67%) of the respondents agreed that dress code among college of education is relevant, while 10 (8.33%) of the respondent disagreed that dress code is not relevant. The finding of the study showed that majority of the respondents agreed that dress code is relevant. This implies that dress code among colleges of education students is relevant.

**Table 3:** Dress Code Compliance, Incidence, Sexual Abuse

Variables	Yes	No	Total
Students' compliance with dress code	<b>112</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>120</b>
Incidence of Sexual abuse	0		

Findings from Table 3 shows that students complied with the rules and regulation regarding the dress code. It was also revealed that no case of sexual abuse has been recorded. This implies that students abide by the rules and regulation of the dress code.

**Table 4:** Participants Responses on Mode of Dressing versus Sexual Abuse

Items	Agree		Disagree	
	F	%	F	%
Exposure of sensitive part could result to sexual abuse	65	54.17	55	45.83
Dress code is a solution to sexual abuse	80	66.67	40	33.33
Causes of rape goes beyond dressing style	45	37.50	75	62.50
Caption on T-shirt predisposed to sexual attraction	80	66.67	40	33.33

Table 4 revealed that 80 (66.67%) of the respondents agreed that dress code is a solution to sexual abuse, while 40 (33.33%) disagreed that dress code is a solution to sexual abuse. The finding of the study showed that majority of the respondents agreed that exposure of sensitive part could result to sexual abuse.

**Table 5:** Chi-Square Analysis on Mode of Dressing Versus Sexual Abuse

Variable	Agree n (%)	Disagree n (%)	X-cal	P-value
Mode of Dressing	95 (79.17)	25 (20.83)		
Sexual Abuse	75 (62.50)	15 (12.5)	6.88	0.032

Results in Table 5 shows that 95 (79.17) of respondents agreed that there is relationship between mode of dressing and sexual abuse. The data were subjected to Chi-squared statistical tool. The results of the chi-square test shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between mode of dressing and sexual abuse students ( $\chi^2 = 6.88$ ;  $p = 0.032$ ).

### Discussion of Findings

Table 1 shows the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents. Table 1 revealed that one hundred and twenty (120) respondents participated in this study. The age range of the respondents was 15–19-year-old, with a mean age of 36.69. The most represented age group were those aged 15 to 20 years who made up 69.17% ( $n = 83$ ) of the study group. There were 56 male participants and 64 female participants with 46.67% and 53.33% respectively. Table 2 shows that 110 (91.67%) of the respondents agreed that dress code among college of education is relevant, while 10 (8.33%) of the respondent disagreed that dress code is not relevant. The finding of the study showed that majority of the respondents agreed that dress code is relevant.

Interview with some staff of the Student's Affairs Unit vividly revealed that there was enough publicity through Circular placed on Notice Boards in strategic areas of the College. The Student Affairs officials affirmed that any student who claimed ignorant of the Dress Code was been mischievous and not honest. However, despite the level of awareness of the Dress Code, majority of the students do not adhere to the Dress Code. They also disagreed that the dresses identified in the Dress Code were indecent dresses. Furthermore, majority of the students disagreed that the Dress Code constitutes part of the learning process, the training of mind and personality, as well as a form of building good character.

Findings from Table 3 shows that students complied with the rules and regulation regarding the dress code. It was also revealed that no case of sexual abuse has been recorded. Table 4 revealed that 80 (66.67%) of the respondents agreed that dress code is a solution to sexual abuse. The finding of the study showed that majority of the respondents agreed that exposure of sensitive part could result to sexual abuse which is in agreement with the finding of Asaju (2013) and Sequeira (2017). Indecent dressing by students of the College, majority of the respondents agreed to the fact that one's mode of dressing reflects his/her personality. The female students could also be a victim of sexual harassment. They agreed that teachers should be a good role model in their mode of dressing.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of study, it was concluded that there is a significant relationship between mode of dressing and incidences of sexual abuse. Rape and other incidences of sexual abuse could be seen exactly how they are on our campuses. There is the probability towards rape, and it is a clear manifestation of personality disorder. It is in this sense that those victims of rapes cannot find excuse in the disposition of their victims.

Respondents also suggested the need for dressing code going beyond dresses exposing sensitive parts of the body. Romantic Captions on T-shirts were also considered as a form of suggestion and enticing dressing.

### **Recommendation**

As part of findings in this study, it was recommended that consistent reminder of the existence of dress code on campus. Addressing issues of suggested dressing code on the campuses by the Health Education, seminars, workshops discussions and debates should serve as instrument of enlightenment. It was also recommended that dress code should be integrated into the school curriculum as a subject to further enhance the practices.

### **Suggestion for Further Study**

The study can further be repented among the entire level of students and staff of the college as the higher the population of study the higher the degree of findings which will further help to establish the truth and details of the stated hypothesis. It is also suggested that other tertiary institution in the country can be studied to see the perceptions of students and staff on dressing code and the health implications, as this will further progress solution to the menace caused by the incidence of indecent dressing especially among the youths of our various tertiary institution across the Nigeria campuses.

### **Conflicts of interest**

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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