# The Impact of Dress Code on an Organisational Image: A Case Study of Prudential Bank Limited, Takoradi Branch

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*Authors' contributions*

This work was carried out in collaboration between all authors. Author JRE designed the study, collected relevant literature and designed the questionnaire. Author IA supervised the data collection and managed the analyses of the data. Author DDK participated in the initial design of the study, data collection and editing. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

*Original Research Article*

## ABSTRACT

This study examined the reasons why workers do not adhere to the policy of corporate dressing and its impact on the image of an organization. A descriptive survey was used for the study. All thirty (30) employees from Prudential Bank, Takoradi Branch in Ghana were selected for the study. Descriptive tables based on frequency and percentage distribution were used to represent the data analysed. Findings of the study revealed that organisations institute dress code policy to provide a sense of unity, promote the spirit of oneness, discourage organisation violence, lessen economic burden on employees and help to maintain a positive image of the organization in the community. The study brought to light that corporate workers are not willing to put on a compulsory dress because they will not be able to show their wealth and personality through their dress and also employees do not want their outfit to be same every day. The study recommended among others that, management should have a policy on what is appropriate for their staff to wear to work. The

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dress code policy should be clear and specific to ensure employees satisfaction. In other words, the dress code policy of the organization should have a standard uniform dress that the average employee will be comfortable with.

*Keywords: Clothing; dress code; policy; productivity and professionalism.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

A dress code is the set of standards that companies develop to help provide their employees with guidance about what is appropriate to wear to work which ranges from formal to casual clothes. From the way, one dresses conclusions are drawn about one's personal characteristics, social status and attitude to work. For example, seeing a man in an expensive, well-fitted suit, we assimilate him with greater competencies and positive qualities, rather than one dressed in faded jeans and a t-shirt. This is one of the laws of the psychology of perception. It certainly should be considered, especially in a business where success depends on the ability to properly present oneself. Clothing as a tool for business development is reflected in this concept as a "dress code". The saying that "Do not judge a book by its cover", however, in the corporate world of today, that is exactly what happens, so it is important for corporate workers to convey the right message through their image. Personality, social status and attitude to work are a few of the dimensions that the image of a corporate body can be portrayed as its corporate identity. The employee's attitude, dress code and corporate culture determine how clients see an organisation [1].

As competition among companies becomes tougher, they need to use all available methods to strengthen their position, win the new audience and stand out of the crowd. One such method is to create a good corporate image. The positive image of an organisation increases its competitiveness in the market and attracts new business and accelerates sales through a successfully implemented corporate image policy. Another important function of the dress code is its ability to unite employees and foster a cohesive team. When the appearance of employees is governed by the same set of rules, they feel part of a whole and gain a sense of ownership [1]. This kind of transformation is very important when a team is working to achieve a common goal. Many companies including large multinationals dress-code guidelines exist either as unwritten rules in the minds of employees, or as oral explanations by the leadership about what colours, shapes, silhouettes and accessories employees should wear.

The dress code is a component of the corporate culture and corporate image of the company. A fundamental feature here is the need to maintain the professional image and reputation of the firm. In this context, the dress code is the way to stand out from competitors, express a professional business approach injust plain and simple terms. The second feature is the proven ability of the corporate dress code to positively impact employee working mood and focus.

Unfortunately, in spite of all the merits of dress code, not all employees have a clear vision about how they should look like in the workplace which creates a risk that the appearance of such an employee may distort the perception a customer has of the company. If no dress codes are adhered to in a workplace, then anyone could conceivably wear anything of his/her choice. This will distract other employees and have a severe impact on their performance. If a colleague proves to be a distraction the other employees will have a hard time concentrating on their work. Productivity suffers, and that affects a business' overall bottom line. An inappropriately-dressed employee can also prove to be a distraction for clients and potential clients – reflecting negatively on the overall impression of the company in what is recognized as a very competitive business climate. This study examined the reasons why workers do not adhere to the policy of corporate dressing and its impact on the image of an organization.

