

Fall 2010

Identity and Fashion: A Look at Jordanian Christian Women and How Their Identity is Portrayed Through Their Clothing

Brittany Witcher
SIT Study Abroad

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection

 Part of the [Social and Cultural Anthropology Commons](#), and the [Sociology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Witcher, Brittany, "Identity and Fashion: A Look at Jordanian Christian Women and How Their Identity is Portrayed Through Their Clothing" (2010). *Independent Study Project (ISP) Collection*. 909.
https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/909

This Unpublished Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the SIT Study Abroad at SIT Digital Collections. It has been accepted for inclusion in Independent Study Project (ISP) Collection by an authorized administrator of SIT Digital Collections. For more information, please contact digitalcollections@sit.edu.

**Identity and Fashion:
A Look at Jordanian Christian Women
and How Their Identity is Portrayed Through Their Clothing**

Witcher, Brittany

Academic Director: Dr. Raed Al-Tabini

Project Advisor: Nemeh, Dr. Norma

Arcadia University

International Studies

Asia, Jordan, Amman

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
Jordan: Modernization And Social Change, SIT Study Abroad, Fall 2010

Abstract

Identity and Fashion:
A Look at Jordanian Christian Women
and How Their Identity is Portrayed through Their Clothing

Brittany Witcher

My research seeks to analyze the relationship between identity and fashion among Jordanian Christian women between the ages of 18-24. The goal of my project was to discover how Jordanian Christian women identify themselves, whether their clothes reflect their identity, and lastly find out what ways their clothes reflect their identity. In order to investigate my study, I observed various places throughout the city of Amman, the media and various churches; surveyed 20 women regardless of religion; held a focus group; and lastly, interviewed 5 Jordanian Christian women between 18-24, and 1 Jordanian Christian man of similar age. Through my research, I not only discovered the current fashion trends and phenomena within Amman, but I also I found that the clothing young Jordanian Christian women wear does not reflect their inner-identity as much as it is a reflection of how they fit within their society. Additionally, I found that while the clothing of the Christian women who participated in my study reflected the Arab society in which they lived, the women themselves claimed that they identified more with the West and its values, primarily because of its similar Christian heritage.

ISP Topic Codes:
Design and Decorative Arts, 106
Gender Studies, 507
Psychology: General, 901

Copyright Permission

The author hereby does grant the School for International Training the permission to electronically reproduce and transmit this document to the students, alumni, staff, and faculty of the World Learning Community.

The author hereby does grant the School for International Training the permission to electronically reproduce and transmit this document to the public via the World Wide Web or other electronic means.

The author hereby does grant the School for International Training the permission to reproduce this document to the public in print format.

Student (please print name): Brittany Monique Witcher

Signature: *Brittany Monique Witcher*

Date: December 4, 2010

Table of Contents

<u>PART 1: INTRODUCTION</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>PART 2: RATIONALE</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>PART 3: METHODOLOGY</u>	<u>13</u>
<u>PART 4: FINDINGS</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>PART 5: CONCLUSION</u>	<u>37</u>
<u>PART 6: LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY</u>	<u>40</u>
<u>PART 7: FURTHER RESEARCH</u>	<u>40</u>
<u>PART 8: BIBLIOGRAPHY</u>	<u>41</u>
<u>PART 9: APPENDICES</u>	<u>42</u>

Part I: Introduction

On the surface, one travelling to Jordan would think that fashion is a very important issue among Jordanians. As I traveled throughout the country, especially throughout Amman, I was fascinated at how meticulous and, yet, how creative many of the women were with their choice of clothing, given the conservative circumstances. When I asked why many of the women wore the clothes they wore, such as long pants, long sleeves, a jilbaab, and most notably, the hijaab, many of the women would often quote the Qur'an saying that God commands that women cover everything except their faces and their hands (debatable among some women). When I began to research the subject, however, there was very little information on the subject of fashion and Jordanian women. The little information I could find was only on general fashion trends among Muslim women throughout the world. I could find nothing on Christian fashion (except for a few passing remarks from various scholars on Muslim-Christian relations in Jordan) and very little specifically on Jordanian fashion. While I had visited some churches throughout Amman and observed different clothing styles, from conservative, with some wearing head coverings, to non-conservative, with some wearing low-cut shirts, in the same church, I still had not gotten a reason for why the women are wearing the clothes they are wearing.

This lack of information probed a stronger curiosity within me and became even stronger as the month of Ramadan ended and many Muslim women relaxed their dresswear. Many women began to take off their hijab, which made it nearly impossible to point out just by looks who was Christian and who was not. These events ultimately brought about the following questions of my research: *How do young Jordanian Christian women identify themselves and do their clothes reflect their identity? And if they do, then in what ways do their clothes reflect their identity?*

This topic is relevant in so many ways to the subject of my major, International Studies, and Modernization and Social Change here in Jordan. Among women, the love of clothing is universal. Women throughout the world shop for clothes year-round, not only out of necessity, but also as a common pastime. By studying the local clothing practices (ie: shopping habits, current fashion trends, etc.), I may have found a bridge not only between the two main religions of this country, but also between the two clashing cultures within this region (Westernization and Orientalism). Secondly, because Jordan is in the center of what we call, “The Middle East”, often whatever happens within Jordan is a reflection of what is currently going on or has recently happened in the rest of the Middle East. Looking at the clothing trends here in Jordan could give us a good assumption of what is occurring throughout the rest of the Middle East. Lastly, it is said that Arab Christians are the bridge between the West and the Arab world(Kelley, 2008). Since Christians have assimilated so well within Jordanian society and since most of the Western world is built upon Christian values, this study may provide us a more tangible understanding of Modern Arab culture and its values. My research attempts to find a bridge between our two worlds through a couple of factors both worlds share in common: Christians, women, and clothing.

Because the data of my research could include just about any woman, any Christian, and all types of clothing, I have narrowed down my research to focusing only on young Jordanian Christians between the ages of 18-24 years old. I chose this age range for many reasons: First, because Jordan’s population is 75% under the age of 35 and the people in this age group are rapidly becoming the role models and decision makers for both the younger and older generations(Youth, 2010). Secondly, they are the first group of people the media largely targets with music videos, magazines, radio, and even the circulars in many of the clothing stores. And

lastly, this age group is largely shaping the ideals and identity of this decade and will paint a very good picture of how fashion was during the 2010s. Within my study, I focused primarily on the *identity* and the *clothing* of the women, rather than their religious practices. I also only studied women in Amman. I did not go beyond the limits of the city in order to keep my research focused.

There are three parts to my hypothesis. First, I believe that a person's identity *is* reflected through their clothing and that in many cases a person's clothing is an outer representation of that person's inner values. Secondly, I think that rather than for religious reasons, Christian women wear what they wear because of traditional values. I am basing this hypothesis on a previous ISP written by Hanlon Kelley on Muslim-Christian relations in Jordan (Kelley, 2008) and also on a lecture recently given by Imad Mardini on Christians in Jordan (Mardini, 2010). And lastly, because I will be specifically studying 18-24 year old Jordanian women, I currently believe that while the identity of the people in this age group may be firmly shaped, (as many developmental theorists claim) it is not static (Kroger, Martinussen, & Marcia, 2010, p. 683). Instead, I currently believe that a person's identity is dynamic and changing (in varying degrees throughout a person's life).

