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# (Un)spoken codes: Is the new generation breaking the Pentecostal dress code?

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Culture is the way people create meaningful worlds to live, which are constructed by interpretation, experience, and activities whereby material is produced and consume (Kawamura, 2018). In this investigation, the material production of the cultural world of the church is fashion. Fashion defined as a cultural practice as well as a symbolic product (Kawamura, 2018). One of the objectives of this research is to identify how women use clothing as a symbolic manifestation of their beliefs and values and the relationship between that fashion and their identity.

Identity is defined as the constant sense of the self and the connection of the self to the world around (Northrup, 1989). The church is a cultural institution where fashion is produced as an expression of social identity. That role is intensified with gender identity because even when the church culture, social identity, and fashion are constantly changing the distinction between men and woman through clothing as gender symbols has been static (Kidwell & Steele, 1989). The Oxford Dictionary defines dress code as "the unwritten cultural codes of dress and general appearance that reflect norms in a particular context". Not all dress codes are explicit rules. In a social and cultural context like the church, it can be passed generation through generation without saying a word.

Scholars have emphasized the importance of incorporating religion and religiosity in academic research, through approaches such as cross-cultural research (Essoo & Dibb, 2004). Minimal attention has been given to the role religion has played in American history and culture because most scholars come from seculars backgrounds (Stephens, 2017; Godina, 2014). Therefore, this paper will examine, how women in the Pentecostal church use their dress to create and manage their religious identity, and indirectly their gender identity, within the context of the church. To effectively interpret the relationship between religious and gender identity in dress behavior, this research applies Social Identity Theory (Michelman, 1999). Using this

theory allows this study to holistically evaluate the complex relationship between women's religious and gender identities within today's Pentecostal church. By doing so, this study aims to continue the development of dress attire and adornment as established topics within the social sciences (Batten, 2010).

Historically, women have played important roles in social change, and today's society is no exception. Gender equality is one of today's most relevant social campaigns. Society is experiencing a fundamental shift with respect to gender identity, its culturally valued forms, and gender role expectations (Eriksen, 2016). The redefinition of gender identity has had implication beyond the individual level and has shifted the identity of the nation as a whole. For example, re-defining gender identity has led to the re-structuring of the family unit and the roles and expectation of family members (Eriksen, 2016). Not only have the ways we define gender changed but what society values has also changed. For example, ethical consumption and sustainability are now issues that the fashion industry has to incorporate in order to maintain brand appeal (Werther & Chandler, 2005).

This paper will focus on Pentecostalism as a movement within Christianity. Pentecostals have the same basic beliefs as any other Christian denomination, that Jesus Christ is the Savior. Pentecostalism's focus is Jesus dying for everyone in the crucifixion and the power of Grace for their salvation from eternal damnation (Thiselton, 1977). A background in Pentecostalism in history is necessary for this investigation to understand how it got to what it is today. The church as a cultural institution sustains the production of symbols, such as daily behaviors, like dress (Kawamura, 2018).

The current research provides a specific context for understanding the ways the female gender is being re-defined in contemporary society and how it is managed through dress. This

research will help scholars to better understand gender, change, and dress within a specific religious context. Furthermore, such research would help scholars advocate for global social changes because women are the center of social policies and programs, such as education, health care, economic security and social welfare (Jaunk, 2017; Stanciu, 2018; Ginsberg & Millers-Cribbs, 2005). Not only the scholar field will benefit from this research but also the business side of the fashion industry.

The fashion and apparel industries can use this research to better understand contemporary social values, which will allow them to create products that resonate with their customers, thereby creating brand loyalty (Werther & Chandler, 2005). The marketing and merchandising sector of the fashion industry may also benefit from this research because past research has demonstrated that religion influences consumer behavior, including purchasing decisions, consumption patterns (Essoo & Dibb, 2004; Choi, Kale & Shin, 2010,; Cosgel & Minkler, 2004), and the way consumers perceive and manage advertising messages (Mokhlis, 2008; Choi, Kale & Shin, 2010).

**Theoretical Framework**

Identity is the constant sense of the self and the connection of the self to the world around the individual (Kriesberg, Northrup & Thorson, 1989). Identity formation is an on-going social process, which helps an individual understand the self and the society they live in (Bendixsen, 2013; Miguez, 2000). Identity, individual and collective, is created by subjective perceptions of interaction with external characterizations (Bendixsen, 2013; Peek, 2005). People have multiple identities because they are social beings that are expected to perform multiple roles throughout life (Bendixsen, 2013; Fombelle, Jarvis, Ward & Ostrom, 2012; Miguez, 2000; Mol, 1976). For example, each individual has a gender identity, age identity, and ethnic identity, which are

performed to varying degrees depending on the social context (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Mol, 1976; Peek, 2005; Stone, 1990).

Social identity theory assumes that individuals seek to define themselves in terms of their relationships with others and their common characteristics (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Tajfel (1981) defined social identity as an individual's knowledge that it belongs to a particular social group (p. 258), and posits that groups are cognitive entities to which an individual is emotionally connected (p. 254). Social identity theory assesses psychological processes, such as social categorization, social identification, and social comparison (Van Lange, Kruglanski & Higgins, 2012; Tajfel, 1981).

