



Role of Fashion in Mental Well-Being

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ABSTRACT

Fashion clothing has become a part of people's identity. It has been a means of showcasing individuality, self-expression, and style. People are aware of the significant influence social media has on their life. People's mental attitudes, political or religious culture, and gender roles are expressed in the present. The fashion industry has also made people more vulnerable to unrealistic beauty standards. It can also have some positive and negative impacts on people's mental health due to factors including body image, peer pressure, and others. The majority of customers (specially teenagers) are more prone to use shopping as a coping mechanism for anxiety, depression, worry, and stress since fashion and bargain stores frequently cause customers' thoughts to become dopamine-stimulated. Brand elitism feeling and the pressures associated with it shall be eliminated by educating people about the risks and deception of consumerism.

KEY WORDS

Fashion, Cloth, Brand, Mental Well-Being.

INTRODUCTION

Getting dressed is a daily routine that people do without even thinking twice. Fashion clothing has become a part of people's identity. People get dressed with the intention of feeling good in their own skin, to embrace their bodies, and communicate who they are through the style of clothes they choose. People can express themselves by wearing clothes that make them feel confident and sexy, but also by wearing clothes make them feel comfortable and confident as well. People can also use this opportunity to show off their personality and interests through fashion accessories such as bags or shoes.

It is important to feel comfortable in own skin because people are all unique individuals who need to express themselves in their own way and there's no better way of doing so than through clothes.

The way people dress affects the way they feel about themselves and how others perceive them. For example, when someone wears formal attire, they usually feel more confident and professional. On the other hand, if people wear casual clothing, they may feel relaxed and laid-back.

The clothes people wear also have an effect on their mood and behavior. For example, if they are wearing something that feels uncomfortable or tight it can make them feel nervous or anxious whereas wearing loose fitting clothing can help reduce stress levels.

Dressing well helps people feel better, which improves their confidence levels which in turn leads to better performance at work or school by boosting self-esteem levels as well as self-image which is essential for success in any area of life including relationships with other's (friends/family) as well as romantic partners.

Today's society has made fashion an essential component of daily life. Fashion is a form of expressions; a person's statement of mind and body. It influences people's mind and also get influenced by the minds of other people. People are still concerned about their outfits and their outfits are determined by the occasion, as each occasion has a distinct fashion style, such as office wear, party wear, casual wear, festival wear, marriage wear, and so on. Those people, who follow fashion, are noticed by other people. Fashion helps people to reform, perform and transform all around them.

Fashion is served as a visible representation of a person's attitude, values, and interests. The nonverbal language is expressed through fashion and clothing. Fashion clothing reflects people's emotions and personalities. The first impression that two people make on each other when they meet is based on their personalities, and a big part of personalities is their expression and their clothing. What a person wear reveals a lot about who they are and their mental and physical health, and the psychology of fashion depicts human behavior and how they feel about their clothes. Fashion also reflects people's personalities and identities. Depending on the situation, a person may feel more or less confident in oneself. These emotions have an impact on people's self-esteem, mental health, and overall well-being. One's mental health can be improved by their appearance and choice of colors.

Fashion has long been a means of showcasing individuality, self-expression, and style. People's mental health directly affects how they dress because their personal style choices are a significant reflection of who they are as a person, even if they are unaware of this at first. It can be very difficult at first to dress appropriately if a person has mental health issues. Fashion can, however, boost people's confidence and self-esteem once they find their personal style.

There is more to fashion's role in promoting mental health than first appears. It can foster interpersonal relationships and improve self-esteem. People can be motivated to take care of their body by having a "positive relationship" with their wardrobe.

Because people's personal style, or what referred to as their "fashion persona," is a reflection of how they see themselves, there is a connection between mental wellbeing and appropriately dressing. People's personality is represented in different ways by different styles. For instance, if a person dresses in bold, vibrant colors, people will probably think he/she is outgoing and confident. A person will be seen as more reserved and serene if he/she wears neutral colors. All of these, of course, have the potential to affect how society views a person. The clothes one wears can have a variety of psychological effects. Fashion significantly influences how people's mental attitudes, political or religious culture, and gender roles are expressed in the present. Others may view a person more favorably if he/she dresses according to the most recent trends because he/she is following by the social norms of the day.