When defining "Jordanian", I mean a person who is a citizen of the country of Jordan and who currently resides within the country. I define a "Christian" and a "Muslim" as someone who is officially recognized as such, whether or not that person is a practicing member. Lastly, I define "fashion" as a popular trend particularly in styles of dress and in ways of behavior ("Fashion", 2005).

Part II: Rationale

As I had mentioned before, there is virtually no information on Jordanian Christian fashion trends, or even Arab Christian fashion trends. The little information I could find pertained either to world fashion trends, Islamic fashion as a whole throughout the world, or on the similarities and differences between Christians and Muslims within Jordan. Because of this lack of information, I had to find sources in other contexts.

Identity & Culture: Some Definitions

My research question is primarily dealing with identity. As I had stated before, I define “identity” as a “stance taken by a person to form a tangible framework as a means to define who he or she is.” Charles Taylor, professor of Political Science and Philosophy at McGill University, attempted to find a more concrete definition of the word through the works of leading philosophers throughout the ages in his book, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. While contemplating the full contexts of identity, Taylor concluded that “identity” is “defined by the commitments and identifications which provide the frame or horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or what I endorse or oppose. In other words, it is the horizon within which I am capable of taking a stand” (Taylor, 1989, p. 27).

We have many identities, however many of us follow one main framework such as, “I am Muslim” or “I am American” and we base the rest of our identities off of these frameworks. Generally, our identities follow some form of moral thought (Taylor, 1989, p. 29). “Moral thought” can be defined as “our sense of respect for and obligations to others...our understandings of what makes a full life...and dignity” or “our sense of ourselves as commanding (attitudinal) respect” (Taylor, 1989, p. 15). Our moral thought is usually

encompassed within a moral system such as religion, nationality, or political affiliation. The visible, audible, and tangible culminations of our moral thoughts become core parts of our identity.

When a significant number of people have notably similar identities, we define this phenomenon as a “culture”. When defining “culture”, Heather Marie Akou in her article on Islamic fashion described it as, “A system belonging to a relatively fixed territory and/or group of people; enforces written and unwritten rules that govern social interaction”(Akou, 2007, p. 409). Within a culture there is a “subculture” which she defines as, “A local system within a culture that shapes much of everyday life; often produced and reproduced as an institution (ex—school, workplace, club, family, etc.) or named subculture (ex—Goths, modern primitives)(Akou, 2007, p. 409). A “macroculture” is: “A broad system that transcends a single culture; an abstract, high-level of identity connected to the global circulation of people, ideas, images, and material objects (ex—Islamic, African, Socialist)(Akou, 2007, p. 409). When dealing with the context of my research paper, Jordanian Christian women live among an Islamic *macroculture*, and many have grown up within the tribalist/Arabist*culture*, which has defined many of the deeply-rooted rules within Jordan’s public society. And lastly, many these women live within the *subculture* of their Christianity—the church and the rules and regulations guiding it. My research seeks to discover which of these cultures is most influential on the dress codes of young Jordanian Christian women.

Jordanian Women’s Dress Codes within the Context of an Arab World

In my second hypothesis, I stated that I believe that rather than for religious reasons, Christian women wear what they wear because of traditional values. Hanlon Kelley, a former SIT student, mentioned in her ISP that dress between both religions was very similar, for the

exception of the hijab. People of both religions insist that they wear modest dress (Kelley, 2008, pp. 29-30). She goes on to say that conservative dress is not only a phenomenon of Islamic culture. Instead, it is a phenomenon of “Arab” culture, which influences every person born into this area of the world (Kelley, 2008, p. 38). Within this Arab culture (Arabism) is the phenomenon of the tribe (or large family unit). Both Arab Christians and Arab Muslims share this phenomenon. One of the key characteristics of tribalism is its particularly patriarchal heritage and its partiality to the male gender. In her book, *Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East*, Valentine M. Moghadam argues that tribalism’s strong link to patriarchy and the family unit leads to “extremely restrictive codes of behavior for women, rigid gender segregation, and a powerful ideology linking family honor to female virtue”(Moghadam, 1993, p. 108). She goes on to say that a “family’s honor and reputation rest most heavily on the conduct of women. The Shari’a itself does not enjoin women to veil, but certain *hadith*, or sayings of the prophet, do”(Moghadam, 1993, p. 108). This means that a woman *must* be dressed modestly or cause her family to lose their honor. Similarly, while there are no scriptures within the Bible that require that women veil, there are admonitions within the New Testament that emphasize modest dress (1 Timothy 2:9).

Hanlon Kelley had also said that some her interviewees within her ISP mentioned that Christian women in the past did veil in public places, just as the Muslim women do. One man also mentioned that in some cases, Christian women in the northern and rural areas of Jordan still cover their heads in public (Kelley, 2008, pp. 29-30). This is evidence that, in some aspects, the local culture (Arabism/tribalism) is significantly stronger in determining the dress codes of women here, rather than the admonitions of religion.

Jordanian Women's Dress Codes within the Context of a Globalized World

Before had I fully embarked on my research of women's fashion within Jordan, I noticed that a majority of the women here wore fairly similar clothing to that of what I would wear back in the United States, most notably: jeans. I recently found an observation report written by Katie Elberg of Iconoculture, a company which researches consumer trends throughout 17 nations, in which she spoke of how fashion has gone global, and that the "Meccas of Fashion" were no longer just Paris, Milan, London, and New York. Instead, leading brands are rising from places such as New Zealand, Brazil, Russia, India, and China. This trend can also be found in many countries within the Middle East. Dubai and Turkey are some of the leading nations of Islamic fashion(Akou, 2007). Heather Marie Akou mentioned in her article on Islamic fashion trends that Islamic fashion is no longer isolated to one place. It can be found not only in the Middle East, but also North America, Europe, Africa, Australia, and the South Pacific. Because Islamic fashion has become a macrotrend particularly among Muslim women, Islamic fashion is no longer considered "ethnic dress" but is now categorized as "world fashion"(Akou, 2007).

On the flipside, consumers across the world no longer have to travel to places such as Paris, Milan, or New York to get the newest Western trends. In many countries, consumers are introduced to new and upcoming Western trends within the stores of their very own malls. Elberg mentioned that one such example is the globalization of US retailers. As an example, she used the Gap, a major chain in the United States, and its new stores in Mexico, Liverpool, Egypt and Jordan(Elberg, 2008). She also interestingly states that:

[c]onsumers have never been more open to exploring style, especially as a representation of their personalities and identities. Global brands and cultural style allow for this, provided that consumers have access to the products. That means more e-commerce options to reach consumers across the globe, translations (and currency conversions) on

websites and in catalogs and a broader awareness of what's stylish beyond our national boundaries(Elberg, 2008).

