

NEWPORT INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CURRENT ISSUES IN ARTS AND MANAGEMENT (NIJCIAM) Volume 3 Issue 1 2023

Evaluation of the Relationship between Colour choices in Manicure and Pedicure and Self-image Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

Manicure and pedicure is not simply an act to look beautiful, but also a means of communication to express oneself and to strengthen one's image and personality. This paper ascertained the motive behind the colour choice for manicure and pedicure procedure among female students, as well as its impact on their self-image satisfaction. A cross sectional study was conducted, while data was collected using pre-tested, structured, face-to-face interview. Findings indicated that social media influence (72.5%), beauty purposes (57.5%), the need to express oneself (67.5%), follow the trend of the day (47.5%), and build alliance (12.5%) were among the determinants of colour choices in manicure/pedicure among undergraduates; in the same way as, self confidence (60%), being trendy (72.5%), beauty (77.5), status conferment and selfcare (52.5%) came up as the impact of manicure/pedicure colour choices on the image satisfaction of participants. The paper therefore recommended the need for colour to be incorporated in beauty styling for women.

Keywords: Relationship, Colour, Manicure, Pedicure and Self-Image

INTRODUCTION

Colour plays a central role in the establishment of new codes and rules in the fashion cycle. It is crucial in signifying a 'fashion trend' and for those within the fashion industry itself, it is considered one of its most outward and visible signs of change at all stages along the system of provision from design and manufacturing, to advertising and retail display [1]. As a signifier of change, it is colour which dictates the mood or ambience of a season and it is colour which supports the whole towering edifice of fashion [2].

According to [3], beauty design is a communication that emotionally communicates the direction of human beauty and life. It coexists with style and colour. Thus, the expression of individuality to show one's own beauty, which is different from others, gives an important meaning to the visual and outward appearance of colour in the formation of women's image and beauty style. As their image is judged important by the perspective of others [4], women use clothes, accessories, hair, makeup, and nail art as tools to express their individuality [5]. Colour is an important asset in personal image that can be evaluated positively and is used as a means of communication, and even other characteristics of individuals, including images, are positive factors for natural expression of personality and social interpersonal relationships. It plays an important communication function. Unequivocally, colour is the surest way to express oneself [6]; and can express one's own image direction and characteristics suitable for social activities [7].

As the competitiveness of appearance becomes more important in modern society, interest in colour is increasing as a way to quickly improve one's image, create a good image, and express one's personality [8]. Images are made up of subjective judgments, but one of the roles that shape and influence them is colour [4]. Colour is a unique linguistic and visual image that exclusively stimulates people's emotions, and is a very important factor in determining an image in the field of nail art [3]. Therefore, colours can express various and universal image

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characteristics in a formative language, and these characteristics can be expressed in a variety of ways in nail art styles [3].

Nail art is a method of complementing imperfections and expressing beauty on the hands and feet using colors that appear visually. Nail art communicates several messages to viewers, one of which is status. [9],states, “because women who work with their hands cannot maintain carefully decorated, long, or even very well groomed fingernails, fingernail length and grooming is a sign of status and wealth”. Beyond status and wealth, nail art communicates affiliations, beliefs, or style depending on the image/design represented. [9],asserts that, “in some contemporary forms of fashion and adornment, the decoration of the body itself has become a template upon which aesthetic sensibilities are inscribed and through which selfhood is articulated”. The images, texts, and designs chosen for nail art reflect some facets of a woman’s self, supporting this argument. However, body adornments like nail art may not be perceived in the way the wearer desires. [8],states that body adornment is “the seat of permanent conflict where the contradictory question of perception is played out between the identity image generated by the self and the image of the self as perceived by others”. Body adornment then becomes a means of communication and mediation between people. Against this backdrop, this paper intends to find out the propelling factor behind the colour choice for manicure/pedicure procedure among female undergraduates.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- i. To ascertain what informs the colour choice of female undergraduates in manicure and pedicure.
- ii. To determine the impact of manicure/pedicure colour choice on self-image satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

