

Hijab Fashion Consciousness Among Young Muslim Women In Malaysia

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Abstract: *In recent years, Muslim women have espoused Hijab fashion as a part of Islamic faith by mixing the contemporary fashion trend to carry out their act of veiling. In turn, this situation has led to the rapid growth of global Islamic clothing market and opened numerous money-spinning opportunities for the fashion industry players. For them, it has become imperative to understand the perception of their Muslim consumers to offer the right product. Therefore, this research attempts to study what considerations articulate together in Muslim women's hijab fashion consciousness. The purpose of this study is to analyze the impact of self-congruity, modesty, conformity and need for uniqueness to the fashion consciousness. To find the effect of these four aspects on Hijab fashion consciousness, a self-administered survey with a structured questionnaire was conducted in Malaysia. Data were collected from 200 Muslim women in Malaysia who wear Hijab fashion and then, SmartPLS 3.2.8 was used to analyze the hypothetical relationships. The findings of this study revealed that self-congruity and the need for uniqueness have a positive effect on the hijab fashion consciousness of Muslim women. It refers that Hijab fashion marketers must consider these two aspects while creating or designing a hijab fashion to satisfy consumer's expectations.*

Keywords: *Hijab Fashion, Self-Congruity, Modesty, Conformity, Need for Uniqueness, Hijab Fashion Consciousness, Malaysia.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Hijab fashion has become one of the contributing products for global Islamic industry. With the population of Muslims is estimated to grow to 2.76 billion, or occupy about 29.7% of total projected population by 2050 (Desilver & Masci, 2017) and increasing spending power of Muslim women in this market that is estimated to be worth more than \$96 billion globally (PR Newswire, 2013; Reportlinker, 2019), the fashion designers and retailers are racing to produce hijab fashion attire. Faith and modesty are the keystones behind this fast-growing industry which is making its mark on fashion runways starting from Turkey, Dubai, Indonesia, Malaysia to Monte Carlo (Dewi, Syairudin, & Nikmah, 2015; El-Bassiouny, 2018; Grand View Research, 2018; Halim, 2018; Sari & Asad, 2018). Yet, concerns were raised regarding the meaning and practice of hijab fashion remains ardently contested.

Fashion often intertwined with the debate about what Islam prescribes for women's dress

(Williams & Kamaludeen, 2017). Analysis from previous literature related to Muslim women's dress highlights two prevailing issues: the representation of the female body and the conceptions of modesty (Gokariksel & McLarney, 2010). Both issues can be connected to the global misconception and the lack of understanding about Islamic values that are different from Western ideal values that perceived Muslim societies as unenlightened when it comes to the status of women (Halim, 2018; Shriver, 2017; Williams & Kamaludeen, 2017). The purpose of the Muslim women wearing their hijab is to protect their aurah (Hassim, Nayan, & Ishak, 2015). This situation has changed when the designer creates an innovation on the hijab that attract the consumer with a unique fashion and design. Accidentally, the hijab becomes trending and most of the Muslim women would like to wear the hijab because the material and design are more beautiful and attractive compare with the old pattern (Arifah, Sobari, & Usman, 2018; Hassim, 2017). Hijab fashion designers try to build a hijab that can show the identities of Muslim women through fashion. therefore, this research to study how these considerations articulate together in Muslim women's hijab fashion consciousness.

The rapid development of hijab fashion industry has explicitly forged the links between faith and fashion of Muslim women which encourages them to be covered, trendy, modest and attractive (Gokariksel & Secor, 2010; El-Bassiouny, 2018; Khalid & Akhtar, 2018). Small but growing literatures have focused on the emergence of Islamic fashion concentrating on women's engagements with piety and fashion through their everyday sartorial practices (Gokariksel & Secor, 2009; Gokariksel & Secor, 2010; Jones, 2007; Sandikci & Ger, 2007; Moors, 2007; Moors, 2009; El-Bassiouny, 2018; Grine & Saeed, 2015; Halim, 2018; Harkness, 2019; Hassan & Harun, 2016). Yet, few studies have attempted to work between and across the marketing and consumption of Islamic fashion (Gokariksel & Secor, 2010). Therefore, the study objective is to explore this uncovered area by investigating how Muslim women choose hijab fashion, making it a part of their complex embodied performances of Muslim identities. Specifically, the study has attempted to dig out the answer to what are the fundamental factors that influence Muslim consumers' hijab fashion consciousness.

A. Worldwide Islamic fashion

The global fashion industry has gone through a lot of adjustments towards the changing economic, political, socio-cultural changes that occur in societies from time to time. The continuing consumer demand for fashion garments contributes to the growth in apparel manufacturing and exports around the world. Asian region continues to produce the largest amount of production and trade in the global apparel industry (World Trade Organization, 2018). China as a major exporter in the apparel markets contributed about 34.9% of the total global market share in 2017. The other major apparel exporting countries include EU, Bangladesh, Vietnam, India, Turkey, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Cambodia and USA (Ara, Leen, & Hassan, 2019; World Trade Organization, 2018). The demand for the latest fashion designs continues to fuel the global fashion scenario that makes the fashion industry as one of the fast-changing industries in the world. In most OIC countries, a special segment of Islamic garments or known as Islamic clothing is emerging globally and joining in boosting the world fashion industry (Brugnoni, 2014; Grand View Research, 2018), with much attention placed on the consumer segment of Muslim women.

