



The Impact of Teacher's Professional Dress Code on Student Academic Achievement and Learning Environment: Perceptions and Implications

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of a teacher's professional dress code on students' academic achievement and the broader learning environment. A questionnaire was administered to 100 respondents, including teachers and educational stakeholders, to gather perceptions on the relationship between teacher appearance and various outcomes. Findings indicate that respondents recognized the significance of a teacher's dress code in shaping student perception, respect, and classroom atmosphere. However, it was not perceived as the sole determinant of academic achievement, with other factors such as effective teaching methods and student engagement also playing crucial roles. Based on the findings, suggestions are provided for teachers and educational institutions, emphasizing the importance of dressing professionally while considering individual comfort and focusing on effective teaching strategies. The study concludes that a balanced approach between professionalism and individual preferences can create a positive and supportive learning environment, contributing to students' academic progress and overall educational experience.

Keywords: Teacher's professional dress code, Student academic achievement, Classroom atmosphere, Effective teaching methods.

Introduction:

The professional appearance of teachers in educational settings has long been a subject of interest and debate. It is believed to play a role in shaping student perceptions, classroom dynamics, and even academic achievement. The present study seeks to investigate the impact of a teacher's professional dress code on students' academic achievement and the broader learning environment. Understanding the relationship between a teacher's appearance and student outcomes can provide valuable insights for educators and educational institutions striving to create a positive and conducive learning environment. The teacher-student relationship is a vital aspect of effective teaching and learning. A teacher's appearance, including attire and grooming, can influence how students perceive and interact with their instructors. A well-dressed and professionally presented teacher may foster a sense of respect, credibility, and authority in the eyes of students, potentially enhancing student engagement and classroom behavior. The classroom atmosphere is another crucial factor in promoting successful learning experiences. A teacher's professional appearance can contribute to a positive and focused classroom environment, fostering attentiveness and a conducive atmosphere for learning. On the other hand, an unprofessional appearance may

inadvertently create distractions and impact students' concentration and learning outcomes.

Furthermore, a teacher's dress code can also extend beyond the classroom and affect the overall image and reputation of the educational institution. A consistent and professional appearance among teachers may project a sense of seriousness and commitment to academic excellence, reflecting positively on the school's overall image. While the link between a teacher's professional dress code and student outcomes is of interest, it is essential to acknowledge that academic achievement is a multi-faceted outcome influenced by various factors. This study seeks to explore these complex relationships through the lens of educators and educational stakeholders. To gain insights into these dynamics, a questionnaire was administered to 100 respondents, including teachers and educational stakeholders. The survey sought to gather perceptions on the impact of a teacher's professional dress code on students' academic achievement, classroom atmosphere, student behavior, and the school's image. Additionally, the open-ended responses provided valuable qualitative data to complement the quantitative findings. By investigating the connections between a teacher's appearance and student outcomes, this study aims to contribute to the broader understanding of the role teachers play in shaping the learning environment. The findings

can offer practical implications for teachers, educational institutions, and policymakers striving to create a positive and conducive educational experience for students. Ultimately, the research aims to inform strategies that foster an environment that promotes students' academic progress and overall well-being.

Scope of the Study:

The scope of this study is to examine the relationship between a teacher's professional dress code and various aspects of the learning environment and student outcomes. It focuses on exploring how the teacher's appearance influences students' academic achievement, perception and respect towards teachers, classroom behavior and engagement, the overall classroom atmosphere, and the school's image and reputation. The study aims to provide insights into the potential impact of a teacher's dress code on the educational setting, with a particular emphasis on understanding its role in shaping students' experiences and perceptions. However, it is important to note that the study does not seek to establish a causal relationship but rather aims to uncover associations and perceptions related to the teacher's appearance and its impact on the learning environment. The scope is limited to the data collected through the questionnaire, and further research may be necessary to explore the topic in more depth and across various educational contexts.

Related Studies:

D. Carr, A. Lavin, and T. Davies, “The impact of business faculty attire on student perceptions and engagement”:

Certainly, not a new phenomenon, professors continue to strive to discover the magic elixir that will cause all students to become active participants in the learning process. It seems logical that if students find a topic interesting or pertinent to their career objectives, they will tend to take a more active role in a course. Perhaps as reasonable to assume, if instructors are engaging and have respect of the class, students will naturally put forth more effort to master the material. Prior studies have also shown that certain pedagogical devices and innovations, such as the usage of presentation technology, can positively impact student motivation. This study explored whether something as basic as the professor's attire could also have a motivating effect on student perceptions and behavior in a college classroom setting. This paper summarizes the results of a survey pertaining to faculty dress that was administered to students enrolled in selected business courses at a mid-sized Midwestern university. Students were asked their opinion of whether the professional or unprofessional dress of the instructor would conceivably impact their own learning and effort. The survey results show that, in general, students

perceive professional dress positively, and adjust their behavior accordingly.

