

Impact of Female Employees' Dress Codes on Job Performance in Sri Lanka: A Review

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Clothing not only provides protection but also remains a symbol of culture, religion, and personality. A significant element in human civilization, clothing is also recognized as a non-verbal medium of communication. The historical evolution of Sri Lankan female clothing reveals that Sri Lankans are considerably concerned about nationalism and cultural beliefs in deciding a suitable dress for women. Accordingly, the dress known as *saree*, which is also called *osari* depending on the style in which one may wear it, is traditionally considered as the most suitable and decent dress for Sri Lankan women. This traditional dress is deemed and recommended as an office wear too. Nevertheless, dress codes of many countries have evolved in favour of individual preferences, comfort, and type of activities performed. Research on dress codes worldwide provide evidence on different ways in which a dress code may influence the performances of employees whereas there seems not to have such a study based on Sri Lanka. With the aim of minimizing this knowledge gap the present study examines the impact of dress codes on female employees' job performance in Sri Lanka, through a comprehensive literature search. The findings of this study suggest that in order to achieve better job performance a dress code may be determined by honoring not only the cultural grounds but also the scientific grounds and the preference of the wearer. Further, the study found that clothing and real-life practices in Sri Lanka have some mismatches that need rectification.

Key words: Dress code, Job performance, *Saree*, Women, Sri Lanka