

**DEPRESSION AND ITS ATTENDANT CONSEQUENCES AMONGST
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN
CITY**

BY

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MARCH, 2025

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**A RESEARCH WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
AND ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
A BACHELOR OF SCIENCES (B.Sc) DEGREE IN SOCIOLOGY AND
ANTHROPOLOGY**

MARCH, 2025

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this project work was done by Marian Oluchi Nzekwesi This is to also certify that the work done is adequate for partial fulfillment for the award of Bachelor of Science (B.SC) degree in the University of Benin.

Dr. Akaba
Project Supervisor

Date

Prof. A.O. Dokpesi
Head of Department

Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God Almighty

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am so much grateful to my Father in Heaven, who has shown me unconditional love all my life, a lot of people have contributed significantly in my academic success in different ways. I wish to express my profound gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the success of this work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| Title Page | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | i |
| Certification | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ii |
| Dedication | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | iii |
| Acknowledgements | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | iv |
| Table of Contents | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | v |
| Abstract | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | vii |

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1 | Background to the Study | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| 1.2 | Statement of the Problem | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| 1.3 | Research Objectives | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 |
| 1.4 | Research Questions | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5 |
| 1.5 | Research Hypotheses | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5 |
| 1.6 | Significance of the Study | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5 |
| 1.7 | Scope of the Study | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6 |
| 1.8 | Limitations of the Study | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 7 |

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 2.1 | Conceptual Framework | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 8 |
| 2.2 | Theoretical Framework | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 9 |
| 2.3 | Determinants of Indecent Dressing Among Students | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 10 |
| 2.4 | Societal Reactions to Indecent Dressing | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 12 |
| 2.5 | Impact of Indecent Dressing on Youth Behavior | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 13 |
| 2.6 | Gaps in the Literature | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 13 |
| 2.7 | Summary | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 14 |

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHOD

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 3.1 | Study Design | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 15 |
| 3.2 | Research Population | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 15 |
| 3.3 | Sample Size | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 15 |
| 3.4 | Sampling Technique | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 16 |
| 3.5 | Instrument for Data Collection | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 16 |
| 3.6 | Method of Data Collection | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 17 |
| 3.7 | Method of Data Analysis | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 17 |

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 4.1 | Section A | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 19 |
| 4.2 | Major Research Issues | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 21 |
| 4.3 | Hypothesis Testing | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 26 |
| 4.4 | Discussion of Findings | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 29 |

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 5.1 | Summary | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 32 |
| 5.2 | Conclusion | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 33 |
| 5.3 | Recommendations | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 33 |
| | REFERENCES | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 37 |

ABSTRACT

This study explores how youths in the Ekosodin community and students at the University of Benin (UNIBEN) feel about "indecent dressing." It looks at the factors that influence students' clothing choices, especially styles considered indecent. The research also examines how students believe society reacts to their dressing and how it impacts their social interactions, academics, and personal identity. To gather information, surveys were conducted with UNIBEN students and Ekosodin residents, and the responses were analyzed to identify trends.

The study found that social media, fashion trends, and peer pressure play a big role in shaping how students dress. A student's choice of clothing also affects their social interactions and their sense of belonging in the community. Additionally, students who dress "indecently" are more likely to face bullying or harassment. However, fashion is also a way for students to express themselves, and their dressing style can influence how they see themselves.

Overall, the study revealed that students' opinions on "indecent dressing" are strongly influenced by their peers and the broader community. This shows that dressing is not just a personal choice but also a social issue. The research concludes that there should be a balance between personal fashion freedom and respecting cultural norms. It highlights how students must navigate self-expression, societal expectations, and peer influence when making clothing choices.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Indecent dressing among youths has become a prevalent and contentious issue in many communities across Nigeria, particularly within academic environments like Ekosodin, a community largely populated by students from the University of Benin (UNIBEN). In Nigerian society, fashion and appearance are not only seen as forms of self-expression but also as markers of moral standing and respectability. Indecent dressing, often characterized by clothing that reveals more skin than is considered acceptable, has become increasingly common among youths, and the shift has elicited responses from parents, educators, and community leaders (Ogunlade, 2019). This phenomenon has been attributed to the influence of Western fashion, social media, and peer pressure, all of which have contributed to reshaping youths' perceptions of what is appropriate attire (Johnson & Nwosu, 2021).

Ekosodin community, situated adjacent to UNIBEN, has seen a remarkable transformation in youth fashion choices over recent years, as students have increasingly embraced clothing styles once considered foreign or inappropriate. Many stakeholders argue that such fashion choices not only diminish the community's cultural values but also influence others, especially younger students, to adopt similar styles. According to Nwabueze and Onwuka (2020), dressing that reveals excessive body parts or focuses attention on sexuality is widely viewed as indecent within Nigerian society, where conservative values on attire still hold sway. Despite the rise of individualistic fashion

choices, these traditional values continue to inform public perceptions, leading to potential friction between students and community expectations.

The subject of indecent dressing among youths has been examined from multiple angles. Some scholars argue that such dressing styles reflect broader social changes and increased freedom of expression (Okoye & Adewale, 2021). Others contend that indecent dressing is linked to moral degradation, increased harassment, and poor public perception of youth (Ogunyemi, 2018). For UNIBEN students, dressing in a manner deemed inappropriate by society may lead to misinterpretations, making them susceptible to moral judgments or unwanted advances from peers. Thus, understanding students' attitudes toward indecent dressing within Ekosodin is crucial for educational and community development.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The phenomenon of indecent dressing is influenced by a mix of sociocultural and economic factors. Nigerian youths are exposed to various media, including music videos, television shows, and social media platforms, that often promote modern, Westernized styles as fashionable or desirable. These portrayals influence young people's fashion choices, often encouraging styles that emphasize personal freedom and uniqueness. Johnson and Nwosu (2021) argue that social media, particularly platforms like Instagram and TikTok, have had a profound impact on fashion among Nigerian youth, who may see dressing as a means of aligning with global trends and achieving social recognition. This exposure to media, combined with peer influence within academic settings, contributes to a shift away from conservative dress codes toward more revealing or suggestive attire.

