



COLOUR IN FASHION: EFFECTS ON PERSONALITY

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Abstract:

Colours have much impact on users – either positively or negatively – when they are used for fashion objects. This paper is purposed to identify major ways in which fashion designers in tertiary institutions within Kumasi metropolis use colours for their fashion objects and the effects of the colours on their clients. Qualitative research approach was employed for this research. Specifically, the descriptive research method was adopted for the study. One hundred and fifty (150) respondents with fashion design and textiles background from three public tertiary institutions offering fashion design and textiles as programme of study in the Kumasi metropolis of Ashanti region, were purposively sampled for the study. Identification, beautification and communication, constituting 92.0%, 84.7% and 84.7% respectively of the 150 respondents, ranked as the top three purposes for which people use colours in fashion goods. Interior decoration, communication, designing textiles and enhancement of the aesthetic appeal of clothes, representing 100%, 92.7%, 92.7% and 92.7% respectively were found to be the highest positive impact of colour in fashion. In the study, 85.3% of the respondents stated that some colours cause people to have low self-esteem while 62.0% of them said some colours cause people to feel lazy. It is recommended that people should select colours wisely to enhance their images.

Keywords: colour, personality, fashion, fashion objects, colour psychology, colour and religion

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1. Introduction

Colour is part of our daily lives. People use colours to express themselves and their emotions, to adapt to weather conditions (e.g. dark colours are used in winter to absorb the heat better while light colours are used in the summer to stay fresh), and also to simply help themselves feel confident with their bodies and appearance. Research indicates that over 80% of visual information is related to colour: that is, colour conveys information. It identifies a product or a company, as well as the quality of the merchandise and much more (Pride & Ferrell, 2003).

The colour is the sight sensation produced in the retina by the visible light rays that is the electromagnetic irradiation of 380-760nm wave length. According to this definition, colour is a feature of neither the sensation-producing light nor the light-emitting object, but it is a psychic experience produced by electromagnetic irradiation (Smederevac, Mitrovic, Colovic, & Nikolasevic, 2006).

The spectrum may be divided into several segments, which when collected together regardless their number, again produce the white light. If the spectrum is dispersed through a prism into three equal segments, three primary colours are obtained. The first colour classification includes the primary and complex colours.

Colour can influence consumers' purchase decisions, how they see things, their emotions, and thus it is integral to marketing. Colour photographs are commonly used in advertisements because they are thought to have superior attention getting properties (Meyer-Levy & Peracchio, 1995). For this reason, it is extremely important to understand how colour affects attitudes, beliefs, and feelings. Marketers can then apply such knowledge to develop effective promotional strategies and tactics. For instance, a package can be designed to appear taller or shorter: e.g., light-coloured packaging may make a package appear larger, whereas darker colours may minimize the perceived size (Pride & Ferrell, 2003). The right colours communicate meaning and please the eye, whereas the wrong colours can be unpleasant and even unsettling. As a functional component of human vision, colour can capture attention, relax or irritate the eyes, and affect the legibility of text.

Colours can also influence customers' emotions-positively or negatively. Pride and Farrell (2003) reiterate research has shown a consistent association of colours with certain feelings and experiences. For example, the colour "Blue" is soothing and associated with wealth, trust, and security, whereas "Red" connotes excitement and stimulation.

Understanding how involved consumers become in their apparel choosing in terms of colours - that is, their attachments to them- provides a deeper understanding of the dynamics of consumer behaviour and the nature and role of the product category of fashion. Evard and Aurier (1996) found involvement to be at the heart of the "person-object relationship" and the relational variable most predictive of purchase behavior. Contemporary fashion research indicates consumers are often distributed across a wide range of fashion consciousness and behaviours. The highly fashion involved consumer has historically been important to fashion researchers and marketers because fashion

involved consumers are seen as the drivers, influentials, and legitimists of the fashion adoption process (O’Cass, 2000).

There are a surprisingly small number of studies investigating the correlation between the individual colour preference and the personality. According to Luscher (1971), who advocates in his thesis that the subjects with similar colour preference may have similar personality traits, the subjects’ psychological reactions/attitudes to the primary colours (blue, red, yellow and green) reflect their basic psychological needs. When, for example, someone does not like red, he/she unconsciously reflects anxiety (Zuckerman, 1991). Eysenck postulated that the introverts, unlike the extroverts, are preoccupied with their own thoughts and emotions, so they choose a social environment that allows them to achieve a medium level of the optimal excitement (Kandinski, 2004).

Ghanaians have been using colours to complement their beauty and occasions. For example, the use of arrays of colours displayed during festivals by the chiefs, queens and other ranking personalities in the society are the typical examples of the use of colours by Ghanaians. The use of colours in religious bodies in Ghana, especially the liturgical colours of the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches and their colours that help in distinguishing between the hierarchical ranks among their clergymen, are other examples of the usage of colours in the society. Fashion designers also select colours for the manufacturing of garments and other fashion products for use by the public.

In other cases, customers make their own selection of coloured fabrics for their conversion into garments by designers. It is found, however, that quite a number of fashion designers and users of the fashion objects do not have in-depth knowledge on colours and therefore do not make the right choice for specific occasions and personalities.

As a result, designers often produce coloured fashion articles which do not fit the intended occasions and personalities. Also, due to lack of knowledge on colours and their usage, consumers do not select the colours for positive impact on their personalities.

The research, therefore, primarily investigated into the selection of colours for use in fashion design objects for use by particular personalities and their impact. It is also aimed to provide information to fashion designers and the public to make right decisions in the selection of colours for use in fashion.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Fashion

Fashion is a general term for a popular style or practice, especially in clothing, footwear, accessories, makeup, body piercing, or furniture. Fashion refers to a distinctive and often habitual trend in the style in which a person dresses or to prevailing styles in behaviour. Fashion also refers to the newest creations of textile designers (www.fashion.news, 3/29/2012). The more technical term *costume* has become so linked to the term ‘fashion’ that the use of the former has been relegated to special senses like

[fancy dress](#) or [masquerade](#) wear, while 'fashion' means clothing more generally, including the study of it. Although aspects of fashion can be feminine or masculine, some trends are [androgynous](#) (Cumming, 2004).

