
The Trend in Fashion: Stylistic Options and Impact on the Dress Code for Fashion Students at Malaysian Polytechnic

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Abstract

Fashion influences lifestyle and has an impact on all stages of life. Fashion also reflects an individual's personality, allowing them to express themselves through the style of their clothing. Fashion and trends will develop swiftly each year, changing and not remaining stagnant. The dynamics of fashion trends and their impact on undergraduate fashion students from the third semester of the Diploma in Fashion Design, particularly concerning adherence to dress codes at Polytechnic Ibrahim Sultan. Fashion is not merely a superficial expression but a powerful tool for self-presentation and societal interaction. Understanding the intersection of style and effectiveness within the confines of dress codes is paramount in a professional and educational setting by Polytechnic Ibrahim Sultan guidelines. Based on the empirical research and qualitative analysis, this study explores the tendencies of the fashion trends influence the choices and the effectiveness of dress codes among undergraduate fashion students. Through surveys, interviews, and observation, insights are gathered into the factors that shape students' stylistic preferences and their compliance with institutional dress regulations. The findings reveal the multifaceted nature of fashion trends, with social media platforms playing a pivotal role in shaping students' sartorial decisions. Additionally, the study uncovers the intricate balance between adhering to dress codes and expressing individuality, highlighting the importance of self-presentation in academic and professional settings. Ultimately, this research contributes to the existing body of knowledge by shedding light on the intricate relationship between fashion trends, dress codes, and their impact on undergraduate fashion students' stylistic choices found that, the effect of social media is observed to dominate students' fashion choices, the effectiveness, and of fashion influenced by platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube at Polytechnic Ibrahim Sultan. It underscores the need for institutions to recognize and accommodate the evolving nature of fashion while maintaining decorum and professionalism.

Keywords : *Fashion Trend, Fashion Influencer, Social Media, Code Dress.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Fashion influences lifestyle and has an impact on all stages of life. Fashion also reflects an individual's personality, allowing them to express themselves through the style of their clothing [1]. Fashion and trends will develop swiftly each year, changing and not remaining stagnant. The fashion trend among undergraduate students at Polytechnic Ibrahim Sultan is likely to encompass a blend of creativity, professionalism, industry relevance, and adherence to dress code guidelines [2]. By striking the right balance between these elements, students can effectively showcase their fashion expertise and individual style while preparing for careers in the dynamic world of fashion. Fashion is defined as the prevailing styles and garments that people wear, which reflect their propensity for change and

inclination towards individuality [3]. Fashion primarily denotes the prevailing style of dress in a certain society. Apparel serves as a non-verbal means of conveying a range of information, such as membership in a certain group, financial status, gender, social status, and occupation [4]. This phenomenon grants individuals the capacity to communicate their personal identity to others by stating, "This is who I am." In addition to clothing, fashion encompasses beauty treatments, haircuts, accessories, and cosmetics.

Curiously, adolescents' tendency to utilise fashion as a means of distinguishing themselves from adults. However, fashion trends, particularly among adolescents, undergo annual transformations. This can be attributed to their age, attire, and lifestyle, particularly among students enrolled at the Institute

of Higher Education (HEIs). Adolescents will endeavour to stay abreast with the contemporary fashion realm [5]. This condition is designed to prevent them from lagging in fashion trends. They have begun attempting to conform to the Code of Ethics of the Rules of Use to be fashionable in accordance with the most recent trends and preferences [6]. Consistent with the guidelines set forth by Polytechnic Ibrahim Sultan. Ethics, in essence, refers to a set of principles and conduct that guides individual in discerning right from wrong and adhering to societal norms and traditions. The term "ethics," derived from the Greek word "ethos," refers to the norms, values, methods, and criteria that guide proper human conduct [7]. Ethics is a theoretical framework that examines human actions from the perspective of their moral implications, as determined by rational analysis [8].

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) provide students with greater freedom in their dressing manner, as opposed to the mandatory school uniforms that are worn by all students in traditional schools. Perhaps adolescents can express their yearning for independence through their sense of style. Nevertheless, the flexibility to choose one's attire does not grant Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) students' permission to disregard the ethical dress code when attending lectures. The dress code should specify the appropriate attire for the given occasion, location, and event.