Globally Islam is the rapidly expanding religious conviction. In 2010, the total number of Muslims were 1.6 billion worldwide, grossly 23 percent of the global population which turned Islam as the world's second-largest religious conviction after Christianity (World Muslim population by percentage) ("Muslim Population By Country Population," 2018). The proportion of the world Muslim inhabitants based on the region in 2010; in Sub-Saharan Africa is 15.5%, in the Middle East North Africa is 19.8% and in Asia-Pacific is 61.7% (Pew Research Center, 2014). As this segment continues to grow, they are showing interest in asserting their

Muslim identities through what they buy including in purchase fashion. The Islamic fashion industry is growing up by increasing the population of Muslims worldwide.

Asia has a potentially huge market for Islamic clothing since the majority of the world's Muslim population lives in that region (Reportlinker, 2019). Besides that, a significant size of the Islamic clothing market could also potentially exist in regions where Muslims are minorities such as Europe and the United States (Grand View Research, 2018). Muslims in Western Europe and North America were reported to spend about US\$21 billion on clothing in 2012 making the Western Muslim clothing market come in second place after Turkey (Brugnoni, 2014). Research conducted by the London College of Fashion shown that women from Judaism and Christianity seeking for modesty in clothing in accordance with the understanding of their faith (Lewis & Tarlo, 2011). Since Islamic clothing preserves the element of modesty that is suitable for both Muslim and non-Muslim, the potential demand could be also coming from the non-Muslim segment.

This situation offers opportunity to the Islamic clothing market for getting a significant position in the global fashion industry. Fashion designers identify that the increasing worldwide Muslim population is the opportunity for them to enter the Islamic fashion market. Thus, several designers, producing Muslim fashion, are stepping into the striking domain of fashion. As an example, the designers who were successful in worldwide hijab fashion is Iman Aldebe. Iman Aldebe is known as a remarkable turban character and famous for her turban line which was exhibited uniquely from Paris to New York. Another successful designer in hijab fashion is Hana Tajima and Dian Pelangi (Arifah et al., 2018; Hassim, 2017). The designers who are successful in Muslim wear are Hikmat Salleh, Hanadi Chebab and Howayda Maoussa; Jenahara Nasution, and Dina Torkia. All these designers try to create wear where looks more stylish, purity, modernity, and uniqueness but at the same time still have extra coverage for the Muslim apparel (MVSLIM, 2016). This fact has shown that Muslim fashion is growing and already accepted in the worldwide fashion industry.

B. Islamic Fashion Style in Malaysia

In Malaysia, the hijab is known as 'tudung' (Hochel, 2013). In Malaysia, Hijab is a stylish clothing accessory which is typically matched with the color of a woman's rest of the attire. Basically, the 'tudung' is worn by the Malaysian women with their traditional dress "baju kurung" which is initially introduced by the royalties (Hassan et al., 2015), or worn with loose-fitting long tunics over 'sarongs' (Boulanouar, 2006). These dresses are usually stylish with bright colored. Most of the Malaysian women deliberately prefer 'tudungs' which can be contrasted with the shade and design of their 'baju kurungs' and eventually make them bright and stylish. The practice of covering 'awrah' is recognizable in the Malaysian public through the introduction of the 'Busana Muslimah' in the 1980s. 'Busana Muslimah' is the term used to indicate dress for female Muslims (Hassim, 2014; Hassim & Khalid, 2015). 'Jubah' or 'abaya' (a long loose maxi dress) worn with socks and wrist covers are the prevalent Islamic styles during that period. Other than 'Busana Muslimah', it is also common to see Muslim women in Malaysia wearing shirts and blouses with jeans, pants, long skirts with headscarves.

Hijab fashion industry has its opportunity and strength to grow up in Malaysian market. This is because Malaysia is one of the countries that have a major Muslim population. Muslim population in Malaysia is the largest around 61.3%, the second largest religious population in Malaysia is Buddhist 19.8%, followed by Christian 9.2%, and Hindu 6.3% (Malaysia Demographics Profile 2016). Muslim women in Malaysia constitutes about 62% or 8 million of total female populations (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2010). It provides a ready market to have thrived for Islamic clothing that currently receiving an overwhelming response from Muslim women segment.

Hijab fashion in Malaysian market has good opportunity and strength because of the Muslim population in Malaysia wider (Grand View Research, 2018; Hassim, 2017; Reportlinker, 2019). There has several successful founders or designers that have involved in this industry (Hassim, 2017). For example, Fareeda hijab and Ariani scarf have become one of the famous brands for the hijab style in Malaysia. Fareeda and Ariani have focused their target to the professional women Muslim in Malaysia. Fareeda and Ariani still can compete in Malaysia market because both companies have followed the latest trend changed in hijab fashion in Malaysia. Nowadays, many of the competitors try to enter in the hijab fashion industry because of the high demand of the hijab fashion from Muslim customers. Therefore, the new company that wants to involve in this industry should understand and research about the characteristics that the organization need to focus on their hijab design to meet consumers expectation and satisfaction.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

C. Hijab Fashion

In general, Hijab is known as a veil traditionally worn by Muslim women to protect their aurah. Muslim women also practice this to cover them in front of the adult males who are not their immediate family members or any male who are eligible to marry those women. Hijab usually covers women's head and chest. It also can be a representation of humility and privacy. The word 'hijab' is known as the headscarf, embraced by the Muslim Population as a part of their Islamic faith (Boulanouar, 2006; Abdelhadi, 2019). Today this word is familiar through numerous terms in different countries, for example, khimar, jilbab, kerudung, etc. (Arifah et al., 2018). Though there are differences in the defining the term 'hijab', some said hijab is covering the whole body and for someone, this is only covering the head (Sari & Asad, 2018), but it is believed by the Muslim population that this is something which is an obligatory written command by The Almighty Allah in the Holy Quran (Arifah et al., 2018). The most frequently cited verse from the Holy Quran which enlightens the significance of 'covering' for women is stated below:

And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils (khumur) over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husband's fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or the 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 to draw attention to their hidden ornaments. And O ye Believers! Turn ye all together towards Allah, that ye may attain Bliss (Quran 24:31).