Everyone is aware of the significant influence social media has on their life. It's tough to picture a life

without it. The fashion industry has been a huge driver of technology in the past few years. From social media to mobile apps and even virtual reality, clothing is an important part of the digital experience. This has changed the way they shop for clothes and how they use them.

Fashion, and the desire for it, can be an important part of people's lives. People love to look good and feel good about themselves, and fashion is one way to do that. But when social media makes them feel like they have to consume more of this stuff than ever before, it can cause problems for them mentally and physically.

People have experienced that feeling when they get home from work and realize they've spent the whole day scrolling through Instagram or Twitter—they just can't stop! they may even feel fatigued because of all the scrolling, which is called "fashion fatigue". It happens when people stop being able to turn off their devices while they are still on because they feel like they will miss out on something if they don't keep checking them constantly.

Social media has also made people more vulnerable to unrealistic beauty standards. The fear of missing out (FOMO) on the latest trends triggers anxiety, lowers self-esteem and creates an unnecessary sense of demand for things that aren't really necessary in real life.

Good health is essential for a society's growth, development and productivity and also for an individual's happy life. Health is a state of physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, (WHO, 2018).

The state of a person's internal health is a major factor in determining how well they're generally doing. It enables someone to reach their full eventuality, deal effectively with life's difficulties, and work effectively. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), internal health is "a condition of well-being in which every individual recognizes his or her strengths, can manage with the typical stressors of life, can perform successfully and fruitfully, and can contribute to his or her community. A person's degree of internal health can be affected by a variety of social, cerebral, and natural factors.

Today, there is a growing global concern about mental health. Particularly during lockdowns, there has been a significant surge in mental health issues. People may flourish and instill confidence in one another via fashion. People eventually came to accept giving up on what they actually want to wear in favor of gathering a wardrobe that will bring them a little bit closer to the standards of beauty set by the society. It is observed that personality development based on clothing and accessories is aimed at most people especially teenagers as they are vulnerable to external influences. The combination of peer pressure and natural self-awareness means fashion has a detrimental effect on people's mental health. Factors such as bad taste and the inability to afford the latest trends make people feel inadequate. They frequently utilize fashion as a way to stay out of people's good graces and preserve their friendships. They may have feelings of alienation if they are unable to emulate their friends and role models, which invariably results in low self-esteem. Choosing fashion is part of growth and self-expression, so it needs to be used in the right way.

Some people would find it strange that the world of fashion and mental health might be combined. But let's be honest, people daily habits and the things they wear definitely have an impact on their mental health. They can achieve so much more with clothing than merely a change in appearance. To put it another way, it gives us the ability to improve every day. However, every coin has two sides and has its advantages and disadvantages just like anything else in life. Fashion can also have some positive and negative impact on people's mental health due to factors including body image, peer pressure, and others.

The following are some of the major positive impacts of fashion on mental well-being:

1. **Enables One to Express One's Identity:** People with mental health disorders frequently are unable to be themselves in social situations or at work. The individual reduces their own self-esteem by trying

to mimic the beliefs or behaviors of another person. Serious problems like sadness, tension, or anxiety may result from this action.

On the other side, fashion clothing completely according to one's own preferences aids in discovering one's genuine identity. Moreover, it aids with decision-making stability. Person's mood is lifted and their confidence in themselves and their choices are increased by appropriate clothes. The new fashion enhances a normal person's looks.

2. **Boosts Self-Assurance:** The only reason why many people like to wear formal dress for interviews or meetings is that it inspires a sense of authority and confidence. Individual's feel better about themselves and is more mentally healthy at work when dressed appropriately.

Another option is to dress in what people most enjoy wearing and give themselves a chance to increase their body confidence. Following trends constantly can even stimulate the brain, which is important for overall mental health.

3. **Affects Mood:** As was previously noted, many people frequently choose clothing that conveys their attitude. Yet if persons choose to dress better or in accordance with how they want to feel, they can even increase their emotional well-being.

Also, it has been observed that particular hues can elevate mood and give one a sense of power. Also, this decision is entirely based on personal tastes. Yet, if the right one is chosen, one may make the best start to the day, regardless of how she/he is feeling at the moment.