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Fashion is extensively promoted throughout the world; from magazines and newspapers to television and the internet, there is no shortage of information on fashion. The extensive amount of information available on fashion does not always help the cause of the dress code. The appearance of employees sets a definite tone for an employer, no matter their size or industry. In a corporate, office-based environment, it is even more important to define and maintain dress

codes. In spite of all attempt by the organization to introduce compulsory dress codes to help keep the company's image and public perception under control and maintaining the company's chosen image in public, some corporate workers are more interested in what is 'fashion forward' or in current style instead of what their employer might want. They are simply not as interested in what the world might think of them; these employees certainly seem to be in disagreement over how workplace attire affects productivity; an attitude that can be relatively dangerous to the image of the organization.

As corporate bodies contend that allowing casual attire implies that they allow a casual attitude, which results in casual work ethics. The other side argues that as employees are allowed to dress more comfortably, their confidence and therefore their productivity will increase. Because of the lack of consensus, this study examined the reasons why workers do not adhere to the policy of corporate dressing and its impact on the image of an organization. The main objectives are: (1) to find out the reasons why organizations institute dress code policy, (2) to find out the reasons why corporate workers are not willing to wear a compulsory dress and; (3) to determine the benefits of dress code to organizational productivity.

## 2.1 Review of Related Literature

### 2.1.1 The concept of dress code

Susan [2] defined dress code as a set of standards that companies develop to help provide their employees with guidance about what is appropriate to wear to work. Dress codes range from formal to business casual to casual. The formality of the workplace dress code is normally determined by some interaction employees to have with customers or clients on sight. In workplaces where some employees interact with customers or clients and others do not, an organization may choose to have two dress codes.

Dress codes may broadly be defined as rules that regulate an individual's appearance. Sociological variables such as age, occupation, class, gender, religion, or ethnicity, stipulate what can and cannot be worn. However, most people probably have a narrower, more specifically modern understanding of dress codes. This stricter definition is associated with a massive uniformization of populations that began in the early nineteenth century as workers and employees were disciplined to meet the demands of capitalism, industrialisation, and national state formation [3]. A more casual dress code is adopted for employees with no customer or client contact. Depending on the organisation, the dress code may be written in great detail, or in the case of a casual dress code, the very little feature is necessary. Over the years, employees have seen a shift towards a more casual dress standard, even in industries that were previously very formal. Startups, in particular, tend towards a more relaxed dress code [4].

According to Davis [5], dress codes, whether explicit or implicit, may apply to small groups (for example, organisation or company) or an entire nation (China's "Mao suit"). Besides mandating what should be worn, dress codes dictate what should not be worn, and they can be better appreciated by conceptualising a continuum of uniformity, ranging from strict integration into a politico-economic order to being free from its constraints. Some of the variations are: highly standardised, group-dominated, clear hierarchy (military uniforms); regulated, group-oriented, hierarchy – 'occupational dress'; nonstandardized, displays individuality, no hierarchy – 'casual dress'; and anti-standardised, overly individualistic, anti-hierarchy 'avant-garde fashion.'

Glenn [6] contended that some factors and gender governs dress codes play a big role: women wear skirts and men as a general rule do not. One's occupation also defines what to wear. Their clothes easily identify Policemen, military personnel, members of the clergy and some academics. Culture and ethnicity, political affiliation, marital status and religions all have an impact on what you decide to put on.

Certain types of clothing and accessories have come to distinguish between the "haves" and the "have-nots", and many times, employees find themselves in life-threatening situations because of it. By instituting a dress code policy, a feeling of "oneness" can be promoted by removing the messages of social and economic status carried by clothing, rather than the segregation that occurs without uniforms. "Uniforms would help discourage violence in the organisations because employees would no longer have to fight over who looks better or want to cause harm in an attempt to take another employee's trendy clothes. The uniform's positive benefits will lessen negative situations that could lead to organisation violence [7].

In the past, employees have spent a large amount of money each year purchasing head-to-toe clothes for work. Employees may seem to forget that the purpose of the organisation is for them to work, not making a fashion statement. By instituting a uniform policy, the economic burden that employees face could be depleted, if not eliminated. Employees could spend less money each year on clothing because they would only need to purchase a few dresses for the year instead of trying to stay updated with the changing fashions [8].

Employees may develop low feelings about themselves and are often prejudged by their peers when they are wearing hand-me-downs, or they do not have trendy clothes. This attitude is very destructive to one's self-esteem which can have a devastating impact on how one contributes to society as an adult. "Uniforms eliminate this prejudice" [8] because employees are not able to tell the "haves" and the "have-nots".