Fashion is a subject of vital interest in the urban centres of the world, fashion matters enormously, especially to the youth. Fashion is an international language and global business. It is also a popular career option and one of the most oversubscribed fields of higher education (Jones and Sue, 2011).

Fashion refers to a style that is popular at a time. Miniskirt and platform shoes and both styles may be in fashion depending on their current acceptance by consumers (Diamond & Diamond, 2007). Fashion has the power to transform an image and make a social statement. To some, fashion is an artform and to others, it is almost a religion. However, for most people, it is a method of utilizing clothing, accessories and hairs to show or hide a person's self. One can use fashion to disguise his or her true self conservation in vamp clothing. Fashion statements can be made with clothes, accessories, shoes, hair, makeup, and even cellphones. Designers can greatly influence the direction fashion will go (Nellis, 2010).

2.2 Colour

Colour is comprised of visible light; objects absorb different wavelengths and the colour that we see is the unabsorbed light reflected back to the eye. As light enters the eye, it interacts with receptors in the retina (also referred to as cones) to produce vision and colour. These receptors send information via the optical nerve to the thalamus region of the brain, where all sensory impulses converge (Mahnke, 1996), synapses fire and information is then sent to the visual cortex. In effect, the eyes and optical pathways merely transfer light information to the brain where sensory experiences of colour are interpreted. As such, the brain acts as a translator between light and colour perception, mediating our responses to colour information. New developments in understanding visual perception have been made possible by advances in technology, and although a large portion of our knowledge regarding the mechanics of colour vision was developed in the last century, it has been a topic of interest to scholars since antiquity.

2.3.1 Uses of colours

According to Bennett (1991), colour is a powerful and important communication tool, and it is tied to religious, cultural, political and social influences. By stopping to consider what each colour represents and is linked to in the 'real world' we can make informed design decisions that ensure we appeal to our target audience. Without this consideration, we run the risk of offending the very people we are designing for.

A. It affects your mood

Most of us have a favourite colour or prefer some colours over others. This is because colour can affect our moods so we surround ourselves in the colours that have a positive impact on our mood. Red can boost your energy, yellow often makes people feel happier, and blue is proven to bring down blood pressure and slow your heart rate which is why it is often associated with being relaxing. If you combine the happiness of

yellow and the relaxing feel of blue you get green, a very pleasing colour for many people. Mental health units are known to use pastel tones on their walls so that patients feel calm, happy, and relaxed. Walls that are beige with a pink tint combined with mint green floors are a popular combination as it is said to create a soothing, harmonious and calm area. At the other end of the spectrum, literally, schools tend to use bright colours that appeal to children (Wilson, Centerbar, Kermer & Gilbert, 2005).

When choosing colours for your next design it is important to consider how they will combine and sit with the other elements on the page and what impact that will have on the mood of your audience.

B. Colours communicate invisibly

Kandinsky (1994), one of the first pioneers of colour theory and a renowned Russian painter and art theorist, believed that the following colours communicate the following qualities:

- Yellow – warm, exciting, happy
- Blue – deep, peaceful, supernatural
- Green – peace, stillness, nature
- White – harmony, silence, cleanliness
- Black – grief, dark, unknown
- Red – glowing, confidence, alive
- Orange – radiant, healthy, serious

C. Colour has cultural significance According to Petterson (2004), different colours mean different things in different places. This is extremely important for designers to know because without an awareness of the cultural significance of a particular colour, you risk offending your entire target audience. Purple, for example, is a colour of mourning in Thailand. In western culture however, it is associated with royalty, luxury, wealth and sometimes magic. The brand colour for Thai Airways is purple. On first glance this seems like a huge error on their part because as mentioned above, purple is a colour of mourning in Thailand. It is most likely, however, that the Thai Airways website isn't aimed at locals but at tourists, therefore if westerners view the site and see purple it will associate Thai Airways with values such as luxury and comfort. Other examples are:

- In western cultures black is a colour of mourning;
- In Japan, however, it is a colour of honour with white as the colour of mourning;
- Red in the west represents danger, love, passion;
- In India it is a colour of purity, in China it is a colour of good luck and in South Africa it is a colour of mourning;
- Yellow represents courage in Japan, mourning in Egypt and hope in the West.

D. Colour can be inspired by our surroundings

We live in a colourful world, a world that acts as the perfect inspirational trigger for design (Bell, 2004). The best thing about looking to the environment for design solutions is that the palette is always changing, from autumnal oranges to cold winter blues. So where better to look than out of your window is to take in the colours and then apply them to your designs. Drawing inspiration from nature for your designs also makes you

look at the world differently. Normally, we whiz by from place to place but you notice the finer details and undiscovered gems when you actually stop to take it in.

E. Colour has political associations

Individual political parties are associated with one colour or another. Depending on whom your audience is, this might prove to be valuable information when designing. The association between political parties and colours isn't a new connection but it is often taken for granted. In the UK, for example, the following pairings exist:

- Labour – Red
- Conservative – Blue
- Liberal Democrats– Yellow
- The Green Party – Green

If a colour is representative of a political party then the values and behaviours that the party is known for can be suggested through the use of this colour.

- Red is often linked to socialism and communism
- White has links to pacifism and the surrender flag. In contrast to this, black is a colour that is used in conjunction with anarchism.
- Working class Nazism is associated with the colour brown as the South Africans known as the 'brown shirts'.

A design with one of these colours as the dominant shade may well hint at a right wing or a left wing preference or at extreme behaviours (Birren, 1956).

F. Religion can be linked to colours

As with politics, colours are representative of certain religions. So as not to unintentionally offend anyone through your designs, some examples of these colour/religion associations are:

- Green is considered to be the holy colour of Islam
- Judaism is represented by the colour yellow
- In Hinduism, many gods have blue skin
- White is linked to peace across many religions

Again, this may only be necessary information if you are designing a site that has specific links to religion but it also emphasises that a thorough knowledge of your audience is a fundamental part of the design process (Birren, 1956).

