

OPINION SURVEY OF STUDENTS ON ENSEMBLES WORN BY TEACHERS IN CLASSROOM

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Abstract

Teachers play a vital role in shaping up a student's life. A teacher is someone whom students look up to and get influenced by. The effectiveness of teachers can be determined by the kind of influence they have on a student. The purpose of this study is to determine the opinion of the students about the ensembles worn by teachers in classroom. It also aimed at determining the most noticed aspect of ensemble and the most preferred formal ensemble for teachers in student's opinion. **Deign/Methodology/approach:** A 15 item structured questionnaire was established and after checking its reliability and validity, data was collected from 360 college students of four colleges of Chandigarh. Percentages, Mean values and Chi-square test were used to analyze the data. **Findings:** The study revealed that mostly teachers in colleges of Chandigarh are seen wearing ensembles that are fashionable and formal. Also clothing is noticed the most when a teacher enters the classroom thereby making it the most influencing aspect of ensemble. In addition to this it was also found that a saree with a sleeved blouse is the most preferred formal ensemble for teachers in student's opinion.

Keywords: Ensemble, Teacher's clothing, Formal clothing, Student's opinion

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Introduction

It is an unrivalled fact that clothes cannot be worn without communicating any social signals. Every costume tells a subtle story, about the wearer. Clothing is a nonverbal tool that expresses who we are. **Gordon, Tengler and Infante (1982)** summarized clothing symbol as an instrument used in perpetuating traditions, used for self-beautification. Dress codes symbolize cultural values regarding sexual identity, differentiating authority, role and status. Comfort, protection and modesty concerns are often overridden by a desire to look good, “fit in”, or acquire status or authority (**Morris, 1996**). Thus clothes have evolved from practical assets to a social marker: they affect the way we see ourselves. They help us to be seen in the light that we wish to be, and also express our personalities and social status.

There was a time when teachers were bound to dress professionally to their work. But now-a-days, the professional ensemble of teachers in colleges is becoming increasingly informal since the set of 21st century and teachers are seen dressing in more and more casual ensemble than before. They are expected to engage students and motivate them to take an active role in their own learning. In addition to this, students now expect engaging classroom environments. Academic institutions feel pressured to ensure that their faculty delivers what students want. The focal point of education in present times is on student learning. In the education scenario a Professor’s role remains paramount. **Lukavsky, Butler & Harden (1995)** found that moderate level of dress worn by college faculty commanded respect from students whereas a more formal level of dress also commanded respect but discouraged contact. They suggested that this may be related to a recent trend in professional dress styles. For example some businesses have been seen to reject formal dress styles in favor of more casual dress.

An instructor’s traits and characteristics can be a subject of study and discussion. In most colleges and universities, students are given the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of a professor through course evaluation. Teaching faculty can make a positive contribution and can influence perception of students enrolled in an institution, for both personal and institutional benefits (**Lavin, 2010**).

Review of Literature

A study by **Angerosa (2014)**, on “Clothing as Communication: How Person Perception and Social Identity Impact First Impressions Made by Clothing”, was done to determine the different

styles of clothing (in respect to this study: professional, casual or trendy) that affect the way a model is perceived by others and if perceiver and target variables are influential in the perception process. For this study the person perception and social identity theories were used to understand both target variables (e.g., a model's clothing variation) and perceiver variables (e.g., a participant's clothing interest/satisfaction and group membership) in first impressions settings. The research questionnaire consisted of a 41-question survey and visual experiment that was distributed in General Liberal Arts courses to 150 Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) students from a variety of colleges. The results of the study stated that a model was perceived differently based on the clothing style she was wearing, but concludes that further research needs to be conducted to find sufficient evidence that perceiver variables (e.g., a participant's clothing interest/satisfaction and group membership), also effect first impressions.