However, it is agreed among the Muslim population today that hijab is a means to 'cover-up' yourself (Khalid & Akhtar, 2018). The word 'hijab' is an Arabic term 'hajaba' which denotes "to veil, to seclude, to screen, to conceal, to form a separation, to mask" and similarly decodes as "cover, wrap, curtain, veil, screen, partition" (El Guindi, 1999) (p. 157). Today, hijab is a representation of Islamic faith and practices by Muslim women in empowering themselves as well as expressing their personality by being fashionable (El-Bassiouny, 2018).

Afterward, fashion denotes to a style which is trending and simultaneously acceptable by the large number of people (Solomon & Rabolt, 2009). It refers to creativity, desire and aspiration. Most fashion designers try to create a unique item that is will self-expressive, show emotion and describe identity of the users (Tony Hines, second edition). Individuals modify fashion styles to create individuality, express identity and manifest their values. Fashion is a dynamic process that creates cultural meanings and interactions (Niinimaki, 2010). It merges

individuals with their emotional needs by expressing their inner personality using symbols, brands and status items. Through fashion, people can define who they are and who they hope to become. For some people, fashion is used as a social mechanism of collective behavior to be accepted in a group (Blumer, 1969). Consumers use countervailing meanings in their fashion discourse to describe their consumption behaviors (Thompson & Haytko, 1997). The diverse perspectives of fashion discourses enable consumers to find meaning by contrasting opposing values and beliefs (Do & Lee, 2013). Therefore, fashion implicates the construction of individual identity.

Today, the growth of Global Islamic clothing market has been possible through offering new brands, trends, fashions and styles to meet customers changing expectations (Grine & Saeed, 2015; Reportlinker, 2019). This growing fashion drift has influenced the consciousness of Muslim women to balance their Islamic faith with fashion in articulating their personality (Grine & Saeed, 2015). The Muslim women who are practicing this concept in preserving their modesty are known as 'hijabis' 'hijabistas', or 'turbanistas'. In this study, 'Hijab Fashion' is defined as a newly celebrated way of maintaining modesty by unifying the Islamic Faith with fashion.

D. Modesty

Modesty can be defined when the physical body of a person is viewed as a reason of humiliation that must be veiled and protected (Asifa Siraj, 2011). It is coveted and scared aspects of one's personality and character. Gurel and Gurel (1970) described modesty as a personality variable that expressed one's appearance and clothing behavior. According to the study conducted by the London College of Fashion reported that women's motivations for modest dressing due to its practice, body image, life-changing, aging, environmental factors and to be a role model for their children (Cameron, 2013). Most society may find it shameful for people to appear in fewer clothes in public. This is because each society has its acceptable standards of decency even though the act of covering might be varied according to the different cultures, situations, and is changing over time (Wolfe, 2012). In short, it can be stated that the way of maintaining modesty completely depends on an individual's own choice (Lewis, 2015).

E. Conformity

At large, conformity can be described as the inclination of members of a group to establish a group standard and the inclination of those members to conform with the related standard (Bumkrant & Cousineau, 1975). Conformity to others' beliefs and behavior helps to enhance, protect and repair one's self-esteem (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004), while failure to conform would cause anxiety and disapproval due to the absence of a sense of belonging (Wolfe, 2012; Piamphongsant & Mandhachitara, 2008). Through the purchase, use and disposition of goods and services, consumers can comply with others by conforming group standards and social norms (Liang & He, 2012). Piamphongsant and Mandhachitara (2008) described clothing conformity as "a collective clothing behavior that is socially accepted in a certain society" (p. 439). Thus, in this study, conformity can be conceptualized as the extent to which individuals are likely to dress and gain acceptance within their social group by wearing the right choice of fashion. Most people normally conform to the standards of dress and behavior to be accepted and liked by their group reference, adhering to socio-cultural norms and religion, and suitable to weather conditions in one's place (Wolfe, 2012; Gbadamosi, 2012; Jamal & Abd Shukor, 2014).

F. Need for Uniqueness

The term 'uniqueness' can be well-defined as a consumer's propensity to pick something exceptional to view himself/herself unlike from others (Hassan & Harun, 2016). Specifically, need for uniqueness refers to the consumer's notion of being idiosyncratic or exceptional

among the society members by gaining, consuming, and disposing of consumer goods. It is mostly signaled through physical substances which enhance an individual's self and social image (Tian et al., 2001a). In literature, it is advocated as a 'universal need' which has the strength to influence the perception or experience of consumers while purchasing fashionable clothing (Dlodlo, 2014; Workman & Caldwell, 2007). Based on Tian et. al. (2001) study, the need for uniqueness has their forms such as these are particularly 'creative choice counter conformity', 'unpopular choice counter conformity', and 'avoidance of similarity'. Creative choice counter conformity postulates that based on the Western culture and expressing one's uniqueness from others requires one to create their style through goods that they can convey by self (Tian et al., 2001a). Unpopular choice counter conformity, in contrast, is "the selection or use of products and brands that deviate from group norms and thus risk social disapproval that consumers withstand to establish their differences from others" (Tian et al., 2001a). Lastly, avoidance of similarity refers to the consumer's lack of interest in consuming those products which are more common or extensively consumed by society members. To find out one's uniqueness, it becomes the norm to not to follow the popular/conventional fashion (Tian et al., 2001a). Above consideration, it is reflected that the need for uniqueness might be a significant trait in predicting an individual's choice of Hijab fashion.

