Research Article

Impact of Peer Pressure in Fashion, on Adolescents

Drishti Satsangi*

Abstract

This paper discusses the impact of peer pressure in fashion, on adolescents. It is human tendency to feel the need to belong. Everyone wants to be accepted by others in some way, especially adolescents. As a result of this want to belong, they make themselves think that they need to change their attitudes, behaviors, or beliefs in order to gain acceptance from others. Peer pressure is a problem that can be solved if the right measures are taken. Adolescents are not mentally prepared to be able to resist and deny peer pressure from others. Adolescents all over the world face peer pressure in fashion or are bullied by their peer groups. Also, they are being bullied by their peer and show depressive symptoms and tend to develop psychotic thoughts and suicidal tendencies.

Therefore, one of the major upcoming problems among adolescents in today's time includes peer pressure in fashion. This pressure has been affecting adolescence both physically and mentally, even to an extent of suicide among adolescents. Thus, there is an urgent need to understand the pros and cons of peer pressure and find the factors driving it. Also there is a need to educate adolescents regarding the methods to reduce peer pressure in an appropriate time and manner.

Keywords: Impact; Fashion; Adolescents

Introduction

Fashion

Fashion in the most general sense means the popular style of garment, footwear, headwear, accessories etc. that is widely accepted and praised by a larger section of the society at a given point of time. Fashion, if seen from the industrial outlook , started in the 19th century and ever since has evolved and become a prominent part of people's life. The purpose of fashion in clothing has been explained through various theories. One says it is to modestly cover ourselves while the other says the purpose is to attract attention. Adornment and safety are also the purposes explained in these theories.

Fashion holds different meaning for different people. For some it may merely mean to cover themselves up, for some it may mean what's comfortable for them, while for some it may mean the way they express themselves.

Adolescents

According to WHO, adolescence is a unique phase of life during which a child goes through tremendous physical, emotional and social changes. Stanley Hall describes it as "the period of storm and stress". Adolescents are children ranging from age 10 to age 19 and constitute about one-fifth of population of India.

Adolescence is a period where children desperately want to be a part of the most famous groups around and are in a desperate need and want of acceptance. Thoughts, behavior, fashion and music often have a deep impact on the society and adolescents in particular, tend to get influenced by their peer group. They want to wear the same types of clothes and have the same stuff as their peers are having. But not everyone has the money to buy brands or designer clothes. If not all, in most cases every average child or adolescent has to wear what their parents can afford for them.

Peer Pressure

Peer refers to a group of people having similar habits, interests, beliefs and to an extent a similar lifestyle, spending most of their time together. Peer pressure the other hand is an incredibly widespread issue in today's society. According to Treynor (2009), Peer pressure is the influence exerted by a peer group or an individual encouraging other individuals to change their attitudes, values or behaviors in order to conform to group norms. Peer pressure in fashion is a serious issue in today's society. Adolescents follow their peer for mere validation willingly or unwillingly and even without considering the pros and cons.

Justification of the study

According to various researches conducted all around the world, adolescents all over the world face peer pressure in fashion or are bullied by their peer groups. Also, an estimated 200 million adolescents are being bullied by their peer and show depressive symptoms and tend to develop psychotic thoughts and suicidal tendencies.

Therefore, one of the major upcoming problems among adolescents in today's time includes peer pressure in fashion. This pressure has been affecting adolescence both physically and mentally, even to an extent of suicide among adolescents. Thus, there is an urgent need to understand the pros and cons of peer pressure and find the factors driving it. Also there is a need to educate adolescents regarding the methods to reduce peer pressure in an appropriate time and manner.

Research Objectives

- To study and analyze the impact of peer pressure in fashion on adolescents.
- To identify the causes behind peer pressure in fashion.
- To promote positive peer pressure in fashion.
- To provide methods for adolescents to avoid peer pressure in fashion.

Review of literature

According to Kratz [1], fashion can be defined as a cultural phenomenon as it is concerned with meanings and symbols, thus is an instantaneous mode of direct, visual communication. Fashion

*Corresponding author: Drishti Satsangi, Master in vocational studies, fashion design and technology. University of Allahabad, India; Tel: 8795661722; E-mail: drishti.satsangi17oct@gmail.com

enables us to make statements about ourselves and our identities, with the use of clothes, accessories and/or other physical items, enabling us to visually communicate who we are, who we'd like to be, what kind of social group we belong to and who we are most likely not to be associated with. "Fashion also has to do with hair styles, make up, accessories and can include items that have nothing at all to do with clothes"

According to Patterson et al. [2], Peers can have both positive and negative influences on a variety of adolescent outcomes. Research has shown that peers can influence maladaptive outcomes, such as antisocial behavior.