A. Problem Statement

The study aims to assess the impact of fashion trends among Fashion Design Diploma students at Polytechnic Ibrahim Sultan on their adherence to the institution's Code of Ethics and Rules of Use. Despite dressing in line with contemporary fashion, students often disregard the guidelines set by the institution, leading to instances of immodest attire such as short hijabs paired with revealing clothing or tight shirts.

B. Research Objective

This research is to study the tendency of discrepancy between students' fashion choices and their compliance with institutional regulations, which is a recurring concern within the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) towards the impact of cultural diversity, peer influence and social media, and fashion education curriculum and industry trends.

C. Limitation

The limitation of this study is its exclusive focus on third-semester students within the Fashion Design Diploma program at the Design and Visual Communication Department (JRKV) of Polytechnic Ibrahim Sultan. The sample size consisted of 52 respondents from this specific group. The selection of third-semester students was based on their prolonged exposure to the polytechnic environment.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. The Impact of Cultural Diversity

Fashion plays a significant role in higher education, particularly within programs like Fashion Design, where students are not only consumers but also creators and influencers of trends [9]. Understanding the influence of fashion style on fashion students in Malaysian higher education is crucial for curriculum development, student engagement, and industry relevance. This research aims to explore existing research on this topic to provide insights into the factors shaping fashion students' style choices and their implications in Malaysian higher education. In Malaysia, cultural and societal factors greatly influence fashion preferences and style among students [10]. Other scholar highlights the impact of cultural diversity on fashion perceptions and practices among Malaysian youth. This diversity reflects in fashion education institutions, where students from various cultural backgrounds bring unique perspectives to their style choices [11]. Understanding these cultural influences is essential for educators to create inclusive learning environments that celebrate diversity while promoting professionalism.

B. Peer Influence and Social Media

Peer influence and social media play significant roles in shaping fashion trends and style preferences among students in higher education [12]. Studies by Lim et al. [13] emphasize the influence of peers and social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok on Malaysian youth's fashion choices. Fashion students are active participants in online fashion communities, where they seek inspiration, share ideas, and showcase their personal style [14]. Educators need to recognize the impact of social media on students' fashion consciousness and integrate digital literacy into the curriculum to foster

critical thinking and responsible online behaviour [15].

C. Fashion Education Curriculum and Industry Trends

The alignment between fashion education curriculum and industry trends is essential for preparing students for professional careers. Research by [16] discusses the importance of integrating industry-relevant content, including trend forecasting, fashion marketing, and sustainable practices, into fashion education programs. By exposing students to real-world industry practices and emerging trends, educators can better equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the competitive fashion industry [17]. Additionally, industry collaborations, internships, and guest lectures provide valuable insights into current market demands and facilitate industry connections for students [18].

Fashion education should foster students' creativity and encourage self-expression while maintaining professionalism and adherence to dress codes. Studies by [19] highlight the importance of balancing creative freedom with academic rigor in fashion design programs. Empowering students to develop their unique style identities while instilling discipline and respect for industry standards is essential for nurturing future fashion leaders. Educators can achieve this balance through project-based learning, portfolio development, and mentorship programs that encourage experimentation and critical reflection.

The influence of fashion style on fashion students in Malaysian higher education is multifaceted, encompassing cultural, social, educational, and industry-related factors [20]. By understanding and addressing these influences, educators can create enriching learning experiences that empower students to navigate the dynamic world of fashion with confidence and integrity [21]. Further research and collaboration between academia and industry stakeholders are essential for ensuring the relevance and effectiveness of fashion education in Malaysia[22].

The interpretation of fashion can be referred as a personal expression, and professionalism are well-articulated. Fashion indeed serves as a means of expression, and it's subjective, varying from person to person. However, in certain environments like educational institutions, there are often guidelines regarding dress code that students are expected to adhere to. By ensuring that students dress

appropriately not only reflects their readiness to transition into the professional world but also contributes to the overall image of both the students and the institution. Students are often seen as ambassadors of their institution, and their appearance can influence perceptions of the school [23]. Generally, for students in public higher institutions, who may be aspiring leaders, paying attention to their appearance is particularly important. Leaders are often judged not just by their abilities but also by their demeanour and presentation, which includes their attire [24].

