

IDENTITY, FASHION AND DRESS CONSUMPTION BY IMMIGRANTS:
A FOCUS ON ETHNIC DRESS AND/OR HIJAB

by

Omono Gladys Akhigbe, BA, University of Toronto, 2017

A Major Research Paper
presented to Ryerson University

in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in the program of
Immigration and Settlement Studies

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2019

© Omono Gladys Akhigbe, 2019

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION FOR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF A MRP

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this MRP. This is a true copy of the MRP, including any required final revisions.

I authorize Ryerson University to lend this MRP to other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

I further authorize Ryerson University to reproduce this MRP by photocopying or by other means, in total or in part, at the request of other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

I understand that my MRP may be made electronically available to the public.

IDENTITY, FASHION AND DRESS CONSUMPTION BY IMMIGRANTS:
A FOCUS ON ETHNIC DRESS AND /OR HIJAB

© Omono Gladys Akhigbe, 2019

Master of Arts
Immigration and Settlement Studies
Ryerson University

ABSTRACT

This study highlights and explores how Canada's multicultural policy influences the relationship between fashion and identity of racialized diaspora communities in Canada. It focuses on traditional dress and/or the Hijab, a religious dress among diaspora communities in Canada. However, the study demonstrates that consumption of these items among immigrants varies, with some immigrant communities displaying stronger ethnic identity than others. The consumption of these goods shapes one's ethnic or religious identity. The two theoretical approaches shed insights on the complex relationship between ethnic fashion/dress, religious dress and ethnic identity. The study concludes that although symbols of ethnic identity such as ethnic fashion and/or religious dress are increasingly being contested due to political ideology, they have served members of their respective diasporic communities quite well in that they have allowed them to display and celebrate their identity, and thus produce a particular theme of their identity within Canadian multiculturalism.

Key words: Fashion, ethnic dress/clothing, veil/religious dress, immigrants and diaspora.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for my supervisor Professor Osmud Rahman, for his patience, guidance and encouragement throughout the past few months. I am lucky to have him as a supervisor who was always available and responded promptly to my questions. I would like to thank him for all that he has done for me.

I would also like to thank the second reader professor Myer Siemiatycki for agreeing to read my MRP.

I am grateful to my friends and family, especially my children, for their support during the past year.

Table of Contents

Author's Declaration.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
1. Chapter One – Introduction	1
1.1. Ethnicity and the meanings of fashion and dress.....	1
1.2. Ethnic identity and dress.....	3
2. Chapter Two – Literature Search Strategy and Research Method.....	8
2.1. Literature search strategy.....	8
2.2. Selection criteria of the studies reviewed.	9
2.3. Research methodology.....	9
2.3.1. Research questions.....	10
2.3.2. Justification of the study/statement of relevance	10
2.3.3. Theoretical approaches	11
2.3.4. Media	12
2.3.5. Historical context.....	13
2.3.6. Review layout	14
3. Chapter Three – Literature Review.....	16
3.1. Ethnic attire and identity.....	16
3.2. Ethnic dress among African immigrants.....	23
3.3. Summary of the literature on ethnic dress/fashion/clothing	27
4. Chapter Four – Focus of Study: Hijab	31
4.1. Wearing the veil/hijab among Muslim women.....	31
4.2. History and Origin of Veiling.....	34
4.3. Hijab and sense of Community.....	36
4.4. Post 9/11.....	39
4.5. The veil/hijab as protective attire against unwanted male gaze.....	41
4.6. Non-veiling by some Muslim women.....	44
4.7. Summary of the literature on the hijab and religious clothing.....	45
5. Chapter Five – Conclusion and Future Research.....	47
5.1. Other Observations	51
5.2. Future research and questions.....	52
5.3. Content Analysis.....	53
Appendix A: Table of articles reviewed.....	57

References	61
------------------	----

1. Chapter One – Introduction

1.1. Ethnicity and the meanings of fashion and dress

Countries such as Canada that admit a significant number of immigrants face challenges such as providing effective settlement services for new arrivals. Canada officially recognizes and celebrates multiculturalism. Multiculturalism refers to a set of principles, policies and practices for accommodating ethnic, racial and cultural diversity as a legitimate and integral component of Canadian society (Banting & Kymlicka, 2006). For this MRP, I adopt Roach-Higgins' and Eicher (1992) definition of dress of an individual "as an assemblage of modifications of the body and/or supplements to the body" (p.1). Furthermore, Roach-Higgins and Eicher (1992) explain that dress incorporates a long list of conceivable coordinate alternations of the body "such as coiffed hair, colored skin", penetrated ears and scented breath, as well as a similarly long list of items of clothing, gems, adornments and other things attached to the body as supplements (p.1). Roach-Higgins and Eicher (1992) then distinguish between fashion and dress as follows: resists fashion change and is, therefore, automatically excluded from a study of fashion (p.3).

The term fashion lacks the precision of the word dress for it refers to many different kinds of material and non-material cultural products ...it [fashion] also forces positive and negative value judgments on body modifications and supplements and their properties on the basis of their relative positions within a fashion circle of introduction, mass acceptance and obsolescence. In addition, not all types of dress qualify as fashion. For example, religious dress-such as the veil-in many societies resists fashion change and is, therefore, automatically excluded from a study of fashion. (p.3)

According to Delaney and Kaspin (2011), culture refers to "signifying, symbolic or meaning systems" (p.13), the concept of culture implied by ethnic dress/fashion is essentially a semiotic one. Ethnic dress fits such a characterization. It signifies several messages such as respect for and loyalty to one's culture and sense of personal dignity, and respect for ethnic attire and items. Ethnic dress fits what Barthes (1999) has characterized as "the signifier, the signified and the

sign” (p.53). In the context of signifier and signified, the sign (ethnic dress) relates to a large structure or structures of meaning, as identified by Barthes (1999). As a result, some racialized immigrants, by refusing to wear or identify with ethnic dress or religious clothing, are trying to avoid stereotypes and ultimately discrimination and marginalization. For this discussion, this is one of the key insights of wearing ethnic dress/fashion, given the implication of Barthes’ (1999) idea that in popular culture, everything has a meaning.

For this MRP, such a distinction is helpful as it clarifies key words. According to Roach-Higgins and Eicher (1992), the meanings passed on by dress may be inferred from its essential properties such as “color, shape or composite properties and components” (p.4). For example, among men, a red tie conveys power, while for mainstream women; black dress and white shirt symbolize order. According to Aspers and Godart (2013), fashion is a spontaneous and unpredictable alteration in clothing styles. As a result, Aspers and Godart (2013) argue that fashion is a social marvel that is not limited to the field of garments. Allen (1994) adds that since fashion joins in an indistinguishable discussion with its referent, the body, it is primarily a woman’s issue. Stone (1962) studied the relationship beyond the symbolic interactions lens and suggested that the communication conveyed by dress may also communicate via appearance (which he defined to include dress as well as gesture and location). Stone (1962) and Stryker (1980) showed that since "dress can be seen in social encounters” before discussions can be launched; it has a certain priority over discussions in creating identity (as cited in Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1992, p. 5). This observation goes to issues of agency, freedom and objectification of the female body, hence the contested debate and claims that multiculturalism has failed (Bissoondath, 1994).

The consumption of fashion refers to procurement of services and goods, such as clothing and the use of such items (Aspers & Godart, 2013). For this MRP, the crucial linkage is between identity, fashion, and ethnic and/or religious dress. Thus, Entwistle's (2000) argument that, "fashion is about bodies; it is produced, promoted and worn by bodies" (p.1). Consequently, studies show that the relationship between an individual's ethnicity and fashion may reinforce each other (Kawamara, 2004).

Roach-Higgins and Eicher (1992) emphasize that dress serves as a viable communication amidst social intuitive; it influences people's settings of personalities of themselves and others. An individual's self-incorporates characters based on allotted and accomplished positions inside social structures; particularly those organized family, financial relations, devout and kinship, economic, religious and political exercises (p.1). Roach-Higgins and Eichler (1992) add that identities conveyed by dress are shaped by innovation and society wide ethical and aesthetic norms. Technological innovations such a social media and internet influence dress codes and styles in accordance with the predictions of consumer cultural theory (CCT). Therefore, particular sorts and properties of dress that communicate personality may alter through time in reaction to financial situations, population changes and other societal changes (Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1992). The point here is that under symbolic interactionism, dress as a "medium of communication relates to personality, subsequently the need to examine specifics of both dress and identity" (Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1992, p.5).

1.2. Ethnic identity and dress

Hansen (2004) defines ethnic identity as the "shared identity of a group of people based on a common historical background, ancestry and knowledge of identifying symbolic elements

such as nationality, religious affiliation and language” (p.521). Such ethnic clothing/dress are a form of symbolic interaction, a sort of silent language that allows individuals to tell others who they are and learn about them.

With respect to claims that dress contributes to the formation of personality and the enhancement of self, Stone (1962) asserted that a “self, acquires identities” when it is located through its involvement or membership in social interactions (p.93). That is, dress may convey particular meanings. Stone (1962) characterized it as “communication of self through dress, an individual’s program” (as cited in Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1992, p. 5). For example, the rule of thumb is that when invited for a job interview, stick to the white shirt rule since it is the industry standard and has resisted postmodernism forces¹. Yet, Eicher (1999) claims that ethnicity and dress have to bargain with space and time, within the “sense that ethnic dress; shifts not as it were with the area of its wearers, but too with the period beneath thought and is no way steady no way stable (as cited in Aspers & Godart, 2013, p. 184). Consequently, Aspers and Godart (2013) observe that ethnic dress has a role to play and often viewed as a “major driver of ethnicity” (p. 184). That is why fashion is fluid and ambivalence because it is prone to dissemination, impersonation and refinement (Aspers & Godart, 2013, p. 187).

That is why in some political quarters, the religious dress, in the form of veil or hijab is controversial and treated unfairly (Omono, 2019). For example, Angela Merkel complained in 2010 long before the rise of nationalist populists such as Donald Trump in the USA and Boris Johnson in the UK with respect to global immigration that:

¹ Postmodernism refers to the development of a number of movements in the 1970’s that reject the authoritative doctrine over the lives of individuals. What modern theorists were not able to deal with, postmodern social theory tries to address. The emergence of post structuralism and postmodernism date back to French in the 1960’s. Structuralism was a revolt against French humanism, (Ritzer, 2008, p.475). It is associated with Michel Foucault. Postmodernism’s claim that there is no absolute truth has been revolutionary and has shed light on structuralism with a focus on structures in society.

The tendency had been to say, let's adopt the multicultural concept and live happily side by side, and be happy to be living with. But the concept has failed. (Angela Merkel, German Chancellor, *The Globe and Mail*, Monday October 18, 2010, A19)

On the other hand, proponents of transnational studies argued that:

What the nationalists wanted was a space for each 'race'...what they have got instead – although they do not admit it - is a chain of cosmopolitan cities and increasing proliferation of diasporic, sub national and ethnic identities that cannot easily be contained in the nation-state system. (Cohen, 1996, p.520)

These competing claims are relevant to the subject issue addressed in this MRP because they give an insight into the study of diaspora and transnationalism, as well as the challenges settlement agencies (and racialized immigrants) may encounter in their mission of helping new arrivals settle down in their respective new countries such as Canada. Nation-states such as Canada face a dilemma between assimilation and integration of ethnic minorities (Cohen, 1996). On the other hand, as Cohen notes, ethnic minorities no longer desire to abandon their past. The ensuing tension and debate would be useful for settlement services, and motivated this study on identity, fashion, dress and religious dress consumption by immigrants. This study specifically investigates the consumption of ethnic apparel and religious dress such as the veil/hijab as they can be used to shape an individual's identity (Kawamara, 2004; Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1992). In order to understand the relationship between the ethnic/religious attire and personal identity, the current study reviewed literature on African women, South Asian women and Muslim women. These consumer groups overlap in that many African and South Asian women are also practicing Muslims and may consume both ethnic fashion and religious dress or privilege religious identity over ethnic identity, as is the case with most Somali women in Canada (Hoodfar, 2003). This study highlights the role of fashion, traditional dress or religious dress among immigrant diaspora communities in Canada.

1.3. Research objectives

This MRP seeks to highlight the role of ethnic fashion, traditional dress and religious dress among diaspora communities in Canada. How does one's country of origin affect their consumption of these products? Why do some immigrant communities display stronger ethnic identity than others? In turn, how does consumption of these goods shape one's identity? This study recognizes that the influence may flow both ways. That is, immigrants who embrace ethnic fashion and/or religious dress may be those with strong ethnic identity or vice versa, where individuals who identify strongly with their ethnic identities are more likely to wear ethnic fashion and/or religious dress. In other words, cause and effect may work both ways. In brief, the study seeks to understand responses to the following question: how does ethnic fashion and/or religious dress shape the identities of individuals who consume such goods? Are those who immigrated to Canada and wearing such ethnic fashion reminds them of the homeland where they or their ancestors came from? Were they born in Canada but wear ethnic fashion to symbolize pride in their African-ness or South Asian-ness identity for example?