In Christian religion, it is found that colours have much symbolic significance in the churches. They suggest the majesty of the feast or signify the sentiment of the special occasion for which a particular service is celebrated (Lang, 1989). The Anglican Church, for example, uses the following colours, among others, with symbolic significance and also for particular occasions (Anglican Lectionary, 1997):

- White is a symbol of purity, joy and bright light of truth and used in occasions such as Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Ascension, Trinity Sunday, Transfiguration, All Saints Day, Baptism, Marriages and Feast of Dedication of a Chapel.
- Violet (or Blue) is a colour of penitence and expectations. It is used during advent and from Ash Wednesday until the day before Palm Sunday. It is also used during funerals.

- Red is a symbol of blood and also represents the Holy Spirit. It is used on Pentecost Sunday, for Confirmation, Ordination and for Feast of Saints venerated as martyrs.
- Green is the common colour mostly used on all days outside the two great festival periods – Epiphany and Pentecost.

Additionally, the hierarchical ranks among the clergy in the episcopal churches, especially, are better identified for recognition by the colours of garments they use. Bishops in Methodist, Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, for instance, are allowed to use purple clerical shirts but clergymen below that rank are not permitted to wear clerical shirts of such a colour.

G. Age affects people's colour preferences

Colour expert Faber Birren carried out many studies into this area and in his book *Colour Psychology and Colour Therapy*, he states that for both genders, blue and red “maintain a high preference throughout life”. He found that yellow is popular with children but as they move into adulthood it shows less popularity. Birren found that “with maturity comes a greater liking for hues of shorter wave lengths (blue, green, purple) than for hues of longer wave lengths (red, orange, and yellow).” Another factor that influences people's colour preferences is that throughout their life, there will be social and cultural changes and this can directly impact on their favourite colours. Some knowledge of what colours certain age ranges prefer can be valuable for designers. If you were designing a website for a toy store or a children's TV channel, then knowing they prefer bright colours and yellow in particular would help with your design decisions. Likewise, if you designed a website for a charity whereby the audience was to be the older generation then blue, green or purple might be ideal, based on Birren's findings. Colour is a complex subject with many strands and it has the power to subliminally convey values and stories.

2.4 Fashion, Colour and Personality

Physical appearance is one domain that people frequently use to formulate impressions of others. Physically, attractive people are helped, trusted, and preferred as employees or mates (Buss, 1995) to a greater degree than less attractive people. Additionally, individuals may consciously or unconsciously manifest aspects of their personalities through their physical appearance. For instance, one argument against forcing children to wear school uniforms is that uniforms suppress their freedom of expression and individuality. Transgendered peoples' use of clothing to express their gender-identity is another example. Observers can form judgements based on a target's conscious clothing decisions or behavioural residue that reflects one's appearance. Gosling, et al. (2002) proposed a model to explain how individuals can influence the environment around them and how that individual expression in physical environments provides valuable information that observers use in forming their impressions. According to this model, there are four mechanisms that link individuals to their environments.

The first two mechanisms describe the more conscious efforts of clothing selection and are categorized as identity claims: self-directed and other-directed.

Individuals may choose clothing (e.g., a t-shirt with cultural symbols or icons) that (1) makes statements intended to reinforce their self-views or (2) communicates their attitudes and values to others. The third and fourth mechanisms describe how aspects of personality unconsciously permeate our clothing selection. These mechanisms are identified as interior and exterior behavioural residue. Behavioural residue refers to the physical traces or activities that an individual conducts in his or her environment (Gosling, et al, 2002). Observers can use this residue of repeated behaviours to form impressions of personality. An individual's clothing may contain (3) residue of behaviour conducted while wearing it (e.g., grass stains in the knee area of a woman's jeans). This residue not only reflects past behaviours, but one can imply future behaviours as well (e.g., gardening). Behavioural residue may (4) leave the space in which it originally occurred. Observers can make inferences about an individual's behaviour that occurred entirely outside the surroundings in which the clothing is seen. From the behavioural residue, observers infer dispositions and personality traits. Gosling et al.'s (2002) model explains how an individual's clothing choices may consciously and unconsciously reflect elements of his or her personality traits. However, one might argue that daily selection of clothing is not an expression of personality but is instead determined by its function (e.g., cold weather or important meeting). The process of selecting personal attire occurs in stages and includes the decision to purchase a particular clothing item, the anticipation of potential environmental conditions, and the freedoms or restrictions of various social conditions. Personality can influence choice of attire at any stage in this process.

An individual has a wide variety of clothing styles to choose from: professional, casual, stylish, or comfortable attire. In selecting clothing, an individual might choose an outfit that fits his or her social or environmental needs: a well-pressed suit and powerful tie for an important board meeting; a t-shirt and jeans to run errands; a flashy blouse and mini skirt for a night in the town; or sweatshirt and jogging pants for a cold day's morning run. An individual also might adjust other aspects of his or her appearance such as hairstyle, jewellery /accessories, or whether to reveal tattoos and body piercings.

2.5 Colour and Personality

The colour is an important aspect of our efforts to create our personal environment we like. There are a surprisingly small number of studies investigating the correlation between the individual colour preference and the personality. According to Luscher (1971), who advocates in his thesis that the subjects with similar colour preference may have similar personality traits, the subjects' psychological reactions/attitudes to the primary colours (blue, red, yellow and green) reflect their basic psychological needs. When, for example, someone does not like red, he/she unconsciously reflects anxiety (Gérard, Gautier, Jappé & Vavasseur, 1993). Eysenck postulated that the introverts, unlike the extroverts, are preoccupied with their own thoughts and emotions, so they choose a social environment that allows them to achieve a medium level of the optimal excitement (Smederevac, Mitrovic, Colovic, & Nikolasevic, 2006).

The studies of the effect of colour on excitement have shown that there is a correlation between colour preferences and personality traits. More precisely, the introverts prefer “calm” colours (such as blue), because they reduce the excitement, while the extroverts prefer “exciting” colours (such as red), as they increase the excitement level (Lange & Rentfrow, 2007). A study in which hue (but not brightness or saturation) was varied showed that more extroverts than introverts preferred warm colours (Gérard, Gautier, Jappé & Vavasseur, 1993). In his careful analysis of the effect of permanent observation of coloured surfaces through psychophysical functions, Gerard reported a significantly weaker excitement under the blue than under the red and white light. Subjects who scored high on the manifest anxiety scale were significantly more excited under the red light and calmer under the blue light as compared to the subjects with low manifest anxiety score (Gérard, Gautier, Jappé & Vavasseur, 1993).

