

IMPACT OF POWER DRESSING AND MAKE UP ON SELF-ESTEEM OF WOMEN

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ABSTRACT: *Scientists say that power dressing before leaving house will make a woman feel more positive about herself. However women have been facing the “glass ceiling” effect in the corporate world. Power dressing is a tool used for social self-presentation. While doing power dressing, women are able to gain respect which makes them feel more confident. Cognitive skills like attention to detail, decision making and social skills have boosted in women due to power dressing and presentable make up. This study attempts to develop a conceptual framework in relation to impact of makeup and enhancing self-esteem of women. The MAP (Makeup-Amour Propre) Effect talks about how self-esteem or self-confidence will improve after wearing makeup as well as the advantages of this for women from all spheres in workplace. This will be applicable in the corporate world too as it plays a very important role in Client Interfacing Skills and Corporate Etiquette. Many articles from HBR related to the title of the paper and a few articles which are Google scholar indexed have been studied in the literature review.*

KEYWORDS: Power dressing, Makeup, Self-Esteem, Makeup- Amour Propre Effect (MAP Effect), Corporate world, Glass Ceiling effect.

Women have a very fragile sense of identity and self-worth which is something not inhabited within them but is something that has been instilled into their minds since their childhood. Women are often suspect to be running with low self-esteem and confidence which makes them suffer with anxiety, depression and other physical injuries. What is the reason for this? Well, there are mainly two reasons one is physical attributes like gender, physical appearance, etc. and mental attributes like sensitivity, emotional stability, etc. are some of the reasons upon which women are often judged and are subject to discrimination. If we take the example of a country like India, women are suppressed and are restricted right from the moment of their childhood and are bound at the mercy of their parents, elders, husband and society across their various stages of life running low in self-esteem. They have been told or directed in various issues like what to wear, what to study and how much to study (level of education), etc. The funny part or irony is that women have been stigmatized to such an extent that their growth in life is considered as a liability for the people around her or with her. This is due to the “Glass-Ceiling Effect” which is an invisible barrier which usually blocks a woman from scaling new heights on her free will in the corporate world.

Women are often subject to this effect in their daily lives wherein they are restrained from pursuing their passions.

Let us discuss two examples, one related to normal household issue and another a corporate example. Firstly, there was a girl named Geeta who was very active and intelligent she always had that flare to do something great, she had topped at every level of her education and had successfully completed her masters in pharmacy. She then wanted to pursue her higher studies in the field of research at abroad. This decision of her was considered very irresponsible and lame by her parents, the reason for it was she was around the age of 25 and if she gets so highly qualified it would be a tough task for them to find and equally qualified groom for her daughter and it is also considered more expensive to get a highly qualified daughter married. In this case we can see how the parents influenced by the social stigma and considered their daughter’s progress as a liability more than what she would accomplish.

Secondly, when it comes to the pretext of corporates, women are often given less challenging job roles as it is presumed that they can’t handle the pressure of the work and also strike a balance between their work life and personal family life. According to a survey, in some organizations only about 10% of women employees become senior executives and hardly 4% make it to CEOs and chairmen positions. It is also a well known fact that women are often paid less than compared to the men at work. Another example with regard to this issue is, a woman named Varsha wanted to see herself as a highly successful HR professional and had attended a job interview in a reputed company. During the interview the HR who was a guy suggested her to take up a role of a HR generalist rather than a Recruitment officer as he felt it was a more challenging job and would be a tough task for her to manage once if she gets married. Reason for this is again the “Glass-Ceiling Effect” which talks about how women are not allowed to take up higher positions at work. Such acts happen to pilfer the self-esteem of women in their work and personal lives.

Self-esteem can be considered the belief on the self-worth or capabilities that an individual, especially women have on themselves. A woman’s capabilities are questioned and threatened many times in her lifetime, by her own family members, friends and society, who have held her back from exploring her passions or live up to her true motives due to this pressure of failing or facing the consequences. There are two external physical aspects which will help a woman to boost her self-esteem at both personal and work space .i.e. “Power Dressing and Make-Up” that can influence the way a woman carries herself in front of others. As we know

