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EFFECT OF MEN'S SHIRTS ON IMPRESSIONS OF WEARERS' MOTIVATION AND PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

We investigated the effect of men's dress shirts on impressions of wearers' motivation and performance in the workplace, and appearance. A ready-made commercial shirt was used as a reference. Four types of shirts associated with high status (a high-priced ready-made shirt, a custom-made shirt, a high-end brand shirt, and a luxury brand shirt) were presented either alone or with neckties, on identical mannequins. Fifty-one Japanese university students in their 20s and 85 office workers in their 20s to 60s evaluated their impressions of the shirts. We provided no information about the shirts. Compared with the standard shirt, the evaluations of some shirts associated with high status were higher in both groups of participants. However, the presence of wrinkles was associated with lower evaluations, even for luxury brand shirts. Wearing a necktie improved participants' evaluation of appearance and impression for all shirts. Overall, the results revealed that dress shirts affected participants' impression of wearers' motivation and performance.

Keywords: *men's dress shirts, neckties, image evaluation, motivation, performance*

1 INTRODUCTION

Clothing has a range of effects, including impacting observers' impressions of the wearer's motivation and performance. Elements of clothing, such as color, pattern, and style affect the wearer's psychology in terms of consciousness, and impression [2]. Moreover, clothing elements can affect the performance of wearers. Adam and Galinsky [4] suggested that the image that the garment portrays and the actual wearing of the garment affect the wearer's performance. Naito

et al. [3] proposed that the relationship between the colors of a wearer's suit, shirt, and tie were strongly related to the business suit's impression.

In recent years, clothing in the workplace has diversified, and various types of clothing have been worn. In Japan, because of the influence of "casual Fridays" since the 1990s, the Japanese "Cool Biz" initiative from 2006 allowing lighter, more casual clothing to reduce air conditioning use, and an increase in working from home because of COVID-19 in 2020, clothing in workplaces has increasingly transitioned from traditional business suits to more casual clothes [1]. Although the prevalence of casual clothes has increased, shirts are still a critical item in the workplace. However, the effect of shirt shape and status on impressions of clothing is currently unclear.

The current study focused on men's dress shirts (hereinafter referred to as shirts), which are worn by office workers daily in the workplace. We investigated the effect of shirts on others' impressions of the wearer's motivation and performance in the workplace, and appearance. In addition, we examined the characteristics of shirts that could improve wearer's motivation and performance at work. In a previous study [5], we conducted an impression evaluation using a sample of shirt images presented on a website to clarify the characteristics of the image portrayed by the clothing. However, impressions of a photograph may differ from those of a physical object. In the current study, we evaluated participants' impressions of actual shirts.

2 EXPERIMENT

We prepared two identical shirts for each of five shirt types (standard and samples A–D), worn by 10 identical mannequins. Five of the shirts were worn with no necktie, and in the other condition, the same shirt was worn with a necktie. Participants then evaluated the actual shirts viewing them arbitrarily without touching them. Two kinds of evaluations were conducted: performance impression evaluation and appearance evaluation. Performance impression evaluation was carried out for 10 evaluation items: "attention," "concentration," "confidence," "persuasiveness," "sense of responsibility," "motivation," "ability to think," "quick thinking," "communication ability," and "energy" on a seven-point scale from "very low: -3" to "very high: +3." Appearance was evaluated with nine items: "no wrinkle," "beautiful," "fit," "looks good," "looks easy to move," "looks slim," "elegant," "expensive," and "preferred" on a five-point scale from -2 (not at all disagree) to +2 (strongly agree). The standard shirt was set at 0, and we conducted a comparative assessment.

Participants were 51 Japanese university students in their 20s (31 men and 20 women) and 85 office workers in their 20s to 60s (38 men and 47 women). No information about the price and brand of the shirts was given to participants. We conducted a one-way analysis of variance, multiple comparisons, and correlation analysis.

