

## Modesty in apparel Motivated by Culture, Faith and Health: Review study

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### Abstract

The purpose of this research is to show how modesty is important in our lives from different aspects; such as culture, society, health, and religions (Islam, Christian, Jewish). The objectives of this paper are to explore how modesty could be a protective form in different ways. Findings of this study improves that modesty is a respectful phenomenon within cultures and societies. Although, this study discusses that all religions believe in modesty. However, it enhances that modesty is the best choice for all human-being.

### Keywords

Modesty, Clothing, Fashion, Feminism, Culture.

### الحشمة فى الملابس بدافع من الثقافة والايمان والصحة (دراسة مرجعية)

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الملابس والنسيج

### المستخلص

الغرض من هذا البحث هو إظهار مدى أهمية الحشمة فى حياتنا من جوانب مختلفة؛ مثل الثقافة، المجتمع، الصحة، والدين (الإسلام، المسيحية واليهودية). كما أن هذا المبحث يعتبر نتيجة إستطلاع آراء ٦٧ بحث عن الحشمة وأثرها على الشخص والمجتمع . تهدف هذه الورقة إلى استكشاف كيف يمكن أن تكون الحشمة شكلاً وقائياً بطرق مختلفة مثل أثر الحشمة على الصحة للوقاية من عدة أمراض وكذلك عدم التعرض للمرأة خارج منزلها بالإضافة على أنها مصدر للإحترام والوقار داخل المجتمع. توضح نتائج هذه الدراسة أن الحشمة ظاهرة مقدسة داخل الثقافات والمجتمعات والأديان السماوية الثلاثة، ومع ذلك، فهي تعزز أن الحشمة هو الخيار الأفضل للبشرية جمعاء. كما أن الحشمة لا تعنى بالضرورة الإلتناء إلى مجموعة معينة وإنما هي فطرة الإنسان المتعلم المثقف ولا تمنع بدورها فى إستخدام الموضة طالما هي فى حدود الحشمة والوقار .

### الكلمات المفتاحية

الملابس، الحشمة، العادات والتقاليد، الأديان، النواحي الطبية، الإحترام

## Introduction

“In the last decade, hundreds of advocates in blogs, magazines, and social networking sites have promoted modesty as an empowering style”. (Hahner & Varda, 2012, p. 22) I choose to focus in this study on modesty to prove that modesty in clothing it’s not related only with some cultures or religions or countries. This study is a review of the newest articles in modesty, through societies, cultures as well as medical aspects and faith. Where “many different world religions have rules that dictate how their followers should dress. Often these rules are based on specific teachings of that religion”. (Wearing is believing, 2012) Modesty is not contradictory to fashion, but it is psychological and satisfactory human bean behavior .

Lynch and Strauss’s (Lynch & Strauss, 2007) mentioned in the theory of Rene Konig (1973) that “fashionable behavior was a fundamental form of human psychological functioning”; and the theory of Flugel that the conflict of the human logic in the contradictory toward modesty and display creates duplicity within the self-satisfaction regarding dress styles. (Steele, 1985(

### I. Modesty in culture and society

Many studies examine modesty in societal norms such as rules regarding appearance, culture rules, and women’s desire for freedom for their femininity and to represent themselves without any specific social or cultural identity and without any specific attitude in clothing, and trying to prove that freedom in clothing choice is not a shameful transgression; while some studies had proved that modesty protect from any harassment. (Chowdhury, 2018); (Tankard, 2015); (Kendall & Nouwen, 2016); (Holmes, 2018); (Zahy & Mrad, 2017); (Bonnet & McAlexander, 2013); (Ali & Robin, 2015); (Jabeen, Sunbal, & Taj, 2017); (Papp, Erchull, Liss, Waaland-kreutzer, & Godfrey, 2017); (Walter, 2016); (Abou Joudeh, 2019); (Diez-Arroyo, 2016); (Fowler, 2012); (Millan & Jonathan, 2011); (Mandhachitaraa & Piamphongsant, 2016); (Kearl, 2014); (Skinner-Thompson, 2018); (Neufeld, 2014); (Frederick, 2014 .(

Starting by the question of Blackwell raised in his Study, “Does modesty or lack thereof improve body image, or does it harm how individuals feel about their appearance?” (Blackwell, 2016, p. 1), and upon some literature, we clarify that Modesty proscribing boasting and self-promotion; such as the Māori and Pākehā culture orders (e.g. meeting norms, ways of criticizing others). Wherefore, they mentioned

that the Shame for an individual is regarded as bringing shame on one's iwi (tribe) or whānau (extended family). (Holmes, 2018, p. 51) However, other studies such Hahner & Varda argues that modesty might be productively read as an outgrowth of aesthetic-based feminist claims that equate empowerment with autonomous individual choice. Where the authors mention that in offline sites, modesty advocacy groups and conferences encourage girls and young women to develop a healthy body image not predicated on exterior validation and to resist injurious norms. (Hahner & Varda, 2012, p. 27)

Modesty attitudes could improve the self-expression of a women taking into the appearance of her femininity; and clothing could be an expression of the "self" in the same way as the clothing of the elite. (Tankard, 2015, p. 29) The strength of self-esteem is tested and found to play an important role in moderating the influence of membership in a culture and in professional groups in women's fashionable clothing decisions. (Mandhachitaraa & Piamphongsant, 2016, p. 146)

Other studies search for Modesty and Feminism and "how modesty in many forms influenced body image" (Blackwell, 2016, p. ii); (Hahner & Varda, 2012); (Mossière, 2012); (Gibertson, 2014); (Mandhachitaraa & Piamphongsant, 2016); (Tankard, 2015).