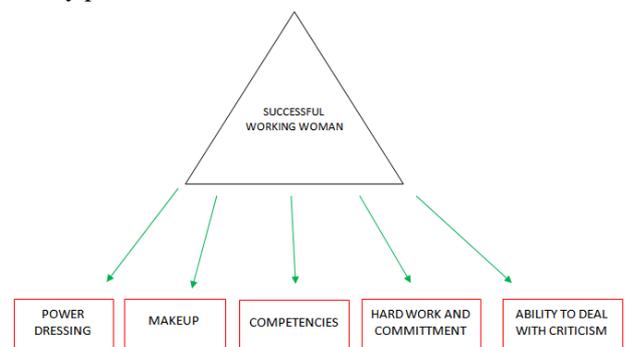
every woman is unique in her own way and carries her own distinct persona from that of the others, 'Power dressing and Make-up' play a key role in striking a first impression in the other person's mind let it be social networking event or a corporate setting, where in if you being a woman can strike the right first impression it is easier for the other person to relate to you and you can be understood in a better manner, let it be while conducting a business or working in a company. In a company, if your dressing and make-up don't convey the message that you are competent, able, ambitious, self-confident, reliable and authoritative, it is tough to lay an impact on your bosses and teammates.

To begin with, what is Power dressing? It is the unique style of an individual that shows their position and authority in business or at a work place. Not only dressing, but your style, confidence, your body language, and the way you carry yourself matters equally. Dressing right is about creating a visual balance in your appearance, as we know there are an infinite number of physical features and each person or individual has their own unique set off them at display. It is not about the physical appearance of an individual but what's key for looking good is the fit of the clothes. Going in tandem with fashion and style will improve a woman's flexibility and creativity irrespective of her age, lifestyle, occupation and budget. So the first step towards power dressing beings with the self-assessment to be made by a woman, with regard to her age, physical attributes, personality, etc. followed by where is she working at, what position does she hold, what are her budgetary constraints and what type of a work is she doing. Power Dressing not only does it helps in creating a good impression but it also a perfect recipe for 'Respect', especially when it comes to women holding high positions at office. Power Dressing displays their authority without words being spoken of. It helps in carrying an indirect source of confidence by the way the boosts the self-esteem of a woman when at work breaking all the stereotypes. Take the example of Margaret Thatcher, Indira Nooyi and Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, what is the common thing that we can see in them is that they are the perfect examples of Power dressing where the way they dress depicts the authority they hold. Margaret Thatcher was a pioneer when it comes to introducing Power dressing for women; "With 'power dressing' she could tap into the image of a working woman but her reputation as a fierce leader then drove her to wear clothes that might 'soften' her image, which was why she wore pussy bow blouses. A symbol of the past reflecting a more conservative femininity, the pussy bow blouse clashed with the aggressive power suits. At the same time if we consider the example of Indira Nooyi, she had this unique style statement of shortened hairstyle, and a scarf around her neck which she wore on top of the power suites depicted her leadership role.

Now coming to the impact of "Make-Up" is a tool used to colour and beautify the face or the appearance of a woman when presenting themselves in the society. Some women lack proper social skills, or have fear of interacting with people because of poor body image or confidence, so when a girl or a woman applies makeup it elevates her

personality and makes her more likeable and trustworthy. When she sees herself in the mirror after wearing makeup, she feels more vibrant that she is beautiful and capable enough to do anything. By this, she starts improving her cognitive skills and gradually it increases her self- esteem. This effect is known as MAP Effect (Makeup Amour Propre) which talks about the self-love or respect a woman has towards herself and how she colours herself using various cosmetics to be a standout from the other woman around her. Makeup not only boosts confidence but also rejuvenates a woman's persona and makes her feel full of life keeping her active. It helps in creating a good first impression and keeps you prepared for the battle. If a woman is working in a job which involves her to interact with clients or when it comes to maintaining the corporate etiquette, it is very essential she has a presentable look. For example, when there is a meeting with a client or her bosses and teammates, she cannot go in with an oily face or a messy hair, etc. as it doesn't speak high of her personality and people will be quick to judge her capabilities. So in order to avoid this kind of a situations, it is essential that women use makeup as a tool which not only boosts their self-esteem, confidence but also make them more approachable and people will trust them more.

Women are suspect to a lot of internal and external obstacles in their lives which affect their self-esteem, but that doesn't mean they stop displaying what makes them differentiated from the other individuals. It is suggested that no matter what tough times they go through it is essential that they carry themselves high at all times by dressing up to the occasion with full of confidence wherein their appearance should speak of their capabilities and authority that they possess.



THE MAKEUP AMOUR PROPRE EFFECT

When a woman gets a hold of all these above attributes, they shall transform her into a successful working woman filled with high esteem and confidence.

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