Economic factors also play a role in students' dressing choices. Many students, eager to fit in with trending fashion styles, may resort to low-cost, easily accessible clothing that reflects popular trends but may not meet societal expectations of decency. Additionally, there is an ongoing commercialization of fashion among Nigerian youths, where celebrities and influencers set trends that are quickly emulated by the younger generation, irrespective of whether these trends align with traditional values (Okoye & Adewale, 2021). This economic accessibility to fashion through local markets or online stores provides students with options to dress as they please, further contributing to the cultural shift toward more liberal attire.

Social perceptions of indecent dressing extend beyond mere personal preference; they have broader implications for how youths are perceived and treated within society. According to Adalakun and Emeka (2019), youths who adopt what is perceived as "indecent" fashion are often stigmatized, with society attributing moral laxity or rebellion to their appearance. This judgment can affect students' interactions, academic experiences, and career prospects, as employers or potential mentors may view them as irresponsible or unprofessional based solely on their attire. Additionally, such dressing styles may expose students to harassment or bullying from peers, who may feel emboldened by societal norms to criticize or reprimand those who defy conventional dress codes.

Despite these concerns, advocates for individual expression argue that fashion is a personal choice, one that should not be overly regulated by societal norms or expectations. These proponents suggest that focusing on dressing styles as markers of morality oversimplifies the complexities of youth identity formation. Okoye and Adewale (2021)

argue that the emphasis on attire diverts attention from more substantive concerns, such as education quality and personal development. Rather than condemning students for their fashion choices, they argue for a shift toward fostering tolerance and understanding within diverse communities like Ekosodin, where many backgrounds and perspectives converge.

In summary, the issue of indecent dressing in Ekosodin highlights broader societal tensions between cultural expectations and individual rights to self-expression. As students navigate the intersection of personal identity, societal norms, and peer influence, they contribute to a dynamic discourse on the future of Nigerian cultural values and youth identity. Understanding students' attitudes toward this issue provides insight into how societal expectations influence individual choices, ultimately helping educators, policymakers, and community leaders address the evolving values within Nigerian youth culture.

1.3 Research Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to explore and analyze the attitudes of UNIBEN students toward indecent dressing within the Ekosodin community. Specific objectives include:

- i. To investigate the factors influencing students' choice of attire, particularly regarding styles considered indecent.
- ii. To examine students' perceptions of societal reactions to their dressing choices.
- iii. To assess the impact of indecent dressing on students' social interactions and experiences within Ekosodin.

- iv. To explore the possible effects of indecent dressing on academic and personal identity among students.

1.4 Research Questions

In pursuit of these objectives, the study aims to answer the following research questions:

- i. What factors influence UNIBEN students' decisions to dress in ways considered indecent by societal standards?
- ii. How do students perceive society's response to their dressing styles in Ekosodin?
- iii. What impact does indecent dressing have on students' interactions and relationships within Ekosodin?
- iv. To what extent does indecent dressing affect students' academic and personal identities?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

To guide the study, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

Ho: There is a significant relationship between students' exposure to social media and their choice of indecent dressing styles.

H1: Students' attitudes toward indecent dressing are significantly influenced by peer pressure and community standards.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to an understanding of the cultural and social dynamics influencing youths' dressing choices in Ekosodin. First, the findings will benefit university policymakers, enabling them to address dressing-related issues with more sensitivity to students' views. By understanding students' perspectives, the university

administration may also consider adapting policies to foster a more inclusive campus culture (Balogun, 2020). Additionally, this study will be valuable to educators and parents, who often play critical roles in shaping youth behavior and attitudes. Community leaders in Ekosodin will also gain insights into how societal norms intersect with individual freedoms, helping to bridge the gap between students' fashion choices and local expectations.

In a broader context, this research adds to the existing literature on youth behavior and cultural shifts within academic environments. It provides a platform for further investigation into how fashion and personal expression among young people reflect changing social landscapes. Understanding the motivations behind students' attitudes toward indecent dressing may reveal deeper insights into the challenges and transformations affecting Nigerian youths today.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study is geographically limited to the Ekosodin community, Benin City, focusing primarily on UNIBEN students residing or frequently interacting within this community. Although it acknowledges the broader societal attitudes toward indecent dressing, the study will center on the perceptions, experiences, and interactions of students within the specific social and cultural context of Ekosodin. This approach provides a localized view that can yield meaningful insights into the unique dynamics of student life within an urban Nigerian academic community.

The study will be limited in scope to undergraduate students from various faculties within UNIBEN, offering a cross-sectional view of students' attitudes. While

this may restrict the generalizability of the findings, it allows for an in-depth examination of the attitudes prevalent among university-aged youths in Ekosodin.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

Despite its contributions, the study has limitations. Firstly, given the subjective nature of what constitutes “indecent dressing,” responses may vary widely, and personal biases could affect data interpretation (Ajibola, 2021). Additionally, the study’s focus on Ekosodin community students may restrict the application of findings to other regions or institutions. Time constraints and limited resources may also limit the sample size, potentially affecting the comprehensiveness of the results.

Lastly, attitudes toward dressing can be influenced by rapidly changing social trends, which may evolve before conclusions are widely applied. Therefore, future research may be necessary to assess whether similar trends persist in subsequent years or across other regions and demographic groups.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an in-depth exploration of existing literature on students' attitudes toward indecent dressing, emphasizing the Ekosodin community in Benin City. It draws from multiple scholarly perspectives to discuss the conceptualization, determinants, societal reactions, and impacts of indecent dressing. The theoretical frameworks guiding this study are also critically reviewed, followed by an analysis of gaps in the existing literature.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 Understanding Indecent Dressing

Indecent dressing is a contested concept with varying interpretations based on cultural, social, and individual factors. It generally refers to clothing styles that expose body parts considered private or inappropriate for public display. Examples include short skirts, ripped jeans, crop tops, and sagging trousers (Ogunlade, 2019).

