
**A STUDY FOR EXISTING CLOTHING PRACTICES AND NEED OF A
DRESS CODE FOR FEMALE EDUCATORS**

Kriti*

Dr. Gurcharan Singh**

ABSTRACT

A survey was conducted to identify the existing clothing practices of female educators and need of a dress code to enhance their performance during teaching learning process. As additional constructional features may provide solution to the problem but does not look smart and professional which can provide dignity and universal identification to the profession. Now, India is heading towards westernization and female educators prefer indo-western style of dressing. So, the present study suggests a waistcoat with any type of dress for summers and coat with any type of dress in winters.

* Research Scholar, Department of Fashion & Designing, Monad University, Village & Post Kastla, Kasmabad, P.O Pilakhwa – 245101 tehsil Hapur (U.P), India

**Supervisor, J.N.V. Dhilwan. Barwala (Pb.), N.V.S. New Delhi under M.H.R.D.

INTRODUCTION

Ever since human has inhabitant earth, men and women have been occupying themselves more or less with attaining, enhancing and preserving of their external beauty. The concept of external beauty has been changing from time to time. Clothing is the second skin and clothes are an outward expression of how people feel about themselves and their surroundings. Adornment later grew as one of the necessities since one's appearance affected not only feelings and behavior but also served as a non verbal symbol, projecting and revealing impression to those with whom one came in contact. (Vastard and Naik, 2005)

Clothing provides a means of self expression and aesthetic enjoyment and a way to suggest wealth and prestige. Clothing is also one of the most personal components of daily life. And its selection, use and care is our daily routine work. Clothing means much more to women. Clothing is considered to be symbolic of working women's success in life and social position. Women need clothes that are suitable for home wear, office wear, shopping, travel and occasions etc (Vijaylakshmi, S. 1970).

Especially the working women require clothes of a more practical nature, comfortable, neat and business like in appearance. Clothes not only help to achieve the success she deserves but also give her poise and confidence as well as self identification (Yadav, N. and Sangwan, N. 2008).

Objective of the study:

1. To identify the existing clothing practices of female educators at work place.
2. To study the preferences of female educators for the dress code.

Methodology:

In this study survey and experimental method was adopted. Sampling is done from Kurukshetra district's schools, degree colleges and professional institutions (also consider as different category). An exhaustive list of fifty respondents from each category in total of one hundred fifty respondents was taken using simple random sampling technique for data collection. Data was collected with the help of self prepared questionnaire with predefined score. Data so collected is tabulated and calculation is done by simple percentage method and preference rank order.

Interpretation of Data:

Existing clothing practices of female educators is tabulated as follows. It includes information regarding respondent's dresses, their fabrics, colors, prints and considerations while selecting the textile material / garments.

Table 1.1 Existing Clothing Practice (Type of Dress at Work Place)

| In summer | School (50) | | Degree College (50) | | Professional College (50) | | Total (150) | |
|------------------|-------------|-------|---------------------|-------|---------------------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Salwar-Kameeze | 39 | 78.00 | 45 | 90.00 | 44 | 88.00 | 128 | 85.33 |
| Sari | 24 | 48.00 | 19 | 38.00 | 11 | 22.00 | 54 | 36.00 |
| Pant-Shirt | 8 | 16.00 | 5 | 10.00 | 6 | 12.00 | 19 | 12.67 |
| Skirt-top | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 4.00 | 2 | 1.33 |
| In winter | | | | | | | | |
| Salwar-Kameeze | 38 | 76.00 | 44 | 88.00 | 39 | 78.00 | 121 | 80.67 |
| Sari | 11 | 22.00 | 10 | 20.00 | 7 | 14.00 | 28 | 18.67 |
| Pant-Shirt | 18 | 36.00 | 9 | 18.00 | 15 | 30.00 | 42 | 28.00 |
| Skirt-top | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 |

While examining the existing clothing practices for type of dress female educators wear at their work place, it is found that salwar kameeze gets the highest percentage in summer as well as in winter. It is found that sari is liked at the second highest place in summer, whereas, in winter pant shirt get the second highest score. Skirt top is the least existing clothing practice in summers and nil in winters. Only 4 percent educators in professional colleges wear skirt during summer. Therefore, salwar kameeze is the most common dress in summer as well as in winter. The result of present study is in line with the result of (Kaur, K. 1980) who reported that the adolescents prefer salwar-kameeze and next to this, they wear pant-tops.