According to Agnew [3], after school, adolescents spend twice as much time with peers than parents and they rely less on their parents and family for problem solving",

Kang [4], defines peer group as a small group of friends, which have close relations with each other and they have regular interactions. They share views and ideas with one other and do activities in groups. In other words, those in peer group have similar characteristics like age, background, social and political affiliations etc. The members of this group are likely to influence beliefs and behaviors.

According to Cotterell [5], Peer pressure can be either expressed or implied. In expressed peer pressure, an individual is challenged directly to comply with existing norms. Studies show that both peers are inclined to take risks they do not want to take because they believe the risky behavior will increase their standing in the eyes of their peers and assure their acceptance in the group.

According to Rathus [6], pressure from the peer group can lead to experimentation with alcohol and drugs, sex, missing school and high-risk behaviors. A sudden change in the children's appearance particularly in dressing, appearance particularly going together with by secretive behavior is a result of adolescents succumbing to peer pressure. An unexplained change of friends to whom the adolescent associates with is a indication that the youth is vulnerable to new influences that may be negative.

According to Merrik [7], not all adolescents act in response to peer group pressure in the similar manner. Sex and age are among the factors that influence how adolescents will act in response to peer group pressure.

Copas [8], supported the idea that peer pressure is not always a bad thing.

According to Friedman Peer pressure is generally frowned upon in the adult world but it actually exists and its impact could either be positive or negative. As a positive aspect, it challenges or motivates the adults to do their best. The effect can be viewed as direct, indirect and individual effect on a peer.

According to Tate & Copas "Like energy, peer pressure cannot be created or destroyed. It can be negative or positive, destructive or constructive; but it is a remarkably powerful phenomenon that enhances or thwarts treatment efforts depending upon how the staff members regard it"

Materials and Methods

Research methodology is a systematic and scientific way to solve the research problem.

The research aimed to discover the pros and cons of peer pressure

and find the factors driving it. Also there is a need to educate adolescents regarding the methods to reduce peer pressure in an appropriate time and manner.

The research procedure has been divided in the following sub heads;

1. Locale of the study
2. Sample size
3. Data collection
4. Data analysis

1. **Locale of the Study**

The present study was carried out in Allahabad city of Uttar Pradesh .The area was selected purposely due to the following reasons

a. Easy availability of respondents.

b. Easy approachability and familiarity of the area.

2. **Size of the Sample**

A sample of 150 adolescents from different backgrounds was selected for the study.

3. **Method of Data Colletion**

The interview schedule was formulated to elicit general and specific information regarding the existing peer pressure practices and the impact it has on individuals.

4. **Data Analysis**

Data obtained through survey was be tabulated and analyzed by using simple percentage and weighted score method (Table 4.1).

Specific Information

The data in the table above Table 4.2 reveals that maximum respondents, i.e 42 percent of the total respondents spend 5-7 hours with their peer group per day, whereas 32 percent of the respondents spend more than 10 hours per day with their peers.17.33percent of the respondents spend about 7-10 hours per day with their peers and about 8.66 percent of the respondents spend only 1-5 hours with their peers per day Figure 4.2.

Table 4.1: General Information N (150).

Family Income:	f	%
10,000 to 20,000	10	6.6
20,000 to 40,000	38	25.33
40,000 to 60,000	43	28.66
60,000+	59	39.33
Age:		
10 to 13	25	16.6
13 to 17	43	28.6
17 to 19	82	54.6
Sex:		
Male	42	28
Female	108	72
Family size:		
2 to 4	65	43.3
4 to 7	45	30
7 to 9	40	26.7

f = frequency
%= percentage

Table 4.2: Distribution of respondents according to the time spend with peers N(150).

Response	f	%
1-5 hours/ day	13	8.66
5-7 hours/ day	63	42
7-10 hours/ day	26	17.33
More than 10 hours / day	48	32

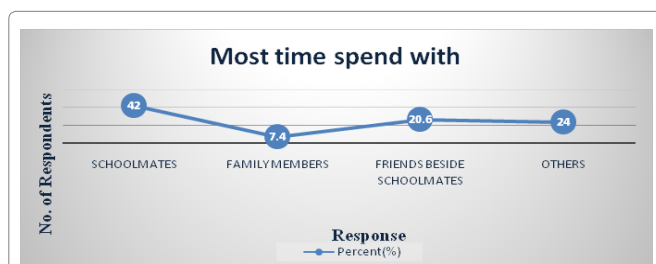**Figure 4.2:** Distribution of respondents according to the time spend with peers.