Additionally, Hahner & Varda study focusses on a discourse that encourage modesty and feminist criticisms of modesty. Popular feminist critics have responded by labeling modesty as a postfeminist advocacy that simply employs the language of feminism to promote aims that injure girls and young women and the goals of feminist projects. The authors mention that "the girl or young woman chooses a personal style in order to change the social;" In a similar tenor to the flirty or girlie style of feminism taken up under the banner of "girl power," modesty becomes an aesthetic that resists normative roles ."

As well as in most popular descriptions, the modesty movement is defined as a collective of girls and young women who reject the "do-me" attitude of the present and insist that dressing demurely and cultivating the virtues of modesty will exert more control over selfhood." (Hahner & Varda, 2012, p. 25) Where the Māori and Pākehā culture in New Zealand focus on "sociocultural norms, and introduce the concept of the culture order, which could be regarded as a potential sociolinguistic universal, manifested in different ways in different societies and social contexts." (Holmes, 2018, p. 33)

“Modesty’s claims of empowerment may express significant relationships to feminisms; and clearly, modesty may simply be the obverse of suggesting that provocative dress is a mode of empowerment, a claim predicated on viewing the aesthetics of self and individualized agency as the key to social change”. This study of Hahner & Varda study invited feminist scholars to teach from, the debate between popular feminists and modesty advocates. (Hahner & Varda, 2012, p. 36)

### **1- Modesty is imposed in culture**

As several commonly identified topics of accusation in the Roman tradition of ridicule was unusual appearance, clothing or demeanor. (Neufeld, 2014) Similarly, American Women in Nineteenth-Century viewed the dress as a social improvement, as “better” clothing that did not impede their health and that empowered them to participate more fully in American society. (Mas, 2017, p. 38) Another study explores and describes the clothing of the rural poor in seventeenth-century England as rough, hardwearing, modest and home-produced, is integral to this representation of the countryside. Simply, the rural poor would not want fashionable clothes even if they could afford them.” It could be an expression of the ‘self’ in the same way as the clothing of the elite. (Tankard, 2015, p. 29)

Drawing on twelve months of fieldwork in suburban Hyderabad, a study explored the double binds experienced by middle-class young women as they attempt to meet the competing demands of ‘respectable’ and ‘fashionable’ femininity. Whereas “middle-class women, respectability requires purposeful movement, demure posture and modest clothing when in public, as well as avoidance of lower-class spaces where men congregate.” Gibertson mention that “In Hyderabad a woman’s appearance—her dress, hairstyle, makeup, comportment and modes of speech—are interpreted as signs of her class background, her and her family’s ideals regarding male-female relationships, and her degree of ‘exposure’.” (Gibertson, 2014, p. 146)

In Hyderabad, “for a woman to be ‘modern’ or ‘fast’ is not a compliment”, As Clarinda Still has argued, “Honor and shame are linked to boundaries and their violation. Still’s study, conducted in 2007 (as cited in Gibertson, 2014, p. 158) shows that more boundaries and self-control a woman has (through veiling, seclusions, restricted movement and interaction), and the more she guards her shame, the more honor she brings to the family”. Gibertson mentions that

"expectations of modesty and respectability are not fixed and uniform for all women. Indeed, expectations of modesty and respectability are a key mechanism in the production of new distinctions between different sections of an increasingly fragmented middle class." He ends with an opinion "Respectability, therefore, requires either limits to movement, overt display of respectability in terms of dress or comportment, or the ability to physically separate oneself from the dirt and disorder of the outside." (Gibertson, 2014, p. 157)

An "Independent and interdependent self-views and their influence on clothing consumption" study examined the influence of individualism and collectivism at an individual level, in the context of an emergent market economy of Eastern Europe, in Bulgaria. The effects of the psychological constructs of independent/interdependent self on a few clothing-related consumer behavior phenomena are examined. Hypotheses of this study are developed with research objectives; like Independent self-concept and preference for self-expressive and hedonic meaning of clothing artefacts; Clothing artefacts are an important means of self-expression". "This study is based on a cross-sectional survey. The questionnaire was pre-tested on 15 respondents. Face-to-face interviews were then conducted with some 1,000 respondents at their homes, using a random multi-stage sampling procedure ."

"The largest segment of respondents comprises consumers who hold simultaneously independent and interdependent self-views, thus providing support for the notion that the relationship between individualism and collectivism is complex, and individualist and collectivist values do not characterize two opposite cultural dimensions, at least not in the Bulgarian context." (Milan & Reynolds, 2011, p. 168)

Furthermore, in the Middle East, the Abaya, predominantly stereotyped as religious and conservative clothing, has experienced a significant transformation in the last few years, shifting from a plain and demure garment that signified tradition, to a style statement symbolizing grace, elegance, and charm. A Fashionable Stereotypes and Evolving Trends study examine women's dress practices in the United Arab Emirates to investigate how the clash between conventional religious modesty and modernity displays different forms of consumption behavior toward the abaya by a focus groups and in-depth interviews trying to understand the key transformation triggers regarding the globally stereotyped garment—the abaya. Based on the

research findings, consumers' consumption behavior of abaya depends on what social occasion the purchase is being made for. The study's findings were that consumers requiring four types of abayas: (1) trendy and comfortable, (2) practical and conservative, (3) trendy and unique, and (4) special and premium. Findings also revealed that Arab women are highly fashion conscious with what they wear under the abaya as they use branded items, the latest fashion clothing, and accessories." (Zahy & Mrad, 2017)

Walter mentioned that shame in Gilgit-Baltistan is omnipresent in women's lives in the suburban conglomerations of the city of Gilgit in northern Pakistan, in the adjacent villages and nearby valleys. Women express their modesty through shame. Being singled out individually in a society with strict collective orientation turns a woman into an object of gossip and threatens the loss of one's family's honor. Accordingly, the traits of modesty and shame follows an inner drive for self-discipline in front of men and is, as Bourdieu states, a significant part of women's "habitus."

