



Research Article

Ghanaian Cultural Values and their Foreign Influence: A Spotlight on Clothing

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Abstract

Clothing is an area of great interest to mankind due to its ties with the cultural values of a people. Unfortunately, the current Ghanaian clothing and dressing styles do not reflect the traditional Ghanaian cultural values accepted by the people. The purpose of the study was to investigate the Ghanaian cultural values in clothing as well as the impact of foreign fashion styles and dressing on it. The study adopted the qualitative research approach that employs the descriptive research method with open-ended questionnaire and observation as the data collection instruments. The purposive sampling technique was used to select fifty five students from marketing, accounting and fashion departments of the Ho Technical University. The data garnered were analyzed using a mixture of descriptive and nonparametric inferential statistics. The findings from the study revealed that the traditional Ghanaian cloths such as Adinkra, Kente, Slit and Kaba as well as Fugu (Smock), promotes Ghanaian cultural values. However, Western fashion and dressing styles copied from foreign magazines and television programs have influenced the patronage of these traditional Ghanaian clothing styles. These Western clothing and dressing styles patronized by the Ghanaian youth in the tertiary institutions have had negative impacts on their moral lives leading to a high rise in moral decadence. The study recommends that the Ghanaian cultural ethics in clothing must be encouraged in schools, churches and other social platforms or gatherings. Also, the government must regulate the importation of foreign second hand clothes, foreign fashion magazines as well as airing foreign television programs that negatively promote Western clothing styles and lower the patronage of the Ghanaian clothing which are carriers of the rich Ghanaian cultural values.

Keywords

Ghanaian cultural values; Clothing and culture; Cultural communication; Fashion

Introduction

Clothing has been an integral part of the cultures of people globally since the age of Adam [1,2] Dating as far back as 20, 000 years ago in the Upper Paleolithic era, clothing in the form of manipulated plant stems, leaves, fibres and animal skins has been used by the prehistoric man [3,4]. The core function of clothing has been to protect humans

from the harsh weather conditions while giving them body comfort [5]. Aside from this primary role, clothing also serves as a powerful tool for expressing one's personality, emotions, religious beliefs and culture in its entirety [6]. The uniqueness of clothing does not only embrace the attire that an individual wears but also when, and for what purpose or occasions as well as the message it communicates about the wearer to the public. Hristova [7] concurs that clothing is a non-verbal way of communication that educates onlookers of the cultural values of a people. The identity given by clothes is the best indicator used in determining the true cultural identity of a group of people and their moral uprightness. People in almost all societies have been identified by some kind of clothing [8]. Clothing has been influenced by the climate in which people live, the materials they find in their surroundings and their ideas about garment and body decoration. Like most other cultures, African clothing are designed and created to have aesthetic, functional and moral values and they also have peculiar underlying symbolisms rooted in the people's values and belief system [4,2]. Ghana as a country is endowed with rich traditions and cultural values in which clothing forms an integral part. For example, the Ghanaian traditional clothes such as Adinkra, Kente, and Fugu (smock) communicate extensively about the rich Ghanaian cultural values. For instance, the Adinkra cloth is mostly worn by Akans during iconic events in their lives such as funerals [9] and the Fugu – a variety of loose garments sewn from strips of cloth woven on traditional looms in Northern Ghana [10] are used mostly by Northerners during festivals. The traditional clothing style among Ghanaian men is the use of ten (10) or six (6) yards of fabric to wrap around the body and hang on one shoulder, particularly the left arm. This description of men's clothing is rather popular among most men in the Southern part of Ghana. The Abosoo or Slit – a wrapped or sewn skirt) and Kaba (a syncretic three piece ensemble consists of an European inspired sewn blouse [11] is also the most recognizable and visible form of women's attire in Ghana. Kaba is a fusion of international and local fashion styles that signify a distinctly Ghanaian identity. Ghana's distinctive three-piece Kaba and Slit was created when European-inspired blouse was added to the existing wrapped ensemble of Ghanaian women's dressing. It quickly became a symbol of Ghana's national heritage and a form of dressing that was debated, celebrated, and routinely worn by Ghanaian women. The Ghanaian society has in recent times expressed worry over what they termed "the rapid decaying" of their traditions and cultural values especially on the part of the youth in terms of dressing. It has been observed that many of the Ghanaian youth, particularly, young ladies have discarded the known Ghanaian traditional ways of dressing for the more liberal, but often less decent Western style of dressing [4]. Surprisingly, these youth cover their ignorance and shame of not knowing or discarding their traditional way of dressing and call these Kolo (outmoded) fashion. Currently in Ghana, it is no shame to see a Ghanaian lady wearing a dress that reveals their thighs, back, stomach, breast as well as waist beads or underpants in the full glare of the public. These dresses disgracefully violate the accepted cultural norms of the Ghanaian society which propagates decency and modesty in dressing [8]. The concern expressed by this fashion trend among the youth is the fact that these young girls are the mothers of future Ghanaian homes and will be sources of the transmission of the Ghanaian cultural values and traditions to the next generation. It is distressing to know that these young men and women have not

