

THE USE OF HAIR EXTENTIONS BY WOMEN IN ONDO WEST LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AREA OF ONDO STATE

Adepeko, Evelyn O. (Ph.D)

Department of Home Economics,
Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.
Email: adetunde.crowns@gmail.com

Abstract

The study examined the use of hair extensions by women in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State. Four specific objectives and research questions were set to guide the study. A structured questionnaire with thirty items was used for data collection. Two hundred and ten respondents were involved in the research. Simple percentage and frequency count were used to analyze the data collected. The findings of the study reveal that, some hair extensions were made of different materials, such as: human hair, synthetics or mixed blends and can be added individually, in groups or by clip-on method. The findings also stated that hair extensions can be used to change a woman's appearance or look. Change short, thin hair to become long, lush and full. The study concludes that, the use of hair extensions by women is basically meant for self-beautification and fashion.

Keywords: Hair, Hair extensions, Women, Human hair and Synthetics

Introduction

Among the Yoruba people of Southwestern Nigeria, the head is given a highly reverend and the woman's hair is considered her crown and beauty. Therefore, over the years the Yoruba people have come up with various beautiful, exotic and dazzling hairstyles. In Yoruba land, hairstyles are not sometimes for fashion or beautification alone, they serve some purposes; it could be religious, for identification, age passage, demonstration of spiritual powers or for celebrating specific traditional festivals. It could also signify the

marital status or mood of a woman. In the past, Yoruba married women adopted hairstyles in which the hair flows from the front down to the nape of the neck. Other styles were the ones which the hair comes from the forehead and from the back and then meet up at the center of the head. Although in the past, the different hair styles were done without the use of hair extensions. Then different Yoruba hair styles included iriunkiko (knotting with thread e.g. colling penny), irundidi (normal hair plaiting without thread), Koroba (bucket or pail) and Kolese. See some examples as shown in figures A, B, and C.



Fig.a Modern Kolese



Fig.b Koroba



Fig. c Irun kiko

However, these hair styles have changed over time due to a number of reasons: technology, increase in travel and fashion changes among others.

What are hair extensions? These are hair extensions or artificial hair integration. Hair extensions are methods of lengthening one's hair by incorporating artificial hair. Women have always wanted longer, fuller hair and have always worn wigs and use other forms of hair extensions to achieve that look. See examples of different attachments used in contemporary times in figures h-i below.



Fig.d



fig.e



fig.f



Fig.g



fig.h



fig i.

The use of hair extensions is now a common phenomenon. It is used by both the high on the low, old and young, (see figs i and j below.) depending on the quality. Although more popular among women in the western world.



Fig.j.A baby with hair extension



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Fig.k.A Grandma with hair extension.

Some authors have traced the history of hair extension to the early civilization. According to Curious (2014), The origin of hair extensions dates back to Cleopatra. The first documented proof of hair weaves were seen among the Egyptians in 3,400BC. In Egypt, hair extensions were both worn by men and women. They wore wigs, sewn on hair pieces and braids that were made of human hairs and dyed sheep wool attached to hair with resin and Bee wax. Both the European and American women were not left out in the business of using hair extensions. In the 1700s, white wig called Perukes were in use, king Louis was the first to use Perukes when his head started turning

bald, he wore wig to cover the baldness of his head and in no time, the noble men and women of his days followed this way of fashion

<http://www.hairboutique.com/tips/articles.ph>

For centuries, European royalty wore elaborate wigs, Queen Elizabeth 1 of England famously wore a red wig, tightly and elaborately curled in a 'Roman' style and king Louis XIII of France pioneered wig wearing among men from the 1620s onwards. Women of the merchant class in northern Europe wore modified versions of courtly hairstyles, with coifs or caps, veils and linen wimples, that is, cloth which

covers the head and wrapped around the neck and chin. While the gray wig of the British barrister and the lacquered black wig of the Japanese illustrate occupational

associations with hair attachments (John & Bankhead 2014). See an example of a contemporary barrister with a wig in fig.1.



Fig.1.A Contemporary barrister with a wig

As earlier mentioned, globally women have always wanted longer, fuller hair for beautification and fashion. The woman hair is no doubt a symbol of beauty especially the long ones look very nice on women and could possibly have affective and emotional effects on people's imagination due to its beauty and luxury. Obasanho (2004) stated that Xie Qiuping a Chinese was acclaimed to have the longest hair in the world. The length of her hair is 5.62m according to the record set in 2004. She began to grow her hair in 1973 when she turned 13 years old and she still keep the hair till date. However, according to other sources, Xie Qiuping no longer holds the record because affirms that, in India there is a woman living with curls, the length of which is nearly 8 meters (7m 92cm).