To a certain extent, I must agree with Elberg's statement. From my observations, I have noticed the increased appearance of more Western-styled clothing among Jordanian women, especially among non-hijaab wearers. It is true that Western styles and brands are everywhere in Amman, from billboards to television to Amman's own fashion magazines (which seem to only show Western styles on Jordanian women). However, I hesitate to completely agree that consumers in Jordan, particularly among young Jordanian women are "more open to explore style as a representation of their personalities and identities" due to their traditional past which insists that the women not bring attention to themselves, and maintain the family honor. More on the topic of globalization and Arabism will be discussed later on in my paper.

Developmental Psychology & Fashion

Lastly, my research is dealing with Jordanian Christian women between the ages of 18-24 years old. This component adds another factor to my research since dress codes vary widely among age groups. In order to understand what this age group values and what they mostly identify with, I researched developmental psychology to better understand the process by which a person realizes their identity.

The developmental theory of psychology is a branch of childhood psychology, which aims to explain the inner process by which a person finds their identity. Theorists generally study child and adolescent development patterns, however some theorists have studied the entire lifespans of people. One of the main thinkers on developmental psychology is Erik Erikson. He began the developmental theory saying that a person progresses through life in a series of stages in which there is a conflict within each stage. A person must succeed in each stage in order to obtain a healthy, fulfilling identity. If not, he/she will experience difficulties in key social aspects

of life(Kroger, Martinussen, & Marcia, 2010, p. 683). Another leading psychologist, James E. Marcia, expanded on this theory by stating that there are four progressions of identity within each stage; most importantly between the adolescent and adult years. Those stages are: Foreclosure (commitment to an identity without exploration), Diffusion (no commitment to an identity with or without exploration), Moratorium (exploring; vague commitments), and Identity Achievement (identity commitment after exploration)(Kroger, Martinussen, & Marcia, 2010, p. 683).

Many developmental theorists have concluded that the normal progressions toward establishing an identity follow the pattern: Foreclosure, Diffusion, Moratorium, and then Identity Achievement. However, in a recent study, psychologists Jane Kroger and Monica Martinussen along with James Marcia have concluded that while most people experience progressive change from their adolescent to young adult years, a significant number also go through regressive change. On top of this, there is a very large proportion of late adolescents and young adults who do not reach identity achievement, and the search for achievement continues throughout adulthood(Kroger, Martinussen, & Marcia, 2010, p. 696).

Within my research, I agree with the previous statement. My third hypothesis was that while women at this age may be firmly shaped, (as many developmental theorists claim) it is not static(Kroger, Martinussen, & Marcia, 2010, p. 683). Instead, I currently believe that a person's identity is dynamic and changing (in varying degrees throughout a person's life). Researching this developmental process is important in order to understand the current fashion trends within this society, and in order to note which culture Jordanian Christian girls at this age are leaning more toward: that of their Arab heritage or that of the changing, globalized world around them.

Part III: Methodology

Originally, I had planned to conduct my research with observations of public places throughout Amman, the media, and various churches in Amman; surveys of 20-30 people; and interviews of 6 Jordanian Christian girls between the ages of 18-24 (ideally 2 Roman Catholics, 2 Eastern Orthodox, and 2 Evangelicals). However, due to many obstacles and circumstances, my plans for my research changed drastically. In reality, I still did many observations of locations, the media, and some churches; however the amount of observations that I had originally planned to conduct (9 locations throughout Amman; 9 sources of the Media; 8 churches) was too difficult to actually carry out, mainly because of the Eid Al-Adha holiday, which took up 5 days of the second week of my ISP, and lack of sufficient funds to drive around Amman. I had also originally planned to pass out my surveys within the second week of the ISP period, but it turned out to be very difficult also because of Eid Al-Adha.

While my original plans for conducting my research did not work out as planned, the methods of my research I actually conducted, in my opinion, more than covered for the obstacles in my way. Ultimately, I observed 7 places in Amman, 14 sources of the media, and 4 church services. Then, I surveyed exactly 20 people (16 from the University of Jordan and 4 were randomly passed out throughout Amman). With the same 16 people from the University of Jordan that I surveyed, I also ended up holding an “impromptu” focus group with them, in which they gave me invaluable information for the conclusion of my research. Lastly, I held six interviews: five of which were done formally with Jordanian Christian girls between the ages of 18-24 from various backgrounds and denominations and one was done informally with a Jordanian Christian man of similar age. This last interview came completely as a surprise and the information he gave me turned out to be a key part to my conclusion.

Observations

As I mentioned before, I observed seven places in Amman. These places were Rainbow Street, Sweiffiyeh, City Mall, Souk Al-Sultan (Tla'a Al-'Ali), Gloria Jeans Coffee Shop (Tla'a Al-'Ali), the University of Jordan, and the Orthodox Club (Abdoun). For each place, I sat between 5 and 15 minutes writing down what the clothing styles of the women passing by me were wearing, regardless of whether they were wearing hijab or not. I decided to include hijab wearers in my observations, because 1.) I realized that even if a woman was not wearing hijab, I would still have absolutely no idea what religion she followed; and 2.) I also realized that there was a possibility that the clothing styles of hijab wearers could also influence Jordanian Christian women's clothing choices. While I was observing the women, I attempted to focus on young adult women who might have passed off for being in my target age range. I also decided to pay attention not only to clothing styles but also to hairstyles and makeup choices, since I assumed that hair and makeup are critical parts to fashion worldwide.

On top of observing the clothing styles of the women around me, I also observed the fashion trends within the stores as well as the price tags of their clothing. I specifically observed the price tags of the clothing in the stores, because I assumed that women of a certain economic class would be shopping in certain stores. I assumed that if the prices of the clothing were high, say like in City Mall or Sweiffiyeh, the women shopping for clothes at these stores would most likely come from upper middle to upper class backgrounds. I also assumed that if the prices of the clothing were medium to relatively low, as some stores are at Souk Al-Sultan in Tla'a Al-'Ali, then the women shopping for clothes at these stores would most likely come from middle to lower class backgrounds. This is significant to note, because I realized that if most of the Christian girls I interviewed and surveyed claimed that they shopped at higher-end locations,

then I would have a better assumption of their economic background and vice versa. I would also have a better idea about the style of clothing they wore. Ultimately, I found that my observations of the locations were the most useful part of my observation fieldwork.

The next aspect of my observations was my observations of the media. This one was very difficult to document, just because, I realized that the “media” is everywhere in Amman: from television and the Internet to magazines and newspapers to billboards and circulars and even the radio. I ended up observing mainly the television and magazines. For the television, I observed many music videos, commercials, news channels, popular Gulf channels such as MBC 1 & 4 and Dubai, as well as the new movie releases from the countless DVD stores in Amman. The magazines I observed included: UMen, Luxury, Living Well, Viva, Jordan Business, Time, Newsweek, Moda, U, and Family Connections. Like the locations, I observed the clothing, hair and makeup styles of the women portrayed on the media. At first, I tried to focus more on Arab media, like the Arabic music videos on MHits and Arabic soap operas on MBC, but toward the end, I expanded my observations to Western media as well such as the new releases from the DVD stores and hit TV shows from channels like Fox and HBO because many of the women I was interviewing repeatedly mentioned that those were the shows they were watching.