Figure 4.3: Distribution of respondents according to with whom they spend most time.

Table 4.3: Distribution of respondents according to with whom they spend most time.

Response	f	%
Schoolmates	63	42
Family members	11	7.33
Friends beside schoolmates	40	26.66
Others	36	24

Table 4.3 shows that majority of the adolescents i.e 42 percent of the respondents spend most of their time with their schoolmates. 26.66 percent of the respondents spend most of their time with their friends beside schoolmates. 7.33 percent respondents spend most time with family members and 24 percent respondents spend most time with others.

Adolescents spend most of their time outside the home with members of peer group. It is understandable that peer would have a greater influence on adolescent attitudes, speech, interest, appearance and behavior than the family Figure 4.3.

The table above shows that 57.99 percent respondents have done things which are out of their comfort zone just because they were pressurized to do so.

Adolescents often give up peering pressure because their peers request them to do something. Most of the time they get influenced by their peers and try to copy their style or the way their peers do certain things. Sometimes this is due to strong liking for their peers and other times it's just to get accepted in the peer group. Getting influenced by the peer group is the most common thing in today's time

The Table 4.4 also shows that 43 percent respondents have never done things which are out of their comfort zone Figure 4.4.

The Table 4.5 above reveals that majority of the respondents i.e 47.33 percent of them say that they get affected by the influence of their peers. Various studies also reveal that adolescents get influenced by their peers and try to do things done by their peers just because they think it's cool, in trend, or just because they want to look exactly like their peers so as to get accepted in the group. .

Peers play a major role during adolescence. An adolescent may get influenced by a peer that he/she sees as successful or fashionable. In an article for "Psychology Today", Dr. Carl Pickhardt discussed that rather than a romantic attraction, an identity crush develops when an adolescent finds someone whom they want to emulate. It is normal for an adolescent to dress or to behave like someone they admire.

Apart from peer group of friends, adolescents may also get influenced by family members. Also, they are sometimes forced by their parents or other family members to dress up in a particular way and to buy particular fashion products because the parents or family members think that it is acceptable in the society they live. Other than influence, 39.33 percent of the respondents said that they give up to peer pressure when their peers request them to do something. Requests when exaggerated become a kind of pressure. Adolescents are well aware of the fact that requesting again and again will work well in their favor.

Table 4.4: Distribution of respondents according to level of pressure in doing things.

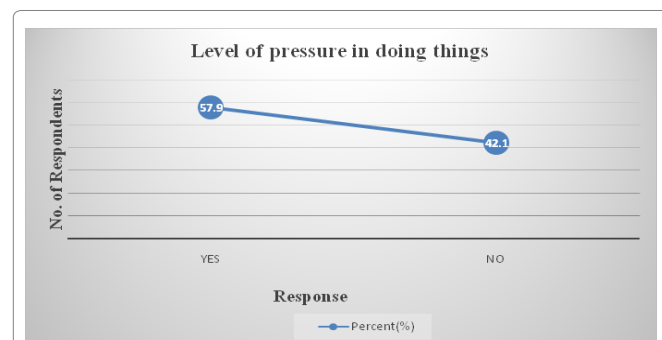| Response	f	%
Yes	87	57.99
No	63	43

Figure 4.4: Distribution of respondents according to with whom they spend most time.

Table 4.5: Distribution of respondents according to the pressure which works best on them.

Response	f	%
Threats	7	4.66
Ridicule	10	6.66
Guilt	3	2
Bribery		
Request	59	39.33
Influence	71	47.33

6.66 percent of the respondents said that pressure of being ridiculed is something they cannot take and they do things which they wouldn't do otherwise. 4.7 percent of the respondents said that threats work best on them. They do things out of fear.

2 percent of the respondents said that they do things under pressure because they feel guilty for their peers have done a lot for them Figure 4.5.

Table 4.6 reveals that 45.4 percent of the respondents have been bullied for the way they dress up or the products they carry. Bullying behavior is prevalent throughout the world. Researchers estimate that 20 to 30 percent of adolescents are involved in bullying incidents, as either perpetrators or victims. Bullying starts during the early childhood and intensifies during transitional stages. School kids often indulge in bullying activities and make fun of the way a kid dresses up or for the haircut or hairstyle he/she has. Adolescents when start going to college become more fashion conscious and bully their friends or other students for the clothes they wear , for their footwear or any other fashion product they carry which is related to style , trend, color, cost, brand etc.