G. Hijab Fashion Consciousness

Generally, it is proven that consumer characteristics may influence their purchasing behaviour. Among those attributes, consciousness regarding fashion is one of the vital dimensions that influence consumer's purchasing decision, especially with regards to fashion clothing. It is defined as "a person's degree of involvement with the styles or fashion of clothing ... characterized by an interest in clothing and fashion, and in one's appearance" (Nam et al., 2007). Lerwannawit et al. (2012) consider fashion consciousness as equivalent to fashion involvement because of a person's desire and adoption of latest styles is to maintain one's status in a social network. The characteristics of fashion consciousness are suggested to be influential in all fashion-related decisions. Fashion conscious individual are more likely educated and young in age than individuals who are less fashion-conscious (Crask & Reynolds, 1978). These early adopter or lighthouse customer of new fashion styles are also referred to as fashion change agents who are more concerned in fashion trend as well as knowledgeable about fashion products (King & Ring, 1980). They always carry innovative style profiles, and although they are not completely newest with all contemporary styles, they can elicit interest among groups of individuals for future adoption or trend (King & Ring, 1980). Fashion agents often influence to establish group standards of dress behavior. Recently, Muslim women are actively asserting their visible Muslim identity in the public sphere through their choice of fashion (Pratisti & Maryati, 2019; Williams & Kamaludeen, 2017). They want to be modern and able to follow global as well as local fashion. As 'fashion consciousness' is already evidence as an important trait in influencing consumer's buying decisions, thus, it is anticipated in this study that while purchasing hijab fashion, it might influence positively. However, this study conceptualized the term 'Hijab fashion consciousness' as the tendency of Muslim women to incorporate their fashion consciousness while adopting hijab fashion.

3. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES AND RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Based on the above suggestions in several existing literature, this study hypothesized that self-congruity, modesty, conformity, need for uniqueness might have a positive impact on Muslim women's Hijab Fashion Consciousness. Figure 1 is illustrating the research framework of the study.

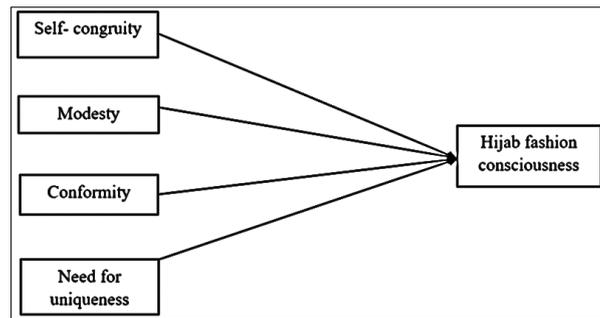


Figure 1: Research framework of the study

A brief discussion of four hypothetical relationships of this study is as below.

H. Impact of Self-congruity on Hijab fashion consciousness

Each product has personality image element that reflect the self-concept of product users (Sirgy et al., 1997). The process of inner comparison between the product image and a person's self-concept is known as self-congruity (Sirgy & Johar, 1999). Self-congruity is driven by the need to maintain one's self-esteem and self-consistency (Sirgy et al., 2000). Clothing is used as a medium to define and communicate their social identities to others (Feinberg et al., 1992). Ericksen and Sirgy (1992) indicated that female employees are more likely to wear outfits that match their actual self-image and ideal self-image. They also found that the more advancement in career growth, the greater the actual and ideal-self-congruity which involves a business outfit, and this leads the preference of wearing professional outfits. Piacentini and Mailer (2004) showed that clothing choices made by young people are closely connected to their trend and one's self-concept. Apaegyei (2011) mentioned that perception of ideal image impact on acceptance and consumption of clothing among young consumers. Rhee and Johnson (2012) indicated that juveniles preferred apparel brands not for the brand name but for matching at least one aspect of their self-concept. These findings also suggest that the extent the congruency between product image and one's self-concept results the greater extent of tendency for particular product. Muslim women are likely to choose Hijab fashion as symbolic goods to enhance their actual and ideal self-image. In this sense, it postulates Muslim women will be seeking for congruency in fashion consciousness. Building on these arguments, it is essential for the present study to test the influence of self-congruity on Hijab fashion consciousness.

H1: self-congruity has a positive impact on Hijab fashion consciousness.

I. Impact of modesty on Hijab fashion consciousness

The categorisation of the self as an occupant of different roles in the social structure implied to the meanings and expectations that are correspond to the given roles and behaviours (Burke & Stets, 2009). Montemurro and Gillen (2013) found that married women modifying their clothing choice based on their husband's impressions or perceived preferences. Their study also indicated that mothers concerned about wearing clothes that reveal as this behaviour might send the wrong message to their children. Cameron (2013) also mentioned that dressing for the workplace among women dictates level of modesty to avoid unwanted attention or the wrong kind of attention from the opposite sex. Generally, Hijab often refers to a form of modesty which is an important aspect of an individual's personality (Boy, Uitermark, & Wiersma, 2018; Dina, Hati, & Daryanti, 2018; Siraj, 2011). Islam also suggests its followers to dress modestly to abstain from attracting attention to their physical appearance (Badawi, 1980). According to

Hassan & Harun (2016), the current hijab fashion should convey Muslim women modesty, as it is one basic aspect of Islamic faith. In this sense, it is argued that Muslim women will be seeking for modesty in their Hijab fashion consciousness. Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis will be formulated:

H2: modesty has a positive impact on Hijab fashion consciousness.