In traditional African societies, clothing is deeply intertwined with cultural values, symbolizing morality, respect, and identity. However, globalization and modernization have led to significant shifts in these values. Today, many young people, including students, adopt Western-inspired fashion trends that may be perceived as indecent within the Nigerian context (Okoye & Adewale, 2021).

The concept of indecent dressing also reflects broader societal concerns about moral decay and the erosion of cultural heritage. As Ogunyemi (2018) observes, the increasing prevalence of provocative dressing among youths has sparked debates about the influence of Western culture on African traditions. This tension is particularly evident

in academic communities, where students often navigate the delicate balance between self-expression and societal expectations.

2.1.2 Youth Identity and Fashion

Fashion is a powerful medium through which youths construct and express their identities. For students, clothing choices often signify individuality, group affiliation, or rebellion against societal norms (Nwabueze & Onwuka, 2020). In academic environments like UNIBEN, students use fashion to assert their independence and differentiate themselves from others.

Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) provides a useful framework for understanding this phenomenon. According to the theory, individuals derive a sense of identity from their membership in social groups. Fashion, as a visible marker of group identity, plays a crucial role in fostering a sense of belonging. In the Ekosodin community, students may adopt dressing styles that align with their peers or challenge traditional norms, reflecting their desire for acceptance and self-expression.

Additionally, the concept of "coolness" often influences students' fashion choices. As noted by Johnson and Nwosu (2021), many students prioritize trendy styles over societal expectations, viewing provocative dressing as a way to project confidence and modernity. This highlights the complex interplay between individual agency and social pressures in shaping fashion behavior.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory, proposed by Bandura (1977), emphasizes the role of observation and imitation in shaping behavior. This theory is particularly relevant to

understanding how students adopt dressing styles modeled by peers, celebrities, and social media influencers. Exposure to provocative fashion trends in movies, music videos, and online platforms can normalize these styles, encouraging students to emulate them. For instance, social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok showcase global fashion trends that often prioritize aesthetics over modesty (Adeoye & Musa, 2020). Students who frequently engage with such content are more likely to adopt similar dressing styles, reinforcing the prevalence of indecent dressing in communities like Ekosodin.

2.2.2 Cultural Norm Theory

Cultural norm theory posits that societal expectations and traditions play a crucial role in shaping individual behavior (Giddens, 1984). In the Nigerian context, dressing modestly is often seen as a reflection of moral values and respectability. Indecent dressing, therefore, is interpreted as a rejection of these norms, eliciting negative reactions from the community. This theory helps explain the societal backlash against provocative dressing in Ekosodin. It also underscores the importance of cultural values in shaping attitudes toward fashion, highlighting the tension between traditional norms and modern influences.

2.3 Determinants of Indecent Dressing Among Students

2.3.1 Influence of Social Media

Social media has emerged as a significant driver of fashion trends among youths. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat provide users with access to global fashion styles, many of which challenge traditional notions of modesty (Adeoye & Musa, 2020). For students, social media serves as both a source of inspiration and a platform for self-presentation. The desire for social validation, measured in likes, comments, and

shares, motivates many youths to adopt trendy but provocative styles. This phenomenon, known as the "Instagram effect," has been linked to the rise of indecent dressing among students (Okoye & Adewale, 2021).

2.3.2 Peer Pressure

Peer pressure is another critical factor influencing students' dressing choices. Within academic settings, the desire to fit in or gain acceptance often leads students to conform to group norms, even when these norms contradict societal expectations (Johnson & Nwosu, 2021). In Ekosodin, peer influence is particularly significant due to the close-knit nature of the community. Students who dress provocatively may do so to align with their social groups, projecting an image of confidence and modernity. However, this behavior can also create conflicts with traditional values, highlighting the complex dynamics of peer influence.

2.3.3 Economic Factors

Economic considerations play a dual role in shaping students' fashion choices. On one hand, affordable clothing options make it easier for students to emulate trendy styles. On the other hand, some students resort to provocative dressing as a means of attracting attention or resources, reflecting the economic pressures faced by many youths in Nigeria (Adelakun & Emeka, 2019).

The commercialization of fashion has also contributed to the spread of indecent dressing. Celebrity endorsements and advertising campaigns often glamorize provocative clothing, reinforcing its appeal among young people. This underscores the role of economic factors in shaping fashion behavior, particularly in communities like Ekosodin

2.4 Societal Reactions to Indecent Dressing

2.4.1 Public Perception

In Nigerian society, individuals who dress indecently are often subjected to moral judgment and stigmatization. This perception reflects broader societal concerns about declining moral values and the influence of Western culture on African traditions (Adelakun & Emeka, 2019).

For students, public criticism can have significant consequences, affecting their social interactions, academic reputation, and overall well-being. However, some youths view societal disapproval as a challenge to traditional norms, using fashion as a form of rebellion or self-expression.

2.4.2 Institutional Responses

Educational institutions in Nigeria have implemented dress codes to regulate students' attire. At UNIBEN, policies prohibit clothing deemed inappropriate for academic settings, such as short skirts, ripped jeans, and sleeveless tops (Adeoye & Musa, 2020). While these policies aim to promote discipline and decency, their enforcement has been inconsistent, often sparking debates about individual freedoms and institutional authority. Many students view dress codes as restrictive or outdated, calling for a more inclusive approach to addressing dressing issues.

2.4.3 Gendered Implications

Societal reactions to indecent dressing are often gendered, with women facing more scrutiny and criticism than men. Female students are frequently targeted by dress code policies and moral judgments, reflecting broader gender inequalities in Nigerian society (Nwabueze & Onwuka, 2020). This double standard underscores the need for a

more equitable approach to addressing indecent dressing, one that considers the diverse experiences and perspectives of both male and female students.

2.5 Impact of Indecent Dressing on Youth Behavior

2.5.1 Academic Performance

Dressing styles can influence students' focus and performance in academic settings. Research suggests that provocative dressing can attract undue attention, disrupting the learning environment and affecting students' academic outcomes (Ogunyemi, 2018).