The high structural mode of colour application has been established to be in the positive correlation with the socially reserved style of behaviour and in the negative correlation with extroversion. However, the looser application of colours is not necessarily in a close correlation with extroversion (Gérard, Gautier, Jappé & Vavasseur, 1993). Lange and Rentfrow suppose that similar personality traits may be reflected through diverse colour preference patterns, e.g., the high creativity might be associated with the yellow or red colour preference at the first place, and the blue colour preference at the last place (Lange & Rentfrow, 2007). The history of the psychological studies on the relationship between personality and colour has been partially reviewed by Schaie, who suggested that the colour shades in the spectrum order from red to violet represent a series of emotions, from excitement, unrestraint, direct and prolonged impulsive discharge (red), over calmness (green), to anxiety and concern (violet). The correlation of the violet colour and concern and tension has been supported by the findings of a great number of psycho-pathological groups. Birren has reported an association between the warm colours and energetic and excited moods and between the cool colours and passive and calm moods (Lange & Rentfrow, 2007).

A. Red

You are extroverted and optimistic. You are action oriented and physically active. You like to be the centre of attention. You are ambitious and competitive. You have a passion and enthusiasm for life and are not afraid to pursue your dreams and goals. You are impulsive. Patience is not one of your strong points. You can be aggressive and easy to anger, often exhibiting a violent temper. You do not hold a grudge. You can be somewhat of a know-it-all, not wanting to appear unintelligent or ignorant (Mehta & Zhu, 2009).

B. White

You are neat and immaculate in your appearance, in the presentation of your home almost to the point of being fanatical. You are far-sighted, with a positive and optimistic nature. You are well-balanced, sensible, discreet and wise. You are cautious, practical. You tend to have a great deal of self-control. You are confident, poised and self-assured when at your most positive, but can also be very choosy and fastidious when the mood

strikes. You can be very critical of yourself and others. You are self-sufficient and a loner. You may appear to be shy, but you do have strong beliefs about most things and love the opportunity to air those beliefs (Lange & Rentfrow, 2007).

C. Black

Prestige and power are important to you. You are independent, strong-willed and determined. You are non-emotional and give the appearance of a dignified and sophisticated person who is in total control - this is often a front as you may feel quite insecure. You like to keep people at a distance. You may be looking for protection from any negativity that surrounds you. You hold things inside and are not good at sharing things with others. You are methodical in your work, making sure everything is completed as required, down to the last detail. It may be a colour of comfort to you, allowing you to retreat and hide from the real world (Lange & Rentfrow, 2007).

D. Yellow

You have a happy disposition and are cheerful and fun to be with. You are creative, often being the one who comes up with new ideas. You tend to have your head in the clouds much of the time. You analyze everything, all the time, and are methodical in your thinking. You are impulsive and make quick decisions, but often, out of anxiety, jump in too quickly and rush things. You have a strong independent streak in you, and are selective with your choice of friends. You tend to hide your emotions, putting on a brave face in times of adversity. You have a modern outlook. New technology does not faze you. You communicate well on a mental level with like-minded people, but can become bitter and sharp-tongued if crossed. You are good at networking and getting information out of others. You can be stubborn but dislike pettiness and spitefulness of all kinds. You are good at anything that involves the mind, rather than physical pursuits (Gage, 1993).

E. Green

You are practical, down-to-earth person. You are stable and well balanced; you are kind, generous and compassionate. You have a great need to love and to be loved and you tend to wear your heart on your sleeve- you are an open book. You have a need to belong. You are at home in any social situation. You have high moral standards and doing the right thing is important to you. You like to be accepted, appreciated and admired for the good you do in the community as well as in your family life. You are a loyal friend and a faithful partner, gentle but not passionate. You are strong-willed and do not like to be told what to do by others. You do like to win arguments and do not concede defeat easily. You are not a risk-taker and not action orientated, rather more of an observer. Detail bores you. You process information quickly and prefer to develop an idea, organize a plan and then delegate the rest to someone else (Gage 1993).

F. Blue

You are conservative, reliable and trustworthy - you are quite trusting of others although you are very wary in the beginning until you are sure of the other person. You are not impulsive- you always think before you speak and act and do everything at your own pace in your own time. You take time to process and share your feelings. You are genuine and sincere, and you take your responsibilities seriously. You have a deep

need for peace and harmony in your everyday life. You appear to be confident and self-controlled, but may be hiding your vulnerable side. You are generally fairly even-tempered, unless your emotions take over - then you can become either moody and over-emotional, or cool and indifferent. You are sensitive to the needs of others. While you are friendly and sociable, you prefer the company of your own close group of friends. You are a rescuer and love to be needed. You can be rigid, you like to stick to what is familiar to you- you stubbornly do things your way even if there is a better way. Untidiness and unpredictability overwhelm you. You do not like to draw attention to yourself. You make a loyal and faithful marriage partner and you are an honest, trustworthy and sincere friend. You are aware of others feelings and sensitive to the moods of others. You are approachable and friendly, always making people feel welcome in your life. You have a thirst for knowledge in order to gain wisdom and appear knowledgeable in whatever area interests you (Mehta & Zhu 2009).

G. Pink

You are loving, kind, generous and sensitive to the needs of others. You are friendly and approachable with a warmth and softness others are drawn to. You have a maternal instinct, with a need to protect and take care of others. You are very much in touch with your femininity this includes men who are in touch with their feminine side. You are romantic and sensual and sensitive. With your optimistic and positive outlook on life, you see the good in everyone. You are methodical and organized, although you can sometimes be rather flippant when the immature girly side of pink appears. You are refined, reserved, calm and non-violent which may give the impression of shyness (Lange & Rentfrow, 2007).