Social identity theory states that one's social identity is created during the social categorization process, where individuals with common characteristics are classified into groups (Bendixsen, 2013; Stets & Burke, 2000; Tajfel, 1981).  This categorization process helps the individual create and define their place in society, as being member of a group (Tajfel, 1981; Hatch & Schultz, 2004). Stets and Burke (2000) affirm that it is essential to examine a person's identity through how an individual categorizes itself as a member of a group, and also, the role that the individual portrays at the same time that they are a member of a social group.

Social identification occurs when an individual assimilates the identity of the social group that they consciously became a member of (Abrams & Hogg, 1990). An individual's interpretation of its social group would determine their self-definitions as their social identity (Tajfel, 1981). Because individuals are part of multiple social groups, all of these memberships contribute to the individual's self-image (the way one see oneself, and want others to see them), public-image (how one is categorized by others), and consequently self-definition (Bendixsen, 2013; Onorato & Turner, 2004; Tajfel, 1981).  During the social comparison process, an

individual seeks a positive evaluation of their social identity (Abrams & Hogg, 1990).

Comparing the in-group (group that the individual a is member of) to another significant out-

group (group the individual has no membership) will produce positive or negative self-

evaluation. Individuals want positive distinctiveness because it protects and enhances their self-

esteem (Sachdev & Bourhis, 1987; Hatch & Schultz 2004; Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Cremer, Vugt

& Sharp, 1999).

       **Social identity and dress.** Used in the most global sense, dress refers to every way the

body can be used in the expression of identities, and is one of the most visible expressions that

social groups expect from their members (Arthur, 1999; Crane, 2000; Roschenthaler, 2015).

Dress is a visual expression that comes before words. This is why dress has a priority over verbal

communication in identity expression (Higging & Eicher, 1992). Dress is a means in the

construction and expression identity, because it offers choices to express different lifestyles,

attitudes, and even sub-cultures as a resistance to the dominant culture (Crane, 2000). In

addition, dress announces social positions of the individual wearing it, to both the wearer and the

spectator in particular social interactions (Higging & Eicher, 1992). An individual's aspiration

for a positive self-evaluation provides motivation to use dress as differentiation between social

groups (Abrams & Hogg, 1990). For example, for a woman wearing a habit, it is a symbolic

expression of her social identity and her gender identity, which is that of a Catholic nun.

**Gender Identity**

       Gender is the social and cultural classification into "masculine", "feminine", and based

on biological differences throughout history (Ribeiro, 2018; Oakley, 2016;Kidwell & Steele,

1989; Kimmel, 2011; Oakley, 2016; Stoller, 1984). Gender is socially constructed, which means

that "masculinity" and/or "femininity" in a person is only created and recognized within a

society and can vary between cultures and change over time (Ribeiro, 2018; Stoller, 1984;

Kimmel, 2011).

**Gender developmen**t.  Sociologists have suggested that the acquisition of one's gender

occurs very early in an individual's development (Kimmel, 2011). For example, Oakley (2016)

stated that gender identity could be acquired at the same time as a native language, in the first

two years of life. From birth, gender is established and reinforced through learned behaviors,

such as use of colors, clothing style, and toys (Kimmel, 2011; Oakley, 2016). Throughout

history, society has created gender stereotypes, as the different behaviors observed between the

sexes (Ribeiro, 2018). For example, in many cultures wearing make-up and jewelry are

considered feminine behaviors. Bodies and dress have been interpreted in terms of gender

stereotypes as part of social structure; this is why throughout history individuals have struggled

with their own personal image and the expected social perception of gender identity expression

(Kidwell & Steele, 1989).

**Gender as social identity**. Gender identity is formed via social encounters within social

institutions, such as families, schools, and churches, which help shape, modify, and create one's

individual gender identity (Kimmel, 2011). Gender identity as a social identity needs to be

constantly reaffirmed and publicly expressed (Cameron, 1997; Femenìas, 2005). In the book

*Men and women: Dressing the part*, Schreire (1989) called the social and cultural expectation of

gender identity expression, "gender conventions" (p. 2). Gender conventions can be behaviors,

clothing, and images, which have been institutionalized as "masculine" or "feminine", which are

used in different social contexts (Kimmel, 2011; Cameron, 1997; Kidwell & Steele, 1989;

Ribeiro, 2018). The embodied experience of gender identity is characterized by fluidity (Listead

&Pullen, 2006). Because gender identity is not static, its expressions may change during the

course of an individual's life (Kimmel, 2011). In other words, the performativity of gender

identity may change through time, space, discourse, and interactions (Listead &Pullen, 2006).

**Dress and Gender Identity**

A majority of social actions require a performance, which means a reenactment of a set of

meanings already socially institutionalized (Butler, 1988). In addition, gender performance has

been strategic in maintaining a gender binary frame (Butler, 1988). This binary frame limits

gender to male and female. Gender performance also continues to prescribe features such as

body movement, hairstyles, and clothing (Sloop, 20004). The meanings given to clothes are

culturally and socially constructed, and those meanings are not static (Kidwell & Steele, 1989).

Dress is a tool used to reinforce gender differences (Kidwell & Steele, 1989). For a woman to

perform her gender identity, she would still rely on her hair, use of make-up, and her clothes

(Evans & Balfour, 2012).

In many cultures, the governmental organizations used dress to maintain gender

perception (Roschenthaler, 2015). For example, in the North West Region of Cameroon, state

institutions make regulations about the style of dress that men and women are supposed to wear

in the celebration of International Women's Day (Roschenthaler, 2015). Roschenthaler (2015)

noticed in his research, that only women wear uniforms with wax; furthermore, men refuse to

wear such uniforms because wax cloth was related to women.

