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# The Relationship Between Education About Dress Practices and Change in Perception of Self-Concept Related to Dress

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION ABOUT DRESS PRACTICES AND  
CHANGE IN PERCEPTION OF SELF-CONCEPT RELATED TO DRESS

by

Jennifer L. Nielson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Agricultural Systems Technology  
(Family and Consumer Sciences Education and Extension)

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Logan, Utah

2009

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## ABSTRACT

The Relationship Between Education about Dress Practices and Change in Perception of  
Self-Concept Related to Dress

by

Jennifer L. Nielson, Master of Science

Utah State University, 2009

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The influence of an individual's dress practices on his/her sense of self has been studied for many years. Courses such as the *Dress and Humanity* course at Utah State University have been developed to educate students on the impact of dress on society. In this study, students in the *Dress and Humanity* course were given a pre-course and post-course survey to determine if self-perceptions related to dress practices underwent a change over the duration of the semester. Significant differences were found in the categories of body image, evaluating self-esteem, and communication of self to others. A relationship was found between survey responses and gender, degree of importance of clothing purchases, and how much money participants spent in the 365 days previous to the pre-course survey.

(102 pages)

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Jennifer L. Nielson

## CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	ix
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Purpose and Objectives.....	3
Definitions.....	3
Assumptions.....	7
Limitations .....	8
Significance of the Study.....	8
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE .....	10
Theoretical Framework .....	10
Purposes in Dress Practices .....	12
Dress Practices and Self as Structure.....	14
Dress Practices and Communication of Self.....	16
Dress Practices and Self-Esteem.....	19
Dress Practices, Body Image, and Body Cathexis.....	20
Summary .....	22
III. PROCEDURES .....	23
Objectives .....	23
Instrumentation .....	24
Selection of Population .....	25
Description of Treatment .....	25
Collection of Data .....	26
Data Analysis .....	27

IV. RESULTS AND FINDINGS .....	28
Objective One .....	29
Objective Two.....	34
Objective Three.....	62
V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	70
Summary .....	70
Purpose and Objectives.....	71
Conclusions and Discussion .....	71
Recommendations and Implications .....	72
Recommendations for Further Study .....	73
Final Statement .....	74
REFERENCES .....	75
APPENDICES .....	80
Appendix A: Change in Proximity of Clothing to Self .....	81
Appendix B: Letter of Information .....	86
Appendix C: Recruiting Script .....	89
Appendix D: PCS Use Permissions .....	91

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1 Personal Characteristics of Students Enrolled in Dress and Humanity Course .....	30
2 Educational Characteristics of Students Enrolled in Dress and Humanity Course ....	31
3 Degree of Religious Influence on Dress Practices of Students Enrolled in Dress and Humanity Course .....	32
4 Spending Behaviors of Students Enrolled in Dress and Humanity Course .....	34
5 Amounts Spent by Students Enrolled in Dress and Humanity Course .....	35
6 Frequency of Student Responses for Survey Questions Within Dimension One: Self as a Structure .....	37
7 Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Test Scores for Dimension One: Self as a Structure .....	39
8 Frequency of Student Responses for Survey Questions Within Dimension Two: Self as a Process – Communication of Self to Others .....	41
9 Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Test Scores for Dimension Two: Self as a Process – Communication of Self to Others .....	44
10 Frequency of Student Responses for Survey Questions Within Dimension Three: Self as a Process – Response to Judgment of Others .....	46
11 Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Test Scores for Dimension Three: Self as a Process – Response to Judgment of Others .....	49
12 Frequency of Student Responses for Survey Questions Within Dimension Four: Self-Esteem – Evaluative Process Dominant .....	50
13 Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Test Scores for Dimension Four: Self-Esteem – Evaluative Process Dominant .....	53
14 Frequency of Student Responses for Survey Questions Within Dimension Five: Self-Esteem – Affective Process Dominant .....	55
15 Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Test Scores for Dimension Five: Self- Esteem – Affective Process Dominant .....	58

16	Frequency of Student Responses for Survey Questions Within Dimension Six: Body Image and Body Cathexis.....	60
17	Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Test Scores for Dimension Six: Body Image and Body Cathexis.....	63
18	Stepwise Regression Results: Gender by Dimensions .....	64
19	Stepwise Regression Results: Purchase Importance by Dimensions .....	67
20	Stepwise Regression Results: How Often Purchases Were Made 365 days Prior to Pre-course Survey by Dimension .....	68

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs.....	11

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Prada was quoted as saying, “Even when people don’t have anything, they have their bodies and their clothes. They have their identities that is assembled during the profound daily ritual of clothing oneself” (Trebay, 2007, p. 1). An individual’s dress practices are an integral part of who he or she is. Each individual “is a biological, aesthetically sensitive, and social being; the visible self – body and dress – reflects this fact” (Sproles & Burns, 1994, p. 208).

Dress practices throughout history were developed for three primary reasons: protection, modesty, and decoration or ornamentation (Flugel, 1930; Horn & Gurel, 1981; Latkze & Hostetter, 1968; Ross, 2008). Although some accept the theory that the primary function of dress practice is protection, it can also be argued against. For instance, the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego wear little if no clothing, showing that “clothing is not essential even in a damp and chilly climate” (Flugel, p. 17). Modesty as the main function of an individuals’ or culture’s dress practice can also be argued both directions. Did Adam and Eve donning fig leaves cover their nakedness or draw attention to their sexual organs (Horn & Gurel)? Dress practices for decoration or ornamentation seem to be overwhelmingly agreed upon as the primary motive for the adoption of dress (Eicher, Evenson, & Lutz, 2008; Flugel; Horn & Gurel). Those who subscribe to this theory believe that all individuals have an instinctual need to express themselves creatively. Can education focusing on dress practices and ensembles throughout humanity change an individual’s perception of his/herself-concept related to dress? In

looking at the research available related to self-concept and dress practices, Kwon (1992) suggested there were many other subjects that needed to be studied relating to body consciousness and dress practices. Soper (2001) stated “when we consider the role of clothing and bodily adornment in the lives of human beings, and how complex our attitudes to dress are, it seems remarkable how little philosophers have had to say about the ‘clothed body’” (p. 13).

### Statement of the Problem

Research conducted (Atkins, 1976; Dubler & Gurel, 1984; Ryan, 1953) suggests a relationship between an individual’s self-concept and what he/she wears. Dress practices are a personal choice. The clothing that individuals choose to wear or not wear can be a reflection of how they feel about themselves, or how they want others to feel about them (Kwon, 1991). In looking at Maslow’s hierarchical order of needs, clothing ranks in a basic physical need category along with food and shelter (Maslow, 1943). However, there is “evidence that higher-order needs, such as belonging and self-esteem can be satisfied through clothing” (Lee, 1997, p. 3). Although dress practices can serve multiple purposes for individuals, some motives or needs may be easier to admit or acknowledge than others (Kaiser, 1997). Dress practices are a “product of a complex set of motives” (Horn & Gurel, 1981, p. 35), which arise from a variety of physical, psychological, and social conditions. The proposed research study will examine whether or not college students’ self-concept changes after completing the *Dress and Humanity* course at Utah State University.

## Purpose and Objectives

“Appearance is one of the most prominent ways to display and reinforce a self-concept” (Sproles & Burns, 1994, p. 209). Clothing is one of the first things noticed by others. The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between education about dress practices and ensembles throughout humanity and students’ change in perception of their self-concept related to dress practices. Specific objectives established to achieve this purpose were to:

1. Describe the demographic characteristics of students enrolled in the *Dress and Humanity* course;
2. Determine if the Proximity of Clothing to Self scales (PCS) for each dimension significantly increase after students complete a *Dress and Humanity* course at Utah State University; and
3. Determine the relationship between the demographic characteristics of the students enrolled in the *Dress and Humanity* course and the PCS scale dimensions.

## Definitions

Before presenting the concepts for this study, it is necessary for the reader to understand the terminology and definitions associated with the concepts tested in the study.

Body modifications: The transformation of hair, skin, nails, muscular/skeletal systems, eyes, teeth or breath, either temporary or permanent (Eicher et al., 2008).

Body Supplements: Body supplements, either temporary or permanent, can include dress practices that enclose the body: wrapped around the body, suspended over the body, pre-shaped to the body, or a combination of all previously listed types. Includes attachments to the body: inserted, clipped on, pressure-fastened, or adhered. Also includes any handheld items either by self or by others (Eicher et al., 2008; Roach & Musa, 1980; Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1973, 1992).

Cathexis: The concentration of emotional energy or the libido on a single object or idea (Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary, 2009). It is an investment of mental or emotional energy. It is a level of satisfaction with an individuals' self or body.

Dress and Humanity depth humanities course at Utah State University: Explores the relationship of *Dress and Humanity*. Includes collaborative group assignments, discussions of history related to dress, cultures as related to dress, and the influence dress has in today's society. This course fulfills a depth humanities and creative arts requirement associated with general education requirements of the university.

Dress Practices: "An assemblage of modification and supplements displayed by a person" (Eicher et al., 2008, p. 28). It involves all of the senses: sight, sound, taste, physical texture and odor. This includes anything done to or put on the body to get dressed, including clothing, accessories, body modifications, body supplements, and grooming practices (Lee, 1997).

Self-Concept: The organized knowledge of the actual self derived from the sum of all experiences with and interpretations of his or her environment. It includes a collection of beliefs about the kind of person he or she is (Hamacheck, 1987). Elements of self-

concept can also include an individual's perceptions of his or her own characteristics, abilities, values, ideas, beliefs, and perception of themselves in relation to others and the environment (Burns, 1997).

Self-Esteem: A positive or negative feeling about the global self “constructed out of our evaluations of the things we do, of who we are, and of what we achieve in terms of our private assessments of the goodness, worthiness, and /or significance of those things” (Hamacheck, 1987, p. 14).

Proximity of Clothing to Self Scale PCS): The psychological closeness of clothing to the self (Sontag, 1978; Sontag & Schlater, 1982). This scale consists of multiple dimensions including clothing in relation to: (1) self as a structure; (2) self as a process – communication of self to others; (3) self as a process – response to judgment of others; (4) self-esteem – evaluative process, dominant; (5) self-esteem – affective process, dominant; and (6) body image and body cathexis. The dimensions listed above apply to this study and were redefined by Lee (1997) as follows:

*Dimension One: Dress Practices in Relation to Self as Structure*: Clothing is one aspect of the self as an organized picture existing in awareness. Clothing, as a component of the material self, contributes to sense of unity with the person and constitutes part of the person's identity. Clothing reflects or expresses one's identity, personality, traits, self-regard, values, attitudes, beliefs, or moods. The person strives for consistency between clothing and self-image. Pictures of the self from the past may exist in memory. (p. 14)

*Dimension Two: Dress Practices in Relation to Self as a Process –*

*Communication of Self to Others:* Clothing communicates information about one's identity (personal, interpersonal, or group), values, attitudes, moods, and self-regard to others and facilitates the enactment of social roles. The person consciously selects or chooses clothing to convey messages about the self to others or to experiment with different identities. (p. 14)

*Dimension Three: Dress Practices in Relation to Self as a Process – Response to*

*Judgments of Others:* The person imagines how the self appears to others through clothing. The person may respond affectively, cognitively, or behaviorally to an actual or imagined judgment of the self by others. Subsequently, the judgment may affect self-validation. (p. 14)

*Dimension Four: Dress Practices in Relation to Self-Esteem – Evaluative*

*Process, Dominant:* Clothing affects one's evaluation of self-worth, self-regard, or self-respect, generally expressed in terms of cognitive evaluation or affective evaluation. Specifically, clothing can positively or negatively affect one's sense of personal and interpersonal competence including personal efficacy, mastery of the environment, usefulness, social adequacy, and desirability. Through one's appearance in or use of clothing, the person engages in cognitive or affective evaluation of self, implicitly or explicitly in comparison with a personal or social standard. A person's evaluation of his or her clothing can affect his or her global self-esteem, or more specifically, confidence in his or her abilities, qualities,

personal features, or performances. Conversely, a person's self-evaluation or self-judgment can affect his or her attitudes or behaviors toward clothing. (pp. 14-15)

*Dimension Five: Dress Practices in Relation to Self-Esteem – Affective Process,*

*Dominant:* Clothing evokes a generalized emotional response or affect directed toward the self. This may take the form of positive or negative affect related to self-love, self-acceptance, or self-cathexis (i.e., satisfaction) and may have behavioral consequences. While the affective process results from implicit evaluation with respect to some ideal or standard for the material self, the emphasis is on the general or global feeling expressive of self-esteem. One's self-esteem also may affect one's feelings about or behavior toward clothing. Finally, the care that one gives to clothing reflects or affects care for or pride in oneself. This dimension does not refer to mood or to all emotions, but only to those emotions that are directed toward the self. (p. 15)

*Dimension Six: Dress Practices in Relation to Body Image and Body Cathexis:*

Clothing creates, modifies, or affects body image or body cathexis and may affect self-feelings. In turn, body image or body cathexis may affect clothing behavior. Body image or body cathexis may affect satisfaction with clothing and self-esteem. Clothing may enhance or reflect body satisfaction or compensate for body dissatisfaction. (p. 16)

### Assumptions

The assumptions of this study included the following:

1. All students enrolled in the course would complete both pre and post surveys.
2. The responses of the students were accurate and the survey instrument was a valid and reliable tool for determining the proximity of clothing to self of the students.
3. The students completing the survey understood the vocabulary associated with self-esteem, identity, clothing, and emotional responses.
4. The respondents answered honestly and thoughtfully when responding to the items on the questionnaire.