Table 1.2 Existing Clothing Practice (in winter)

| In winter | School (50) | | Degree College (50) | | Professional College (50) | | Total (150) | |
|-----------|-------------|-------|---------------------|-------|---------------------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Pullover | 4 | 8.00 | 11 | 22.00 | 13 | 26.00 | 28 | 18.67 |
| Cardigan | 27 | 54.00 | 29 | 58.00 | 27 | 54.00 | 83 | 55.33 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|----|-------|----|-------|----|-------|-----|-------|
| Shawl | 8 | 16.00 | 20 | 40.00 | 14 | 28.00 | 42 | 28.00 |
| Coat / Jacket | 39 | 78.00 | 49 | 98.00 | 47 | 94.00 | 135 | 90.00 |

Table 1.2 depicts that during winters pullover, cardigan, shawl and coat / jacket are some of the common outfits used by the educators at work place. It is found that coat /jacket is highly preferred among all the three categories, followed by cardigans, shawl and pullover is the last preference. Reason behind this is coat has pockets and comparatively warm and soothing in the season. Above all it can provide a professional look to the wearer.

Table 1.3 Existing Clothing Practice (Fabric Type)

| In summer | School (50) | | Degree College (50) | | Professional College (50) | | Total (150) | |
|------------------|-------------|--------|---------------------|-------|---------------------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Cotton | 50 | 100.00 | 49 | 98.00 | 46 | 92.00 | 145 | 96.67 |
| Organdie | 5 | 10.00 | 15 | 30.00 | 6 | 12.00 | 26 | 17.33 |
| Chiffon | 11 | 22.00 | 25 | 50.00 | 19 | 38.00 | 55 | 36.67 |
| Blends | 2 | 4.00 | 8 | 16.00 | 4 | 8.00 | 14 | 9.33 |
| Denim | 1 | 2.00 | 6 | 12.00 | 8 | 16.00 | 15 | 10.00 |
| Khadi | 7 | 14.00 | 19 | 38.00 | 5 | 10.00 | 31 | 20.67 |
| Silk | 1 | 2.00 | 7 | 14.00 | 2 | 4.00 | 10 | 6.67 |
| Organza | 2 | 4.00 | 5 | 10.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 7 | 4.67 |
| In winter | | | | | | | | |
| Cotton | 3 | 6.00 | 4 | 8.00 | 5 | 10.00 | 12 | 8.00 |
| Wool | 44 | 88.00 | 48 | 96.00 | 42 | 84.00 | 134 | 89.33 |
| Acrylic | 2 | 4.00 | 2 | 4.00 | 1 | 2.00 | 5 | 3.33 |
| Blends | 5 | 10.00 | 10 | 20.00 | 9 | 18.00 | 24 | 16.00 |
| Denim | 6 | 12.00 | 10 | 20.00 | 7 | 14.00 | 23 | 15.33 |
| Khadi | 3 | 6.00 | 8 | 16.00 | 4 | 8.00 | 15 | 10.00 |
| Silk | 15 | 30.00 | 27 | 54.00 | 12 | 24.00 | 54 | 36.00 |
| Synthetics | 3 | 6.00 | 6 | 12.00 | 5 | 10.00 | 14 | 9.33 |

Table 1.3 depicts that cotton is the commonly accepted fabric in summer. It is found 100 percent female educators prefer cotton in schools followed by 98 percent in degree college and 92 percent in professional institutions respectively. The reason behind this acceptance is the properties of cotton fabric. Cotton fiber is cellulosic fiber. It has worldwide popularity for its verity of uses. Cotton fiber is the most used fibers for producing various types of fabric through all over the world. Cotton fabrics are comfortable to wear than the other fibers product. It is comfort to wear in all the seasons. Like other textile fibers, cotton has its own physical and chemical properties such as: Cotton fiber is stronger when wet, absorb moisture easily. It is easy to launder, accept finishes and retain them. So, in summer it absorbs body perspiration and provides resilience. The result of present study is similar to the result of (Mitra, A. 1988) who conducted a comparative study on clothing color and design preferences of women. It was found that urban respondents prefer plain cotton fabric for all the three types of dresses namely salwar-kameez, chudidar pajama kurta and sari blouse. Whereas, respondents in rural area prefer printed cotton for salwar-kameez and sari.

Chiffon gets the second highest percentage in all the three categories, followed by organdie, khadi, denim, blends, silk and organza respectively. On the other hand wool gets the highest percentage in winter. Similarly, the reason is its properties. Wool is the textile fiber obtained from sheep and certain other animals, including cashmere from goats, mohair from goats, qiviut from muskoxen, angora from rabbits, and other types of wool from camelids. Wool fabric provides warmth and has very good elongation, elastic recovery and resiliency. It varies in degree of luster, absorb moisture to a high degree and tend to shrink. It needs special care, natural or mild soap should be used. After wool, silk stood second highest, blends and denim is with 16 and 15 percentage followed by khadi, synthetics, cotton and acrylic with 10, 9.33, 8 and 3.33 respectively.

