

SEMESTER I

Course Title: FASHION: DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT (THEORY)

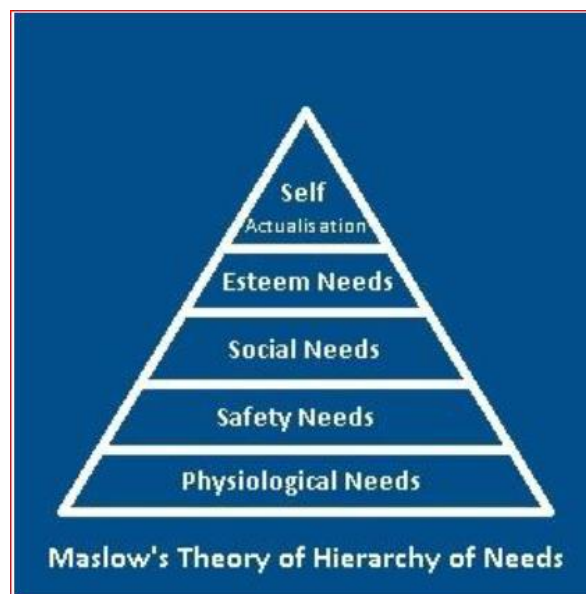
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Unit II: Social Aspects of Clothing

- Clothing Functions and Theories of Origin
- Individuality and Conformity

NEED AND FUNCTIONS OF CLOTHING

Theory of Hierarchy of Human Needs: Abraham Maslow propounded what is now known as the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs explaining the factors behind human motivation and the hierarchical interrelationship among these factors. It explains human behavior by showing how humans deal with more basic needs before moving on to the next set of needs. This is also relevant for understanding the functions of clothing which addresses multiple human needs. The diagram given below depicts Maslow's view of the hierarchy of human needs.



Clothing meets all the five basic human needs that are part of the pyramid of human needs conceived by Maslow. There are distinct functions of clothing that meet each of the indicated needs. The relationship between the human needs and clothing functions are as follows:

- **Physiological Needs:** Physiological needs are a prerequisite to human survival. Clothing protects people from natural climatic conditions such as freezing cold, extreme heat and heavy rain.

- **Safety Needs:** Clothing and associated accessories also help overcome danger from enemies as well as other living organisms that pose a threat to human life. There are also protective clothing and accessories that safeguards human life from wars, toxic chemicals, biological agents and nuclear radiation.
- **Social Needs:** The third level is not based on basic needs but instead on psychological or emotional needs. It is also referred to as the love and belonging stage and includes the need for interpersonal relationships and social connections such as friendships, love, social connectivity, group affiliations etc. When people express acceptance in receiving and giving gifts as a symbol of love and belonging, when consumers trust and follow fashion trends by purchasing and wearing clothes and accessories similar to that worn by friends and even strangers, it inducts and situates the individual within a social group/community.
- **Esteem Needs:** This is classified into two categories - first is self-esteem in terms of dignity and achievement; second is the desire for respect from others in terms of status and prestige. The bride and bridegroom feel special by being the focus of attention in their wedding ensembles; a graduating student feels a sense of achievement in the convocation gown and cap; an army officer feels pride to receive medals, badges and stars that indicate rank; army and police personnel feel proud to wear their uniform.
- **Self- Actualization Needs:** Individuals experience self-fulfillment when they attain personal growth which can be expressed in many ways including clothing that is in sync with individual's self-image and the consumption preferences regarding everyday clothing.

FUNCTIONS OF CLOTHING

1. **Protection and Comfort Function-** Survival is a prime motivation of human life. In Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the physiological needs and safety concerns are primary and therefore placed at the base of the pyramid. Clothing is among the physiological needs necessary for survival as it is essential to protect human life from the vagaries of the seasons as well as natural and man-made dangers. The following are some of the specific ways in which clothing safeguards human life:
 - **Protection from weather hazards:** Human body has limits beyond which it cannot cope with the extremes of whether. Warm clothing worn in layers of inner wear and outer wear help the body to withstand different levels of cold. People are able to live and work even at sub-zero temperatures using clothing that helps to keep the body warm. Specialized clothing such as the raincoat and accessories such as the hat and umbrella protect people from rain.
 - **Protection from Environmental Danger:** There is a link between man and the environment. People need custom made clothing and accessories to avoid

becoming victims of environmental danger. Clothes protect the body from insect bites, shoes protect the feet from dirt and discomfort of walking over rough surfaces. Astronauts wear high technology space suits to survive in difficult atmospheric conditions. Surgeons wear surgical masks and gloves to keep the operation theatre sterile and prevent the patient from infection.