### Limitations

This research was conducted with the following limitations:

1. The surveys were distributed only to students enrolled in the *Dress and Humanity* depth humanities and arts course at Utah State University which limited the sample size.
2. It was possible that students forgot their anonymous code from pre to post surveys which rendered several surveys unusable.
3. The use of a self-response questionnaire limited the type of data collected and prohibited an in-depth understanding of the respondent' opinions and feelings.

### Significance of the Study

The study of dress practices and their impact on society is a “scholarly pursuit” (Eicher et al., 2008, p. 1). Dress practices communicate information about the individual and also can influence behaviors (Kwon, 1987). In order to better understand the communication being presented, education must be established. The call to family and

consumer sciences researchers everywhere is to better understand the study of dress practices involving “the analysis of artifacts themselves, their visual representations, and written documents of different types” (Eicher et al., p. 1). The research provided by this study will contribute to the research base by providing data to better understand how dress practices are influencing individuals and driving their needs. It will survey previously unexplored populations that have used the same PCS scale in previous studies.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the available literature focusing on dress practices and perceived self-concept. Based on the review of literature, Chapter II has been divided into the following sections: (a) theoretical framework; (b) purposes in dress practices; (c) dress practices and self as a structure; (d) dress practices and communication of self; (e) dress practices and self-esteem; (f) dress practices, body image, and body cathexis; and (g) summary. Hand searches of the *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* as well as the *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal* were performed. Information was also obtained from the Utah State University Library online databases using Google Scholar, ERIC, EBSCO HOST's Education collection, and the Digital Dissertation's collection. Searches were conducted using the following words or combination of words: self-perception, identity, clothing, self-concept, dress, education, and history.

#### Theoretical Framework

In studying the change in proximity of clothing to self, the theory of human motivation as proposed by Maslow (1943) was utilized as the theoretical framework. In this theoretical model, Maslow suggested "man is a perpetually wanting animal" (p. 370). Human motivation theory is based on five basic human needs: physiological, safety, belonging or love, self-esteem, and self-actualization. These needs build on each other with the physical motivations needing to be fulfilled before the individual can begin

meeting safety-related needs, etc. Within the interpretation of this research, the theory was applied to consider how students enrolled in the *Dress and Humanity* course used their dress practices to fulfill their motivational needs in all of the dimensions tested. Are their dress practices simply a result of a physical need that provides protection or does it move beyond a physical need into feelings of safety and protection to their psychological self? Do the students' dress practices affect their feelings of belonging (how they communicate to others or how they respond to judgment of others) and figure into their developing self-esteem? Dress practices affect the self as a structure and body cathexis, which in turn may provide self-fulfillment and self-actualization. Based on this theory, a theoretical model was developed as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Sontag (1978) suggested that clothing has a relationship with quality of life. The difficulty lies in having a quantitative method for measuring the relationship. A

systematic random sampling procedure from 1970 census tracts was employed. The sample was clustered by age, income, education, and employment. The study used a seven point Likert-type scale to rate respondent's feelings about their clothing and how it related to their sense of self. Following the general question of feelings about clothing, subjects were asked to write a response to the open-ended question: "What are some of the most important reasons why you feel as you do about your clothing" (Sontag & Schlater, 1982, p. 3). The development of the Proximity of Clothing to Self was developed from these responses. Original results obtained from the initial scale suggest that people differ in the extent to which they perceive clothing as the second skin and the visible self. Sontag and Schlater (1982) suggested that "proximity of clothing to self may be a key concept in building a general theory of clothing and self" (p. 7). Proximity of clothing to self was broken down into six dimensions: (1) self as a structure; (2) self as a process in relation to communication with others; (3) self as a process in response to judgments of others; (4) clothing in relation to self-esteem in an evaluative process; (5) clothing in relation to self-esteem in an affective process; and (6) clothing in relation to body image.

### Purposes in Dress Practices

Crane (2000) stated that clothing "performs a major role in the social construction of identity" (p. 1). Dress practices have been an indication of emotion, social status, boundaries, culture, and gender throughout the years and across cultures. They were the principal means for identifying oneself in public space. Clothing choices can lead to

specific behaviors by individuals and allow for the capacity to influence self-expression and interaction with others (Eicher et al., 2008). Clothing became a way to showcase the wealth of the population and display their status. When immigrants arrived in the United States, they would generally divest themselves of their clothing in order to shed their old lives and start a new one. Beginning in the twenty-first century, an individual's clothing communicated wealth, but also was used to influence, to gain new employment, and create changes within a changing economy (Crane). With the availability of ready-to-wear clothes, those with limited financial resources could find and/or create personal styles that showcase their identity or self-concept. Dress practices no longer simply represent an economic status. Crane stated,

Style, enjoyment, excitement, escape from boredom at work or at play, being attractive to self and others, these become central life-concerns, and affect patterns of consumption in post-modernity, rather than copying the ways of living and consumption patterns of 'superior' social status groups. (p. 81)

Dress practices are tied intimately to our "conceptions of dignity, personhood, and bodily integrity" (Soper, 2001, p. 18). They serve to provide modesty to individuals according the culture they live in. Clothes can be a protection against the environment. They can also serve as a protection against "the general unfriendliness of the world as a whole" (Flugel, 1930, p. 77). Dress practices can shape an individual's self-concept and identity, influence behavior, influence perceptions about one's characteristics, abilities, values, ideas, beliefs, and perception of oneself in relation to others and the environment (Burns, 1997).

### Dress Practices and Self as a Structure

“Clothing makes the very nature of the self” (Hannover & Kühnen, 2002, p. 2522). Dress or dress practices can serve as a medium to recognize the personality of the wearer either to oneself or to others (Matthews, 1963). In a study of dress and self-perception descriptors, Hannover and Kühnen focused on the differences in self-perception based on formal and casual dress. Hannover and Kühnen expected participants to describe themselves and their identities as they related to their clothing. They also expected the participants to respond faster to the self-descriptors that were consistent with their style of clothing than to the self-descriptors that were inconsistent with their present dress. They randomly assigned formal and casual categories. One group of participants was to dress in formal dress. The females were instructed to wear a blouse, blazer, skirt, and high-heeled shoes and the males a shirt, tie, jacket, pressed trousers, and polished shoes, while the other group of participants were to dress casually. Both males and females were to wear jeans, a sweatshirt, and sneakers. Participants were shown a series of trait adjectives on a computer screen, one at a time. Their task was to judge the applicability of each item to himself or herself by choosing “me” or “not-me” as quickly as possible. The participants were under the impression that their style of dress was for another study on police line-ups and the adjectives were a “pretest of some trait adjectives for another student’s diploma theses” (p. 2517), and therefore unrelated to their reason for dress.

Hannover and Kühnen (2002) found that the formally dressed participants responded more to the formal adjectives and the reverse was true for the casually dressed

participants. The main effect of the adjective list was found to be statistically significant. They did not predict any effects accounting for gender differences in their study. Gender was factored into the ANOVA calculations and yielded no effect. The study revealed that clothing influences judgments about the self, not only judgments about others. Since they did not introduce a behavioral measure into their study, behavioral questions are needed in future research. They also were aware of the limitations of their study. Hannover and Kühnen stated that “every person has self-knowledge confirming casual and formal traits available to him or her” (p. 2521). Even if they assumed that the clothing could affect the accessibility of the listed adjective traits, there is an alternative possibility. The clothing could have activated general stereotypical knowledge associated with casual and formal clothing, which the participants might have applied to describe themselves.

“Clothing performs a major role in the social construction of identity” (Crane, 2000, p. 1). It not only represents our gender and social class, but frequently our occupation, hobbies, religious affiliation, and regional origin. Our identity is constantly being shifted, manipulated, and reformulated by our dress practices (Flugel, 1930; Ross, 2008). Individuals can use dress for “enjoyment, excitement, escape from boredom at work or at play, being attractive to self and others” (Crane, p. 11). Identity is the distinguishing character or personality of an individual. Identity is in nature, ambivalent to our nature, our times, and our culture. Dress “comes easily to serve as a kind of visual metaphor for identity . . . and for registering the culturally anchored ambivalences that resonate within and among identities” (Davis, 1992, p. 25).

Self-concept refers to the perceptions and attitudes individuals have of themselves (Goldsmith, Flynn, & Moore, 1996). Individuals establish their self-concept through their interactions with the environment, other people, and their own thoughts and feelings. Experimentation with their appearance can assist in the search for self-image or identity (Wilson & MacGillivray, 1998).

“Self-concept is a global perception of who one is” (Kaiser, 1997, p. 147).

Although individuals’ self-perceptions may change to fit the situation they find themselves in, that is a small piece of the global picture. Dress practices can help shape the self as a structure or as a psychological construct “involving systematic mental perceptions that are integrated into some kind of order (Kaiser, p. 148). Important to the study of an individual’s dress practices is that “personality implies a ‘mask’ which is in itself, is an article of clothing” (Flugel, 1930, p. 16).

### Dress Practices and Communication of Self

Solomon and Schopler (1982) found in a study of undergraduates enrolled in introductory psychology at the University of North Carolina that on a perceptual level, apparel invokes tactile and kinesthetic cues that will differentially affect behavior, evokes responses in others, alters his/her appearance, and affects the way we are perceived as individuals by others. The students participated in the study as partial fulfillment of a course requirement. Participants were given a battery of questionnaires that addressed some of their feelings about various aspects of clothing and fashion, as well as more general perceptions regarding everyday living. Means and standard deviations for the

clothing measures were computed. Male responses showed a powerful relationship between self-consciousness and clothing variables using an inter-correlational matrix of the clothing measures with the three components of the Self-Consciousness Questionnaire. The study found that clothing variables warrant further attention by those who study self-awareness and self-presentation processes. Solomon and Schopler (1982) stated that because a large fraction of self-awareness is devoted to an evaluation of the social self, there is a need to understand the individual's tactical use of social products and symbols for self-definition. "Foremost among these is, of course, clothing" (p. 514).

In a study of 200 married men and women living in a Midwestern community, Stone (2006) found that "appearance *means* identification of one another" (p. 141). Responses made about the wearer of the clothes by others and responses made about the wearer by the wearer were considered. The most frequent response to dress was the assignment of value words to the wearer. "Identity establishes what and where the person is in social terms" (Stone, p. 142). Identity can be established when others place him/her as a social object, like a policeman in a uniform. Stone stated, "appearance provides the identities, values, moods, and attitudes of the person-in-communication, since it arouses in others the assignment of words embodying these dimensions to the one who appears" (p. 148). This is only a part of the total picture. The study showed a correlation between the view of the reviewer and the wearer.