Impact of conformity on Hijab fashion consciousness

The finding demonstrated that consumers watch and imitate fashion from their group reference Shoham (2003). Banister and Hogg (2004) indicated that conformity and affiliation in the clothing choices drive positive self-esteem among young professionals. Meanwhile, Gbadamosi (2012) found that due to affiliation with the host culture and their trend, Black-African women in London keen to buy and use mainstream clothing for attending occasions which involves mainly mainstream consumers. Jamal and Abd Shukor (2014) showed that young Muslim British consumers relied on the advice significantly while making clothing choices. Findings from these studies suggest that individuals often look for conformity in their clothing choice. Thus, it is postulated that consumers who have a great concern for social acceptance, approval, and validation would desire for a certain level of conformity in their choice of clothing. In this sense, it shows that Muslim women will be seeking conformity in their Hijab fashion consciousness. Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis will be formulated:

H3: conformity has a positive impact on Hijab fashion consciousness.

Impact of the need for uniqueness on Hijab fashion consciousness

People have a desire to be at least somewhat unique (Lynn & Synder, 2002). Chan et al. (2012) found that higher needs for uniqueness drive most of the people to select different options within their in-group rather. In this sense, it is speculated that a person with higher needs for uniqueness can differentiate themselves within the group by choosing creative choice options that acquire symbolic meaning associated with their group identity, without having to compromise the symbolic meaning carried by the consumption, and these meaning may come to shape choice (Dlodlo, 2014; Hassan & Harun, 2016; Ling, 2008; Workman & Caldwell, 2007). In Hijab fashion, Muslim women can differentiate themselves by customizing the use of different colors, materials, accessories and styles of the fashion choice or making creative options among those that are associated with their traditions and cultures, resulting in the unique and fashionable attire (El-Bassiouny, 2018; Hassan & Harun, 2016). In this sense, it is argued that Muslim women will be seeking for uniqueness in their Hijab fashion consciousness. Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis will be formulated:

H4: the need for uniqueness has a positive impact on Hijab fashion consciousness.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study can be considered as quantitative and descriptive research and has used the cross-sectional design. At first, a comprehensive literature review was conducted on the variables namely self-congruity, modesty, conformity, need for uniqueness, and hijab fashion consciousness to gather an understanding of the depth and breadth of the subject matters. The research framework was derived from the literature review and the hypotheses were conjectured to examine the relationship among different variables. Therefore, this study tries to determine the relationship between variables and the analysis for this study was on the Muslim women in Malaysia who wear hijab and follow hijab fashion. The reasons behind choosing

Malaysia as the area of the study are: as this country is experiencing significant growth in numbers of Muslim women wearing hijab fashion (Halim, 2018) and also in marketing fashionable hijab brands (Hassim, 2017). In turn, Malaysia has become one of the major contributors to flourishing the global Islamic clothing market (Reportlinker, 2019). In this study, convenience sampling, a form of non-probability sampling was used to collect data. However, a total of 200 responses were gathered through a self-administered questionnaire, representing a response rate of 58.82%.

J. Measurement Scales

The measurement items to set the questionnaire were obtained from previous studies. 'Self-congruity' was a five-item scale taken from Sirgy et al. (1997) and Sirgy & Danes (1982); 'Modesty' was a six-item scale sourced from Gurel & Gurel (1979); 'Conformity' was a five-item scale sourced from Gurel & Gurel (1979); 'Need for Uniqueness' was a four-item scale extracted from Gurel & Gurel (1979) and Park & Sullivan (2009); 'Fashion Consciousness' was a five-item scale sourced from Sproles & Kendall (1986). The structured questionnaire applied in this study was divided into two sections. Section A consists of the questions related to the study variables, isolated into five parts. Part A is Self-Congruity, Part B consist of questions about Modesty, Part C is about Conformity, Part D is about the Need for Uniqueness question and Part F is about Fashion

Consciousness. Section B contains the five screening questions for respondents to explore the demographic data of respondents. The total number of questions in both sections is 30 and the questionnaire is attached in the Appendix. Five-point Likert Scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) that was used to determine the perception of respondents on the study instruments.

5. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The following Table 1 summarizes the demographic profile of the respondents who participated in the survey which were analyzed using SPSS (Version 23) software. According to the demographic results, most of the respondents are age group below 25 years old consists of 92.55% and followed by 7.5% from the age group of 25-35 years old. It is interesting to note that majority of them were found to be single which consists of 93% followed by 5.5% were married and 1.5% were widowed/divorced. More than 86.5% of the respondents were students, followed by 8.5% from the private sector, 3.5% of respondents have an occupation in the government sector and the last 1.5% of respondents have their own business. Remarkably, 79.5% of the respondents have completed Degree as the level of education, accompanied by 15% from the STPM/Diploma/Matrices level and 5% from SPM and lastly 0.5% from the Master level. Almost 91% of the respondents have income below RM29,000, followed by 5% of respondents where have income from RM29,000 to RM39,000 and 2% of respondents have a range above RM100,000 and 1% of the respondents have ranged between RM60,000 to RM69,000 for their income. Lastly, respondents from the range income from RM40,000 to RM49,000 and RM50,000 to RM59,000 have the same percentage which consists of 0.5% each range.