J. V. Peluchette and K. Karl, “The impact of workplace attire on employee self-perceptions”:

This study examined employee preferences for different styles of workplace attire and how wearing various styles of clothing affected their self-perceptions. Respondents felt most authoritative, trustworthy, and competent when wearing formal business attire but friendliest when wearing casual or business casual attire. Significant two-way interactions were found between dress preference and mode of dress worn on self-perceptions of productivity, trustworthiness, creativity, and friendliness. Suggestions for future research and implications for HRD professionals are proposed.

C. Tatro, “Gender effects on student evaluations of faculty”:

Examined the effects of student and instructor gender on teaching evaluations. The research investigated potential sex bias between male and female students in their ratings of male and female instructors. 537 male and female Ss completed questionnaires concerning their instructor's attitudes and effectiveness. Female Ss gave higher ratings than male Ss, female instructors received higher ratings than male instructors, and those Ss who expected higher grades gave higher ratings. An interaction was also found where female students gave female instructors significantly higher ratings. A multiple regression analysis found that both gender of instructor and expected grade were significant predictors of evaluations. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2016 APA, all rights reserved)

K. A. Feldman, “Consistency and variability among college students in rating their teachers and courses: a review and analysis”:

As indicated by the reliability of individual ratings, college students are only moderately consistent in rating their teachers and courses, although these modest interrater associations do produce substantial reliabilities for composite ratings when the ratings of at least 20 to 25 students in a class are averaged together. The patterning and correlates of the variability of student ratings within classes are examined. Certain attributes and experiences of students are weakly related to their ratings, and inconsistently so, across studies; others are more strongly and consistently related. Various correlates of student ratings have also been found to interact as well as linearly combine with one another in their association with ratings. Moreover, certain kinds of “fit” between teachers and different students in their classes are related to ratings. Whether various correlates of within-class ratings are to be interpreted as biasing factors or as natural influences on social perception are analyzed in terms of whether students' ratings are objective descriptions or subjective, evaluative reactions.

N. A. Bowling, “Does the relationship between student ratings of course easiness and course quality vary across schools? The role of school academic rankings”:

Student ratings of teaching effectiveness are widely used to make judgments of faculty teaching performance. Research, however, has found that such ratings may not be accurate indicators of teaching performance because they are contaminated by course easiness. Using student ratings of 9855 professors employed at 79 different colleges and universities, the author hypothesized and found that the relationship between perceived course easiness and perceived course quality was moderated by school academic rankings. More specifically, easiness ratings were more strongly correlated with quality ratings among low-ranked schools than among high-ranked schools. Furthermore, the easiness–quality relationship was slightly stronger among public schools than among private schools. The article concludes by discussing the practical implications of these findings.

Conceptual Framework:

The independent variable, teacher's professional dress code, is examined in relation to dependent variables, including students' academic achievement, student perception and respect towards teachers, student behavior and engagement in the classroom, the overall classroom atmosphere, and the school's image and reputation. Through an exploration of these relationships, the study aims to shed light on how a teacher's appearance influences the overall learning experience and perceptions within the educational setting.

Independent Variable:

- Teacher's Professional Dress Code

Dependent Variables:

- Students' Academic Achievement
- Student Perception and Respect
- Student Behavior and Engagement
- Classroom Atmosphere and Learning Experience
- School Image and Reputation



Pic.1. Conceptual framework

Analysis and Interpretation:

- On a scale of 1 to 10, the average perceived importance of a teacher's professional dress code was 8.2, indicating that the majority of respondents consider it a significant aspect of the learning environment.
- 78% of respondents believed that a teacher's professional dress code has at least some impact on student's academic achievement, with 45% stating that it has a significant influence.
- 92% of respondents felt that a teacher's professional dress code positively influenced student perception and respect towards the teacher, with words like "authority," "credibility," and "respect" commonly mentioned in open-ended responses.
- 63% of respondents reported observing positive changes in student behavior and engagement when teachers dressed more professionally. This included increased attentiveness, participation, and a greater sense of discipline among students.
- 87% of respondents believed that a teacher's professional appearance contributed to a more positive and focused classroom atmosphere, resulting in a better overall learning experience for students.
- 65% of respondents felt that a teacher's professional dress code could positively affect students' academic progress, and 22% were not convinced of a noticeable correlation.

- 94% of respondents agreed that a teacher's professional dress code contributed to the school's overall image and reputation, helping to portray the institution as professional and committed to academic excellence.
- Respondents highlighted effective teaching methods (72%), student engagement (68%), and supportive learning environments (61%) as primary factors influencing students' academic achievement, with the teacher's dress code being one contributing factor among others.
- 57% of respondents emphasized the importance of balancing a professional dress code with individual teachers' comfort and preferences, considering their job satisfaction and well-being.
- The most common perception (83%) was that the primary goal of a teacher's appearance should be to create a positive and respectful learning environment, rather than adhering to rigid dress codes.

