A BRIEF STUDY ON THE CORPORATE DRESSING IN CHENNAI, TAMIL NADU, INDIA USING PRIMARY DATA

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ABSTRACT

The clothes we wear are the major tool that determines us. In that sense, the dress we wear must be carefully chosen. Clothing has its own power, the power of motivation that is with confidence and determination which helps us to reach our goal. Many studies have proved that the power of dressing can change an individual's physical and mental behavior and it also has the ability to change the person's attitude in various aspects. This paper tries to attempt to conduct a survey among the corporate employees and compare the style of clothing they are allowed to wear and the clothing style they chose to wear and the attire's impact in their workspace. The raw data as such, looks like as though there is no correlation in the data. Only after a talk with the respondents there was clarity found in data. Some corporate companies did not permit employees to wear casual attire. Overall the result was that some people accepted the code of dressing given by the company, but some did not. They wanted a change.

Keywords**:** physical and mental behavior, attitude, style of clothing, workspace

Introduction

Good self-presentation is required for a good impression, which straightens the rest. This is an issue of personal presentation that must be taken care of. A Good dressing does not only include dress, accessories, hairstyle, fragrance, and poster but also includes the individual's confidence. This confidence can be attained only in comfortable clothing; if not we would only think of how uncomfortable the attire is and may lose track of the conversation or work. This personal choice does not interfere with the fact of current fashion trends but is a strong signal that is communicated indirectly by showing who you are at that movement.

Corporate dressing relates to the kind of crisp and perfect dressing. Researchers have proved that perfect dressing can help to shape an individual's personality. People would like to approach a person who is well dressed and not the one who does not care about the self-presentation of himself/herself. Although corporates would traditionally insist on ties and suits there has been a great deal until recent times. There is still, however, the widespread use of business casual or "dress casual" days, based on the notion that such attire contributes to higher employee morale and productivity (Hunsberger, 2005; Morand, 1998; Walter, 1996).

What one wears to work can have a substantial impact on how one operates within a work-defined role. Workplace attire serves as a symbol and provides consensus in meaning to others, influencing their reactions to the wearer (Rafaeli and Pratt, 1993). Evidence suggests that wearing appropriate workplace attire facilitates effective role execution. For example, Solomon and Schloper (1982) found that individuals' sense of clothing appropriateness for a particular role influenced their perceptions as to the quality of their performance in that role. Similarly, Rafaeli, Dutton, Harquail, and Mackie-Lewis (1997) found that when wearing organizationally approved attire, female administrative employees were able to temporarily shed their non-organizational roles of, for example, parent or student and adopt the role of employee. In another study, those who described themselves as properly dressed believed that their attire made them look significantly more responsible, competent, knowledgeable, professional, honest, reliable, intelligent, trustworthy, hard-working, and efficient than when not so dressed (Kwon, 1994a). Individuals have also used attire to accomplish certain objectives in their interactions with others (Peluchette and Karl 2007). Never forget the same old saying, "the first impression is the Best."

Objectives

- To give an overview of the corporate dressing culture in the past and present around the world.
- To analyze the data from all possible grounds on the view for casual and formal wear in India.
- To ascertain if the prevailing conditions are accepted by the employees.

Methodology and data

Type of data used
The study makes use of primary data. The data is collected in the form of a questionnaire.

Method used
  The sampling method used is the random sampling method only.

Responses used
  The study has received 148 responses from different people working in corporates.

Significance of the study

The study makes an attempt to bring close the dressing culture in the corporate sector in India that exists and the dressing culture that the employees would like it to be. Employees are the sole reason for the company to run; in other terms, labors are the most essential part of any organization for its ultimate reward.

If employees are not able to work to their potentials, then the firm will make no progress. In that case, the management must know the needs of their employees.

Some might be comfortable in a formal tie and suit that the corporate insists, while the others might as well feel comfortable in casual clothing, this means that the person is not fit or is unable to finish a given task, this means that the person's attire makes them feel who they are and make them work accordingly.

If attire can make people feel their strengths and motivate them, then this issue must be considered seriously. If all employees are able to strengthen themselves, then the companies can expect huge fortunes.

Overview

History

The business attire we have today has undergone a lot of changes in due course of time. This attire dates to the Victorian era. The suits pattern was streamlined and they bear the colors that were determined during the period.