- **Protection from Occupational Hazards:** Threats to human life and health from man-made products, machinery and systems have been increasing. In response, the clothing industry has been engaged in producing a variety of protective garments and accessories that shield people and particularly industrial and professional workers from occupational hazards such as bruises, cuts, burns, and other injuries. Advancements in technology has also helped the clothing industry to use fabrics and materials that are resistant to stains, contamination, corrosion from acids, fires, electrical current and radiation. Masks are made with advanced materials to help rescue workers to do their job even inside highly toxic environments. Hard hats, steeltoed shoes, and safety goggles have been part of the standard safety gear at construction sites and manufacturing plants. An array of sportswear accessories like compression sleeves, guards, anti-slip pads, back supports etc. are worn to protect the players from high impact injury.
- **Protection from Enemies:** Traditionally legionary soldiers wore armour, helmets and carried shields to protect themselves from enemy attack. Initially these were made of leather or plant fibre or even animal bones and horns. But as swords and spears became stronger and heavier, soldiers needed sturdier protection. Metallic armour made of iron, brass and copper continued to dominate till gun powder and use of projectiles were introduced along with high power cannons and long range guns. The search for alternative protective clothing that can withstand increasing fire power of the modern weaponry resulted in bulletproof vests. Some of the new types of protective clothing specially developed for modern warfare include nitrile that protects hands even inside liquid chemicals, Hazmat suits which safeguards people from hazardous substances like chemicals, biological agents and radioactive materials, and NBC suits which are to be worn in case of nuclear or biological warfare. Camouflage clothing reduces visibility of soldiers and reconnaissance teams. As clothing cannot withstand the power of modern ballistic weapons, the focus has shifted to armoured vehicles.

2. **Identity Function-** Identity is not only about distinct nature of the dress but also the intention with which it is worn. Various civilizations also developed dress codes to distinguish among the different socio-economic strata of society and other professions. There are distinctive cultural traditions in every society. Traditional dress express the wearer's pride in their heritage. There are norms of clothing for the bride and groom at each ceremony at weddings. There are norms of austere clothing for funeral rituals. There

are differences in dressing at religious and community based events. Clothing practices addresses and satisfies the psychological need for a common feeling of identity and belonging to a community. It can even be an accessory or simply a tattoo that is symbolic of their common bond. Clothing has traditionally expressed ideas about the evolution of gender in terms of feminine and masculine appearance through various dress styles. It also expresses the deviation of individuals from the larger social group, thus contributing to the creation of subgroups. Uniforms also play an important role in creating a new identity in lieu of their original which could have been very different. A soldier gains a new identity after joining a regiment as wearing a regimental uniform. This, in turn, creates and reinforces a new and strong bond of cooperation among the members of the concerned regiment replacing their original identity as civilians. The same psychological feeling of pride and belonging is also seen among uniformed professionals particularly those belonging to the armed forces who treat their uniforms as a mark of the privilege of protecting the country and its people. Uniforms also help to distinguish people belonging to different professions. In a crowded place, the uniform of police personnel would visually signify a source of help. The same applies in a hospital where the uniforms and lab coats help to identify a doctor or nurse in case of a medical emergency. The same applies to a flight attendant, referee of games, or a member of the clergy. In schools, the identity of students is established with the help of fabric colours, design, and manner of dressing with accessories such as emblems, badges and patches. Students may occasionally wear specific pieces of jewellery such as class rings on special occasions. Ceremonial garments worn on special occasions also create a sense of pride and belonging. The graduating students look forward to wearing convocation gowns and caps that indicate the successful completion of their studies. Members of religious organizations wear distinctive types of robes and symbolic accessories that are unique to them. Sportspersons who represent their country at international sports events take immense pride in wearing their country's uniform. Fans of football clubs, cricket teams and other professional games also proudly wear the colours and the insignia of their favourite teams to signify their emotional allegiance.