Sklar, M. (2012), conducted a study on “Punk Dress in the Workplace: Aesthetic Expression and Accommodation”. The study was targeted at individuals who identify with punk subculture negotiate between aesthetic expression of their sub-cultural identity and the role they believe they are expected to play at work. Data was collected from men and women, aged 26 - 45 years, in a wide range of professions through interview method and were asked questions related to their workplace dress. They were asked to bring to the interview a display of how they dress to express both their punk and workplace identities. Interviewees reported a balancing act of blending in and standing out, taking into consideration viewer interpretations and subsequent outcomes. Efforts to wear “appropriate” dress included accommodations such as modifying one's punk appearance by conceding to dress codes and using perceived non-confrontational aesthetic choices with punk cues subtly coded to appear conventional. Dress features were selectively revealing or concealing punk symbols as interviewees strive to push the boundaries of workplace appropriateness for satisfying aesthetic self-expression.

Joseph, S. (2017) studied the Students Perception of Teacher's Professional Attire. The quantitative study aimed at determining the student's perception of professional attire of teachers at the secondary and tertiary levels of the education system. The sample size included Five hundred and twenty-six (526) students that were randomly drawn from Forms 1-6 in the secondary school system and tertiary-level students from Tobago as well as the northern and southern parts of Trinidad. Two tests namely the One-way ANOVA and Pearson correlation tests

were used to analyze student responses. These tests were done on the basis of a probability of error threshold of 1 in 20, or $p < .05$ and 1 in 100, or $p < .01$ respectively. Findings of the study revealed that while there were no statistically significant differences in secondary students' perceptions about their teachers' professional attire, there were significant differences in students' perceptions at the tertiary level. The results of the study depicted significant relationships between the variables measuring student perceptions of teachers' attire and those measuring teacher occupational attributes, as well as student effort and behaviour in class.

Sampson (2016) in his study 'Teacher's Perceptions of the Effect of Their Attire on Middle-School Students' Behavior and Learning', did a qualitative case study which provided constructive information that led to understanding the perceptions of the effect of teachers' attire on middle school students' behavior and learning. Ten certified middle school teachers were selected randomly to participate in the study and each participant articulated personal perceptions of his or her attire on middle-school students' behavior and learning. The interpretations of the findings of the study were presented in connection to the conceptual framework and literature for the study. The results revealed that seven of the participants had similar perceptions regarding the positive influence of teachers' attire on students' behavior and learning. However one participant held the perception that teachers' attire does not totally influence students' behavior and learning. The results confirmed that uniformity in professional attire contributes to the influence of respect for teachers and is a positive strategy for classroom management.

Lightstone, et. al. (2011) in their study University Faculty Style of Dress and Students' Perception of Instructor Credibility, focused on the attire of the university professors and how their students perceive them in terms of credibility, character, and likeability. The sample size selected for the study was 257 participants who completed a survey responding to questions relating to a photograph of a male or female university professor, with faces obscured, and dressed in casual, semi-casual, or formal attire. The results of the study depicted that the University professors in formal attire are perceived as more credible than less formally dressed faculty. Contrary to the hypothesis, female formally dressed professors were not perceived as less credible or competent than their male counterparts. Males in formal attire are less likeable than females in formal dress as well as males and females in casual styles of dress. These

findings of the study also helped in assisting the faculty in determining the level of credibility or likeability they wanted to project in the classroom.

Lavin et al. (2010) explored in their study, ‘Impact of Instructor Attire on Student Perceptions of Faculty Credibility and their Own Resultant Behavior’, how the instructor’s attire has an impact on their perceived credibility, and how the students’ corresponding perception of instructor credibility impacts the students’ self-described behavior. Questionnaires depicting instructors of both genders each wearing three different outfits, including casual, business casual and professional attire, were used to assess business student opinions regarding the academician’s credibility and the students’ resultant effort and learning. The results indicated that faculty members can take comfort in that their level of preparation, knowledge and ability to prepare students for a career do impact their credibility in the eyes of the students, no matter their choice of attire. Instructor credibility, in turn, was found to have a significant positive relationship where all ten student effort and behavior variables were examined. In particular, credibility had the most impact on the student’s preparation for each class, attentiveness, appreciation for instructor effort, and respect for the instructor. Positive significant relationships were also found between credibility and student evaluations of both class and the instructor.