According to LaPoint et al. [9], experts in psychology generally agree that "clothing and appearance influence individual and group behaviour". According to Caruso, [8], Clothing can provide a sense of unity, which in turn, may increase one's self-esteem. Dress codes may be able to instil employees with a sense of discipline and morale, which is needed in today's organisations for a positive corporate image. There is a saying that states, "you act the way you are dressed". If that saying is true, and one dresses appropriately for work, then one will act accordingly and take pride in how one looks.

Organisations house many individuals and any intruder could walk in and grab valuable items. Organisations who go by the dress code policy are also concern about the safety of the organisation and its workers. Some organisations do not lock entrance doors around their building because they want to have an open-door policy. Instead, they put up signs inside the building instructing visitors to sign in at the office. If an intruder wants to commit any crime, he will not take the chance by signing in at the office. Cohn [10] observed that, "Every administrator of a large organisation knows the potential for problems of disruption and violence when outsiders, including gang members, gain access to an organisation without a process of ready identification". In the view of Caruso [8], a uniform policy can promote the safety issues we all fear by allowing corporate officials to easily recognize intruders in the organisation. A dress code can often be used by employers to ensure workers are safe and dressed appropriately. It should, however, relate to the job and be reasonable in nature, for example, workers may be required to tie their hair back or cover it for hygiene reasons if working in a kitchen.

Nath et al. [11] argued that employers often introduce a dress code for health and safety reasons, for example, health care workers may not be allowed to wear jewellery for safety reasons when around patients and certain clothing may not be allowed in factories while operating machinery. However, an employer's dress code must not be discriminatory in respect of the protected characteristics such as age, disability, gender, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. According together al [11], the major reason an employer will introduce a uniform is to increase the professional look of the company. Uniform makes it easier for customers to identify staff members. The appearance of employees can also be managed easily. The ultimate function of a uniform is to identify workers hired by companies [2].

In other jobs, dress codes are important because it helps in representing the company. Employees who work at clothing stores are often required to wear clothes the store sells. Fast food restaurants require a strict uniform so that it does not look like customers have wandered behind the counter [11]. For office jobs, the person who sits at the front desk might have a stricter dress code than the Chief Information Officer because everyone who walks in off the street sees the receptionist, but you'll only see the Chief Information Officer if you have an appointment. Many client based industries, like law firms and corporate accounting, have formal dress codes. No one wants to meet with a lawyer wearing a tank top and Daisy Duke shorts. A suit is the chosen outfit, for both male and female employees [12].

Nevertheless, in spite of the reluctance from some workers to get into the corporate colours, when done correctly, dressing in uniforms can really unify a team and be a powerful branding tool. But given how powerful a staff uniform can be as a branding tool, it is essential to match the uniform to your product, and to do your best to ensure employees enjoy wearing it. In fact, a functional, well-designed uniform in a contemporary style can make employees lives easier. A high standard of dress and personal

presentation becomes a source of pride among staff and a part of a company's identity as a business [13].

### 2.1.2 Reasons why workers refuse to wear dress code

The idea of implementing a corporate dress code policy appears to have favorable intentions - protect employees and provide a valuable education, but not all people believe so. There are many people in society, including employees, employers and corporate officials, who have opposed the idea of a dress code policy. Caruso [8] opined that for many professionals, the days of wearing uniforms might have ended with high school, for this reason, an increasing percentage of the workforce today do not want their outfit to be same every single day.

Freedom of expression through appearance is one's constitutional right, although many corporate officials are trying to get around that right by claiming a dress code policy is to regulate employees for health and safety issues, not for conforming issues. Some employees are upset because workers are not able to show their personality through their dress, and they believe it lessens the employees' individuality. It is not clear, however, whether the guarantees of privacy and free speech apply to employee's choice of dress [8].

Caruso [8] was of the view that opposers for a dress code policy believe employees will continue to segregate based on social class even with the implementation of dress code. They will wear accessories and learn to distinguish themselves through academics, sports and extracurricular activities, rather than by the way one dress. In reality, employees and society alike have different social classes, and the implementation of the dress code will not eliminate such classes like the "haves" and the "have-nots."

According to Caruso [8], dress code policy would also eliminate the hand-me-down option that many employees rely on to tackle the economic hardship of purchasing new clothes each year. Dress codes are also an intrusion into lives of employees' societal rights, and duties are violated when a uniform policy is enforced because employees no longer have the right to socialize according to their values and social class. For employees, their individuality is restricted along with the natural process of identity experimentation through clothing. By

conforming and eliminating every form of an individual's expression, our organizations will only be left with soldiers and not employees.