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found pleasure in, especially the material aspect of the Ghanaian culture. This situation is often attributed to the influence from the Western style of dressing [4,9]. The Western form of clothing has gained popularity and admiration among the Ghanaian youth as a result of reading foreign fashion magazines, exposure to television music videos, unbridled access to Western fashion via social media networks [11,4]. It has changed the perception and cultural values related to clothing in Ghana. What was thought to be immodest and immoral previously is now shamefully glorified as fashion. Though the Western fashion is accepted in the context of Western culture, it is considered as an act of moral decadence in the perspective of Ghanaian culture. Dennis [12] concur that globalization results in the modification of the traditional culture which can be viewed as offensive and licentious, negatively impacting the traditional culture. There is a need, therefore, for the flogging of the negative impact of Western civilization and culture on Ghanaian cultural values specifically in the case of dressing. Granted, cultural isolationism is not possible in the context of globalization [13] because cultural ideas and values grow and flow across borders unimpeded. This should not in any way result in the downplaying of the Ghanaian traditional cultural values. This is crucial because Western fashion influences are now eroding the endogenous philosophy of traditional Ghanaian cultural values that insisted that men and women wear clothes that do not expose certain parts of their bodies for public view [12]. Interestingly, [14] noted that there has been growing Western interest and admiration for West African clothes, with some showcased in major fashion weeks such as London and New York fashion weeks. Considering the broad nature of clothing that consist of garment and accessories, this paper will focus on the garments aspect of clothing and how it is a tool for communicating Ghanaian cultural values. The scope of this research is limited to selected tertiary institution within the Ho municipality, specifically Ho Technical University. It is focused on the dressing styles of the youth particularly students in the tertiary institution and how people look at them from various perspectives within the Ghanaian concept of culture. The study premised on four main research objectives:

1. Investigate the provisions of Ghanaian cultural values in appropriate forms of Ghanaian clothing.
2. Examine the extent to which foreign concept of fashion and ways of dressing have influenced Ghanaian fashion among the youth in the tertiary institutions.
3. Discuss the factors that influence the choice of clothing among Ghanaian youth in the tertiary institutions
4. Suggest ways of promoting Ghanaian traditional clothing in lieu of promoting Ghanaian cultural values.

Clothing and culture

Every society is founded on culture because it uniquely identifies a particular people from all human societies [15]. Culture lends itself to many definitions [16,17] because it is said to be one of the controversial terms difficult to define. It is used in many different disciplines, each defining it differently to fit within their parameters. In their classic study, Latzke and Hostetter (1968) defined culture as the complex of distinctive attainments, beliefs and traditions which make up the background of a racial, religious, or social group. Similarly, Kaiser thinks culture is a learned system of knowledge, behaviours, attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms that is shared by a group of people. The arts and costumes that define a particular social group constitute culture. In the broadest sense, culture includes how people think, what