Johnson, Schofield, and Yurchisin (2002) found that clothing helps people make first impression judgments in others. Clothing helps the wearer send cues to others about how they want to be perceived. All but one participant in the study stated that they did, in

fact, form impressions or opinions about others based on their appearance and dress, at least most of the time. The visual cues mentioned by participants used to make first impressions included: body enclosures (clothing), body modifications, and body attachments. Three additional cues emerged from the data: garment aesthetics, fashionability, and appropriateness of dress. The most mentioned non-visual cue was smell and classified as hygiene. Just over three-fourths of participants believed that their first impression would be accurate.

Almost all of the participants believed that others used their dress and appearance cues to form impressions of them. Participants' mentioned cues linked to body form or body surface most frequently instead of body enclosures, body modifications, or body attachments. Most participants "believed that others inferred information about them that was related to character traits or to attitudes and feelings" (Johnson et al., 2002, p. 134). A majority of the participants believed that others' impressions of them were accurate. One participant felt that the impressions formed about her were accurate only in certain situations.

An individual's dress practices can establish a mood for himself/herself which is capable of eliciting a response from others. The meaning of appearance, therefore, is "the establishment of identity, value, mood, and attitude for the one who appears by the coincident programs and reviews awakened by his or her appearance" (Stone, 2006, p. 142). By appearance, an individual announces their identity, shows their value, expresses their mood, or proposes their attitude. Like any language or form of communication,

there can be mistakes and failures to communicate with dress practices, willfully or otherwise (Ross, 2008).

### Dress Practices and Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is a positive or negative feeling about the global self (Hamacheck, 1987). An individual's appearance "due to one's body or clothing can trigger self awareness and can increase one's level of self-consciousness (Buss, 1980). "Even though appearance first comes across as a physical self, it has critical impact on the formation of self-concept" (Chowdhary, 2006, p. 156). Several researchers have noted that the way an individual feels about his or herself can affect the choice of clothing and that the clothes an individual decided to wear also affects his/her feelings about the self (Atkins, 1976; Horn & Gurel, 1981; Kwon, 1991; Ryan, 1953). Dress practices can be used to strengthen an individual's self-concept, especially for individuals who tend to perceive themselves negatively (Kwon, 1991). Morale and attitudes can be lifted up when an article of clothing elicits a positive reaction from others. "When a person feels positive about the clothes he or she is wearing, self-awareness may be increased and the impact of clothes on one's behavior may become more evident" (Kwon, 1994, p. 130).

In a study conducted by Kwon (1994), male and female students were enrolled in three general education courses, three economics course, or three sociology courses. Participants were given a self-administered survey that contained three components: (a) a scale that would assess the perceived effects of clothing on self-perception of emotion, sociability, and work competency when one feels positive about the clothes one is

wearing; (b) a scale that would assess the same when one feels negative; and (c) demographic information. An overall MANOVA was performed and found significant differences in all three categories. When MANOVA was run using gender as an independent variable, it was found that females agreement of the effects of positive feelings on their self-perception were higher than males, but their agreement of the effect of negative feelings were lower. These findings reinforced the idea that dress practices are a “very personal and emotional issue to an individual and a very important means to define, refine or enhance one’s self-esteem (Kwon, 1994, p. 137). Kwon (1994) recommended that future research be conducted focusing on gender differences in clothing choice and/or preference.

#### Dress Practices, Body Image, and Body Cathexis

According to Eicher et al. (2008), the human body is always a part of the total image we see, and yet we do not actually see a great percentage of the body itself. Individuals’ impressions are, instead, based on an individual’s dress practices, which can “change it, cover it, or create illusions of its real form” (p. 153). Each culture or society has an ideal image of what the male and female body should look like (Eicher et al.; Horn & Gurel, 1981; Kaiser, 1997). These ideals shift with time and differing trends. On a social level, bodies are used to identify individuals within a larger cultural or historical context. On a personal level, “people use their bodies as markers for self-assessment” (Kaiser, p. 97). An individual’s perception of his or her body image may have nothing to do with the physical body. It is simply their perception. Body cathexis is similar to body

image, but focuses on the level of satisfaction an individual has with the body instead of the perception of the image. Dress practices can enhance an individuals' body image or hide perceived flaws. According to Picken (1918), "anything that interferes with the harmonious costuming of your individual type is a mistake" (p. 102).

Dress practices become "an extension of the self, serving to reinforce body walls or transform the body image" (Kernaleguen & Compton, 1968, p. 196). Kernaleguen and Compton investigated the relationship between field dependence and body-boundary scores and peer perception of attitudes toward clothing. One result found in this study is that fashionable and individualistic clothing seems to help the individual raise the index of adjustment by redefining weak body boundaries.

Appearance-related dissatisfaction has been linked to decreased social self-esteem and increased social anxiety (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). According to Lee (1997), society receives "distorted messages about ideal slimness from the fashion and diet industry" (p. 167). In a study performed by Engeln-Maddox (2006), participants were asked to examine the rewards women associate with looking like a media ideal and whether these associations are predictive of appearance-related dissatisfaction. Results from all participants contained descriptions of thinness or body shape. The rewards variable, body dissatisfaction and internalization were all significantly and positively correlated. Appearance evaluation was significantly and negatively correlated with these variables.

## Summary

It is human nature to be social. As a population, however, we have limited points of observation (the face and hands). What we actually see and react to are the clothes of those around us (Flugel, 1930). Dress practices have been in all societies and cultures since Adam and Eve. Clothing or dress practices affect several aspects of the human experience. Specifically, an individuals' basic sense of self as a structure can be developed. Individuals can use their own dress practices to communicate with others or respond to the judgment of others based on those same practices. Self-esteem or how individuals evaluate themselves can be influenced by dress practices. Body image or satisfaction with one's body can be enhanced or made less depending on the dress practices used.

The research provided by this study will provide data to better understand how dress practices are influencing individuals and driving their needs. It will survey previously unexplored populations that have used the same PCS scale in previous studies.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between education about dress practices and ensembles throughout humanity and students' change in perception of their self concept related to dress practices. The research provided by this study will contribute to the research base by providing data to better understand how dress practices are influencing individuals and driving their needs. It will survey previously unexplored populations that have used the same PCS scale in previous studies.

#### Objectives

Specific objectives established to achieve this purpose were to:

1. Describe the demographic characteristics of students enrolled in the *Dress and Humanity* course;
2. Determine if the Proximity of Clothing to Self scales for each dimension significantly increase after students complete a *Dress and Humanity* course at Utah State University; and
3. Determine the relationship between the demographic characteristics of the students enrolled in the *Dress and Humanity* course and the PCS scale dimensions.

## Instrumentation

This study utilized descriptive survey methodology to determine the student's change in perception of their self-concept related to dress practices. Sontag and Schlater (1982) developed the instrument used in this study in order to define the concept, proximity of clothing to self, and to develop an indicator if it.

Sontag and Lee (2004) redesigned the PCS scale to verify content, validity, and reliability. Concept and contest related criteria, as well as scale related criteria were evaluated. Validation was assured through a panel of eight national experts. A six-point Likert-type response scale, skewed toward the positive direction was developed to prevent misleading results due to a ceiling effect. A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted and 39 items of the original 204 were retained. One recommendation of their study was to confirm the factor structure with other age groups.

The instrument consisted of two sections. Section I requested information about selected personal and educational characteristics from the participants. Section II involved participants to respond to statements about their individual perceptions and feelings toward their clothing. Each statement asked the participants to rate their response on a 6-point Likert-type scale, from "always or almost always true" to "never or almost never true." Permission was sought and granted by Sontag for use of the PCS scale for this study (see Appendix D).

### Selection of Population

All students enrolled in the Spring 2009 section of *Dress and Humanity* university depth humanities course ( $N = 67$ ) were invited to participate. Participation in the study was strictly voluntary. Completion of the survey will have no reflection on the student's grades.

### Description of Treatment

All students at Utah State University are required to take a minimum of two credits in each of two of the three depth course categories available. *Dress and Humanity* (FCSE 3080) is a depth humanities course at Utah State University. This course explores the relationship of dress practices and its effects on society. The course includes collaborative group assignments, discussions of history related to dress, cultures as related to dress, and the influence dress has in today's society. This course fulfills a general education requirement of the university. The purpose of the course is to explore dress as it expresses basic needs and values of humanity and of individuals living within various cultures outside and within the United States (Shirley, 2009). Course objectives include:

1. Expand global awareness related to textiles, apparel and dress in relation to design, production, marketing, and consumption;
2. Analyze various cultural factors related to dress and humanity (economics, technology, social organization, aesthetics, religion, rituals);

3. Use critical thinking in order to analyze personal experiences from a cultural perspective and to explore popular culture and media influences on dress;
4. Analyze dress in real-life situations considering the relationship of social and cultural behavior;
5. Understand dress as a communication tool and explore its impact on human relations and interactions; and
6. Value diversity in dress and its many functions. (p. 3)

#### Collection of Data

The letter of information (see Appendix B) along with Section I and Section II of the questionnaire with both sections (see Appendix A) were presented as a pre-course survey to students during the first week of class, spring semester, 2009. Students were asked to develop an anonymous code to use on the surveys to identify pre-course and post-course scores to maintain anonymity and confidentiality. Codes consisted of the last two letters of the students' mothers' maiden name, the two day digit of the month they were born, and the first two letters of the city in which they were born. Instructions for completion of the survey were included in the recruiting script (see Appendix C) that was read aloud to participants prior to giving the pre-course survey. Completed surveys were kept in a locked office, in a locked drawer. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained prior to conducting the survey. Post-course surveys included restatement of password selection and Section II of the questionnaire. Demographic material was not collected a second time. Post-course surveys were presented to students during the final

week of class during spring semester, 2009. Instructions for completion of the survey were reiterated by reading aloud the recruiting script (see Appendix C) once again as a reminder to participants. Complimentary ice cream coupons were distributed to students upon verification of matching pre-course and post-course survey passwords.

### Data Analysis

Responses related to the first research objective were statistically analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Responses related to research objective two were analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages. The Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test was used to determine any statistically significant changes between pre-course and post-course survey responses. A series of multiple regression analyses was performed to determine if any significant relationship existed between the demographic characteristics of the participants and the six dimensions of the PSC survey for research objective three. An a priori alpha level was set at .05. A post hoc analysis using Cronbach's alpha was conducted to estimate reliability of the instrument. All statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS, version 17.0 for Windows.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between education about dress practices and ensembles throughout humanity and students' change in perception of their self concept related to dress practices. The research provided by this study will contribute to the research base by providing data to better understand how dress practices are influencing individuals and driving their needs. It will survey previously unexplored populations that have used the same PCS scale in previous studies.

The number of usable responses from the defined population of students enrolled in the *Dress and Humanity* course at Utah State University ( $N = 67$ ) was 40 for a response rate of (59.7%). The remaining surveys (16 pre-course surveys and 12 post-course surveys) were discarded due to inability to match pre-course and post-course responses. A post hoc reliability analysis of the survey instrument was performed to determine if the instrument had an acceptable reliability value. Internal consistency of the pre-course survey was estimated at .956 and internal consistency of the post-course survey was estimated at .813 using Cronbach's alpha. Internal consistency for both survey administrations were found to be within the acceptable ranges.

Three objectives were established to achieve the purpose of this study. The objectives were to:

1. Describe the demographic characteristics of students enrolled in the *Dress and Humanity* course;

2. Determine if the Proximity of Clothing to Self scales for each dimension significantly increase after students complete a *Dress and Humanity* course at Utah State University; and
3. Determine the relationship between the demographic characteristics of the students enrolled in the *Dress and Humanity* course and the PCS scale dimensions.

Objective One: Describe the Demographic Characteristics of  
Students Enrolled in the *Dress and Humanity* Course

The typical student enrolled in FCSE 3080 – *Dress and Humanity* was 20.95 years old ( $SD = 1.97$ ) with an age range of 18 to 25 years old. The respondents consisted of 34 females (85.0%) and 6 males (15.0%). Overall, 31 (77.5%) of the participants were single or/and had never been married while 9 participants (22.5%) were married. There were no divorced, widowed, or widower respondents in the sample. The dominant religion practiced by the participants was The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) with 34 (85.0%) respondents. Other religious affiliations tallied were Lutheran with 2 respondents (5.0%), Roman Catholic with 1 respondent (2.5%), and 3 respondents (7.5%) were not affiliated with any religion. A summary of the characteristics of these students is provided in Table 1.