Davis [5] opined that when it comes to how employees feel about uniform dressing, they are far less excited about being clad in company designed work wear. In some companies, dress codes are enforced by military-like morning inspections. Dress code should be non-discriminatory and should apply to both men and women equally. Standards can be different, for example a policy may state "business dress" for women "flying tie" for men.

Nath et al. [11] explained that the dress code should not discriminate: men and women must have similar standards and must tolerate religious beliefs. Employers need to accommodate an employee whose religion requires him to keep his head covered or to wear a religious necklace unless there are extreme circumstances, for this reason, some employees would like to protect themselves with this act and choose not to wear dress code. In supporting the above view Davis [5] asserted that clothes make an impression, which can lead to unconscious bias. Some studies have highlighted how 'power dressing' can help ones career, but if one is not a stylish dresser, the person might be left behind for no fault of his or hers. Uniforms enable managers/customers and other stakeholders to go beyond the clothes you are wearing and encourage evaluation based on your contributions and ideas. A dress code can often be used by employers to ensure workers are safe and dressed appropriately. It should, however, relate to the job and be reasonable, for example, workers may be required to tie their hair back or cover it for hygiene reasons when working in a kitchen.

### 2.1.3 Rationale behind dress code policy

Glenn [6] opined that business attire had changed significantly over the years, especially in the last 20 years. Too many people have forgotten why proper business attire is important. Some companies prefer to allow and even encourage employees to dress freely or casually for comfort. This tends to work well in a more creative work environments. However, other companies will typically encourage and require a more defined and professional dress code to maintain a professional image of themselves and the business, where employees routinely interact on a daily basis with prospects, clients and business partners. The major reason why

dressing in proper business attire is important for every business professional is because it presents a visual image and sends a message that employees are professionals.

Some employers experience resistance from employees who believe they have the right to groom themselves and dress in a way that suits their personality. This is true in the context of what they do outside of the employer's operation. A commitment to strive to achieve an appropriate balance is very important. Whatever else we think about dressing for success, we need to be reminded that first impressions are everything, and we only get one chance to make a positive first impression [6].

Agrawal and Maheswaran [14] asserted that observing people and predicting how they are is always trickery. One's appearance invariably becomes the window through which the world looks at them. Interestingly, it may occasionally also become the deciding factor for prospects at work. Aside, some of us definitely invest in perfection, including perfection in how we pull ourselves together every morning. The idea is that if appearance has such a huge role to play in so many areas of one's life, including boosting self-confidence, then why should it be so difficult to do? Agrawal and Maheswaran [14] again said that talking about the importance of dressing well, does not refer to the professional context only. It is something that extends to all areas of your life since your clothes are a large part of who you are as a person. It does not only makes you feel good but can also largely influence your interaction with people. Nath et al. [11] contended dress codes are often used in the workplace to communicate a corporate image and ensure that customers can easily identify them. When you are dressed in well-fitted comfortable clothes that are truly meant for you, you are undistracted. This also means that it keeps you focused on getting the important stuff done.

### 2.1.4 Dress code and productivity

According to The Guardian [15], dressing casually could cause an employee to feel less focused and alert. When we put on an item of clothing, it is common for the wearer to adopt the characteristics associated with that garment. A lot of clothing have symbolic meaning for us, whether it's 'professional work attire' or 'relaxing weekend wear', so when we put it on we prime the brain to behave in ways consistent with that meaning. It is the reason why we feel fitter in our

sports clothes, or more professional in work attire Research shows your alertness is affected by what you wear [15]. People wearing a doctor's lab coat displayed heightened attention. The influence of clothes depends on wearing them and their symbolic meaning. This theory supports the notion that we would stay more focused when wearing work clothes, and may be more cognitively alert than if we dressed down. But that does not necessarily mean companies should switch back to old world corporate culture to boost productivity. Although one could conclude that the enclothed cognition study, the studies that assess the direct relationship between the two are based on self-report.

Indeed, it seems that attire is such a deeply personal preference that, at least from a statistical perspective, there is no perfect way to predict how implementing a dress code in your workplace will affect productivity [12].