Dress also reflects social differences between men and women, like the relation between

men and authority, and the more restricted public life of women (Kidwell & Steele, 1989). For

example, Femenìas (2005) conducted an ethnographic study in Cayllama, Peru, were *polleras –*

their traditional ethnic clothes-- were only worn by women (p.2). In this case, dress was a way to

establish gendered boundaries, but also a powerful tool for social change (Femenìas, 2005).

Femenìas stated in her book *Gender and the Boundaries of Dress in Contemporary Peru* that women wear the ethnic clothes because men did not (p. 10). They also wear ethnic dress when engaging in political activism on behalf of the "*Cayllominos*" – people from *Cayllama,* they said it gave them a voice because of their minority statues as a community (Femenìas, 2005). This example shows the importance of expressing identity through dress as non-verbal communication (Femenìas, 2005).

**Religious Identity**

The concept of self is constructed when an individual differentiates themself from others with whom they interact (Mead, 1913; Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Michelman, 1997). Mead (1913) distinguishes the self as "I" and the self as "Me". The self as "I" works as the influential force of behaviors, on the other hand the self as "Me" is the collection of materials, inner attitudes, social identities that can be recognized by others (Klein, Klein & Kernan, 1993). The self performs depending on continuous encounters with objects, symbols, and people, including the self (Klein, Klein & Kernan, 1993; Mead, 1913). In introspection, the self interacts with itself in an inner conversation, with social codes and symbols to create a self-identification (Mead, 1913; Weigert, 1986).

Identity is the result of self-identification from introspection, social interaction, and cultural representation (Bendixsen, 2013). Personal identity is the assumption that the individual can differentiate themself from others (Goffman, 1963). Identities are social because they are constructed from social conceptions of social positions each individual fills (Higging & Eicher, 1992).  The social roles an individual ascribes to themselves are the core of their social identity, which collectively forms the individual's global identity (Klein, Klein & Kernan, 1993). This means that one's social identity—categorization to a significant group-- affects their global

identity based on their group membership (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Furthermore, an individual's global identity and social identity depend on each other, but also they can conflict with one another (Mol, 1976).

Religion is part of one's personal identity and one's social identity (Peek, 2005). Religions traditionally provide believers with specific theology, set of norms, and moral values that seek to establish and maintain a secure identity (Cosgel & Minkler, 2004; Mol, 1976). When an individual commits to a religious group it acquires a religious identity, because the individual identity is perceived in relation to the social group of which they are now a member (Cosgel & Minkler, 2004; Bendixsen, 2013). As with any other social identity, religious identity must be affirmed, which social identity theorists call positive distinctiveness. Positive distinctiveness is the processes were the individual seeks identification with their in-group and differentiation from out-groups to better their self-esteem (Bendixsen, 2013; Cremer, Vugt & Sharp, 1999).  For example, research has determined that in the acquisition of religious identity, the individual is in a continuous search of being closer to the "ideal religious subject", and this becomes part of the positive distinctiveness process where the individual affirms its identification with the religious group (Bendixsen, 2013).

Peek (2005) stated that religious identity has three stages of development. First, religious identity is ascribed, meaning the religious identity is passed through family; an individual can take their religious identity for granted and still be monitored by family members (Peek, 2005; Leveson, Aldwin & Igarishi, 2015). The second stage is when the religious identity is chosen, and the individual consciously assimilates to this new identity (Peek, 2005). Peek explains that when the religious identity is chosen, it can be supported or rejected by other core identities (Peek, 2005). This is why conversion plays an important role in many religions: because in

conversion the individual consciously acquires the identity, integrating it with their other

identities (Mol, 1976; Miguez, 2000). In this stage, the individual seeks to differentiate from

other religions, through self-reflection and meaning making (Leveson, Aldwin & Igarishi, 2015).

The third stage happens when religious identity is the declared identity of an individual— an

individual decides to express it to empower themselves or to correct public misconception of the

declared identity in society (Peek, 2005). The declared identity is a conjunctive stage, where the

individual attempts to bridge contradictions (Leveson, Aldwin & Igarishi, 2015). When an

individual decides to perform their religious identity in order to make a statement, it becomes

their declared identity. An example of this third stage was after the events of 9/11, when many

people were misjudged for their religion.  Individuals decided to express their religious identity

in order to correct the public image of Islam (Peek, 2005). Regardless of the developmental stage

of the religious identity formation being performed, the individual's identity depends on their

interpretation of the social group identity (Mol, 1976).

As previously mentioned, conversion plays an important role in most religions; sharing

the faith with others is part of expressing an individual's religious identity (Kimmons, McGuire,

Stauffer, Jones, Gregson & Austin, 2017; Mol, 1976; Miguez, 2000). Religious conversion

happens when a new perspective becomes emotionally attached in one's identity, giving the

individual new orientation, new order of priorities, a new set of values (Mol, 1976). These new

definitions of reality, orientation, and values are produced by the social group that the individual

becomes a member of (Miguez, 2000).  Some theologians suggest that conversion is a change in

identity, breaking off the "old identity" and incorporating a "new identity" (Mol, 1976; Miguez,

2000). Conversion is a process of self-categorization, where the individual consciously acquires

a group membership, emotionally identifying with other group members (Miguez, 2000).