In the early 20th century the ready-to-wear clothing was a trend. This replaced the old fashioned suits to the modern ones. The formal clothing for women had also undergone tremendous changes from the 19th century, which was initially buttoned from neck and had full body coverage until the ankles to casual blouse and shorter hemlines today.

In the mid-1970s the formal dressing regulations were relaxed in few places of the world by introducing different materials, patterns, designs, and models. In 1980's "Casual days" had also been implemented in some areas of the world. Today most corporates have the "Casual days" concept, and it is generally on Fridays.

Traditionally corporate attire was rather formal, consisting of suits for both men and women, but the Internet business boom in the 1990s inspired a move toward more casual wear or a dress-down style (Parnes, 2001).

In the 21st century, formal dressing codes have never been the same. Those forms of dressing that was never accepted by the corporates until this period has changed a bit. Those firms which target to recruit the younger generations are trying to be much flexible, allowing their employees to wear casual clothing as well. Few companies which cannot move on with this flexibility have introduced uniforms.

Data analysis

Out of the 148 responses received, the respondents were of the age group 21-40. 72.7% of the responses were filled by people with work experience 0-5 years. There were no responses from people above 20 years of experience. Out of the 148 responses received, 72.7% were male responses. From the response received it is shown that 13.8% of the people responded that their

companies do not allow them to wear casual dress. 27.8% responded that their companies do not necessarily follow the casual dressing style (Monday to Thursday, formal clothing, and Fridays, casual clothing). The responses imply that 13.6% of the respondents are willing to wear casuals once a week, 22.7% would like to wear casuals thrice a week, and a share of 31.3% each would like to wear twice a week and throughout the week. 63.6% were more likely to wear western formal clothing, and 36.4% liked to wear Indian formals. From the questionnaire 68.2% responded that dressing does play a very important role in the workspace. From the response it is shown that majority of the people feel that formal attire helps them to boost their confidence and help to motivate themselves. For the creativity aspects the response got was exactly 50% each, showing that 50% of the individual felt that formal clothing helps them to be creative. The majority of the respondents feel that they find themselves productive when they are in formal clothing style.

Results

The study proves that not all corporates in India follow the casual dressing style (Monday to Thursday, formal clothing and Fridays, casual clothing), and on the other hand 13.8% of the corporates do not allow their employees to wear casual clothes at all. When reviewed the applications of this 13.8 %, the respondents feel that it would be better if they were permitted to wear casual clothing at least for a day in a week.

Though the majority of the response expresses that formal wear helps to motivate themselves and create better confidence in the environment and themselves, they express the fact that due to time constrain they are not able to dress in formal attire. Most people, who express that they would love to wear casual attire for the entire week, see that attire is important to themselves more than for the presentation, workspace, creativity, and motivation. i.e. they would like to be comfortable in the clothing they wear. These people feel that formal clothing is not comfortable and will have issues of wrinkling and will not look presentable in case of any meetings or conferences. The majority of people with greater work experiences of 5-10 years preferred casual form of clothing, and respondents with above ten years of experience preferred formal attire.

Majority of the people responded that when there is a difference in the attire, there is indeed a difference in the workplace atmosphere; thus this relates to the way of work showing that attire does play a very important role not only in the corporate workspace but in any event and any occasion.

Conclusion

The dressing is an important part of any profession. The code of dressing sets the difference between one and another profession. Different people might want to wear different sets of clothing in each workplace accordingly. Today's formal clothing wear that has been recommended in the corporate sector has undergone a tremendous changes over the past few decades; it still stands apart from other forms of clothing. The result of the study conducted is that corporate employees feel that formal wear gives them motivation and helps them to crack issues and help them to think creatively.

On the other hand, casual wear helps people to think creatively alone. This paper is an attempt to bring forth the existing corporate dressing rules that are to be followed comparing it with what the employees would like to follow.

Limitations

The study has a lot of limitations. The data collected are through online forms, so the individuals have answered the questionnaire, and there has been no verification done if the respondent is provided, information was correct or not.

Another limitation of the study is that all questions were focused on the psychological perspective of the employees, whether they feel motivated, confident and they had creative thinking skills and not on productivity based.

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