Chinese Chenq Shiquin-a owner of a beauty salon on the other hand has not cut her hair in the last 16 years, the length of her hair is 2.4m

<http://www.hairboutique.com/tips/articles.ph>

Men are not left out in the hair fashion show, Tran Huy Wai according to him has not cut his hair in the last 36 years. According to the source, the 67 years old man was determined not to cut his hairs in order to be recognized and to get into Guinness Book of Records. The same source further revealed that, American Asha Mander is a world famous longest dreadlocks owner, 2.6m in length. She said it took her 20 years to grow such long hair.

Research Questions

1. What is the perception of women on the concept of hair extensions?
2. Why do women use hair extensions?
3. What are the benefits of using hair extensions?

Natasha Moraes de Andrade, a 2 year old girl from Brazil. She hasn't cut her hair from birth. Though from a very poor background, she managed with great efforts to care for her long hair. However, Natasha cut her 150cm long hair and sold it for \$5000-five thousand US dollars to assist her poor family financially

<http://www.hairboutique.com/tips/articles.php?f=tip>



Fig m: a woman with jerry curls

Observations from the pilot study conducted by the researcher in 2016 indicates that, there are misconceptions on the concepts of hair extension, therefore, the study is to examine the use of hair extension by women in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State. Five specific objectives were set to guide the study. The study

1. examined women's perception on the concept of hair extensions:
2. highlighted reasons why women use hair extensions:
3. examined the perceived benefits of using hair extensions and
4. identified some challenges of using hair extensions
5. highlighted how natural hair can be maintained

Hair extension could mean any form of material, decoration, bond or chemical attached to the hair in order to improve its appearance, length, colour or overall acceptability. Examples are hair weaves (human hair or synthetic) wig, Artmacasa, (wool), twine, rubber thread, relaxers, hair activator, conditioner, hair dyes and gels Banks(2000).



fig n.a lady with relaxed hair

4. What are the challenges of using hair extensions?

5. How can natural hair be maintained?

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Methodology

The design used for this study was descriptive survey. Survey design is suitable for eliciting information from respondents without interfering with their responses (Durotolu, 2006). The Study was carried out in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State with a population of 283,672 (National Population Commission of Nigeria, 2006). There are 12 wards altogether in the Local Government and they are Newtown, Odosida, Yaba, Odojomu, Laje, Bagbe/Igunsin, Ilunla, Igbado, Okerowo, Surulere, Okelisa and Lekere. The areas covered were: Yaba, Odosida, Odojomu, Okerowo, Newtown, Okelisa and Surulere. The population of the study comprises of all hairstylists and women in the area of study. The population of women as at the last population census is one hundred and forty-four thousand, two hundred and seventy-two (144,272).

Population office Ondo West Local Government (2006). Seven wards out of the twelve wards in Ondo were selected by balloting. From each of the wards twenty (20) women were selected. A total of two hundred and ten (210) respondents constituted the sample size for the study. Purposive sampling technique was used for the selection of women in the wards to ensure that women sampled were users of any form

of hair extender. A structured questionnaire of '4- point of strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed with values 4, 3, 2 and 1 assigned. Mean was used and interpreted based on the statistical real limits with 2.50 as the cut-off point accepted as agreed.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the perception of women on the concept of hair extensions?

Table 1: Women's perception on the concept of hair extensions

S/N	Concept of Hair Attachment	X	Remarks
1.	Some hair extensions are made of human hair	3.02	Agreed
2.	Hair extensions can be made from synthetics or mixed blends	2.88	Agreed
3.	Hair extensions can be added individually, in groups, or by clip-on method	3.11	Agreed
4.	Hair extensions are added by bonding	3.16	Agreed
5.	Hair extensions are added by gluing	1.91	Disagreed
6.	Hair extensions are added by heat fusing	3.09	Agreed
7.	Hair extensions are added by sewing	3.00	Agreed
8.	Chemical or thermally alteration of hair texture is a form of hair extension	1.78	Disagreed
9.	Hair extension is as old as hair styling	2.95	Agreed
10.	Art Macasa (baby wool and Yeye wool), twine, weave-on, wigs, relaxers	1.75	Disagreed

Key: N = Total number of respondents = 210, X = mean

Table 1 presents women's perception on the concept of hair attachment. The Table revealed that the mean responses of respondents on items 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 9 ranged from 2.88 to 3.16 and were greater than the cut-off point (2.5); hence, respondents agreed to the items statements. The table also revealed that the mean responses on items 5 (1.91), 8 (1.78) and 10 (1.75) were lesser than the

cut-off point (2.5); hence, respondents disagreed to the items statements.