Table 1

*Personal Characteristics of Students Enrolled in Dress and Humanity (N = 40)*

Characteristics	<i>f</i>	Percent
Gender		
Male	6	15.0%
Female	34	85.0%
Age ( $M = 20.95$ ; $SD = 1.97$ )		
18 years old	4	10.0%
19 years old	7	17.5%
20 years old	8	20.0%
21 years old	6	15.0%
22 years old	4	10.0%
23 years old	6	15.0%
24 years old	4	10.0%
25 years old	1	2.5%
Marital Status		
Married	9	22.5%
Never Married/Single	31	77.5%
Religion		
LDS	34	85.0%
Lutheran	2	5.0%
Roman Catholic	1	2.5%
None	3	7.5%

The educational background of students enrolled in the *Dress and Humanity* course was predominantly junior level students with 19 (47.5%) respondents reporting 61-90 credit hours. A summary of the educational characteristics of students is provided in Table 2. Of the rest of the respondents, one was freshman level with 0-30 credit hours (2.5%), 10 were sophomore level with 31-60 credit hours (25.0%), and 10 were senior or above level with over 91 credit hours (25.0%).

Table 2

*Educational Characteristics of Students Enrolled in Dress and Humanity (N = 40)*

Characteristics	<i>f</i>	Percent
<b>Major</b>		
Family and Consumer Sciences Education	7	17.5%
Sociology	4	10.0%
Exercise Science	3	7.5%
Public Relations	3	7.5%
Social Work	3	7.5%
Other	20	50.0%
<b>Student Status</b>		
Freshman (0-30 hours)	1	2.5%
Sophomore (31-60 hours)	10	25.0%
Junior (61-90 hours)	19	47.5%
Senior (91 hours and above)	10	25.0%

Over 20 different majors were reported. The educational majors most frequently reported were Family and Consumer Sciences with seven respondents (17.5%), Sociology with four (10.0%) respondents, Exercise Science with three respondents (7.5%), Public Relations with three respondents (7.5%), and Social Work with three (7.5%) respondents. The other majors reported (50.0%) were individual responses.

Respondents were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 how their affiliated religion influenced their dress practices with 1 being no influence and 5 being very strongly influenced. The average score was 3.83 ( $SD = 1.318$ ) with 28 (70.0%) respondents stating their religion influences their dress practices strongly or very strongly.

As shown in Table 3, five respondents (12.5%) stated that religion influenced somewhat what they wore. Seven (17.5%) of the respondents were influenced a little or not at all in their dress by their affiliated religion.

Table 3

*Degree of Religious Influence on Dress Practices of Students Enrolled in Dress and Humanity Course (N = 40)*

Category	<i>f</i>	Percent
Degree of influence ( $M = 3.83$ ; $SD = 1.318$ )		
Does not influence	4	10.0%
Influences a little	3	7.5%
Influences somewhat	5	12.5%
Influences strongly	12	30.0%
Influences very strongly	16	40.0%

*Note.* Does not influence = 1; Influences a little = 2; Influences somewhat = 3; influences strongly = 4; and influences very strongly = 5.

Respondents were asked to rate how important clothing purchases were to them on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being not important and 5 being extremely important. The average response was 3.6 ( $SD = .778$ ) with 26 (65.0%) respondents stating that clothing purchases were very to extremely important. Of the remaining respondents, 11 (27.5%) felt clothing purchase were somewhat important, two (5.0%) felt they were a little important, and one (2.5%) didn't feel they were important at all. When asked how often purchases were made in the past year, 24 (60.0%) purchased clothing more than 12 times, three (7.5%) purchased 11-12 times, three (7.5%) purchased 7-10 times, seven (17.5%) purchased 4-6 times, and three (7.5%) purchased 0-3 times. On the questionnaire, clothing was defined as apparel, accessories, tattoos, piercings, and so forth (see Appendix A). A summary of spending behaviors of the students is provided in Table 4.

Respondents were asked to estimate how much money (rounded to the nearest dollar) they had spent on personal clothing items (apparel, accessories, tattoos, piercings, etc.) in the past 30 days and the past 365 days. In the past 30 days, respondents spent an average of \$70.50 ( $SD = 76.73$ ) with a range of \$0.00 to \$300.00. In the past 365 days, respondents spent an average of \$517.25 ( $SD = 453.13$ ) with a range of \$50.00 to \$2000.00. A summary of amounts spent by students is provided in Table 5.

Table 4

*Spending Behaviors of Students Enrolled in Dress and Humanity Course (N = 40)*

Category	<i>f</i>	Percent
Importance of clothing purchases to students		
Not important	1	2.5%
A little important	2	5.0%
Somewhat important	11	27.5%
Very important	24	60.0%
Extremely important	2	5.0%
How often purchases were made in the past year		
0-3 times	3	7.5%
4-6 times	7	17.5%
7-10 times	3	7.5%
11-12 times	3	7.5%
more than 12 times	24	60.0%

*Note.* Not important = 1; a little important = 2; somewhat important = 3; very important = 4; and extremely important = 5.

Objective Two: Determine if the Proximity of Clothing to Self scales for each dimension significantly increase after students complete the *Dress and Humanity Course*

Using the dimensions created by Sontag and Schlater (1982), student responses were categorized into the different dimensions: (1) self as a structure; (2) self as a process

in relation to communication with others; (3) self as a process in response to judgments of others; (4) clothing in relation to self-esteem in an evaluative process; (5) clothing in relation to self-esteem in an affective process; and (6) clothing in relation to body image.

Table 5

*Amounts Spent by Students Enrolled in Dress and Humanity Course (N = 40)*

<i>Category</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>
Amount spent in the past 30 days		
Between \$ 0.00 and \$ 300.00	\$ 70.50	76.73
Amount spent in the past 365 days		
Between \$ 50.00 and \$ 2000.00	\$517.25	453.13

*Dimension One: Self as a Structure*

The definition of self as a structure, according to Lee (1997):

Clothing is one aspect of the self as an organized picture existing in awareness.

Clothing, as a component of the material self, contributes to sense of unity with the person and constitutes part of the person's identity. Clothing reflects or expresses one's identity, personality, traits, self-regard, values, attitudes, beliefs, or moods. The person strives for consistency between clothing and self-image.

Pictures of the self from the past may exist in memory. (p. 14)

Participants were asked to respond to questions on the survey that reflected how they felt about clothing. A summary of the findings for survey questions included in dimension one is provided in Table 6. When asked if their clothing reflects how they feel

about themselves, 31 respondents (77.5%) stated this was often, usually or almost always true at the beginning of the class. When asked the same question on the post survey, 29 (72.5%) respondents felt the same way. Over 82.5% of respondents felt their clothing was consistent with who they are at the beginning of the course, but only 62.5% responded at the same level at the end of the course. About 50.0% of the respondents sometimes or often feel that their clothing is a part of them and not just a possession and scores were similar both pre-course and post-course survey. Between pre-course and post-course surveys, 21 to 22 respondents felt clothing helps them be who they are often or sometimes. Roughly 70.0% of pre-course survey respondents felt their clothing reflects a certain type of person most of the time as compared to 80.0% post-course survey responses. When asked if clothes help them become who they want to be, 23 (57.5%) responded that this statement was sometimes or often true, compared to 22 (55.0%) responses recorded on the post-course survey.

A Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test was conducted to compare pre-course and post-course survey responses in dimension one. No statistical significant difference was found in participants' responses. A summary of the Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test scores for each question in the dimension is provided in Table 7.

*Dimension Two: Self as a Process –  
Communication of Self to Others*

According to Lee (1997) the definition of dimension two is as follows:

Clothing communicates information about one's identity (personal, interpersonal, or group), values, attitudes, moods, and self-regard to others and facilitates the

enactment of social role. The person consciously selects or chooses clothing to convey messages about the self to others or to experiment with different identities. (p.14)

Table 6

*Frequency of Student Responses to Questions for Dimension One: Self as a Structure (N = 40)*

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
<b>My clothing reflects how I feel about myself</b>				
Always or almost always true	6	4	15.0	10.0
Usually true	13	15	32.5	37.5
Often true	12	10	30.0	25.0
Sometimes true	5	8	12.5	20.0
Usually not true	4	2	10.0	5.0
Never or almost never true	0	1	0.0	2.5
<b>What I wear is consistent with who I am</b>				
Always or almost always true	9	9	22.5	22.5
Usually true	24	16	60.0	40.0
Often true	4	11	10.0	27.5
Sometimes true	2	4	5.0	10.0
Usually not true	1	0	2.5	0.0
Never or almost never true	0	0	0.0	0.0

(table continues)

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
My clothing is a part of me, not just a simple possession				
Always or almost always true	2	5	5.0	12.5
Usually true	9	7	22.5	17.5
Often true	10	10	25.0	25.0
Usually not true	3	5	7.5	12.5
Never or almost never true	4	2	10.0	5.0
The clothes I wear help me to be who I am				
Always or almost always true	1	5	2.5	12.5
Usually true	9	7	22.5	17.5
Often true	15	12	37.5	30.0
Sometimes true	6	10	15.0	25.0
Usually not true	6	5	15.0	12.5
Never or almost never true	3	1	7.5	2.5
I am a certain type of person, and my clothes reflect that				
Always or almost always true	5	5	12.5	12.5
Usually true	9	12	22.5	30.0
Often true	8	10	20.0	25.0
Sometimes true	11	10	27.5	25.0
Usually not true	5	3	12.5	7.5
Never or almost never true	2	0	5.0	0.0

(table continues)

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
Clothes help me become the person I want to be				
Always or almost always true	3	3	7.5	7.5
Usually true	3	5	7.5	12.5
Often true	13	10	32.5	25.0
Sometimes true	10	12	25.0	30.0
Usually not true	7	9	17.5	22.5
Never or almost never true	3	1	7.5	2.5

Table 7

*Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Test scores for Dimension One: Self as a Structure*

Self as a structure	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
My clothing reflects how I feel about myself	-0.432	.666
What I wear is consistent with who I am	-1.533	.125
My clothing is a part of me, not just a simple possession	-0.952	.341
The clothes I wear help me to be who I am	-0.737	.461
I am a certain type of person, and my clothes reflect that	-1.526	.127
Clothes help me become the person I want to be	-0.576	.564

\* *Indicates significance with  $p < .05$ .*

Participants' responses to the pre-course and post-course survey questions for dimension two are summarized in Table 8. The majority of participants (27 pre-course survey and 30 post-course survey) felt that what they wear and how they wear it shows their attitudes to others often, usually or almost always. When asked on the pre-course

survey if participants try to project a certain image of themselves through their clothing, 35.0% responded to usually true and 25.0% sometimes. During the post-course survey, however, 60.0% responded this statement was often or usually true. Participants were asked if they wanted their clothes to make a statement about them without the need for words and almost 47.5% of respondents pre-course survey stated sometimes, when compared to the post-course survey responses of only 40.0%. When asked if participants could show their value to others through their clothing, responses were noticeably different pre-course and post-course survey with 60.0% pre-course and 72.5% post-course stating this was usually or almost always true. Sometimes or often, 25 pre-course survey respondents wear certain clothing to let people know what kind of person they are as compared to 22 post-course survey respondents feeling this statement is often or usually true. About 75.0% of pre-course survey respondents feel their clothing shows others how they think and feel about themselves and 77.5% replied similarly during the post-course survey. The pre-course and post-course survey responses asking if clothing gives others an idea about the participants' interests or activities sometimes or often showed a difference of 65.0% to 47.5%.

A Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test was performed for dimension two and a significant difference was found between pre-course and post test. Participants responded that they use their clothing to show their values to others with a significant difference ( $p = .023$ ) between pre-course and post-course surveys. Participants also indicated a significant difference response rate when they used their clothing to let people know what kind of person they were ( $T = -2.694, p = .007$ ). A significant difference was also found pre-

course and post-course surveys ( $T = -3.231, p = .001$ ) when participants were asked if their clothing gave others an idea about their interests or activities. A summary of the Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test findings are provided in Table 9.