4. **Enhanced Social Life:** People stopping socializing and isolating themselves is one of the typical indicators of mental illnesses. Speaking with unfamiliar groups or people still feels traumatic. Nonetheless, wearing the right clothes can make meeting new people easier. This is due to the fact that dressing adequately gives a person self-assurance.

Also, if a person keeps up with current fashion trends, he can become a great discussion starter. He/she can connect and network more effectively if the conversation turns to what one will be wearing.

5. **Enhances Creativity:** In many ways, clothing resembles art. Through their choice of attire, people can readily display their artistic talents. Combining various patterns and colors enables one to discover more about oneself. And as a person gains greater insight into his/her decision, it becomes simpler for him/her to recognize the triggers that affect his/her mental health.

For example, jeans can be worn by many people with various patterns and colors. Hence, one might become an entirely different version of oneself through creativity. As a result, this improves mood and aids in maintaining mental health.

The following are some of the major negative impacts of fashion on mental well-being:

1. **Low Self-Esteem:** When a person begins to believe that those around him/her are superior to him/her on all counts—better, wiser, and more successful—low self-esteem develops. Today, the majority of individuals, particularly teens, have low self-esteem. And the fashion industry has played a part in this. Everyone aspires to regularly change their clothing with the newest trends available. Some people can wear the fashionable clothing and shoes they want, but others find it difficult to express their ideas and opinions for fear of being mocked or disregarded by others. When this occurs, they become irate, resentful, and jealous of other individuals who can afford this way of life. And ultimately, this results in a lack of confidence and self-worth.
2. **One-on-One:** What is in style today in terms of clothing, footwear, automobiles, and homes won't be in style tomorrow. Today's fashion market is more competitive than ever. Every manufacturer puts forth a tremendous amount of effort to outperform the competitors. They are not the only ones affected by this; consumers are as well. Most people who invest a large portion of their time in expensive and

time-consuming fashion frequently fail financially. They will never be able to outdo fashion in any manner. As with the weather, fashion will always change.

People frequently compete with their friends and family since following the latest trends is a highly unhealthy way to live. And competition causes dissatisfaction, rage, jealousy, fear, doubt, and envy. Not to mention the tension and annoyance too.

Nobody truly cares about a person's residence, vehicle, or clothing choices. They are primarily concerned with their own interests and future. They are typically preoccupied with themselves. It will be unfortunate to realize that a person wasted his/her valuable time, money, and effort attempting to win over people who don't give a damn and won't give him/her a second thought when they sleep.

3. **Addiction and Guilt:** Every day that goes by, the fashion industry grows more and more dynamic, diverse, and trendy. There are many incredible brands out there that make it simple for most people to prioritize fashion without having to spend their hard-earned money. Anything people see on the shelf, even those with steep discounts, could, however, cost them psychologically. The majority of customers (specially teenagers) are more prone to use shopping as a coping mechanism for anxiety, depression, worry, and stress since fashion and bargain stores frequently cause customers' thoughts to become dopamine-stimulated.

And ultimately, this develops into a vicious cycle of addiction. In the end, this causes remorse about excessive expenditure and financial difficulties.

4. **Workplace Stress:** People may have to work more to stay up with trends if they spend more money on clothing and it's difficult to work hard all the time. Therefore, moderation should be used.

Everybody needs enough downtime to unwind, explore, and experience the wonders of the world. When a person occasionally unwinds and takes it easy, his/her body and mind will operate at peak. He/she wastes his/her hard-earned money buying things he/she does not need if he/she spend the majority of his/her free time browsing shops and businesses.

5. **Negative Body Image:** Most fashion industry models always have fantastic looks. They have a flawless body and are usually grinning. The majority of people have unreasonable expectations after seeing the trim, toned models walking the runway.

Young people often experience feelings of inadequacy and pressure to live up to unreasonable standards when they compare their bodies and lifestyles to the top models in the fashion business. Most young women have given in to eating problems and pill-popping because they prioritize attractiveness over all else, which has long-term negative effects on their physical and mental health.

There are always costs associated with issues of body image. A person does not have to take short cuts, in order to reach his/her aesthetic objectives. Just eating healthy and staying active will do. One only needs to go for a stroll, work out, meditate, journal and smile.