In the area of Gilgit, shame is women's embodied expression of "pardah". Their fear of exposure is always connected to the (potential) presence of men and modest behavior serves as the standard of femininity. Girls who adhere to this are depicted as "shermati" (modest, shy). The concept of "Sharm" cannot be plainly rendered with the English term "shame" but relates to a much wider cultural understanding of modesty, chastity, reserve and embarrassment. The term "sharminda" (embarrassed, ashamed) is clearly negative for the women in Gilgit. The feeling of being ashamed, or even humiliated, arises when committing major moral and social mistakes, such as being overheard when gossiping or flirting with men. (Walter, 2016, p. 171)

Goffman's study, conducted in (1956/1990) (as cited in Walter, 2016, P. 170) shows how women not only act or demonstrate modesty in public, but also feel embarrassment. Within the context, this article lends content and meaning to the social concept of "Sharm" from a female perspective in Gilgit-Baltistan. By analyzing "Sharm" as double embodiment of the "pardah habitus", it was demonstrated how "Sharm" is perceived as modest behavior, as well as embarrassment by women in the district of Gilgit, was demonstrated. When individuals appreciatively spoke about a noble, "Shermati" girl, they generally described her modest, reserved manner, passive body language and conformity to social gender norms. (Walter, 2016, p. 180)

Meanwhile, the term “slut” is commonly used against women in the United States to judge them as not complying with society’s gender norms and explains the "shame" for clothing choices. A study presented 186 self-identified feminist and non-feminist female college students with a Facebook interaction in which one woman calls another woman a “slut.” The interaction included a photograph of the target, in which she was dressed either “provocatively” or “conservatively.” Participants generally had negative perceptions about the “shamer,” but results showed that both social class and clothing influenced how women perceived both the “slut” and the “shamer.” (Papp, Erchull, Liss, Waaland-kreutzer, & Godfrey, 2017)

Accordingly, to a Religiosity and Voluntary Simplicity study, results not only identify a prosocial role of intrinsic religiosity in motivating voluntary simplicity, but also indicate that secular pursuits that enhance communal/personal well-being and environmental well-being may also motivate voluntary simplicity. (Chowdhury, 2018)

## **2- Modesty in Workplaces**

A strong relationship appears between the main character traits of a woman and her choice of dress. (Abou Joudeh, 2019) An analyzing study for the U.S versus Chinese fashion magazine advertisements by Fowler, introduced the professional type of woman as one who tends "to be featured in different styles of clothing and in a different background context than the nurturer. According to the word association tests, she may be wearing a business suit. These type of women are successful, strong, confident and sure of herself." (Fowler, 2012, p. 10)

The study mentions that both images of the professional type include professional-seeming dress. In both ads in the study, the model "reflecting the independence of the modern Western woman. Though neither is pictured in an office, both appear to be women who work in part because of their attire and the poses they’ve adopted." And for the classic type Based upon some literature, they mention that "the classic type is potentially influenced by “old fashion” and they tend to be traditional or conservative". (Fowler, 2012, p. 14) That what we found its meets with using of the English words ‘lady’ and ‘preppy’ is used to indicate a classic and neat look; which sends us back to past times of classicism, modesty and virtuous demeanor. (Diez-Arroyo, 2016, p. 33)

Women in politics often assume a monolithic standard of femininity, overlooking the ways in which gender values are varied and deeply racialized. A study takes the case of Political Women in Texas (Race,

Gender & the Deciding to Run Accounts); it gathered results through 46 interviews conducted with women leaders and political activists in Texas by Frederick. "A racialized standard of femininity has emerged in candidates' responses to a question I asked about how they dressed on the campaign trail. This question elicited emotionally charged responses from the white candidates, who had a great deal to say about the pressure they experienced to get their appearance "right." Suzanne had the following to say, I had to change the way I dressed. You can't look sexy, and you can't show too much." (Frederick, 2014, p. 309)

Another study taking Professional Women's Fashionable Clothing Decisions in Bangkok and New York City by Mandhachitaraa & Piamphongsant, with an objective to learn how much of the variances between women's fashionable clothing decisions can be explained by (1) membership of Eastern (collectivistic) and Western (individualistic) cultural groups, (2) membership of three major professional groups, and (3) level of self-esteem. (Mandhachitaraa & Piamphongsant, 2016, p. 135)

The authors identify five dimensions of women's fashionable clothing decisions: clothing concerns, fashion consciousness, fashion conformity motivation, susceptibility to interpersonal influence, and variety-seeking behavior. Moreover, they mentioned also that cultures play an important role in shaping their members' attitudes, rituals, thought processes, and consumption and that everyone within a cultural group differs to some extent in her ideas of what is an appropriate dressing style .

