

IMPACT OF MEDIA ON APPAREL ATTITUDES

RADHA KASHYAP*

ABSTRACT

In the present study an attempt is made to study the Impact of Media on apparel attitudes of 200 girls belonging to 18 to 21 years. The study is carried with the help of media attitude and apparel attitude scale. The results show significant correlation of media with apparel attitudes. The study reveals that girls with greater interest in media have positive attitude towards apparel.

INTRODUCTION

Clothes speak volumes about our identities and community. Clothes are seen just not as objects but as meaningful component of appearance styles. These meaningful components are arranged and rearranged on daily basis to make critical, creative connections—connections not only within a person's appearance but also with a variety of identities and communities.

In the global time when the growth and acceleration of economic and cultural network that operate on worldwide scale. The global market place blurs the boundaries among nations. Some of the same or at least very similar clothing items and images circulate globally. Even if the garments themselves are not distributed to a specific location, the image of these styles circulates to consumers in that location through media. (O'Sullivan et al., 1994).

In the context of global capitalism our everyday lives are saturated with media. Media

has become a major factor in this social structure of what is right, acceptable, desirable or fashionable. In the global media market, perception of fashionable appearance has become increasingly homogenized and has influenced the perception of appearance which further influences our attitude towards apparel. Media is linked not only to an individual's self-image, but they are closely ilinked to the projected social-self of an individual (Kumar & Balasubramanyu, 2004). Media gives lot of ideas about what looks right and what symbolize connections within and across communities. Therefore, media do not just serve images to us rather various types of media interact with us and shape our perception of social reality. According to Howell (1989) advertising has turned away from selling a product to selling an image.

Media is not only the vehicles of communication but they are the referents themselves, as they perform the same function as that of the reference group. The receiver

* Associate Prof. & Head, Deptt. of Clothing and Textiles, International College for Girls, Jaipur-302 020.

plays an active role in media or content seeking to gratify needs and desires.

The media is also convenient, available and diverse enough to provide the individual with a range of choice. Media, psychologically influence the behaviour in two ways-one, they determine an individual's motivation to consume media, and two; they determine how an individual understands the media messages and makes use of them.

A review of literature on attitudes towards apparel and media has shown emphasis on brand name and type of apparel. Davis and Lennon (1989) examined evaluations of advertising appeals for specific types of apparel and found that image oriented advertisements are important for specific type of apparel, while quality and information oriented advertisements are important for other type of apparel.

Lennon, Davis and Fairhurst (1989) examined attitude towards apparel shopping in the college females which influence the purchasing and wearing apparel attitudes. Retailers are also interested in attitudes towards apparel, so that they can modify presentations of merchandise and selling techniques to suit different shoppers (Purto, 1990).

Keeping in view the above, an attempt has been made to find out the impact of media on clothing attitudes. It was hypothesized that there will be significant correlation between media and clothing attitudes. Individuals with different attitudes towards media will differ in clothing attitudes.

METHOD

200 girls of various college of Jaipur belonging 18 to 21 years were randomly selected for the study.

Tools

Mathews (1963) study served as a guide for development of instrument used for the present research, which included sections on apparel attitudes. Apparel attitude items used 5 points scales in Likert format with anchors of 1. strongly agree, 2. agree, 3. neutral, 4. disagree and 5. strongly disagree.

Questions concerning attitude towards media use in everyday life were developed by research using Dillman, (1978) and Henerson, Morris and Gitz- Gibbon (1987) as guides. Questions dealing with media were anchored as 1. always, 2. frequency, 3. sometimes, 4. seldom and 5. never.

Procedure

After forming proper rapport with girls, the test was administered in a group of 4-5. To test the proposed hypothesis mean, standard deviation, coefficient of correlation and t-ratio were applied.

RESULTS

Relationship of Media with apparel attitude

Media	Clothing Attitude	
		.37**

$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Above table depicts significant correlation of media and clothing attitudes.

Mean, SD, t-ratio of media in individuals with low and high clothing attitude

Clothing Attitude	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio
Positive	118	81.51	12.83	2.9
Negative	82	64.01	17.73	

$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Results in above table reveals that girls with different attitude towards media differ in apparel attitudes. Girls with high interest in media have positive attitude towards clothing (m.38) than girls with little interest in media. Results reveal that media puts pressure on the individual and consciously or unconsciously effect the thoughts, feelings, emotions and attitudes.

Media project image or life style through films, television shows, commercials, magazines, newspapers and catalogues. Media has become a major factor in this social structure of what seems right acceptable, desirable, or fashionable. In the global media market, place, perception of fashionable appearances have become increasingly homogenized. As the adolescents have become accustomed to seeing and interpreting, media logic allow to process information. Many prior experience, pre-conceptions and understandings to the viewing are attached which make us increase our interest in apparel as media shape our perception of social reality (Altheide and Snow, 1979).

TV programs, advertisements in magazines and newspaper send the message that one can easily choose, make and remake identities in the rapid shift from one scene to next. They increase our consciousness that identity is fluid, multiple and transitory (Kellner, 1992). They also make us aware that identity is round the clock-twenty four hours a day (Featherstone, 1992).

They influence us so much that those who are influenced by media develop greater

interest towards apparel. Media incredibly puts pressure to buy for the idealized body image promoted by the media and fashion. They believe that they are assessed by others through their clothes.

With the result they spend a great deal of time, money and energy on activities related to appearance and are greatly interested in altering their appearance through diet, exercise and clothing, the idealized body image presented by media.

Individuals with positive attitude towards media use clothing as a part to construct their image, with the result placing greater importance on attire for accomplishing their roles (Solomon & Scholper, 1982) as they are highly concerned about what others think of them, as they are sensitive to cues about the appropriateness of their apparel.

To conclude, the present finding has provided empirical investigation that those who have positive attitude towards media value clothing.

REFERENCES

- Altheide, D.L. Snow R.P. (1979). *Media Logic*. Beverly Mills : Sage.
- Davis, L.L. and Lennon, S.J. (1989). Apparel advertising appeals as a function of apparel classification trendy versus classic, *Perceptual and motor skills*, **68**, 1011-1014.
- Dillman, D. (1978). *Mail and telephone survey*. New York : Wiley.
- Featherstone, M. (1992). Post moderns icon and the aestheticization of everyday life. In S.