Other Scholar agree that they frequently try to make their style choices stand out. Furthermore, social status and social class can be delineated through fashion. Students from diverse socioeconomic situations may possess varied levels of access to fashion materials and exhibit distinct tastes [25]. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of these distinctions can contribute to the establishment of a fashion environment within the school that is more inclusive and diverse. Moreover, it is crucial for students to incorporate many cultural influences into their dress choices while maintaining a polite approach. This entails comprehending the cultural importance associated with specific attire or symbols and refraining from appropriating or misrepresenting them [26]. In Polytechnic Ibrahim Sultan (PIS), the rules can foster an environment conducive to dialogue and appreciation for diverse cultural perspectives by endorsing sartorial choices that demonstrate cultural sensitivity. Furthermore, fashion is an ever-changing industry that is impacted by technological advancements, global patterns, and shifting societal standards [27]. At PIS, students can utilize their creativity to modify fashion trends to fit the local environment, all while ensuring that the trends remain meaningful and original. The adaptability of fashion reflects its dynamic character and equips students to navigate the always evolving industry landscape[28].

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research particularly involving 52 student of the third semester Diploma in Fashion Design at Polytechnic Ibrahim Sultan. This data can offer a quantitative understanding of the extent to which fashion trends influence students' choices in adhering to or deviating from dress codes. The questionnaire is divided into two parts, namely Part A is the demographics of the respondents, Part B contains four factors that influence the fashion style of clothing among students of the third semester Diploma in Fashion Design and researcher using the

Excel Analysis to generate the data collection.

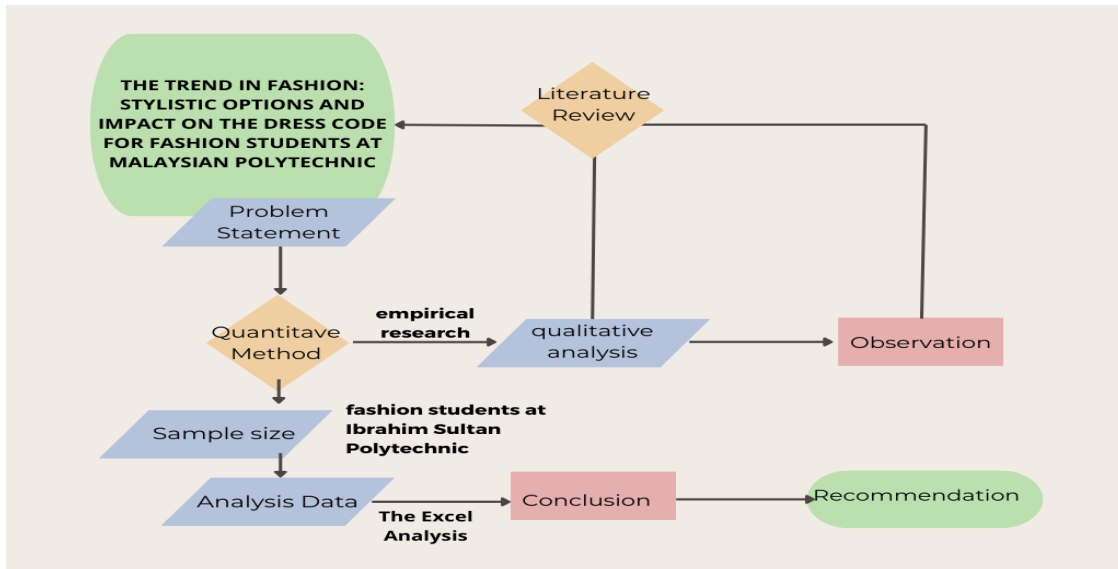


Figure 1: Research Methodology Framework

Exploring this intersection through empirical research and qualitative analysis can provide valuable insights into how students perceive and navigate dress codes considering evolving fashion trends. By conducting empirical research, such as surveys or observations, the study can gather quantitative data on students' attitudes, preferences, and behaviours regarding dress codes and fashion trends. By synthesizing both quantitative and qualitative findings, the study can offer comprehensive insights into the dynamics between fashion trends and dress code effectiveness among undergraduate fashion students. Additionally, the findings may contribute to broader discussions within academia and professional settings about the role of fashion in shaping identity, expression, and adherence to codes of conduct.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree No disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

Table 2: Interpreting Likert Table [29]

This section uses a Likert scale as shown in table 2 the division of scores is divided into five sections, namely score 1 is Strongly Disagree, score 2 is Disagree, score 3 is Neither Agree nor Disagree, score four is Agree and score 5 is Strongly Agree.