An estimated 200 million adolescents are being bullied by their peer and pressurized into things related to fashion and show depressive symptoms and tend to develop psychotic thoughts and suicidal tendencies. Studies also reveal that victims of bullying suffer from physical and mental and emotional stress. They don't want to face their peers and avoid going in public gatherings. Problems of low self esteem and depression can occur and interfere with personal and professional life. Table 4.6 also shows that 54.6 percent of the
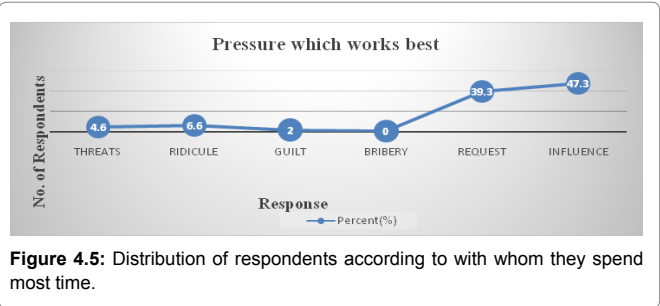
respondents have never been bullied for the way they dress or the products they carry Figure 4.6.

The Table 4.7 above shows that 71.4 percent of the respondents have been pressurized to make fashion choices that they do not prefer. Adolescents may feel pressure from an array of sources such as friends, non-friend peers and even the media to follow the current trends and wear fashionable clothes. 28.6 percent of respondents have never been pressurized to make fashion choices that they do not prefer Figure 4.7.

Table 4.8 shows that 37.3 percent of the respondents sometimes buy things (fashion products) in the influence of their peers. 26 percent of the respondents most often buy things (fashion products) in the influence of their peers. 15.3 percent of the respondents always buy things in the influence of their peers and only 21.3 percent of the respondents said that they never buy things in the influence of their peers. Adolescents get influenced by peer pressure purchase what friends buy, according to a Psychological Association, and product branding and marketing give adolescents a way to quickly identify items Figure 4.8.

The Table 4.9 above shows that 40 percent of the respondents are mostly pressurized by their schoolmates to follow their fashion

Figure 4.5: Distribution of respondents according to with whom they spend most time.

Table 4.6: Distribution of respondents according to bullying they faced for their dressing.
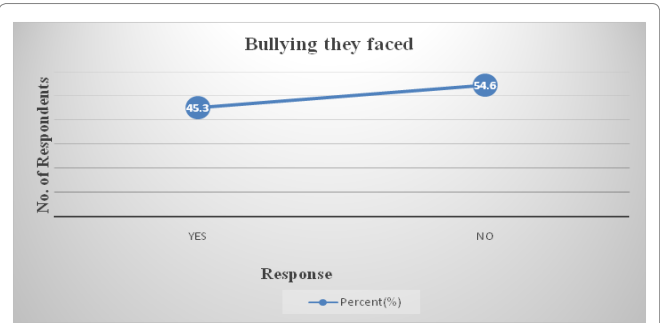
Response	f	%
Yes	68	45.4
No	82	54.6

Figure 4.6: Distribution of respondents according to bullying they faced for their dressing.

Table 4.7: Distribution of respondents according to level of pressure in fashion choices.

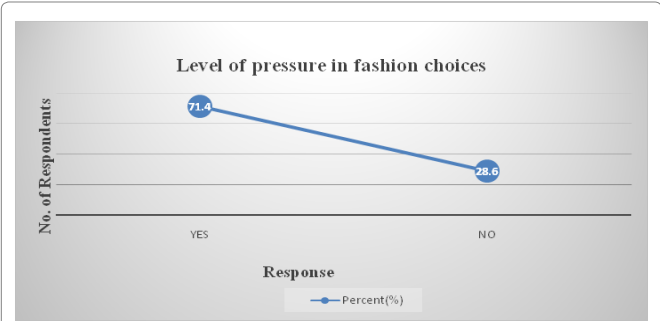| Response	f	%
Yes	107	71.4
No	43	28.6

Figure 4.7: Distribution of respondents according to level of pressure in fashion choices.

Table 4.8: Distribution of respondents according to frequency of buying clothes due to influence.

Response	f	%
Sometimes	56	37.3
Most often	39	26
Always	23	15.3
never	32	21.3

Table 4.9: Distribution of respondents according to peer group that mostly pressurize to follow fashion preferences.