they do, and how they use things to sustain their lives. Culture has conservative elements that bind the past generation with the present and unborn generations [16]. There are cultures that place great value on the way members of their society clothe themselves. Clothing adds nuance to our daily life undertakings, announcing a group's feelings and culture [7]. Many cultures have certain ways of dressing that are specific to their culture and are recognized worldwide. Some of these include the Japanese silk kimonos, the Indian saris, the European dirndls, as well as the Middle Eastern burqas and headscarves [1,14]. Even though, over the course of history, some of these garments or pieces have lost their cultural value, yet, they are still easily reminiscent of each culture. Adamtey contends that language is an aspect of culture and the clothes worn by a group, communicates their cultural values. Clothing provides the most picturesque insight into the lifestyle of a particular social environment. It also reveals the universal constants that generally show the cultural and physical similarity in a certain time, as well as a series of cultural processes, borrows, or specificities. Clothes are treated as a collective and an individual visual medium and with the help of it a specific group in contemporary culture can be successfully decoded. It is one of the best ways that a person makes expressive visual statements about their identities [18,19,6]. Clothing, based on the culture of a person, helps to maintain social relationship. Akinbileje argues that clothing play significant roles in the identification of the cultural milieu of a people [13]. In traditional institutions, clothing is a viable means through which the traditional values of a society are sustained [20]. It gives one a feeling of satisfaction and encouragement to be part of their group. In the case of outlook of the individual-the clothing pattern of the person as according to the culture; influences a person thinking and the outlook towards that person's life and others [21,22]. The clothes people wear sometimes announce their sex, age and class. It can even show their occupation, their origin, personality and taste. Ahmed noted among the Siltie community in Southern Ethiopia that clothing is used in determining the ages and marital status of females. Here, it is clear that clothes do not exist in limbo; instead they are embedded in context or social circumstances of daily life.

The Influence of foreign fashion on the dressing styles and behavioral attitudes of the youth in Ghanaian higher institutions

The desire for change is an integral part of every society. Change and adaptation of clothing are mostly expressed by the desire of individuals to accept new things. Ghanaian culture like all other cultures of the world does not remain uninfluenced by other cultures. Interaction with the world outside its boundaries gave birth to cross – cultural influences, which go a long way to change partly the Ghanaian culture and its mode of dressing. Due to trade liberalization, formal education and the advancement in technology [20] negative foreign fashion styles have greatly influenced the local Ghanaian dresses that are epitomes of the rich Ghanaian cultural heritage. The negative influence of some foreign fashion styles is so obvious that it is no surprise to see Ghanaians, particularly the students on various campuses of higher institutions in Ghana dressed in a manner that influence people to marvel as to whether the students are in a learning environment or are a commune of harlots [23]. It is said that education is considered to be the bed-rock of development of any nation. It is concerned with the total development of the personality traits of students to positively influence their behavioral patterns. The attainment of the lofty aims and objectives of education cannot be realized unless environments of tertiary institutions of learning

are made conducive for effective teaching and learning. Discipline is absolutely an essential ingredient of such an enabling operational learning climate. The attitudes and values of students constitute the critical factor in the level of discipline in the institution. There is the need for students to be aided in clarifying their values and modifying their attitudes so as to be able to make rational decisions in the society [24]. However, it is increasingly becoming obvious that indecent dressing has gradually taken over the dress pattern of students in higher institutions of learning in Ghana. Egwim [25] referred to indecent dressing as the attitude of a person to dress in a manner that exposes sensitive parts of their bodies such as the breasts, buttocks or even their underwear. This practice violates the acceptable norms and values of the Ghanaian society [26].

Materials and Methods

The research was conducted from the 5th of September 2016 to the 20th of December 2017. The study was driven in the qualitative research approach with descriptive research as the main research method. The researchers wanted to provide a holistic picture of the impact of Ghanaian cultural values in clothing as well as the impact of foreign culture on the choice and production of Ghanaian clothing. An accurate, careful and deliberate observations and/or description of the phenomenon under study [27] was required for the research, hence the selection of the descriptive study. The target population for this study comprises students in fashion, accounting and marketing departments of the Ho Technical University. Our preliminary study showed that the dressing styles of these students from these departments were mostly influenced by Western styles and perception of clothing. The sample for the study was selected using the stratified random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. The researchers divided the entire population into different subgroups or strata based on their programmes of study. A total of fifty five sampled respondents were engaged in the study (Table 1). Open-ended questionnaire that are used by qualitative researchers in developing deep understandings of how people perceive their social realities [28] were utilized by the researchers in gathering the data for the study. The questionnaire were self-administered and collected by the researchers. The open-ended type of questions allowed respondents to express their opinions on the items by answering them in their own words. The questionnaire, which was designed into three parts (sections), touched on various aspects of clothing as a tool for communicating cultural values in Ghanaian society. The first aspect comprises particulars of respondents; the section (A) assessed the Ghanaian cultural values that provide appropriate form of dressing. The section (B) asked factors that influence individual clothing selection. The last section (C) was on the influence of foreign way of dressing on Ghanaian way of dressing. Fifty-five (55) completed questionnaire forms were received and used by the researchers in the final analysis. In addition, direct observations were made by the researchers on the campus of the Ho Technical University on the clothing styles that reflect the Ghanaian cultural values and/or

show traces of foreign influences. This data collection procedure was crucial for this descriptive study because the researchers wanted to get first-hand information on these issues for investigation in a more precise and reliable manner [29]. A mixture of descriptive statistics, graphics and some nonparametric inferential statistics was used for analyzing the data generated from the open-ended questionnaire [30]. Individual response categories were organized after which the data were represented visually.