Frequently Score

Min Score	Level
1.01 - 2.00	Lower
2.01 - 3.00	Mid-Lower
3.01 - 4.00	Mid-Higher
4.01 - 5.00	Higher

Table 3: Interpreting Frequently Score source Norasmah (2002)

The interpretation of the mean score used is that for score 1, the mean score is at a level of 1.01-2.00 which is at a low level, score 2 is 2.01 - 3.00 is at a medium low level, score 3 which is 3.01 - 4.00 is a medium high level and score 4 is 4.01 – 5.00 with high level.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

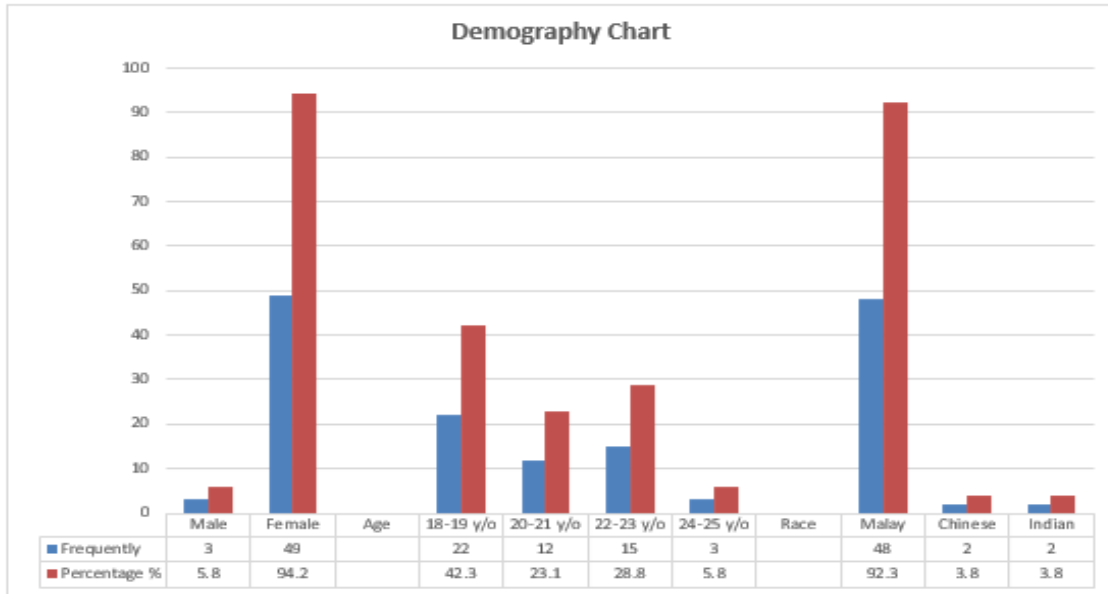


Figure 4: The Analysis table of Demography Chart by Author

This section reports the demography analysis of the respondents consisting of gender, age and race. Based on the table above, 52 respondents were female students totalling 49 with a percentage of 94.2% and male students totalling 3 with a percentage of 5.8%.

While, showing the age distribution of respondents consists of 18-19 years with a percentage of 42.3%, 20-21 as many as 23.1%, 22-23 as many as 28.8% and 24-25 as many as 5.8%. for the race, malay percentage of 92.3%, Chinese and Indian student are same at 3.8%.

Item	Frequency Percentage										Minimum Score	Interpretation
	Extremely Disagree				Not Sure		Totally Agree					
	STS	%	TS	%	TP	%	S	%	SS	%		
Influenced by tv shows related to the world of fashion	0	0.0%	1	1.9%	3	5.8%	29	55.8%	19	36.5%	4.62	Extremely High
Reading Interested of fashion magazines	1	1.9%	2	3.8%	11	21.2%	28	53.8%	10	19.2%	3.65	Medium High
Copy a lot of fashion styles from TV shows	1	1.9%	1	1.9%	13	25.0%	23	44.2%	14	26.9%	3.56	Medium High
Influenced by fashion styles from magazines	1	1.9%	8	15.4%	19	36.5%	18	34.6%	6	11.5%	2.31	Medium Low
Watch tv shows related to fashion	2	3.8%	2	3.8%	8	15.4%	30	57.7%	10	19.2%	3.85	Medium High
Fashion magazines giving a lot of guidelines about being fashionable	1	1.9%	2	3.8%	11	21.2%	28	53.8%	10	19.2%	3.65	Medium High
											3.61	Medium High

Table 5: The Analysis table of Mass Media Factors Affecting Clothing Fashion Styles Among Students of the Third Semester Diploma in Fashion Design.