The last part of my observation research was my observations of the churches. To be honest, this is the part where I was most disappointed. I had originally intended to observe the churches primarily because I thought that the churches were the main gathering places where I would find women between 18-24. The places I did end up going to were: Grace Fellowship in Al-Mahatta; West Amman Baptist Church in Al-Rabiah; Assembly of God Church in JebalWeibdeh; and Amman International Church in Al- Rabiah. While I was able to find contacts and actually get an interviewee from one of the churches, I found that this part of my

research was the most difficult of them all, primarily because it was very hard to know the days and times and exact locations church services are held due to very little directories. I eventually got my hands on a directory of churches, but all the churches listed were Evangelical churches (hence why all the churches I observed all Evangelical). I originally wanted to go to 2 Roman Catholic churches, 2 Eastern Orthodox churches, as well as a Maronite and a Coptic church, but I found going to that many churches within a month is somewhat idealistic.

Another issue I had was that every time I would go to the churches, there were very few girls between the ages of 18-24. They were either middle age and up, or they were teens and younger. When I asked members of the congregation why this was so, they told me that chances of me finding women in my age group were slim during main services (either because they had work, university, or other things to do). They encouraged me to go to the Youth services, which I did end up going to at the Assembly of God church and ended up finding an interviewee. Because going to church was so difficult for me, I eventually put more of my focus on the other aspects of my research (the location/media observations, surveys, and interviews) than on that of the Church.

Surveys

To further understand young Jordanian Christian women within the context of their society, I wrote a 4 page survey which I passed out to any girl who fit my criteria of being between 18 and 24 years and was a Jordanian citizen. For this survey, I only needed a small quota (20 people) to analyze since I was already highly involved with observations and interviews. Within the first week of my ISP, I had emailed RulaQuwas, an expert on American literature and Arab feminism at the University of Jordan, and asked if I could pass out my survey in her classroom. She emailed me back giving me permission to pass out 16 of my surveys to

her class. This worked perfectly because I was behind in passing out surveys due to the Eid Al-Adha holiday. The other four surveys I had passed out between Eid Al-Adha and the middle of the 3rd week. My surveys were conducted in English and all of my participants knew English fairly well (especially Rula's class since it was held in the English department of the University of Jordan). For anyone that needed help, I knew enough Arabic to translate, and in Rula's class, Rula also was there to help.

My survey consisted of 3 parts. Part 1 covered the demographics of the participant. Within Part 1, I asked 7 questions pertaining to the participant's citizenship, age, religion, residency, marital and parental status, working status, and economic status. Part 2 covered the fashion habits and influences on the participant's dress code. I asked 4 relatively long questions: whether or not the participant bought her clothes, how often she bought her clothes, where she liked to shop the most and lastly influences on dress code. In this last question, I asked about 9 potential influences: religion, modesty, price, style, environment, other people's desires, their own personality, the effect of the media, and the importance of makeup. I asked each participant to rank on a scale from one to ten how much she was considering each influence when she got dressed in the morning (one being "never considering" and ten being "always considering"). I asked extra questions regarding the media and makeup. For the media and makeup, I ask her first how important is each influence to their sense of style and second (I asked this in separate questions), if it is important, then what forms of media does she watch/hear/read, and if she could give me the names of her favorite shows/channels/magazines/etc.; also what makeup products do she wear and if she could please explain more about why makeup is important or not.

The last part of my survey, Part 3, dealt with Identity and Fashion. I asked each participant to circle 3 words that first, best described her personality, and second, best described the clothes in her closet. Most of the words I used originate from the “growth” list from Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. The “growth” list is essentially a list of words leading motivational psychologist, Abraham Maslow, discovered that people feel after their needs to exist and relate to others are met. They cover the feelings that “impel a person to make creative or productive effects on himself and his environment” (Huitt, 2007). Most of the girls I surveyed followed my instructions and circled 3 words; however, one only circled 2 words in each category and some circled as many as they liked. Instead of 60 words under each question, I have only 59, which is all right. The only issue lies with the ones who selected more than three. Because my data only allowed for 3 words maximum, I was forced to choose three of the words the girls circled. I decided to err on the side of most like their personality. Any words that were the same or remotely alike in both categories, I used as part of my data. Because of this issue, my data may have been skewed and there is a possibility that my data does not accurately reflect the population’s values. The last question, question 14, asks what the participant’s favorite articles of clothing are. Ideally, I thought I would get just one answer, but many of the girls could not resist and wrote down ALL of their favorite things to wear. Because this question was open-ended and was not restricted to any specific amount of answers, their answers did not skew any data. In fact, the opposite occurred, and I found their results to be very telling. To calculate and analyze my data, I used Microsoft Excel.

Focus Group

I held an “impromptu” focus group shortly after I handed out the 16 surveys in RulaQuwas’s Arab Feminism class on Sunday, November 21, 2010. Her class was very diverse

in every aspect: religiously, economically, socially, etc. They varied from very conservative, with one observing the veil, and many observing the hijab and jilbaab to non-conservative. Of the 16 girls in the class, 3 were Christian (2 Roman Catholic; 1 Roman Orthodox). I first told the class what my research is about and my current findings. In exchange, they gave me more very interesting information that actually helped to form my conclusion. I will explain more about the focus group within my findings.

Interviews

For the last part of my research, I interviewed 6 Jordanian Christians. I required that every person use a pseudonym instead of their real names, so as to protect their identity and create an atmosphere of trust. I was not expecting this, but all of my interviewees spoke very good English. I **formally** interviewed 5 girls from various backgrounds and denominations (3 Eastern Orthodox, 2 Evangelical) all of whom are Jordanian citizens and are 18-24 years old.

All of my interviews ran fairly the same way. They ran very much like my surveys, where I asked for demographic information first. Then I showed my interviewees 12 pictures: 11 of them I clipped out from the magazines I was observing. The styles included: casual clothes, pajamas, contemporary clothing from a leading store in City Mall, a wedding dress, an elegant ball gown, a traditional gown, business wear, a sensual dress, outdoors wear, athletic wear, winter wear and a bikini. When I showed them the pictures (in their respective order), I asked them two questions: “How would you describe the clothing? And on a scale from 1 to 10, how comfortable would you be wearing this?” One thing, I realized is that for one of my interviewees, I forgot to show the picture of the wedding dress, and my data may have been skewed because I am missing data on the wedding dress.

The next part of my interview was an expansion of my survey. The questions covered the 9 influences of my survey as well as the observations I had previously made. The categories of the questions I asked included: style, shopping habits, religion, tradition, media, and trends. While I closely followed my question outline, I also made it a point to allow the girls to speak as they wished on specific subjects. If they mentioned something interesting that I had not heard before, I would ask them more about that issue. My goal was to make the interview as conversational as possible. All of my formal interviews were recorded and I was given full permission to record my interviews.