Among members of the Africa, South Asian or Muslim diaspora in Canada, issues regarding representation of their identity matter. Interrogating issues of ethnic fashion, religious attire and identity helps us to make sense of the immigrant experience in Canada. This MRP contends that such an engagement with various immigrant groups in Canada reveals something about Canada as a diasporic space. Because ethnic fashion/dress and/or religious attire represent particular aspects of immigrant identity, understanding their interactions helps those engaged in settlement services to understand Canada as a multicultural diasporic space where diversity is celebrated and accommodated. Therefore, one of the objectives of this study is to shed insights

on the complex relationship between ethnic fashion/dress, religious dress and ethnic identity. The study hopes to demonstrate that symbols of ethnic identity such as fashion and dress are increasingly being contested due to political ideology, they have served members of their respective diasporic communities quite well in that they have allowed them to display and celebrate their identity, and thus produce a particular theme of African-ness, South Asian-ness etc. within Canadian multiculturalism.

2. Chapter Two – Literature Search Strategy and Research Method

2.1. Literature search strategy

Originally, I wanted to focus on books and articles published after 1990. However, as I began my search, I quickly realized that some of the seminal works on fashion and dress were published much earlier than 1990. I searched specific journals such as fashion and dress, race and ethnicity, and immigration, as well as general sources including the bibliography of important articles, and tracked certain articles through the Google citations. In terms of inclusion and exclusion of searched literature, there is no restriction imposed on the date of publication to ensure that the search was as inclusive as possible. The keywords I used to search were fashion, ethnic dress/clothing, veil/religious dress, immigrants and diaspora. Abstracts of identified articles were reviewed in order to identify emerging themes, patterns and ideas. There were three themes, ethnic dress, religious dress and mixed themes covering both ethnic dress and religious dress. Once themes and ideas were determined, I categorized and organized articles under each theme in accordance with the study's objectives and research questions. The selected articles were both theoretical and empirical studies from across the globe although immigrants exist in most western countries. However, I also recognize that my data analysis and, in some cases, interpretation of study findings remain incomplete, as there are numerous possible ways of reading and understanding the study findings depending on the researcher's social and political positions. For example, when reading studies about fashion and ethnic dress among African immigrants, women of colour or immigrant and refugee women, I was cautious about my positionality as an African immigrant woman from Nigeria.

2.2. Selection criteria of the studies reviewed.

Any studies that investigated the relationship between ethnic fashion/dress and/or religious dress on immigrant's identity were selected. For this review, eligible studies could have considered immigrant women in general, immigrant and refugee women or women of colour. The literature selected includes both theoretical and empirical studies on the relationship between fashion/dress and/or religious dress and identity in general and specific immigrant groups such as African women, South Asian women and Muslim women. These groups tend to wear ethnic fashion /dress that stand out for identification purposes. Priority for review was given to Canadian and USA studies, although studies from other countries such as England and Australia that help me to understand this topic was included. It is important to note that the experiences of immigrant or refugee women extend beyond a particular country in light of globalization and attendant immigration and refugee flows. In any case, some ethnic fashion/religious dress are global. The study focuses on immigrants, first and second-generation immigrants, and Muslim women in terms of ethnic or religious affiliation.

2.3. Research methodology

The MRP is an extensive content analysis of the literature on ethnic fashion, dress and/or religious dress and identity. It draws mostly on books and published theoretical and empirical studies in major journals. The research strategy is to look at the articles that are relevant to ethnic dress among immigrants living in western countries such as Canada, the USA and UK. I will use literature materials including but not limited to media and journals to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions and motivations for immigrants' fashion choices. I will use literature from different disciplines, including sociology. I will use search terms such as

‘identity’, ‘fashion’ ‘media’ and ‘consumer behavior.’ The findings in these articles were used to illuminate and to answer the study’s research questions as summarized in the literature review.

2.3.1. Research questions.

How does Canada’s multicultural policy influence the relationship between fashion and identity of racialized diaspora communities in Canada? What are the factors that affect immigrant women’s decision to identity with ethnic fashion or clothing from the homeland even for those who were born in Canada? Why do some Muslim women wear the hijab and some do not? In searching the literature for my research question, I discovered numerous shortcomings and limitations of existing scholarship; and the reality is that sometimes the literature may not be readily available or capable to address some specific questions. In other words, most studies have their strengths and limitations in data sources and current literature.

Furthermore, many of those who embrace the veil are second-generation immigrants who were born in Canada and have never been to Somalia due to the ongoing political instability in what was once Somalia and have no memories to speak about. On the other hand, Iranian women who are majority Muslim tend to prefer ethnic fashion over religious attire and are the least likely among Muslim women in Canada to wear the veil (Hoodfar, 2003). The literature seems to ignore such differences within ethnic communities.

2.3.2. Justification of the study/statement of relevance

From a settlement studies perspective, exploring these questions will help me to understand the relationship between ethnic fashion/dress, religious clothing and identity among diaspora communities, and how they integrate in Canadian society. This is an important topic to

pursue given Canada's celebration of official multiculturalism. At a personal and academic level, this is a meaningful topic to pursue because as an immigrant woman, and student of settlement studies, I have grappled with issues of identity in Canadian society when I have to respond to the question: where are you from? Therefore, I fully understand why some members of the diaspora communities embrace ethnic clothing or religious attire to show their identity, while others shun it in favor of mainstream western dress. While the media occasionally pays attention to ethnic fashion and dress, it tends to focus more on the perceived tensions of wearing such dress especially the veil (Omono, 2019).

2.3.3. Theoretical approaches

The study draws on insights from various schools of thought. The first one is Blumer's symbolic interactionism (1969). Symbolic interaction posits that people try to understand their experiences based on norms and values acquired through human interaction (Blumer, 1969). Blumer emphasized that meaning is created and maintained through social interaction. Symbolic interaction framework is based on three premises. First, Blumer (1969) argues that "human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them" (p. 2). According to Blumer, everything has a meaning, including clothing. Second, Blumer adds, "The meaning of such things is derived from social interactions with others" (p. 2). That is, meanings arise as a process of interacting with others. For example, clothing communicates what those wearing it want to signal or present to others. Third, Blumer (1962) adds "meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encountered" (p. 2). For example, images of relatives or movie stars may influence what people wear. On their part, immigrants may interpret ethnic clothing as a means of reflecting the

identities they wish to project. Blumer's argument is that clothes carry symbolic meanings. Accordingly, symbolic interactionism allows us to examine how people may have different interpretations of fashion. Such meaning may differ from person to person because fashion is just one source of symbols that create identity. Symbolic interaction leads to symbolic consumption as individuals develop their sense of identity. Women consume ethnic fashion, dress and religious attire to signal their preference for their respective identities (Inglessis, 2008). From the perspective of symbolic interaction theory, Roach-Higgins and Eichler (1992) observed, "individuals acquire identities through social interactions in various social, physical and biological settings" (p. 5).

The second school of thought is consumer culture theory (CCT). CCT refers to "a family of theoretical perspectives that address the dynamic relationships between consumer actions, the marketplace, and cultural meanings" (Arnould & Thompson, 2005, p. 234). Based on their respective definitions above, fashion and clothing have different meanings depending on markets and brands. Immigrants will use these symbols to create their own identities through clothing. CCT can be used to explain how the meanings are created through their consumption of ethnic clothing.

2.3.4. Media

The media also plays a major role in propagating consumer culture. The media is arguably one of the most influential sources that convey daily messages to the public. For example, which information disseminated in what way; which issues are marginalized; whose group interests are positively presented; and which groups are negatively portrayed in the media. With respect to fashion and dressing, the media influences people's choices and lures consumers

into buying particular items, which fuels the consumption craze, especially in western society. The media plays socio-cultural roles in promoting human rights, democracy and access to information in most societies across the world. The media, print, broadcasting and social media, are the major transmitters of society's cultural standards, myths, values, roles, and images.

The media is extremely influential in the realm of fashion. Consumer culture sells a commodity; more often than not, it targets the body. In the case of fashion, the media objectifies female bodies in western society because it is obsessed with fashion. As a result, consumers (especially young people) are forced to meet the media's standards of what is fashionable and trendy and consume more of the same. In addition, individuals are bombarded with media images suggesting that their bodies, fashion or dresses are flawed, and that such flaws are fixable with particular apparel items. That is why matters related to fashion and dress are somewhat controversial in the West. For instance, some fashionable clothing is revealing, whereas critics of modest dress such as the veil or hijab claim they are oppressive. Yet still, proponents of modest clothing such as the hijab suggest that it is protective and shields the women who wears it from the intrusive male gaze (Boddy, 2007; Mahmood, 2005). The controversy over what particular dress is fashionable, liberating or oppressive, modern or ethnic illustrates why consumer culture has become a major aspect of individual's lives, especially in the West. Consumer culture not only promotes maximization of profit, but also it has become an essential part of a system for representing social values.

2.3.5. Historical context

In South Asian countries, the sari is the traditional outfit for women. The sari is wrapped and draped long garment, which is folded in specific ways around the body. In these countries,

most notably India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, women also wear Shalwar kamiz, which is another a traditional garment. These garments were shaped by Western-style clothing. In India, people wore Western clothing during the colonial period. In the 1920s, Gandhi endorsed traditional clothing to promote patriotism and spirituality (Hansen, 2004), as well as to return apparel to a source of revenue for the Indian economy. Gandhi's famous spinning wheel appears on the Indian national flag. Immigrants bring this clothing to North America. The historical context shows what was once worn, and immigrants are bringing this clothing with them. Second-generation immigrants are maintaining this tradition by wearing these garments, particularly on special occasions and events.

2.3.6. Review layout

First, I begin with a discussion of study findings that suggest a link between ethnic fashion, patterns of dress and/or religious dress such as the veil. Second, I review the literature on ethnic fashion/dress and identity among African and South Asian women. The literature shows that these factors matter. Third, I discuss the literature on the veil and Muslim identity and some of the issues that may contribute to the growing consumption of religious dress across age, first-/second-generation immigrants, class and country of origin. Fourth, I evaluate the linkages between ethnic fashion/dress, religious dress and ethnic or religious identity. What is the role of rising Islamophobia and security biases in the form of ethnic and religious profiling post-9/11 in shaping or undermining a strong Muslim identity in Western countries such as Canada and America? In covering the war on terror, the media has portrayed Muslims and/or Arabs as prone to terrorism, which set them up for racial profiling and Islamophobia. Such media depictions of the "Other" as terrorist reinforces a racist culture that treats the "Other" as inherently criminal

and thus inferior and deserving to be mutilated (Butler, 2009). For this study, given the symbolism of identifying with one's ethnic or religious collective, such representation may have driven practicing Muslims to seek comfort in collective symbols such as the veil (Haddad, 2007; Hoodfar, 2003).

3. Chapter Three – Literature Review

3.1. Ethnic attire and identity

Ethnic fashion and religious dress are “a form of symbolic nonverbal communication, which symbolize ethnic identity” (Michelman & Eicher, 1995, p. 125). Accordingly, ethnic fashion and religious dress signify royalty and respect to culture or religious teachings (Barthes, 1983). That symbolism is apparent within various immigrant communities. First- and second-generation immigrants belong to two cultures. By the term “first-generation immigrant”, I refer to a person who immigrated to another country or their children who were born in that country. Second-generation immigrants refer to those immigrants who have at least one parent born outside of their country of residence or home (Dey et al., 2013). Some immigrants choose their apparel based on their interactions with individuals within their ethnic group. They use ethnic apparel to show that they belong to two cultures, culture of their parents’ place of birth and mainstream Western dress to reflect their current countries of abode. Such individuals buy ethnic apparel to show that they identify with that culture. For the population groups identified for this study, African immigrants consume diverse ethnic apparel based on their region or country of origin in Africa. South Asian immigrants often wear saris and shalwar kamiz to reflect their parents’ place of birth. Some Muslim women have embraced the veil and hijab as religious fashion. This study acknowledges and focuses on different ethnic or religious dresses.

For this review, the veil/hijab triggers criticism because those who wear it and those who oppose it believe in a particular type of multiculturalism. Those who oppose the veil include German Chancellor Angela Merkel. Former Canadian Immigration Minister (and current Premier of Alberta) Jason Kenney claimed that the veil “reflects a certain view about women that

we [Conservatives] don't accept in Canada" (The Toronto Star, December 12, 2011; Omono, 2019).