Experimental sample details are shown in Table 1. In addition to a ready-made commercial shirt priced at 3,900 JPY (34 USD) that was set as the standard (100 JPY = 1.14 USD), four types of shirts associated with different statuses were prepared (A: high-priced ready-made shirt priced at 8,700 JPY [75 USD], B: custom-made shirt priced at 10,000 JPY [87 USD], C: high-end brand priced at 18,700 JPY [162 USD], D: luxury brand shirt priced at 69,400 yen [603 USD]). All five

shirts were also prepared with neckties. The shirt sizes were 38 or 39 cm for neck circumference and 84 or 85 cm for length from back neck point–shoulder point–wrist. Details of the dimensions are shown in Table 2. Sample images are shown in Figure 1.

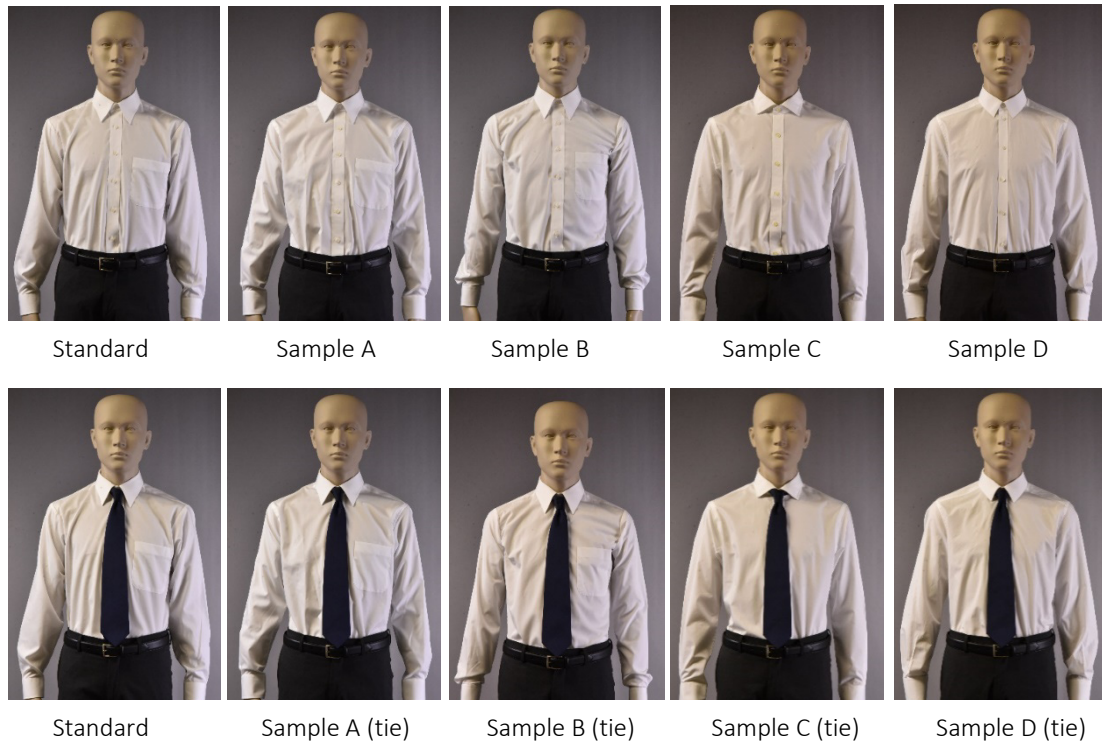


Figure 1. Sample Images

Table 1. Details of the experimental sample (100 JPY = 1.14 USD)

Sample name	Brand	Price(yen)	Fabric composition
Standard	Common commercial ready-made	3,900 (34 USD)	75% cotton, 25% polyester
Standard (tie)			
Sample A	Expensive ready-made	8,700 (75 USD)	55% cotton, 45% polyester
Sample A (tie)			
Sample B	Custom-made shirt	10,000 (87 USD)	75% cotton, 25% polyester
Sample B (tie)			
Sample C	High-end brand	18,700 (162 USD)	100% cotton
Sample C (tie)			
Sample D	luxury brand	69,400 (603 USD)	100% cotton
Sample D (tie)			

Table 2. Dimensions of shirt samples (cm)