The primary data collection was conducted through online and face-to-face self-administered questionnaires with professional women aged 21 to 50 years old working in Bangkok (233 women) and New York City (158 women). The analysis of the three professional groups within and between cultural comparisons yields an in-depth understanding of the differences in personal and interpersonal determinants toward fashion and the subsequent evaluation in clothing decisions. Finally, the strength of self-esteem is tested and found to play an important role in moderating the influence of membership in a culture and in professional groups in women's fashionable clothing decisions. (Mandhachitaraa & Piamphongsant, 2016, p. 146)

A study of "Good Muslim women at work: An Islamic and postcolonial perspective on ethnic privilege " mentions that female employees in Pakistan also participated in this study to develop an

Islamic and postcolonial perspective on ethnic privilege, which is unique not only due to contextual and cultural differences but also due to its postcolonial nature and composition. Drawing on a qualitative study of Muslim female employees in Pakistan, this study shows that religio-ethnic privilege represents postcolonial influences of a foreign (Arab-Salafi, ultra-orthodox Islamist) culture on a (non-Arab Muslim) society, and as such does not represent ethnic norms of a local mainstream society. Also, it investigates the case of religio-ethnic privilege and female employment in Pakistan and examines how a foreign-influenced stereotype of female modesty is used to benchmark and preferentially treat ‘good Muslim women.’ The analysis shows that an Islamic and postcolonial lens may be needed to understand the nature and implications of religio-ethnic privilege at work in Muslim majority countries and societies. (Ali & Syed, Good Muslim women at work: An Islamic and postcolonial perspective on ethnic privilege, 2018)

In addition, Influence of Clothing on Librarian presents an image-rating of librarian behaviors can affect impressions of approachability prior to the reference transaction. Bonnet & McAlexander used in their study an image-rating method that allowed for manipulation of the independent variables of target affect and clothing, with balancing of the potentially confounding factors of target gender, age, and race. Findings mentions that male librarians wearing formal clothing were perceived as more approachable than their baseline images in informal clothing, while the opposite was true for females. Findings suggest that librarian behaviors do matter, with specific treatments resulting in increased or decreased perceptions of approachability. These findings support common sense assessments that an attentive and welcoming environment is essential to encouraging patrons to engage with librarians. (Bonnet & McAlexander, 2013, p. 335)

## **II. Modesty and protection**

In the words of a 35 years old journalist, “Nowadays no female is safe whether she is a 6 years old girl or an old lady of 60.” (Jabeen, Sunbal, & Taj, 2017, p. 98)

Starting by the Privacy's double standards – Tort law, Allen & Mack study, conducted in 1990 (as cited in Skinner-Thompson, 2018, p. 2079) mention that “tort was built off gendered notions of female modesty that suggested women were vulnerable and in need of protection .”

The national street harassment report shows a different cases related to Unsafe cities and harassed in public spaces ; such as South Dakota where it demonstrates a “community discussion about what is considered acceptable in that community”; as ideas for stopping street harassment. (Kearl, 2014, p. 25)

Whereas, "modest seductiveness" study takes conflicting notions of modesty and vanity in the Arab Gulf region by focusing on contemporary female adornment practices and the tensions underlying them. The standard of modest traditional dress that women are expected to adhere to in Gulf countries is intended to conceal their sexuality and promote public virtue. Authors found that the concepts of reverse assimilation and double resistance are most useful in understanding responses to these conflicting imperatives among young Gulf women. (Sobh, Belk , & Gressel, 2012)

An exploratory study of sexual harassment (SH) in Pakistani organizations identifies that there is a tension between traditional culture and behavior consistent with SH policies in the workplace. This study identifies three major factors which influence SH redressal; these are socio-cultural factors (e.g., female modesty), institutional factors (e.g., inappropriate redress procedures), and managerial expertise/bias.

Findings demonstrate that managers bring their cultural practices to the workplace and are influenced by their individual biases. Through the experiences of female employees, it was evident that male HR managers practice gender bias in the workplace in relation to SH issues. The study helped to identify complexities of SH in the workplace. It suggests that female employees who face SH do not feel comfortable discussing this issue because of the cultural norms involving modesty and shame. Women need to have the self-confidence in order to distinguish—and report without fear—between casual, friendly comments and sexual intimidation and blackmail. (Ali & Robin, An exploratory study of sexual harassment in Pakistani organizations, 2015, p. 245)

In addition, an empirical study based on a research conducted to investigate the relationship of sexual harassment with mobility of females, going out daily, in Lahore Metropolitan used 600 females (15 to 35 years) were grouped into three categories of: students, working women and housewives to get their opinion about extent of the problem and suggestions to tackle the problem of sexual harassment in the absence of legal definition (including legal response) of street sexual

harassment in Pakistan. This paper discusses the results of a study into the relationship between mobility and sexual harassment of women while they go about their everyday lives, the consequent effect on women's mobility, their future aspirations, the need for a cultural shift in terms of women perceived and real status and place in society .

In fact, the Pakistan Penal Code clearly states that, any kind of harassment is a crime punishable by up to three years' imprisonment or a fine of up to five lacs or both; but results illustrate that female victims of SH reported that management do not take complaints seriously or take appropriate actions against such complaints. (Jabeen, Sunbal, & Taj, 2017, p. 92)

This paper has presented the findings from a study of the relationship between everyday harassment women have to contend with when they are going to and from work/school/college/university, the markets or leisure activities. In the nut shell, the study concluded that there are so many ways, including staring, cat calls, touching and so forth, to harass females when they are out and without any male company. (Jabeen, Sunbal, & Taj, 2017, p. 98)

### III. Modesty and Religions

Studies focused on issues such as the modesty in clothing from the religious prospective in Islamic, Christian and Jewish faiths (Tarlo & Moors, 2013); (Mossière, 2012); (Geller, et al., 2018); (Frenkel, Latzer, & Lev-Wiesel, 2018); (Blackwell, 2016); (El-Bassiouny, 2017); (Bullock, 2015); (Boulanouar, Aitken, Boulanouar, & Todd, 2017); (Ali & Syed, 2018); (Jones, 2015); (L. & Jr., 2018); (Jones, 2015). Where they all reflected the edcite of "Modesty."