Table 8

*Frequency of Student Responses to Questions for Dimension Two: Self as a Process – Communication of Self to Others (N = 40)*

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
<i>What I wear and the way I wear it show others my attitudes</i>				
Always or almost always true	5	3	12.5	7.5
Usually true	15	14	37.5	35.0
Often true	7	13	17.5	32.5
Sometimes true	8	9	20.0	22.5
Usually not true	5	1	12.5	2.5
Never or almost never true	0	0	0.0	0.0
<i>I try to project a certain image of myself to others through my clothing</i>				
Always or almost always true	2	3	5.0	7.5
Usually true	14	11	35.0	27.5
Often true	9	13	22.5	32.5
Sometimes true	10	9	25.0	22.5
Usually not true	4	4	10.0	10.0
Never or almost never true	1	0	2.5	0.0

(table continues)

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
I want my clothes to make a statement about me without any need for words				
Always or almost always true	3	3	7.5	7.5
Usually true	6	8	15.0	20.0
Often true	7	6	17.5	15.0
Sometimes true	19	16	47.5	40.0
Usually not true	2	6	5.0	15.0
Never or almost never true	3	1	7.5	2.5
Through my clothing, I can show my values to others				
Always or almost always true	10	15	25.0	37.5
Usually true	14	14	35.0	35.0
Often true	5	6	12.5	15.0
Sometimes true	5	3	12.5	7.5
Usually not true	3	2	7.5	5.0
Never or almost never true	3	0	7.5	0.0
I often wear certain clothing to let people know what kind of person I am				
Always or almost always true	1	3	2.5	7.5
Usually true	7	10	17.5	25.0
Often true	9	12	22.5	30.0

(table continues)

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
Sometimes true	14	11	35.0	27.5
Usually not true	8	4	20.0	10.0
Never or almost never true	1	0	2.5	0.0
<i>My clothing shows others how I think and feel about myself</i>				
Always or almost always true	4	6	10.0	15.0
Usually true	10	12	25.0	30.0
Often true	10	9	25.0	22.5
Sometimes true	10	10	25.0	25.0
Usually not true	4	2	10.0	5.0
Never or almost never true	2	1	5.0	2.5
<i>My clothing gives others an idea about my interests or activities</i>				
Always or almost always true	2	3	5.0	7.5
Usually true	5	16	12.5	40.0
Often true	14	12	35.0	30.0
Sometimes true	12	7	30.0	17.5
Usually not true	6	2	15.0	5.0
Never or almost never true	0	0	0.0	0.0

*Dimension Three: Self as a Process –  
Response of Judgment of Others*

The definition of dimension three as described by Lee (1997) is:

The person imagines how the self appears to others through clothing. The person may respond affectively, cognitively, or behaviorally to an actual or imagined judgment of the self by others. Subsequently, the judgment may affect self-validation. (p. 14)

Table 9

*Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Test scores for Dimension Two: Self as a Process – Communication of Self to Others*

Self as a process-communication of self to others	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
What I wear and the way I wear it show others my attitudes	-0.324	.746
I try to project a certain image of myself to others through my clothing	-0.387	.699
I want my clothes to make a statement about me without any need for words	-0.639	.523
Through my clothing, I can show my values to others	-2.268	.023*
I often wear certain clothing to let people know what kind of person I am	-2.694	.007*
My clothing shows others how I think and feel about myself	-1.553	.120
My clothing gives others an idea about my interests or activities	-3.231	.001*

\*indicates significance when  $p < .05$ .

Participants were asked to respond to questions pre-course and post-course survey questions that described their feelings about others judgments based on their clothing. When asked if they cared about what other people thought about how they look in their clothing 13 (32.5%) of respondents stated this was usually true while 10 respondents

(25.0%) stated it was only sometimes true. Responses post-course survey were similar. Participants were asked if it mattered to them that people were making judgments about the type of person they were based on their dress, and the majority of the pre-course survey responses (67.5%) stated sometimes to almost never true. Post-course survey responses were 60.0% for the same question. Participants brand consciousness in relation to respect from others seemed to have little change with 23 respondents claiming it was usually not or almost never true from pre-course to post-course survey. About 50.0% of pre-course survey respondents claimed it was sometimes, usually not or almost never true that how they look in their clothing was important because they wanted others to accept them, compared to 72.5% of post-course survey respondents who felt this statement was sometimes or often true. A summary of these findings for dimension three are available in Table 10.

When a Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test was administered for dimension three, no statistically significant differences between the pre-course survey and the post-course survey were found. Table 11 summarizes these findings.

*Dimension Four: Self-Esteem –  
Evaluative Process Dominant*

Lee (1997) defined self-esteem – evaluative process dominant as follows:

Clothing affects one's evaluation of self-worth, self-regard, or self-respect, generally expressed in terms of cogitative evaluation or affective evaluation.

Specifically, clothing can positively or negatively affect one's sense of personal and interpersonal competence including personal efficacy, mastery of the

environment, usefulness, social adequacy, and desirability. Through one's appearance in or use of clothing, the person engages in cognitive or affective evaluation of self, implicitly or explicitly in comparison with a personal or social standard. A person's evaluation of his or her clothing can affect his or her global self-esteem, or more specifically, confidence in his or her abilities, qualities, personal features, or performances. Conversely, a person's self-evaluation or self-judgment can affect his or her attitudes or behaviors toward clothing. (pp. 14-15)

Table 10

*Frequency of Student Responses to Questions for Dimension Three: Self as a Process – Response of Judgment of Others (N = 40)*

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
I care about what other people think of how I look in my clothes				
Always or almost always true	4	2	10.0	5.0
Usually true	13	12	32.5	30.0
Often true	9	13	22.5	32.5
Sometimes true	10	10	25.0	25.0
Usually not true	4	3	10.0	7.5
Never or almost never true	0	0	0.0	0.0
It matters to me that people make judgments about the type of person I am by the way I dress				
Always or almost always true	3	1	7.5	2.5
Usually true	1	7	2.5	17.5

(table continues)

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
Often true	9	8	22.5	20.0
Sometimes true	14	11	35.0	27.5
Usually not true	10	12	25.0	30.0
Never or almost never true	3	1	7.5	2.5
I'm careful in wearing certain styles or brands of clothing because they affect how people respect me				
Always or almost always true	2	1	5.0	2.5
Usually true	1	2	2.5	5.0
Often true	6	7	15.0	17.5
Sometimes true	8	7	20.0	17.5
Usually not true	14	17	35.0	42.5
Never or almost never true	9	6	22.5	15.0
How I look in my clothing is important because I want others to accept me				
Always or almost always true	2	3	5.0	7.5
Usually true	7	3	17.5	7.5
Often true	9	14	22.5	35.0
Sometimes true	9	15	22.5	37.5
Usually not true	10	3	25.0	7.5
Never or almost never true	3	2	7.5	5.0

Participant's responses to dimension four were compared for differences between the pre-course and post-course survey. Students were asked to analyze their feelings

toward clothing in relation to their personal evaluation of their self-esteem. When asked if dressing up made them feel important, 70.0% of pre-course survey respondents felt this statement was usually or almost always true compared with 75.0% of post-course survey respondents. Pre-course and post-course survey responses to the question if they felt good about what they were wearing and having confidence in themselves were the same for usually and almost always true with three responses (77.5%). When asked if the way they dress was important in giving them a sense of control in their life, 57.5% responded it was often or sometimes true in the pre-course survey while 47.5% responded similarly in the post-course survey. Pre-course and post-course survey responses of 34 and 37 indicated that participants feel their self confidence increases when they dress appropriately. Between 37.5% and 35.0% (pre-course and post-course survey scores, respectively) of participants stated that they feel it is usually true the clothes they like to wear help them feel self-assured. When asked if participants felt they were better able to talk with others when they would wear clothes that made them feel good, 11 pre-course survey respondents indicated it was usually not true while 13 post-course survey respondents indicated it was usually true. Participants were asked if they tried to buy clothing that made them feel attractive, and 67.5% pre-course and post-course survey response indicated this was usually or almost always true. Only 20 (50.0%) of pre-course survey respondents felt that good quality clothes that made looked good on them made them feel competent often or usually compared with 29 (72.5%) post-course survey respondents. A summary of these findings are available in Table 12.

Table 11

*Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Test Scores for Dimension Three: Self as a Process – Response of Judgment of Others*

Self as a process-response of judgment of others	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
I care about what other people think of how I look in my clothes	-0.538	.591
It matters to me that people make judgments about the type of person I am by the way I dress	-0.908	.364
I'm careful in wearing certain styles or brands of clothing because they affect how people respect me	-0.447	.655
How I look in my clothing is important because I want others to accept me	-1.021	.307

\*indicates significance when  $p < .05$ .

A significant difference was found between the pre-course survey and the post-course survey responses in one aspect of dimension four when a Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test analysis was conducted. Responses indicated a statistically significant difference from pre-course to post-course survey ( $T = -2.150$ ,  $p = .032$ ) when asked if they wear clothes that make them feel good and are better able to talk with others. A summary of these findings are provided in Table 13.

Table 12

*Frequency of Student Responses to Questions for Dimension Four: Self-Esteem –  
Evaluative Process Dominant (N = 40)*

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
<b>Dressing up makes me feel important</b>				
Always or almost always true	13	13	32.5	32.5
Usually true	15	17	37.5	42.5
Often true	8	5	20.0	12.5
Sometimes true	1	5	2.5	12.5
Usually not true	2	0	5.0	0.0
Never or almost never true	0	0	0.0	0.0
<b>When I feel good about what I am wearing, then I have confidence in myself</b>				
Always or almost always true	21	15	52.5	37.5
Usually true	10	16	25.0	40.0
Often true	6	9	15.0	22.5
Sometimes true	3	0	7.5	0.0
Usually not true	0	0	0.0	0.0
Never or almost never true	0	0	0.0	0.0

(table continues)

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
The way I dress is important in giving me a sense of being in control of my life				
Always or almost always true	4	7	10.0	17.5
Usually true	8	7	20.0	17.5
Often true	10	9	25.0	22.5
Never or almost never true	3	1	7.5	2.5
My self-confidence increases when I dress appropriately				
Always or almost always true	11	11	27.5	27.5
Usually true	18	15	45.0	37.5
Often true	5	11	12.5	27.5
Sometimes true	5	3	12.5	7.5
Usually not true	1	0	2.5	0.0
Never or almost never true	0	0	0.0	0.0
The clothes I like to wear help me feel self-assured				
Always or almost always true	4	6	10.0	15.0
Usually true	15	14	37.5	35.0
Often true	7	9	17.5	22.5
Sometimes true	7	8	17.5	20.0
Usually not true	5	2	12.5	5.0
Never or almost never true	1	1	2.5	2.5

(table continues)

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
When I wear clothes that make me feel good, I am better able to talk with others				
Always or almost always true	5	6	12.5	15.0
Usually true	9	13	22.5	32.5
Often true	6	7	15.0	17.5
Sometimes true	7	10	17.5	25.0
Usually not true	11	3	27.5	7.5
Never or almost never true	1	1	2.5	2.5
I try to buy clothing that makes me feel attractive				
Always or almost always true	14	15	35.0	37.5
Usually true	13	12	32.5	30.0
Often true	10	9	25.0	22.5
Sometimes true	1	3	2.5	7.5
Usually not true	0	1	0.0	2.5
Never or almost never true	1	0	2.5	0.0
Good quality clothes that look good on me make me feel competent				
Always or almost always true	6	4	15.0	10.0
Usually true	16	14	40.0	35.0
Often true	4	15	10.0	37.5
Sometimes true	6	5	15.0	12.5
Usually not true	6	1	15.0	2.5
Never or almost never true	1	1	2.5	2.5

Table 13

*Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Test Scores for Dimension Four: Self-Esteem – Evaluative Process Dominant*

Self-Esteem – evaluative process dominant	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
Dressing up makes me feel important	-0.545	.586
When I feel good about what I am wearing, then I have confidence in myself	-0.198	.843
The way I dress is important in giving me a sense of being in control of my life	-0.587	.557
My self-confidence increases when I dress appropriately	-0.039	.969
The clothes I like to wear help me feel self-assured	-1.626	.104
When I wear clothes that make me feel good, I am better able to talk with others	-2.150	.032*
I try to buy clothing that makes me feel attractive	-0.186	.853
Good quality clothes that look good on me make me feel competent	-0.740	.459

\*indicates significance when  $p < .05$ .