Table 1 Demographic profile of the respondents

Demographics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Below 25 years old	185	92.5
	25-35 years old	15	7.5
Marital Status	Single	186	93.0
	Married	11	5.5
	Widowed/divorced	3	1.5
Occupation	Government sector	7	3.5
	Private sector	17	8.5
	Own business	3	1.5
	Student	173	86.5
Level of Education	High School	10	5.0
	Diploma	30	15.0
	Degree	159	79.5
	Masters	1	0.5
Income	Below 29K	182	91.0
	RM29K-RM39K	10	5.0
	RM40K-RM49K	1	.5
	RM50K-RM59K	1	.5
	RM60-RM69K	2	1.0
	Above RM100K	4	2.0

Note: RM (Ringgit Malaysia)

K. Common method bias (CMB)

Today in academic research, common method bias (CMB) has become an emerging problem in confirming the research findings (Fuller, Simmering, Atinc, Atinc, & Babin, 2016). To identify this issue, this study has used Harman's one-factor test as a statistical approach. It is found that CMB is not a problem in this study as this test has formed five variables eigenvalues

larger than 1.0. These five variables covered 68.17% of the variance in the data, where the first factor explained 23.97% which below the cut-off value (less than 50%). Also, this test has brought out more than one factor that advocates CMB is not a concern for this study (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986).

L. Reflective measurement model

In reference to the research question and objective to analyze the effect of Self-congruity, Modesty, Conformity and Need for Uniqueness on Hijab Fashion Consciousness, SmartPLS 3.2.8 was used in this study. Before proceeding with the structural model, this research assessed the measurement model. As stated by Fornell & Larcker (1981), researcher need to examine the measurement model to figure out the reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity of the study items. After examining, it is established that all the loadings of the study items excelled the threshold value of 0.50 and the five variables in this research have satisfactory values (more than 0.50 and 0.70) for AVE (average variance extracted) and CR (composite reliability); recommended by (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2018). After performing all the analyses, it shows that the measurement model proposed is fit for further analysis. Table 2 indicates that the reliability and convergent validity of this study were met.

Table 2 Reflective measurement model—summary of construct measurement

Constructs	Items Code	Loadings	CR	AVE	Cronbach Alpha
Self-Congruity			0.883	0.605	0.843
	SC1	0.820			
	SC2	0.864			
	SC3	0.621			
	SC4	0.701			
	SC5	0.853			
Modesty			0.966	0.827	0.962
	M1	0.907			
	M2	0.929			
	M3	0.926			
	M4	0.955			
	M5	0.863			
	M6	0.871			
Conformity			0.822	0.536	0.715
	C1	0.710			
	C2	0.716			
	C4	0.697			
	C5	0.800			
Need for Uniqueness			0.891	0.672	0.836
	D1	0.711			

	D2	0.837			
	D3	0.874			
	D4	0.848			
Hijab Fashion Consciousness			0.896	0.635	0.854
	FC1	0.750			
	FC2	0.856			
	FC3	0.870			
	FC4	0.782			
	FC5	0.714			

Note: Item, C3 was deleted due to low AVE

AVE= Average Variance Extracted CR= Composite reliability

At first, the Fornell-Larcker criterion (F&L), as the most frequently used method in the past (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015), was used to assess discriminant validity. Table 3 presents the results of F&L which established the discriminant validity of the study measurement model by confirming that the squared correlation of the AVE is than inter-construct correlations (Hair et al., 2017). compared the average variance extracted and squared correlation (r) between all pairs of latent constructs

Table 3 Discriminant Validity Analysis (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Conformity	0.732				
2. Hijab Fashion Consciousness	0.348	0.797			
3. Modesty	0.080	0.116	0.909		
4. Need for Uniqueness	0.471	0.527	-0.056	0.820	
5. Self-Congruity	0.085	0.207	0.417	-0.002	0.778

Note: Values in diagonal (bolded) are the square root of the average variance extracted.

However, as a simulation study by Henseler et al. (2015) has revealed that these criteria are insufficiently sensitive to disclose discriminant validity problems. Thus, Henseler et al. (2015) urged assessing the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of the correlations. As per the suggestions of Henseler, Hubona, & Ray (2016), there are 2 different threshold values for HTMT, are 0.85 and 0.90 to validate discriminant validity. This research applied the HTMT ratio of 0.90 to confirm the discriminant validity of this study model. Table 4 displays that the discriminant validity was confirmed for this study as the outcomes of the HTMT.90 measure

below the threshold value. To be exact, these results demonstrated strong support for the discriminant validity.

Table 4 Discriminant Validity Analysis (HTMT0.90 Criterion)

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Conformity					
2. Hijab Fashion Consciousness	0.426				
3. Modesty	0.102	0.119			
4. Need for Uniqueness	0.611	0.612	0.138		
5. Self-Congruity	0.154	0.224	0.461	0.154	

Note: Shaded boxes are the standard reporting format for HTMT ratios.

Estimation of Structural Relationships

After determining the reliability and validity of the study variables, the subsequent phase is to assess the structural model to show how well the hypothesized relationship predicts the model. Thus, the significance of the hypothesized relationships was evaluated by applying 5000 bootstrap subsamples (Hair et al., 2018). The results of hypotheses testing are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5 Hypotheses Testing

Hy po.	Relationship	Std. Beta	Std. Error	t-value	p-values	Decision	f2
H1	Self-Congruity -> Hijab Fashion Consciousness	0.174	0.057	3.041	0.001	Supported	0.037
H2	Modesty -> Hijab Fashion Consciousness	0.062	0.064	0.974	0.165	Not Supported	0.005
H3	Conformity -> Hijab Fashion Consciousness	0.100	0.062	1.597	0.055	Not Supported	0.011
H4	Need for Uniqueness -> Hijab Fashion Consciousness	0.484	0.061	7.924	0.000	Supported	0.270