Conversion is a means that incorporates rather than annihilates change, and reduces the competition with other core identities because it is produced in a specific social context by a social group providing positive distinctiveness of this new social identity (Mol, 1976; Miguez, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1974; Kimmons, McGuire, Stauffer, Jones, Gregson & Austin, 2017). Most religions rely on conversion and groups' interaction to guide new members in the process to know their new religious identity and the roles that religious organizations expect from their members (Miguez, 2000). In addition, religious organizations expect visual evidence of the group's compromise with their religious identity (Miguez, 2000). Religious identity, as with most identities, needs to be expressed (Cosgel & Minkler, 2004). This compromise can be evidenced by rituals (Mol, 1976; Miguez, 2000).

**Dress and religious identity.** Religious rituals can be practices and behaviors with particular meanings produced by a particular religious group (Miguez, 2000). Mol affirmed that religious rituals have three specific effects in a believer's identity: restore, reinforce, and redirect (Mol, 1976). For instance, rituals give restoration through a system of meaning, giving a sense of belonging (Mol, 1976). In addition, they can reinforce the religious identity impelling social expectations; and they can redirect with emotional support the identity transformation through conversion (Mol, 1976). For example, for many, religion can be praying, doing good deeds, reading and studying their theology, talking publicly about their beliefs, having a particular diet, or wearing a symbolic garment, jewelry, body mark, and many others rituals.

Through rituals, religious identity can be expressed, and most rituals include body enactments (Bendixsen, 2013). For instance, religious identity expression can include a particular style of dress, specific rules in grooming, and strict diets (Cosgel & Minkler, 2004). For

example, Muslim women wearing headscarves or the "*yarmulke*" used in the Jewish community are different ways of expressing religious identity.

Stone (1990) discussed the role of appearance in the expression of identity. He stated that the expression of identity through appearance gave the individual's identity values, attitudes, and moods, because it established and mobilized the self (Stone, 1990; Johnson, Lennon & Rudd, 2014). When an identity is established it is emphasized through forms of symbolic expression, like dress and appearance, because it affects the identity through interactions with others (Stone, 1990; Johnson, Lennon & Rudd, 2014). Physical appearance's role is important because it has an affect on how others interact with an individual, and one's identity is influence by those interactions (Gonzalez-Backen & Umaña- Taylor, 2011). Dress is a social tool used to communicate specific identities, even aspirational group identities (Batten, 2010). Stone (1990) said very clearly, "as the self is dressed, it is simultaneously addressed" (p. 149). In other words, with dress the self emits a message and is received by an audience. Of course, this message can be validated, overlooked, or even rejected.   For example, an individual can express religious identity and it can result in in-group cohesion and positive distinctiveness. In other cases, it can result in discrimination, hostility from the in-group and out-group (Peek, 2005). Furthermore, one's identity needs to be expressed through symbols in order for their identity be perceive by others members of the social group (Stone, 1990). This is why dress is a tool of religious identity expression; dress helps promote an individual's self esteem and create group cohesion (Peek, 2005). Michelman (1997) examined the constructions of women's religious' identity for Catholic nuns, where the habit created tension between their personal and social identity. This research concluded that nuns after retirement felt tension because they felt that by reentering a secular world without the habit, their religious identity was no longer visible (Michelman, 1997). This

shows how important the role of dress is in expression of religious identity as a way of unifying personal identity and a social identity.

Religious identity is an on-going process. Because the individual and the social group construct the religious identity it informs how individuals understand their other social identities (Bendixsen, 2013). The religious identity of an individual can be challenged, accepted or rejected by others, and this is why social group membership buffers this tension by providing positive distinctiveness (Peek, 2005). The way religious identity is expressed is not only part of self-expression but also part of identity formation (Bendixsen, 2013). In addition, one's religious identity may indirectly affect the way they express their gender identity (Bendixsen, 2013).

**Pentecostalism**

Christianity is one of the most prominent religions in the world; 31.4% of the world population considers themselves Christian (Pew Research Center, 2010). There are three grand streams: Orthodox, Catholicism, and Protestantism. All streams are very different from each other, but they all have similarities in their core believes.

Protestantism has the conviction that there is only one God with three different manifestations: the Father, the Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. One of the core beliefs of Protestantism is Salvation, an unearned gift of divine grace, any deeds or efforts will not make anyone deserving of it (Nichol, 1966). The majority of Protestants find their central messages in the Bible, and they believe it contains answers to human questions (Anderson, 2014; Boppart, Falkinger & Grossmann, 2104; Ram, 1970). That is why they use the Bible as the norm and guidance for their faith and life (Nichol, 1966). Protestantism as a social group expects their member to study, believe and obey the Bible, yet have the right to interpret it in their own ways (Anderson, 2014; Nichol, 1966). Another universal Protestant belief is that Jesus Christ is the

Savior. This means that by God's spirit a believer life can be transformed; they call it being

"born again" (Anderson, 2014). The one central theme in Christianity is the Lord Jesus Christ,

and the idea of he is coming back for all who believe in him as their Savior. The Holy Spirit is

the one who leads everything that takes place in many Christian churches (Anderson, 2014).

Within Protestantism, there are different denominations, such as Baptist, Methodist, and

Lutheran. This paper will focus on Pentecostalism. The term Pentecostalism in this paper will

include the classical Pentecostal churches, the Charismatic movement, and many independent

churches that follow the main characteristics of Pentecostalism (Anderson, 2014). Pentecostals

are 26.7% of the world's Christian population (Pew Research Center, December 2011).