*Dimension Five: Self-Esteem – Affective Process Dominant*

Lee (1997) defined dimension five as follows:

Clothing evokes a generalized emotional response or affect directed toward the self. This may take the form of positive or negative affect related to self-love, self-acceptance, or self-cathexis (i.e., satisfaction) and may have behavioral consequences. While the affective process results from implicit evaluation with respect to some ideal or standard for the material self, the emphasis is on the

general or global feeling expressive of self-esteem. One's self-esteem also may affect one's feelings about or behavior toward clothing. Finally, the care that one gives to clothing reflects or affects care for or pride in oneself. This dimension does not refer to mood no to all emotions, but only to those emotions that are directed toward the self. (p. 15)

Participants were asked to respond to survey questions that described how clothing affects their behavior related to their self-esteem. When asked if certain clothes make them feel good about themselves, the majority (87.5%) responded this statement was usually or almost always true both pre-course and post-course survey. Participants (80.0%) indicated that it was usually or almost always true they felt better about themselves when they were well dressed on the pre-course survey. However, only 70.0% of the participants responded similarly on the post-course survey. On both the pre-course and post-course survey, 24 to 23 respondents stated it was usually or often true when they felt good about themselves, they took more care in getting dressed. When asked if taking time to dress up gave them a feeling of pride in how they looked, results were similar to both surveys with 26 responding it was usually or almost always true in the pre-course survey and 24 responding similarly in the post-course survey. More respondents stated they felt good about themselves when they had something new to wear in the post-course survey (32) than the pre-course survey (22). A similar number of respondents stated they felt good about themselves when they looked good in their clothes usually or almost always (30 pre-course and 31 post-course). When asked if they felt content with themselves when they looked good in what they wore, 19 respondents (47.5%) responded

it was usually or almost always true in the pre-course survey and 24 (60.0%) in the post-course survey responded the same. A summary of the responses for dimension five is provided in Table 14.

A Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks test was run for dimension five and no significant differences were found between pre-course survey scores and post-course survey scores. A summary is provided in Table 15.

Table 14

*Frequency of Student Responses to Questions for Dimension Five: Self-Esteem – Affective Process Dominant (N = 40)*

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
Certain clothes make me feel good about myself				
Always or almost always true	22	14	55.0	35.0
Usually true	13	21	32.5	52.5
Often true	3	5	7.5	12.5
Sometimes true	2	0	5.0	0.0
Usually not true	0	0	0.0	0.0
Never or almost never true	0	0	0.0	0.0
I feel better about myself when I am well dressed				
Always or almost always true	17	11	42.5	27.5
Usually true	15	17	37.5	42.5
Often true	5	8	12.5	20.0

(table continues)

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
Sometimes true	3	4	7.5	10.0
Usually not true	0	0	0.0	0.0
Never or almost never true	0	0	0.0	0.0
When I feel good about myself, I take care in getting dressed				
Always or almost always true	8	7	20.0	17.5
Usually true	13	11	32.5	27.5
Often true	11	12	27.5	30.0
Sometimes true	6	7	15.0	17.5
Usually not true	1	3	2.5	7.5
Never or almost never true	1	0	2.5	0.0
Taking time to dress up gives me a feeling of pride in how I look				
Always or almost always true	13	10	32.5	25.0
Usually true	13	14	32.5	35.0
Often true	9	11	22.5	27.5
Sometimes true	3	5	7.5	12.5
Usually not true	2	0	5.0	0.0
Never or almost never true	0	0	0.0	0.0
I feel good about myself when I have something new to wear				
Always or almost always true	12	11	30.0	27.5
Usually true	11	21	27.5	52.5

(table continues)

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
Often true	10	4	25.0	10.0
Sometimes true	5	3	12.5	7.5
Usually not true	1	1	2.5	2.5
Never or almost never true	1	0	2.5	0.0
When I look good in my clothes, I feel good about myself				
Always or almost always true	12	12	30.0	30.0
Usually true	18	19	45.0	47.5
Often true	7	8	17.5	20.0
Sometimes true	3	1	7.5	2.5
Usually not true	0	0	0.0	0.0
Never or almost never true	0	0	0.0	0.0
When I look good in what I wear, I feel content with myself				
Always or almost always true	12	11	30.0	27.5
Usually true	7	13	17.5	32.5
Often true	11	11	27.5	27.5
Sometimes true	5	5	12.5	12.5
Usually not true	3	0	7.5	0.0
Never or almost never true	1	0	2.5	0.0

*Dimension Six: Body Image and Body Cathexis*

Dimension Six was defined by Lee (1997):

Clothing creates, modifies, or affects body image or body cathexis and may affect self-feelings. In turn, body image or body cathexis may affect clothing behavior. Body image or body cathexis may affect satisfaction with clothing and self-esteem. Clothing may enhance or reflect body satisfaction or compensate for body dissatisfaction. (p. 16)

Table 15

*Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Test scores for Dimension Five: Self-Esteem – Affective Process Dominant*

Self –Esteem – affective process dominant	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
Certain clothes make me feel good about myself	-1.015	.310
I feel better about myself when I am well dressed	-1.760	.078
When I feel good about myself, I take care in getting dressed	-0.941	.347
Taking time to dress up gives me a feeling of pride in how I look	-0.543	.587
I feel good about myself when I have something new to wear	-1.837	.066
When I look good in my clothes, I feel good about myself	-0.513	.608
When I look good in what I wear, I feel content with myself	-1.602	.109

\*indicates significance when  $p < .05$ .

Participants were asked questions about their relationship between clothing and their body image or body satisfaction (cathexis). About 50.0% (20) participants stated that when they were dissatisfied with a part of their body, they wore clothing that would draw attention away from it usually or often in the pre-course survey. The same number responded similarly in the post-survey. However, only three participants responded in the

pre-course survey that this statement was almost always true and eight on the post-course survey. More respondents felt they usually, often or sometimes choose clothes that accented the parts of their body that they liked (31) compared to the post-course survey where 31 responded that this statement was often, usually or almost always true. About 83.0% of the respondents indicated on the pre-course survey that when they buy clothing that looked good on them, they felt satisfied with their bodies while only 70.0% indicated the same level of satisfaction on the post-course survey. When participants were asked if the way their clothing fit affects the way they felt about their bodies, 50.0% of the pre-surveys indicated it was usually or almost always true, compared with 62.5% of post-course survey responses. When asked if they avoided certain styles or colors that did not enhance their body build, 35.5% responded this was usually or often true during the pre-course survey, but 55.0% responded similarly in the post-course survey. About 75.0% of pre-course survey respondents felt they often, usually or almost always look best in their clothing when they are at the right weight for them, while about 83.0% felt the same with the post-course survey. When asked if they wore certain clothing styles to change the way their bodies looked, the majority (52.5% pre-course and 60.0% post-course) responded this statement was often or sometimes true. A summary of the information on dimension six is available in Table 16.

A Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test was performed for dimension six. Two questions were found to have significantly different scores from pre-course to post-course survey. Responses indicated a significant difference ( $T = -2.218, p = .027$ ) when participants were asked if they were dissatisfied with a part of their body, and they wear clothing that

draws attention away from it. When asked if they choose clothes that accent the parts of their body that they like, significance was found ( $T = -2.095, p = .036$ ). A summary of these findings are provided in Table 17.

Table 16

*Frequency of Student Responses to Questions for Dimension Six: Body Image and Body Cathexis (N = 40)*

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
When I'm dissatisfied with a part of my body, I wear clothing that draws attention away from it				
Always or almost always true	3	8	7.5	20.0
Usually true	13	11	32.5	27.5
Often true	7	9	17.5	22.5
Sometimes true	8	8	20.0	20.0
Usually not true	5	2	12.5	5.0
Never or almost never true	4	2	10.0	5.0
I choose clothes that accent the parts of my body that I like				
Always or almost always true	4	8	10.0	20.0
Usually true	15	14	37.5	35.0
Often true	5	9	12.5	22.5
Sometimes true	11	5	27.5	12.5
Usually not true	2	2	5.0	5.0
Never or almost never true	3	1	7.5	2.5

(table continues)

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
When I buy clothing that looks good on me, I feel satisfied with my body				
Always or almost always true	10	12	25.0	30.0
Usually true	23	16	57.5	40.0
Often true	4	9	10.0	22.5
Sometimes true	1	3	2.5	7.5
Usually not true	1	0	2.5	0.0
Never or almost never true	1	0	2.5	0.0
The way my clothing fits affects the way I feel about my body				
Always or almost always true	9	10	22.5	25.0
Usually true	11	15	27.5	37.5
Often true	7	8	17.5	20.0
Sometimes true	6	5	15.0	12.5
Usually not true	5	0	12.5	0.0
Never or almost never true	2	1	5.0	2.5
I avoid certain styles or colors in clothing that do not enhance my body build				
Always or almost always true	9	9	22.5	22.5
Usually true	7	13	17.5	32.5
Often true	7	9	17.5	22.5
Sometimes true	10	4	25.0	10.0
Usually not true	4	4	10.0	10.0
Never or almost never true	3	1	7.5	2.5

(table continues)

Question	Pre <i>f</i>	Post <i>f</i>	Pre %	Post %
I look best in my clothing when I'm at the right weight for me				
Always or almost always true	12	12	30.0	30.0
Usually true	9	12	22.5	30.0
Often true	9	9	22.5	22.5
Sometimes true	3	4	7.5	10.0
Usually not true	3	2	7.5	5.0
Never or almost never true	4	1	10.0	2.5
I wear certain clothing styles to change the way my body looks				
Always or almost always true	1	4	2.5	10.0
Usually true	7	7	17.5	17.5
Often true	8	8	20.0	20.0
Sometimes true	13	16	32.5	40.0
Usually not true	7	5	17.5	12.5
Never or almost never true	3	0	7.5	0.0

Objective Three: Determine the relationship between the demographic characteristics of the students enrolled in the *Dress and Humanity* course and the PCS scale dimensions

A multiple linear regression utilizing the stepwise method was performed on the dimensions utilizing the demographic variables as the dependent variables. In the first regression, the six dimensions were correlated against the demographic variable age.

According to the stepwise regression, none of the dimensions were entered into the equation at the .05 level of significance. Therefore, no dimensions were statistically significantly related to age.

Table 17

*Wilcoxon Signed-ranks Test scores for Dimension Six: Body Image and Body Cathexis*

Body image and body cathexis	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
When I'm dissatisfied with a part of my body, I wear clothing that draws attention away from it	-2.218	.027*
I choose clothes that accent the parts of my body that I like	-2.095	.036*
When I buy clothing that looks good on me, I feel satisfied with my body	-0.108	.914
The way my clothing fits affects the way I feel about my body	-1.579	.114
I avoid certain styles or colors in clothing that do no enhance my body build	-1.644	.100
I look best in my clothing when I'm at the right weight for me	-1.374	.169
I wear certain clothing styles to change the way my body looks	-1.909	.056

\*indicates significance when  $p < .05$ .

The next regression correlated gender with the six dimensions. According to the stepwise regression, two variables were statistically significantly related to gender,  $F(2, 37) = 18.826, p = .000$ . Further, 50.4% of the variance in the variable gender was explained by the two significant dimensions ( $R = .710$ ). The two significant variables are presented in Table 18.

Table 18

*Stepwise Regression Results: Gender by Dimensions*

Dimensions	Beta	T	p
Dimension Six: Dress Practices in Relation to Body Image and Cathexis	0.852	5.870	.000*
Dimension Two: Dress Practices in Relation to Self as a Process – Communication of Self to Others	-0.307	-2.115	.041*
Dimension Three: Dress Practices in Relation to Self as a Process – Response to Judgment of Others	-0.117	-0.767	.448
Dimension Five: Dress Practices in Relation to Self-Esteem – Evaluative Process Dominant	-0.132	-0.757	.454
Dimension One: Dress Practices in Relation to Self as a Structure	-0.090	-0.579	.566
Dimension Four: Dress Practices in Relation to Self-Esteem – Affective Process Dominant	-0.051	-0.253	.801

\* indicates significance at the .05 level;  $F(2, 37) = 18.826, p = .000$ .