H. Grey

You are neutral about life, often to the point of being indifferent. If you love grey, you are trying to protect yourself from the chaotic outside world, even to the point of isolating yourself from others. It is important for you to maintain the status quo - you prefer a safe, secure and balanced existence and never desire much excitement. You will usually compromise in order to keep the balance and stability. You are practical and calm, do not like to attract attention and are simply seeking a contented life. You are the middle of the road type, cool, conserved, composed and reliable. You are a hard worker who just gets on with the job that has to be done. You tend to be indecisive, lacking confidence - a fence-sitter who finds it difficult to make choices in most situations in your life. You like to be in control of your emotions and avoid experiencing emotional pain by shutting off from your emotions. You tend to make fair and balanced judgements, and may be a good critic, because of your emotional detachment. You prefer to not get involved - you are quite independent and may be quite individual in your attitude, although you lack imagination and creativity (Lange & Rentfrow, 2007).

I. Brown

Having a personality colour brown means you are honest, down-to-earth and wholesome, with both feet planted firmly on the ground. You are steady and reliable and quietly confident. You are friendly and approachable, genuine and sincere. You have a keen sense of duty and responsibility. Family and family life is extremely

important to you. You like physical comfort, simplicity and quality. You are a loyal and trustworthy friend, supportive and dependable. You are sensitive to the needs of others. You are sensual, warm and supportive. Others are comfortable in your presence and find it easy to open up to and confide in you. You are hard-working, industrious and reliable. You take life seriously but have a subtle dry sense of humour. You like a structured life with everything in its place, although you are not a perfectionist by any means. You are materialistic, appreciating quality in everything a comfortable home, the best food and drink and loyal companionship. You may suppress your emotions at times, retreating from the outside world. You feel uncomfortable about losing control but will work hard to change a situation that seems unjust or unfair. You have a strong need for security and a sense of belonging, which is why your family is so important to you. You can be quite contemplative, working out problems and becoming quite absorbed until you find a solution. You have a warm and encouraging manner that gives reassurance to others. You do everything in moderation and with restraint (Lange & Rentfrow, 2007).

J. Purple

Having a personality colour purple or violet as your favourite colour means you are sensitive and compassionate, understanding and supportive, thinking of others before yourself. You are a gentle and free spirit. Your feelings run deep and you can be quite sensitive to hurtful comments from others, although you would never show it. People are drawn to your charismatic and alluring energy. You are usually introverted rather than extroverted and may give the impression of being shy although this is not the case. You are creative and like to be individual in most of your endeavours, including your dress and home decoration - you love the unconventional. You are idealistic, and often impractical, with a great imagination, you tend to look at life through rose-coloured glasses. People who don't understand you sometimes think you are eccentric because you spend so much time in your fantasy world. You inspire others with your creative thinking and your ability to deal positively with adversity. You are very intuitive and quite psychic. You are a generous giver, asking for little in return except friendship. You can be secretive, with even your closest friends not really knowing you well. You dislike responsibility and have difficulty dealing with real day-to-day problems. You dislike being part of the crowd. You don't like to copy others and you don't like them to copy you. You are a visionary, with high ambitions, dreams and desires, and a compulsion to help humanity and to improve the planet earth. You often hold positions of power because you are visionary, but you delegate to others all the minor details that you aren't interested in. You like to have the best of everything, so you aim high. Being the free spirit you are, you love to travel to experience different cultures and meet new people. You are a good judge of character and sum others up quite quickly and accurately, although you usually see the best in everybody. Time means little to you and you are often late for everything. You trust the flow of the Universe to take care of everything. You can sometimes appear arrogant and conceited if operating from a negative perspective. You can be selfish and self-indulgent as you don't like being imposed upon by others beliefs and regulations (Lange & Rentfrow, 2007).

2.6 Effects of Colour on Personality

Judgements about colours are frequent in the market place. Consumers often buy products in the colours that they find most pleasing at the time of purchase and, knowing that, firms often rely on colours to appeal emotionally and aesthetically to consumers. Colours are powerful signals, in part, because of their readily accessible emotional tones. Indeed, research has shown that colours are associated with and inducers of specific emotional states (Valdez & Mehrabian 1994). Colour signals an emotional tone. More saturated and lighter colours are perceived to be happier, more exciting, and purer (i.e., most often, positive emotions), whereas more muted and darker colours tend to be more strongly associated with sadness, distress or disgust (i.e., most often, negative emotions). Contrary to the common belief that a colour's emotional tone (or colour tone) is determined primarily by hue (e.g., yellow is happy, blue is sad), the strongest determinants are actually saturation (i.e., the apparent purity of the colour) and lightness (Valdez & Mehrabian 1994).

People's perception of a colour's emotional tone is surprisingly consistent across age groups and cultures (D'Andrade & Egan, 1974). Developmentally, children as young as three years old have shown to make associations between colours and emotions similar to those made by adults (Zentner, 2001).

Surprisingly, colour tone explains little about colour preference (Terwogt & Hoeksma 1995). For example, bright yellow is the happiest colour, yet among the least preferred, whereas blue is often linked with sadness, yet among the most preferred (Palmer & Schloss, 2010).

Colour is an important part of human perception. Many everyday objects have been designed to convey a message through colour. The way that colours effects psychological processing has not been fully explained. In particular, past studies on the effect of colour on cognitive tasks have presented contradicting results (Mehta & Zhu, 2009). These studies have often only assessed two of the three primary colours at a time and still had contradicting results. Most studies focus on comparing red to either blue or green. The results from the studies have been a mix with some of the studies showing red to enhance cognitive task performance over blue or green and the other studies showing the opposite effect. Mehta and Zhu (2009) explain these results through achievement motivation theory. Different colours enhance different achievement motivations, which can then affect the performance on different types of cognitive tasks. For colour to affect the performance on cognitive tasks, Elliot and Maier (2007) state six premises that must be met.