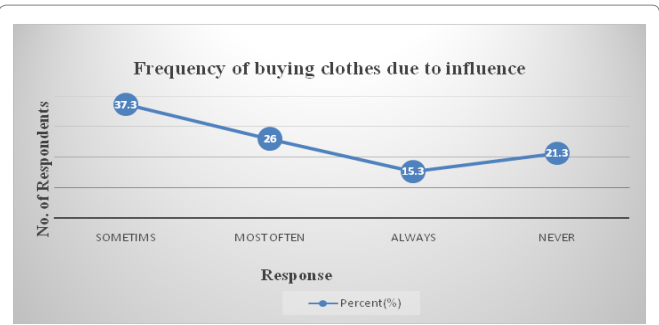| Response	f	%
Schoolmates	60	40
Family members	17	11.4
Friends beside schoolmates	37	24.6
others	36	24

Figure 4.8: Distribution of respondents according to level of pressure in fashion choices.
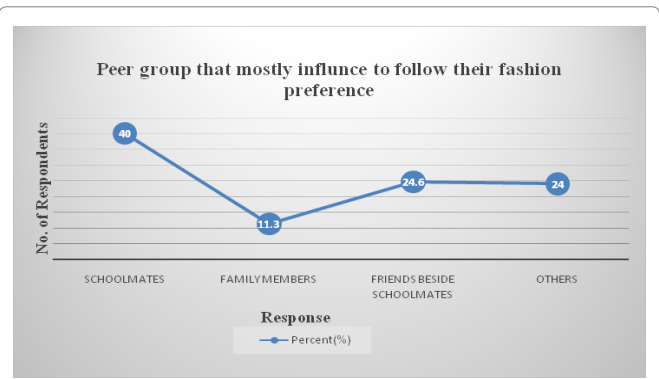

Figure 4.9: Distribution of respondents according to peer group that mostly pressurize to follow fashion preferences.

Table 4.10: Distribution of respondents according to type of preference change.

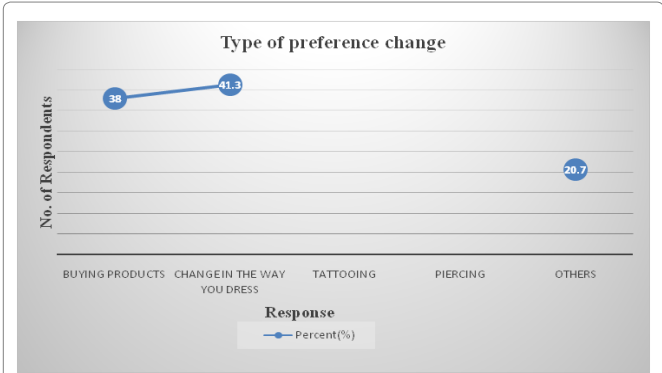| Response	f	%
Buying products	57	38
Change in the way you dress	62	41.4
Tattooing		
Piercing		
Others	31	20.6

Figure 4.10: Distribution of respondents according to type of preference change.

Table 4.11: Distribution of respondents according to positive impact of peer pressure.

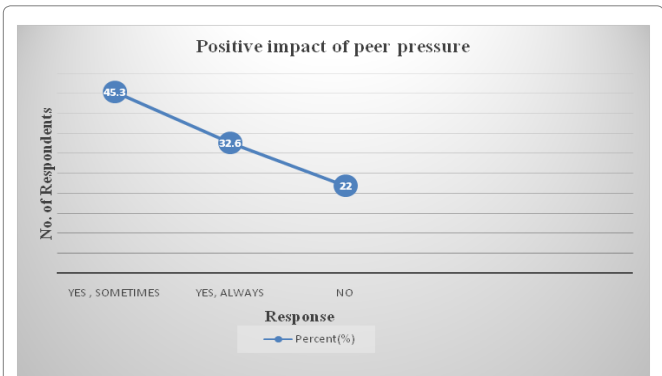| Response	f	%
Yes, sometimes	68	45.3
Yes, always	49	32.6
No	33	22.1

Figure 4.11: Distribution of respondents according to positive impact of peer pressure.

Table 4.12: Distribution of respondents according to advantages of peer pressure.