Their view is that multiculturalism poses challenges and may not be compatible with 'modernity'. The perceived clash between the requirements of modernity and multiculturalism has led Conservative politicians and commentators to problematize multiculturalism and its celebration of multiple identities in all forms. However, ethnic or diaspora communities who consume ethnic fashion and wear religious dress such as the veil/hijab challenge the modern assumption of nationality as the only legitimate force of identity. In Canada, some diaspora communities, especially the Muslim community, feel that multiculturalism has failed because tolerance and respect for diversity is diminishing (e.g. Islamophobia increased after 9/11). As demonstrated later, 9/11 was a turning point for Muslims in Canada, many of whom turned to the veil for both protection and resistance against Islamophobia (Haddad, 2007). For conservative commentators, the popularity of ethnic fashion, and especially the veil, illustrates that multiculturalism has failed due to the perceived tension or dilemma it has created in 'modern' countries such as Canada. According to Taylor's (2000) definition of modernity, there has to be erosion of traditional beliefs towards "a point of convergence" (p.366). Ong (1999) recognizes the "tensions and disjunctions" and calls for "flexibility" towards non-western societies [immigrants] within unifying models of modernity" (p.5). Ong (1999) argues that it is problematic to have a single "modernity against which other societies must be measured", even as they recognize that modernity entails secularization of culture (p.5). Tsing (2000) reminds conservative commentators and politicians who resist multiculturalism and ethnic symbols to start imagining a new world in the making, and to understand the dilemmas brought about by

modernization (globalization, immigration) without “becoming caught in their prescriptions for social change” (p.329).

The flow of people between countries shows that the Southeast Asian population is expected to triple in America by 2050 (Chattaraman, Veena, & Lennon, 2008). As this population increases, sales of ethnic apparel in America will also increase. Clothing is the most commonly desired and frequently purchased durable consumer good. Immigrants wear different types of clothing according to the individual. The buying power of Hispanics, African Americans, and Asians exceeds one trillion dollars in America (Chattaraman et al., 2008). Retailers will have to “understand why ethnic consumers choose to or choose not to” wear apparel products associated with their ethnic culture (Chattaraman et al., 2008, p. 519) instead of typical American dress. I want to investigate if more people today are willing to show their ethnocultural identity through their clothing. Through their exploration of the transnational lives of the second-generation in America, Levitt and Waters’ (2002) argue that there are many factors contribute to second-generation identities (p. 22). In the process of learning more about their family histories and ancestral homes, members of the second generation incorporate elements of these narratives and experiences into their own self-concepts. They may become more transnationally active as a result, or they may come to new ways of thinking about their place in the United States.

The factors that shape the identities of the second-generation immigrants include gender, socioeconomic class, religion, region, city of residence, country of origin, and age. Their identities and sense of belonging are tied to transnationalism, meaning an attempt to recreate the culture of their parents’ place of birth. To be transnationally active is to be involved with activities across borders, like dressing the way they would dress in their country of birth.

Hansen (2004) argues that when examining the significance of dress, one has to link production and consumption because together fashion is no longer exclusive property of the West. Contemporary fashions are created rapidly and in great volume in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, and this is redefining both consumption and fashion itself (Hansen, 2004, p. 371). Hansen's observations demonstrate that when second-generation immigrants wear ethnic clothes from their parents' ancestral country, they are trying to display "shared identity".

Crane (2012) argues that clothing is one of the most visible forms of consumption and it performs a major role in the social construction of identity (p.1). Immigrants' choice of clothing provides an excellent field for the interpretation of a specific form of culture. In addition, Crane observes that because of the large number of immigrants in the second half of the nineteenth century, clothing in the United States is particularly important, as some new immigrants used clothes to create a new identity and maintain their identity from their home county. Crane (2012) argues that such consumers use fashion discourse to construct narratives of personal history (p. 12). Crane (2012) reveals that that fashion plays a vital role in enabling individuals to construct and sculpt their identities. According to Crane (2012), second-generation immigrants use clothing as a form of belonging to different cultures.

Furthermore, clothing is not just about social status. Davis (2013) argues that fashion is important to us because it is "a means of self-expression" and that what we wear, when and how we wear helps us identify ourselves with other related groups of people (p. 4). For Davis, an individual's identity is always a work in progress. In addition, because social categories shift, individuals tend to go along with the changes. That is why people's identities are always in flux. Davis asserts clothes help individuals to convey their shifting identities. For example, through clothing individuals can communicate to society whether they are sexually available, athletic,

rebellious, liberal, and conservative and so on, thereby revealing to others how they want to be seen and sometimes the company to keep or to associate with. However, at some point in their lives as they age or migrate to different countries, their outlook may change. When that happens, their clothing styles change to signal their current identity. Generally, as individuals become older, they tend to dress more conservatively. His observation illustrates how clothes communicate our identity.

Dey et al. (2013) in their study involving young British South Asian adults, found a strong dual cultural identity among participants. According to Dey et al. (2013), such duality in valuing both their ancestral and dominant cultures is informed by four factors: “consonances with ancestral/culture, situational constraints, contextual requirement and convenience” (p.789). These, in turn, lead participants to develop what the authors characterize as “quadripartite perspectives, namely, religion, social, communal and familial bonding” (Dey et al., 2013, p.789). The authors infer that young South Asians in the UK find “meaning and identity in interacting with their cultural ethnic heritage as well as country of abode, where sense of identity informed by their ethnic inheritance in terms of customs, traditions, religion and language” (p.790). Furthermore, most participants were “transient in their cultural self-identities and held on to home culture” (p.790). Nonetheless, the youth also embraced a diaspora identity phenomenon and the tensions of being here and there simultaneously (Bardhan, 2011). As a result, with such strong grounding in both cultures, young South Asians were able withstand dominant culture (Swartz et al., 2010). Dey et al. (2013) conclude that such duality through “individual interactions with family, religion, society” helped them “to retain their ancestral cultural traits and/or adopt host country culture” (p. 805). Interestingly, the study found that religion was central and critical to such positive interactions across generations.

In their study, Barakat et al. (2014) report that “ethnic identity and socialization are important variables that predict the consumption of culture specific products such as dress” (p.405). They emphasize that in many immigrant communities, “ethnic identity is part of culture” (p.406) and in turn influences the consumption of ethnic goods. Other studies found that “situational factors can enforce and underscore ethnic norms” (McGuire et al. 1978; Wooten, 1995, as cited in Barakat et al, 2014, p.408). This is reinforced by Festinger’s (1954) social comparison theory that holds that “similar others wield disproportionate social influence as compared to dissimilar others’ on individual who in turn tow the community line” (as cited in Barakat et al., 2014, p. 408). In other words, strong ethnic identity plays a major role in the consumption of ethnic and culture specific products (Barakat et al., 2014).

Somerville (2008) examined transnational belonging among second-generation youth. Somerville conducted interviews with second generation Indo-Canadians. Her findings reveal that “selecting of ethnic clothes is an important way in which second generation Indo-Canadians express their transnational belonging” (p.28). For second generation Indo-Canadians, dress is an ethnic symbol that distinguishes one group from another. Accordingly, Somerville (2008) writes, “the children of migrants create their own fashion styles that reflect their connection to their parents’ birthplace, and their own country of citizenship” (p.28). Fashion is therefore important because it is a cultural tool and serves as a bridge to cross national boundaries. Fashion enables young people, including many second-generation immigrants, to move between these boundaries. Somerville (2008) found that, among transnational youth, facets of multiple cultures and identities are selected, combined and modified, so migrants can allow their consumption and fashion trends to be an expression of this multi-belonging (p. 28). Somerville’s study established that members of the second-generation community use fashion as a way of defining themselves

as belonging to two cultures and two countries simultaneously. This was more important than the actual clothing selected. Their clothing serves as a cultural tool they acquire transnationally through phone calls and emails about fashion, and during shopping trips in India and Canada (Somerville, 2008, p. 29). These findings illuminate the relationship between fashion consumption and identity formation within immigrant communities, particularly the second-generation cohort who do not want to abandon their ancestor's cultural origins. They embrace ethnic fashion to communicate connections to their parents' homelands and retain parts of their culture as part of their identity.

Feinberg and Burroughs (1992) found that clothing as an important social symbol employed by individuals in identity definition because (a) dressing is an everyday activity, (b) clothes constitute a frequent public display, and (c) clothing choice is an easily manipulatable symbol (p. 18). These findings deepen connections between identity formation and dress, and vice versa. Furthermore, the study reveals that second-generation immigrants not only wear traditional clothes, but also create their identity with Western-inspired traditional clothes.

Consequently, Davis (2013) asks, "What is the nature of the statement we make with our clothes?" (p. 3). Davis (2013) argues that clothing will depend on the identity of the wearer, the occasion and the place (p.8). Davis' arguments clarify why many immigrants combine ethnic fashion and western attire wearing, for example, jeans and a kamiz together. However, this also undermines the claim that dress always communicates our identity. For second- and even first-generation immigrants it may simply be cool to mix clothing.

In accordance with consumer culture theory, Kellner (1995) argues that media culture has become a dominant force of socialization, with media images and celebrities replacing families, schools, and churches as arbiters of taste, value, and thought, thus producing new models of

identification and images of style, fashion, and behavior (p. 17). Through the media, celebrities influence the ebb and flow and ebbs of clothing/fashion trends. Kellner's findings illustrate how the media influences immigrant consumption of dress. For example, second-generation immigrants may choose to wear traditional attire if they see their relatives on Facebook wearing that type of clothing. In addition, they may wear a particular dress because a favorite celebrity wore it in a movie. This study demonstrates that immigrants may simply want to identify with certain groups of people when they see positive media images such as a picture of a woman dressed in a sari in a magazine.

3.2. Ethnic dress among African immigrants

Most studies adopt a trans-national approach when theorizing Black or African identity in the Diaspora. For example, in the first line of his book, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, Paul Gilroy (1993) states "striving to be both European and black requires some specific forms of double consciousness" (p. 1). This sentence establishes the crux of what Gilroy speaks about in his book, and more broadly, on issues relevant to the black diaspora. Double consciousness calls for members of the Black diaspora to acknowledge the multi-faceted nature of Black culture. That is Black or African are cautioned against blind assimilation in favor of double consciousness. According to Gilroy (1993), a double consciousness is necessary and requires members of the Black or African diaspora to connect based on the common historical linkages, uniting them across the Western world today. Black culture needs to be understood as existing beyond national borders because those narrowing constraints work to create inherent divisions between people who have a shared history. This is the reason why debates around "identity" and "double consciousness" in the black diaspora exist.

For instance, the African diaspora does not necessarily share similar concerns with the Caribbean or African-American diaspora. For example, Africans have distinct ethnic dress, which they are fond of (Kirby, 2014; Kaiser & McCullough, 2010; Michelman & Eicher, 1995; Rovine, 2009; Strubel, 2012). These debates exist due to the circumstances that led to the development of the Black diaspora.

Gilroy (1993) argues that for a true understanding of “black Atlantic” culture to be realized, there must be an understanding of the essential linkages that exist between and within these categories. The influences of European and African-American cultures need to be included, yet this is something that has largely not taken place within the field of cultural studies (although that is changing through Diaspora studies). As Gilroy (1993) writes,

Regardless of their affiliation to the right, left, or centre, groups have fallen back on the idea of cultural nationalism, on the over integrated conceptions of culture which present immutable, ethnic differences as an absolute break in the histories and experiences of “black” and “white” people. Against this choice stands another, more difficult option: the theorisation of creolisation, métissage, mestizaje, and hybridity. From the viewpoint of ethnic absolutism, this would be a litany of pollution and impurity. These terms are rather unsatisfactory ways of naming the process of cultural mutation and restless (dis)continuity that exceed racial discourse and avoid capture by its agents. (p. 2)

These ideas demonstrate Gilroy’s argument that an understanding of “black Atlantic” culture must acknowledge the role of community goods (e.g. ethnic dress and music) because they provide Africans or African-Americans with a more cohesive identity than other textual sources.

Black intellectuals like W.E.B. Dubois have long theorized about the transnational essence of black culture, but it is only in the last half century that the term *diaspora* has been used to name the links that black people in the diaspora experience all around the world, and especially in the “black Atlantic” (Kelley, 1996). W.E.B Dubois was among the first to conceptualize Black people in the West as a whole. W.E.B Dubois continually observed that

Blacks in the West did not share the common values of their locale; rather they shared values inherent in their own culture, one that had deep historical roots. His work centered on the question of black identity, so he wanted to develop a new set of tools for Blacks to use to better acknowledge their shared identity in what would come to be known as the diaspora. While making this argument, Gilroy expands on W.E.B. Dubois' notion of "double consciousness", "A preoccupation with the striking doubleness that results from this unique position - in an expanded West but not completely of it - is a definitive characteristic of the intellectual history of the black Atlantic" (1993, p. 58).