I **informally** interviewed a Jordanian Christian man of similar age, who goes to the university in Irbid, but lives and works in Amman. His denomination is Roman Catholic. We had actually met quite randomly while I was observing Rainbow Street. We formerly knew each other from a previous repelling excursion we had both taken to Wadi Al-Zarqa. He had previously known that I was researching Jordanian Christian women and he wanted to hear about my findings, so he invited me into Turtle Green Tea Bar for tea and conversation. Through our conversation, I gained some very important insights about the other gender and how males impact women's clothing choice.

Further Difficulties

As I had said earlier, the most notable obstacles I faced were the time (the Eid Al-Adha holiday and only three weeks to do fieldwork) and money. Observing all the places I wanted to originally observe became extremely difficult due to the holiday and largely because of insufficient funds to travel about the city. Because I live with a Muslim family, leaving the house during Eid Al-Adha without them to go explore the city became difficult, especially if family was over. On top of this, I ended up travelling with them from house to house to deliver *lahma*

(meat). While the experience was a rewarding one, it took away from the time I needed to observe the rest of the city. I had also wanted to observe the differences between West and East Amman by travelling to such places as Al-Istaqlal Mall and the stores on Istaqlalstreet, however, I often found myself stuck either at my house or walking far distances to places, because it was hard to afford to travel by taxi all the time around Amman. I did what I could with the situation: if my homestay parents were not home, I would observe what was on the television or type up my observation notes onto the computer. (It was also difficult to watch mainstream television because my family is very religious and only watches Islamic television.) Many times, I would try to observe the places near my house or wherever I happened to be at the moment. This turned out to be the most efficient way to observe women in Amman.

I also had a few difficulties with my interviews where I had to cancel two interviews and lost contact with the third, however, my last interview was a three-in-one interview where I was able to interview three girls at one time, which, I believe, added more to the richness of my data.

* * *

Part IV: Findings

The Trends

Because I could not separate Muslim fashion trends from Christian fashion trends immediately, I had to learn about fashion trends all around, and then separate the Christians from the Muslims. From my observations, I had noticed a couple of ongoing fashion trends among women 18-24 years old. First, I noticed that a majority of the girls between the ages of 18-24 love to wear somewhat tight jeans, with a long tight long-sleeved shirt and maybe a long close-fitting t-shirt over top. Ankle to mid-length, leather boots are currently in fashion. Second, the

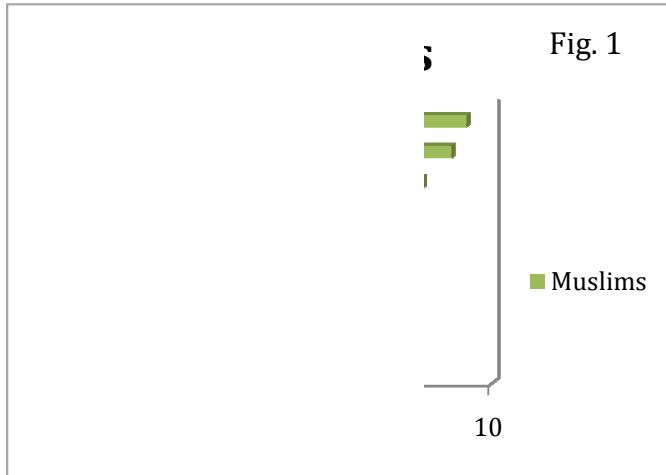
women love makeup, ranging from moderate to generous amounts. Third, I noticed that Christian girls and non-hijab wearers insist on long and loose bone-straight or slightly wavy hair. I have seen a few buns here and there, but I noticed that other styles such as bobbed hair, cropped hair, ponytails, braids, and so on are at a low. Lastly, the leading trend I noticed among young Jordanian women is that everything has to match. The colors have to be just right. From what I observed and from unanimous agreements from all of my interviewees and my focus group, I think it may be safely said that Jordanians are excellent at color coordination.

When I compared my observations to my surveys, I found that the observations significantly matched the data of my surveys. Of the 20 girls I surveyed, shoes, jeans, and shirts ranked the top three most favorite articles of clothing to wear (respectively). Zara from City Mall was the girls' most favorite store, followed by Bershka also in City Mall. Mango (City Mall), Stradivarius (Sweiffiyeh), and Massimo Dutti (Sweiffiyeh) took third place. When I compared makeup trends, again, I found that my data matched my observations, where 15 of the 20 girls expressed that wearing makeup (from some makeup to a good amount of makeup) was important. It is also important to note that eyeliner and mascara tied as the women's most important makeup products.

Seeing that the data I collected was running very similar to that of my observations, I decided that I wanted to compare the data from the Christian girls I surveyed to that of the Muslim girls and see if the information continued to move in a similar pattern. Within my surveys, I had 3 Christian girls, which is a very good number of women to have considering that Amman's Christian population is 1 percent. What I found greatly surprised me. First, I found that all of the Christian girls in my group bought their own clothes. This is significant because that tells us that they are in control of what they are wearing. Second, I found out that most of

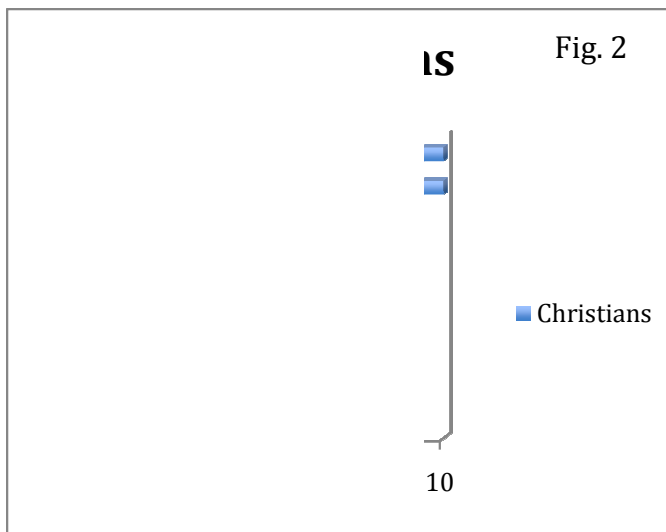
them tended to buy their clothes a few times a year rather than a few times a month. On the Muslim side, however, I found while the majority of girls bought their own clothes as well, the majority also bought their clothes more frequently (selecting that they purchased their clothing a few times a month over a few times a year).

When I compared the



influences of their dress codes, I found the information to be very interesting as well.

In order to make the data less overwhelming, I first separated the girls by religion, tallied the amount of people under each ranking for each influence, and then averaged the number of people along with their ranking under each influence. I did



this primarily to find out which influence ranked the highest among Muslims and Christians. What I found was that among Muslim women, the top three influences on their dress codes were: 1.) their own **personality**, 2.) the **style** of the clothing, and 3.) the **environment**, which includes the weather, location, etc. (see Fig. 1).