Based on the provided data and analysis, Item 1, which pertains to being influenced by TV shows related to the world of fashion, received the highest score value of 4.62. This suggests that TV shows play a significant role in shaping the fashion style of clothing among students in the third semester of the Fashion Design Diploma program. It implies that students are particularly receptive to fashion trends and inspirations presented in television programs focusing on the fashion industry. Meanwhile, On the other hand, Item 4, which relates to being influenced by fashion styles from magazines, obtained a moderately low score value of 2.31. This indicates that magazines have a relatively weaker influence on

the fashion style of clothing among the surveyed students compared to TV shows. It suggests that students may find other sources, such as television or digital media, more impactful in shaping their fashion preferences and style choices[30]. Overall, the analysis highlights the varying degrees of influence exerted by different mass media factors on the fashion style of clothing among students of the third semester Diploma in Fashion Design. The findings underscore the importance of considering multiple media channels and platforms when exploring the influences on fashion trends and styles among students. Additionally, this information can inform educators and industry professionals about the most effective channels for reaching and engaging with fashion students in higher education.

Item	Frequency Percentage										Minimum Score	Interpretation
	Extremely Disagree		Not Sure		Totally Agree							
	STS	%	TS	%	TP	%	S	%	SS	%		
The latest fashion trends awareness	0	0.0%	1	1.9%	15	28.8%	25	48.1%	11	21.2%	3.46	Medium High
very sensitive to the latest fashion trends and often research the latest fashion trends in Malaysia	0	0.0%	2	3.8%	15	28.8%	27	51.9%	8	15.4%	3.37	Medium High
The latest style makes it more trendy	0	0.0%	2	3.8%	11	21.2%	22	42.3%	17	32.7%	3.75	Medium High
Often follow the development of fashion, clothing, hair, hijab and accessories	1	1.9%	1	1.9%	10	19.2%	24	46.2%	16	30.8%	3.85	Medium High
Follow the latest trends to feel more confident and stylish	1	1.9%	2	3.8%	9	17.3%	22	42.3%	18	34.6%	3.85	Medium High
Willing to follow the latest trends every year	0	0.0%	7	13.5%	12	23.1%	21	40.4%	12	23.1%	3.17	Medium High
											3.57	Medium High

Table 6: Tendency of Latest Trend Factors Affecting the Fashion Style of Clothing Among Students of the Third Semester Diploma in Fashion Design.

The analysis of the two study questions revealed that items 4 and 5 had the same score of medium-high, with both items receiving a score of 3.85. This item received a score of 3.85, indicating a medium-high level of agreement among the surveyed students. It suggests that a significant proportion of students in the third semester Diploma in Fashion Design believe that following current trends contributes to their confidence and sense of fashion ability. This finding underscores the importance of staying up to date with contemporary fashion trends for students pursuing a career in fashion design. Similarly, item 5 also received a score of 3.85, reflecting a medium-high level of agreement among the respondents. This suggests that a substantial number of students in the third semester Diploma in Fashion Design are

willing to adopt new trends on an annual basis. It indicates a proactive attitude towards embracing and adapting to evolving fashion trends, which is essential for aspiring fashion designers to stay relevant in the industry. The findings highlight the significance of current trend variables in shaping the clothing fashion style preferences of students in the Fashion Design Diploma programme. The medium-high scores for both items 5 and 6 suggest a strong inclination among students towards staying abreast of the latest fashion trends and incorporating them into their personal style choices. This information can be valuable for curriculum development, industry engagement, and student support initiatives within the Fashion Design Diploma programme.

Item	Frequency Percentage										Minimum Score	Interpretation
	Extremly Disagree				Not Sure		Totally Agree					
	STS	%	TS	%	TP	%	S	%	SS	%		
frequently encounter fashionable outfits on social media	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.9%	20	38.5%	31	53.6%	4.90	Extremly High
Purchase stylish clothing on Instagram and TikTok platforms.	1	1.9%	2	3.8%	5	9.6%	20	38.5%	24	46.2%	4.23	Extremly High
The apparel sold on Instagram and Tiktok platforms is very fascinating.	1	1.9%	1	1.9%	2	3.8%	21	40.4%	27	51.9%	4.62	Extremly High
Using social media as an online boutique to discover the latest fashions.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	6	11.5%	24	46.2%	22	42.3%	4.42	Extremly High
Influence with the latest fashion on social media	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	7	13.5%	19	36.5%	26	50.0%	4.33	Extremly High
Fashion in social media is very current and updated.	0	0.0%	1	1.9%	3	5.8%	14	26.9%	34	65.4%	4.62	Extremly High
											4.52	Extremly High

Table 7: Analysis of the Frequency of Percentages for Social Media Factors That Are Fashion Styles of Clothing Among Students of the Third Semester Diploma in Fashion Design.