First, colour should be able to carry a specific meaning. If colour were merely for aesthetic purposes then it would not have influence over psychological functioning. Second, the meaning of colours is based both on learned associations and on biological responses. For example, in an academic setting, red is often coupled with mistakes. A teacher corrects a paper in a red pen; this is a learned association. Biologically red can be a signal of danger as in some cases of an ape's attack readiness (Maier, Elliot, & Lichtenfeld, 2008). Blue is more often associated with openness and peace instead of danger (Mehta & Zhu, 2009). The third premise is that the perception of colour alone

will cause evaluative processes. Evaluative processes are defined as determining whether a stimulus is harmful or hospitable (Elliot & Maier, 2007). Fourth, these evaluative processes, which are caused by the perception of colour, influence motivated behavior. Colours with a positive association would trigger an approach motivation, while colours with a negative association would trigger an avoidance motivation. The fifth premise is that the influence of colour on psychological functioning is implicit and automatic. The activation of the motivation behaviour takes place without awareness. The sixth premise is that the meaning and effects of colour are based on context. In different contexts, a colour can have different associations. Within an achievement setting, red is associated with danger and mistakes. If you are in a social context, red can be associated with romance and will then have a more positive association (Elliot & Niesta, 2008).

Moods and emotions are a conscious way to evoke the approach and avoidance motivations. They both have been shown to have influence on cognitive task performance. (Baldwin & Meunier, 1999). Positive moods have been shown to increase the performance on some cognitive tasks and to decrease the performance on others. Being in a positive mood has been shown to enhance tasks that involve creativity, and those that involve the recall of happy memories. The feelings of happiness tend to increase the tendency to generate free associations and can then increase the ability to solve insight problems (Kuschel, Forster, & Denzler, 2010). Positive mood has been shown to impair cognitive tasks involving assessing memory, deductive reason, and planning. It is hypothesized that positive mood enhances tasks because it increases a person's ability to reinterpret material and switch between cognitive sets. Positive mood may increase the load on working memory, which causes poorer performance on cognitive tasks. (Baldwin & Meunier 1999), show that positive mood can both enhance and impair cognitive task performance. On creative tasks, positive mood enhances the performance, while on more detail-oriented tasks, positive mood inhibits the performance. Kuschel, Forster, and Denzler (2010) explain these results through the cognitive tuning model. This model suggests that an individual's internal state informs them about their current situation, whether it is dangerous or safe, and can then convey the processing requirements for that situation. Negative states signal a problematic or dangerous environment and will then convey a more systematic and detail-oriented processing style. While in this processing style, each solution that could change the situation would be carefully assessed and less creative thinking would be used because untested solutions could act to make the current situation worse. On the other hand, positive states signal a safe environment and will convey a more risky processing style. It is thought that internal knowledge structures desire to be enriched with new information and this can lead to more creative thinking. Mood is one influencer of cognitive tuning, but it does not always have to be a conscious signal that an individual is aware exists (Kuschel, Forster, & Denzler, 2010).

3. Methodology

This study adopted the qualitative research design. Qualitative research, according to Bell (2012), is more concerned about understanding individuals' perceptions of the world. It doubts whether social 'facts' exist and questions whether a 'scientific' approach can be used when dealing with human beings. She, further, says there are occasions when qualitative researchers draw on quantitative techniques, and vice versa, and depends on the kind of data required. Punch (2005: 28) adds that 'qualitative research not only uses non-numerical and unstructured data but also, typically, has research questions and methods which are more general at the start and become more focused as the study progresses'. Descriptive research technique was specifically used for this study.

Purposive sampling technique was used to sample one hundred and forty (140) fashion design students and ten (10) fashion design lecturers from three public tertiary institutions in the Kumasi metropolis of Ashanti region for the study. A total of one hundred and fifty (150) respondents were used. The numbers of respondents selected from the three educational institutions were: 50 students and 4 lecturers from University of Education, Winneba (Kumasi-Campus); 40 students and 3 lecturers from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi; and 50 students and 4 lecturers from Kumasi Polytechnic (now Kumasi Technical University).

Questionnaire that comprised of open-ended and closed-ended questions was used as the data gathering instrument. The data gathered were analysed and presented in tables and figures with their frequency and percentage values and also in descriptive forms, where necessary.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Overview

The study seeks to determine the effects of colour in fashion on personalities in the fashion industry in Ghana. A total of one hundred and fifty (150) respondents were given questionnaire to answer and the responses received were analysed and presented in the form of tables and figures.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The analyses of the bio – data of respondents in Table 1 shows that out of the 150 respondents who were studied, 77.4% of the respondents were of the age group 25-34 years, and the rest of the respondents were in the age groups of 18-24years, 35-44 years and 45 years and above. It was also revealed that 54% of the respondents were females, while 46% of them were males. Also 84.7% of the respondents were Christians and all the 150 respondents have tertiary education background. Again 84.7% of the respondents were single, and 15.3% of the respondents were either married or divorced.

Table 1: Respondents' demographic data

Respondents characteristics	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Age Group		
18-24 years	21	14.0
25-34 years	116	77.4
35-44years	11	7.3
45years and above	2	1.3
Total	150	100.0
Sex		
Male	69	46.0
Female	81	54.0
Total	150	100.0
Religious Background		
Christian	127	84.7
Traditionalist	0	0.0
Muslim	23	15.3
Others	0	0.0
Total	150	100.0
Educational Background		
Second cycle	0	0.0
Tertiary	150	100.0
Total	150	100.0
Marital Status		
Single	127	84.7
Married	12	8.0
Divorced	11	7.3
Widowed	0	0.0
Total	150	100.0

4.3 Knowledge on colour and personality in fashion

Table 2: Ranking of knowledge on colours in fashion

Factors	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Low	11	7.3
Moderate	46	30.7
High	93	62.0
Total	150	100.0

As shown in Table 2, 93(62.0%) of the respondents were ranked high while 46(30.7%) of them were ranked moderate and 11(7.3%) of the respondents were ranked low. This means that according to the analysis of the data collected from the respondents' majority of them had knowledge on colours in fashion. Also when respondents were asked whether they know and understand the meaning and impact of colours in fashion, all the 150 respondents indicated that they understand the meaning and impact of colours in fashion.