Sample name	Neck circumference	Back neck point–shoulder point–wrist	Across shoulder	Length	Chest	Waist	Hips	Armhole	Cuffs
Standard	38.3	84.0	45.0	78.4	107	96.0	101	21.5	22.8
Sample A	39.5	84.5	45.0	79.0	113	103	106	21.5	24.1
Sample B	38.3	84.3	42.5	79.2	100	87.0	104	19.0	20.8
Sample C	39.8	84.8	45.8	80.8	108	99.0	108	24.0	26.5
Sample D	39.3	84.5	44.0	79.8	101	89.0	101	22.3	25.2

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Figures 2 and 3 show the results for samples A–D (shirts only) for the students and office workers, respectively. Regarding students' performance impression evaluation, a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) was found between sample D and the other samples, and between sample A and the other samples. Correlation analysis showed a positive correlation ($0.50 < r < 0.75$) between the appearance evaluation items "beautiful," "looks good," "elegant," "expensive," and "preferred" and performance impression ratings. The results revealed that the more expensive and preferred by students, the better the performance impression rating, except for sample D. Office workers' responses exhibited a significant difference ($p < 0.001$) between Sample D and the other samples. Correlation analysis showed a positive correlation ($0.50 < r < 0.75$) between "wrinkle-free," "beautiful," "fit," "elegant," "expensive," and "preferred," and performance impression improvement. Sample D received the lowest evaluation among the samples for both groups of participants. Sample D was made of 100% cotton fabric without wrinkle-resistant finishing, so fine wrinkles were noticeable when viewed closely. Regarding students' performance impression evaluation, Sample A received the second-lowest evaluation. Sample A had a larger body width than the other samples and seemed to not fit the body well, contributing to the lower assessment.

Both students' and office workers' impressions were improved by the inclusion of a necktie, with significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between some shirts with and without the necktie. Wearing a necktie improved the evaluation of appearance and impression, and even commercially available ready-made shirts were evaluated as equivalent to a luxury brand shirt. Thus, the impression evaluation was found to be enhanced by wearing a necktie.

In the online survey in our previous study [5], the "looks slim" item influenced the evaluation of performance impression for both students and office workers. However, in the actual shirt evaluation in the current study, participants paid more attention to the presence of wrinkles and compatibility with the body than to the slimness.