## 2.2 Methods

### 2.2.1 Research design

The descriptive survey was used for the study. According to Creswell [6], the descriptive survey is when a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items (sample) considered to be a fair representation of the entire group, and the findings from the study is expected to be generalized to the entire population. The researcher used this design because it involves asking the same set of questions prepared in the form of a written questionnaire from a large number of individuals. Surveys are good for asking about their perceptions, opinions and ideas though are less reliable for finding out how people actually behave.

### 2.2.2 Population and sampling

The population of this study constitutes all management and staff of Prudential Bank Limited, Takoradi branch in Ghana working in diverse positions in the company, and number thirty (30). All the thirty (30) employees were selected for the study. The study adopted the convenience sampling technique considering the availability and timely collection of data.

### 2.2.3 Data collection instruments

For the purpose of gathering primary data, questionnaires were used. The questionnaires

were administered personally by the researcher, after permission has been sought from the managers, and the purpose of the study explained to them. Each of the items on the questionnaire was explained to them to make it easy for them to understand issues fully. In some instances, some of the respondents preferred to respond to the questionnaire at their own convenient time. To ensure that most of the questionnaires distributed were retrieved, its administration was done in the break hours. This did not only ensure easy and convenient distribution but also ensured easy identification of respondents. In all, all the questionnaires administered were retrieved. The data was analyzed quantitativelyusing the Microsoft Excel computer software.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Reasons why Organizations Institute Dress Code Policy

Table 1 presents the result of the reasons why organizations institute dress code policy.

Table 1 shows that, 18, respondents representing 60% strongly agreed that the reason behind dress code policy is to provide a sense of unity among employees. Eight employees representing 27% also agreed, 3, representing 10% disagreed, while 1 participant was constituting 3% of the total respondents strongly disagreed. Again, 13 respondents representing 43%, strongly agree that dress code policy promotes the spirit of ones among employees, ten respondents agreed to this statement, 7 respondents representing 23% disagreed. However, none of the participants strongly disagreed that the policy is to promote the spirit of oneness. The researcher also asked the respondents if they think that the rationale behind this policy is to lessen economic burden on employees, the majority of 25 respondents representing 82% strongly agreed, 4 participants

constituting 13% agreed, 1 participant who is 3% disagreed. A closer look at the analysis on the table reveals that 30 respondents representing 100% of the sampled employees were of the view that the underlying principle of the policy is to help to maintain a positive image of the organization in the community.

### 3.2 The Benefits of Dress Code to an Organization's Productivity

Two types of data were collected to answer this research question. These were the benefits of dress code to the organization at large and secondly, the impact of dress code on productivity.

The analysis on Table 2 revealed that 20 respondents representing 66% strongly agreed that dress code policy presents a visual image and sends a message that the employees are professionals, 5 respondents representing 17% of the respondents agreed, in contrast, 3 respondents representing 10% disagreed, whereas 2 respondents representing 7 strongly disagreed to the assertion. On the issue of whether dress code policy assists in building an organisation and team spirit eight respondents representing 27% strongly agreed, ten respondents representing 33% agreed, and strongly disagreed respectively, while two respondents representing 7% strongly disagreed.

Again, it can be observed from Table 2 that 20 respondents representing 66% strongly agreed dress code policy ensures workers are safely dressed for specific organizational activities, five respondents representing 17% agreed, three respondents representing 10% disagreed, while two respondents representing 7% also strongly disagreed. Moreover, on the question of whether dress code policy helps employees' to recognize themselves 100% of the respondents agreed to that assertion.

**Table 1. Reasons behind dress code policy**

| Statement | Response | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Total |
| Provide a sense of unity | 18 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 30 |
| Promotes the spirit of oneness | 13 | 10 | 7 | 0 | 30 |
| Discourages organisation violence | 22 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 30 |
| Lessens economic burden employees | 25 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 30 |
| It helps to maintain a positive image of the organization in the community | 30 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 30 |

*Source: Field Survey, 2017*

Finally, 25 representing 83%disagreed that dress code policy encourages equity among workers, 5 participants representing 17% strongly disagreed whereas none of the respondents strongly agreed or disagreed.