A study by **Ahmed (2007)** on ‘The Aesthetic Connotation of Modes of Dressing by Teachers and their Impact on Quality Education in the Junior High School’, was done with an objective of finding the impact of teacher’s dressing style on the junior high school students and for that matter quality education. Having teachers, student, parents, education officers and fashion designers as respondents, data was collected using observation method, questionnaire, interview and focused group discussions. Findings of the study revealed that dress styles indicated non-verbal communication to indicate occupation, rank, gender, sexual availability, social class level, wealth and group affiliations. It was found that teachers influence students both positively and negatively by the way of their dressing styles. Thus the dress style can be used to express acceptance, rebel, deviation, violation and condolences, rejection of norms of the society. Clothing also symbolizes independence, liberal lifestyle, extreme behavior, racist ideas and outrage violence. And acceptable dressing was found to be synonymous to self-respect and sign of respectability; even uniform wearing is a vital source of power to the wearer.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

1. To find out the opinion of students on ensembles worn by teachers.
2. To find out the aspects of ensemble that gets noticed the most when teacher enters the classroom.
3. To find out the requisites of formal ensemble in student's opinion.
4. To find out what are the most preferred types of formal ensemble in student's opinion.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

H1: Mostly teachers in college are seen wearing fashionable clothing.

H2: Mostly teachers in college are seen wearing formal clothing.

H3: Clothing is the most noticed aspect of ensemble by students when a teacher enters a class.

H4: Neat and clean clothing is the most important aspect of formal clothing in student's opinion.

H5: Saree with sleeved blouse is the most preferred formal ensemble for teachers in student's opinion.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

- The study was delimited to undergraduate girl students of Panjab University, Chandigarh.
- The study was delimited to opinion about only female teachers of Panjab University, Chandigarh.

RESEARCH DESIGN

(i) **Sample of the Study:** the sample of the study included 360 student respondents selected randomly from two Government and two Private colleges of Chandigarh. 90 students were selected from each college, including 30 students each of first year, second year and third year.

(ii) **Tools Used in the Study:** The data was collected using 15 items questionnaire developed by the researcher. The tool was further divided into four parts.

Section A included questions related to the personal profile of the respondents, like name, contact details and demographic variables of age, gender, marital status and education, family type and monthly family income.

Section B included 5 point Likert-scale questions regarding the opinion of students on ensembles worn by teachers, aspects of ensemble that gets noticed most when a teacher

enters the classroom, requisites of formal ensemble in student's opinion and what are the most preferred types of formal ensemble in student's opinion.

(iii) Statistical Tools Used in the Study: The data that was collected from the respondents was analysed using the following statistical tools:

- Claculating overall percentages and ranks
- Chi-square test was applied using SPSS software.

DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETITION

H1: Mostly teachers in college are seen wearing fashionable clothing.

Table 1: Fashionable or Unfashionable Clothing Teachers in a Classroom are seen wearing.

	Frequency	Percent	Chi- square value	df	p-value
Fashionable Clothes	250	69.4	54.4	1	0.00**
Unfashionable Clothes	110	30.6			
Total	360	100.0			

**Significant at 0.01 level

Table 1 shows the association of the existing dressing style of teachers in terms of fashionable and unfashionable. There exists a significant association (Chi-square value= 54.4, $p < 0.01$) at 0.01 level of significance. It was found that out of 360 respondents majority suggests that teachers in a classroom are seen wearing Fashionable Clothing 250 (69.4%) in comparison to Unfashionable clothing 110 (30.6%).

Therefore, H1: Mostly teachers in college are seen wearing fashionable clothing is accepted.

H2: Mostly teachers in college are seen wearing formal clothing.

Table 2: Formal or Informal Clothing Teachers in a Classroom are seen wearing

	Frequency	Percent	Chi- square value	df	p-value
Formal	264	73.3	78.4	1	0.00**
Informal	96	26.7			
Total	360	100.0			

**Significant at 0.01 level

Table 2 shows the association of the existing dressing style of teachers in terms of formal and informal clothing. There exists a significant association (Chi-square value= 78.4, $p < 0.01$) at 0.01 level of significance. It was found that Out of 360 respondents majority suggests that teachers in a classroom are seen wearing mostly Formal clothing 264 (73.3%) in comparison to Informal clothing 96 (26.7%).