3. **Status and Prestige Function:** Historically, clothes played a major role as a symbol of a person's status. The kings and queens were the most elaborately and extravagantly dressed personalities with elaborate wardrobes for different occasions; others at the court could not replicate the royal robes. There were also decrees in several kingdoms that reserved certain types of dress only for a designated few and forbade all others from wearing such clothes thus creating a differential status quo (to maintain the social status). Mandatory dress codes with clear differentiation of status are seen inlay in uniforms of the armed forces. Service stripes on a military sleeve, merit badges on a Boy Scout's shirt, as well as the captain's band worn by a sports person, indeed add to their status. While vestiges of the traditional dress codes among a number of village communities still

exist, the more dominant form of differentiation in status is between the rich and poor. Clothes convey the status and prestige of the wearer by signifying the culture, economic status, and social power. Thus it becomes a powerful pointer of social relations and to enforce class differences. Expensive clothes are associated with the rich and the powerful. The rich are willing to pay more for designer fashion labels, popular logos, and expensive jewellery to demonstrate their prestige, higher socio-economic status, and peer approval. Both the clothes and the wearer receive recognition and social acceptance to exclusive high society events.

4. Ornamental and Aesthetic Function: While the adornment theory explains the human inclination towards beauty, aesthetics prevent us from the experience of viewing unaesthetic objects. The psychological association between poverty and lack of elegance results in ignoring those whose sense of dressing may not appeal to urban aesthetic sensibilities. The following are some of the ways in which clothing performs its aesthetic function:

- **Design:** Design is the fundamental activity of designers to create new and innovative products including apparel. Good design balances the elements and principles of design to complement the wearer's body. This emphasizes the positive physical attributes of the person and creates a good impression on the onlookers.
- **Surface Ornamentation:** Surface ornamentation gives value addition to fabrics through weaving and handcrafted techniques such as embroidery, dyeing and printing applied on finished fabrics or dresses help enhance the aesthetic appeal of the clothing.
- **Accessories:** Accessories are coordinated to complement the aesthetics appeal of clothing and complete the look and to direct attention towards the wearer. Jewellery, wristwatches, shoes, bags and make-up are the accessories that maximize the impact of the dress. Even uniforms are designed with two versions - one that is worn on a daily basis and the other with additional accessories for use during ceremonial occasions.

5. Sociability and Conformity Function: People generally have a need for love and belonging as they also fear isolation. Clothes can indirectly generate identification with a group or community through the performance of sociability and attraction:

- **Indigenous Clothing:** Traditional clothing engender the feeling of belonging to a community. Indigenous dressing is also useful in displaying one's cultural identity.
- **Conformity Dressing:** People express loyalty to their community by adhering to its unwritten yet implicit dress codes.
- **Uniforms:** Regimented dressing instils a feeling of belonging and camaraderie with the concerned group. Uniforms also announce the professional identity of

the wearer and forges a bond with the other similarly-dressed people in the group.

- **Special Occasion Clothing:** When a special occasion requires people to dress formally, it generates a sense of social belonging and social behavior. Dressing in appropriate attire for a convocation or wedding ceremony emphasizes the significance of social participation and makes the occasion memorable.

6. Self-Expression and Actualization Function: In Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, self-expression and actualization are placed at the top of the pyramid. Self-actualization, according to Maslow, represents the growth of an individual towards self-growth, gaining knowledge, and seeking a deeper meaning of life. In Maslow's view, the need for self-actualization is distinct from other needs. While the physiological, safety, social and esteem functions address the basic motives, the self-actualization function addresses higher motives to develop an integrated personality. For example, the physiological need for protection arises from the inability of our body to withstand weather hazards such as cold, heat or rain or to go without food and water for long periods. Self-actualization, on the other hand, may be about concerns about environmental impact of increasing consumerism. Thus Maslow's description of self-actualizing people delineates an ideal of human character. Those who seek self-actualization, tend to use their dressing as a way to express their individuality and to communicate their core message with others. Self-expression and actualization is expressed through clothing such as a simple robe with distinctive appeal. The following are some of the important ways in which clothing can serve our growth needs.