Response	f	%
Boosts your confidence	63	42
Makes you look better	32	21.3
Enhances your personality	9	6
Others	7	4.7

preferences. 24.6 percent of the respondents are mostly pressurized by friends beside schoolmates to follow their fashion preferences. 11.4 percent of the respondents are pressurized by their family members to follow their fashion preferences. 24 percent of the respondents are mostly pressurized by other peer group to follow their fashion preferences Figure 4.9.

Table 4.10 reveals that 41.4percent of the respondents have been pressurized for changing the way they dress up. 38 percent respondents are pressurized for buying products. 26.6 percent of the respondents are pressurized for some other preference change Figure 4.10.

Table 4.11 reveals that 45.4 percent of the respondents think that giving up to peer pressure sometimes help them and 32.6 percent of the respondents think that giving up to peer pressure always help them. This means majority of the respondents, i.e 78percent think that giving up to peer pressure help them in some way. On the other hand 22 percent of the respondents think that giving up to peer pressure does not help them in anyway Figure 4.11.

Table 4.12 shows that out of 78 percent of the respondents who think that giving up to peer pressure help them in anyway, 42 percent of the respondents think that giving up to peer pressure help them in boosting their confidence. 21.3 percent of the respondents think that giving up to peer pressure makes them look better. 6 percent of the respondents think that giving up to the peer pressure enhances their personality. 4.7 percent of the respondents think that giving up to peer pressure help them in some other way Figure 4.12.

Table 4.13 shows that out of 22 percent of the respondents who think that giving up to peer pressure does not help them in anyway, 11.4 percent of the respondents said that they feel uncomfortable in giving up to peer pressure. 5.3 percent said that they think they are making a fool of themselves when they give up to peer pressure Figure 4.13.
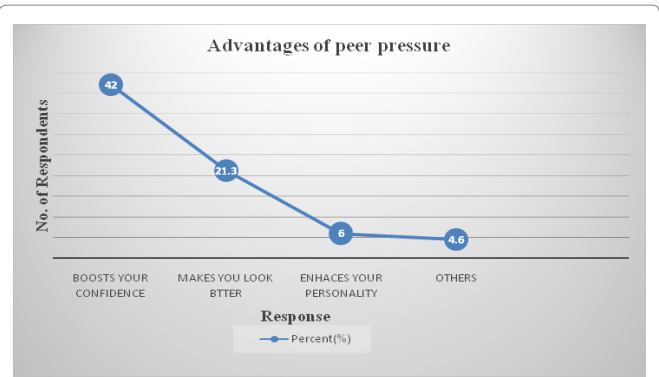
Figure 4.12: Distribution of respondents according to advantages of peer pressure.

Table 4.13: Distribution of respondents according to disadvantages of peer pressure.

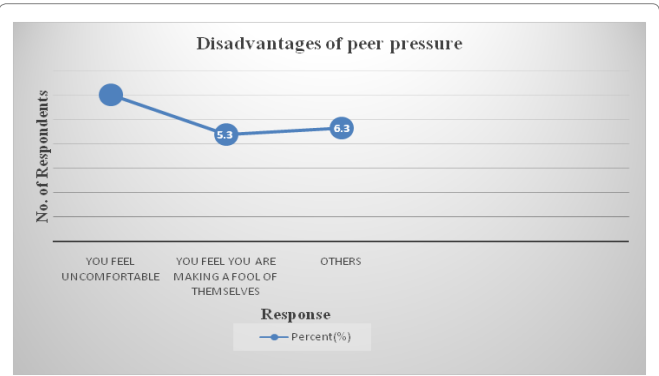| Response	f	%
You feel uncomfortable	17	10.4
You feel you are making a fool of yourself	8	5.3
Others	8	6.3

Figure 4.13: Distribution of respondents according to disadvantages of peer pressure.

Table 4.14 shows that 39.3 percent of the respondents regret a bit for giving up to peer pressure. 17.3 percent of the respondents feel terrible for giving up to peer pressure. This means 56.6 percent respondents regret giving up to peer pressure. 21.3 percent of the respondents don't really regret giving up to peer pressure. 22.1 percent of the respondents not at all regret giving up to peer pressure Figure 4.14.

Table 4.15 shows that 42% of the respondents sometimes feel upset or depressed due to the pressure they face. 14% of the respondents often feel upset or depressed top to the pressure they fac. 17.3% of the respondents always feel upset or depressed due to the pressure they face. 26.3% of the respondents never feel upset or depressed due to the pressure they face. This shows that 73.3% of the respondents feel upset and depressed due to the peer pressure they face Figure 4.15.