On the other hand, while the influences that resulted for the Christian women were the same, the ranking of the influences differed. The Christian women ranked the **environment** and **style** both as the #1 influence on their dress code, where each woman ranked both influences as a 10.

Because environment and style tied for first place, their individual **personalities** took second place (see Fig. 2). It is also very interesting to note that while the Muslim women ranked **religion** as the fourth most important influence on their dress codes, the Christian women in my group ranked religion as eighth, right above **other people's desires** which took the last place of importance for both religions.

When I analyzed the data, and saw that for the Christian women, environment and style took the first place as most important influence on what they wore, I realized that this statistic was probably one of the most important, if not *the* most important piece of data to note. Among the three Christian girls in the group, each one was individual in their own way. They came from all economic backgrounds, live in various places in and outside of Amman, range from very religious to not religious at all, shopped at various stores, etc; however, all three of them in their own way, said that when they got dressed in the morning, they are *always* thinking about their environment and the style of their clothing. This indicates that among these three Christian women, their outer world (society, the weather, the location of where they are going, etc.) significantly affects their dress code for the day.

The last of note from my surveys is the collection of the data of Part 3, the part where I analyzed whether the women's clothing matched their personalities. As I mentioned before, I had 59 circled words for questions 12 and 13 on my survey. Question 12 asked the women to describe their personality in 3 words. Question 13 asked the women to describe the majority of the clothing in their closets in 3 words. To analyze the data, I listed all of the words they circled and tallied how many people voted for each word. After that, I subtracted the Christian women's answers from the Muslim women's answers and put them in separate categories. Lastly, I lined up the words from each question to see if there were any matches between clothing and

personality. The results were staggering. Among the Muslim women, I found 11 matches between personality and clothing; however, among the Christian women, I found *only 1 match*. The match was the word “simple”. This single match between personality and clothing is also the highest circled matching description for both Muslims and Christians (see Fig. 3). This finding is highly important to note because it shows that among these Christian women, their clothing does not significantly reflect how they identify their inner-selves.

As I continued to analyze the data I received from these 20 women, I began to wonder



why the Christian girls unanimously stated that their environment and the style of the clothing were the most influential factors on their dress code, why there was only one match between their personality and their clothes when I could find 11 among the Muslim population, and why the one word that matched the Christian girls personality and their clothing was the word “simple”.

The Four Fashion Phenomena

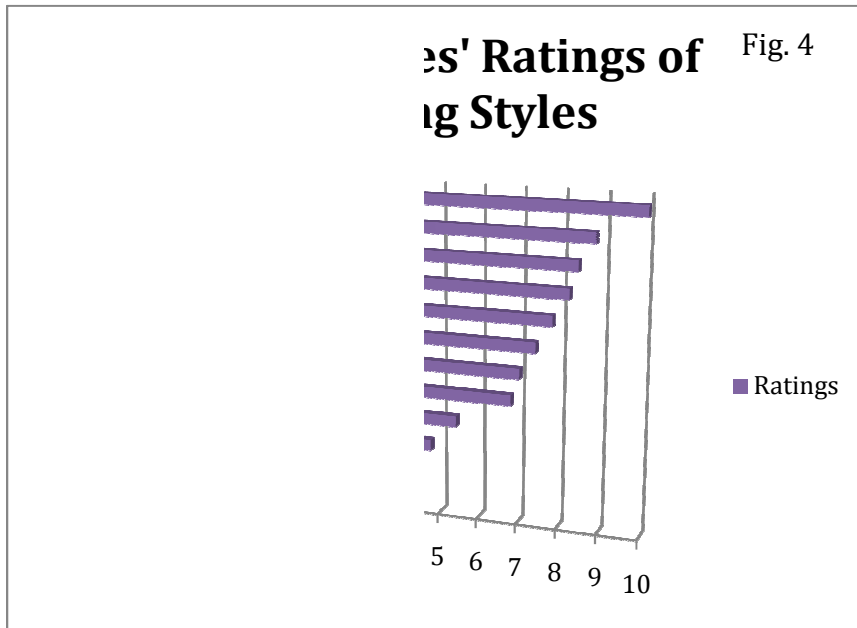
I turned to my interviewees and the focus group to find the answers to my previous three questions. From the answers all 21 people were giving me, I began to find parallels and repetitions in the data that revealed evidence that there are four primary phenomena that are not only affecting the clothing styles of Christian women, but are also having a huge affect on the dress codes of nearly every young Jordanian woman here in Amman regardless of religion. These four phenomena are: 1.) Inside/Outside clothes, 2.) the lack of creativity in clothing styles, 3.) “Ammani” girls, and 4.) the resurgence of Islamic fashion. The first two phenomena are intangible, subconscious trends have greatly influenced the emergence of the last two trends. Greatly impacting these four fashion trends are three overarching influences: 1.) the society 2.) the *shabaab* (young men), and 3.) the West and the globalized world.

Inside/Outside Clothes

While I was conducting my surveys, a couple of the women wrote down that they had two opinions when they were ranking the importance of each of the 9 influences. One Muslim woman even circled two numbers for several of the influences and labeled the circles “inside” and “outside”. Another Muslim woman wrote down at the end of the survey that she does not think her clothes outside the house reflect her personality at all. She explained that she sees herself as a “funny” person, and she even has certain articles of clothing that reflect that, such as her “Sponge Bob Squarepants” socks. However, she claimed that she would never wear such clothing in public, because she does not want to attract unnecessary attention from the men.

This phenomenon is not particular just to Muslim girls. As I did my interviews, I noticed that most of the girls I interviewed wore very stylish clothing, mostly falling within the fashion trend list I had first written about. However, when I took the girls through the second part of my interview, which required that they rank how likely were going to wear the types of clothing I

had cut out from the magazines and to describe it, pajamas ranked as the #1 most likely thing they would wear (see Fig. 4). When I asked them to describe the pajamas, the comments I got were that they were “comfortable”, that they were for the



“home”, and that they were for “indoors”. They all said that they love to wear pajamas around the house, some even saying that pajamas are their favorite thing to wear. However, when I asked them if they would wear pajamas or similar clothing outside the house, they all strongly stated that they would never wear their pajamas outside of the house. One girl even ventured to say that she even gets dressed into her “outside clothes” just to feed the dog next door (Jessica, Ghazal, & Angela, 2010).

Many of the girls claimed that they separated their clothes based on whether they are for inside the house or outside the house. Much of the clothing for inside the home is more comfortable and relaxed. Inside the home, the styles vary greatly from “big and baggy”

(Jasmine, 2010) to “open” and “sexy” (Jessica, Ghazal, & Angela, 2010). The girls within my interviews explained to me that inside the home, no one is watching them and that they feel more free (Jessica, Ghazal, & Angela, 2010). Inside the house, women are free to dress according to their personalities and their desires, away from society’s eyes.

On the other hand, clothing for outside is less comfortable and more styled. Outside the house, the girls in my focus group and interviews told me, is society’s world. It is the place where the community meets, and therefore, judges. “It’s all about appearances,” explained one of the Christian girls I interviewed (Christina, 2010). From both religions, the girls I talked to all around stated that the clothing they wear outside the house *does not* fully match their inner personalities mainly because the women do not want to attract attention from the members of society.