2.5.2 Social Interactions

Fashion choices significantly shape students' social interactions. While provocative dressing may foster connections within certain peer groups, it can also lead to exclusion or criticism from others who view such choices as inappropriate (Johnson & Nwosu, 2021).

2.5.3 Personal Identity

Fashion plays a central role in shaping personal identity, particularly among youths. For some students, dressing provocatively represents a rejection of societal norms and an assertion of individuality. However, this choice often comes with challenges, including societal backlash and internal conflict, highlighting the complex interplay between self-expression and cultural expectations (Okoye & Adewale, 2021).

2.6 Gaps in the Literature

While extensive research has been conducted on indecent dressing, several gaps remain. Existing studies often focus on societal reactions and institutional responses, with limited attention given to students' perspectives and motivations. Moreover, research on

this topic tends to generalize findings, overlooking the unique cultural and social dynamics of specific communities like Ekosodin.

2.7 Summary

This chapter has reviewed relevant literature on the concept of indecent dressing, its determinants, societal reactions, and its impact on youth behavior. By addressing gaps in the literature, this study aims to provide a localized perspective on students' attitudes toward indecent dressing in Ekosodin, contributing to a deeper understanding of this complex social phenomenon.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Study Design

This study adopted an explanatory research design with a focus on the survey trend design. The explanatory design is ideal for collecting data and testing hypotheses, as it provides insights into the current status of the research subject—students’ attitudes toward indecent dressing. The survey trend design enables the researcher to observe patterns and trends within the Ekosodin community systematically. This approach supports easy data collection using structured tools such as questionnaires, interviews, or direct observation. By employing this design, the study effectively captures diverse perspectives, aligns with the research objectives, and addresses the research questions outlined in Chapter One.

3.2 Research Population

The research population comprises students from the six departments within the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Benin, Benin City, and residents of the Ekosodin community. The departments include Geography and Regional Planning, Economics and Statistics, Political Science, Public Administration, Social Work, and Sociology and Anthropology/Psychology, with a total student population of approximately 2,500. Additionally, Ekosodin residents are included to capture broader societal perspectives on students’ attitudes toward indecent dressing, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

3.3 Sample Size

Given the challenges of surveying the entire population, this study adopts a probabilistic sampling method to select a representative subset. A sample of 100 participants will be drawn from the combined population of University of Benin Social Sciences students and residents of the Ekosodin community.

Specifically, 70 students will be selected from the Faculty of Social Sciences, focusing on 200 and 400-level students across four out of six departments. Additionally, 30 Ekosodin residents will be included to provide community perspectives. The selected participants will complete questionnaires designed to capture data on their attitudes and experiences regarding indecent dressing.

3.4 Sampling Technique

This study employs a stratified random sampling technique to ensure a representative and unbiased selection of participants from the target population. Stratified sampling divides the population into distinct subgroups, or strata, to reflect key characteristics of the population. For this research, the population was stratified into two groups:

1. Students from the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Benin.
2. Residents of the Ekosodin community.

From these strata, random sampling was used to select participants. Within the student stratum, emphasis was placed on 200 and 400-level students from four departments to ensure diversity in academic exposure and opinions. This technique ensures that both university students and community members are adequately represented, enabling a comprehensive understanding of attitudes toward indecent dressing.

3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

A questionnaire will be utilized for data collection in this study. The questionnaire is divided into four sections to capture comprehensive information:

Section A: Contains questions designed to collect personal information about the respondents, including age, gender, educational level, and residence (student or Ekosodin community member).

Section B: Focuses on questions about the predisposing factors influencing indecent dressing among students in the Social Science Faculty and the Ekosodin community.

Section C: Includes questions on the prevalent types of clothing considered indecent within the Social Science Faculty and the Ekosodin community.

Section D: Contains questions exploring the societal and academic effects of indecent dressing on students and the reactions of the Ekosodin community.

3.6 Method of Data Collection

This study will adopt the survey method for data collection. A one-time survey approach will be employed, meaning the researcher will visit the field to engage respondents and collect data in a single phase without requiring a follow-up visit. Data will be gathered using structured questionnaires, which will be distributed to both students in the Faculty of Social Sciences and residents of the Ekosodin community. The responses will be collected on-site to ensure timely and accurate data acquisition, minimizing the risk of incomplete or lost information.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected will be analyzed using explanatory methods, with the aid of simple frequency distributions and percentage tables. These tools will provide a clear, organized presentation of the data, allowing for better interpretation and understanding of

the findings. Frequencies and percentages will be calculated to identify trends, relationships, and variations in respondents' attitudes toward indecent dressing. This approach ensures that the analysis aligns with the study's objectives, hypotheses, and research questions, making the results accessible and easy to comprehend.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

This chapter elucidates the data derived from fieldwork via the administration of questionnaire to respondents. One hundred questionnaire were disseminated to individuals randomly selected from Among Youths in the Ekosodin Community, Benin City. The gathered data underwent analysis utilizing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings are delineated through the presentation of frequency distribution tables, percentages, and the application of chi-square analysis to evaluate the formulated hypotheses.

4.1 Section A

Socio-demographic characteristic of Respondents

Table 1: Sex Distribution of Respondents

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------|-----------|------------|
| Males | 40 | 40% |
| Females | 60 | 60% |
| Total | 100 | 100.0% |

Source: field work, 2024

From the table 1 above 40% of the respondents are male while 60% are female.

Table 2: Age Distribution of the Respondents

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------|-----------|------------|
| 15-19 | 15 | 15.0% |
| 20-25 | 75 | 75.0% |
| 26-30 | 10 | 10.0% |
| Total | 100 | 100.0% |

Source: Field work. 2024

Table 2 above illustrates that 15% of the participants fall within the age range of 15-19 years, 75% fall within the age bracket of 20-25 years, and 10% are situated within the age group of 26-30 years.