#### a) Modesty in Islam

"The character of Islam is modesty" (Malik, c750/1997, 47.2.9). (Boulanouar, Aitken, Boulanouar, & Todd, 2017, p. 7) A simple sentence Have a lot of meanings. The subject of Modest in clothing for both sexes, especially the Hijab was reviewed by many studies. Finding are that modesty meets in many forms to protect the femininity whilst maintaining the good appearance and body image.

McCosker et al.'s study, conducted in 2001 (as cited in (McCosker, Barnard, & Gerber,, 2001, p. 9)) mention that while some topics may be "sensitive" for Muslim respondents, some topics which are generally regarded as "sensitive" in the west may not be .

By reviewing the relevant literature about modesty and Islam; I highlighted a book review about Islamic fashion and anti-fashion mentioned that a new perspectives from Europe and North America “offers a fresh new look at veiling, its intersection with religious piety, family, community, religious authority, fashion, and commoditization through sixteen distinct studies ranging from clothing items like the burqini and the pardosu to larger issues surrounding identity and politics, such as North American Islamophobia and its impact on Canadian Muslims. This book represents a large field of research on Muslim women’s lived experiences, one that reveals the complexities inherent in these religious actors whose choices of dress reveal a large set of competing values, desires, and commitments.” (Tarlo & Moors, 2013, p. 105(

Moreover, a study of Modesty and style in Islamic attire conducted with female converts to Islam in France and in Quebec, (Canada) shows that, for these women, being Muslim does not necessarily mean wearing clothes with ‘oriental’ designs. Rather, they are starting their own clothing companies to produce distinct Muslim-Western fashions that they promote through the Internet with a style that “combines modesty with intimacy and grace”. (Mossière, 2012, p. 115(

In this regard, the strategies that they develop for wearing the veil and for integrating into their environment (family, workplace, etc.) make it clear that fashion, religion and politics are interacting in multiple, creative ways. This study looks at how new Muslim feminist subjectivities are produced and realized through habits of dress, resulting in new representations of the body. (Mossière, 2012, p. 115(

The author stated that she felt her appearance “androgynous, or less feminine” when compared to the recent Muslim female converts (80 interviews) in France and in Quebec. The case of women converts to Islam in France and Quebec shows that fashion is shaped by the increased flows of multiple cultural, religious, moral and ethical resources, by the fluidity of their circulation as well as by the resistances that they encounter, leading individuals to constantly negotiate between modernity and tradition, between global and local.” (Mossière, 2012, p. 133(

Another study used an online forum created on social media with Egyptian hijabinsta consumers delved into the intricate relationships between hijab culture and consumption and shows that the hijab fashion experience combines authentic religious meanings with cultural ones.

Where the consumers of hijab have noted that the hijab experience gives them a sense of freedom, modesty and femininity. The results showed that the hijab phenomenon is authentic to religious tenets rather than for fashion per se. As one of the respondents highlighted, it is a symbol of freedom from an excessive attachment to the fashion industry. (El-Bassiouny, 2017, p. 303 (

Similarly, a first paper of its kind in English was written to support especially western, non-Muslim researchers accessing and gathering data from groups of Muslim women explain approaches to “conservative” Muslim women in societies across the globe. These women are “conservative” in that they avoid anything considered “doubtful”. The study mentions that modesty (haya’) is an integral part of Islamic teaching, in fact, the Prophet Mohammed (s) said, “Every deen (“way of life”) has an innate character; and Muslims in general are encouraged not to draw attention to themselves in terms of dress or speech or loud laughing, for example, and it is a part of maintaining the privacy and respect for the other gender. And as the authors said modesty is manifested in several ways – physically, conceptually/psychologically and spiritually/religiously. (Boulanouar, Aitken, Boulanouar, & Todd, 2017, p. 7(

### **b)Modesty in Christianity**

Blackwell tried to determine in his study “the impact of Christian identity on modesty and how modesty in many forms influenced body image”. He mentions that “Modesty could be a major factor in how religiosity interacts with body image. Therefore, using the social identity approach, it was deemed vital to examine the influence of religious identity on modesty, body image, and dress.” (Blackwell, 2016, p. 2)

The study used an online survey of 428 adult Christian women, the importance of a Christian identity was explored as well as how these women constructed and evaluated their appearance. Findings mention that “Religious beliefs about the body and personal values such as prayer, positively influenced religious or respect driven modesty." in addition, these types of modesty influenced body image such as appearance evaluation and body surveillance." These findings suggested when rooted in a Christian identity, modesty functioned as a filter and armor. When personal values and beliefs about the body are emphasized, modesty is armor or a defense against negative body messages. In essence, “Studying modesty and body image through the lens of religious identity showed that that these concepts are all connected”.

When about 95% of women experience normative discontent with their bodies, that reality is a problem that can be relieved. Here, “Modesty discussions in churches tend to focus on women and what they can do to dress modestly and how men can avert their gaze from women if a woman is dressed immodestly. The result of these studies brings wholeness to body image and better health to mind and body. Everyone has a sense of modesty; especially when we prove that modesty can be protective. (Blackwell, 2016, p. 96)

### c) Modesty in Judaism

Modesty in the Jewish faith is defined as preserving a traditional feminine role, especially in ultra-Orthodox women. A study of body image dissatisfaction has been associated with harmful effects on the psychological well-being of women in western societies. (Geller, et al., 2018), here religions have been suggested to be a protective factor against body image dissatisfaction, though its precise mechanisms are not fully understood .

Geller, et al. study’s investigated the relationship between religious denominations and body image, both positive and negative. Further, it examined strength of religious faith, media exposure, and modesty, as possible mediating factors underlying this relationship .