The provided data outlines the results of a study aimed at identifying social media elements influencing clothing fashion patterns among students of the third semester Diploma in Fashion Design. Table 6 summarizes the findings and based on the analysis of the third research question, several key insights emerge such as this item 1 received the highest score value of 4.90, indicating a strong agreement among the surveyed students. It suggests that students in the third semester Diploma in Fashion Design often come across fashionable outfits on social media platforms. This finding underscores the significant influence of social media in exposing students to diverse fashion trends and styles, shaping their perceptions and preferences. Furthermore, Item 3 received a

score value of 4.62, indicating a high level of agreement among the respondents. It suggests that students find the apparel sold on Instagram and TikTok platforms to be highly appealing and captivating. This finding highlights the role of social media platforms as influential channels for showcasing and promoting fashion products, attracting the interest of fashion-oriented students. Similarly, item 6 also received a score value of 4.62, indicating a high level of agreement among the surveyed students. It suggests that students perceive fashion content on social media platforms to be current and regularly updated. This finding reflects the dynamic nature of social media platforms, where fashion trends emerge and evolve rapidly, keeping students engaged and informed about the latest developments in the fashion industry[31].

Item	Frequency Percentage										Minimum Score	Interpretation
	Extremly Disagree				Not Sure		Totally Agree					
	STS	%	TS	%	TP	%	S	%	SS	%		
influenced by the style of wearing peers.	0	0.0%	5	9.6%	14	26.9%	19	36.5%	14	26.9%	3.17	Medium High
Desire to observe the appearance style of other people	0	0.0%	3	5.8%	9	17.3%	23	44.2%	17	32.7%	3.85	Medium High
Peers have an important role in setting style and appearance.	2	3.8%	7	13.5%	9	17.3%	21	40.4%	13	25.0%	3.27	Medium High
Frequently make a friend as an idol	6	11.5%	9	17.3%	15	28.8%	18	34.6%	4	7.7%	2.12	Medium Low
Peers' fashion style is typically followed.	1	1.9%	9	17.3%	14	26.9%	22	42.3%	6	11.5%	2.69	Medium Low
More confidence when one's style and that of peers are the same.	1	1.9%	11	21.2%	20	38.5%	9	17.3%	11	21.2%	1.92	Low
											2.84	Medium Low

Table 8: Analysis of the Frequency of Percentages for Peer Factors That Influence the Fashion Style of Clothing Among Students of the Third Semester Diploma in Fashion Design.

Data presents the findings of a study aimed at identifying peer factors influencing the fashion style of clothing among students in the third semester of the Fashion Design Diploma programme. Table 8 summarizes these findings and based on the analysis of the fourth research question, several key observations. This item received the highest score value of 3.85, indicating a relatively strong agreement among the surveyed students. It suggests that students in the third semester of the Fashion Design Diploma programme have a desire to observe the appearance

styles of their peers. This finding underscores the significant influence of peer observation and social comparison in shaping fashion preferences and style choices among students[32]. In contrast, item 6 received the lowest score of 1.92, indicating a reduced level of agreement among the respondents. It implies that among students of the third semester Diploma in Fashion Design may not necessarily feel more secure when their style is consistent with that of their peers. The study shows that students value originality and personal expression over following peer dress trends.