Michelman and Eicher (1995) assert that among African immigrants, dress is a silent type of communication that empowers women within the constructions of society (p. 121). For example, in many African diasporic communities (like the Nigerian diaspora in Texas), how individuals dress is important because improper clothing selection is regarded a social infringement (Erekosima, 1989). In such an environment, individuals are expected to display double consciousness and wear clothing that reflects communal sensibilities (Michelman & Eicher, 1995). Rovine (2009) adds that within African diasporic communities, fashion provides powerful pointers about local identities and worldwide markets. However, such changes in clothing cannot and should not be equated with modernity in the Western sense. Rather, Eicher (2001) observes that fashion is spontaneous irrespective of culture as individuals move from one age group to the next. Furthermore, clothing patterns are more than ever subject to global forces, which has created tensions in African ethnic dress and fashion. For example, some young girls may want to imitate Britney Spears to express themselves in ways some may interpret as offensive to local social and communal expectations.

Nonetheless, Rovine (2009) claims that despite the fluidity and disruptions caused by globalization, African fashion has undergone creative adaptation rather than capitulation. Lewis (2003) identified similar tensions and dilemmas facing members of the African diaspora in their clothing styles, but noted that they wear African clothing to communicate to the broader society their African identity. Lewis (2003) credits W.E.B. Dubois (1903) in saying that double consciousness is displayed by members of the African diaspora by wearing ethnic clothing to convey multiple roles (p.173). For example, many are proud to affirm their lack/ethnic identity by wearing Afro and Kente clothing and other African garments. Along similar lines, Kaiser and McCullough (2010) observe that African diaspora have embraced both modernity while maintaining aspects of their African identity by wearing ethnic clothing (p. 361). This observation fits W.E.B. Dubois' double consciousness theory by urging African immigrants to constantly demonstrate critical awareness of being here and there simultaneously. That is why some members of the diaspora mind their appearances irrespective of their location. According to Aruanitidou and Gasouka (n.d.), African consumers make such choices because ethnic clothing is a type of wordless language that conveys meaning about their identities.

Kirby (2014) also highlights the symbolic meaning of clothing among members of the diaspora communities of conveying to others a particular aspect of their African-ness identity. For example, Strubel (2012) found that among African immigrants in America, Nigerians had "high ethnic identity, wear ethnic dress with high frequency to the extent that African women have turned into a local fashion statement" (p. 24). Strubel (2012) found that partly because of their affinity for ethnic clothing, Nigerian immigrants in Texas demonstrated high self-esteem. Accordingly, Strudel (2012) claims that ethnic clothing is an essential component of Nigerian identity in such a way that, even with acculturation in American society, it remains strong (p.25).

Strudel concluded that Nigerian have a positive ethnicity perspective, capable of shielding them from some negative aspects of American society. This claim is similar to other studies that found that minorities report stronger levels of ethnic identity than other broadly defined groups (Cislo, 2008; cited in Strudel, 2012, p.29). Similar findings were reported among South Asian immigrant where Asian-traditional ethnic upbringing protects them from “unfamiliar and therefore culturally challenging life events” (C.J. 2008, p. 471). Immigrants, whether first or second generation wear ethnic clothing/fashion because it is an authentic way to assert their identity.

Strudel’s (2012) observation that it is mostly Nigerian women who compete to display their different fashion styles fits general claims that fashion is mainly a female preserve, which is why, for some feminists, fashion is seen as an instrument of male oppression and control of women. For instance, in the West, some feminists have refused to wear items such as the bra as resistance to male expectations of what women’s fashion should be.

The analysis reveals a binding relationship between ethnicity and cultural consumption (Noble & Ang, 2018). The literature supports Sproles and Burns’ (1994) findings that fashion is part of behavior and an important element of identity and reflection of the consumer’s culture. As a result, some scholars argue that since fashion is symbolism, it is not just about clothing, but rather about habits, arts, ideas and morality (Sapir, 1937).

3.3. Summary of the literature on ethnic dress/fashion/clothing

The literature review illustrates that members of ethnic Diasporas consume ethnic dress because they are eager to demonstrate a particular kind of African-ness, or south Asian-ness. Furthermore, many of those who identify with ethnic fashion reveal a critical awareness of

double consciousness and acknowledges the multi-faceted nature of their experience. According to Dey et al. (2013), members of diaspora communities who embrace ethnic dress/fashion are proud of their “dual cultural identity” (p.789), for instance as Africans and South Asians. In addition, Dey et al. (2012) found that those who embrace ethnic dress/fashion do so due to a “sense of identity” regarding their place of origin, which the authors characterize as “tension of being here and there simultaneously” (p.79). Put differently, some of those who dress in ethnic fashion do so because they occupy a liminal space. In such a space, many try to resist wholesale consumption of dominant culture promoted by cultural consumption theory as they recognize the influence of clothing on identity formation (Neumann, 2011).

The literature is mostly in agreement with the predictions of symbolic interaction theory in explaining the popularity of, and positive identification with, ethnic dress/fashion by some members of the diaspora communities in Canada and elsewhere. From the perspective of symbolic interaction theory, the need to celebrate and identify with their ethnic identity or that of their grandparents leads them to embrace ethnic dress/fashion. In addition, the literature reveals that individuals actively construct their ethnic identity through symbolic practices in multicultural societies such as Canada. In accordance with symbolic interaction theory, ethnic dress “communicates symbolically the social identity, namely how a person wants and seeks to appear in society” (Davis, 1985, as cited in Arvanitidou & Gasouka, n.d, p.4). The literature also highlights the importance of ethnic dressing in revealing an individual’s values and is “particularly rich in emotional and psychosocial consequences” (Arvanitidou & Gasouka, n.d, p.4). In other words, ethnic dressing/fashion signifies particular values such as pride in one’s ethnic identity and culture. That is why clothing is a “full visual language with distinct vocabulary” (Arvanitidou & Gasouka, n.d, p.5). Subsequently the literature illustrates that

fashion as a product of culture reflects certain values and communal aspirations (Arvanitidou & Gasouka, n.d). Arvanitidou and Gasouka (n.d) found that clothing such as ethnic dress /fashion, which “illustrates the unconscious and conscious perceptions of morality, the ideology of fashion designer and that of the wearer’s and hence the culture itself” (p. 12).

Interestingly and unsurprisingly, the literature on ethnic fashion refutes the predictions of consumer culture theory. Consumer culture theory is media-driven. Consumer culture sells a commodity; more often than not, the commodity it sells is the body. For example, in the case of fashion, the media objectifies female bodies in Western society because the society is obsessed with fashion. As a result, consumers (especially young people) are forced to check their habits in order to meet the media’s standards and consume more. For this study, the exact opposite happens. Those who wear ethnic dress resist media representations of what is beautiful or trendy. Usually what is deemed fashionable or desirable are Western styles, not ethnic ones. Individuals who wear ethnic dress are able to resist the powerful media companies and images that convey particular types of clothing should be abandoned in favor of modern Western styles (Mahmood, 2005; Boddy, 2007). That many individuals stick with ethnic dress amidst such intense media campaigns to embrace Western clothing styles is testimony to the symbolic power of ethnic dresses for some individuals. What brings them happiness is not what advertisements depict. Rather, many are proud to associate with ethnic fashion. That many embrace ethnic clothing when consumer culture is a central aspect of Western society demonstrates the strong symbolic appeal of ethnic dress in conveying social values.

The literature also reveals that those who wear ethnic clothing feel empowered to resist unfamiliar cultures and thus promote their cultural identity within intercultural contexts (hooks, 1990). This is important given that the politics of identity and the subjective depictions (often

stereotypes) of identity conflict, and the perpetual struggle on the part of non-dominant group members as victims of white colonialism, racist domination, exclusion and media stereotypes (Gramsci, 1998). What emerges from the literature is that some members of ethnic minorities wear ethnic clothing as a form of positive representation of their communities in a world in which hegemonic structures systematically marginalize certain types of difference from the constructed notion of race. In most cases, non-White body experiences are made invisible by the pervasiveness of the dominant White culture. Members of ethnic groups are able to resist because of official multiculturalism policy in Canada, which celebrates diversity. Immigrants are proud of their identity within Canadian multiculturalism and consume ethnic fashion (Parkin & Mendelsohn, 2003; Nielsen Company, 2013). The literature confirms that contrary to the predictions of consumer culture theory, immigrants value their identity and cultural ethnic heritage as well as that of country of abode (Dey et al., 2013). That is why many individuals wear ethnic clothing to construct their self within the context of Canadian multiculturalism. That said, consumer culture theory is very powerful in Western society to the extent that many individuals from ethnic diaspora communities influenced by media abandon their traditional clothing in favor of 'modern' Western clothing in order to fit in.

4. Chapter Four – Focus of Study: Hijab

4.1. Wearing the veil/hijab among Muslim women

This section examines how the Hijab has impacted Muslim women's lives in the diaspora. This study argues that such religious dress encourages Muslim women to participate in public activities. Under multiculturalism and in the context of equity within that multicultural space (be it the classroom or workplace), ethnic/traditional fashion and religious dress should be encouraged. For example, within Canadian schools, students who are not from the dominant group sometimes face discrimination and oppression because of their race, gender, disability, culture or religious identities. Consequently, how Canadians dress can lead to discrimination. As a result, Muslim students and women immigrants in general have found empowerment in their ethnic, traditional fashion or religious dress code, such as the hijab, part of an Islamic dress code that reaffirms their identities in different ways. The hijab or veil empowers, encourages and inspires some Muslims to excel in school through social empowerment, because it is a form of resistance against oppression (Haddad, 2007). In the maintenance of their Islamic beliefs, Muslim women learn the importance of their identities and what they represent. Through the Islamic veil, Muslims are free to be themselves, and overcome the fear of oppression from their dominant society. Hence, the veil empowers students and (Muslim women) to stay and excel in their education, which reduces the high number of academic dropouts. Furthermore, the veil reduces peer pressure because those who wear it do not have to conform to the dominant group to fit in. In that regard, it performs multiple roles in constructing and maintaining identity through self-confidence. Therefore, to be inclusive of differences, a multicultural society should be inclusive in every way, including through celebration of ethnic fashion, both traditional and

religious dress. My study argues that ethnic fashion, traditional and religious dress promote diversity which allows racialized immigrants to resist assimilation.

A hijab is a very important tool for some Muslim women in maintaining a strong cultural identity. It can allow women to resist oppression (Hoodfar 2003; Haddad, 2007). For example, within a positive multicultural space, a Muslim woman is able to wear the hijab without any hesitation. Moreover, it is more than clothing: it is a form of domination. Hoodfar (2003) observes that "... a hijab has a significant social and political function, serving as a non-verbal medium of ideological communication...that demarcates social boundaries and to distinguish 'self' from 'other' at both collective and individual levels" (p.3). Many Muslim students, for example, while growing up in a multicultural society such as Canada, find it very hard to practice their Muslim identity in public due to Islamophobia. Interestingly, the earlier literature reveals that even some liberal and so-called 'modern' Muslim immigrants turned to the veil to resist Islamophobia (Haddad, 2007). Many scholars believe that rather than seeing religious dress as a form of oppression, wearing the hijab made it easier for these women to overcome peer pressure because it symbolized their Muslim identity. Many feel empowered wearing the hijab because they do not have to hide their presence from anyone. Many feel that under multiculturalism and its message of diversity and tolerance of difference, people should accept other people's dress choices or preferences for ethnic fashion, including religious attires such as the hijab (Haddad, 2007). Moreover, for Muslims, the hijab is not just clothing; it is a strong social and political identity representation of a Muslim woman.

However, in the minds of many in the West who espouse the representation of Muslim women both in the West and East, from the perspective of Orientalism advanced by Edward Said, the hijab is ironically depicted as oppressive to Muslim women. Under Orientalism, the

West is “modern” and its women fully liberated. The East is “pre-modern” and its women are constrained by culture and tradition. This view involves the marginalization, racialization and disfiguration of history, culture, society and identity of the people deemed to be traditional/pre-modern. Under Orientalism, the “Other” is the Muslim woman, who is portrayed as inferior, oppressed, victimized, ignorant, and domestic and tradition-bound, in need of saving by the West. An anti-racial and anti-colonial framework takes issue with such representation as problematic.

Accordingly, Hoodfar’s (2003) work offers us a much deeper narrative about Muslim women’s veiling in Canada. For example, the general perception among the non-Muslim public is that veiling oppresses women, yet the women in Hoodfar’s study revealed that veiling has actually empowered them in Canada, and allowed them to participate fully in Canadian society. Women felt liberated because the veil gave them respect and dignity, and a sense of modesty and empowerment, protecting themselves against different forms of oppression. The finding that the veil is liberating is quite surprising and helps readers to begin to understand why educated Muslim women in Canada freely embrace the practice of veiling. Hoodfar’s (2003) research is specific on the Muslim veil, but connects to a larger story, which is freedom and liberty in Canada.

