

## Business Casual Research

I have two projects that I have published (as well as two others in progress) in this research area. Project 1 was as follows:

This research study had two major goals: to develop a questionnaire that can be used to determine what types and categories of attire are acceptable in today's work environment for men and women, and to provide a preliminary test of whether these policies impact work attitudes and behavior. Because of the lack of past theory and research to guide the project, human resources professionals were interviewed to help generate ideas for questionnaire design. Once developed, this questionnaire was completed by 95 students, most of whom worked full- or part-time. Analyses revealed that there are clear trends and categories that can be identified in determining acceptable attire for dress policies, and that these may differ for men and women. Further, the results suggest that business casual dress policies may have little impact on employee attitudes and behavior. Implications for dress code policies are discussed.

*Published as:*

Franz, T.M., & Norton, S. (2001). Investigating Business Casual Dress Policies:

Questionnaire Development and Exploratory Research. *Applied HRM Research*, 6, 79-94.

Project 2 was as follows:

Questions with different format regarding mode of dress at work were administered to 91 MBA students. The questions were based on an earlier factor analytic study by the authors. The predominant mode of dress was Business Casual. Mode of dress was correlated with a number of personal and job characteristics. Although the correlations among the various Mode of Dress questions were quite high, the format of these questions did have a substantial impact on correlations of dress with personal and job characteristics. The more formal the reported dress policy, the more likely employees are to report a higher level Conscientiousness. Employees who prefer a more formal dress policy report a higher level of Time Commitment, Conscientiousness, and Job Satisfaction. They are more likely to report having a Higher Level Job and to directly supervise more Employees. Employees who prefer to wear more formal clothes themselves report a higher level of Time Commitment, Work Intensity, feeling of Fairness, Conscientiousness, and Job Satisfaction as well as lower Stress. They directly supervise more employees. We provide suggested items and approaches for further research on Mode of Dress at work.

*Published as:*

Norton, S., & Franz, T.M. (2004). Methodological Issues in Research on Business Casual Dress. *The Journal of American Academy of Business, Cambridge, 5*, 130-137.