Although different interpretations of Pentecostalism exist, for this paper Hollenweger's

(2004) definition is the most appropriate. Hollenweger (2004) defined Pentecostalism as a

movement that expects the visual manifestations of the Spirit of God. An example could be

evident miracles, such as divine healing. The miraculous work of the Holy Spirit is the main

distinctive characteristic in Pentecostalism (Anderson, 2014).

**Origins**. Many Pentecostal historians give the Pentecostal origin to Charles Parham

(1873- 1929) in Kansas (Anderson 2014; Nichol, 1966; Hollenweger, 2004). To understand the

origins of Pentecostalism, it is better to start with the nineteenth-century American Methodist

movement, another Protestant denomination. The Methodist movement introduced personal

liberty and the emotional element to the Christian experience (Anderson, 2014, Nichol, 1966).

John Wesley preached about the manifestation of the Spirit as the "second blessing" where a

Christian needs to live a pure life; this doctrine is called "Sanctification" (Nichol, 1966). John

Fletcher took the Sanctification doctrine deeper and called it the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit", an

immediate experience for every Christian. The "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" doctrine opened the

door for Pentecostalism after 1835 (Anderson, 2014). Phoebe Palmer from the American

Holiness, another Protestant movement, embraced the Sanctification doctrine as she led the

Holiness revivals (Anderson, 2014).  The Holiness movement began to grow from 1885 to 1905

including: Church of God (1886), Church of Nazarene (1895), Fire-Baptized Holiness Church

(1895), Christian Union (1896), The Church of God in Christ (1897), and Pilgrim Holiness

Church (1897); all these denominations ended up joining the Pentecostal movement (Anderson,

2014). From the Holiness movement, Pentecostalism received the majority of their leaders and

members in the nineteen-century (Nichol, 1966).

The main contributions of the Holiness movement to Pentecostalism are the beliefs that

revival meetings have to be utilized for getting new people to convert, that believers should hope

for the return of Jesus Christ, that one must seek to be guided by the Spirit of God in all aspect of

life (Anderson, 2014), and that people should deny all manifestation of the "world" (nothing that

does not come from God), like amusement, jewelry, cosmetics, or any luxury (Nichol, 1966).

With all these developments the Holiness movement became less Methodist and more

"Pentecostal" (Anderson, 2014).

**Basic beliefs**. The event in the Bible, the Day of Pentecost, is the foundation of

Pentecostal practice and beliefs (Nichol, 1966). The Day of Pentecost is the second Jewish

festival of the agriculture year, called "*Shabuoth"* Feast of Weeks (Marshall, 1977). This

celebration was when, through freewill, the first and best fruits of the harvest were given to God,

as is mentioned in the Old Testament in the Bible (Marshall, 1977). In the books of Acts, the

Bible describes when during this festival Jesus tells the disciples that they will receive the power

of the Spirit. The Pentecostals call this moment the Baptism of the Holy Spirit (Nichol, 1966;

Anderson, 2014). In the book of Acts 1, verse 8 is the main passage of Pentecostal beliefs

(Marshall, 1977):

> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my
>
> witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (New
>
> International Version)

For Pentecostals, the Pentecost is a relevant and recurring phenomenon (Nichol, 1966),

the reception of the Spirit is evident with the manifestations of the gifts of the Spirit, which are

divine healing (physical healing without the intervention of medicine), speaking in tongues (the

ability to speak in languages that the speaker never has learned), and prophecy (God's provision

of a vision of the future; Hollenweger, 2004). Many authors have stated that the main

characteristic that distinguishes the Pentecostal from other Christians are the emphasis in the

manifestation of the Holy Spirit's gifts, speaking in tongues being the most common (Nichol,

1966; Anderson, 2014; Hollenweger, 2004; Anderson; 2011; Burgess, 2006). The baptism by the

Holy Spirit is the evidence that God is present, and Pentecostals emphasize in the search for the

encounter with the Spirit of God that results in a transformation of life (Anderson; 2011; Nichol,

1966). In others words, Pentecostals need to show visual evidence that believers are separating

themselves from "worldly" behaviors.

**Worship.** In Pentecostalism, emotional experience and a personal relationship with God

are the essential characteristic of the Christian life (Anderson, 2014). These characteristics need

to be present every service at church, where congregational participation is expected: a leading

preacher gives a message, and the evidence of the presence of God through the manifestation of

the gifts of the Spirit are the center of the service (Anderson, 2014). Pentecostalism is

characterized by the "freedom in the Spirit," where spontaneity is encouraged with oral and narrative liturgy and worship (Anderson; 2011; Burgess, 2006).

       The Pentecostal theology emphasizes "*glossolalia*" (Anderson 2014). *Glossolalia* comes from the Greek term "*glossa*" (tongue), and "*lalein*" (speak), meaning speaking in tongues (Burgess, 2006). It was not until the revivals in Azusa Street in Los Angeles, California that Pentecostalism turned to a global religion (Anderson 2014). William Joseph Seymour (1870-1922), a student of Parham is considered as the founder of Pentecostalism (Hollenweger, 2004; Anderson, 2014). Seymour made a revolutionary movement giving the marginalized (e.g., African American, women, and the poor) the opportunity to have the same personal experience with God (Hollenweger, 2004; Anderson, 2014; Nichol, 1966). In addition, those Azusa Street revivals opened the door to visitors from around the world, including those from China, India, Japan, Egypt, Liberia, Angola, South Africa, and Latin America, where the Pentecostal movement influenced with a global outreach (Anderson, 2014). In Pentecostalism, outreach is crucial because the movement seeks to convert as many people as possible to Christianity. Conversion occurs when an individual consciously and freely accepts a religion's beliefs and practices (Lawless, 2005).