- **Acceptance of self, others and nature:** This is one of the basic requirements of self actualization – food, sleep and air. This translates into wearing comfortable clothes without making any attempt to conceal the flaws in the body, nor body-shaming others.
- **Reliance on own experiences and judgement:** This implies that one's own clothing choices can be made without the influence of other people or extraneous factors.
- **Spontaneous and natural:** Spontaneity and being true to one's own nature entails making a choice of how one prefers to appear and not what others' expectations.
- **Task Centred:** Self-actualization implies that humans have a higher mission that is beyond the self and that the clothing style would be in sync with this mission.
- **Autonomy:** Self-actualization demands that freedom from reliance on external authority or other people. This implies that you would buy clothes with your own resources and also focus on earning the resources that are needed.
- **Continued renewal of appreciation:** This is about the need for self-esteem, self-respect, and positive feelings derived from admiration. In terms of clothing, this requires the renewal of appreciation of their qualities without experiencing boredom or deeming them obsolete.

- **Profound interpersonal relationships:** The value for meaningful relationships expresses itself through respect and understanding for others. This may translate into 'Slow fashion' where limited quantity of clothes are made with care for the slow handmade processes and respect for artisanal knowledge and skills.
- **Socially compassionate:** Sensitivity and empathy for wider society could be expressed through clothes that are responsibly made with concern for society, without environmental degradation.

THEORIES OF THE ORIGIN OF CLOTHING

1. **Modesty Theory:** Modesty of a woman refers to her dressing or behaving in a way so as to avoid impropriety or indecency, and especially to avoid attracting sexual attention. As a function of dress, modesty is concerned with the concealing of oneself and the body. Followers of the Modesty theory propose that morality is dependent upon modesty. In other words, modesty is a way to overcome the feeling of shame associated with exposure of the body and therefore seeks its concealment through clothing. The attribute of demureness determines how people dress. However, the Modesty theory has been refuted by other theorists with different viewpoints. Some suggest that modesty arises out of self-consciousness regarding one's imperfect body and to defend against negative body image. The Social Norm theorists argue that modesty does not arise from shame but from the need for self-propriety and privacy, and that the socio-cultural environment as well as norms of strictness or permissiveness in society influence the codes of decency regarding body covering. Others opine that modesty is not instinctive but is learnt or imposed; the concept depends on variables such as religion, culture, age, place, activity, social status and personal preferences. This points to the fact that modesty may have different connotations in different cultures. Questions pertaining to modesty such as how much skin can be revealed or concealed forms the focus of studies on media and celebrity culture. Historically, the concept of modesty has not been stagnant except for consistent norms that are rooted in religious faith. What is considered modest in one community may not be a necessary co-relate to modesty in others. Early paintings and statuettes across different civilizations often depict both men and women with bare bodies. Clothing served an important function in the display of social status where the extent of the covered body could convey social status as free citizens or slaves. For example during the Roman Empire, marital status was indicated with married women wearing long dresses that completely covered the body.

From a fashion perspective, the Modesty theory has had two distinct expressions. First, is the socio-cultural, political and religious norms of clothing in some countries that have also played a role in defining modesty. In some civilisations, the veiling of faces indicated status- women of class were required to wear veils, while others were not allowed to do so. In Iran, wearing the hijab was banned in 1936 but it was made mandatory in 1979. The growing market for modest fashion which is currently estimated to be worth over \$400 billion is for the cosmopolitan consumer who wants coverage in accordance with her faith but with style. The other expression of the modesty theory is women's clothing in public life including the workplace. In the Victorian era in England, the length of dresses and skirts were prescribed for women and children. Women and girls of 16 years and above were required to wear skirts where hemlines reached below the ankles. During World War II, rationing of clothes was imposed, for example the skirts of the women's Utility Suits were standardized to knee length. Requirements of the workplace also had a major role in the emergence of power suits in the 1980's. As women began to occupy more and more of executive positions in corporate management, they preferred dresses that reflected authority along with modesty and did not in any way objectify women. Power dressing has brought in full length suits and knee length skirts whose necklines revealed nothing but the collarbones.