Nevertheless, women feel empowered, because their sense of identity is affirmed; when wearing the *hijab*. Wearing a veil-is a strong representation of a Muslim woman’s identity which also creates a sense of community among Muslim themselves, who share values and experiences. Many feel empowered when they started wearing the veil, because they feel comfortable about who they are. They feel that religious dress allows them to be themselves and not have to prove their worth in terms of beauty and sexuality. Many feel independent and strong because they do

not feel the need to blend in the mainstream culture, even if oppressed, by dominant groups. No matter what, many are sure of their religious and ethnic identity, regardless of what others think. In such a context, it is reasonable to believe that Muslim women feel liberated in practicing their religious identity; in a dominant society.

4.2. History and Origin of Veiling

Veiling has a long history and different interpretation even before Islam was introduced in the world. It was strongly practiced in different parts of the world and. Heath (2008) states that:

Veiling – of women, men, and sacred places and objects - has existed among people of countless cultures and religions from time immemorial. Yet the veil is vastly misunderstood. Once upon a time, the veil in all its multiplicity was more or less taken for granted everywhere as, at the very least, an essential expression of the divine mysteries. Today, veiling has become globally polarizing, a locus for the struggle between Islam and the west and between contemporary and traditional interpretation of Islam. But veiling spans time long before Islam and space far beyond the Middle East. (p.1)

From the above quotation, it is clear that veiling it is not only practiced in Islamic culture, and that it existed long before the birth of Islam, playing different roles in different parts of the world. In Islam, the veil is mostly referred to as the hijab, an Arabic word. The literal meaning is "a veil", "curtain", "partition" or "separation." In a metaphysical sense, hijab refers to the illusory aspect of creation. The most common meaning of hijab today is the veil worn by women to cover the hair, involving a certain standard of modest dress for women. The usual definition of modest dress according to the legal system does not actually require covering everything except the face and hands in public. This is at least the practice which originated in the Middle East. The hijab is used as a screen or a protection to cover a women's hair to maintain their modesty while also serving as a form of resistance against perceived religious discrimination in the form of

Islamophobia (Haddad, 2007). As we can see from the above quotation, the literal meaning of hijab is “curtain”, therefore Muslim women wear hijab to create a barrier between them and anything deemed oppressive. Thus, Muslims have kept the veiling tradition to date and it plays an important role in Islamic and non-Islamic societies (such as Canada) for the Muslim immigrant diaspora. However, it is mandatory in many Islamic countries for women to wear the veil, because according to the Quran it is a form of protection. As stated in the Quran:

Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for Greater purity for them: And God is Well-acquainted with all that they do. And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: and they should not display beauty and ornaments expect what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they must draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husband's fathers, their sons, their husband's sons, or their women, or their slaves whom their right hands possess, or male servants free of physical needs, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex; and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their ornaments. (Chapter 24: 30)

This verse shows that both sexes should maintain their modesty. Therefore, the hijab plays a big part in maintaining these laws. If women decide to cover themselves, it is not because her husband or her father or anyone forced her. If she chooses to follow what the verse in the Quran says, she is only doing it to please Allah, not to please her parents or society.

Modesty is something every human who has a sense of morality accepts as being the norm. Indeed, many immigrants come to Canada because they cherish Canada's respect for liberties and rights as enshrined in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Some critics claim that wearing religious dress in particular may negate those Canadian values. Such critics fail to acknowledge the importance of official multicultural policy in Canada and its respect and celebration of diversity in all forms. According to Hoodfar (2003): In Canada, particularly in Quebec, many feminists and Quebec nationalists who have advocated banning the veil in public

schools claim that young women are forced by their families to wear the veil, and that banning it will free young women from such oppression (p. 15).

Western societies find veiling to be a form of oppression, often imposed by family members. Evidently, research shows that veiling for Muslim women is perceived by them to be more liberating and empowering than oppressive. Hoodfar (2003) adds that:

...women have frequently also used the veil to empower themselves and bring about structural changes in their societies. In the context of Canada, many women have adopted the veil and have acquired religious knowledge, in order to challenge some of the cultural and traditional patriarchal practices that have historically denied women mobility, access to education, participation in the labor market and their own choice of a husband. (P. Xviii)

Likewise, Christian nuns who have committed themselves to a religious life have always covered themselves with a habit and nothing of them is seen but the face and hands. Why then the claim that when a Muslim is covered, she is oppressed? Thus, Western societies use different methods of control to manipulate others in abandoning their identity, such as degrading one's identity, into making it inferior (Haddad, 2007).

4.3. Hijab and sense of Community

Hoodfar (2003) found that among Muslim students in Canadian schools, colleges and universities, the religious dress code in the form of hijab is empowering. Students who wear the veil-have the opportunity to build religious communities to engage in conversations and gain information that will empower them psychologically and physically. Thus, contrary to some criticism that such religious veil is oppressive, the opposite seems to be true among practitioners. Many racialized Muslims students find themselves in school environments or on campuses that can be intimidating, dislocating and even oppressive, notwithstanding strict policies in place to respect equity for all (Hoodfar, 2003; Haddad, 2007). Many find themselves dislocated in such

environments where they are viewed as visible minority or “woman of colour” which puts them under pressure to abandon their ethnic, or religious and assimilate into the mainstream identity in order to fit in. Fortunately, because of Islamic veil, many are able to identify themselves with other Muslim students to form the Muslim Student Association. Hoodfar (2003) notes that: “Emphasizing their membership and participating in the Muslim community is a means of coping with a new culture and social system” (p.13). When many Muslims students discover groups such as the Muslim Student Association or ethnic student groups such as South Asian Students’ Association, African Students’ Association, Caribbean Students’ Association etc., they feel relieved. Many become active members and, in the process, became well-acquainted with others of their religious or ethnic group. In the process, they form or maintain a very strong identity as they can identify with the people around them. They are able to practice their religious obligations without any boundaries. Usually, such religious or ethnic focused students’ associations host several events and encourage students to get involved in the school community and not feel left out. Therefore, groups such as the Muslim Students’ Association reinforces positive peer pressure for students who feel marginalized (Hoodfar, 2003). In that sense, it serves as a form of resistance against Orientalism and other negative representation of Islam. Through the activities of Muslim Students’ Association, Muslims can overcome oppression through the maintenance of strong Islamic identities and overcoming mainstream cultural assimilation.

The Muslim Students’ Association brings strong community bonding among Muslims, when living in a white dominant society. Muslim feel entitled to support one another. They feel that the community provides them with empowerment in various forms: Sirit and Katisificas (2011) note that “Community engagement refers to taking an active role in solving social problems and serving one’s community” (p.1530). Muslim Students’ Association groups, as a

religious community in universities, can generate a strong sense of a spiritual bonding that creates empowerment and identity affirmation among Muslim peers. Sirin and Katisafica (2011), quoting Branscombe et al. (1998) found that: “when young people experience moral exclusion (Opotov, 1990), as is the case for Muslim Americans in a post-9/11 U.S. political context, community engagement can become an effective coping mechanism for asserting their stigmatized identity (p.1531).” Similarly, when any individual is oppressed, they feel left out and empty. However, when surrounded by those who share the same identity in the form of ethnic or religious dress, they seem to each other to be individuals, sharing same values and culture. Then they can reaffirm themselves in spiritual and physical healing through the sense of belonging in a community. Sirin and Katisafica (2011), quoting Baber et al (2005), find that: “...community engagement helps adolescents to express and solidify their social identities. Therefore, this type of community engagement serves not only as a way to strengthen identities under stress, but can also sharpen the skills of positive citizenship” (p.1531). Thus, community involvement is important in identity affirmation, and can be used as a method of resistance against oppression from mainstream culture.

Zine (2001) observes life of Toronto, one of the most multicultural cities in the world: “Thirty percent of all immigrants to Canada reside in Toronto, a city comprised of people from 106 nations and in which more than 100 languages are spoken” (p.400). This observation illustrates how highly diverse cities like Toronto should not ignore the importance of ethnic dress, fashion or religious wear in promoting equity issues, so as to ensure that every citizen has equal access. Hence, our multitude of differences should be acknowledged because everyone is different and with different needs. In addition, everyone should be respected, and should have

equal access to places and things. Such access requires recognition to embrace different accommodation in different societies.

Furthermore, having the opportunity to freely practice one's identity, even by simply wearing a hijab in a diverse community allows people to get proper access, and sometimes people who share the same experiences in life understand each other better. Similarly, within Western societies, there is a lack of understanding and lack of information about other races and traditions (Mahmood; 2005; Boddy, 2007). Such lack of understanding perpetuates racism against minorities because of the widely given negative stereotypes. In that regard, conscious racialized individualized turn to ethnic /traditional fashion and religious wear, as some of the available resources to overcome the inequity issues that create division between what is familiar, and what is not familiar, in Western societies. By wearing ethnic /traditional dress and religious dress, some individuals raise awareness to those in society quick to ask racialized immigrants "where do you come from?" No matter how long they have lived in Canada. In that sense ethnic fashion and dress is symbolic and may be a form of resistance against such bigoted ignorance (Haddad, 2007; Hoodfar, 2003).

4.4. Post 9/11

Unfortunately, after 9/11, many in the West attacked multiculturalism and claimed that it had failed sentiments that fueled opposition to the hijab or veil in Western society. After 9/11, oppressions against Muslim people in the media and Western societies increased dramatically after Canada declared its "war against terrorism" (Bahdi, 2003, p. 293). Many within the Muslim community felt that the "war against terrorism" is more like war against Muslims and Islam. As a result, Muslim bodies have resisted oppression by maintaining their strong identity values even

by their dress codes such as the Islamic veil. Through the Islamic veil, strong community bonds were formed to offer each other support based on their cultural identity, an identity that gives them a reason to belong in a marginalized society. In schools, practicing communities like Muslim Student Associations, give Muslim students support.

This raises the question, why has multiculturalism come under attack in Canada and in Canadian schools. For Canadian/school authorities, integration meant that it was better for immigrants to gradually discard the cultures into which they were born or for such cultures and traditions to gradually become extinct. For example, integration would entail a gradual loosening of religion (Islam) or abandonment of any values that supposedly discriminate or oppress women. For their part, Muslim youth feel that integration had failed because Canadian authorities despite official multiculturalism failed them. In their view, Muslims/immigrants were treated the same (discrimination against) irrespective of whether they were second-generation immigrants who were born and raised in Canada. In the eyes of youths, whether Canadian or foreign born/immigrants, Muslim youths faced discrimination. Under such treatment as second-class citizens many feel that integration was not working, which is why many resort to wearing the veil/hijab as a form of resistance and solidarity (Haddad, 2007; O'Neil et al., 2014). For instance, some young Canadian born Muslim women may have abandoned the “veil” which is considered by some to be oppressive towards Muslim women, and were thus ‘free’ and ‘liberated’, yet in the end their embrace of western values and lifestyles did little to earn them respect from the mainstream/dominant society who still saw them as oppressed. This observation illustrates -as an immigrant I can attest to it - that sometimes immigrants are damned irrespective of what they do in their desire to become integrated: for example, immigrants are asked, “where do you come”, even to those born and bred in Canada. Under such conditions,

many Muslim youths were not actively involved in Canadian life and embraced the veil to celebrate their faith, which is central to their identity (Rahman, Fung & Yeo, 2016).

4.5. The veil/hijab as protective attire against unwanted male gaze.

Attacks against the veil/hijab highlight some of the challenges of applying Western notions of freedom to the situations of particular women in society. Within the feminist movement debate rages regarding the representation of the “Other” (Mohanty, 1991). In this study, I briefly comment on the relevance of Western liberal feminism to immigrant women in Canada (Mahmood; 2005; Mohanty, 1991). I should point out that the issue is not about equality, but rather what may appear to Western feminists in Toronto as oppressive to immigrant women from South Asia or Africa may turn out to be actually liberating (Boddy, 2007). Accordingly, although Western liberal feminism may not be relevant to the lives and activities of immigrant racialized women in Canada, other forms of feminism that are neither ethnocentric nor colonial in approach are relevant.

Mahmood (2005) poses an important question thus, “how should issues of historical and cultural specificity inform both the analytics and the politics of any feminist project” (p.1). Similarly, Boddy (2007) takes issue with Western notions that “homogenize distinct practices” under the guise of “civilizing women” (p.3). Boddy (2007) presents an anthropological perspective that “situates women in their respective cultural milieus” and avoid judgmental confrontation (p.3) from some Western writers about unfamiliar activities among immigrant communities in Canada or even abroad. Therefore, the most dominant challenge for Westerners is how to see or measure freedom among African women through Western/Eurocentric lenses

that are deemed by many racialized immigrant women to be colonizing. Mahmood (2005) cautions that Western writers and commentators should not judge the activities of Muslim women especially their involvement in Islamic activities negatively. Mahmood found that in Egypt Islamic dress is quite popular and women from all classes voluntarily wear the veil, ironically as a “reaction against secular governance” (p.2).