Table 1.4 Existing Clothing Practice (Type of Color and Print)

| Colors | School (50) | | Degree College (50) | | Professional College (50) | | Total (150) | |
|--------------|-------------|-------|---------------------|-------|---------------------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Dark colors | 17 | 34.00 | 25 | 50.00 | 16 | 32.00 | 58 | 38.67 |
| Light Colors | 34 | 68.00 | 33 | 66.00 | 31 | 62.00 | 98 | 65.33 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|----|-------|----|-------|----|-------|----|-------|
| Bright colors | 14 | 28.00 | 19 | 38.00 | 10 | 20.00 | 43 | 28.67 |
| Dull colors | 0 | 0.00 | 3 | 6.00 | 1 | 2.00 | 4 | 2.67 |
| Prints | | | | | | | | |
| Plain | 17 | 34.00 | 29 | 58.00 | 19 | 38.00 | 65 | 43.33 |
| Self prints | 30 | 60.00 | 35 | 70.00 | 30 | 60.00 | 95 | 63.33 |
| Dots | 12 | 24.00 | 15 | 30.00 | 11 | 22.00 | 38 | 25.33 |
| Geometrical | 10 | 20.00 | 9 | 18.00 | 13 | 26.00 | 32 | 21.33 |
| Lines | 10 | 20.00 | 16 | 32.00 | 5 | 10.00 | 31 | 20.67 |
| Checks | 9 | 18.00 | 9 | 18.00 | 6 | 12.00 | 24 | 16.00 |
| Abstract | 4 | 8.00 | 11 | 22.00 | 9 | 18.00 | 24 | 16.00 |
| Floral prints | 16 | 32.00 | 30 | 60.00 | 18 | 36.00 | 64 | 42.67 |

While examining the existing clothing practices for color and fabric used by the female educators, light color gets the highest preference among the three categories. Dark colors are on second position with 34, 50 and 32 percent at school, degree college and professional institutions. On the other hand self prints are preferred more than others, that is 63.33 percent. Plain fabrics and floral prints are almost equally preferred by the respondents in all the three categories with 43.33 and 42.67 percent in total. Here, least preferred are checks and abstract, only 16 percent educators like it.

The result of present study is same as that of (Jain D., 1996) who concluded that self prints were most commonly used by lecturers, doctors, lawyers etc. and the next preference was given to plain fabrics. At work place dark colors were used most of the time by lecturers followed by light colors. Bright colors were used for special occasions.

Table 1.5 Criteria for the selection of clothes

| | School (50) | | Degree College (50) | | Professional College (50) | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|------|---------------------|------|---------------------------|------|
| | Mean | Rank | Mean | Rank | Mean | Rank |
| Fashion | 5.11 | 6 | 4.38 | 4 | 4.06 | 4 |
| Comfort | 1.9 | 1 | 1.92 | 1 | 2.62 | 2 |
| Suitable to personality | 1.94 | 2 | 2.44 | 2 | 2.32 | 1 |
| Durable | 4.81 | 5 | 5.18 | 7 | 5.48 | 7 |
| Economical | 4.5 | 4 | 4.96 | 6 | 3.6 | 3 |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|------|---|------|---|------|---|
| Easy to maintain | 3.98 | 3 | 4.2 | 3 | 4.66 | 5 |
| Uniqueness | 5.29 | 7 | 4.92 | 5 | 5.2 | 6 |

While selecting clothes everybody has some considerations to prefer. Commonly such considerations are fashion, comfort, suitable to personality, durability, economical, easy to maintain and uniqueness. Respondents were asked to give rank for each condition. With the help of mean we get the rank order. In schools educators prefer that the clothes should be comfortable, suitable to personality, easy to maintain, economical, durable, fashionable and unique. Whereas, in degree college educators prefer that the clothes should be comfortable, suitable to personality, easy to maintain, fashionable, unique, economical and durable. On the other hand educators in professional colleges prefer clothes those are suitable to personality, comfortable, economical, fashionable, easy to maintain, unique and durable.

Fashion gets fourth position at degree college and professional college level and sixth position at school level, because, educators should be in sober and formal dressing. The result of present study is in line with the result of (Jonson et.al. 1977) conducted a research to examine the effect of clothing style differences on the formation of impression of sociability. Both male and female students evaluated a female peer when she wore in fashion clothing as being more sociable than when she wore out of fashion. The effect of clothing style on the impression of sociability was found to be statistically significant and conceptually important.