Table 3 shows that, 16, representing 57% of the respondents strongly agreed that workplace attire affects productivity positively 9 representing 26% agreed, 1, representing 3% disagreed while 4 constituting 13% strongly disagreed that workplace attire affects productivity positively. In another development, the respondents were questioned whether dress code policy boost morale, friendship and increase the creativity of employees; surprisingly, none of the respondents strongly agreed, four respondents representing 13% agreed, 20 participants representing 67% disagreed whereas six employees representing 20% disagreed. Eight respondents representing 27% strongly agreed, 14 respondents representing 47% agreed, five respondents representing 17% disagreed and three respondents representing 10% strongly disagreed to the statement that dress code policy motivates employees to work to negotiates contracts easily. Additionally, participants were asked whether the policy encourages workers to stay for longer hours. Only three respondents representing 10% strongly agreed, seven respondents representing 23% agreed, three respondents representing 10% strongly disagreed while, 17 respondents representing 57% disagreed.

## 3.3 Reasons why Corporate Workers are not Willing to Wear a Compulsory Dress

Table 4 shows the reasons why corporate workers are not willing to wear a compulsory dress.

Table 4 indicates that, 25 respondents representing 83% strongly agreed that the policy defrays employees from showing their wealth and personality through their dress, one respondent each representing 3% agreed and strongly disagreed, while, three respondents representing 10% disagreed.

Also, 16 respondents constituting 53%strongly agreed that employees do not want their outfit to be same every day, six respondents each representing 20% agreed and disagreed to this assertion, whereas two respondents representing 7% strongly disagreed. 22 respondents representing 73% strongly agreed that dress

**Table 2.  Benefits of dress code policy to the organization**

| Benefits | Responses | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Total |
| It presents a visual image and sends a message that the employees are professionals. | 20 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 30 |
| Assist in building organizational and team spirit | 8 | 10 | 10 | 2 | 30 |
| Ensures workers are safely dressed for specific organizational activities | 20 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 30 |
| It helps employees' to recognize  themselves | 30 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 30 |
| Encourages equity among workers | 0 | 0 | 25 | 5 | 30 |

*Source:  Field Survey, 2017*

**Table 3. Impact of dress code on productivity**

| Statement | Response | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Total |
| Workplace attire Affects productivity positively | 16 | 9 | 3 | 4 | 30 |
| It boosts morale, friendship and increases creativity of employees | 0 | 4 | 20 | 6 | 30 |
| It motivates employees to work and negotiates contracts easily. | 8 | 14 | 5 | 3 | 30 |
| It encourages workers to stay longer hours | 3 | 7 | 17 | 3 | 30 |

*Source:  Field Survey, 2017*

**Table 4. Reasons why corporate workers are not willing to wear a compulsory dress**

| Statements | Responses | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Strongly agree** | **Agree** | **Strongly disagree** | **Disagree** | **Total** |
| Employees are not able to show their wealth and personality through their dress | 25 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 30 |
| Employees do not want their outfit to be same every day | 16 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 30 |
| Dress codes are an economic burden on employees | 22 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 30 |
| Dress code is interference to the social lives of employees | 12 | 14 | 2 | 2 | 30 |
| It does not help in religious affiliation | 8 | 15 | 4 | 3 | 30 |

*Source: Field Survey, 2017*

code is an economic burden on employees, four respondents representing 13% agreed that it is an economic burden on employees, three respondents representing 10% disagreed, but one respondent representing 3% strongly disagreed to this statement.

Another issue that was raised was dress code being interference to the social lives of employees. Per the analysis, it can be seen that, 12 respondents representing 40% strongly agreed, 14 respondents representing 47% agreed, two respondents representing 7% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectfully.

## 4. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This portion of the study discusses the results and major findings of the research which were based on the research objectives and subsequently discussed in detail in line with the relevant literature.

## 4.1 Reasons for Dress Code Policy

Table 1 was used to collect data on the reasons why dress code policy is usually promoted by organizations. The findings are in line with the view of Agrawal and Maheswaran [14] that the major reason why dressing in proper business attire is important for every business professional is because it presents a visual image and sends a message that the employees are professionals. According to Agrawal and Maheswaran [14] observing people and seeing how they are different is always trickery. However, one's appearance invariably becomes the window through which the world looks at his or her organisation. Interestingly, it may occasionally become the deciding factor for prospects at work.

A closer look at Table 1 reveals that respondents' opinions were by the above statement.

