

Factors that affect clothing choice



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Introduction:

Fashion today is a continuously changing trend, favored for frivolous rather than practical, logical, or intellectual reasons. Nevertheless, it is necessary to say that at this very moment fashion has a deeper influence on the life of people and possess more than frivolous reasons for its existence. This essay investigated and looks at how identity influences our choice of clothing and how fashion has changed males and females perception of what we should look like and the media. To address this topic the essay will first look at identity and its link to our choice of clothing. Furthermore, the essay will then look at body image and its link to fashion and then discuss how it has changed how we perceive we should look like and thirdly the link between media influence and its impact on fashion. Finally the essay will provide both a negative and positive view of fashion on today teen.

The type of clothes we choose to wear depends on who is wearing it, as a result it becomes a reflection of his / her perception of themselves. Social identity and self-image plays an important role in society determining certain standards of beauty. A strong interest in fashion is because it is a way for teenage girls to shape their identities. Clothing today ha becomes an integral part of self-realization of every person. The choice of clothing is as important as identification thorough the colour of hair, height, skin and gender.

Barnard, Malcolm (1996) argues that there is a strong link between women and fashion and describes it as “ curious cultural profile” and that clothing today is a media of information bout the person wearing it (p. 21 and 175).

The clothes we choose to wear tell a lot about ourselves which in fact also shapes our identity. Clothes reflect personal and social identity of people,

their values and beliefs. Many young people express their identity through clothes and social images. Hip- Hop and rap were social movements which influenced fashion trends and priorities of youth. Today young teens do the same their identity is classified through groups for example a person dresses in vintage style of clothing has created their own style such as dressing in vintage clothes which becomes their own identity via the influence of the social movements.

The media does influence and promote women and men to believe that the culture standards for body image are ideal. Therefore the phrase, thin is in and the perfect bodies are two ' eye-catching' headlines that are in so many women's magazines. As a result this exposure, the thin ideal has led many young girls in triggering eating disorders, depression and low self-esteem.. The media has a significantly growing role in how women and girls see their bodies and personalities today. By using provocative and inappropriate images of extremely underweight models in magazines, television or music video, the media gives a distorted picture of the ideal woman's appearance. Media has greatly influenced people into the trap of what is in style and what is not. Teenage girls are affected by compulsion to receive a degree of thinness that they see in models (Cussins, Marie Anne, 2001). Over the years the media advertising models have been getting thinner and thinner, making women more dissatisfied because they want to look like that " girl' in the advertisement. The media have developed the ideal body shape in the hope that it will create more sales of the product that they are trying to sell. But the advertisement and media industries are not caring about how a person feels in trying to achieve the ideal body. By promoting the ideal body the

media contribute to eating disorders such as bulimia, anorexia which has influence today's youth. The media is the most contributing factor to this problem. They have developed the so called ideal image of what a person should look like but it's all false advertisement. You never see a ' fat' person on TV advertising a beauty product or a new clothing line. When you flip the pages of magazines all you see is the ideal image of a thin women advertising the new

Victoria Secret's new collection. Why don't the media use people of all sizes in their advertisement to fill up the needs of all people?

Fashion magazines , many young girls see tin models like Kate Moss who is one of the many top models that represents the perfect body image that many young girls are striving towards. Unfortunately may teenage girls don't understand that looking exactly like their favorite model is unrealistic. Many of these images in magazines of models are retouched before they are printed out, the fashion clothes are often duct taped to enhance fit, many blemishes are covered or altered, there is at least two inches removed form the thighs, and the average fashion model weighs 23-25% less than the average woman. All this in order to create that ideal or perfect body image that everyone is striving for and sadly dying for. This compulsion to be thin has led many young girls to have a negative body image that dangerously leads to eating disorder in order for them to achieve their desire for thinness. The media has a social responsibility for how women and girls see themselves, as well as the opposite sex and how an ideal woman today should look like. The false and unrealistic images in most of the different

media projects do have negative and harmful impacts, both mental and physical, especially on women and as well as on young adolescents.