Table 3: Religion of Respondents

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Christianity | 91 | 91.0% |
| Islam | 9 | 9.0% |
| Others | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 100 | 100% |

Source: field work, 2024

The above table shows that the dominant religion practiced in the study location is Christianity with 91% and Islam with 9%, while the minority groups represented as “others” are with no respondents.

Table 4: Ethnicity of Respondents

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Edo | 55 | 55.0% |
| Igbo | 5 | 5.0% |
| Yoruba | 25 | 25.0% |
| Hausa | 3 | 3.0% |
| Others | 12 | 12.0% |
| Total | 100 | 100% |

Source: field work, 2024

Table 4 above shows that 55% of the respondents are from bini ethnic group (Edo), 5% are from Igbo, 25% are Yoruba, 3% of the respondents is Hausa while the remaining 12% are from other ethnic groups like Esan, Ijaw, and Urhobo.

Table 5: Marital status of respondents

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Married | 10 | 10.0% |
| Single | 95 | 90.0% |
| Divorced | 0 | 0% |
| Separated | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 100 | 100.0% |

Source: field work, 2024.

Table 5 above demonstrates that 10% of the respondents are in a married, 90% are unmarried, and 0% are separated, while non are divorced.

Table 6: Where do you reside in at Ekosodin Community

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Newton Street | 18 | 18.0% |
| Edo Street | 18 | 18.0% |
| Jp Street | 16 | 16.0% |
| Pos Junction | 16 | 16.0% |
| Boundary Junction | 16 | 16.0% |
| Winners Junction | 16 | 16.0% |

Source: field work, 2024.

Table 6 above illustrate that the questionnaires was equally distributed youths in the Ekosodin community.

4.2 Major Research Issues

Table 7: How much does the desire to follow current fashion trends influence your choice of attire?

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| VERY MUCH | 80 | 80% |
| MUCH | 10 | 10% |
| SOME | 10 | 10% |
| NOT AT ALL | 0 | 0% |
| TOTAL | | 100% |

Source; field work, 2024

From the table 7 above, 80% of the respondent agree that the desire to follow current fashion trends influence the choice of attire is very much, then much respondents of 10% agree that it affect while some of 10% also agree and nobody disagreed to that the desire to follow current fashion trends influence the choice of attire

Table 8: To what extent do social media platforms (e.g., Instagram, TikTok) influence your clothing choices?

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------|-----------|---------------|
| A GREAT EXTENT | 70 | 70% |
| SOME EXTENT | 20 | 20% |
| A LITTLE EXTENT | 10 | 10% |
| NOT AT ALL | 0 | 0% |
| TOTAL | | 100.0% |

Source; field work, 2024it

According to table 8 above, it is evident that 70% (majority) of the respondents attest that social media platform (e.g., Instagram, TikTok) influence their clothing choices to a great extent, while the minority of 20% believes does to some extent and 10% of the which are the minority responded it does to a little extent but it also seen that not of the respondent disagreed.

Table 9: How much do you think a student's dressing style affects their interactions with other students in Ekosodin?

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------|-----------|---------------|
| A GREAT EXTENT | 60 | 60% |
| SOME EXTENT | 30 | 30% |
| A LITTLE EXTENT | 15 | 15% |
| NOT AT ALL | 5 | 5% |
| Total | | 100.0% |

Source; field work, 2024

From the table 9 above 60% of the respondent agreed that student's dressing style affects their interaction with other students in Ekosodin, then much respondents of 30% also agreed that student's dressing style affects their interaction with other student in Ekosodin, while some of 15% agreed that student's dressing style affects their interaction with other student in Ekosodin and 5% disagreed to that student's dressing style affects their interaction with other student in Ekosodin.

Table 10: To what extent do you believe dressing in a way considered indecent affects a student's sense of belonging in the Ekosodin community?

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------|-----------|---------------|
| A GREAT EXTENT | 50% | 50% |
| SOME EXTENT | 15% | 15% |
| A LITTLE EXTENT | 5% | 5% |
| NOT AT ALL | 20% | 20% |
| Total | | 100.0% |

Source; field work, 2024

According to table 10 above, it is evident that 50% (majority), while the minority of 20% believes does to some extent and 15% of the which are the minority responded it does to a little extent but it also seen that not of the respondent disagreed.

Table 11: Distribution of respondents by whether have you witnessed or experienced negative social interactions due to someone's dressing style in Ekosodin?

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|---------------|
| YES | 15 | 15% |
| NO | 85 | 85% |
| | | |
| Total | 100 | 100.0% |

Source; field work, 2024

From the table 11 above, 85% of the respondent had not witnessed or experienced negative social interactions due to someone's dressing style in Ekosodin, so also did 15% of the respondents had witness.

Table 12: Distribution of respondents by how much do you agree that students who dress indecently are more likely to face harassment or bullying?

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|-------------|
| STRONGLY AGREE | 60 | 60% |
| AGREE | 30 | 30% |
| DISAGREE | 5 | 5% |
| STRONGLY DISAGREE | 5 | 5% |
| Total | | 100% |

Source; field work, 2024

In reference to the table 13 above, 60% of the respondent strongly agreed to that students who dress indecently are more likely to face harassment or bullying 30% of the respondent agreed while 5% of the respondents disagreed and 5% also strongly disagreed that students who dress indecently are more likely to face harassment or bullying respectfully.

Table 13 Distribution of respondents by how much do you think a student's dressing style affects their academic performance?

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------|-----------|---------------|
| A GREAT EXTENT | 30% | 30% |
| SOME EXTENT | 10% | 10% |
| A LITTLE EXTENT | 20% | 5% |
| NOT AT ALL | 50% | 50% |
| Total | | 100.0% |

Source; field work, 2024

From the table 13 above 30% of the respondent think that student's dressing style affects their academic performance, then much respondents of 10% also agreed that student's think a student's dressing style affects their academic performance, while some of 20% agreed think a student's dressing style affects their academic performance and 50% disagreed to that think a student's dressing style affects their academic performance.