## 4.2 Importance of Dress Code on Productivity

One of the major aims of this study was to investigate the importance of dress code on organizational productivity. Tables 2 and 3 were used to gather data for this research question, per the analysis, it is clear that the results are by the view of LaPoint et al. [9], who postulated that, experts in psychology generally agree that clothing and appearance influence individual and group behaviour. In supporting this view, Caruso [8] opined that, clothing could provide a sense of unity, which in turn, may increase one's self-esteem. Dress codes may be able to instil employees with a sense of discipline and morale, which is needed in today's organisations for a positive corporate image. There is a saying that states, "you act the way you are dressed". If that saying is true, and one dresses appropriately for work, then one will act accordingly and take pride in how one looks. Kahn [17], added that employees could spend less money each year on clothing costs because they would only need to purchase a few dresses for the year instead of trying to stay updated with the changing fashion.

Again, on the issue of dress code and productivity, the majority of the respondents were of the view that dress code does not add much to employees productivity which is in agreement with the opinion of Kahn, [17] that employees wearing the same dress to work is not the right answer to increase productivity. He said:" scientifically speaking, how does a dress code impact productivity?" [17]. In short, we just do not

know. Kahn [17] concluded that it seems that attire is such a deeply personal preference that, at least from a statistical perspective, there is no perfect way to predict how implementing a dress code in your workplace will affect productivity.

In analyzing the views of the above researchers vis-a vis the findings in Tables 2 and 3, there is no deniable fact that the results match with the views of the employees sampled for the study.

## 4.3 Reasons why Employees do not Want to Wear Dress Code

According to the findings employees sampled for this study did not recognize and appreciate the importance of dress code policy because they were of the view that, when they wear a compulsory dress to work, they will not be able to show their wealth and personality through their dress, others were also of the view that they don't want to wear one outfit to work every day. They also said that dress code is interference to their social lives and finally, dress code does not help in some of their religious affiliations.

These findings is also in line with the views of Caruso [8], that freedom of expression through appearance is one's constitutional right, although many corporate officials are trying to get around that right by claiming a dress code policy is to regulate employees for health and safety issues, not for conforming issues. Some employees are upset because workers are not able to show their personality through their dress, and they believe it lessens the employees' individuality.

Opposers for a dress code policy believe employees will continue to segregate based on social class even with the implementation of dress code. They will wear accessories and learn to distinguish themselves through academics, sports and extracurricular activities, rather than the way one dresses. In reality, employees and society alike have different social classes, and the implementation of the dress code will not eliminate such classes like the "haves" and the "have-nots."

## 5. CONCLUSION

The study shows that corporate dressing helps an individual to dress according to his work profile and organization culture. From the company's perspective, the dress code has been seen as a cost-effective way to improve employee morale, provide a means for a

company to become more attractive to new employees and a strategy to improve overall productivity. However, it has also been an evolving challenge for employees because it typically means wearing slacks of some sort to work.

Formal dressing, if done correctly goes a long way in shaping one's personality. Corporate workers should remember that no one likes to speak to an individual who does not know how to carry himself/herself. Going to work in formal dresses helps to create an image of your organization to the outside world. Bankers handle other people's money, so they need to present themselves as capable and professionals. How they dress conveys their commitment to professionalism, attention to detail and concern for their clients. Therefore if employees do not dress appropriately for the banking industry, they may give customers the impression that they do not care about their perceptions. Employees who altogether dress alike are easily identified as employees in a business. This makes it easier for customers to seek out employees when they are looking for assistance, which leads to increased profits for the company and job security for the workers. This translates to a greater sense of loyalty toward the company and elevated levels of employee performance. Employees who wear uniforms develop a sense of solidarity with co-workers, creating an environment in which teamwork is enhanced, and performance improves.

Productivity can come in different guises, based on what an employee has scheduled for that day. Different dress codes can be appropriate for different tasks. For example, if a lawyer is drafting a long contract, they need to be dressed to be able to sit at a desk in comfort for a long period. But at a client meeting, we expect them to be smartly dressed to convey a professional approach.

The study recommends that management institutes a policy on what is appropriate for their staff to wear to work so that employees will not feel they are being discriminated against their mode of dressing. The dress code policy should be clear and specific to ensure that employees are satisfied. In other words, the dress code policy of the organization should have a standard uniform dress that the average employee will be comfortable with. The dress code policy should be flexible to ensure a balance between

professionalism and the desire for self-expression.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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