The regression analysis indicated two significant dimensions related to gender. Dimension six: dress practices in relation to body image and cathexis was statistically significantly positively related with gender. Further analysis indicated that females tended to have a higher proximity of clothing to self as measured by body image and cathexis while males tended to have a lower proximity of clothing to self as measured by body image and cathexis.

The other significant dimension related to gender was dimension two: dress practices in relation to self as a process - communication of self to others. The analysis indicated that there was a statistically significantly negative relationship with gender. Further analysis indicated that females tended to have a lower proximity of clothing to

self as measured by communication of self to others while males tended to have a higher proximity of clothing to self as measured by communication of self to others. Since no other variables were entered into the regression equation, no other dimensions were significantly related to gender.

In the third regression, the six dimensions were correlated against the demographic variable of how many credit hours had been completed at the higher education level. According to the stepwise regression, none of the dimensions were entered into the equation at the .05 level of significance. Therefore, no dimensions were statistically significantly related to credit hours.

In the fourth regression, the six dimensions were correlated against the demographic variable chosen major at the university. According to the stepwise regression, none of the dimensions were entered into the equation at the .05 level of significance. Therefore, no dimensions were statistically significantly related to chosen major.

In the fifth regression, the six dimensions were correlated against the demographic variable, religious affiliation. According to the stepwise regression, none of the dimensions were entered into the equation at the .05 level of significance. Therefore, no dimensions were statistically significantly related to religion.

In the sixth regression, the six dimensions were correlated against the demographic variable of to what degree the respondents religious affiliation influenced their dress practices. According to the stepwise regression, none of the dimensions were

entered into the equation at the .05 level of significance. Therefore, no dimensions were statistically significantly related to religious influence.

In the seventh regression, the six dimensions were correlated against the demographic variable marital status. According to the stepwise regression, none of the dimensions were entered into the equation at the .05 level of significance. Therefore, no dimensions were statistically significantly related to marital status.

In the eighth regression, the six dimensions were correlated against the demographic variable of how important the respondents indicated their dress purchases were to them. According to the stepwise regression, dimension one was found to be statistically significantly related to how important dress purchases were to the respondents,  $F(1, 38) = 21.527, p = .000$ . Further, 36.2% of the variance in the degree of purchase importance was explained by the significant dimension ( $R = .601$ ). The summary of the regression findings are found in Table 19.

The regression analysis indicated one significant dimension related to the importance respondents placed on their clothing purchases. Dimension one: dress practices in relation to self as a structure was statistically significantly positively related with respondents stated degree of importance placed on clothing purchases. Further analysis indicated that generally the more important the purchases were to the participants, the higher the proximity of clothing to self as measured by self as a structure.

Table 19

*Stepwise Regression Results: Purchase Importance by Dimensions*

Dimensions	Beta	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
Dimension One: Dress Practices in Relation to Self as a Structure	0.601	4.640	.000*
Dimension Six: Dress Practices in Relation to Body Image and Cathexis	0.250	1.730	.092
Dimension Four: Dress Practices in Relation to Self-Esteem – Affective Process Dominant	0.114	0.630	.532
Dimension Five: Dress Practices in Relation to Self-Esteem – Evaluative Process Dominant	0.095	0.579	.566
Dimension Two: Dress Practices in Relation to Self as a Process – Communication of Self to Others	0.079	0.461	.647
Dimension Three: Dress Practices in Relation to Self as a Process – Response to Judgment of Others	0.001	0.005	.996

\*indicates a significance at the .05 level;  $F(1, 38) = 21.527, p = .000$ .

In the ninth regression, the six dimensions were correlated against the demographic variable of how often purchases were made in the 365 days prior to the pre-course survey. According to the stepwise regression, one of the dimensions was found to be statistically significantly related to how often purchases were made by the participants,  $F(1, 38) = 4.382, p = .043$ . Further, 10.3% of the variance of how often purchases were made in the past 365 days was explained by the significant dimension ( $R = .322$ ). A summary of the significant variable findings are presented in Table 20.

Table 20

*Stepwise Regression Results: How Often Purchases Were Made in 365 Days Prior to Pre-course Survey by Dimension*

Dimension	Beta	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
Dimension Six: Dress Practices in Relation to Body Image and Cathexis	0.322	2.093	.043*
Dimension Five: Dress Practices in Relation to Self-Esteem – Evaluative Process Dominant	-0.333	-1.515	.138
Dimension One: Dress Practices in Relation to Self as a Structure	0.147	0.834	.410
Dimension Four: Dress Practices in Relation to Self-Esteem – Affective Process Dominant	-0.073	-0.325	.747
Dimension Three: Dress Practices in Relation to Self as a Process – Response to Judgment of Others	-0.038	-0.207	.837
Dimension Two: Dress Practices in Relation to Self as a Process – Communication of Self to Others	0.020	0.103	.918

\* indicates significance at the .05 level;  $F(1, 38) = 4.382, p = .043$

The regression analysis indicated one significant dimension related to how often participants purchased clothing in the past 365 days. Dimension Six: dress practices in relation to body image and cathexis was statistically significantly positively related with how often purchases were made by participants in the 365 days prior to the pre-course survey. Further analysis indicated that generally the more often purchases were made, the participants had a higher proximity of clothing to self as measured by body image and cathexis. Since no other variables were entered into the regression equation, no other dimensions were significantly related to how often clothing purchases were made in the 365 days prior to the pre-course survey.

In the next regression the six dimensions were correlated against the demographic variable how much money was spent in the 30 days prior to the pre-course survey. According to the stepwise regression, none of the dimensions were entered into the equation at the .05 level of significance. Therefore, no dimensions were statistically significantly related to how much money was spent in the 30 days prior to the pre-course survey.

In the last regression, the six dimensions were correlated against the demographic variable of how much money was spent by the participants in the 365 days prior to the pre-course survey. According to the stepwise regression, none of the dimensions were entered into the equation at the .05 level of significance. Therefore, no dimensions were statistically significantly related to how much money was spent by participants in the 365 days prior to the pre-course survey.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS

#### Summary

Upon completion of the study, it was found that a little more than of 50% of the change in perception between pre-course and post-course surveys could be explained by gender. A significant relationship was found between gender and clothing as it relates to body image or cathexis, with female respondents more likely to agree that the statements in this dimension were most like them than male respondents. A relationship was also found between gender and the use of clothing to communicate sense of self to others, with male respondents being more likely to agree that the statements in this dimension were most like them than female respondents. No significant relationships were found between participants' responses to the scale and their stated religious affiliation, age, educational level, or chosen major.

There were 30% more participants who felt they use clothing to give others an idea about their activities and interests when comparing the pre-course survey to the post-course survey. More participants (12.5%) indicated that they show their value to others through their clothing according to the post-course survey. When comparing participants' responses to whether or not they use clothing to show who they are as a person, 20% more felt they did after completing the course. More students (12.5%) felt they were better able to talk with others when they were dressed in clothes that made them feel good after completing the course. There were 17.5% more students who felt they used

clothing to accent the parts of their body that they liked and 21.5% of the participants who wore clothing that drew attention away from the parts of their body that they were dissatisfied with on the post-course survey than the pre-course survey.

### Purposes and Objectives

“Appearance is one of the most prominent ways to display and reinforce a self-concept” (Sproles & Burns, 1994, p. 209). Clothing is one of the first things noticed by others. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between education about dress practices and ensembles throughout humanity and students’ awareness of how clothing can change ones’ perceived self-concept. Specific objectives established to achieve this purpose were to:

1. Describe the demographic characteristics of students enrolled in the *Dress and Humanity* course;
2. Determine if the Proximity of Clothing to Self scales (hereafter referred to as PCS) for each dimension significantly increase after students complete a *Dress and Humanity* course at Utah State University; and
3. Determine the relationship between the demographic characteristics of the students enrolled in the *Dress and Humanity* course and the PCS scale dimensions.

### Conclusions and Discussion

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn.

Students enrolled in the *Dress and Humanity* course at Utah State University did experience a change in their perception of themselves with relation to their own dress practices. Gender was the greatest predictor of change in self-concept related to dress practices, similar to the findings in Lee's (1997) study with adolescents. The change was small, but measurable. Female students tended to experience a more significant change in regards to their body image and their self as a structure than self-esteem than the males did similar to Lee's findings. However, males tended to use dress practices to communicate their sense of self to others more than females which was opposite of Lee's (1997) findings. Sontag and Schopler's (1982) study concluded with similar results with gender playing a major role in PCS predictors. According to this study the proximity of clothing to self is generally not predicted by religious affiliation or degree of religious influence on an individual's dress practices. Based on the results of the current study, and supported by literature (Lee), if participants experience a change in perception of their clothing in relation to themselves, they may have a "different expectation of outcomes obtained through clothing, and develop various levels of affect or distinct behavioral patterns toward clothing" (p. 19). According to Sontag and Schopler, "proximity of clothing to self may be a key concept in building a general theory of clothing and self" (p. 7).

### Recommendations and Implications

Students should continue to be educated about the relationship between self and clothing choices or dress practices. The media has such a strong impact on any society's self-esteem and relationship with themselves as an individual that education in this area

could minimize the negative effects. According to Chowdhary (2006), the belief of the individual in themselves can make or break them. If society's dress practices are driven by the media or by unconscious choices on the part of the individuals within that structure, belief in oneself will always be at the mercy of others. Participants in the study indicated a small (but not statistically significant) change in perception of self-esteem related to dress practices, but that change could possibly expand with more concentrated education at a younger age when self-concept is developing at a faster rate. Lee (1997) stated, "Adolescents have not yet established stable self-concepts" (p. 169). More educational opportunities could be developed in secondary education in dress related courses to discuss the impact the media has on self-esteem and dress practices.

According to Lee (1997) males generally develop a relationship with their self-concept and their dress practices later in age than females. Using this information, more males could be recruited for dress-related courses to expand their educational opportunities in relationships between self-concept and dress practices.

### Recommendations for Further Study

Based upon the findings of this research, it is suggested that:

1. Further research be conducted utilizing sample sizes with a more equal proportion of males to females;
2. Further research be conducted with younger age sample groups;
3. Further research be conducted in areas that have a more religious diversity to explore the relationship between dress practices and religious influence; and

4. This study be replicated with a greater sample size in different comparable universities.

#### Final Statement

Chowdhary (2006) stated “the self-concept is a product of socialization construction from infancy and throughout the life course” (p. 146), and it can exert a powerful influence on social behavior. Having an individual’s dress practices become a conscious choice instead of an unconscious response to society, provides power to the individual in influencing social behavior. Educational opportunities to explore the relationships between dress practices and self-concept could be the key to accomplishing the necessary change.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Change in Proximity of Clothing to Self

### Change in Proximity of Clothing to Self Research Study

The following information is needed to create a code that will connect your pre-course survey responses to your post-course survey responses. This code will be created by you so that it is uniquely yours and so you remember it from the beginning of the course to the end, but will contain no data that will allow the researchers or instructors to connect your responses to you.

Last two letters of your mother's maiden name: \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

The two digit DAY of the month you were born: \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

The first two letters of the city in which you were born: \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Directions: *Please fill out the information below as accurately as possible. Please use whole numbers (no decimals or fractions unless otherwise directed).*

1. What is your age in years? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your gender?
  - \_\_\_\_ Male
  - \_\_\_\_ Female
3. What is your current student status (according to credit hours)
  - \_\_\_\_ Freshman (0-30 credits)
  - \_\_\_\_ Sophomore (31-60 credits)
  - \_\_\_\_ Junior (61-90 credits)
  - \_\_\_\_ Senior (91 credits or more)
  - \_\_\_\_ Other (Describe) \_\_\_\_\_
4. What is your major? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is your religious affiliation?
 