Table 4.16 shows that 11.8 percent of the respondents don't want to spend time with their peers because the pressure bothers them. 3.6 percent of the respondents said that they want to live alone when the pressure bothers them Figure 4.16.

Table 4.14: Distribution of respondents according to dissatisfaction with peer pressure.

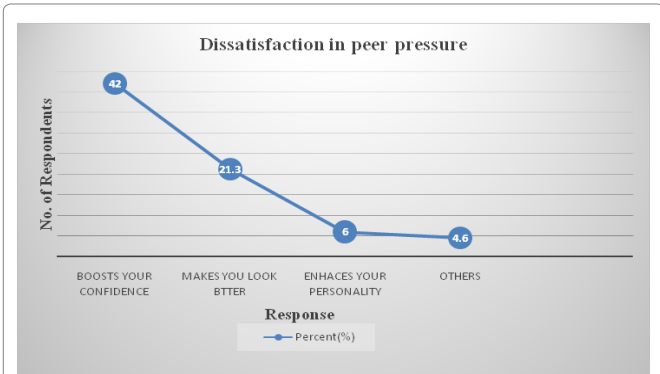| Response	f	%
Yes, I feel terrible	26	17.3
Yes, a bit	59	39.3
Not really	32	21.3
Not at all	33	22.1

Figure 4.14: Distribution of respondents according to dissatisfaction with peer pressure.

Table 4.15: Distribution of respondents according to level of depression due to peer pressure.

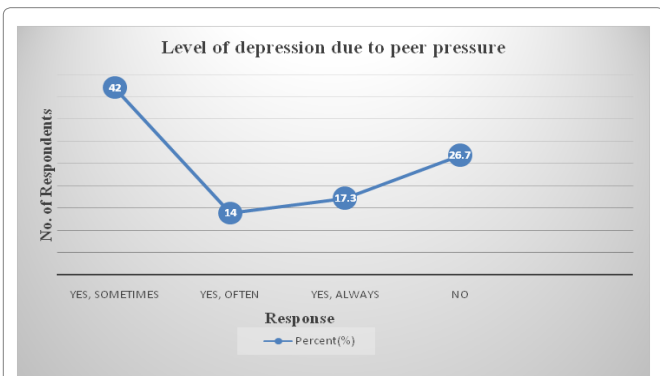| Response	f	%
Yes, sometimes	63	42
Yes, often	21	14
Yes, always	26	17.3
No	40	26.7

Figure 4.15: Distribution of respondents according to level of depression due to peer pressure.

Table 4.16: Distribution of respondents according to extent it bothers them.

Response	f	%
You don't want to spend time with your peers	13	11.8
You want to stay alone	4	3.6
Others	93	84.6

Table 4.17 shows that 51.4 percent of the respondents have never pressurized someone for changing their fashion preferences. 48.6 percent of the respondents have pressurized someone for changing their fashion preferences Figure 4.17.
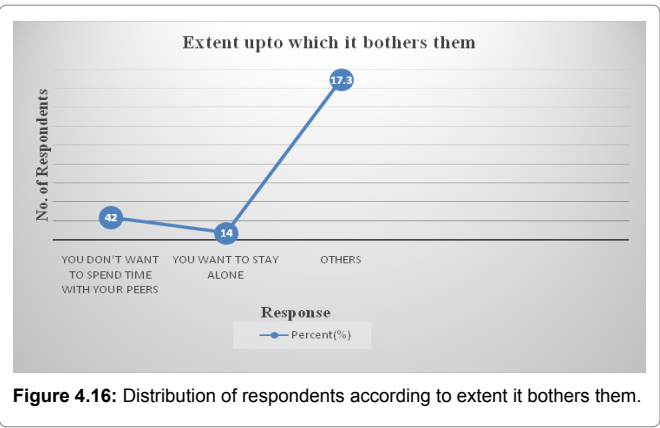
Figure 4.16: Distribution of respondents according to extent it bothers them.

Table 4.17: Distribution of respondents according to whether they have pressurized some for fashion preference.