Note: $p < 0.05$

The study results guide that apart from two hypothesize relationships (H2 and H3), the other two relationships are important as these reached the threshold (higher than 1.645) for the bootstrap critical t-values (one-tailed test). Overall, all the direct hypotheses are accepted at $p < 0.05$. it is concluded that self-congruity (H1: $\beta = 0.174$, $t = 3.041$) elicit a positive impact on hijab fashion consciousness, followed by need for uniqueness effect (H4: $\beta = 0.484$, $t = 7.924$). thus, H1 and H4 were supported whereas H2 and H3 were not supported. Figure 2 shows the path of the direct relationship among the constructs. The R2 values of ‘Hijab fashion consciousness’ (0.333) were greater than 0.13 value as advised by Cohen (1988) suggesting a practical model. Following that, then we also examined the effect sizes (f2) of the latent variables of this study, suggested by Sullivan and Fein (2012). Highly used reference for measuring effect size was

recommended by Cohen (1988). According to the researcher, 0.02 small, signifies medium 0.15, and signifies large 0.35 effects. The outcome of the effect sizes in Table 5 confirms that self-congruity has a small effect on hijab fashion consciousness (0.037) and the need for uniqueness has a medium effect on hijab fashion consciousness (0.270).

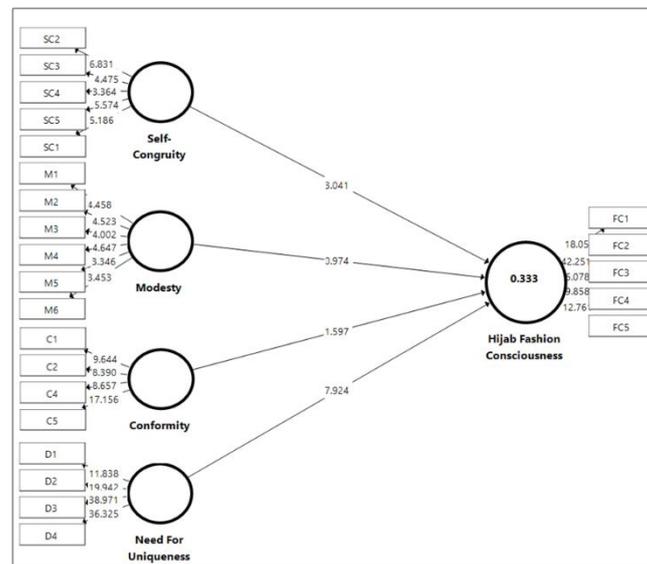


Figure 2: Structural model of this study

6. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Grounded on the study findings, the first hypothesis has found to be supported that self-congruity has an impact on Hijab Fashion Consciousness positively. One of the valid causes could be that self-congruity is an important attribute that can affect Muslim women's thoughts and feelings towards shaping their Hijab Fashion Consciousness. This finding is consistent with the study of Sohn & Yuan (2004) where they proposed that self-congruity can affect the travel behavior of the tourists. In other words, consumers might purchase a product based on how well the product image fits with how they see themselves and how they like to see themselves. Based on the study context, it can be believed that Muslim women practice their hijab fashion consciousness to express their self-concept. This notion is also evidenced in the study of Casidy (2012) where it is found that consumer often prefers a product that is related to their self-congruity. This means self-congruity is an important value to look forward to by hijab marketers to create a new hijab fashion. The second hypothesis was proposed in this study was modesty has an encouraging influence on Hijab Fashion Consciousness and this couldn't be confirmed through the study findings. This shows that modesty couldn't be proved as one of the important attributes for Muslim women to determine their perception of Hijab Fashion. A valid reason could be that Hijab Fashion Consciousness for Muslim women nowadays mostly depends on the acceptance within their social group or their social affiliation (Blommaert & Varis, 2015; Goyal, Maity, Thakur, & Srivastava, 2013; Taylor & Cosenza, 2002). In other words, it can be interpreted that today modesty might not be a crucial factor for Muslim women to affect their hijab fashion consciousness.

Moreover, the study result for the relationship between conformity and Hijab Fashion Consciousness is conflicting with the hypothesis and revealed that conformity doesn't have a significant effect on Muslim women's Hijab Fashion Consciousness. Though it is established in different studies that social acceptance has the control to modify the consumers' purchasing decision (Blommaert & Varis, 2015; Goyal et al., 2013; Piacentini & Mailer, 2004; Taylor &

Cosenza, 2002). But, in this study, it couldn't be proved that conformity by the Muslim women in Malaysia with their social standards relating to dress & behavior, socio-cultural norms, and weather conditions in one's place (Wolfe, 2012; Gbadamosi, 2012; Jamal & Abd Shukor, 2014) wouldn't support them to adopt hijab fashion positively. To be specific, this shows that Muslim women in Malaysia provide more importance to wear a unique hijab fashion to make them more distinctive. Thus, it is stated by Esfidani et al. (2014) that consumers with this kind of mindset have a strong interest in choosing fashionable clothing. The fourth hypothesis, the need for uniqueness has a positive influence on Hijab Fashion Consciousness has found to be supported. This shows that the Muslim women's Hijab Fashion Consciousness for hijab based on their strong need for uniqueness. People pursue to establish and maintain a sense of moderate self-distinctiveness because of being too like others can generate a negative emotional reaction. Thus, people try to prove their uniqueness in ways that do not result in discontentment or social isolation by others. This means, people want uniqueness in their hijab fashion to make them different from other people in that group but at the same time they want that uniqueness will be accepted in their group. This is because the respondents of this study want to be different from others or to become typical among a larger group through the acquisition, consumption and disposition of consumer goods such as hijab (Tian et al., 2001a).