The paper is a qualitative study, wherein the researcher used in-depth interview to obtain responses from the respondents. A campus-based cross sectional study was conducted among 40 undergraduate students. Data was collected using pre-tested, structured, face-to-face interview. Purposive sampling method was used to select the students.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Data indicated that beauty/fashion purposes (57.5%) was responsible for the colour choice made, just as most of the respondents (47.5%) largely affirmed their conformity to manicure/pedicure colour and designs as a result of what is trending at each point in time. The global nail care industry continues to grow due to ever-changing fashion trends among women; consequently, as much as colour plays a crucial role in the expression of individuality, the choice for a particular nail colour could be considered as a means of reassurance of self image. Similarly, 72.5% of the respondents agreed to social media being a huge determinant of their manicure/pedicure colour choices. This could be as a result of the fact that social media has played a large role in the development and widespread appeal of nail art [10]. Social media has paved the way for more exciting and innovative nail art. According to [5], social media is “a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations...and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content.” Social media platforms have made nail art accessible for everyone and everyday wear; no longer is nail art some luxury privy only to celebrities. Social media use is becoming a part of daily life for people all over the world, and nail art has a large presence on various social media platforms. Thus, since young people are frequent users of social media, it is possible that they will at some point see a hand donning nail art. Social media plays a key role in influencing colour brands among women who wear manicured nails, as pictures, videos and processes to achieve such art are shared on several platforms which bring out the desire in the viewer, to duplicate the manicure/pedicure designs found on their favorite celebrities, artists, or influencers. One of the respondents explains how her choice of colour has been largely patterned after a number of celebrities: “I believe myself and a lot of other girls follow celebrities on their Facebook and Instagram pages, and are attracted to the kind of manicure designs they wear on their hands and feet. But most importantly, they do so to get the latest styles, and they try to use the same nail length and the colour so as to replicate exactly what they have seen. In fact, most of us go with our phones to the salon so that we can show the manicurist the videos or pictures as the case may be.” Another undergraduate, a 300 level student of Estate Management, said she is a regular visitor of blogs and Youtube where she learns how to work on her nails. “Sometimes the bloggers tell you what colour to use and the need to be conscious of your skin colour. They provide a range of colours, how to mix them, and what suits what, and all that..., and when I practice them, the results are often wonderful.” In this way therefore, social media is serving as source of inspiration for nail artists, as well as a platform to share their work and build their businesses [10].

Colour choice as a form of creativity (35%) and self expression (67.5%) received affirmative responses. Expression is the process in which a person relates their thoughts, feelings, and ideas. According to Kim and Ko (2007), expression is one of the most highly-regarded and venerated values in Western civilization due to the near-deification of “the individual” in our society. One of the prevalent perspectives among the undergraduates in this

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study was that nail colours and designs serve as a major instrument for self expression, both for creative and expressive reasons. In the opinion of Brown and [2], “the creative act also associated with self-identification, being completely involved in, and with, the work that an individual creates. During the process, the creative work becomes an extension of the self who is completely immersed in the action”. In view of this, a colour choice in manicure/pedicure can be a way for women to express themselves which in turn reflects their individuality. Such inventiveness is articulated through designs, images, colors, or text. To another respondent in her final year, one of the most appealing things about manicure/pedicure being a means for creativity is the fact that it allows one to play with colours.

Roach and Eicher (1979) cited in [11] aver that personal adornment is “a communicative symbol that serves crucial functions within human lives”. As a form of personal adornment, nail art communicates one’s creativity. Nail art also allows women to be expressive.

Furthermore, findings show that aside for the fun (32.5%) of trying out different colours and designs on one’s nails, another premise that materialized was colour choice borne out of social construct. 22.5% of the participants affirmed this concept, noting that they were colours that were completely in contrast with their beliefs and social values.

In addition, 12.5% choose alliance as a determining factor. This agrees with the position of [12] who asserts that bonding took place as a matter of circumstance and survival. Women bonded, formed alliances, and supported one another. In contemporary times, women still participate in activities that facilitate bonding. [13] further adds, holding hands while painting nails is a platonic touch that kindles feelings of bonding. It is also important to note that the touching done while painting nails is often accompanied by talking. The dual process of touching and talking promotes a level of comfort between women and supports the theme that wearing nail art offers women the opportunity to bond.

In table 2, data reveals that manicure/pedicure contributes to self-image satisfaction among the respondents in that it produces the feeling of self confidence (60%), being trendy (72.5%), the feeling of being beautiful (77.5%), status conferment (45%) as well as self-care (52.5%). Supporting this line of thought, [14] writes that, body image dissatisfaction can make an individual withdraw from society and among peers. It is common knowledge that in modern times, beauty especially among females is defined partly by body structure. Once the individual perceives either through remarks from people or by self evaluation that his/her body appearance is incomparable to that of others, it tends to affect their general feeling and well being.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

Manicure/pedicure is not simply an act to look beautiful, but also a means of communication to express oneself and to strengthen one's image and personality. Accordingly, the results of this study indicate that female undergraduate students gained more satisfaction with their self image through the colour choices made for their manicure/pedicure, and are more ready to delve into the process as a way to express their individuality through different nail arts and colours. This paper recommends that there is need for colour to be incorporated in beauty styling with clear consideration for self-images of women.

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Nebo, Njideka Agu-Ukamaka (2023). Evaluation of the Relationship between Colour choices in Manicure and Pedicure and Self-image Satisfaction. *NEWPORT INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CURRENT ISSUES IN ARTS AND MANAGEMENT (NIJCIAM)* 3(1): 1-4.

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