Lack of Creativity in Clothing Styles

This phenomenon is highly connected to the Inside/Outside Clothes phenomenon, particularly the Outside part. Outside of the house, I noticed that most of the girls—hijaab or no hijaab, following Islamic fashion or Western fashion—wore the same styles of clothing. There was very little deviation from whichever fashion trend they were following. When I asked the girls in my focus group as well as the girls in my interview about this, again I was told that society was the main influence of this. The girls explained to me that the meticulous manner in which a woman gets dressed in the morning is less about self-expression and more about how she is perceived by society. Jasmine (20), a Jordanian girl of Armenian origin, explained the situation best:

“Like in Jordan, everyone wears the same. No one has the creative side. They don’t like to go crazy. They wear the same. Whatever they think that matches. They don’t have their own different styles. Like jeans and top and *hada*. Jeans, heels, and... I mean, it’s the same trend. Like

when I travel, I see the different styles. Like they have different styles, like the punk style...they have different creativities. No, here, everyone just goes and they do the same or copy each other...they copy each other. Maybe you can say that” .

Another Christian girl I interviewed, Ghazal, explained further:

“People here care about appearances. They really do care. So if you’re creative and think outside the box, then people look at you differently. And we really do care about how people look at us.”

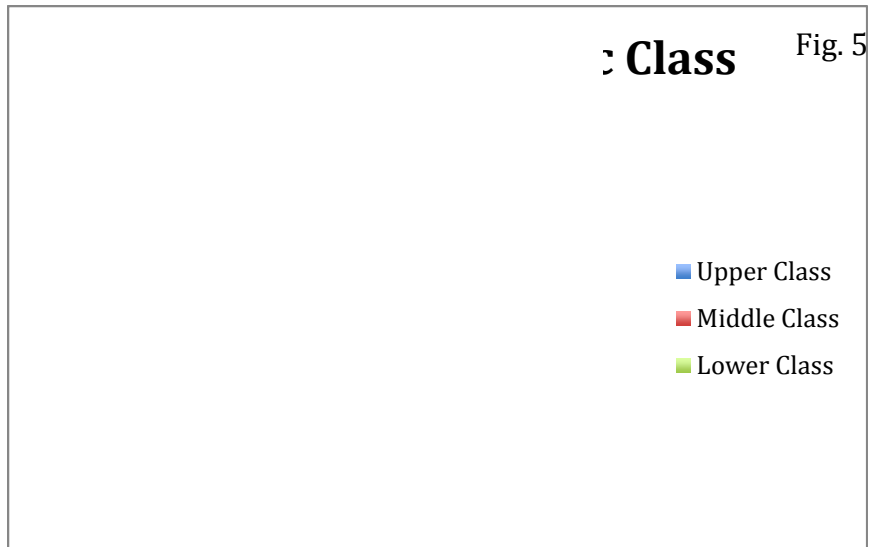
Ammani Girls

One fashion trend that has resulted from the combination of both phenomena is the “Ammani Girl” trend. “Ammani Girls” is a play on the word, “Armani” girls. It is a colloquial term I had discovered when I had expressed to the focus group that I had seen a considerable amount of girls who are following the main fashion trends; but confused me particularly because I was finding that many of the girls who were following the current Western trends—the tight clothing, the high-heeled boots, the jewelry, and tons of makeup—were also wearing the hijab. I was confused because according to the Qur’an, a woman should not only cover up, but she should not so much as bring attention to herself in public (An-Nur 24:31). The girls explained to me that this phenomenon is true and it is thriving. They pointed out that many of them could be found in various places throughout the University of Jordan. Many of the Muslim girls within the group also reiterated to me that this trend was *haram* and that Muslim girls should not wear such clothing.

When I asked the Christian girls I interviewed about these “Ammani Girls” they explained to me that they were the rich girls in society. The girls explained that they were the ones who live in Abdoun and Sweiffiyeh, go shopping often, and visit the salon many times a week. The Christian girls confirmed for me that this phenomenon was not special to any one religion. Instead, it was more associated with economic class. Of the girls I interviewed, some of

them alluded to a generally held assumption, that the higher up a person is economically, the more likely that person will be to put more value on materialistic things. Out of curiosity, I reanalyzed my surveys, this time categorizing all 20 participants by economic class regardless of religion. I wanted to see which of the 9 influences the girls with in each economic class considered the most. When I calculated my results, I found that among 7 girls who indicated that they were of the upper class, **style** took first place. **Personality** and then the **environment** followed respectively (See Fig. 5). To further confirm my data, I asked all 20 participants to explain to me why or why not makeup was important to her sense of style. Of the upper class girls, 86% mentioned that makeup was very important; the most popular reason being, because “it increases confidence.” When I compared the results to the rest of the classes, I found that the girls who indicated that they were of the middle class found their **personality** to be the most important influence on their dress code, followed by **religion** and then **style**. Those from a lower class income indicated that the

environment was most influential, followed by **style** and then **religion**. When asked about the importance of makeup, the middle class mostly stated that makeup was “not important” to their sense



of style, and the lower class indicated that “some” makeup was important to their sense of style.

From the data of my surveys, I could see that there was a significant difference between the

classes on the value of the style of clothing, and that by far, the girls of the upper class considered the style of the clothing over all of the other influences when they got dressed.

The Resurgence of Islamic Fashion

On the other side of the spectrum, another rising phenomenon that has emerged as a result of Inside/Outside clothes and Lack of Creativity phenomena is the rise of Islamic clothing as a fashion trend. This trend includes the donning of the *jelbaab* and *abaya* in public, strong support for *hijaab* (and sometimes veil) primarily for religious reasons, moderate to no makeup when walking outside. I have noticed this trend particularly in residential areas such as Tla'a Al-'Ali, Dahit Al-Rashid, and Al-Mahatta. I saw very little of this trend in residential areas like Abdoun and Sweiffiyeh. Because of the increase presence of the West, the boldness of the *shabbab*, and too many conflicting issues such as the Ammani girls, a lot of the girls I surveyed and talked to in the focus group expressed their desire to stay covered in the public. I have noticed that while many Muslim women do not want to attract the attention of the *shabaab* and the judgments of the society, many of them have also been finding their place and identity within Islam. I think it is also very important to reiterate that when I compared the economic classes to each other in my surveys, both the middle and lower class listed religion as their top three most influential factors.