Therefore, H2: Mostly teachers in college are seen wearing formal clothing is accepted.

H3: Clothing is the most noticed aspect of ensemble by students when a teacher enters a class.

Table 3: Students Perception on Teacher's Ensemble that gets most noticed when she enters the Classroom

	Least important	Less Important	Important	More Important	Most important	Mean	Rank	Chi-square value	df	p-value
Clothing	2(0.6)	2(0.6)	34(9.4)	33(9.2)	289(80.3)	4.68	1	831.3	4	0.00**
Footwear	16(4.4)	75(20.8)	76(21.1)	139(38.6)	54(15)	3.39	2	110.7	4	0.00**
Handbag	30(8.3)	55(15.3)	147(40.8)	80(22.2)	48(13.3)	3.17	3	115.5	4	0.00**
Jewellery	67(18.6)	150(41.7)	83(23.1)	43(11.9)	17(4.7)	2.43	5	140.2	4	0.00**
Hairstyle	55(15.3)	95(26.4)	114(31.7)	60(16.7)	36(10)	2.80	4	55.9	4	0.00**
Makeup	151(41.9)	82(22.8)	79(21.9)	27(7.5)	21(5.8)	2.13	6	152.0	4	0.00**

** Significant at 0.01 level

The above table suggests that there exists a significant association of teacher's ensemble and students opinion ($p < 0.01$ for all items) at 0.01 level of significance. The mean values for students perception on teacher's ensemble that gets most noticed when she enters the classroom for clothing is 4.68, for footwear is 3.39, for Handbag is 3.17, for hairstyle is 2.80, for jewellery is 2.43 and for makeup is 2.13. Since clothing has got rank 1, we therefore can conclude that it is the most important aspect of teacher's ensemble (as it is noticed the most when a teacher enters

the classroom), followed by footwear (rank 2), suggesting that it is more important than rest of the aspects of ensemble. The next most important aspect of ensemble is handbag (rank 3), followed by hairstyle (rank 4), jewellery (rank 5) and makeup (rank 6) thereby making it the least noticed aspect of teacher's ensemble.

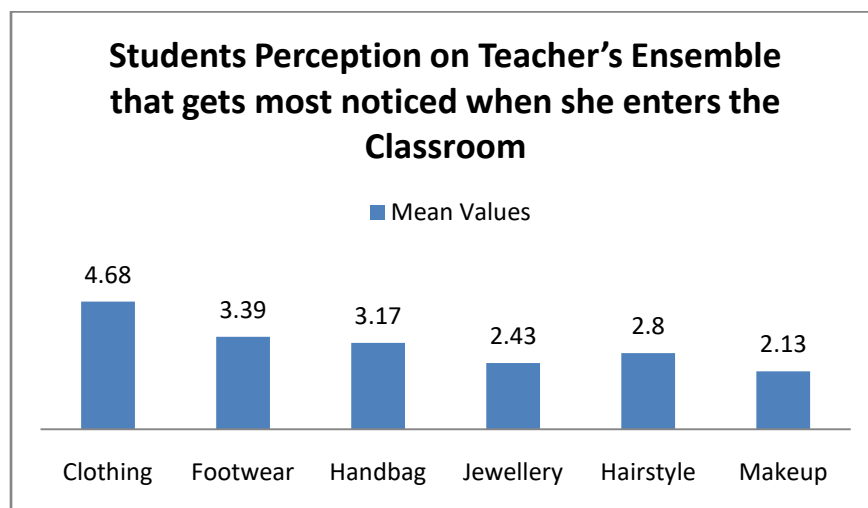


Figure1: The above graph shows that the mean value for clothing (4.68) is maximum, followed by footwear (3.39), handbag (3.17), jewellery (2.43), Hairstyle (2.8) and Makeup (2.13), which suggests that clothing is the most noticed aspect of ensemble of teacher and makeup is the least noticed aspect of teacher ensemble.