Table 14 Distribution of respondents by what extent do they believe dressing in a way considered indecent affects a student's personal identity?

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------|-----------|---------------|
| A GREAT EXTENT | 50% | 50% |
| SOME EXTENT | 30 | 310% |
| A LITTLE EXTENT | 10 | 10% |
| NOT AT ALL | 20 | 20% |
| Total | | 100.0% |

Source; field work, 2024

According to the above table 14, 50% of the respondents succumb they believe dressing in a way considered indecent affects a student's personal identity, while 30% respondent also believe dressing in a way considered indecent affects a student's personal identity, 10% respondent believe dressing in a way considered indecent affects a student's personal identity and 20% respondent believe dressing in a way considered indecent do not affects a student's personal identity

Table 15: Distribution of respondents by whether there is expressing oneself through fashion an important part of personal identity for students?

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|---------------|
| YES | 85 | 85% |
| NO | 15 | 15% |
| | | |
| Total | 100 | 100.0% |

Source; field work, 2024

According to table 15: above, it is evident that 85% (majority) of the respondents agreed that expressing oneself through fashion's an important part of personal identity for students, while the minority of 15% think it is not.

Table 16 Distribution of respondents on how much do they think that pressure to dress a certain way affects students' confidence and self-esteem?

| Respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------|-----------|---------------|
| A GREAT EXTENT | 50% | 50% |
| SOME EXTENT | 30 | 30% |
| A LITTLE EXTENT | 20 | 10% |
| NOT AT ALL | 10 | 20% |
| Total | | 100.0% |

Source; field work, 2024

In reference to the table 16 above, 30% respondent succumb to how much they think that pressure to dress a certain way affects students' confidence and self-esteem, while 30% also succumb to how much they think that pressure to dress a certain way affects students' confidence and self-esteem, 20% respond to a little extent succumb to how much they think that pressure to dress a certain way affects students' confidence and self-esteem and 10% respondent do not succumb to how much they think that pressure to dress a certain way affects students' confidence and self-esteem.

4.3 Hypothesis Testing

This section of the study will deal with the testing of hypothesis. The statistical approach chosen for this purpose is the chi-square test, which is widely recognized and utilized in research. The chi-square test is represented mathematically by the formula provided below.

$$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum (o-e)^2}{e}$$

Level of significant or alpha = 0.05

Degree of Freedom (df) = 2

Decision Rule; If the calculated value is larger than the table value of the chi-square at the significant level of 0.5, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis.

Hypothesis

Ho: There is significant relationship between students' exposure to social media and their choice of indecent dressing styles.

Hi: Students' attitudes toward indecent dressing are significantly influenced by peer pressure and community standards.

This hypothesis was tested using question 9, section B from the appendix.

The formula as represented:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O-e)^2}{e}$$

O = Observed frequency

E = Expected frequency

Degree of Freedom (df)= (C1)(R1) i.e C is the column R is the roll.

| HOSTELS | Yes | No | Total |
|------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Newton Street | 10(a) | 8(b) | 18 |
| Edo Street | 9(c) | 9(d) | 18 |
| Jp Street | 12(e) | 4(f) | 16 |
| POS Junction | 8(g) | 8(h) | 16 |
| Boundary | 12(i) | 4(j) | 16 |
| Winner Junction | 9(k) | 7(l) | 16 |
| Total | 60 | 40 | 100 |

$$\text{Cell a} = 10 \times 60 = 600/100 = 6$$

$$\text{Cell b} = 8 \times 40 = 320/100 = 3.2$$

$$\text{Cell c} = 9 \times 60 = 540/100 = 5.4$$

$$\text{Cell d} = 9 \times 40 = 360/100 = 3.6$$

$$\text{Cell e} = 12 \times 60 = 720/100 = 7.2$$

$$\text{Cell f} = 4 \times 40 = 160/100 = 1.6$$

$$\text{Cell g} = 8 \times 60 = 480/100 = 4.8$$

$$\text{Cell h} = 8 \times 40 = 320/100 = 3.2$$

$$\text{Cell I} = 12 \times 60 = 720/100 = 7.2$$

$$\text{Cell j} = 4 \times 40 = 160/100 = 1.6$$

$$\text{Cell k} = 9 \times 60 = 540/100 = 5.4$$

$$\text{Cell l} = 7 \times 40 = 280/100 = 2.8$$

| O | E | O-E | (O-E) ² | (O-E) ² /e |
|-------|-----|-----|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 10 | 6 | 4 | 16 | 2.67 |
| 8 | 3.2 | 4.8 | 23.04 | 7.2 |
| 9 | 5.4 | 3.6 | 12.96 | 2.4 |
| 9 | 3.6 | 5.4 | 29.16 | 8.1 |
| 12 | 7.2 | 4.8 | 23.04 | 3.2 |
| 4 | 1.6 | 2.4 | 5.76 | 3.7 |
| 9 | 5.4 | 3.6 | 12.96 | 2.4 |
| 7 | 2.8 | 4.2 | 17.64 | 6.3 |
| TOTAL | | | | 35.97 |

$$df = 2$$

$$\alpha = 0.05$$

$$\chi^2 = 35.97$$

$$CV = 5.99$$

Since the calculated chi-square value of 35.97 at degree of Freedom(df) 2 at the significant level of 0.05 is higher than the table chi-square value 5.99. We will reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis which is; " Students' attitudes toward indecent dressing are significantly influenced by peer pressure and community standards."

4.4 Discussion of Findings

The study sought to examine the attitudes toward indecent dressing among youths in the Ekosodin community and students of the University of Benin (UNIBEN). The findings, drawn from the data analysis in Chapter Four, highlight the various factors influencing students' dressing choices and their perceptions of societal reactions. These results are closely tied to the background and research objectives outlined in Chapter One.

The demographic analysis revealed that the majority of respondents were female, accounting for 60% of the total sample. Most participants fell within the age range of 20-25 years (75%), and Christianity was the dominant religion among them (91%). Additionally, the largest ethnic group represented was Edo (55%), and most respondents (90%) were single. The questionnaires were equally distributed among the youths in the Ekosodin community, ensuring a diverse representation of perspectives.