Boddy (2007) observes that Westerners need to stop confronting cultures whose interests have been at stake in such interventions, because who embrace certain aspects of their culture interpret such attitudes as “denigrating their lives” (p.309). Thus, the mistake many Westerners make is to assume that “Eurocentric values are universal and correct” (Boddy, 2007, p.310). For the majority of Muslim women in Egypt and elsewhere, Secularization/Westernization has no particular bearing on the practicalities of daily living (Mahmood, 2005, p.4). Accordingly, the message from Mahmood (2005) and Boddy (2007) is that Westerners should be careful not to make judgments without fully understanding the meanings behind an object or practice (e.g., hijab) that may seem oppressive, while for the racialized immigrant women in Canada or elsewhere such activities are seen as enhancing their freedom. Put bluntly, racialized immigrant women in Canada do not necessarily see their freedom from the lenses of Western liberals. For instance, dressing in short or revealing clothes is freedom in the West while dressing modestly and veiling is seen as freedom in the Middle East. For instance, Rahman et al. (2016) assert that the “veil serves as an erected boundary that solidifies distance and difference” (p.218).

Mahmood (2005) cautions that the “normative liberal assumption that all human beings have an innate desire for freedom, assert freedom when allowed to do so” is misleading (p.5). Mahmood (2005) found that the women studied demonstrated that social agency need not “primarily consist of acts that challenge social norms”, but rather that such agency can uphold

them and so on (p.5). In other words, women have used their presence to enhance their agency and voice, contrary to Western accusations that such organizations only perpetuate women's subordination. Likewise, Fantasia and Hirsch (1995) observe that cultures should be seen as "an open-ended creative dialogue of sub-cultures of insiders and outsiders of diverse factions" (p. 145). Furthermore, the veil served as the "language of refusal" in the sense that it provided the "organizational basis for traditional cultural transmission (Fantasia & Hirsch, 1995, p.157). Again, contrary to the fears or false assumptions about the veil, the power of culture can be revealed in certain contexts, contexts that are not necessarily oppressive to women.

What we discern from Boddy (2005) and Mahmood (2007)'s insightful work is that Westerners need to take difference seriously and examine the sources and effects that threaten disruption in terms of how certain notions are constructed and reproduced, and by paying attention to, rather than turning away from, those painful moments of unfamiliarity. In other words, it is better to start from point zero and realize that there are moments at which no common ground exist whatsoever between Western liberal women and racialized immigrant women here or abroad. As Body (2007) cautions, Westerners should desist from judgmental confrontations that perpetuate the structural divisions created by historical processes such as colonialism, imperialism and nationalism. Mahmood (2005) notes that sometimes women "resist by being complicit - sometimes oppressed sometimes active feminist consciousness" (p.8).

The insights from Mahmood (2005) is that Westerners who push their notions of freedom need to "detach the notion of agency from the goals of progressive politics" (p.14). That is important in the debate or controversy surrounding the hijab in Canadian society because what may appear as passivity may actually be a form of agency (Mahmood, 2005, p.15). That way, Western feminists can perhaps begin to appreciate what it means to be different. Put differently,

that difference must be accommodated in the sense that what is liberating from a white woman's perspective in Toronto or New York may not necessarily be liberating from the perspective of an African or South Asian immigrant woman in Toronto. It is fine for those women who choose to wear skimpy skirts and revealing dress in the streets of Toronto when exercising their freedom but we should give the same leeway to women who wear the veil in Toronto because that is their version of freedom, without Orientalizing the "Other".

4.6. Non-veiling by some Muslim women.

Although the veil is a religious dress, some practicing Muslim women do not wear it. Part of this is driven by concerns by some women groups that since multiculturalism tends to privilege ethnicity, religion or descent over and above other social identities such as gender, sexuality and class, it could undermine gender equality for women from certain cultural backgrounds (Mahtani, 2002). Hence the fear that multiculturalism creates tension between gender and sexuality equality and cultural diversity since measures that promote gender equality may be viewed as threats to cultural autonomy, and on the other, measures promoting cultural autonomy are viewed as hostile to the achievement of gender equality in society, contrary to the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Such individuals opt for non-veiling partly because some frame the debate in either/or terms; either individual rights or cultural traditions; either gender equality or cultural autonomy, but not both. Nonetheless, what is true for many women is both group and individual identity matter.

Additionally, non-veiling is also informed by modernity. For some women, non-veiling allows them to maintain a balance between two fundamental principles; religious freedom on the one hand and gender freedom on the other. In a democratic society such as Canada liberal

institutions are founded on the principle of separation. Thus, within liberal democracy, we undertake to ensure the separation between church and state, religion and political institutions and matters of faith and matters of politics. In such an environment, there is a separation between private and public space within societies, especially within diverse multiethnic societies. In liberal democracies, there is a clear difference between what the individual wants, and what the state or community wants. Put differently, individual views are a fundamental part of who they are, that is if they conform to a religious or secular view or when they separate the two identities through non-veiling. For this study, practicing Muslim women who opt for no-veiling separate their identities. Non-veiling Muslim women illustrate that it is possible to self-separate contending, religious from gender or ethnic identity. Non-veiling women embrace a view of modernity (Taylor, 2000). According to Taylor (2000), a “cultural theory of modernity is one that characterizes the transformation that have been issued in the modern West mainly in terms of the rise of a new culture” (p.365). For some practicing Muslim women, the new culture manifests itself in the form of non-veiling.

4.7. Summary of the literature on the hijab and religious clothing

The literature on the hijab in Canada supports the predictions of symbolic interaction theory that clothing is symbolic and thus communicate meaning (Davis, 1992; Sapir 1971; Tawfiq, 2014). In addition, the veil as an item of clothing symbolizes cultural values such as religious identity along with decency and morality in the public sphere (Inglessis, 2008; Sproles & Burns, 1994). Indeed, the literature supports Inglessis’ (2008) argument that:

women communicate their individual, social and cultural identities through clothing...and help us understand the way in which clothes as objects embody deeper cultural values and how the meanings assigned to them are socially constructed and diffused in a bicultural context. (p.vii)

These ideas illustrate that clothing whether in ethnic or religious dress means something for members of the diaspora communities in multicultural Canadian society. The veil serves particularly in social roles including protecting women's dignity (Seunghye, 2012). This fits symbolic interaction explanation that through religious clothing, meaning is socially constructed (Inglessis, 2008). In this case, the veil symbolizes the collective dimension of Islamic culture as an expression of faith (Barakat et al., 2014; Rahman et al., 2016).

In addition, the literature reveals that the veil serves multiple roles including protection from an unwanted male gaze and sexual harassment on public transportation (Mahmood, 2005). In western countries like Canada, veiling is influenced by situational factors such as racism and Islamophobia (Barakat et al., 2014; Haddad, 2007; McGuire et al., 1978; Wooten, 1995). Additionally, the veil is a form of resistance to the commodification of women's bodies in the media (Hoodfar, 2003; Haddad, 2007). In that regard, it encourages female modesty and piety (Mahmood, 2005). For the women who embrace the veil, contrary to the allegations of Western commentators, it serves as a disciplinary practice against the excesses or predictions of consumer cultural theory. Indeed, from the literature surveyed wearing the veil does not support the expectations of consumer cultural theory. Rather it repudiates the theory. For instance, the veil minimizes peer pressure because individuals do not have to conform in order to fit in.

5. Chapter Five – Conclusion and Future Research

The core inquiry in this MRP study is how theories of symbolic interaction and consumer culture theory influence the consumption of, or positive identification with, ethnic fashion and religious clothing like the veil. The key result from the literature review is that symbolic interaction theory best explains the embrace of culture-specific goods such as ethnic dress. The literature illustrates that individuals embrace ethnic clothing and the veil for more or less similar reasons: to associate positively with their ethnic/cultural or religious identity. The study has also demonstrated that non-veiling among practicing Muslim women can be linked to modernity (Taylor, 2000). Proponents of modernity, like, Charles Taylor (2000) observe that modernity involves a transition in terms of “loss of traditional beliefs and allegiances where old views and loyalties are eroded” (p.366). That definition of modernity certainly poses challenges for Canada’s official multiculturalism. Consequently, debate rages about multiculturalism because a community or nation cannot modernize, while also supporting differences, some of which are seen as oppressive towards women and other groups. The perceived clash between the requirements of modernity and multiculturalism is what has led some Muslim women within diaspora communities to opt for non -veiling. This literature survey uncovers several key issues.

First, the findings illuminate the study’s central research questions. Canada’s official multicultural policy, which celebrates diversity and accommodates ethnic, racial and cultural diversity as a legitimate and integral component of Canadian society, allows and empowers racialized communities to positively identify with their ethnic and religious dress such as the veil.

Second, immigrant women’s decision to proudly identify with ethnic fashion or clothing from their homeland, even for those who were born in Canada, do so because such clothing

empowers them and allows them to affirm their ethnic identity and heritage (e.g. African-ness, South Asian-ness etc. In addition, ethnic clothing communicates their identity and position in society, but also allows them to celebrate their dual cultural identity (Dey et al., 2013; Inglessis, 2008; Swartz et al., 2010). Moreover, ethnic dress as a form of *symbolic interaction*, a kind of silent language that allows them to convey to others who they are and other can learn something about some of their most prominent and distinct cultural identities. More fundamentally, the propagation of culture resides with women (Michelman & Eichler, 1995).

Third, an immigrant's country of origin has a strong influence on their consumption of ethnic clothing/fashion and even religious dress such as the veil. This is the case because some immigrants come from countries or cultures with strong collective identities which many retain even when they move or are born to immigrant parents in countries such as Canada with a strong emphasis on individualistic values (Lewis, 2003; Tulock, 2005; Dey et al. 2013). Consequently, even within diaspora communities, some immigrant communities display a stronger ethnic identity than others (Strubel, 2012; Kirby, 2014.). For example, among the African immigrant diaspora in the USA, Nigerians had the strongest ethnicity identity as conveyed through ethnic clothing. With respect to the religious dress such as the veil/hijab, studies show that Somali women had the highest coverage with the veil. On the other hand, Iranian women had the lowest consumption and were the least likely among the Muslim community to identify with the veil/hijab (Hoodfar, 2003).

Four, ethnic fashion and/or religious dress positively shape the identities of individuals who consume such goods. This clothing allowed individuals to have strong self-esteem in that positive ethnic identity is manifested through the wearing of ethnic clothing (Strubel, 2012). Similarly, religious dress in the form of the veil/hijab allows women to construct a modest

Muslim identity and moral self (Barakat et al. 2014; Tawfiq, 2014; Seunghye, 2012; Boddy, 2007; Mahmood, 2005).

Five, among those who immigrated to Canada, wearing such ethnic fashion reminds them of the homeland where they or their ancestors came from. Among those born in Canada, they wear ethnic fashion to symbolize pride in their African or South Asian identity for example (Dey et al. 2013, Strubel, 2013, Inglessis, 2008. Lewis, 2003). Others do so because they occupy a liminal space in Canada, or else because they want to stand out from homogenizing forces in society and they proudly identify with Canadian multiculturalism. Furthermore, because of global migration, and ethnic diaspora communities distributed across the world, identity is no longer associated with just one country, gender or sexual orientation but rather it has become an anchor point for self-expression. The literature reveals that identity is also fluid. For women and men in the diaspora, sophisticated dress and how one must dress and in what colors, should be important. This is why ethnic dress matters to members of diasporic communities.

On the other hand, the veil represents a non-confrontational protest and resistance against oppressive and racist regimes. Moreover, ethnic clothing can be a powerful tool for self-expression as well as political defiance. An issue worth nothing though not examined in this study is how members of the Rastafarian movement dress and wear their hair. The movement fought against social, cultural and economic oppression (Chevannes, 1995, p.1).

Roland Barthes (1999) and Raymond Williams (1958) analyzed and explored the powerful ramifications of mythologies in a human cultural society. Williams (1958) argues that the interconnection of mythologies and culture has proven that “culture is ordinary” because “every human society has its own shape, its own purposes, and its own meanings” (p.11). As a result of these ways of thinking of ourselves, in conjunction with our psychological lives, our

daily activities, social relations, ethical values and commitments, and perceptions of others are constantly fluid and being reshaped. Furthermore, Barthes (1999) argued that this type of reshaping happens because our world can pass from a closed, silent existence to an oral state, open to appropriation by society, for there is no law, whether natural or unnatural, which prohibits talking about things (p.51). Additionally, it is human history which converts reality into speech and the mythologies devised are chosen by histories and cannot possibly evolve from “the nature of things” (p.52).

The key insight from Barthes (1999) that is relevant to the discussion of ethnic dress is that we live in an unequal world that is governed by norms; where great inequalities are evident especially in the disabled, trans-gendered and racialized communities. Such inequality, which is pervasive in these communities, does not just have consequences for the lives of individuals, but few would disagree that these marginalized groups face formidable social and economic problems. Consequently, Williams highlighted English bourgeois culture, arguing that the centre of power are linked very closely in England’s powerful, literary and social institutions. He went on to say that English society was class-dominated and purposely restricted a common inheritance to a small class, while leaving the masses ignorant. Admittedly, Williams (1958) explained his feelings of being part of one of those considered ‘the deserving poor’ who is helped to access educational opportunities (p.14).