Participants were 483 Jewish women ages between 18 and 30 years, belonging to ultra-Orthodox, modern-Orthodox, or to a secular population. Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they cover various parts of their body when in public using a 5-point scale ranging from Bnever^ to Balways. The scale score is obtained as the sum of the responses regarding 12 body parts which are relevant for religious Jewish women, including: Elbows, collarbones, knees, legs, wrist, hair, thighs, abdomen, foot, shoulder, chest cleavage, and armpit. Findings confirmed that Jewish denomination affiliation is associated with women’s body image. Particularly, in agreement with our first hypothesis, ultra-Orthodox women maintain more positive attitudes regarding their bodies and suffer less from body image dissatisfaction than secular Jewish women .

Importantly, For Positive body image differed between the Ultra-Orthodox group and the other two groups, and this relationship was fully mediated both by media exposure and by strength of religious faith. For negative body image, secular women differed from the two other groups, and this relationship was fully mediated only by media exposure. These findings are discussed in light of sociocultural influences, and related clinical implications”.

Moreover, ultra-orthodox Jewish women are expected to marry at a young age, and afterwards to preserve a traditional feminine role, dress very modestly, only revealing the face and neck in public. The attitude toward them is in accordance with Halacha laws. It includes behavioral codes and many obligations, especially in terms of modesty. Results clarify how they describe and drew illustrations of themselves with long skirts, covered heads, long sleeves and neck areas covered significantly by blouses. The women also made sure to note that modesty is important to them. It is more important for ultra-orthodox Jewish women to emphasize that they are modest, compared with the National-Religious women, and, their clothing plays a role as a shield for modesty. Women (Frenkel, Latzer, & Lev-Wiesel, 2018, p. 80)

Jones mention in his article that: "On Religious Diversity and Tolerance," Philip L. Quinn argues that: "modesty leads to tolerance of other religions". (Jones, 2015, p. 73)

In addition, many studies about modest dress include the concept of 'fashion.' For many women who dress modestly, this is not particularly special, as they live daily the travails of seeking nice, fashionable clothing that is long or loose enough to be purchased. As so it has been that some Jewish, Christian, and Muslim women entrepreneurs have opened stores, and designed and sold their own clothes, finding that many women want to dress modestly, but also be stylish and fashionable when they do so. (Bullock, 2015, p. 399)

#### **IV. Modesty and health aspects**

There are limited studies on the health benefits of modesty in that a protective layer of clothing can protect from the sun's harmful rays and help reduce the number of incidence of skin cancer. There are also studies on the harmfulness of very tight clothing such as tight jeans on the health; and demand the reduction for thigh clothing such jeans and bras to decrease the breast cancer, and Stress on physical structure for pregnant women and children's, and Stress on physical structure (muscles and bones). (Miskulin, Orkic, & Miskulin, 2015); (Adeniba & Harriss, 2019); (McNoe & Reeder, 2019); (Moon & Lee, 2018); (Mas, 2017); (Yoo, 2016); (Bryant, Zucca, Brozek, Rock, & Bonevski, 2015); (Major, 2015); (Takehara, et al., 2015); (Nahar, et al., 2014); (McWhirter & Hoffman-Goetz, 2015); (Yuxiu, Jie, Zimin Jin, & Jianwei, 2014); (Sobh, Belk, & Gressel, 2012); (Who, What, Why: Are skinny jeans bad for your health?, 2015); (McLeod, Insch, & Henry, 2011)

### **i.Skin diseases**

Hidradenitis Suppurativa (HS) is an inflammatory skin disease that causes painful lesions and scarring and which, though rare, can have disabling effects, both physical and mental. (HS) is a chronic, disabling condition that often relentlessly progresses. Occurring in often otherwise healthy adolescents and adults, this rare disease manifests in painful lesions that may cause hypertrophic scars and immobility. (World Union of Wound Healing Societies (WUWHS), 2016) It affects around 1% of the population in Europe, often occurring in otherwise healthy adolescents and adults, with women being three times more likely to be affected than men and it affects African and Afro-Caribbean populations. (Adeniba & Harriss, 2019, p. 25)

The HS affect a psychological aspects of Hidradenitis suppurativa especially that "The skin is the largest and most visual organ of the body and has an important role in interpersonal relationships, self-esteem and perception of self and public image. People with HS can struggle with certain aspects of their lives because of its effects". There are limited options for effective treatment of HS. Whereas some advice includes the use of "antiseptic soaps, tea tree oil, wearing cotton underwear, loose clothing (including avoiding tight jeans/ trousers), soft/friction free brassieres (or no brassieres at all) and hold-up hosiery in preference to tights". (Slade, Powell, & Mortimer, 2003, p. 457)

This study explores the effects of HS on a woman employed as a passenger vehicle driver. It assesses the impact of her health on her ability to conduct her role and the recommendations for adjustments to support her return to work following her hospital admissions. Emma (pseudonym), 36, is of Afro-Caribbean ethnicity and worked full-time in a safety-critical role. Any type of personal impairment can endanger the lives of the individual and others. (Carter, Major, Evans, & Colvin, 2013 as cited in Palmer, Brown, & Hobson, 2013 in Adeniba & Harriss, 2019, p. 25)

Emma was diagnosed with HS three years previously. It has had a significant impact on Emma's physical and psychological wellbeing, causing embarrassment and depression, painful skin tension and psychological distress. It has triggered fever and fatigue, preventing her from performing everyday activities such as carrying shopping and dressing because of her limited limb mobility from dermal contractures and lymphoedema. (World Union of Wound Healing Societies (WUWHS), 2016, p. 4) Emma indicated she was unable to wear her bra

because of the location of the abscesses. From the recommendations discussed with Emma is:” Wearing a looser-fitting uniform to prevent any friction against her wound.” (Adeniba & Harriss, 2019, p. 28)

Furthermore, Skin cancer is a significant public health problem also among Canadians. The aim of this study was to describe the volume and nature of coverage of skin cancer and recreational tanning in Canadian women’s magazines by analysis on article text and images in six popular Canadian women’s magazines (Chatelaine, Canadian Living, Homemakers, Flare, FASHION, ELLE Canada) from 2000–2012 with attention to risk factors, ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure and protection behaviors, and early detection .