       As Pentecostalism grew around the world, the movement took different styles of worship and theologies, such as: the Classical Pentecostalism following the Azusa movement; the Independent Pentecostals Churches (in Africa and Asia) since 1914; the Charismatic Movement from the middle of the century; and all the newer Pentecostals and Charismatic Churches that have risen since 1975 around the world (Anderson, 2011). They are all different, but they all have the main characteristic of Pentecostalism in common: a personal encounter with God lead by the Holy Spirit, were the gifts of the Spirit are evident (Anderson, 2014).

**Gender Roles and Expectations in the Pentecostal Church**

The Pentecostal Church has three crucial elements in their approach to how they perform their religious identity—the role of the Holy Spirit, the role of the Scripture, and the role of the community (Thomas, 1994). The church community is where the Pentecostal identity is performed as a social group. In the community, believers are testimony— visual representations of God's activity in their lives, and observe other believers' testimony. In others words, they have to testify of their religious identity with visual expression. In addition, community members' testimonies can be assessed and accepted, or rejected. The community acts like a guard of the group identity, avoiding excessive individualism and subjectivism (Thomas, 1994). Pentecostals tend to live in some proximity so that older members can teach and watch the new members as they learn and maintain their new roles of their membership (Austin-Broos, 1987).

Within the Pentecostal community, gender is marked and distinctive. An extreme example is seating patterns in very austere denominations, like the Small Branch Pentecostal Church, where women and men did not sit together in church (Scott, 1994). Men sat on the left and women sat on the right of the center of the aisle (Scott, 1994). In this same community, men worked and owned land; their roles were clearly to be the head of the household and at the same time to lead church (Scott, 1994). On the other hand, women needed to stay at home, raising the children, doing all the domestic work and remaining "submissive" under the men's guidance, both at home and church (Scott, 1994).  This is a common picture of a Pentecostal gendered community, where men control the financial and administration of the church, and women operate Sunday Bible School for the children, and women's associations (Austin-Broos, 1987). Sunday services are also managed according to gender roles.  Men are predominantly in control of the preaching and women dominate the singing aspects of the service (Fosztó & Kiss, 2012).

This is because traditionally, masculinity is identified with strength, independence, assertiveness and rationality, while femininity indicates passivity, dependence, and emotionalism (Scott, 1994). Preaching is about an assertive and rational interpretation of the Scriptures, while singing and worshiping involve an emotional connection with the Holy Spirit.

In spite of the male dominated organizational part of the church, Pentecostalism has the reputation of being a "woman's religion" (Scott, 1994; Lawless, 2005; Austin-Broos, 1987). The religion has more female followers than male. In 2014, women were 59% of the Pentecostal population (Pew Research Center). Pentecostalism has opened new avenues for women to express themselves (Rabelo, Mota & Almeida, 2009). For example, some Pentecostals expanded spiritual roles to women and enabled them to be leaders outside the domestic sphere—as preachers, evangelists, healers, and prophets—with the acquisitions of the Holy Spirit (Rabelo, Mota & Almeida, 2009; Scott, 1994; Thomas, 1994). In the Pentecostal community, women and men are spiritually equals—they will be judged by the same standards by God (Scott, 1994). Furthermore, Pentecostal religious discourse is used by women to maintain moral mandates on sexual relations and family dynamics (Martin, 2001). For example, family discipline puts the household needs over the freedom and pleasure of men, which gives women the right to police and sanction men's behaviors that do not follow the Pentecostal moral mandates (Martin, 2001).

Gender roles in Pentecostalism are constantly negotiated between genders' spiritual equality and the reinforcement of patriarchy through the organizational structure (Scott, 1994). For example, even when a woman may not be able to have a position on the church board (that makes administrative decisions), she can be the most important spiritual leader of a church. With alternative structures created within the Pentecostal churches—different status positions, like youth's pastor, worship director, usher, Bible study teacher-- opportunities are given for internal

social mobility of their female members (Fosztó & Kiss, 2012). There is a close connection

between displaying gender roles and the emotional expression of the Holy Spirit's gifts as the

Pentecostals' social identity and practice (Schmidt, 1989; Scott, 1994; Rables, 2009). This

mobility gives women the opportunity to manage their identity negotiating better positions that

allow them better self-esteem.

**Dress in the Pentecostal Church**

Dress is used symbolically by Pentecostal communities, as a way of identifying their

members. It acts as a visible boundary between an in-group (Pentecostal) and an out-group (non-

Pentecostals) member (Schmidt, 1989; Belk, 1989).  Furthermore, Pentecostal dress creates a

more egalitarian community, through an agreement from their members to maintain a

homogenous appearance (Schmidt, 1989; Fosztó & Kiss, 2012). Pentecostalism tries to avoid

individualism; they believe each person is part of the same "body" (the church) (Miguez, 2000).

For example, all members are part of the unity and each member could have a different but

equally important role for the function of the "body". Especially for women, dress creates a

connection between themselves as members of the Pentecostal church, because they can

recognize each other outside the confines of the church—establishing themselves as a distinct

group, within Christianity, furthermore, from within Protestantism (Rabelo, Mota & Almeida,

2009; Lawless, 2005).