However, Barthes (1999) took a different approach to analyzing the power of mythologies in accordance to culture. Different people can interpret Barthes’s (1999) example differently of a picture with a young African boy in a French uniform saluting with his eyes uplifted. Specifically, Barthes (1999) wrote that everything could be a myth for the universe is infinitely fertile in suggestions (p.51). Regarding the picture of the young African soldier in the

French uniform, Barthes (1999) argued that it normalizes colonialism and that the young African boy is eager to serve his oppressors. Most significantly, he used the picture as an illustration to tackle the terms through which a myth is created and to analyze the most important term, namely the 'signifier.' Barthes (1999) described the 'signifier' as an ambiguous presenter, which has meaning and is full on one side and empty on the other (p.55). Subsequently, he posits that the meaning of the myth has its own value. Thus, ethnic dress is fascinating Indigenous cultural reality. Its symbolism makes it one of the most significant and obvious cultural assets of the diaspora experience. This MRP has noted that ethnocultural identity is powerful and has the potential to be liberating and empowering. Analyzed within the context of culture as "signifying and symbolic meaning", ethnic dress signifies multiple roles and goals (Delaney & Kaspin, 2011, p. 13). As Barthes (1999) noted, "every object in the world can pass from a closed, silent existence to an oral state, open to appropriation by society" (p.51). This study has shown that ordinary culture, like ethnic dress/fashion among the diaspora communities, represents people's social experience and identity.

5.1. Other Observations

This study recognizes that for some categories in the diaspora like young men, dress can be a matter of life and death. In cities such as Toronto or New York, it sometimes appears that young racialized men are forbidden or limited in what to wear. For example, hooded clothing, which has tragically led to the death of several African-Canadian and African-Americans youth is an example. Police and security agencies have criminalized the hoodie. To be clear, white young men can freely wear hooded clothing, but this is not so, for racialized young men, thus the claim that in some instances fashion for members of the racialized diaspora can be a matter of

life and death. It does not matter whether it is during the winter months: to be safe from police harassment and even death at the hands of police officers, young racialized men now try to avoid hooded clothing even for protective purposes against cold weather. Their white counterparts can freely wear this clothing without attracting any scrutiny or controversy. I therefore argue that there are circumstances in which wearing an ethnic dress, and not a Western hoodie, goes a long way in saving lives. The controversy and risk to racialized youth of wearing hooded dress/clothing, no matter how fashionable it may be, demonstrates the complexities of black identity in Western society. In such cases, the wearing of ethnic dress can be a form of armor, though it is not necessarily bulletproof.

Therefore, by looking sharp, ethnic fashions provide a sense of positivity and establishes a sense of worth that can transcend circumstances, as well as societal perception. In such cases, members of the diaspora community may or may not wear ethnic dress based on their circumstances. For instance, here in the West, dressing well means wearing a suit or other Western attire, but not ethnic dress. Put differently, ethnic dress may not be welcome in government and public offices, and may be deemed casual wear not appropriate for work-related presentations, even if some African dress is quite impressive. For African or Black men in particular, wearing ethnic dress defies the monolithic understanding of what it is to be a man. That is why in the west, ethnic dress is at the centre of the intersections between race/ethnicity, class, gender, power and culture.

5.2. Future research and questions

To address some of the limitations in the literature, there is a need to undertake qualitative research to hear from immigrants why they consume or do not consume ethnic or

religious attire. In addition, there is a need to investigate whether how immigrants arrive in Canada has an impact on their consumption of ethnic dress and identity with their respective communities. In other words, understand the role of situational factors in the consumption of ethnic and religious clothing. For instance, what is the view of those who come to Canada as refugees fleeing ethnic or religious persecution? Are there similarities between refugees and immigrants in the wearing of ethnic and religious clothing? Put differently, does how immigrant women arrive in Canada matter when it comes to the consumption of ethnic fashion, dress and/or religious dress. Which immigrants are most likely to consume or identify with ethnic apparel? Are there convergences and divergences between the two groups? If so, what contributes to such differences. We also need studies to understand the cause and effect because the relationship between the consumption of ethnic dress/fashion may be influenced by strong ethnic identity and vice versa. That is, individuals who openly identify with ethnic dress or even religious clothing may be individuals who identify strongly with their ethnic or religious identities.

There is also a need to understand why it is that Somali women are the most likely to wear the veil compared to any other Muslim women immigrants in Canada? Why are Iranian women the most likely to shun the veil relative to other Muslim women in Canada? (Hoodfar, 2003). What factors account for such observed identification with religious dress among Muslim women from different parts of the world?

5.3. Content Analysis

The content analysis review examines the literature on ethnic fashion, dress and/or religious dress and identity. It draws mostly on books and published theoretical and empirical studies in major journals. After the search, I reviewed several articles that were relevant to my

study if they looked at the role of ethnic dress among immigrants living in Western countries such as Canada, America and the UK in the context of either symbolic interactionism or consumer culture theory (CCT). In addition, I found many relevant articles on the role of the veil/hijab as religious dress in Western society (see table in Appendix A). The identified articles were separated into various groups based on their content. For example, articles that discussed ethnic dress and symbolic interactionism were grouped into one pile. Other articles discussed ethnic dress among particular group of immigrants, namely, Africans, South Asians, Hispanics and others. These articles were initially put in one pile, which was later sorted again to separate articles according to the ethnic groups analyzed. For instance, Africans, South Asians and Hispanics created three minor themes within the larger theme of the role of ethnic dress among racialized immigrant communities, and were reviewed separately.

In general, there were three significant categories based on specific ethnic groups. Articles that included the key search words were recorded as positive and included for analysis. There were some three articles deemed neutral and they were excluded from the study. Interestingly, on the relationship between ethnic dress and identity among immigrant communities, there were no negative articles identified. However, had some existed, they would have been included in the literature review to acknowledge the other side of the debate. There were some articles on CCT not cantering on ethnic dress, but rather discussing how Western firms can target the growing base of ethnic consumers to buy more Western fashion than ethnic fashion. For example, the Nielsen Company study highlighted the growing power of ethnic Chinese consumers in Western societies and how they could be targeted in accordance with CCT to buy mainstream products. Certainly, much of that is going on but it was not the interest of this study. In fact, this study was interested in the opposite question: namely, why is it that even with

such targeting or bombardment with images of Western fashion, many individuals within immigrant communities remain loyal to ethnic dress and fashion instead. On the whole, there were three significant categories identified with respect to ethnic dress and identity and they are discussed in the literature review. The findings in those articles were used to illuminate and to answer the study's research questions as summarized in the literature review.

The same procedure applied to the second research question on the role of the veil/hijab among those who wear it. The literature was both positive and negative and was analyzed accordingly. Articles were split into different piles depending on whether it was positive, meaning that it viewed the veil/hijab in the context of symbolic interactionism, and thus had value or communicated specific messages to the general public. Articles that were openly critical of the veil/hijab as oppressive to women in Western society were labelled negative, but nonetheless discussed extensively along those lines. The themes that emerged about the hijab were much stronger to the extent that no articles could be characterized as neutral. Similarly, unlike the literature on ethnic dress which was separated on the basis of ethnic groups, the literature on the veil tends to be global in the sense that it considered to all Muslim women as Islamic religious dress, and not as much in terms of from where the women or their ancestors immigrated. Put differently, religion dominates ethnicity with respect to the veil. As a result, the categories that emerged are very significant in that they took particularly strong attitudes for or against the veil as summarized in the literature. Because the veil as a religious dress is not fashion per se in the sense that it lacks the characteristics of fashion such as originality or spontaneity, and is rather stable, predictable and uniform irrespective of one's location and even age, it is not influenced by CCT.

The clarity in the literature from two opposing sides helped to answer relevant research questions. Furthermore, the findings on the veil were consistent with the outcome I had anticipated. The findings about the veil are reflective of the larger contested debates in the context of Canadian multiculturalism, namely individual versus group rights. It also reflects tensions within different forms of feminism, for example liberal feminism versus transnational feminism and their relevance to racialized women globally. Those opposed to the veil dismiss and downplay its positive sides, such as protecting women against the male gaze in public space. Some groups that are against the hijab claim they care about the rights and freedoms of women who wear the hijab and come across as if they care greatly about racialized women, but in ways that are patronizing.

Appendix A: Table of articles reviewed

Author(s) (Year)	Country & sample	Domain of interest	Approach/measuring method	Focus of study
Lewis (2003)	Jamaica, UK and USA	fashion	Comparative	Dilemmas in Diaspora fashion
Rovine (2009)	European and North American cities	Fashion	Change as loss model	Exploring diffusion of fashion across regions
Kaiser & McCullough (2010)	USA	Fashion	Comparative and multidimensional	Diasporic fashion entanglements
Strubel (2012)	Texas, USA	Nigerian dress	Triangulated exploratory study	Ethnic identity among Nigerian- American community
Seunghee (2012)	South Korea N=268	Examine the relationship between women's social status, freedom and clothing	Ask about women's perceptions (qualitative)	Women's perception of clothing and their social participation
Barakat et al. (2014)	USA-Arab American. N=230	Strength of Arab American ethnic identity	Online survey	Role of ethnic identity in predicting consumption of Middle eastern food, dress and entrainment
Tawfiq (2014)	Saudi Arabia: Saudi Arabian women	How married Saudi Arabian women use dress to construct self within the context of the private sector	Survey in form of questionnaire	Saudi Arabian women's views on traditional versus westernized dress for private sphere
Nobel & Ang (2018)	Australia. N=1461	Ethnic diversity and cultural consumption	Computer –assisted telephone interviews (CATI)	How resulting ethnic diversity transformed patterns of cultural consumption in Australia
Neumann	Global	fashion	Feminist and content	Role fashion

(2011)		performance	analysis of 3 fashion blogs	plays within everyday performance
Rahman et al. (2016)	Canada	Islamic dress (headscarf), identity and faith	Content analysis of online posters 's opinions and perceptions about hijab	Understand issues related to Islamic dress, identity and faith
Dey et al. (2017)	United Kingdom. N=34	Understanding young British south Asian adult's lifestyle and cultural identity	Qualitative, in-depth interviews	Why and how young British South Asian adults define themselves (multiple cultural identities)
Michelman & Kaiser (2000)	Global	Feminism, aesthetics	Theoretical reviews of feminist perspectives in textile and clothing	Feminist interest in fashion as feminist discourse and thus oppressive
Roach-Higgins & Eicher (1992)	Global	Understand linkages between identity and dress.	Literature review and definition of fashion	Dress as an effective means of communications during social interaction
Aspers & Godart (2013)	Global	Analyze sociological understanding of fashion	Interdisciplinary literature review	Definition of fashion as spontaneous activity
Parkin & Mendelsohn (2003)	Canada. N=2000	How ethnic diversity shapes Canadian identity	Online interview (poling)	How Canadian multiculturalism allows immigrants to celebrate their diversity
Nielsen Company (2013)	Canada	Understanding ethnic/multicultural consumers	Surveys and case studies	How Canadian firms can market to diverse ethnic consumers, a market that is growing
Preiholt	Global	Understand why	Literature review	How the theory

(2012)		fashion appears in terms of collective trends and personal styles.		of symbolic interactionism is a useful analytical tool to understand fashion collectively.
Kaiser et al., (1991)	Global	Theoretical explanation of fashion as change	Literature /theoretical review	Symbolic interactionism insights about fashion and appearance
Banister & Hogg (2004)	Young consumers/ global	How symbolic interactionism contributes to positive self-esteem in individuals.	Literature review	How search for self-esteem motivate individuals to consume and accept symbolic goods.
Davis (1982)	Global	Definition of fashion and symbolic function	Literature review	Clarifies what fashion is in the context of symbolic interactionism theory
Kirby (2014)	African diaspora in Michigan, USA	African/ethnic clothing among members of African diaspora.	Ethnographic fieldwork	How shared engagements with clothing forge and shape meaningful relationships within and between Africans living in diasporic settings in Michigan
Inglessis (2008)	Experiences of Hispanic women in the USA	Meaning of clothing among Hispanic women.	In-depth interviews and observations	Understand the way in which clothes as objects embody deeper cultural values and how meaning assigned to them are

				socially constructed
Arvanitidou, & Gasouka (n.d)	Athens, Greece N=8 (4 women and 4 men) al	Phenomenon fashion	Qualitative research	Understand human attitudes about the evolution of gender through clothing and fashion.