Six popular American women’s magazines were used for a between-country comparison to determine whether articles focused on skin cancer and tanning by examining the title, byline, introductory paragraph, and amount of space (>75%) devoted to the issues. There were 154 articles (221 images) about skin cancer and tanning published on skin cancer or tanning in six popular Canadian women’s magazines between 2000 and 2012 (over 13 years). 72% of articles promoted sunscreen use, little content encouraged other protection behaviors. Over a decade of Canadian women’s magazine reporting on skin cancer and tanning has focused on UV exposure as a risk factor and sunscreen use as a protection behavior; however, little attention was given to other risk factors, other UV protection or avoidance behaviors, and information about early detection. (McWhirter & Hoffman-Goetz, 2015, p. 242)

Figure 1: skin cancer and tanning published per year (2000-2012) in six Canadian women’s magazines (McWhirter & Hoffman-Goetz, 2015, p. 239)

Australia is a multi-cultural society with a high proportion of individuals from an Asian, Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and Indian background, (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2009-2010 as cited in Bryant, Zucca, Brozek, Rock, & Bonevski, 2015, p. 248) who generally have Skin Type IV which does not burn easily .

In addition this country has “has one of the highest reported skin cancer incidence rates in the world”, (skin cancer, 2014 as cited Nahar, et al., 2014, p. 468) but little is known about the knowledge, attitudes and sun protection practices of first generation Australian-born individuals with olive and darker skin types. This study conducts with six focus groups in the summer months of January and February 2012,

with first generation Australian-born individuals of Asian, Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and Indian background. (Bryant, Zucca, Brozek, Rock, & Bonevski, 2015, p. 248) A big Skin cancer prevention campaigns in Australia that had significant success; they use such the Slip! Slop! Slap! Campaign and the more recent Sun Smart campaign have encouraged individuals to reduce their sun exposure by adopting protective behaviors including using sunscreen and wearing protective clothing, shirt with sleeves, sunglasses and a hat. (Sinclair, Borland, Davidson , & Noy, 1996 as cited in Bryant, Zucca, Brozek, Rock, & Bonevski, 2015, p. 249)

Focus groups conducted with ethnic minorities found that darker skin color was correctly perceived as protective to the development of skin cancer. (Robinson, Joshi, Ortiz, & Kundu, 2011 as cited in Bryant, Zucca, Brozek, Rock, & Bonevski, 2015, p. 249)

Correspondingly, a study on sun protection uniforms - Skin cancer preventative and behaviors in state park workers had Considered the potential for occupational sun exposure among state park workers, the purpose of this pilot study was to identify skin cancer knowledge, health beliefs, self-efficacy, and sun protection behaviors (SPBs) among state park employees. The current study used a cross-sectional survey research design with state park workers in a Southern state (23 state parks). Of the 94 possible employees who could have participated in the study, 87 completed the survey .

The most commonly reported barriers to sun protection were “inconvenient,” “too hot to wear,” and “forget to protect.” Half of the participants (50.6 %) were highly confident in their ability to wear long pants while in the sun. 56.3 % of the respondents perceived that there were benefits of wearing long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Almost half (47.1 %) reported that if they wear a wide-brimmed hat, they are less likely to develop skin cancer”. In summary, based on the available evidence, worksite programs and interventions should be developed to increase skin cancer prevention behaviors among state park workers. (Nahar, et al., 2014, p. 472)

Likewise, in New Zealand also has the highest incidence rate for cutaneous malignant melanoma, the deadliest of the skin cancers. (International Agency for Research on Cancer.; WHO, 2014 as cited in McNoe & Reeder, 2019, p. 46)

To assess sun protection policies and practices in New Zealand primary schools. Schools can play an important role in educating about

risk and protective practices as well as implementing policies which will help to protect students and staff from UVR damage. (DC Whiteman Affiliation: Epidemiology and Population Health Unit, Whiteman, & Green, 2001) as cited in (McNoe & Reeder, 2019, p. 46)

This paper is to report the findings from a nationwide survey of primary school principals (from both Sun Smart accredited and non-accredited schools) on their schools' sun protection policies and practices. Principals at 1,243 schools (62% of eligible primary schools) completed a survey about school: 1) provision of personal and environmental sun protection, 2) sun protection practices. Virtually all schools (94%) had a sun protection policy/procedure about which their community was informed (96%)

Of the 2,013 schools invited, more than 90% of respondents reported that their school had either a sun protection policy (57%) or procedure (37%). Of the remaining schools, most respondents were either unsure whether there was a sun protection policy/procedure in place or reported that sun protection was included in another policy (usually Health and Safety). (McNoe & Reeder, 2019, p. 47)

#### ii. Tight clothing: Damage and Diseases

Identically, after the several studies mentioned above; researchers identified others several diseases such breasts cancer, Spinal Diseases, etc. Catherine Mas indicate in her article "the Reform Dress as Technology in Nineteenth-Century America", that corsetry garments caused many problems in muscles and spinal diseases. Where she tried to illustrate in (figure 2) the "inner muscles of the back" and a skeleton with "single curvature" of the spine; on the right, a "double curvature" of the spine. Below are illustrations of the clothing associated with spinal disease, compared to the clothing fit for the natural body. (Trall, 1852 as cited in Mas, 2017, p. 49)