Theoretical framework for the study

The study is underpinned in the fashion theory by Steele [31] which posit that the fashion system is a dimension of material culture. It is aimed in part, to recognize the cultural significance of general fashion including clothing. It portrays clothing and/or fashion as a cultural construction of the embodied identity. The tenet of our study agrees with the theoretical constructs evident in the fashion theory. Our stance is that clothing depicts the identity of a people and as such, any foreign influence on the clothing culture of a people inversely affects their cultural values. Thus, a constant monitoring of the foreign influences of a society is crucial as it can positively or negatively affect their accepted cultural values. This study significantly contributes to knowledge in the field of cultural influences on clothing by assessing the foreign influences on Ghanaian clothing and how it affects the communication of the rich Ghanaian cultural values.

Results and Discussion

This section of the paper presents the results and discussion of the data from the study. The findings have been presented based on the research questions for the study. However, interesting themes within some of the research questions were highlighted to throw more light on the main tenet of the study. The section begins with the demographic background information of the participants of the study and how it influenced the findings of the study.

Demographic backgrounds of respondents

Fifteen (15) males and forty (40) females took part in this study, constituting 27% and 73% respectively. This finding may suggest the popularity of fashion generally among women in comparison with men. The age ranges of respondents show clearly that a greater percentage of respondents were youth aged between 20 to 35 years (Table 2). This is in consonance with the view of [32] who opined that young people attach greater importance to clothing as a means of gaining acceptance and approval than mature persons.

Provision of Ghanaian cultural values in appropriate forms of Ghanaian clothing

Out of the 55 respondents, 41 representing 75% responded positively that there were provisions of Ghanaian cultural values in some Ghanaian traditional clothes. On the other hand, 14 representing 25% responded negatively. The results clearly suggest that Ghanaians have their own set of clothing that reflects the cultural norms of the

Table 1: Sampling design for the study.

Participants of the study			
Categories	Students in the Fashion Department at the Ho Technical University	Students in the Accounting Department at the Ho Technical University	Students in the Marketing Department at the Ho Technical University
Total number of students purposively sampled from each of the departments	18	18	19
Total sample	55		

Source: Author's construct

people, buttressing the perspectives of Anawalt (2007) and Dogoe (2013) that many cultures have particular kinds of clothing that are peculiar to their cultural norms and are recognized worldwide. As shown in Figure 1, it is evident that 19 out of 55 respondents representing 34% acknowledged Batakari (smock) as the clothing that reflects Ghanaian culture, 23 representing 42% thinks Slit and Kaba is what identifies the wearer as being Ghanaian. Eleven (11) representing 20% said Kente reflected the Ghanaian culture. The findings indicate that these traditional Ghanaian clothes portray the rich Ghanaian cultural values [33] Thus, great sensitization among the youth on their patronage should be embarked upon. The encouragement of public workers in Ghana to adorn themselves in Ghanaian traditional clothes every Friday working day should be promoted by heads of institutions and organizations in lieu of popularizing the Ghanaian cultural values via clothing. The majority of the respondents representing 73% and 69% respectively attested that Ghanaian culture of clothing frowns against clothes that expose the sensitive parts of the body but advocate total covering of the sensitive parts of the wearer. This affirms the theory of Dennis (2018) that the Ghanaian cultural values do not patronize revealing clothes. Thus, Ghanaian cultural values associate indecency with clothes that expose the sensitive parts of the wearer (Table 3). The wrong perception of many Ghanaian female youth to wear these revealing clothes to attract the opposite sex is alien to the Ghanaian cultural ideals of dressing [8]. The findings from the study showed that these clothes are not in conformity with the accepted Ghanaian moral standards.

