On Being Uniform

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Uniforms came into being primarily to create an identity amongst a group of people involved in a particular vocation and it also provides a ring of safety whether amongst adults or school going children. The concept of uniforms is prevalent in the armed and security forces with styles and colors segregating the various divisions of the defense personnel like the navy, air force and the army. Policemen and security guards as well as inmates in a prison have their own dress codes.

In the civilian sector also different uniforms are seen in all sectors like public transport systems, postal divisions, couriers, and the like. Educational institutions have also adopted their exclusive uniforms for their students. In other industries and corporate houses uniforms are resorted to by the staff to distinguish them and set them apart. These uniforms are again a medium of advertisement for the companies and have embellished the house colures and company logos.

Today almost every educational institution has its set of uniform which includes a complete set of shirts, blazers, ties shoes and socks with its sports kit alongside. Teachers and staff also follow a pattern of dressing affiliated to their school. Engineering colleges, law, professional institutes like hotel management and catering, nursing and medical colleges besides business schools all boast of their uniforms. School bands and sports clubs have different sets of dress that makes them familiar and popular as much as we find in the international sports stadiums where different countries have their national color codes for their sports teams.

Leading hospitality and health care industries use their attractive uniforms to create a branding and bettering their business prospects apart from creating a corporate image. Clothes, jackets, footwear and headgear form part of the uniform and to add to appeal suitable colors and styles are chosen by individual businesses. Large manufacturing units have a common uniform for the workers and staff alike to identify the company's business and have badges also with the company signature. In some instances where it warrants helmets are worn by the employees involved in hazardous tasks, like mining, process and refinery plants, firefighters and rescue squads.

The health care industry also places importance of uniforms for its various categories like radiologists, operation theatre personal, nurses, doctors and medical orderlies and other kitchen staff. These include head ware, masks, footwear and jackets with logos embossed and name badges or identity cards completing the ensemble.

It is a common sight to notice that people belonging to different faiths utilize a uniform pattern of clothing for carrying out rites and rituals and also when they undertake pilgrimages to holy shrines in different locations in various parts of the globe. In India which is a diverse country this is more pronounced with followers of different religions don multiple attire which distinguishes their religious following. On the social front also dress differentiates people and their social standing like royalty and caste systems, the land barons and the serf. The days of kings and queens have long gone but the dress culture is a legacy that has been handed down over the generations even into the modern times where science and technology reigns supreme.

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