Table 3: Colour must be considered when making decision on fashion

Factors	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	94	62.7
Agree	45	30.0
Neither Agree nor Disagree	11	7.3
Disagree	0	0.0
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Total	150	100.0

Table 3 reflects that 94(62.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the fact that colour must be considered when making a decision in fashion, 45(30.0%) of them agreed to the above statement. This data collected shows that majority of the respondents strongly agreed with the fact that colour in fashion must be taken into consideration when making decision on fashion while the minority (7.3%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the view that colour must be considered when making decision on fashion.

Table 4: How colours are used in fashion

Factors	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
For beautification	82(54.7)	45(30.0)	23(15.3)	0(0)	0(0)	150(100)
For identification	58(38.7)	80(53.3)	12(8.0)	0(0)	0(0)	150(100)
For therapy	46(30.7)	48(32.0)	44(29.3)	12(8.0)	0(0)	150(100)
For communication	82(54.7)	45(30.0)	0(0)	23(15.3)	0(0)	150(100)
For protection	82(54.7)	34(22.7)	22(14.7)	12(8.0)	0(0)	150(100)
For creating illusion	71(47.3)	68(45.3)	11(7.3)	0(0)	0(0)	150(100)
For religious purposes	58(38.7)	57(38.0)	23(15.3)	0(0)	12(8.0)	150(100)
For symbolism	104(69.3)	34(22.7)	0(0)	12(8.0)	0(0)	150(100)
For charming and invoking powers	58(38.7)	35(23.3)	34(22.7)	11(7.3)	12(8.0)	150(100)
For correcting figure fault	70(46.7)	35(23.3)	23(15.3)	22(14.7)	0(0)	150(100)
For attraction	93(62.0)	57(38.0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	150(100)

The data from the survey, presented in Table 4, also reveals the following in relationship to colours used in fashion. It shows that above (50%) of all the respondents agree or strongly agree with the factors. For example, for beautification (84.7%), while 15.3% neither agreed nor disagreed. For identification (92.0%), for therapy (62.7%) while 29.3% neither agreed nor disagreed, for communication (84.7%) while 15.3% disagreed, for protection (77.3%), for creating illusion (92.7%) and for religious purposes (76.7%) while 8.0% strongly disagreed. For symbolism (92.0%), for charming and invoking spiritual powers (62.0%) while 8.0% strongly disagreed, for correcting figure fault (70.0%) while 14.7% disagreed, and for attraction (100%). It is deduced from the Table 4 that the idea of attraction is the most outstanding factors that respondents consider for the use of colours in fashion. This factor is followed by identification purpose, creation of illusion and for symbolism which are also on the same level in terms of ranking. It is

found in the Table 4 that comparatively the concept of charming and invoking spiritual powers, correcting figure faults followed by the idea of therapy are the factors least considered for use of colours in fashion.

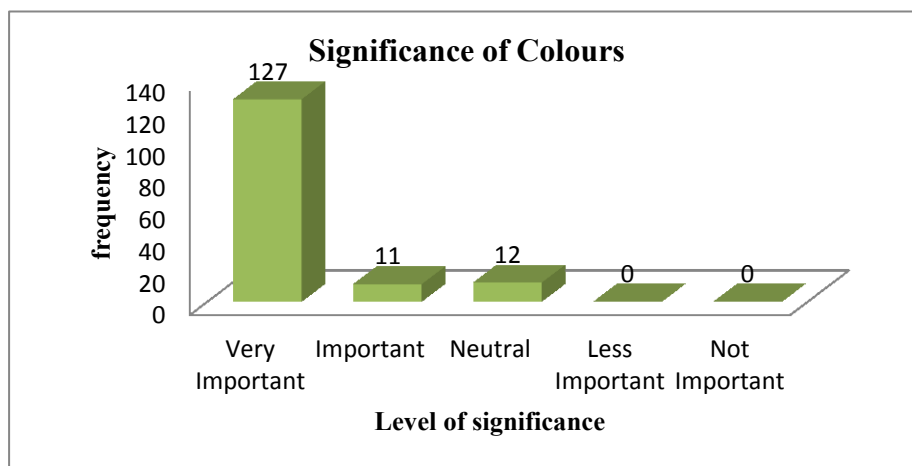


Figure 1: The level of importance of learning of colours in fashion

The analysis of the factors also revealed that when respondents were asked how important they consider the learning of colours in fashion, 127 respondents out of 150 consider it very important. This means the majority (84.7%) of the respondents indicated that they consider learning colours in fashion as very important while the least were neutral (Figure 1).

4.4 Attitudes toward colours and personality in fashion

The analysis of the attitude of respondents toward colours and personality in fashion was presented in terms of frequency (N), (always =1, occasionally = 2, and never = 3). The results for how often the respondents consider colour when choosing a particular fashion are as follows: 115(76.7%) respondents said they always consider colour when choosing a particular fashion object while 35(23.3%) respondents said they occasionally do that. With the question of how often the respondents consider personality when choosing a particular fashion, the data collected were: 93(62%) respondents chose always, 46(30.7%) respondents also chose occasionally while 11(7.3%) respondents chose never. This implies that majority of the respondents are in the favour of the consideration of colour, as well as personality of the user, when selecting a particular fashion object.

The analysis of the factors also reveals that majority of the respondents were of the view that colour and personality have influence on fashion (Strongly Agree = 46.0%, Agree = 46.7 and neither agree nor disagree = 7.3%). There were no responses for disagree and strongly disagree. This, therefore, means that over 80 % of the respondents indicated that both colour and personality are important factors to be considered in the choice of fashion products.