Figure 2: Effect of tight dresses on muscles and Spinal (women of Nineteenth Century America) (Mas, 2017, p. 49)

Additionally, the fashion for "skinny jeans" adopted by many young people as stylish comes with health concerns, doctors have warned that wearing "skinny jeans" may lead to serious damage to nerves and muscles. Who, What, why: Are skinny jeans bad for your health? Is a published article by BBC News. It highlights the case of a 35-year-old Australian woman who developed a condition called compartment syndrome, caused by bleeding or swelling within muscles, which an article in the Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery and

Psychiatry stated was made worse by her adoption of the fashion for skinny jeans. This is not the first documented occurrence of tight legwear being subject to health warnings. Other researchers have identified several cases where patients have developed pain or tingling in their thighs after wearing "tight new fashion low cut trousers ."

In addition, men are warned that skinny jeans can lead to a condition known as twisted testicles. They are typically urged to wear looser undergarments when they and their partner are trying to conceive, says general practitioner Dr. Sarah Jarvis, because high temperatures caused by tight clothing around the private parts are thought to have a negative effect on sperm production. People with urinary tract infections are advised to avoid skinny jeans. Tight trousers have also been blamed for exacerbating heartburn by putting pressure on the abdomen, which in turn pushes stomach acid upwards - although Jarvis says that "tightness of the woman's jeans apparently caused her muscles to swell inwards rather than outwards, and the fact she was squatting for extended periods also worsened the situation". She adds "if you go to the gym and forget your tracksuit bottoms, it's best not to exercise in tight-fitting denims". (Who, What, Why: Are skinny jeans bad for your health?, 2015)

Similarly, Won-gyu Yoo points to the effect of wearing tight pants on the trunk flexion and pelvic tilting angles in the stand-to-sit movement and a seated posture. He focused his study on a sample of nine male subjects aged 20–27 years. The trunk flexion angle and pelvic posterior tilting angle were measured using a motion capture system during the stand-to-sit movement and in a seated posture. Results found that that trunk flexion and the posterior pelvic tilting angles during the stand-to-sit movement and in the seated posture when wearing tight pants significantly increased compared with those when wearing of general pants .

Therefore, wearing tight pants could produce musculoskeletal disorders via abnormal movement and posture in the lumbar spine and pelvis. So, the effects of wearing tight pants needs to be investigated in further studies to reveal their direct relationship to musculoskeletal problems. (Yoo, 2016, p. 93)

Furthermore, a woman's body undergoes many changes due to hormonal effects during pregnancy to support the uterus. Besides that, the wearing of tight clothes can therefore interfere with these physical changes and cause discomfort. Women may be unaware that tight

clothing can constrict their growing body. In addition, midwives preclude using constrictive clothing for pregnant women, where they reflect negatively on the uterus and abdomen and that tension may due a risk of miscarriage or premature delivery .

A study about "pregnant women on avoiding constrictive clothing" is designed to verify the effect of a unique intervention program, that is, advice from healthcare professionals to pregnant women about types of clothing and how to wear them to reduce the risk of premature birth and improve QoL (quality of life) during pregnancy. during pregnancy. This study focused on a sample of 616 pregnant women scheduled to give birth at the National Center for Child Health and Development in Tokyo, Japan where primary outcome was measured with some variables: (1) cervical length <30 mm up to 28 weeks' gestation, (2) admission to hospital for threatened premature delivery or (3) premature delivery (gestational age <37 weeks). However, based on the results they indicate that constriction of the trunk has an adverse effect on health. (Takehara, et al., 2015, p. 5)

There are instances when an element of constriction is beneficial in garments an example of which is sports bras. The performance of the fabric and the way in which they are engineered is beneficial not only to improve motor function and physical quality of human movement; and to protect the body from damage and reduce fatigue. (Yuxiu, Jie, Zimin Jin, & Jianwei, 2014, p. 501) From here, Yuxiu, Jie, Zimin Jin, & Jianwei clarified in their study the relationship between dynamic clothing pressure of women's sports bras and heart rate variation indexes during playing basketball. They focused on a sample of 35 healthy females aged between 20 and 24; they observe the pressure when wearing sports bras of different bust sizes (66 cm/64 cm/62 cm) during playing basketball were measured using Polar RS800CX heart rate monitor and Flexi Force201 thin film type pressure sensor with MFF series pressure test system. Their subjective comfort evaluations were conducted by five-point Likert scale.

This study finds that the clothing pressure of the chest area during basketball exercise should be controlled in the range of 2.01-4.74 kPa; and indicated that there is an inevitable connection between heart rate variation indexes and subjective comfort of basketball sports bras. Findings clarify the pressure of sports bras, and the impact in the chest area so the clothing pressure in this area during playing basketball should be controlled in the range of 2.01-4.74 kP, (Yuxiu, Jie, Zimin Jin, & Jianwei, 2014, p. 507) and environmentally friendly apparel products. (Moon & Lee, 2018, p. 1374)

## Conclusion

This study focused on modesty in many aspects, such culture, society, feminism, and health. Modesty in clothing in this study appears as a sign of wealth, power, status, religion, gender and lifestyle where it taken with different rules and conditions in societies.

The researcher tried to improve how modesty is define as a better choice for all forms of many aspects. Moreover, Modesty is not conflicting with fashion nor femininity, but it is a psychological and satisfactory human bean behavior; and is not limited to a specific countries. Recommendations for future research include investigating modesty and body appearance as well as studying the "impact of modesty on social media presentation". (Blackwell, 2016, p. iii)

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