2.Immodesty Theory: The history of civilization shows that both modest and immodest clothes have coexisted. The Immodesty theory recognizes the basic instinct of the human beings to arouse the sexual interest of the opposite sex and proposes that clothing is worn for this purpose. Human history has evidence that even before leather or vegetation based clothing was worn, the body was painted and accessorised with colourful feathers to draw the attention of the opposite sex. This behaviour may have been learnt by watching the colourful display of plumage that some species of birds used for attracting mates. The Immodesty theory argues that the impact of trying to attract the attention of the opposite sex can be maximised by adopting a clever combination of hiding and revealing tactics through provocative clothing as a sexual tool to highlight private parts of the body. The psychology underlying the immodesty theory is that familiarity breeds indifference while concealment breeds interest. Immodest dressing has been focused on drawing the attention of the onlooker to the shape of certain specific parts of the body –

- i) upper torso (chest/breasts),
- ii) waist,
- iii) hips,
- iv) buttocks,
- v) legs,
- vi) arms, and
- vii) Height.

Body posture also impacts the appearance and the way in which the clothes conceal and reveal the body. Immodest dressing has also been subject to the shift in emphasis on the particular zone of the body. For example, though short hemlines that revealed a bit of leg was fashionable in the 1920's, lengthened hemlines that highlighted the body silhouette (body outline) was the trend in the 1930's. The 1940's were dominated by structured shoulders and shorter hemlines, while longer skirts with small waistlines and accentuated bust typified the 1950's. In the 1960's, immodest dressing was associated with the growing clamour for women's liberation expressed through the mini-skirt. Immodest clothes became a way to challenge clothing restrictions on women. The popularity of midriff-baring cropped tops of the 1980's, slip dresses of the 1990's, low rise jeans of the 2000's and the bold fashion of the contemporary music stars are considered to be examples of immodest dressing. However, perceptions about immodesty differ widely from community to community as well as from person to person. Some of the major factors that account for the differences in the perception about immodesty include the following:

- 1) **Situational Factors:** Attitude towards immodest clothing has been historically conditioned both by societal norms and the individual's personal disposition towards sexuality.
- 2) **Religious Faith:** Historically, religious teachings have had a bearing on the community's views on immodesty.
- 3) **Psychological factors:** People's psychological inclination towards pleasing oneself or pleasing others has had an impact on their wearing of immodest clothes.
- 4) **Physiological Factors:** Differences in anatomical proportions even among people wearing the same kind of clothes also play a role in reflecting immodesty.

5) **Physical and Psychological Comfort Factor:** While some people are comfortable wearing different types of clothes including those that may be perceived as immodest, there are others who may be uncomfortable in wearing immodest clothes.

3. **Adornment Theory:** The Adornment theory emphasises the fact that human beings began to adorn themselves even before they started wearing clothes as we know them now. The desire for adornment is considered to be natural and instinctive, motivated by the desire to feel good about oneself and to appear attractive to others. The aesthetic value of beauty is enhanced by the other embedded qualities such as amiability which appears to be welcoming and therefore attractive. The essence of adornment is the positive emotional reaction in the wearer and on the viewer. The Adornment theory also reflects a holistic approach to fashion. Its scope extends beyond clothing to encompass accessories and cosmetics to create an integrated fashion appeal. While the Modesty theory aims at demureness, and the Immodesty theory aims at sexual attraction, the Adornment theory focuses on enhancing beauty and makes use of all elements and principles to enhance the aesthetic impact of appearance. This theory emphasizes that adornment also draws inspiration from nature and emulates it. Designers draw inspiration from nature and develop abstractions in the form of decoration. Design involves colours, textures, and the use of various materials for adornment. Adornment through creative interpretations of surface ornamentation on textiles for clothing and home décor is the basis of a important activity in the fashion industry known as fashion forecasting. Fashion designers incorporate aspects of tradition and modernity for fabric development, processing and garment production. Different embellishment techniques are used to raise the adornment quotient of the collections which include traditional surface treatments such as dyeing and printing, embroidery, bead work, lace work and several other fabric manipulation techniques. Addition of accessories is also an important way of enhancing the adornment value of fashion. Historically, adornment was not confined to dress and accessories. Three different methods of body adornment have become an integral part of contemporary fashion as well. These are:

a) **Body modification:** Historical examples of body modification include several examples. First is the now-abolished practice of Chinese foot binding for artificially creating tiny lotus feet; second is wearing of large circular lip plates by the Kichepo women in Sudan who consider themselves undressed without their lip plates; and third is the tradition of

artificially elongating the necks of girls with a series of brass rings around the neck in the Paduang tribe also known as Kayans. The same concept is reflected in modern society through cosmetic surgery procedures.

- b) **Tattooing:** Traditionally body tattooing were used by different tribes for creating distinct identity marks for the tribe as well as the rank held by the person within the tribe. Examples include tattooing by the Thracians to indicate rank, the elaborate facial tattoos as marks of distinction and esteem of the Maoris of New Zealand, and the tradition of body tattooing which holds symbolic meaning for the Japanese Yakuza. In contemporary society, tattooing has become fairly widespread fashion statement among the youth.
 - c) **Body painting:** Historically body painting and face painting have been part of rituals. For example, girls in some Congolese tribes oil themselves and apply red camwood powder in order to look more attractive. Royal ladies of some ancient Chinese dynasties as well as Japanese geisha girls applied heavy face make-up highlighted with the powder of ground rice and white lead. Although body or face painting is now limited mainly to sports fans and participants in religious rituals, the underlying concept provides the foundation for the entire beauty and cosmetics industry. The norms of beauty held by a culture may be different from that of other cultures. The desirability and significance of specific decorations is determined by the traditions and values of indigenous cultures. In some regions, people decorate their bodies with paint and ornaments everyday or on occasion. Bodies may be ritually scarred, bound for adornment, and decorated with tattoos and piercings. People may wear necklaces made of animal teeth, shells, or seeds.
4. **Protection Theory:** The Protection theory is closely related to the origin of clothing. Although the early human beings who lived in warmer climatic zones did not require added protection to their body, those who moved away from Africa and migrated into the Northern hemisphere needed to cover their body particularly to protect themselves from the freezing temperatures. Early human beings who lived in colder climates used available materials from the surroundings to protect themselves from the vagaries of weather including cold, heat and rain as well as hazards of insect or snake bites. The raw materials included remnants of fur and skin of the hunted animals as well as vegetation that they learnt to process as bark cloth, and even fibres from rain or river washed plants. The problems that they faced in using these materials would have prompted them to look for better ways of using them as external cover

for their body. Clothing has also served as a camouflage during warfare. The experience of using more effective body coverings gave the opportunity to think of other ways of protecting themselves. It gave rise to the development of different kinds of armours that was helpful in fending off enemy attacks by sword or spear. As technology developed and warfare became more mechanized, protective uniforms for combat were made for protecting soldiers from the impact of bullets.

INDIVIDUALITY AND CONFORMITY IN CLOTHING

All people seek an identity and a sense of belongingness through conforming to a given set of norms, and yet at the same time they strive to achieve some distinction as individual human beings. These two social tendencies – conformity and individuality – form the basis for all fashion behaviour. George Simmel emphasized that both are essential to the establishment of fashion and that should one of these be absent, fashion will not be formed, its sway will abruptly end. Either one carried to an extreme, is incompatible with human social existence; complete order and rigidity contradicts the need for new experience, but complete freedom or normlessness may lead to a state of chaos.

A clothing norm represents the typical or accepted manner of dressing shown by a social group. Conformity means acceptance of or adherence to a clothing norm, that is, dressing in accordance with the norm of a specified group. With the exception of the term style, all of the terms mentioned earlier – fashion, classic, fad etc.-may be considered as clothing norms and depend on varying degrees of conformity.

“Conformity is expressed by the degree to which individuals follow the norm formations of the times. Styles, classics, fads and fashion are all part of the normative formulation of a society.” Expressed in specific types of clothing, norms may be differentiated on the basis of their relative endurance and the magnitude of their acceptance in the society.