Factors that influences people’s choice of clothing among Ghanaian youth in the tertiary institutions

The findings from the study showed that many factors influence the selection of particular clothing by the respondents. Table 4 indicates that majority of the participants of the study selected a specific kind of cloth based on its suitability to an occasion, event

or condition (82% of respondents). Thus, the occasion determined the type and style of clothing to be worn. Some of the respondents opined that clothes to be worn for public occasions are supposed to cover the entire body while those meant for private places free from the full glare of the public such as in attending to domestic chores in the house. Also, the personal observations made by the researchers confirmed the views of 73% of the respondents that the type and nature of the fabric also influence the choice of clothing. The most endorsed qualities of the most selected fabrics were their high absorbency rate and coolness to the skin. This may be due to the appropriateness of such fabrics for the Ghanaian tropical climate. Ninety-five percent of the respondents made it clear that comfort and protection were the main factors for their clothing selection. This is consistent with the view of and Condra [34] that humans’ priority for a kind of clothing is for protection from the harsh elements of the environment. However, the findings showed that the brand name or designer’s name of a particular clothing style did not in any way influence their selection (82% of the respondents).

The findings from the study also indicated that the youth cared greatly about quality (93% of the respondents) though they still held on to the cloth’s affordability (96% of the respondents). This finding is contrary to the early findings of Frings (1991) who noted that youth generally cared less about the quality of clothes in their selection of clothing items. This may be due to the enlightenment of the youth in this age, probably attributed to the development in science and technology. Colour plays a crucial role in a cloth’s selection, with 71% of the respondents holding this view. However, religious expectations was seen as a less influencer in the selection of clothes (64% of the respondents), among the youth as only 36% of the respondents supported the idea that it influenced cloth’s selection. It was revealed from respondents’ responses that decency or modesty was an important factor in clothing selection. Out of the 55 respondents, 48 respondents agreed that modesty in dressing greatly influenced their

Table 2: Ages of respondents.

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 20 years	10	18%
21 -25 years	21	38%
26 – 30 years	11	20%
31-35 years	9	17%
Above 35 years	4	7%
Total	55	100

Source: Field research (2017)

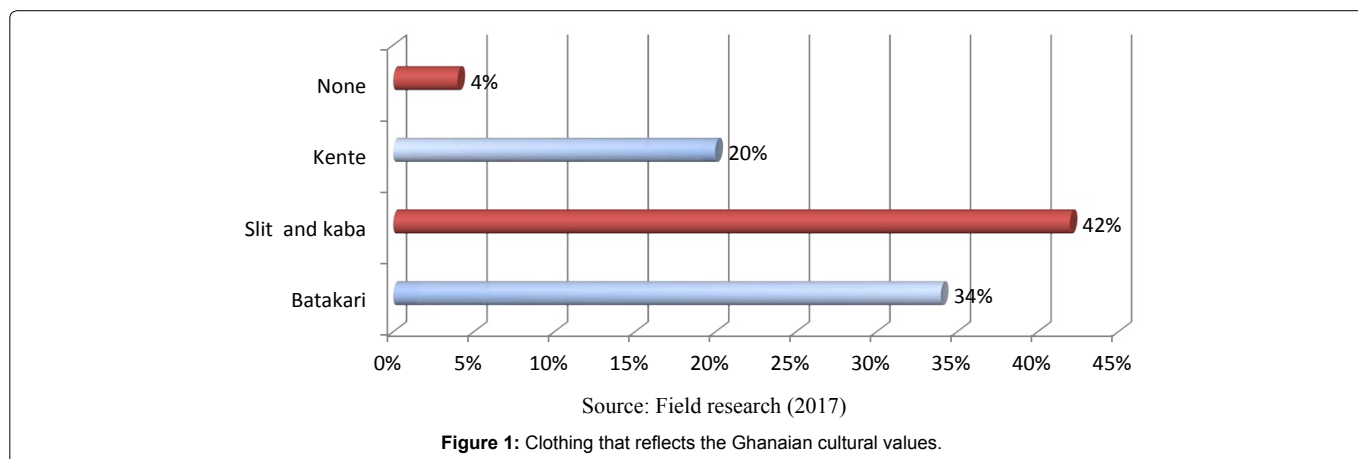


Figure 1: Clothing that reflects the Ghanaian cultural values.

Table 3: Ghanaian cultural forms of dressing.