____ Agnostic	____ Presbyterian
____ Atheist	____ Quaker
____ Baptist	____ Roman Catholic
____ Buddhist	____ Seventh Day Adventist
____ Church of Christ	____ United Church of
____ Eastern Orthodox	Christ/Congregational
____ Episcopalian	____ Other Christian Religion
____ Hindu	(Describe)
____ Islamic	____ _____
____ Jewish	____ Other Non-Christian
____ LDS (Mormon)	Religion (Describe)
____ Lutheran	____ _____
____ Methodist	____ None

6. To what degree do your religious values influence the way you dress?
- Do not influence
  - Influences a little
  - Influences somewhat
  - Influences strongly
  - Influences very strongly
7. What is your marital status?
- Divorced
  - Married
  - Never married/ Single
  - Widowed/Widower
8. To you, how important are clothing purchases?
- Not important
  - A little important
  - Somewhat important
  - Very important
  - Extremely important
9. How often in the past year have you acquired new clothing (apparel, accessories, tattoos, piercings, etc.)?
- 0-3 times
  - 4-6 times
  - 7-10 times
  - 11-12 times
  - More than 12 times
10. In the past 30 days how much money (round to the nearest dollar amount) have you spent on personal clothing items (apparel, accessories, tattoos, piercings, etc.)? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
11. In the past year how much money (round to the nearest dollar amount) have you spent on personal clothing items (apparel, accessories, tattoos, piercings, etc.)? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## Change in Proximity of Clothing to Self Research Study

Spring 2009— Pre-Course Survey

<b>Directions: Below is a list of statements that describe the way clothing may or may not relate to your self. Read each statement carefully. Please <u>circle</u> the number that best describes how often the statement is true of you.</b>	Always or almost always true	Usually true	Often True	Sometimes true	Usually not true	Never or almost never true
Certain clothes make me feel good about myself.	6	5	4	3	2	1
What I wear and the way I wear it show others my attitudes.	6	5	4	3	2	1
My clothing reflects how I feel about myself.	6	5	4	3	2	1
Dressing up makes me feel important.	6	5	4	3	2	1
I care about what other people think of how I look in my clothes.	6	5	4	3	2	1
When I'm dissatisfied with a part of my body, I wear clothing that draws attention away from it.	6	5	4	3	2	1
What I wear is consistent with who I am.	6	5	4	3	2	1
It matters to me that people make judgments about the type of person I am by the way I dress.	6	5	4	3	2	1
When I feel good about what I am wearing, then I have confidence in myself.	6	5	4	3	2	1
I choose clothes that accent the parts of my body that I like.	6	5	4	3	2	1
I try to project a certain image of myself to others through my clothing.	6	5	4	3	2	1
I feel better about myself when I am well dressed.	6	5	4	3	2	1
When I buy clothing that looks good on me, I feel satisfied with my body.	6	5	4	3	2	1
I want my clothes to make a statement about me without any need for words.	6	5	4	3	2	1
I'm careful in wearing certain styles or brands of clothing because they affect how people respect me.	6	5	4	3	2	1
When I feel good about myself, I take care in getting dressed.	6	5	4	3	2	1
My clothing is a part of me, not just a simple possession.	6	5	4	3	2	1
The way I dress is important in giving me a sense of being in control of my life.	6	5	4	3	2	1
The clothes I wear help me to be who I am.	6	5	4	3	2	1
My self-confidence increases when I dress appropriately.	6	5	4	3	2	1
Taking time to dress up gives me a feeling of pride in how I look.	6	5	4	3	2	1
Through my clothing, I can show my values to others.	6	5	4	3	2	1
The way my clothing fits affects the way I feel about my body.	6	5	4	3	2	1
How I look in my clothing is important because I want others to accept me.	6	5	4	3	2	1

## Change in Proximity of Clothing to Self Research Study

Spring 2009— Pre-Course Survey cont.

<b>Directions: Below is a list of statements that describe the way clothing may or may not relate to your self. Read each statement carefully. Please <u>circle</u> the number that best describes how often the statement is true of you.</b>	Always or almost always true	Usually true	Often True	Sometimes true	Usually not true	Never or almost never true
The clothes I like to wear help me feel self-assured.	6	5	4	3	2	1
I often wear certain clothing to let people know what kind of person I am.	6	5	4	3	2	1
I feel good about myself when I have something new to wear.	6	5	4	3	2	1
I avoid certain styles or colors in clothing that do not enhance my body build or figure.	6	5	4	3	2	1
I am a certain type of person, and my clothes reflect that.	6	5	4	3	2	1
When I look good in my clothes, I feel good about myself.	6	5	4	3	2	1
I look best in my clothing when I'm at the right weight for me.	6	5	4	3	2	1
My clothing shows others how I think and feel about myself.	6	5	4	3	2	1
When I wear clothes that make me feel good, I am better able to talk with others.	6	5	4	3	2	1
When I look good in what I wear, I feel content with myself.	6	5	4	3	2	1
I try to buy clothing that makes me feel attractive.	6	5	4	3	2	1
Clothes help me become the person I want to be.	6	5	4	3	2	1
My clothing gives others an idea about my interests or activities.	6	5	4	3	2	1
I wear certain clothing styles to change the way my body looks.	6	5	4	3	2	1
Good quality clothes that look good on me make me feel competent.	6	5	4	3	2	1

Appendix B: Letter of Information



Page 1 of 2  
Date Created: December 5, 2008

Utah State University IRB Approved 12/10/2008  
Approval terminates: 12/09/2009  
Protocol No: 2216  
IRB Password Protected per IRB Specialist

## Letter of Information

CHANGE IN CLOTHING PERCEPTIONS IN RELATION TO SELF IN COLLEGE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE DRESS AND HUMANITY CLASS AT UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY

**Introduction/ Purpose:** Professor Brian Warnick in the Department of Agricultural Systems Technology and Education at Utah State University is conducting a research study to find out more about Change in Clothing Perceptions in Relation to Self in College Students Enrolled in the Dress and Humanity class at Utah State University. You have been asked to take part because you are enrolled in the Dress and Humanity class. There will be approximately 60 participants in this research.

**Procedures:** If you agree to participate in this research study, you will be asked to answer a short survey at the beginning and the end of the course. The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes each time to complete in class. We ask that you respond to each survey question honestly and completely.

**Risks:** There are no anticipated risks to the individuals who participate in this study.

**Benefits:** There may or may not be any direct benefit to you from these procedures. The investigator, however, may learn more about how clothing relates to self perception in college students. This information may be used to create effective curriculum development opportunities in which you could be a beneficiary of in the future.

**Explanation & offer to answer questions** Dr. Brian Warnick has explained this research study to you and answered your questions. If you have other questions, concerns, complaints, or research-related problems, you may reach Professor Warnick at (435) 797-0378 or by email at [brian.warnick@usu.edu](mailto:brian.warnick@usu.edu).

**Extra Cost(s)** There will be no cost for you to participate in the study.

**Voluntary nature of participation and right to withdraw without consequence:** Participation in research is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without consequence or loss of benefits.

**Confidentiality:** Research records will be kept anonymous, consistent with federal and state regulations. Participants will develop a code to maintain anonymity and connect pre- and post surveys. Only Dr. Brian Warnick and Jennifer Nielson will have access to the data which will be kept in a locked file cabinet in a locked room.



Page 2 of 2  
Date Created: December 5, 2008

Utah State University IRB Approved 12/10/2008  
Approval terminates: 12/09/2009  
Protocol No: 2216  
IRB Password Protected per IRB Specialist

### Letter of Information

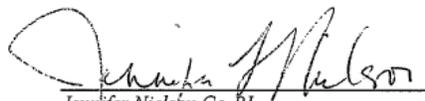
CHANGE IN CLOTHING PERCEPTIONS IN RELATION TO SELF IN COLLEGE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE DRESS AND HUMANITY CLASS AT UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY

**IRB Approval Statement** The Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the protection of human participants at USU has reviewed and approved this research study. If you have any pertinent questions or concerns about your rights or think the research may have harmed you, you may contact the IRB

Administrator at (435) 797-0567 or [irb@usu.edu](mailto:irb@usu.edu). If you have a concern or complaint about the research and you would like to contact someone other than the research team, you may contact the IRB Administrator to obtain information or to offer input.

**Investigator Statement** "I certify that the research study has been explained to the individual, by me or my research associates, and that the individual understands the nature and purpose, the possible risks and benefits associated with taking part in this research study. Any questions that have been raised have been answered."

  
Dr. Brian Warnick  
Principal Investigator  
(435) 797-0378

  
Jennifer Nielson Co-PI  
Student Researcher  
(435) 797-1561

Appendix C: Recruiting Script

**Paragraph read to students prior to administering the survey:**

**We are conducting a research study related to your clothing choices. The study will include a pre-course survey that should only take you a few minutes to complete. At the end of the semester we will also ask that you complete the survey again. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may refuse to answer any question.** However, your input is crucial to the success of this study and to the improvement of this course. If for some reason you do not wish to participate in this study, simply return the uncompleted survey. The answers you provide will be anonymous. Special precautions have been established to protect the anonymity of your responses. A code number which you will determine will be used to link your pre-course survey to your post-course survey. The instructor of this course will have no way of connecting your code number to you. Participation in this study will in no way influence your grade or status in this course. Your responses will be destroyed once the data has been tallied. This study is considered minimal risk. The benefit of this study could be improved course instruction for future students. Participants completing both the pre-course survey and the post-course survey will be provided with a small token of appreciation.

What questions do you have regarding this study prior to my administering the questionnaire?

Appendix D: PCS Use Permissions

From: **M. Suzanne Sontag** <sontag@msu.edu>  
Date: Oct 16, 2008 12:44 PM  
Subject: RE: Proximity of Clothing to Self Scale  
To: Jenn Nielson <jenn.nielson@aggiemail.usu.edu>  
Cc: Young-A Lee <ylee@iastate.edu>, "Jongnam Lee (Jongnam Lee)" <jongnamf@hanmail.net>

Dear Jennifer,

You have my permission to use the 39-item PCS Scale that I have attached. This is the appropriate version of the scale since the shorter scales have only been validated for use with adolescents (four factors, 24 items) and older persons (three factors, 19 items). It would be appropriate to complete a confirmatory factor analysis on the 39 items if your sample is large enough. This would help to confirm the factors (dimensions) of the scale for college students. I assume you have the CTRJ publication:

Sontag, M. S., & Lee, J. (2004). Proximity of Clothing to Self Scale. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 22(4), 161-177.

The Scale has also been tested on older persons and a different factor structure was obtained for this group than for that with adolescents. See the report:

Lee, Y., & Sontag, M. S. (2007). Validation of the Proximity of Clothing to Self Scale for older persons. *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles*, 31(6), 848-858.

You may wish to obtain the following two dissertations from interlibrary loan or by purchase from University microfilms:

Young-A Lee, *Older persons' successful aging: Relationship among proximity of clothing to self, age identity, and self actualization*, Doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University, 2005.

Jongnam Lee, *Proximity of clothing to self: Its relationship to self-perception, clothing deprivation and gender among adolescents*, Doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University, 1997.

In return for the use of the scale, I would appreciate it if you would give me a report of your findings; this could either be an unbound copy of your thesis (preferred) or a summary report.

If you have any further questions, please contact me by e-mail or phone (517-351-1034). I wish you success in your research and look forward to hearing of the results.

Sincerely,

M. Suzanne Sontag, Ph.D.

Professor Emerita, Michigan State University

**From:** Jenn Nielson [mailto:[jenn.nielson@aggiemail.usu.edu](mailto:jenn.nielson@aggiemail.usu.edu)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 15, 2008 4:01 PM  
**To:** [sontag@msu.edu](mailto:sontag@msu.edu)  
**Subject:** Proximity of Clothing to Self Scale

Dr. Sontag,

I am a graduate student at Utah State University and am working on my thesis. I am studying how self-concept as related to dress changes after taking a Dress and Humanity class. How does education in the world of dress change how students perceive themselves. I have had difficulty finding an instrument to use and came across your work. I would like your permission to use your Proximity of Clothing to Self scale in my research along with the Tennessee Self-Concept scale that I have already made arrangements to use.

Thank you for your time.

--

Jennifer Nielson  
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