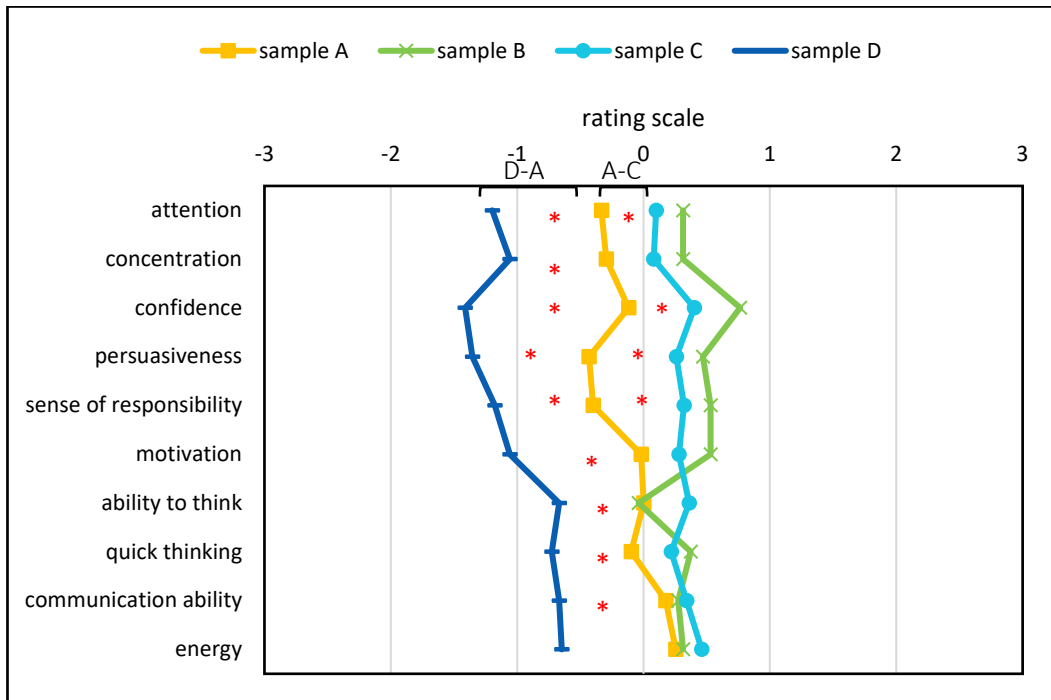


Figure 2. Performance impression evaluation by students (* : p < 0.05)

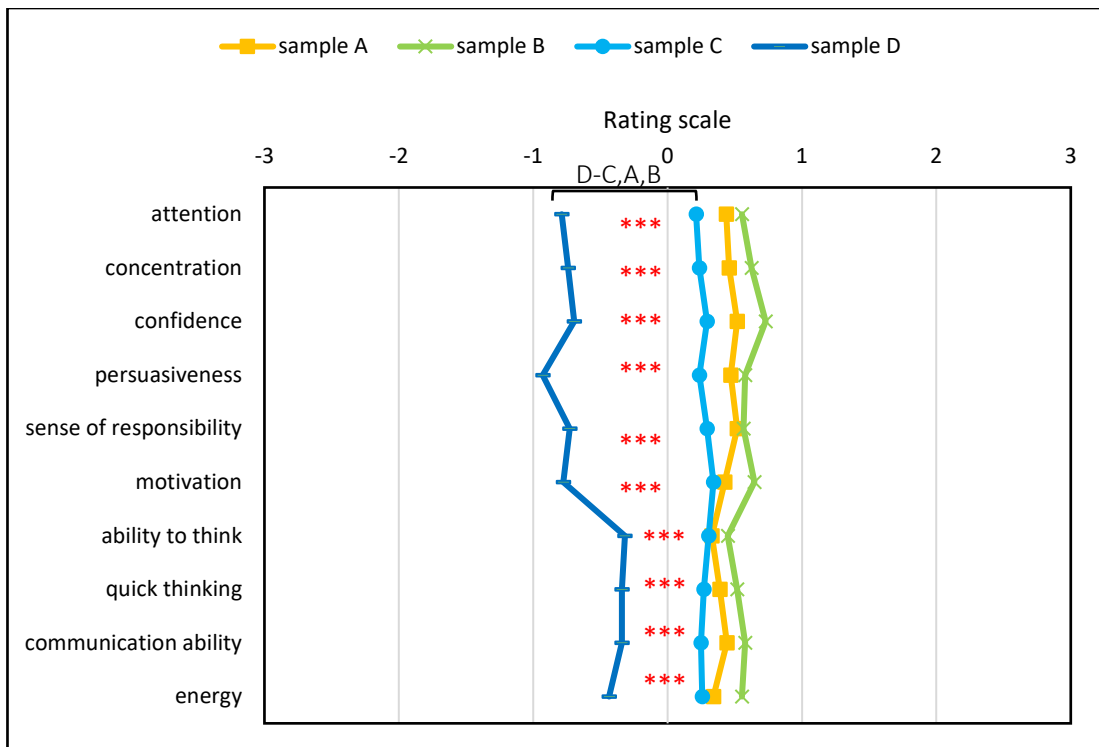


Figure 3. Performance impression evaluation by office workers (***) : p < 0.001)

4 CONCLUSION

We investigated the effect of men's dress shirts on viewers' impressions of wearers' motivation and performance in the workplace, and appearance. It was found that the appearance of the shirt influenced the viewer's impression of performance when the shirts were evaluated. The impression evaluation was enhanced by wearing a necktie. A lack of wrinkles and a better fit of the shirt to the body improved the impression of performance. In addition, differences were observed in evaluation between students and office workers. Office workers paid more attention to the presence or absence of wrinkles. This may be because of differences in their experiences of wearing and observing shirts.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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