

Are you dressing up to please?

What drives a woman to look good and, importantly, feel good? If a recent survey is to be believed, it's the man with her who inspires her to look gorgeous!

Jayanthi Madhukar reports



“ I DRESS UP FOR MYSELF. IT'S NOT ABOUT STANDING OUT IN A CROWD OR MAKING A STATEMENT.

UPASANA NATH, MARKETING MANAGER, ZOMATO.COM

some basic issues/complaints like how 75% of Bangalore women (74% rest of India) feel that their husband/partner and family do not notice their appearance, and 50% of Indian women feel that their husbands have stopped noticing them! Cliche, did you say?

Interestingly, only 49% of

Bangalore women want to get noticed by their husbands as opposed to the rest of India (83%), which probably shows their devil-may-care attitude! But it can also be, as Sarah Fareed, married for 14 years, says: “Although compliments from my husband are very important, after so many years of marriage, I really don't expect him to notice me so minutely every day! We fall into a comfort zone where day-to-day compliments are not required.”

But that doesn't mean that women can rest easy as, according to the survey, about 93% of Indian men say that they definitely want their partner to look attractive. And, about 78% of them believe that women, post marriage, are not as attractive as they were before marriage.

So, what drives a woman to look good and importantly, feel good? Is it the man with her that makes her 'want to' look good?

“The day I wear the right clothes and have taken some trouble to groom myself, I like what I see in the mirror. My family's opinion does matter to me, but some compliments from friends and interested looks from strangers do boost my confidence. Having said that, I really don't feel that hair is the most noticeable feature in a woman. In fact, one must be well-groomed,” says PR executive Priyanka Malik.

“But when it comes to the husband, I would definitely dress up for him and I would expect him to notice whatever I wear or do.”

Upasana Nath, Marketing Manager for Zomato.com, an online food guide, says: “I dress up for myself. When I put that extra effort to dress up and look presentable, then I feel good. It is not about standing out in a crowd or about making a statement. But yes, if I can afford to, I don't mind spending on making myself look good. And it is but natural that one's confidence gets a boost when one receives compliments.”

Sarah says if people — irrespective of gender — take care of their appearance, then compliments will follow wherever they go.

This is unlike what the survey suggests: 64% of Indian women say they have stopped receiving compliments from friends and relatives at social gatherings.

Which brings us back to the pressure that women come under of looking good all the time. “You are as beautiful as you feel. And if you feel that you can look good by making a little extra effort, then why not? But do remember that the feeling of looking good dissipates quickly. Some women are obsessed with external approval and that could be harmful,” says psychologist Meera Ravi.

‘Am I looking nice?’ For a woman from any of the Indian metropolitan cities, affirmation by the husband or partner matters the most — or at least that's what a recent survey suggests. This is as opposed to the compliments from their children and female friends.

Of the 500 women recently surveyed across Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Bangalore, about half of Bangalore women surveyed (56%) said that their husbands' or partners' compliments matter the most. What the women surveyed in the rest of India think is consistent to this opinion with 58% of the women saying the same.

The women surveyed in Bangalore said that beautiful hair is the most essential and also the most noticeable feature in a woman. That they take their looks seriously is reinforced by the percentage of

Bangalore girls (88%) who do not mind spending quite a lot of money to make themselves look good. A whopping 94% said that colouring their hair would change their looks completely, and at least 50% of them said they would definitely colour their hair when they choose to have a makeover. And to split hairs further, of these, at least 69% would opt for professional hair colours over *henna (mehendi)*.

These findings almost make the survey sound like a pitch for hair care products, but makeup artist and makeover specialist, Gouri Kapur, absolutely agrees with the findings and says, “When coloured and styled right, hair becomes the most noticeable feature in a woman. In fact, it is the overall package of cut, colour and style that makes hair one's crowning glory.”

The survey also throws up