Aside from group identification, Pentecostals use their dress as a mark of distinctiveness;

church members should demonstrate visual signs of distance from "worldly" references (Rabelo,

Mota & Almeida, 2009; Fosztó & Kiss, 2012). This includes dress behaviors, like long hair, high

necklines, below the knee skirts, no make-up, and jewelry. While trying to establish their

Pentecostal identity as a social group, they separate themselves from the world; social

comparison plays an important role, where the in-group exaggerates the differences between them and the out-group through dress (Lawless, 2005; Festinger, 1954). During the process of social comparison, Pentecostals express their discontent with "worldly" things, like drinking, smoking, dancing, listening to and watching secular movies and music, and vanity; they believe those behaviors affects their relationship with God (Schmidt, 1989). Moreover, Pentecostals draw attention to the out-group dress behavior through their own, creating positive distinctiveness for their members to maintain their religious identity as their social identity (Lawless, 2005; Schmidt, 1989).

Pentecostals seek distinctiveness because they believe God has given them the command to be testimony, to lead others in the world by example, and to try to convert them; dress takes on a spiritual significance for the members of the church (Lawless, 2005; Sarancino, 2012). For example, a simple symbolic article, like a habit, or a cross, establishes behavior code expectations to the person wearing them. Many Pentecostals believe that their daily rituals have religious significance—they can affect their relationship with God, and furthermore, other people's relationships with God (Sarancino, 2012).  In addition, Pentecostals use their dress to express their commitment to the Pentecostal identity; it makes a statement that the member is willing to sacrifice all notions of fashion for notions of religion (Lawless, 2005).

When dress assumes a spiritual role it can bring anxiety to the wearer to meet the social group' standards. The individual knows the significance of what they are wearing as a social identity—it not only identifies them, it also identifies them as member of a social group—and the need to represent them in the best way possible (Sarancino, 2012).

Using a dress code, Pentecostals seek to create and maintain their religious identity as homogeneously as possible, and indirectly their gender identity as perceptible (Roschenthaler,

2015; Lawless, 1988). Pentecostalism emphasizes a modest, dignify, unworldly identity evidenced through appearance, to maintain boundaries that can be identified by members and non-members (Zimuto & Chikodza, 2013; Scott, 1994; Lawless, 1988). In contrast to women's strict dress code, men only have to wear their hair short, maintain a clean-shaven face and wear their "best" clothes for church (Lawless, 1988; Scott, 1994). Women's dress code is more restricted; they are forbidden to have their hair cut or processed, and to use makeup, perfume, and jewelry are forbidden (Rabelo, Mota & Almeida, 2009; Brodwin, 2003; Lawless, 1988; Butler, 2011). Furthermore, women are only allowed to wear dresses and skirts with length below the knees; also they need to have high necklines and cover their arms up to the elbow (Lawless, 1988; Scott, 1994). Pentecostal women are consider by many as "old-fashioned" and "out of style", because of their use of sober colors and not following the latest fashion trends (Lawless, 1988; Scott, 1994). They are aware of these stereotypes, but are not bothered by them because it is the way they distinguish themselves as members of a Pentecostal church (Lawless, 1988,). Pentecostal dress is carefully distinguished by over-determined gender symbols, seeking a singular code of appearance for their members (Brodwing, 2003; Schmidt, 1989). For example, the prohibition of pants for women is a clear distinction of the Pentecostal identity, managing gender and religiosity with one single item of clothing (Scott, 1994).

The Pentecostals' modest dress code stems from early America, when plain dress was used to express social and religious protest (Schmidt, 1989). During the 1920's, entertainment and women's clothes passed through a transformation; the show business was more sexualized and women's bodies were more exposed. In that period, Evangelicals not having equal access to print words, used dress as the medium to communicate (Schmidt, 1989). With the attention women's clothes were receiving, religious women took plain dress as a marker of boundaries

between believers and non-believers (Jones, 2018; Lawless, 1988; Schmidt, 1989). The modest plain dress code was used to demonstrate and establish a moral, decent, and acceptable way of dress, which did not follow the fashions of the decade (Jones, 2018; Butler, 2012). From that moment, modest and plain dressing has been a symbol of purity and consecration to God for believing women (Jones, 2018; Sadatmoosavi, Ali & Shokouhi, 2016; Schmidt, 1989).

One of the most important rules for a sanctified life was the modest plain dress code (Butler, 2012; Brodwin, 2003). Mother Lizzie Robinson (1860-1945) with her white blouse, long black skirt, and practical shoes, was the template for "holiness dress"; she believed that fashion was a challenge to Pentecostal teachings (Butler, 2012). Fashionable clothes were a symbol of sin and pride, and were an emblem of vanity (Sadatmoosavi, Ali & Shokouhi, 2016; Schmidt, 1989). Holiness dress is the visual expression to the community that a new member submitted to the authority of the Holy Spirit, moreover, to the authority of the leadership of the church (Butler, 2012).