Nevertheless, in the process of conducting this study, the factors influencing Hijab Fashion Consciousness have been revealed which can be leading to the adoption of a new concept by the researchers and practitioners. It is noticeable from the study that self-congruity and need for uniqueness are essential values for the Muslim women in Hijab Fashion Consciousness which must be considered by hijab manufacturers and marketers in creating and offering hijab. Thus, the hijab manufacturers and marketers should need to contemplate these values to cultivate their business more. Furthermore, pricing structure, marketing strategies, and enhancement of quality need to be considered.

7. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Few limitations also found whilst carrying this study. Firstly, it was hard to get those respondents whose age range is 25-35 years old, as most of the respondent busy with their work and does not have time to answer the questionnaire. So, the researcher needs to pick the respondent randomly to answer the questionnaire and most of them from the range below 25 years old. Another limitation was that the current study is restricted to a specific country which could represent a possibility that the external validity and generalizability of the study are restrained.

Concerning future research, it is apparent that a few issues need to be measured. Future researchers might reproduce this study by including a greater number of Muslim countries that have significant market share in the Hijab Fashion industry. Moreover, more studies need to be conducted to investigate the comprehensive representation of the Hijab Fashion Consciousness. The hijab fashion style, hijab fashion choice, the pricing, branding and marketing dimension were not covered distinctly in this study which should be included in future.

8. CONCLUSION

Hijab fashion has a significant contribution as an important offering in increasing the global Islamic clothing market worldwide (El-Bassiouny, 2018; Hassim, 2017). As the market for hijab fashion expands, the industry continues to develop through the participation of various marketers from small to international retailers offering outfits and headscarves made from a range of different fabrics, variety of cuts and shapes, colors and range of prices. The regular dressing style slowly moves to more blended styles, indicating a rising of fashion consciousness particularly among urban, educated and young religious consumers (Arifah et al., 2018; Grine & Saeed, 2015). In turn, the rising of the hijab fashion phenomenon affected Malaysian Muslim women as well. The growth of hijab fashion consumption represents the gradual shifts from the image of 'pious women' to the image of a 'modern consumer' through the fusion between faith and fashion (Sandikci & Ger, 2007). It is also agreed by existing researchers that Hijab fashion has the potential to become one of the major contributing industries with a high rate of innovation for the Islamic clothing industry in Malaysia. Hence, this study endeavored to explore the probable influence of some imperative attributes that might affect Muslim women's hijab fashion consciousness. In the end, It is suggested that to build the desired level of consciousness for the hijab fashion among Muslim women, the hijab manufacturers and marketers should focus on self-congruity and the need for uniqueness to make sure their product would meet Muslim consumers' expectations.

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10. APPENDIX

a. SECTION A

A Self-Congruity						
	My current hijab image:					
SC1	is consistent with how I see myself.	1	2	3	4	5
SC2	reflects who I am.	1	2	3	4	5
SC3	is similar to others who wear hijab.	1	2	3	4	5
SC4	is very much like me.	1	2	3	4	5
SC5	is a mirror image of me.	1	2	3	4	5
B Modesty						
	I feel embarrassed:					
M1	when I see someone in clothes that are too tight.	1	2	3	4	5
M2	when I see someone in too low cut a dress.	1	2	3	4	5
M3	when I see someone wearing clothes that reveal too much of their body.	1	2	3	4	5

M4	when I see someone wearing immodest clothes.	1	2	3	4	5
M5	wearing unlined sheer dresses that reveal too much of the body.	1	2	3	4	5
M6	wearing blouses that reveal too much of the body.	1	2	3	4	5
C Conformity						
C1	I wear clothes that everyone is wearing even though they may not look good on me.	1	2	3	4	5
C2	When I buy new clothing, I try to buy something similar to what my friends are wearing.	1	2	3	4	5
C3	I am uncomfortable when my clothes are different from all others at an event.	1	2	3	4	5
C4	I feel more a part of the group if I am dressed like my friends.	1	2	3	4	5
C5	I try to dress like others in my group so that people will know we are friends.	1	2	3	4	5
D Need for Uniqueness						
D1	I choose a hijab fashion that makes me feel distinctive.	1	2	3	4	5
D2	I wear a very different hijab fashion even though I attract attention from others.	1	2	3	4	5
D3	I try to wear unusual hijab fashion different from styles that many people wear.	1	2	3	4	5
D4	I would like to show my personality by selecting a unique hijab fashion that people hardly wear.	1	2	3	4	5
E Fashion Consciousness						
FC1	I usually have one or more hijab fashion of the very newest style.	1	2	3	4	5
FC2	I keep my wardrobe up to date with the changing hijab fashion.	1	2	3	4	5
FC3	Fashionable, attractive styling of hijab fashion is very important to me.	1	2	3	4	5

FC4	To get variety, I shop at different stores and choose different brands of hijab fashion.	1	2	3	4	5
FC5	It's fun to buy new and exciting hijab fashion.	1	2	3	4	5

b. SECTION B - RESPONDENT PROFILE:

1. Please state your age: _____

2. Marital status:

Single

Married

Widowed/Divorced

3. Education level:

SPM

STPM/Diploma/Matrices

Degree / undergraduate

Masters

PhD

Others: _____

4. Occupation:

Government sector

Private sector

Own business

Others: _____

5. Annual income level:

Below RM29K

RM29K-RM39K

RM40K-RM49K

RM50K-RM59K

RM60K-RM69K

RM70K-RM79K

RM80K-RM89K