Therefore, H3: Clothing is the most noticed aspect of ensemble by students when a teacher enters a class is accepted.

H4: Neat and clean clothing is the most important aspect of formal clothing in student's opinion.

Table 4: Preference for Formal Ensemble for Teachers

	Strongly disagree N(%)	disagree N(%)	Neutral N(%)	Agree N(%)	Strongly agree N(%)	Mean	Rank	Chi-square value	df	p-value
Ironed clothing	2(0.6)	3(0.8)	8(2.2)	56(15.6)	291(80.8)	4.75	2	861	4	0.00**
Neat and clean clothing	0(0)	0(0)	6(1.7)	50(13.9)	304(84.4)	4.83	1	431	4	0.00**
Non-revealing clothes	11(3.1)	16(4.4)	81(22.5)	134(37.2)	118(32.8)	3.92	4	179	4	0.00**
Fashionable	14(3.9)	9(2.5)	153(42.5)	128(35.6)	56(15.6)	3.56	5	240.1	4	0.00**

clothes										
Matching footwear	17(4.7)	37(10.3)	196(54.4)	69(19.2)	41(11.4)	3.22	6	286.1	4	0.00**
Matching jewellery	38(10.6)	22(6.1)	206(57.2)	66(18.3)	28(7.8)	3.07	7	327.6	4	0.00**
Neat hairstyle	11(3.1)	17(4.7)	81(22.5)	123(34.2)	128(35.6)	3.94	3	174.5	4	0.00**

** Significant at 0.01 level

The above table shows that maximum number of student respondents strongly agree that for formal ensemble the most important requirement is of Ironed clothing 304 (84.4%) and neat hairstyle 304 (84.4%), followed by Matching jewellery 128(35.6%), Neat and clean clothing 118(32.8%), Non-revealing clothes 56(15.6%), Fashionable clothes 41(11.4%) and Matching footwear 28(7.8%) which is of least importance.

Therefore, H4: Neat and clean clothing is the most important aspect of formal clothing in student's opinion is accepted.

H5: Saree with sleeved blouse is the most preferred formal ensemble for teachers in student's opinion.

Table 5: Student's Perception about Preference of Formal Clothing for Teachers

Clothing	Strongly disagree N(%)	disagree N(%)	Neutral N(%)	agree N(%)	Strongly agree N(%)	Mean	Rank	Chi-square value	df	p-value
Saree with sleeved blouse	16(4.4)	12(3.3)	82(22.8)	100(27.8)	150(41.7)	3.99	1	190.3	4	0.00**
Salwar kameez with sleeves and dupatta	19(5.3)	14(3.9)	67(18.6)	167(46.4)	93(25.8)	3.84	2	217.6	4	0.00**
Churidar with kurta and dupatta	28(7.8)	53(14.7)	137(38.1)	102(28.3)	40(11.1)	3.20	5	117.3	4	0.00**
Anarkali suits	74(20.6)	172(47.8)	99(27.5)	10(2.8)	5(1.4)	2.17	7	264.8	4	0.00**
Elaborately designed suits	44(12.2)	214(59.4)	94(26.1)	7(1.9)	1(0.3)	2.19	6	426.4	4	0.00**
Simple cuts and straight silhouettes	28(7.8)	58(16.1)	117(32.5)	96(26.7)	61(16.9)	3.29	4	67.4	4	0.00**
Formal pant suit/ skirt top with coat or blazer	25(6.9)	43(11.9)	76(21.1)	57(15.8)	159(44.2)	3.78	3	150.8	4	0.00**

** Significant at 0.01 level

The above table suggests that there exists a significant association in student's perception about preference of formal Clothing for teachers ($p < 0.01$) at 0.01 level of significance. Saree with sleeved blouse got rank 1 suggesting that it is the most preferred formal clothing for teachers in student's perception, followed by Salwar kameez with sleeves and dupatta (rank 2), formal pant

suit/ skirt top with coat or blazer (rank 3), simple cuts and straight silhouettes (rank 4). Churidar with kurta and dupatta (rank 5), elaborately designed suits (rank 6) and anarkali suits (rank 7) received the minimum ranks respectively therefore suggesting that they are the least preferred formal ensemble for teachers in student's perception.