	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage
Total covering of the sensitive parts	40	73	15	27
Wearing dresses in line with fashion	19	35	36	65
Dressing to depict ones educational level	20	36	35	64
exposing the most attractive part of the body	17	31	38	69
Dressing in conformity to the moral standard of the community	40	73	15	27
Wearing clothes to portray ones parental training	35	64	10	18
Wearing attires that you appreciate as an individual	25	45	30	55
Dressing to suite an occasion	39	71	16	29
Dressing to attract the opposite sex	45	82	10	18

Source: Field research (2017)

Table 4: Factors that influence people's choice of clothing.

	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage
Suitability for an occasion	45	82	10	18
Type of fabrics and texture	40	73	15	27
Comfort and protection	52	95	3	5
Label, brand or designer's name	10	18	45	82
Care and maintenance	40	73	15	27
Colour	39	71	16	29
Quality	51	93	4	7
Mood	30	55	25	45
Fashion trend	30	55	25	45
Decency/modesty	48	87	7	13
Parental consent	46	84	9	16
Religious expectation	20	36	35	64
Affordability	53	96	2	4
Attract the opposite sex	5	9	50	91
Uniqueness of style	38	69	17	31
Weather	40	73	15	27

Source: Field research (2017)

clothing selection. Though modesty is not a universal concept in all cultures in the selection of clothing [3] the Ghanaian culture propagates modesty and decency in dressing and/or cloth selection [4,12]. With regards to seeking parental consent when it comes to the selection of clothing, only 9 respondents representing 16% said 'Yes' they do seek their parents' consent and 46 respondents representing 84% made it clear that they are matured enough to make their own clothing selection.

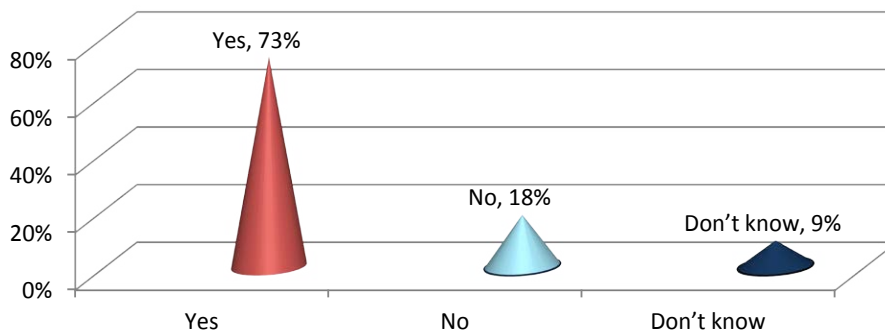
Extent to which foreign clothing styles has influenced Ghanaian clothing styles

Seventy-three percent (73%) of the respondents affirmed that there has been influx of foreign dress styles into the Ghanaian society (Figure 2). This is in unison with the views of Adom (2013) and Adom (2016) that the Ghanaian clothing styles have been influenced by Western clothing styles in their production processes, tools and materials and designs. The respondents shared their views on where they get the Western clothing styles (Table 5). The findings from the study indicated that foreign fashion magazines have been the main source of the designs influencing the Ghanaian clothing styles with foreign television shows being the second influencer [35,36]. The findings suggest that the Ministry of Trade and Industry has to regulate the importation of foreign fashion magazines and if possible place a ban on all foreign fashion magazines that negatively impact on the Ghanaian traditional clothing styles. This would reduce the behavior of fashion designers and the youth mimicking these unacceptable clothing styles. Inferring from Table 6, eighteen of the respondents representing 33% are of the view that there will be decrease in the

patronage of our locally Ghanaian made clothing because they are even costly compared to second hand clothing [37,38]. Eight of the respondents representing 14% indicated that our cultural values will be affected when we start to dress like westerners. It was also revealed from 24 respondents representing 44% who acknowledged breeding of indecency will be the effect since the youth especially copy what they see when it comes to fashion [39,40]. It can be concluded from the result gathered that indecency is the main effect caused by foreign way of dresses. Table 7 expressed the way Ghanaian traditional clothing can be promoted. Out of 55 respondents who participated in the study, 21 being the highest number and constituting 38% of the respondents are of the view [41] that we can promote Ghanaian clothing through limitation of imported second-hand clothing. Eleven (11) respondents representing 20 percent suggested we can promote our Ghanaian clothing by dressing in clothing designed in Ghana. Also, 16 respondents representing 29% recommended that Ghanaian traditional clothing can only be promoted by wearing clothes sewn with materials originating from Ghana. The minority of the respondents 7 representing 13 percent said through intensive education on the importance of our Ghanaian culture we can promote our traditional clothing [42,43]. The results, therefore, show clearly that, importation of second hand clothing is the major factor hindering the promotion of Ghanaian traditional clothing.