4.5 Positive effects of colour on personalities in fashion

Table 5: Positive Effects of Colour on Personalities

Factors	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Helps to correct figure fault	105	70.0	45	30.0
Enhances the aesthetic appeal of clothes	139	92.7	11	7.3
For enhancing self-image	127	84.7	23	15.3
For indicating ranks and classes	104	69.3	46	30.7
For designing textiles	139	92.7	11	7.3
For interior decorations	150	100.0	0	0.0
For the celebration of particular events	138	92.0	12	8.0
For effective communication	139	92.7	11	7.3

The results from the analysis of the factors responsible for the consideration of the positive effects of colour on personalities in fashion show that among all the factors surveyed, the respondents indicated over 50% level of agreement to all the statements that were used as the effects of colours on personalities in fashion (Table 5). That is over semi-quartile (1/2) of the responses by the respondents were Yes as shown in (Table 5). The highest agreement rate were found in statements such as for decoration (Yes =100%), enhances the aesthetic appeal of clothes, for designing textiles and for effective communication (Yes = 92.7% each). However, the lowest Yes response rate was found in the statement: for indicating ranks and classes (Yes =69.3%). This means that among the statements considered, the respondents were likely to have indicated that “for indicating ranks and classes” is least positive effect of colour on personalities in fashion. From inferences, it can be said that the information here agrees with Pride and Ferrell’s assertion that colour conveys information, identifies a product or a company, determines quality of a merchandise and much more (Pride & Ferrell, 2003).

4.6 Negative effects of colour on personalities in fashion

Table 6: Negative effects of colour on personalities

Statements	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Some colours have effect on blood pressure	48	32.0	102	68.0
Some colours cause people to have low self-esteem	128	85.3	22	14.7
Some colours make people lazy	93	62.0	57	38.0
Colours can cause a person to have a negative mood	150	100	0	0.0
Some colours absorb more heat into a wearer’s body and cause the person to grow weaker	150	100	0	0.0

From the data collected on the negative effects of colour on personalities in fashion, Table 6 presents that 48(32%) respondents said Yes whiles 102(68%) respondents said No on the view that some colours have effect on blood pressure. One hundred and twenty-five 125(85.3%) respondents said that some colours cause low self-esteem. For the case of some colours influencing people to be lazy, 93(62%) respondents answered Yes whiles 57(38%) answered No. On the statements that colours can cause a person to

have a negative mood and some colours absorb more heat into a wearer body and cause a person to grow weaker, they all responded Yes 150(100%). From the analysis of the statements on the negative effects of colours on personalities in fashion, the respondents indicated that the highest ranking effects among the statements are colours can cause a person to have a negative mood and some colours absorb more heat into a wearer's body and cause the person to grow weaker (Yes = 100%), while least ranked negative effect was some colours have effect on blood pressure (Yes = 32.0%). This is shown in Table 6. From the Table 6, the higher the Yes value in percentage form, the more negative effect that statement has on personalities in fashion and vice versa.

4.7 Suggestions to help people choose the right colours for fashion products

According to the survey, some of the suggestions that were stated by the respondents in order to help people choose right coloured fashion products for use are: Customers or users should communicate with the designers to help choose colours that suit them; there is the need to teach more colours in schools; factors such as occasion, age, time, and weather should be considered for the selection of fashion goods; public education about colours and their meanings and what they stand for must be given to people; designers should be more open to the general public to help wearers to approach them for selection of appropriate colours for use; people should be educated on the importance of colours correctly; customers should be able to know and appreciate colours and be able to differentiate them; designers should learn more about colours; there should be education on how people should choose colours; colour must match the occasion; and additionally, wearers should avoid the use of too bright colours that may draw people's attention whenever they are at particular places.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The purpose of this study is to determine the effects of colour in fashion on personality; to find out respondents' knowledge on colours they wear; to identify ways in which colour is used in fashion; to find out positive and negative effects of coloured fashion objects on selected personalities in the Ghanaian community and to provide means of enhancing the effective use of colour by personalities in Ghana with regards to fashion design objects.

In order to achieve this, the researcher identified respondents' knowledge in colours. It was found out that most (76.7%) of the respondents always considered colours for their clothes selection, (23.3%) of the respondents occasionally considered colours for their clothes selection. Also, all (100%) the respondents showed that they understand meaning and impact of colours in fashion, while in terms of knowledge ranking on colour, report showed that (62.0%) of the respondent were ranked high, (30.7%) of them were ranked moderate and (7.3%) of the respondents were ranked low.

Again, the researcher investigated how the colours were used in fashion on respondents and it was found out that those factors with high ranking the idea of

attraction is the most outstanding factors that respondents consider for the use of colours in fashion. This factor is followed by identification purpose, creation of illusion and for symbolism which are also on the same level in terms of ranking. Comparatively, the concept of charming and invoking spiritual powers, correcting figure faults followed by the idea of therapy are the factors least considered for use of colours in fashion.

The analysis of the statements responsible for the negative effects of colours on personalities in fashion shows that respondents indicated that the highest ranking effects among the statements are colours can cause a person to have a negative mood (Yes =100%) and some colours absorb more heat into a wearer's body and cause the person to grow weaker (Yes = 100%), while least ranked negative effect was some colours have effect on blood pressure (Yes = 32.0%).

Finally, according to the survey, some of the suggestions that were stated by the respondents to help people choose right coloured fashion products for use are: Customers should communicate with designers to help choose appropriate colours for use; there is the need to teach more about colours in schools; religious bodies should teach more about colours used in their worship for more effective positive impact on personalities; colour must match the occasion; and avoid using too bright colours that may draw people's attention whenever the user is around.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and the results of the research, the researchers recommend that policy makers in fashion should make good use of this research report to aid in the design of good intervention measures and policies that could enhance colour choice and selection in the fashion industry. The research document should also serve as manual for individuals and resource persons in especially apprenticeship units and other sectors of education to adapt and implement good practices that must be used by teachers and fashion designers in order to improve upon choice of colours for more positive effects in the fashion industry.

Symposiums and talk shows should be organized to draw more attention on knowledge of colours, their proper uses, and how they can affect people's personalities. Also, before anyone will be admitted into a fashion institution or gain employment into a fashion industry, that fellow must be tested on colours.

In order to reduce high blood pressure, doctors should advise their patient to avoid the use of red (warm colours) but rather they should use blue (cool colours) to reduce the high blood flow.

In order to increase productivity at work places, the employers should use colours that will motivate workers to work and should also paint the working premises with colours that, comparatively, prevent laziness.

As safety measures for farmers and hunters the Ministry of Agriculture in Ghana should advise hunters and farmers to wear green colours when going to the bush for protection.

Furthermore, researchers in future can increase the sample size and extend the exercise to include the whole of Ghana.

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