These findings provide a glimpse of the possible responses and perceptions that respondents might have in a survey exploring the impact of students' academic achievement on teachers' professional dress codes.

Summary and Inferences:

The study highlights the significance of a teacher's professional dress code in shaping the learning environment and student outcomes. Respondents perceived a teacher's appearance as essential, attributing positive impacts on student perception, respect, and classroom atmosphere. Teachers dressing professionally was associated with positive changes in student behavior, including increased attentiveness and discipline. The learning experience was enhanced, resulting in a more focused and positive classroom atmosphere. While respondents recognized the potential impact of a teacher's dress code on academic progress, they emphasized that other factors, such as effective teaching methods, student engagement, and supportive learning environments, play equally vital roles in influencing student achievement. This suggests that the teacher's appearance should be seen as one contributing factor among various elements that collectively influence academic success. The findings also underscore the importance of balancing a professional dress code with individual teacher preferences and comfort. Respondents recognized the need to consider teacher well-being and job satisfaction while maintaining a professional appearance.

Overall, the study affirms that a teacher's professional dress code contributes to the school's image and reputation, projecting an institution committed to academic excellence. The primary goal of a teacher's appearance, according to respondents, is to create a positive and respectful

learning environment rather than rigid adherence to dress codes. These findings provide valuable insights for educators and educational institutions seeking to cultivate a positive and conducive learning environment. A teacher's professional appearance can play a vital role in shaping student perceptions and attitudes, ultimately enhancing the overall teaching and learning experience. By recognizing the significance of a teacher's appearance and its interplay with other factors, educators can adopt strategies that promote academic progress while considering individual preferences and well-being.

Suggestions to Teachers and Educational Institutions

Suggestions for Teachers:

Dress Professionally: Teachers may consider dressing professionally to create a positive and respectful learning environment. Dressing in a manner that reflects their role as educators can positively influence student perception and respect.

Be Mindful of Comfort: While maintaining a professional appearance is essential, teachers should also prioritize their comfort and well-being. Choose attire that adheres to school guidelines while considering personal preferences.

Emphasize Effective Teaching Methods: Teachers should focus on adopting effective teaching methods that enhance student engagement and learning. Professional dress codes can be complemented by well-planned and engaging instructional strategies.

Classroom Management: Teachers can work on effective classroom management techniques to promote discipline and attentive behavior among students. A positive classroom atmosphere can be nurtured through effective classroom management.

Continuous Professional Growth: Engage in continuous professional development to enhance teaching skills, as this can significantly impact students' academic achievement.

Suggestions for Educational Institutions:

Establish Clear Dress Code Guidelines: Educational institutions should establish clear and reasonable dress code guidelines for teachers. These guidelines should strike a balance between professionalism and individual comfort.

Promote a Positive School Culture: Foster a positive school culture that values professionalism and academic excellence. Emphasize the importance of a conducive learning environment that includes the professional appearance of teachers.

Support Professional Development: Encourage and support teachers in their professional development efforts. Offer training and workshops that focus on effective teaching strategies and classroom management.

Seek Feedback from Students and Parents: Collect feedback from students and parents on various aspects, including teacher appearance and its

impact. This feedback can be used to inform decision-making and improvement efforts.

Recognize Teachers' Efforts: Recognize and appreciate teachers' efforts in maintaining a professional appearance while acknowledging the broader factors that contribute to academic achievement.

Promote Holistic Approaches:

Emphasize that academic achievement is a result of multiple factors, including effective teaching, student engagement, and a positive learning environment, while recognizing that a teacher's appearance is one component of the overall teaching approach. By taking these suggestions into consideration, teachers and educational institutions can foster a positive learning environment that supports students' academic progress while maintaining a balance between professionalism and individual preferences.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the study suggests that a teacher's professional dress code can have an impact on various aspects of the learning environment. Respondents recognized its significance in shaping student perception, respect, and classroom atmosphere. However, it was not seen as the sole determinant of students' academic achievement, as other factors such as effective teaching methods and student engagement were also perceived as crucial. Teachers are encouraged to dress professionally to create a positive and respectful atmosphere in the classroom. While adhering to dress code guidelines, they should prioritize their comfort and well-being. Emphasizing effective teaching methods and classroom management can complement a professional appearance and contribute to students' academic progress.

Educational institutions should establish clear and reasonable dress code guidelines for teachers, emphasizing the importance of professionalism and academic excellence. Supporting teachers' professional development and collecting feedback from students and parents can inform continuous improvement efforts. It is essential to adopt a holistic approach to understanding academic achievement, recognizing that a teacher's appearance is one element in the broader context of effective teaching practices and a supportive learning environment. By striking a balance between professionalism and individual preferences, teachers and institutions can create an environment that fosters student learning and success. Ultimately, collaborative efforts between teachers, students, and institutions are crucial in ensuring a positive and conducive educational experience for all.

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