A significant majority (80%) of respondents indicated that their clothing choices are greatly influenced by current fashion trends. This supports the argument presented in Chapter One that Nigerian youths are highly exposed to media that promote Westernized fashion styles. Social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok play a crucial role in shaping these trends, as 70% of respondents agreed that their dressing choices are heavily influenced by the content they see on these platforms. This finding reinforces the idea that social media has a profound impact on Nigerian youths, leading them to align their fashion sense with global trends.

The study also examined the influence of dressing on students' social interactions. About 60% of respondents agreed that a student's dressing style significantly affects how they interact with others within the Ekosodin community. Furthermore, half of the

respondents (50%) believed that dressing in a way perceived as indecent can impact a student's sense of belonging. Despite these perceptions, an overwhelming majority (85%) reported that they had neither witnessed nor experienced negative social interactions due to someone's dressing style. This suggests that while societal perceptions of indecent dressing exist, they may not always translate into actual negative interactions within the community.

The issue of harassment and bullying related to dressing style was also explored in the study. A significant portion (60%) strongly agreed that students who dress indecently are more likely to face harassment or bullying. This finding aligns with previous discussions in Chapter One, which highlighted that young people who adopt controversial fashion styles often face stigmatization. It suggests that societal norms continue to play a crucial role in shaping students' experiences, sometimes leading to discrimination based on appearance.

Regarding the relationship between dressing style and academic performance, half of the respondents (50%) disagreed that a student's attire influences their academic success. This implies that while fashion choices may affect social perceptions, they do not necessarily determine a student's academic performance. However, when it comes to personal identity, 50% of respondents believed that dressing in an indecent manner could affect how a student perceives themselves. Additionally, an overwhelming majority (85%) agreed that fashion serves as an important tool for self-expression, further emphasizing the role of clothing in shaping personal identity.

The study also explored the relationship between dressing and students' confidence levels. The responses varied: 30% of respondents felt that pressure to dress in

a certain way significantly affects students' confidence and self-esteem, while another 30% moderately agreed. Meanwhile, 20% of respondents acknowledged some influence of fashion pressure on self-esteem, whereas 10% stated that dressing choices had no impact on their confidence. These findings indicate that while peer influence plays a role in shaping students' dressing styles, its effect on self-esteem varies from person to person.

The hypothesis testing conducted using the chi-square method led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, confirming that students' attitudes toward indecent dressing are significantly influenced by peer pressure and community standards. This finding aligns with the research objectives in Chapter One, which aimed to investigate the key factors affecting students' attire choices and societal perceptions.

In conclusion, the study highlights the complex relationship between individual expression, societal norms, and peer influence regarding fashion among youths in the Ekosodin community and UNIBEN students. While social media and fashion trends play a major role in shaping dressing styles, perceptions of indecent dressing vary, particularly concerning its impact on social interactions, academic performance, and self-identity. These findings suggest the need for a balanced perspective—one that acknowledges personal freedom in fashion choices while also considering the cultural and societal norms that shape students' experiences.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

5.1 Summary

This study examines how University of Benin (UNIBEN) students and Ekosodin residents perceive "indecent dressing," focusing on what influences their views and how it affects their interactions, studies, and self-image. In Nigeria, the way someone dresses are often seen as a reflection of their morals and respectability. "Indecent dressing," usually referring to clothing that reveals too much skin, is a controversial issue in student areas like Ekosodin due to the influence of Western fashion, social media, and peer pressure. The research aimed to understand why students choose certain outfits, how they believe society reacts to their choices, and the impact of "indecent dressing" on their social life, academics, and self-perception. To gather data, researchers conducted surveys with UNIBEN students and Ekosodin residents, analyzing the responses to identify patterns and trends. The study found that social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok, current fashion trends, and peer pressure significantly influence students' clothing choices. Regarding societal reactions, the way a student dresses affects their social interactions and sense of belonging in the community. A notable concern is that students who dress "indecently" are more likely to experience bullying or harassment. However, most respondents did not believe that dressing style directly impacts academic performance. For many students, fashion is a form of self-expression, and "indecent dressing" plays a role in shaping their personal identity. The study's main finding revealed that students' opinions on "indecent dressing" are strongly shaped by their peers and the broader community. The pressure to conform to group expectations influences

how they dress and how they judge others' fashion choices. While the research offers valuable insights, it also has limitations—what is considered "indecent" varies from person to person, and since the study was conducted only in Ekosodin, the findings may not apply to other areas. Overall, the research highlights the need for a balance between personal fashion freedom and respecting cultural norms, showing that students navigate a complex mix of self-expression, societal expectations, and peer influence in their clothing choices.

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlights how UNIBEN students and Ekosodin residents navigate the complexities of fashion, social expectations, and personal identity. The findings confirm that students' views on "indecent dressing" are heavily shaped by peer influence and community standards, showing that clothing choices are not just personal but also socially constructed. While fashion serves as a form of self-expression, it also affects social interactions, feelings of belonging, and, in some cases, vulnerability to bullying. However, the study found no strong link between dressing style and academic performance. Given the subjectivity of what is considered "indecent" and the study's focus on a single location, future research could explore this issue in broader contexts. Ultimately, the study suggests the need for a balanced approach—one that respects personal freedom while acknowledging cultural and societal norms.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the research findings regarding attitudes toward indecent dressing among youths in the Ekosodin community and students of the University of Benin

(UNIBEN), the following recommendations are made for parents, school management, and students.

