



A pilot study to measure the effects masculine clothing and a masculine work role influence the self concept of adolescent girls
by Andreen Lee Hubble

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Abstract:

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The experimental group measured no difference among sub-scale scores, noted largest external self correlations with the physical self, and internal identity was derived from behavior. The control group measured significance among the self-satisfaction sub-scale, noted their largest external self correlations to the social self and internal identity was derived from self acceptance. Both groups related self esteem to the physical, moral-ethical, and social selves.

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Date May 29, 1973

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WORK ROLE INFLUENCE THE SELF CONCEPT OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS

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ANDREEN LEE HUBBLE

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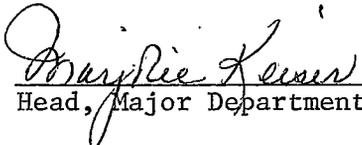
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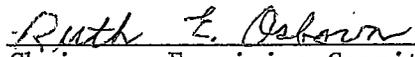
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ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a period when the self image is established and concept of self formed. Clothing and role serve as important symbols of identity for adolescent girls. The purpose of this pilot study was to measure the effects masculine clothing and a masculine work role influence the self concept of adolescent girls. Thereby, providing insight necessary to structuring a long-term research study.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Importance of the Study

Modern society is beset by major social change. Today it is vital to look at man as a social product within the milieu of new cultural beliefs (McGehee, 1956: 27-29). Trends toward equality of the sexes, for example, have altered the traditional role patterns. Within the contest of this social change, the self has been interpreted as a nucleus around which man organizes his many wants and needs. The self concept, then, is regarded as the controlling force in perceiving, guiding, and directing human behavior (James, 1892: 175-177).

Clothing represents an intimate part of man for it serves in the presentation of self to others. Flügel has said, "to understand the dynamic relationships involved in a man's attitude to the garments he wears would carry us far toward a knowledge of his whole psychological development" (1929: 205). When related to the self, clothing functions as a part of one's perceptual field and contributes to man's general state of well being, or self concept (Jersild, 1952:72-73).

Roles provide structure by dictating an expected behavior to any individual occupying a specific position associated with the role (Newcomb, 1950: 180). Ryan explains (1966: 5):

The specific role an individual plays at a given moment depends upon the situation and upon his concept of himself . . . The self as object of awareness is the unit which interacts with the role to lead to specific human behavior.

Interaction between role and self becomes a presentation of man's actions and attitudes from within a personal point of view, or concept of self.

The relationship between clothing and role are integrated to the extent that certain roles require specific dress. A change in roles often times accompanies a change in dress or a change in dress often times accompanies a change in role (Wass, 1962: 50, 68). Clothing for the adolescent assumes significance in performing social roles and is important to one's self concept (Hurlock, 1955: 479-480). The self interacts with the role and clothing influences one's concept of self by making the role easier to play (Ryan, 1966: 5).

During specific times in the life cycle, the individual may be less certain of his identity, or concept of self. Adolescence is such a period. The self image becomes crucial and self identity needs to be established (Erikson, 1968: 128-129). Anspach proposes that (1967: 31):

Unlike men, identity for women is not so easy. An occupational role outside the home may conflict with the feminine role women have been trained to assume.

The importance clothing and appearance assumes in the development of an adolescent girl's self image has been demonstrated in a number of previous studies (Silverman, 1945; Cannon, et. al., 1952;

Ryan, 1953; Wax, 1957; Vener, 1957; Hurlock, 1959; Alexander, 1961; Bjorngaard, 1962; Hambleton, et. al., 1972). If in fact, clothing and role serve as significant symbols for establishing identity, adolescence may be a time when a girl's self concept is influenced the most by the type of clothing and role assumed.

Need for the Study

The concept of self is thought to be the controlling force in behavior. Clothing and role performance are fundamental in developing this self image. Adolescent girls tend to be more affected by their clothing in developing an identity of self.

In recent years, the social-psychological aspects of clothing behavior have received increasing attention. America in the late 1960's has been faced with abolishment of high school dress codes, focus upon functionality in dress, and feminine mode of dress.

Recent studies have shown the self concept in relation to clothing and role performance. Ryan points out (Ryan, 1966: 85):

. . . clothing plays a relatively important part in establishing the self-concept and conversely the self-concept is important in determining our choice of clothing. There is very little research evidence, however, which indicates the relative importance of clothing or gives us situations under which clothing affects the self-concept or how it affects it.

Although references have been made to the use of clothing and role as a means of perceiving and communicating the self, there has been little

research concerning the affects clothing and role have on the developing adolescent self concept. Insight and understanding into the concept of self will contribute to the knowledge of adolescent girls behavior.

Purpose of the Study

During adolescence when the self concept becomes so crucial, it is helpful to note if clothing and role identification serve as meaningful symbols in establishing identities. Before any comprehensive empirical study could be conducted, a pilot study is looked upon as a means of providing investigative insight and understanding to form the structure in developing a research design.

The purpose of this study was to conduct a pilot study evaluating the research techniques and design involved in measuring the effects masculine clothing and a masculine work role influence the self concept of adolescent girls. The objectives in this study are to determine changes adolescent girls experience, having assumed a masculine position, and establish a foundation for constructing an effective long-term research project.

Assumptions

The study was conducted in lieu of the following assumptions:

1. Self concept is a dimension of human behavior capable of change and measurement.

2. Individuals are aware and can accurately identify as well as relate to feelings of the self.
3. Clothing for a defined role will make identification easier.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses which guided the pilot study focused upon measuring what effects masculine clothing and a masculine work role have on the self concepts of adolescent girls. There were three major areas of study: (1) examination of preliminary descriptive data, (2) examination of descriptive experimental data, and (3) changes that occur as the result of clothing and role. Null hypotheses investigated:

1. There will be no difference between the Tennessee Self Concept Scale pre-test and post-test mean differences measured for each of the nine Positive Scores (self esteem) and the self criticism subscale within both the experimental and the control group.

2. There will be no relationship between the Tennessee Self Concept Scale pre-test and post-test mean differences measured for the Total P Score (level of self esteem) and the fifteen Positive Cell Scores within both the experimental and control group.

Limitations of the Study

It is recognized that this study contains a number of variables that are deemed unavoidable and yet could be a determining factor in

the scope of conclusions drawn. The sample size remained at a constant twenty subjects per group: experimental and control. In spite of the small sample size, it was believed that information gained from the experimental group would be especially valuable and justify a need for future research.

Another limitation was imposed on the study by the relatively shortness in the period of overall time (seven and one half weeks). Permanent adjustments in the concept of self are not expected over a brief period, nevertheless, there is considerable evidence that change occurs as a result of significant experiences (Ashcraft and Fitts, 1964: 115-118). Changes occurring over a seven and one half week experience could be deemed significant in light of the stringently controlled experimental treatments.

Definition of Terms

To facilitate communication, the following definitions are made:

1. Adolescence. That period of time between age 12-21 years (Hurlock, 1955: 4).

2. Feminine clothing. A cultural symbol of adornment ascribed to the female which emphasizes a concern for professionalism and fashion. The typical pattern of dress is composed of dresses,

jumpers, skirts with blouse or sweater coordinates, simple suits and pants suits. (Figures 1 - 4).



Figure 1. Dress