References

- Adelman, H. (2011). Contrasting commissions on interculturalism: The hijab and the workings of interculturalism in Quebec and France. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 32, 245-259.
- Allen, B. (1994). The novel, the body, and Giorgio Armani: Rethinking national identity in a post national world. In G.M. Jeffries (Ed.), *Feminine feminist: Cultural practices in Italy* (pp. 153-170). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Anderson, A.B. (2001). The complexity of ethnic identities: A postmodern reevaluation. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 1 (3), 209-223.
- Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. New York: Verso Books.
- Arnould, E.J., & Thompson, C.J. (2005). Consumer culture theory (CCT): Twenty years of research. *Journal of consumer research*, 31 (4), 868-882.
- Arvanitidou, Z., & Gasouka, M. (n.d). Fashion, gender and social identity. London: First Fashion Colloquia.
- Aspers, P., & Godart, F. (2013). Sociology of fashion. Order and change. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 39, 171-92.
- Banister, E.N., & Hogg, M.K. (2004). Negative symbolic consumption and consumers' drive for self- esteem: The case of the fashion industry. *European Journal of Marketing*, 38 (7), 850-868.
- Banting, K., & Kymlicka, W. (2006). Multiculturalism and the welfare state: Setting the context. In K. Banting, & W. Kymlicka. (Eds.). *Multiculturalism and the welfare state: Recognition and redistribution in contemporary democracies* (pp. 1-48). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Bardhan, N. (2011). Slumdog millionaire' meets India shining: Transnational narrations of identity in South Asian diaspora. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communications*, 4, 42-61.
- Barthes, R. (1983). *The fashion system*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Barthes, R. (1999). Myth today. In S. Hall & J. Evans (Eds.), *Visual culture: A reader* (pp. 51-58). London/Thousand Oaks: Open University & Sage Publications.
- Barakat, A., Gopalakrishna, P., & Lala, V. (2014). The impact of Arab America ethnic identity on the consumption of culture-specific products. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 26, 505-425.
- Bissoondath, N. (1994). *Selling illusion: the cult of multiculturalism in Canada*. Toronto: Penguin Books.
- Blumer, H. (1969). Fashion: From class differentiation to collective selection. *Sociological Quarterly*, 10, 275-291.
- Blumer, H. (1986). *Symbolic interactionism: Perspective and method*. Berkeley: University of California Press. (Original work published in 1969).
- Boddy, J. (2007). *Civilizing women: British crusades in colonial Sudan*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Butler, J. (2009). Introduction: Precarious life, grievable life. In *Frames of war: When is life grievable?* London & New York: Verso Press.
- Chattaraman, V., Sharron, J., & Lennon, S.J. (2008). Ethnic identity, consumption of cultural apparel, and self-perceptions of ethnic consumers. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, 12 (4), 518-531.

- Cheddie, J. (2010). Troubling subcultural theories on race, gender, the street, and resistance. *Fashion Theory*, 14 (3), 331-353.
- Cislo, A.M. (2008). Ethnic identity and self-esteem: Contrasting Cubans and Nicaraguan young adults. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 30 (2), 230-250.
- C.J. (2008). Ethnic clothing. *Psychologist*, 21 (6), 471.
- Cohen, R. (1996). Diasporas and the nation-state: From victims to challengers. *International Affairs*, 72 (3), 507-520.
- Crane, D. (2012). *Fashion and its social agendas: Class, gender, and identity in clothing*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Davis, F. (1982). On the 'Symbolic' in Symbolic Interaction. *Symbolic Interaction*, 5 (1), 111-126.
- Davis, F. (2013). *Fashion, culture, and identity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Davis, J. (2008). *Fashion: Introduction, lifestyle, communication*. New Delhi: Abhishek Publications.
- Dey, B.L., Blamer, J.M.T., Pandit, A., Saren, M., & Binsardi, B. (2017). A quadripartite approach to analysing young British South Asian adults' dual cultural identity. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 33 (9/19), 789-816.
- Du Bois, W.E.B. (1903). *The souls of black folk*. Chicago, IL: A.C. McClung.
- Erekosima, T.V. (1989). Analysis of a learning resource for political integration applicable to Nigerian secondary school social studies. The case of Kalabari men's traditional dress. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.
- Entwistle, J. (2000). *The fashion body. Fashion, dress and modern social theory*. Cambridge, U.K.: Polity.

- Fantasia, R., & Hirsch, L. E. (1995). Culture in rebellion: The appropriation and transformation of the veil in the Algerian revolution, In H. Johnston & B. Klandermas, (Eds.), *Social movements, protest, and contention, Volume 4* (pp.144-159) Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Feinberg, R.A., Mataro, L., & Burroughs, J. W. (1992). Clothing and social identity. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal, 11* (1), 18-23.
- Fisher, A. (1984). *Africa adorned*. New York: Harry N. Abrams.
- Gans, H. (1979). Symbolic ethnicity: The future of ethnic groups and cultures in America. *Ethics and Racial Studies, 2*, 1-20.
- Gilroy, P. (1993). *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and double consciousness*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Guy, A., & Banim, M. (2000). Personal collections: Women's clothing use and identity. *Journal of Gender Studies, 9* (3), 313-327.
- Haddad, Y. Y. (2007). The post-9/11 hijab as icon. *Sociology of Religion, 68*, 253-267.
- Hansen, K.T. (2004). The world in dress: Anthropological perspectives on clothing, fashion, and culture. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 33*, 369-392.
- Hoodfar, H. (2003). *More than clothing: Veiling as an adaptive strategy*. In S.A.H. Sultana, H. Hoodfar, & S. McDonough (Eds.), *The Muslim veil in North America: Issues and debates* (pp.3-40). Toronto: Women's Press.
- Horn, M., & Gurel, L. (1981). *The second skin*. Boston, MA: Houghton.
- Jafari, A., & Suedem, A. (2012). An analysis of the material consumption culture in the Muslim world. *Marketing Theory, 12* (1), 61-79.

- Jaspal, R. (2015). Migration and identity processes among first generation British South Asians. *South Asian Diaspora*, 7 (2), 79-96.
- Kaiser, S.B., Nagasawa, R.H., & Hutton, S.S. (1991). Fashion, postmodernity and personal appearance: A symbolic interactionist formulation. *Symbolic Interaction*, 14 (2), 165-185.
- Kaiser, S.B., & McCullough, S.R. (2010). Entangling the fashion subject through the African diaspora: From not to (k)not in fashion theory. *Fashion Theory*, 14 (3), 361-386.
- Kawamara, Y. (2004). *The Japanese revolution in Paris fashion*. Oxford, U.K.: Berg.
- Kirby, K.A. (2014). Clothing, kinship, and representation: Transnational wardrobes in Michigan's African diaspora communities (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
- Levitt, P., & Waters, M.C. (Eds.) (2002). *The changing face of home: The transnational lives of the second generation*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Lewis, V.D. (2003). Dilemmas in African diaspora fashion. *Fashion Theory*, 7 (2), 163-190.
- Mahmood, S. (2005). *Politics of piety: The Islamic revival and the feminist subject*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Mahtani, M. (2002). Interrogating the hyphen-nation: Canadian multicultural policy and mixed-race identities. In S.P. Hier & B. Singh Bolaria (Eds.), *Rethinking race and ethnicity in Canadian society* (pp. 163-177). Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press Inc.
- McGuire, W.J., McGuire, C.V., Child P, & Fujiota T. (1978). Salience of ethnicity in the spontaneous self-concept as a function of one's ethnic distinctiveness in the social environment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 5 (2), 511-520.
- Michelman, S.O., & Eicher, J.B. (1995). Dress and gender in Kalabari women's societies. *Clothing and Textile Journal*, 13 (2), 121-130.

- Michelman, S.O., & Eicher, J.B. (Eds.). (2000). Feminist issues in textiles and clothing research: Working through/with contradictions. *Clothing and Textile Journal*, 18 (3), 121-127.
- Mohanty, T.C. (1991). Under Western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses. In C.T. Mohanty, A. Russo, & L. Torres (Eds.), *Third world women and the politics of feminism* (pp.51-80). Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indian University Press.
- Nielsen Company (2013). *Ethnic consumers: How to tap into Canada's unprecedented growth opportunity* (pp.1-19). New York.
- Neumann, J. (2011). Fashioning the self: Performance, identity and difference. *Electronic theses and dissertations*. 475. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd/475>
- Noble, G., & Ang, I. (2018). Ethnicity and cultural assumptions in Australia. *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 32 (3), 296-307.
- Omono, G. (2019). *Nation and nationalism: Over here, no Veil allowed* (unpublished manuscript). Ryerson University: Toronto.
- O'Neill, B., Gidegil, E., Cote, C., & Young, L. (2014). Freedom of religion, women's agency and banning the face veil: The role of feminist beliefs in shaping women's opinion. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 19 (11), 1-16.
- Ong, A. (1999). *Flexible citizenship: The cultural logics of transnationality*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Pannabecker, R.K. (1997). Fashion theory: A critical discussion of symbolic interactionist theory in fashion. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journey*, 15 (3), 178-183.
- Parkin, A., & Mendelsohn, M. (2003, October). *A new Canada: An identity shaped by diversity*. (pp.1-24). The CRIC papers. Montreal: Centre for Research and Information on Canada.
- Pereira-Ares, N. (2018). *Fashion, dress and identity in South Asian diaspora narratives: From the eighteenth century to Monica Ali*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Phinney, J. (1990). Ethnic identity in adolescents and adults. Review of research. *Psychological Bulletin*, 108 (3), 499-514.
- Pollack, W. (1990). Sexual harassment: women's experience vs. legal definitions. *Harvard Women's Law Journal*, 35, 35-85.
- Preiholt, H. (2012). From collective selection to individual style: A symbolic transfer in fashion, *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 3 (1), 5-11.
- Rahman, O., Fung, B., & Yeo, A. (2016). Exploring the meanings of hijab through online comments in Canada. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 45 (3), 214-232.
- Ritzer, G. (2008). *Modern sociological theory (7th ed.)*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Roach-Higgins, M., & Eicher, J. (1992). Dress and identity. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 10 (4), 1-8.
- Rovine, V.L. (2009). Viewing Africa through fashion, *Fashion Theory*, 13 (2) 133-139.
- Samuel, E. (2009). Acculturative stress. South Asian immigrant women's experiences in Canada's Atlantic Provinces. *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies*, 7 (1), 16-34.
- Sapir, E. (1937). Fashion. In *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (pp.139-144). New York: Macmillan.
- Schwartz, S. J., Unger, J.B., Zamboanga, B.L., & Szapocznik, J. (2010). Rethinking the concept of acculturation: Implications for theory and research. *American Psychologist*, 65 (4), 237-251.
- Seunghe, L. (2012). Women's clothing and social participation. *Journal of Fashion Business*, 16 (3), 1-12.
- Simmel, G. (1957). Fashion. *American Journal of Sociology*, 62 (6), 541-558.

- Sirin, S., & Katsiafika, D. (2011). *Religiosity, discrimination and community engagement: gendered pathways of Muslim American emerging adults*. New York, NY: Sage Publishing.
- Somerville, K. (2008). Transnational belonging among second generation youth: Identity in a globalized world. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 10 (1), 23-33.
- Solomon, M., Russell-Bennett, R., & Previte, J. (2012). *Consumer behaviour*. French's Forest, N.S.W.: Pearson Education Australia.
- Sproles, G., & Burns, L. (1994). *Changing appearances*. New York: Fairchild Publications.
- Stone, G.P. (1962). Appearance and the self. In A.M. Rose (Ed.), *Human behaviour and the social processes: An interactionist approach* (pp. 86-118). New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- Stryker, S. (1980). *Symbolic interaction, a social structural version*. Menlo Park, CA: Benjamin Cummings.
- Stryker, S., & Burke, P.J. (2000). The past, present, and future of an identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 63 (4), 284-297.
- Taylor, C. (2000). Modernity and difference. In P. Gilroy, L. Grossberg, & A. McRobbie (Eds.), *Without guarantees: In Honor of Stuart Hall* (pp.364-74). New York: Verso.
- Tettey, W.J., & Puplampu, K.P. (2005). Continental Africans in Canada: Exploring a neglected dimension of the African-Canadian experience. In W.J. Tettey & K.P. Puplampu (Eds.), *The African diaspora in Canada: Negotiating identity and belonging* (pp. 3-23). Calgary: University of Calgary Press.
- Tulock, C. (2004). *Black style*. London: V&A Publications.
- Wattanasuwan, K. (2005). The self and symbolic consumption. *Journal of American Academy of Business*, 6 (1), 179-184.

Williams, R. (1958). Culture is ordinary. In J. Higgins (Ed.), *The Raymond Williams reader*.
London: Blackwell.

Wooten, D.B. (1995). One of a kind in a full house: Some consequences of ethnic and gender
distinctiveness. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 4 (3), 205-224.

Zine, J. (2001). *Muslim youth in Canadian schools: Education and the politics of religion
identity*. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 32 (4), 399-423.