For Parents:

Parents play a crucial role in shaping their children's attitudes and behaviours. Given the significant influence of social media and peer pressure on students' dressing choices, parents should:

- **Engage in open communication:** Initiate regular conversations with their children about fashion trends, social media influences, and societal expectations. This dialogue can help youths develop a balanced perspective, understanding the importance of self-expression while respecting cultural norms.
- **Promote media literacy:** Educate children about the potential impact of social media on their perceptions and choices. Encourage critical evaluation of content and help them understand that not everything portrayed online reflects reality.
- **Instil values and cultural awareness:** Reinforce the importance of cultural values, respect, and modesty. Help children understand the significance of dressing appropriately in different contexts and the potential consequences of not adhering to societal norms.
- **Provide guidance and support:** Offer guidance on making responsible fashion choices that align with both personal preferences and societal expectations. Support their children in developing a strong sense of self-esteem that is not solely dependent on external validation or fashion trends.

For School Management:

Educational institutions have a responsibility to create an environment that fosters both academic excellence and personal development. To address the issue of indecent dressing, school management should:

- **Review and revise dress code policies:** Ensure that dress code policies are clear, fair, and consistently enforced. Involve students, parents, and educators in the policy-making process to create a sense of ownership and understanding.
- **Promote inclusivity and diversity:** Foster a campus culture that values diversity and individual expression while maintaining respect for community standards. Encourage dialogue and understanding between students from different backgrounds and perspectives.
- **Provide education and awareness programmes:** Organise workshops, seminars, and campaigns to educate students about the impact of their dressing choices on social interactions, academic performance, and personal identity. These programmes can also address issues such as harassment, bullying, and gender inequality.
- **Collaborate with parents and community leaders:** Establish open lines of communication with parents and community leaders to address concerns and work together to promote responsible behaviour among students. This collaboration can help bridge the gap between students' fashion choices and local expectations.

For Students:

Students themselves are key stakeholders in addressing the issue of indecent dressing. To navigate the complex interplay between personal expression and societal norms, students should:

- **Develop self-awareness:** Reflect on their motivations for choosing certain dressing styles. Understand the potential impact of their choices on how they are perceived and treated by others.
- **Embrace responsible self-expression:** Use fashion as a means of expressing their individuality while being mindful of societal expectations and cultural values. Strive to strike a balance between personal preferences and community standards.
- **Promote respect and empathy:** Treat others with respect, regardless of their dressing styles. Challenge stereotypes and biases related to appearance and promote a culture of understanding and acceptance.
- **Seek support and guidance:** Reach out to parents, educators, or counsellors for support and guidance when facing challenges related to fashion choices or societal pressures. Engage in constructive dialogue with peers and community members to foster mutual understanding and respect.
- **Understand the implication of indecent dressing** Students should understand that indecent dressing can expose them to harassment or bullying from peers, who may feel emboldened by societal norms to criticize or reprimand those who defy conventional dress codes.

By implementing these recommendations, parents, school management, and students can work together to create a more inclusive and respectful environment that supports both individual expression and community well-being.

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UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

Dear respondent,

This is a research study embarking on by Osagie Aisosa Anita titled STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS INDECENT DRESSING AMONG YOUTHS IN THE EKOSODIN COMMUNITY, BENIN CITY. It is undertaken for purely academic purpose and your utmost attention will be highly appreciated. Every information here will be held in utmost confidentiality.

Please tick { } on the options that best suits you.

SECTION A: SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

SEX: MALE () FEMALE ()

AGE: 15 - 19 () 20 – 25 () 26 – 30 () 30 ABOVE ()

RELIGION: CHRISTIANITY () ISLAM () OTHERS ()

ETHNICITY: EDO [], IGBO [], YORUBA [], HAUSA []

OTHERS _____

MARITAL STATUS: MARRIED [] SINGLE [] DIVORCE [] SEPARATED []

WHERE DO YOU RESIDE IN AT EKOSODIN COMMUNITY: NEWTON STREET [] EDO STREET [] JP STREET [] POS JUNCTION [] BOUNDARY JUNCTION [] WINNERS JUNCTION [] OTHER: _____

Section 1: To investigate the factors influencing students' choice of attire, particularly regarding styles considered indecent:

1. How much does the desire to follow current fashion trends influence your choice of attire? Very much [] Much [] Some [] Not at all []
2. To what extent do social media platforms (e.g., Instagram, TikTok) influence your clothing choices? A great extent [] Some extent [] A little extent [] Not at all []
3. Do your friends' dressing styles influence your own clothing choices? Yes [] No []
4. How much does the cost of clothing affect your decision to dress in a style that might be considered indecent? A great deal [] Some [] A little [] Not at all []

Section 2: To examine students' perceptions of societal reactions to their dressing choices:

5. How aware are you of the community's expectations regarding appropriate dressing styles? Very aware [] Aware [] Somewhat aware [] Not at all aware []
6. To what extent do you believe society judges students based on their dressing style? A great extent [] Some extent [] A little extent [] Not at all []
7. Does societal reaction influence your decision to dress in a particular way? Yes [] No []
8. How much do you agree that individuals should have the freedom to dress as they choose, regardless of societal expectations? Strongly agree [] Agree [] Disagree [] Strongly disagree []

Section 3: To assess the impact of indecent dressing on students' social interactions and experiences within Ekosodin:

9. How much do you think a student's dressing style affects their interactions with other students in Ekosodin? A lot [] Some [] A little [] Not at all [].
10. To what extent do you believe dressing in a way considered indecent affects a student's sense of belonging in the Ekosodin community? A great extent []
Some extent []
A little extent [] Not at all []
11. Have you witnessed or experienced negative social interactions due to someone's dressing style in Ekosodin? Yes [] No [].
12. How much do you agree that students who dress indecently are more likely to face harassment or bullying? Strongly agree [] Agree [] Disagree [] Strongly disagree []

Section 4: To explore the possible effects of indecent dressing on academic and personal identity among students:

13. How much do you think a student's dressing style affects their academic performance? A lot [] Some [] A little [] Not at all []
14. To what extent do you believe dressing in a way considered indecent affects a student's personal identity? A great extent [] Some extent [] A little extent []
Not at all []
15. Is expressing oneself through fashion an important part of personal identity for students? Yes [] No []
16. How much do you think that pressure to dress a certain way affects students' confidence and self-esteem? A lot [] Some [] A little [] Not at all [].