Conformity is the process by which individuals adapt their behaviour to some pre-existent norms. It is a form of social interaction in which one tries to maintain standards set by a group. Although often subjected to value judgements, excessive or over-conformity tends to evoke negative feelings. Conformity is neither good nor bad. Although nonconformity or individuality contributes interest and change, conformity lends stability to our lives and to society.

There are some areas of activity in which society maintains rather rigid control over human behaviour. In others, conformity to or deviation from the accepted norm is a matter of choice left up to the individual; in still others, non-conformity may even be encouraged and rewarded.

Within the broad range of human activity related to dress, adherence to clothing norms is largely voluntary. The desire to conform – consciously or unconsciously – to the established norms of the group appears to be strongly reinforced in human behaviour.

Conformity is an important part of a person's personality structure at all stages of life. It is first learned in childhood in the form of obedience to parents and teachers. Society and schools have tried to force individuals to conform to a single behaviour pattern.

Lucy C. Taylor found that 4 college women who considered conforming dress behaviour important placed a low value on aesthetics, creativity, and individuality. They were not interested in whether or not the dress was beautiful but only in whether or not it was acceptable and like that of the students around them. Imitating the clothing behaviour of a high-status person gives a feeling of assured success to some. Young teenagers are apt to copy the current idols of the entertainment or athletic worlds. Women and men have a variety of sources to copy, depending on their roles and values. Pressures toward conformity also are thought to be related to the need for maintaining harmonious relations with others. A number of studies have identified a positive relationship between conformity to group standards of dress and peer acceptance. Conformity appears to have certain positive social values. In the mass society, consumer demand for a style of dress often is enhanced by the fact that others are wearing it. This provides evidence of the degree of conformity that exists, nationally or locally, to a given clothing norm. Conformity in dress appears to be widespread, and the desire to be like others is strongly reinforced in human interaction.

The varieties of individuality are numerous, some socially acceptable, desirable and expected. Those who start fashion, fashion leaders, etc belong to this category who express independent creative minds. Fashion leaders are nonconformists in that they constantly seek to be different from those who follow their actions. Their behaviour is based on an awareness of the norm and a desire to set themselves apart from it.

The true individualist is one who can make a decision that is independent of group action. Such behaviour requires an independence of thought and action that stems from a set of strong and internalized standards, and it is "inner-directed". That is characterized by individual conscience and self-imposed goals. The individualist is often regarded as something of an eccentric and consequently must have the strength to withstand the criticism or ridicule brought on by deviations in dress.

Individuality fosters creative expression and facilitates an intelligent, rational, and free choice among the available alternatives in the selection of clothing. Individuality in dress requires a strong sense of personal conviction and psychological security.

Conformity is both necessary and desirable to the extent that it provides for the transmission of functional normative patterns and gives the individual a sense of belonging. Several types of nonconformity may be observed in the clothing behaviour of individuals and groups in society. Fashion leaders themselves are nonconformists in their striving to be different. The individualist is guided by an independence of thought and action that neither relies on group opinion nor deliberately counteracts it. Conformity helps people to fit more easily into their social roles, but individuality is necessary for a completely rational choice among available alternatives.

Sociability and Conformity: People generally have a need for love and belonging as they also fear isolation. Clothes can indirectly generate identification with a group or community through the performance of sociability and attraction:

- **Indigenous Clothing:** Traditional clothing engenders the feeling of belonging to a community. Indigenous dressing is also useful in displaying one's cultural identity.
- **Conformity Dressing:** People express loyalty to their community by adhering to its unwritten yet implicit dress codes.
- **Uniforms:** Regimented dressing instils a feeling of belonging and camaraderie with the concerned group. Uniforms also announce the professional identity of the wearer and forges a bond with the other similarly-dressed people in the group.
- **Special Occasion Clothing:** When a special occasion requires people to dress formally, it generates a sense of social belonging and social behavior. Dressing in appropriate attire for a convocation or wedding ceremony emphasizes the significance of social participation and makes the occasion memorable.