Pentecostals used various passages of the Scripture to validate the strict dress code. First they believe their members need to be humble people as the Bible says in Micah 6:8. For women's dress, Pentecostals specifically use the passages of 1 Timothy 2:9-10, 1 Peter 3:3-4, and 1 Corinthians 11:15 (Massey, 2011; Schmidt, 1989; Jones, 2018). In 1Timothy 2:9-10, clearly establish modest dress as a woman's way of professing God. 1 Peter 3:3-4, explains how women's beauty should come from within and not from the body's adornments. Finally in 1 Corinthians 11:15, emphasis is placed in long hair as a modest covering. With these passages, Pentecostals believe their dress code is Biblical and God's mandates. The dress code also manages the reaction of men to women through clothing. Pentecostals believe that a woman's dressing provocatively can damage men spirituality with lustful thoughts (Schmidt, 1989;

Lawless, 1988). A modest dress code avoids temptation for men, and supports a holy life for women.

Clothes acquire a religious significance because they express the spirituality of those who wear them (Saracino, 2012; Lawless, 1988; Schmidt, 1989). For Pentecostals dress is part of a "holy" way of living (Lawless, 1988). Furthermore, the renunciation of adornment, fine clothes, and cutting of hair, demonstrate spiritual awakening (Butler, 2012; Schmidt, 1989). A Pentecostal woman following the dress code can achieve up-ward mobility in-group because it shows a sincere search for a spiritual life, someone that can be disciplined, and know the scriptures; it also demonstrates that she is in control of herself, and with time can have control over others (Butler, 2012). She has made a decision to be religious instead of fashionable.

## A New Generation of Pentecostal Women

More recently, there have been numerous complaints in Pentecostal churches about young women's dress behaviors, which are challenging the traditional modest dress code (Eriksen, 201; Scott, 1994). The younger generation has introduced shorter dresses, new hairstyles, and even trousers (Scott, 1994; Eriksen, 2016). The youth has expressed that Christian women should be allowed to dress fashionably as long as they do not go too far; this means not showing too much skin, attracting too much attention, or overly masculine appearance (Lindhanrdt, 2016). Despite these changes, the youth still maintain a modest standard and binary gender ideology.

History has shown that radical fashion changes happen after women's roles in society have reformed (Kidwell & Steel, 1989). After the 2016 election, the women's movement has been developing in the United State of America. For example, the 2017 Women's March was celebrated around the world and was a catalyst for political change in the Unites States, where

many women run for political positions. After the Women's March events, other social movements led by women have developed, shifting women's social roles.

Dress has been used to blur social standings, which advance the breaking of social constraints (Crane, 2000). Because dress is the most visible expression of social identities, like religious and gender identity, it is used to maintain symbolic boundaries, like the Pentecostal church has done, but also to subvert against it like the younger generation is doing (Crane, 2000; Scott, 1994; Eriksen, 2016).

Today's fashion has helped the young generation of Pentecostals to use specific fashionable styles that are meaningful to them without breaking the dress code (Crane, 2000). For example, a young woman can go and buy a low-cut neckline, sleeveless dress and layer it with a t-shirt and a jean jacket. Accessories like sunglasses and shoes are a way of expressing their love for fashion and an evidence of new fashion trends. Furthermore, in specific Pentecostal denominations, like Assembly of God (one of the largest Pentecostal denominations), women now are allowed to wear pants (Life Church Assembly of God, 2017). The new generation is getting further away from the plain dress and closer to their personal style, redefining their Pentecostal identity and, indirectly, their gender identity (Eriksen, 2016).

The elder members (men and women) have reacted with concern to the changes in the youth dress behavior. The youth are considered to be vulnerable to the outside world and worldly behaviors, and the acceptance of fashionable dress is seen as a sign of weakness to worldly things (Lindhanrdt, 2016). Furthermore, if a young woman wants to participate in the service (sing, play an instrument, read the Bible, or give a message), she needs to compromise by wearing a skirt and to not use make-up or jewelry. Appearance is still a way to discern the level of consecration of the Pentecostal's members (Ek, 2005).

Youth's dress behavior can be seen as a conflict between their religious identity and their personal identity (Ek, 2005); but the youth have insisted that being a faithful Christian should not inhibit them from following fashion. The youth are basing the expression of their religious identity on moral, faith, and spiritual stances (Lindhanrdt, 2016). For example, they are active in church participation, Bible studies, and taking leadership positions to younger members. This is a clear negotiation between their religious identity and being able to express their personal identity through dress. Their performance of age has taken a greater role in their global identity, and furthermore as a mark of distinctiveness within their social group.

Women in the Pentecostal church managed, performed, and expressed their religious identity through modest dress code. Pentecostals rely on dress behavior to visually measure member's devotion to the social group. Women's aspiration to be good Christians makes dress behavior their badge of holy living, demonstrating group identification and creating positive distinctiveness. At the same time, new generations of Pentecostal women are redefining their religious identity within the social group. The female youth's performance of their religious identity was in conflict with their personal identity and they decided (consciously or unconsciously) to perform their age identity to manage that conflict. These changes have caused a transformation in the dynamic of the social group. Previously the Pentecostal community served as a buffer to decreased tension between one's new identity and out-groups. Now, the youth has learned to manage their religious identity with their dress behavior causing tension within the community. The Pentecostal's youth generation is a great example of how dress is used to negotiate the performance of identities, demonstrating that women can be Pentecostal and fashionable at the same time.

Further research is needed to analyze where the generational gap lies between the woman accepting new expression of Pentecostal religious identity through dress, and the women who maintain the traditional dress code. In addition, analysis of the variations between church locations and the religious identity performance within different Pentecostal denominations will help to better understand this social group and the new expression of Pentecostal religious identity.

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