Table 2 shows women's perception on the benefits of using hair extensions. The table revealed that the mean responses on items 1-5 ranged from 2.65 to 3.48 and were greater than the cut-off point (2.5), while items number 5, 8 and 10 mean lower than 2.5.

Table 2:Reasons for using Hair Extension

S/N	Reasons for using Hair Extension	X	Remarks
1.	Hair styles (with cxtensions) have the power to dictate how people treat others	2.94	Agreed
2.	Hair extensions can be used to enhance the appearance of women's hair	3. 04	Agreed
3.	Hair extensions are used for fashion	3.20	Ad

4.	Hair extensions can be used to cover up for baldness	3.04	Agreed
5.	The use of hair extensions promotes the growth of natural hair	1.68	Disagreed
6.	Hair extensions is used only by women with damaged hair	1.77	Disagreed
7.	Hair extensions can be used to achieve youthful appearance	1.90	Agreed
8.	Hair extension is used by younger women to help them boost their status and make them look more beautiful and attractive	2.03	Disagreed
9.	With hair extensions (especially wigs) it is possible to change hairstyles and look as often as possible	2.93	Agreed

Key:N=Total number of respondents,C=Cut-off point.X=mean

Table 2 presents women's reasons for using hair extensions.The table revealed that the mean responses on items 1,2,3,4,7 and 9 ranged from 2.93 to 3.20 and were greater than the cut-off point (2.5)hence, respondents agreed to the items statement.

Table 2 presents women's reasons for using hair extensions The table revealed that the mean

The table also showed that the mean responses on items 5 (1.68) and 8 (2.03) were lesser than the cut-off point (2.5),this implies that respondents disagreed to the item statements.

Research Question 3:What are the benefits of using hair extensions?

Table 3: Benefit of using Hair Extensions

S/N	Benefit of using Hair Extensions	X	Remarks
1.	With hair extensions,women's hair can bechanged to any colour	3.03	Agree d
2.	Women can wear different looks for different occasions with the aid of hair attachments	3.20	Agreed
3.	Hair attachment can change short,thin hair to long,lush and full	3.45	Agreed
4.	With hair extensions,women can wear any style	3.48	Agreed
5.	With hair extensions women's hair can be changed to longer or shorter length	2.65	Agreed

:N=bf dC=Cffi

C=Cut-off point, X=mean

longer or shorter length

Key:N=Total number of respondents,C=Cut-off point,

C=Cut-off point, X=mean

Table 3 shows the benefits women derive from hair extenders of using hair attachment. The table revealed that the mean responses on items 1-5 ranged from 2.65 to

Table 4: Challenges of using Hair Attachment

S/N	Challenges of using Hair Attachment	X	Remarks
1.	There are some diseases associated with the use of hair attachment (e.g.HIV)	2.42	Disagreed
2.	Hair attachment is more expensive to keep than natural hair	3.47	Agreed
3.	Hair attachments can cause hair damages	3.30	Agreed
4.	Hair attachment can cause scalp irritation	2.98	Agreed
5.	The use of hair attachments can cause inflammation	2.70	Agreed
6.	The use of hair attachments can lead to temporary and permanent bald patches on the scalp	2.77	Agreed

Table 4 presents some of the challenges of using hair attachment. The

3.48 and were greater than the cut-off point (2.5), hence respondents agreed to all the item statement in the table.

table revealed that the mean responses of respondents on items 2-6 ranged from 2.70

to 3.47 and were greater than the cut-off point(2.5)while item number | disagreed with the statement.

Table 5:How Natural Hair can be maintained

N ITEMS		SA	A	D	SD	MEAN	DECISION
Hair dye is good for the hair	50	44	52	54	2.43		Rejected
Hairstyling is good for the upkeep of natural hair	90	64	28	18	3.13		Accepted
It is preferable to use organic cream like Damatol,Soulmatc.	110	54	16	20	3.29		Accepted
Sporting waves etc on natural hair							
Natural hair is casier to maintain	72	88	24	16	3.07		Accepted
Daily use of shampoo is not necessary for natural hair unless you have exceptionally oily hair or are exposed to a large amount of dust or particles	120	40	25	15	3.33		Accepted
Thick natural hair is not inherently good or bad,but it does affec both the appearance and the maintenance needs of your hair			16	22	3.29		Accepted
Thick natural hair can clump and han limp.which doesn't look good	g 108	54					

Table 5 shows how natural hair can be maintained.The table shows that majority of the items were rated as their mean scores were greater than the criterion mean (2.5)

Discussion of Findings

Hair attachment as the name implies are attached to the hair to give the hair a better appearance. The study examined women's perception on the concepts of hair attachment and the study found out that women perceived that some hair attachments

are made of human hair,can be made from synthetics or mixed blends and can be added individually, in groups, or by clip-on method. Women also perceived that hair attachment is as old as hair styling and can be added by bonding, heat fusing and sewing. In support of this finding Bright (2014) noted that there are

nine traditional, methods of applying hair attachments

namely: bonding,tracking,fusion, suspension application, netting, free braiding, clip-in and clip-on hair extensions, lace application and micro braiding.