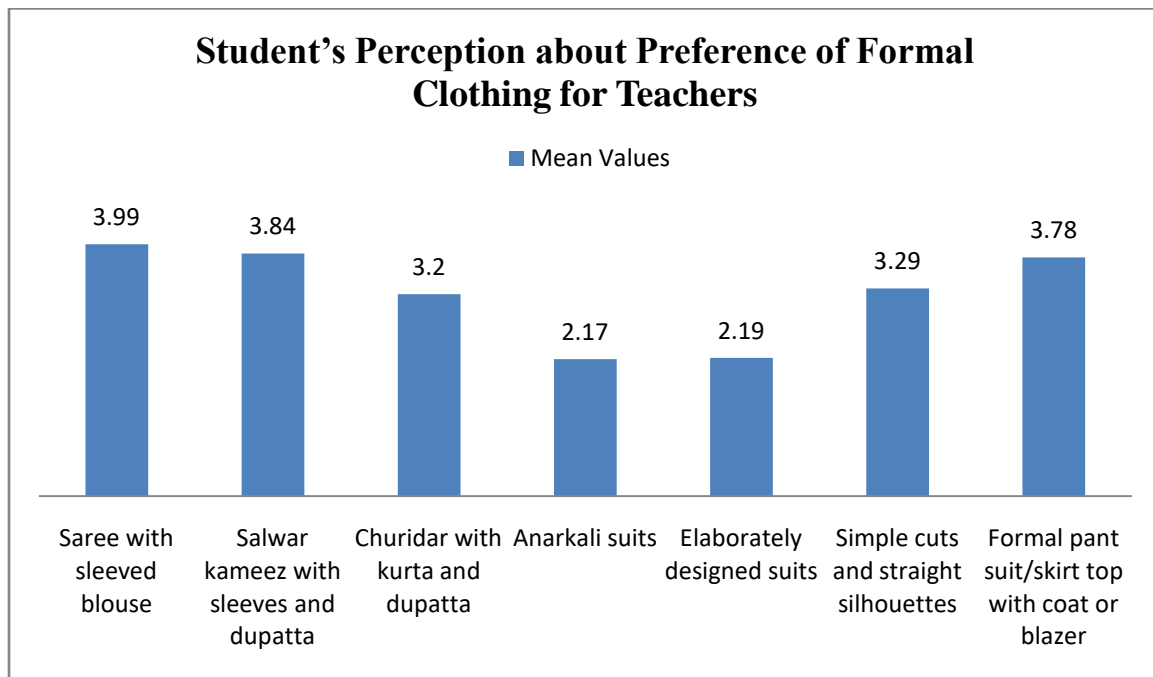


Figure 2: Student's Perception about Preference of Formal Clothing for Teachers

The above graph shows that the mean values for student's perception about preference of formal ensemble for teachers for Saree with sleeved blouse is 3.99, for Salwar kameez with sleeves and dupatta is 3.84, for Churidar with kurta and dupatta is 3.20, for Anarkali suits is 2.17, for Elaborately designed suits is 2.19, for Simple cuts and straight silhouettes is 3.29 and for Formal pant suit/skirt top with coat or blazer is 3.78. Thus we can conclude that saree with sleeved blouse is the most preferred formal clothing for teachers.

Therefore, H5: Saree with sleeved blouse is the most preferred formal ensemble for teachers in student's opinion is accepted.

Conclusions

From this study, it is concluded that the ensembles worn by teachers in colleges of Chandigarh are in accordance with the latest trends. The study reveals that mostly teachers in colleges are seen wearing formal and fashionable clothing.

In addition to this, the study revealed the impact of teacher's ensemble on student's perception and stated that clothing is the most influencing aspect of teacher's ensemble whereas makeup holds no or least importance in forming a perception about a teacher by students.

Neat and clean clothing and ironed clothing turned out to be the most important aspect of formal ensemble in student's opinion and Saree with sleeved blouse was considered to be the most preferred type of formal clothing for teachers in student's opinion.

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