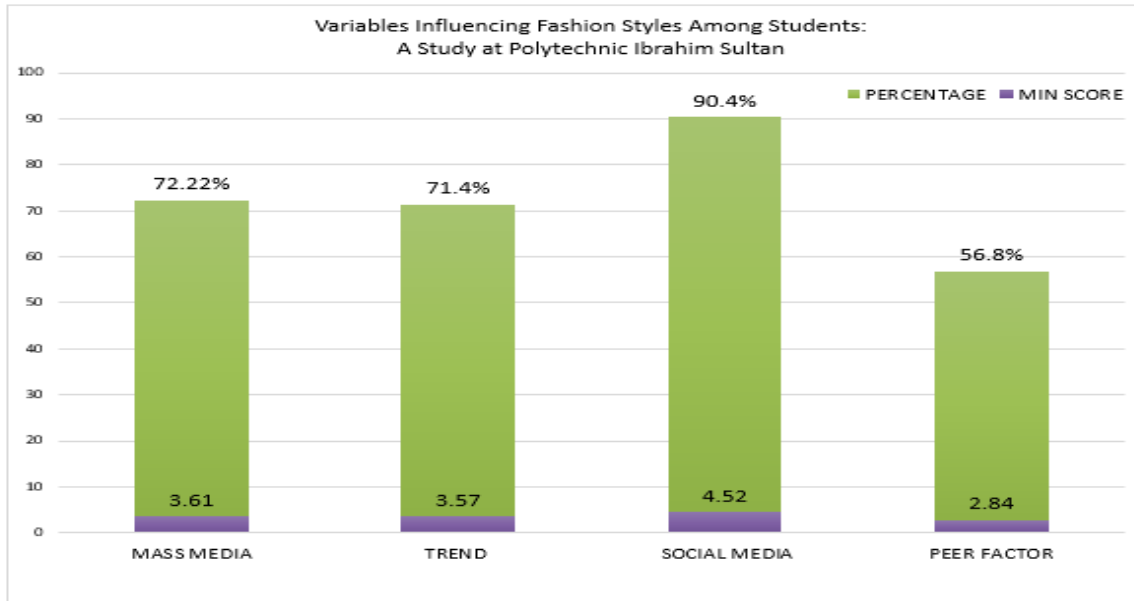


Table 9: Overall Analysis With Mean Scores For Factors Mass Media, Latest Trends, Social Media, And Peers Are Influencing Clothing Fashion Style Among Students Of The Third Semester Diploma In Fashion Design.

This study was carried out by 52 student from third-semester Diploma in Fashion Design students. According to table 9, the results of the mean score and the overall average for the research questions found that the factors that influence the fashion style of clothing among students in the third semester Diploma in Fashion Design are the social media factor, which shows the highest score value of 4.52 with the item Students are frequently exposed to fashion trends via social media. For mass media, students are more influenced by fashion-related television shows, and for the latest trend, students frequently follow the development of fashion, clothes, hair, hijabs, and accessories, and they feel more confident and stylish when they follow the latest trends[33]. The component with the lowest scoring value is 2.84, which represents the peer factor. Students like to see their classmates' appearance styles.

V. CONCLUSION

Overall, the mass media component has had an impact on the fashion style of apparel among students of the third semester Diploma in Fashion Design, accounting for 72.2%. This demonstrates that students are encouraged by the media to seem more stylish in school. The item with the highest

score (4.62 students) is more influenced by fashion-related television shows. For the following research question, the current trend element had the second highest average percentage of influence on the design style of the third semester Diploma in Fashion Design, at 71.4%. It may be inferred that the effect of trends is less appealing to students when it comes to styling this fashion, possibly because they must first conduct study. According to the findings of the study, the social media component received the highest score of 90.4%, with only an 18.2% difference between the mass media factors. The study's findings suggest that students spend more time on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube[34]. The total outcomes of the peer factor study suggest that the percentage position is as high as 56.8%, indicating that is the least influential component. The present research found that students are not easily affected by their peers' fashion choices while styling a piece of clothing.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

Overall, the researcher concluded that this study met its aims and provided answers to all four research questions. According to the findings of the study, social media has the greatest influence on the

fashion style of among student of third semester Diploma in Fashion Design. This is since today's students are more exposed to social media and have unlimited access to information. The current platform makes it easy for them to get the most recent information and styles. In general, students can style their appearance[35]. According to their own preferences and fashion, but they must adhere to the Code of Ethics and Rules of Use established by Polytechnic Ibrahim Sultan. The enforcement of student discipline needs to be tightened to ensure that students comply with manners at the same time. The policy guidelines are updated in line with the current fashion but and do not violate the guidelines. this can be standardized in all Malaysian Polytechnics and the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

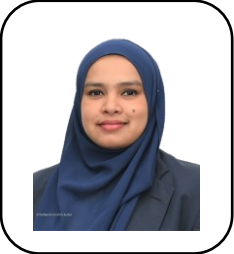


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