Furthermore, the study examined the reasons women use hair attachment and found out that the hair especially with attachment has the power to dictate how people treat others,hair attachments can be used to improve one's personal appearance, hair attachments are used for fashion and hair attachment promote the growth of natural hair. It also found out that hair attachment can be used to achieve youthful appearance and it is used by younger women to help them boost their status and make

them look more beautiful and attractive. With hair attachments (especially wigs) it is possible to change hairstyle and look as often as possible. The fashion industry and the business of "looking good" has become an agent of globalization. Women adopt hairstyles from all over the world using the mass media. Added to this most people now value (more) their appearance when compared to what it used to be in order to achieve this, women wear hair attachments. Apart from this some set of people (especially the religious fanatic) can be identified by the kind of hairstyle they are wear. Some are referred to as the "old school" while some the "jasi". In line with the finding of the study Mercer (1994), Rooks (1996) Byrd and Tharps (2001). Jacobs Huey (2006) and Patton (2006) noted that in 15th century Africa, hairstyles were used to indicate a person's marital status, age, religion, ethnic identity, wealth and rank within the community. Hairstyles have historically represented social class and political stance (Rooks, 1996: Chapman, 2007).

The study also examined the benefits of using hair attachments, it was observed that with hair attachments, women's hair can be changed to any colour, they can wear different looks for different occasions with the aid of hair attachments and can change short, thin hair to long, lush and full. Hair attachments come in different lengths. Women with different size and length of hair can improve the length and size of their hair with hair attachments. There is "full expression" for women with scanty hair, the attachment is fused into the hair in such a way as to make it blend with the natural hair and improved its appearance. Bald ladies can also wear wig to hide or disguise their hair deformity. Since some of these hair attachments are synthetic and produced industrially, it is therefore possible to have different length and sizes. Hair attachment

also come in different colours and can be dyed, this makes it possible for women to wear hair of different hair colour. It was also discovered that with hair attachments women can wear any style. Some hairstyles require the hair to be scrapped or cut and most women would not want their hair cut, in this case, hair attachment is first added to the hair and rather than scrapping the natural hair, the attachment is scrapped or cut.

In addition, the challenges of hair attachments based on the findings of the study were: it can cost a lot of money, it can cause hair damages, it can cause scalp irritation, it can cause inflammation and lead to temporary and permanent bald patches on the scalp. In support of this finding Wise, Palmer, Reich, Cozier and Rosenberg (2012) found out that harmful chemicals cause minor to severe hair loss including balding, burns, and color change, DeGruy (2006) noted that chemicals used in hair relaxers caused injury in the mouth and esophagus when ingested and such products must therefore be labeled poisonous.

Lastly, this research work showed that hair dye is not good for the hair with mean value of 2.43. Items 2-8 under Table 5 all accepted their opinions respectively. This means that hairstyling is good for the upkeep of natural hair. It is preferable to use organic cream like "Damamol", "Soulmate", "Sporting Waves" etc on natural hair to prevent hair dandruff and other hair rashes. Natural hair is easier to maintain as it takes lesser time and it is less costly. Daily shampooing is not necessary for natural hair unless the hair is exceptionally oily or it is exposed to large amount of dust. Thick natural hair is not inherently good or bad but it affects both the appearance and maintenance of the hair. Thick natural hair can clump and hang limp which does not look good. All these opinions show that natural hair can be maintained without any damage.

Conclusion

The study concludes that, the use of hair extenders by women is basically meant for self-beautification and fashion.

Recommendations

Based on the findings made and the conclusion drawn, the following recommendations were therefore made:

- i. The findings of this study should be made available to women in the local government in order to broaden their horizon and inform them on the concept of hair attachment
- ii. The use of hair extenders must not be too frequent to reduce its consequences on the hair. Women should endeavour to go natural often
- iii. Women in the society should be reoriented so as not to place too much premium on the use of hair attachments and reduce the prejudice on people without hair attachments.

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