6. **Mental Health:** The more into fashion somebody engages, the more difficult it will be to quit. Hence every action must be taken moderately. When an obsession develops, a person may suffer from it. The fashion sector has a high risk of suicide. Furthermore, it has an impact on customers.

When one starts competing with others and comparing oneself to them, he/she will find that most of his/her valuable time is spent purchasing items to impress people he/she does not like. Over time, a person begins to experience regret, rage, jealousy, and self-doubt. And as a result, feelings like worry, fear, anxiety, and depression, to mention a few may develop. These are some of the most harmful mental diseases, particularly for children and young adults.

7. **Imitating Others:** People start imitating their role model after a period of watching television and after identifying them, as they want to feel like them. Copying has both advantages and disadvantages. It will benefit their life to imitate the great traits they see online, such as exercising, eating well, reading, and having a strong work ethic.

But copying the negative traits is far simpler than avoiding them. The fashion industry thrives on emulating what others do. And this may have a negative impact on a person's life.

Ways To Improve Mental Health Through Fashion

There are several methods for achieving and maintaining a better mental state. One among them is the usage of fashion to increase one's self-esteem. Experimenting with clothes to boost one's mental health is a fantastic idea. It can help him/her explore and feel comfortable in his/her own skin.

1. **Dressing up:** In order to create a sense of sturdiness and discipline, offices and schools frequently attempt to keep a uniform. This method can also help a person to boost his/her confidence and maintain a positive mindset. Changing look and clothing up on a daily basis can help a person to remain focused and disciplined. It can also help to broaden a person's creative perspective and improve his/her overall mental state.
2. **Retail Therapy:** It comes as no surprise that retail therapy is very real. From clothing to jewelry to shoes and accessories, the right purchases can boost a person's confidence. It all contributes to a person's confidence and ultimately results in improvement. However, it is also critical not to overspend on things.
3. **Getting Out of Comfort Zone:** Having a social life can help a person overcome the negative mental state caused by uncontrollable urges. People tend to compliment a person's appearance when he/she dresses well, and small gestures which can help his/her mind.
4. **Building Self-Confidence:** It can assist a person in regaining his/her self-esteem. The ultimate goal of improving one's mental health through fashion is to do oneself justice. It may be by giving himself/herself a chance to reach a pinnacle of confidence. Trying to keep up with the latest trends can be a lot of fun. The ability to conduct exploration and research to determine the style can greatly help stimulate one's brain.
5. **Color Booster:** Color psychology has long been recognized as an important psychological factor. Different colors elicit spontaneous emotional responses in others and can influence stress and mood. This, in turn, may have an impact on one's mental health.
Blue, for example, has long been associated with harmony, spirituality, positivity, peace, tranquility, and calmness.
6. **Fabric Matters:** Aside from color, fabric plays an important role in mood enhancement. When it comes to a person's comfort, fabric is extremely important. Natural fiber clothing, such as linen and cotton, is generally durable, breathable, and flexible. All of these elements contribute to increased comfort.

CONCLUSION

Each coin has two sides. The positive effects of fashion on one's self-image include the sense of belonging, high confidence, and high self-esteem. A person can become more attentive by paying attention to one's hair, makeup, jewelry, and shoes. The benefits of dressing to flatter one's individual shape include greater self-esteem and increased creativity. Fashion choices reveal morals and progress. Prominent brands can be used as a status symbol and a sign of affluence, making people who don't wear them the target of cruel mockery or bullying. People would be better off working on personal growth and purchasing clothing that is authentic to themselves regardless of how trendy the brand is than trying to find joy in their clothes purchases. There are actions that may be made to move in the right direction, but there are no simple solutions to problems like mental health. Brand elitism feeling and the pressures associated with it could be eliminated by educating people about the risks and deception of consumerism. By allowing people to be themselves without anxieties, the universal acceptance of all body types and a reexamination of social beliefs surrounding body image will help lessen the burden on mental health. "Power clothes" can boost one's self-assurance and assertiveness,

enhancing motivation, productivity, and negotiating abilities. Authenticity appeals to people. Resonance is the mark of authenticity. Looking and feeling nice is important for one's welfare and is not simply a catchphrase for advertisements.

A positive attitude makes a bigger impression on people than looks. Hence a person shall keep the relationship going and be content.

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