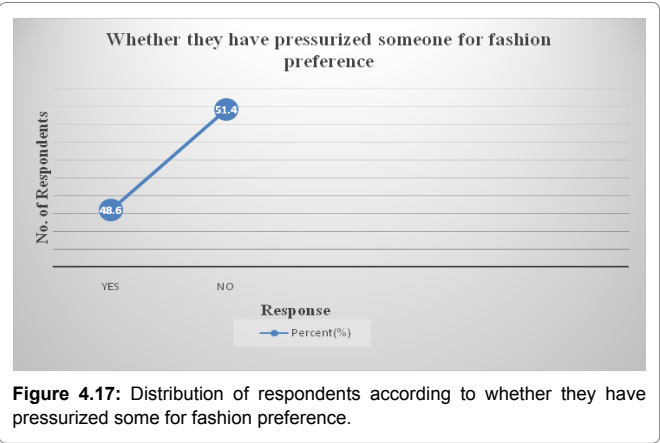| Response	f	%
Yes	73	48.6
No	77	51.4

Figure 4.17: Distribution of respondents according to whether they have pressurized some for fashion preference.

Factors That Influence Adolescents to Adopt A Fashion

Influence

The result of the survey reveals that influence is the major cause of peer pressure. Peers play a major role during adolescence. An adolescent may get influenced by a peer that he/she sees as successful or fashionable. In an article for "Psychology Today", Dr. Carl Pickhardt discussed that rather than a romantic attraction , an identity crush develops when an adolescent finds someone whom they want to emulate. It is normal for an adolescent to dress or to behave like someone they admire.

Family Pressure

Apart from peer group of friends, adolescents may also get influenced by family members. Also, they are sometimes forced by their parents or other family members to dress up in a particular way and to buy particular fashion products because the parents or family members think that it is acceptable in the society they live.

Celebrities And Western Culture

Apart from this, respondents said that there are certain factors

like influence from western culture, movies, magazine, celebrities and many more factors which influence the adolescents to adopt a particular fashion. Celebrities influence individuals, especially adolescents, into buying a particular product or following a particular fashion. Celebrities are more like salespersons. Though they may not explicitly try to persuade their audiences, they are subconsciously altering the thoughts of the public. This is noticeable through celebrity endorsements, press interviews, apparel worn during public events, items favored by celebrities, celebrity-branded products and celebrities' overall brand image all of which create epidemics of societal acceptance among various social groups.

Media

Fashion magazines have a huge impact on teens because they are a way teens find the latest trends. Most fashion magazines know their largest target group is teenagers, particularly girls, so these magazines will put popular celebrities on the covers just so teens buy the magazine.

Ways to Avoid Pressure

- Keep the lines of communication open
- Ask for support and advice without hesitation
- Pick your battles
- Know which friends are best choice
- Talk about issues
- Set healthy boundaries

Conclusion

Peer pressure can have numerous maladaptive outcomes on adolescents. They can adopt behaviors like changing the kind of clothes they wear or forming negative attitudes to conform to what their peers are influencing them to have. Out-of-the-ordinary behavior can arise because of peer pressure. Physical aggression, committing crimes, or joining gangs are possible outcomes of this possible deviant behavior.

Adolescents often give up to peer pressure because their peers request them to do something. Most of the time they get influenced by their peers and try to copy their style or the way their peers do certain things. Sometimes this is due to strong liking for their peers and other times it's just to get accepted in the peer group. Getting influenced by the peer group is the most common thing in today's time.

Apart from peer group of friends, family members also influence the adolescents. Also, they are sometimes forced by their parents or other family members to dress up in a particular way and to buy particular fashion products because the parents or family members think that it is acceptable in the society they live.

Apart from this, certain factors like influence from western culture, society, movies, magazine, celebrities and many more factors which influence the adolescents to adopt a particular fashion. Fashion magazines have a huge impact on teens because they are a way teens find the latest trends. Most fashion magazines know their largest target group is teenagers, particularly girls, so these magazines will put popular celebrities on the covers just so teens buy the magazine.

It is necessary to understand that peer pressure in fashion does

not always have disadvantages. It can help the adolescent to analyze them and contemplate on their ways of life. Knowing what the mass follows expose the adolescents to the outside world. It gives them a chance to choose the best. It is necessary to choose your peer group wisely as they play a vital role in shaping your personality. Positive peer pressure can help you reflect on your actions and amend your ways to become a better individual.

However, peer pressure can be prevented. If teenagers are taught how to resist peer pressure adequately they can avoid the many negative outcomes that go hand-and-hand with it. If the youth are taught how to respond correctly when a peer is attempting to persuade them to do something they do not want to do the youth will be more able to resist the peer pressure. Youth should be reminded of their own self-worth to boost their self-esteem. If the teen has good self-esteem they will not feel the need to be accepted by others as much. It is up the adults of the community to assist the youth. The responsibility is on the parents, teachers, and other professionals to keep our adolescents on track.

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Author Affiliations

Master in vocational studies, fashion design and technology. University of Allahabad, India