Table 1.6 Type of dress code comfortable for work place

| | School (50) | | Degree College (50) | | Professional College (50) | | Total (150) | |
|---------------------|-------------|-------|---------------------|-------|---------------------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Traditional | 23 | 46.00 | 15 | 30.00 | 19 | 38.00 | 57 | 38.00 |
| Western | 2 | 4.00 | 4 | 8.00 | 6 | 12.00 | 12 | 8.00 |
| Indo-western | 32 | 64.00 | 35 | 70.00 | 43 | 86.00 | 110 | 73.33 |
| All | 1 | 2.00 | 3 | 6.00 | 2 | 4.00 | 6 | 4.00 |

Table 1.6 shows that the indo-western style of dressing is highly conventional for the respondents. 64 percent at school level, 70 percent at degree college level and 86 percent of professional college educators accept the indo-western style of dressing. As, India is also heading towards westernization, and female educators still dressed up themselves in traditional

suits, saris etc. though these dresses sometimes are neither comfortable nor appropriate to fulfill the requirement of their profession.

A teaching profession requires active, comfortable, sensible and smart look. Because when a teacher enters the class room her first impression is to gain every student's attention so that they listen to her. Being an educator it is their moral duty, not just to literate the students but to educate them in all aspects of life. So, to keep in pace with the latest technology and trends educators are also looking forward to adopt western formal dressing along with their traditional attire.

Table 1.7 Comfortable dress code for work place

| | School (50) | | Degree College (50) | | Professional College (50) | | Total (150) | |
|---|-------------|-------|---------------------|-------|---------------------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Suit (in fixed style) | 14 | 28.00 | 8 | 16.00 | 10 | 20.00 | 32 | 21.33 |
| Sari (in fixed style) | 9 | 18.00 | 6 | 12.00 | 7 | 14.00 | 22 | 14.67 |
| Waistcoat (with any type of dress) | 22 | 44.00 | 25 | 50.00 | 27 | 54.00 | 74 | 49.33 |
| Coat (with any type of dress) | 21 | 42.00 | 25 | 50.00 | 23 | 46.00 | 69 | 46.00 |

To seek the preference for type of dress code respondents were given four choices. These are suit in a fixed style, sari in a fixed style, waistcoat with any type of dress, coat with any type of dress. In first two options respondents were bounded to wear the same dress every day as mostly students do, but, in last two options respondents were free to wear any type of dress or any color. With just a waist coat in summer and coat in winter as dress code, to get identified as an educator. So, in result the high percentage of educators prefer waistcoat, that is, 44, 50 and 54 percent at school, degree college and professional college level respectively. Whereas, coat is preferred by 42, 50 and 46 percent at school, degree college and professional college level respectively.

The result of present study is in line with the result of (Kumar, 1999) reported in the article 'courtly couture' about the dresses of royal families. In Calcutta, the sari evolved a style of its

own that was the predecessor of the modern-day sari. In the 1870s, a revolutionary new trend was introduced by Gyanodanandini, the sister-in-law of Rabindranath Tagore. She wore her sari over a petticoat and a tailored blouse, sometimes matched with a jacket. Hence, it is proved that indo-western style is not a new concept to be adopted.

The result of present study is opposite to the result of (Yadav, N. and Sangwan, N. 2008) conducted a research to develop the Stylized functional salwar-kameez for working women. As working women feel uncomfortable and less active at work place, with some more problems i.e. no provision for keeping belongings, free hang of duattas, problem of tying strings, improper fitting at waist and undesirable styles. For this problem researcher suggest some additional constructional features such as pockets, collars, back yoke, Velcro-tape to fix dupattas, cowl neck for kameez and side zippers, pockets, belt at waist and elastic at back for salwar. These additional constructional features in traditional attire can solve the problem but doesn't look smart and professional. It also ruins the natural grace of our traditional attire. That's why dress code should be something that looks smart as well as professional. So, the present study suggest a waistcoat for summers and coat for winters as a dress code which can provide freedom of wearing any kind and colored dress to the wearer. This dress code also helps in keeping belonging with them and provides more professional look to the wearer.

RESULT/ FINDINGS:

With the help of these tables we come to know the existing clothing practices of female educators. Salwar kameez is the most accepted dress by female educators followed by sari and pant shirt in summers and it is pant shirt and sari in winters. During winters coat / jacket is the most preferred as it provides warmth as well as pockets to carry some personal items such as mobile, specs, pen etc. Educators mostly prefer cotton in summer and woolen in winter. Light colors are more preferred and then dark colors. Self prints followed by plain and floral prints are mainly practiced. Now, India is heading towards westernization. So, educators prefer indo-western style of dressing because with this one can remain in her traditional attire along with adopted one. A dress code for female educators should be comfortable, more practical in nature, neat and business like in appearance. So the study suggests a waistcoat with any type of dress for summers and coat with any type of dress in winters, suitable and stylized according to weather.

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