Conclusion

Every country has its distinct culture and tradition which communicate to the others of who they are and what they believe in.



Source: Field research (2017)

Figure 2: Influx of foreign dress styles in Ghanaian society.

Table 5: Where respondents get their western clothing styles.

	Frequency	Percentage
Foreign magazine	37	67
Social gathering	8	15
Television	10	18
Total	55	100

Source: Field research (2017)

Table 6: Effects of foreign way of dressing on the youth and Ghanaians as a whole.

	Frequency	Percentage
Low patronage of Ghanaians clothing	18	33
It will devalue our Ghanaian culture	8	14
Breeding of indecency	24	44
No effect	5	9
Total	55	100

Source: Field Research (2017)

Table 7: Ways of promoting Ghanaian traditional clothing.

	Frequency	Percentage
By dressing in clothing designed in Ghana	11	20
By wearing clothes with materials or garments originating from Ghana	16	29
By limiting the importation of second-hand clothing	21	38
Through intensive education on the importance of our Ghanaian culture (forms of dressing)	7	13
Total	55	100

Source: Field research (2017)

Ghana as a country is also endowed with rich traditions and cultural values. These cultural values help in promoting appropriate form of dressing in Ghana. The study found out that the Ghanaian traditional clothes like Adinkra, Kente, Fugu (smock), as well as slit and Kaba communicate extensively on the Ghanaian traditional cultural values. These clothing go beyond merely covering the body to prevent exposure but it conveys metaphorical importance in Ghanaian culture. In addition, a dress, according to the Ghanaian culture is to cover the body parts (private part) and is not expected to show body parts like thighs, breast, stomach, waist, buttocks and so on. However, looking at the current trends of clothing and fashion associated with the Ghanaian, particularly the youth, the researchers concur that Western civilization has taken precedence over Ghanaian culture, especially on the dressing culture. The majority of clothing styles in Ghana are considered to move toward exposure of body parts which were considered sacred and must be covered. These current

dressing styles are as a result of electronic and print media, as well as importation of second-hand clothes and fashionable items into the Ghanaian markets. The study also found out that many people based their choice of this second hand clothing on economic factors because these dresses are cheaper and stylish compared to the locally-made garments. These second-hand clothing normally comes with styles that are culturally unacceptable in Ghana and these styles are of great worry to Ghanaians, because they devoid of the decent ethics, moral and social norms of the Ghanaian society. It is also found that if pragmatic steps are not taken, the rich Ghanaian cultural values in clothing and dressing would be lost.

Recommendations

The concept of good moral has to be given serious attention in Ghanaian society by parents, teachers and other organisational heads

to help salvage all the negative practices associated with dresses that expose the immoral standing of the youth in particular. Cultural ethics and moral values have to be encouraged in schools, churches and at traditional gatherings to correct the possible moral degradation in the Ghanaian society via clothing. All concerned citizens must act to keep checks and balances on the mode of dressing of the youth to correct the menace and reduce vices like promiscuity in the Ghanaian society.

The electronic and print media in Ghana must be circumspect in what they print and show in the papers and on the television screens, as they are the mouthpiece of the nation. They should guide the youth in their ways of reasoning and in their desire towards the selection of fashionable items. The Ministries of Communication in Ghana must regulate the kind of materials published into the Ghanaian society to rid of all forms of dress styles that negatively affect the Ghanaian cultural values regarding clothing.

By-laws have to be put in place to address the indecency paraded by the youth in public places through their dress styles. The by-laws should be enforced by traditional and opinion leaders in their respective jurisdictions. By-laws that will enable chiefs to impose fines on offenders who dress indecently as a deterrent for other people should be welcomed by Ghanaians. With regard to what can be acceptable as decent or indecent, the extent of the exposure or coverage of the body parts should be in-line with the traditional level of tolerance within the various societies in Ghana.

The Guidance and Counselling Units in the tertiary institutions in Ghana should be resourced to educate students on the dangers of indecent dressing and its possible effects on their studies.

Meaningful gains on decent dressing can also be obtained if measures are put in place by law-making bodies to control the importation of second-hand goods and other fashionable items. Ghana should learn from other countries that were able to resist Western culture. For instance India banned importation of Western clothes sometime in the past and today India is one of the largest producers of textiles in the world.

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