A Complex Christian Conundrum

Christians and Society

After observing much of the environment young Jordanian Christian girls live in, I began to ask them more about how they fit into their society. They all agreed that they followed much of the current fashion trends that the rest of Jordan's population followed, but the reasons for why they followed the trends were not the same reasons the Muslim girls from before I

embarked on this study gave me. As I had mentioned before, many of the Muslim girls explained that the reason why they wore the clothes they wore (primarily the modest dress) is because the Qur'an told them to dress modestly. On the other hand, *all* of the Christians that participated in my study said that the main reason for why they dressed modestly was not because of religion, but rather because of *society*. All nine of them explained to me that to be a Christian woman in Jordan has a bad connotation among Muslim Jordanians. Christina (19), an Eastern Orthodox girl of Palestinian origin, explained further:

“Like most of the community here in Jordan, they are Muslims and they wear hijab, and they judge Christians here in Jordan. They consider us, like, more open-minded negatively. Like, ‘Do you actually do that?’ Yes, we do that. So we don’t want to reflect the wrong image for being Christian. Like they expect the worst, you know? ‘You talk to guys more.’ ‘You do things’, ‘You do that’...because we’re Christian.”

Many of the girls also expressed that they are not against wearing such clothing as shorts, sleeveless shirts, short dresses, and even pajamas outside; but because of society, they are very careful to follow society’s standards. Christina also gave a very good example:

“Like for example, the last week...last Saturday, *yanni*, I went to Zara, you know? And I had to buy a dress for my cousin’s party something...graduation from something. So I really liked the dress. It was amazing, but it was very short. I couldn’t buy it. Because of society.”

Jasmine, an Evangelical of Armenian origin, also complained of the situation:

“I can’t wear really open things in this because of society. It depends on where I’m going maybe. Like, it depends on if I’m going to a really nice restaurant where you can wear whatever you want. But if I’m going downtown, you can’t just wear open or cut, you know? Because of the society.”

Within my interviews, I told the girls of my hypothesis that tradition had a stronger say in the dress codes of Christian women than religion did. The girls in my focus group, as well as three other Jordanian girls of Jordanian origin, agreed. Jessica (20), who is originally from the

town Fuhies, explained further, “Most of our Christian traditions here in Jordan are Muslim. Like you can’t wear this...you can’t wear that. Not because religion says, but because we live in a Muslim community.”

Another girl, Ghazal, told me that her grandmother would tell her stories of how her mother would often wear the traditional dress of Salt, a dress made of so much material that when stretched out to its full length was longer than a single story home. In the past, what a person wore signified where a person was from, not what their religion was.

Christian Women and the Shabbab

Over and over again, I continued to get responses from both the women in the focus group and the girls in my survey that they did not want to attract the attention of the “shabbab”, or young Jordanian men. Therefore, many would wear clothing that was modest and unassuming. However, many of the same girls also admitted their desire to be “attractive”, and so wore stylish clothing. Among Christian women, the situation is very difficult. Because Christians do not have any verses within the Bible restricting them from interacting with the other gender throughout everyday life, much of the society believes them to be loose and open. Because of this, the shabbab see the Christian women as free game. From all aspects of my research—from the focus group to my interviews—every person agreed on this one issue: the men in Jordan are not “used to the other gender” (Christina, 2010).

I had a very interesting conversation with a Jordanian Christian man named Ibrahim. Ibrahim works with many women as a personal trainer in Amman. I told him of my previous observations of the women I had seen throughout Amman and the women on the media and how I was very confused that the media, which would be considered by society to be very “open”, was very accepted here, but the clothing styles were not seen in public. He explained to

me that part of the reason why the media, particularly the music video channels, were doing so well here is because the men not only in Jordan, but throughout the Middle East, will pay millions to see “naked women who can’t sing” (Ibrahim, 2010). He then vented his frustrations about the women here in Jordan, saying that women dress for school as if they were going to a formal event. He said that it is the same between Christians & Muslims, and that all the women wear so much makeup and do their hair the way they do it, because of the “catch-22” cycle of sexuality here in Jordan: suppression leads to obsession. From a man’s point of view, Ibrahim told me that 90% of the men in Jordan & the Middle East are not successful because most of what they think of is women. He said that because the women are suppressed here, many of the women do what they can to stand out (hence, a ton of makeup, perfect hair, stunning clothes...looking sexy for the grocery store). He named numerous times he had seen women go to the gym with full makeup on. The religion (Islam) and tradition then steps in and suppresses women more and the men obsess more. The result: a society of very “rude” men that will take any opportunity to satisfy their desires (Jessica, Ghazal, & Angela, 2010).

Jessica and Ghazal explained to me that the current situation is that because the shabbab have grown up all of their lives living in communities where the women outside of their families were always covered, when they become young adults and are admitted into universities, many of the men are exposed for the first time to uncovered women. Because, traditionally, men are held less accountable for their actions than women are, the men often take liberties to verbally harass the women. Additionally, because many of the men see Christian women especially as fair game, Jessica and Ghazal explained that it is not uncommon for groups of Muslim men to gather right outside of the churches to watch the young women come out. Some, Ghazal admitted, even come inside the churches, disguising themselves as Christian men, to watch the

women during worship, with the purpose of getting a Christian girl to marry them (Jessica, Ghazal, & Angela, 2010). Many of the girls throughout my interviews told me that when they dressed for church, they particularly dressed modestly, not only out of respect for the church, but also because of this reason. “This is why our families are overprotective and they care about what you wear. Not because of religion. Just because they know [the shabbab] are going to try to talk to you and they are going to try to marry you” (Jessica, Ghazal, & Angela, 2010).

Christians and the Globalized West

As part of my research, I wanted to know how much of an effect the media was having on Jordanian Christian women’s clothing. I mostly wanted to know about the media primarily because of the popularity of Western fashion trends here such as jeans and long leather boots and the strong presence of Western brands in the malls such as Gucci, Coach, and Nine West. The answers I got were astounding.

“Everything is affected by the American culture. Everything,” said Jessica. When I originally began my observations of the media, I only observed Arabic TV. Of the channels I watched, I was most fascinated with the music videos and the commercials, mainly because of how strikingly similar the clothing of the women was to that of women’s clothing in Western music videos and commercials. Within the music videos, I mostly found stunning women in extremely low cut dresses or tight-fitting clothes, who wore so much makeup they looked fake, and whose hair was so perfect (equally long and loose) that it could not be real. What I found very odd was that much of what was on the television for entertainment, did not reflect the society’s fashion standards in any way. When I asked about this discrepancy, Ghazal told me that what is on the television does not reflect the way of life of Jordanian society at all. She explained to me that the way that the people on commercials and music videos dress is very

different because they are mostly Lebanese or Egyptian, and that the Lebanese and Egyptian culture allows for women to be more open (Jessica, Ghazal, & Angela, 2010). “[The media] especially affects the younger generation,” she added. “They grow up watching these commercials and songs and they think it’s okay to wear like this. While in Jordan it’s not okay.”

When I asked the girls what they watched and how the media affected their fashion, however, I found another very interesting trend. All of my interviewees said that they did not watch Arabic television as much as they watched American television and American movies. The shows they named (Glee, Desperate Housewives, Gray’s Anatomy, etc.) were shows that are currently on prime-time television in the States. When I asked them if the shows had an affect on the clothes they wore, some of the replies I got were: “It gives you a hint of what is fashionable” (Jessica, Ghazal, & Angela, 2010); “I watch the media and see what they wear” (Jasmine, 2010); and “It opens up your eyes” (Christina, 2010).

Many of the girls I talked to expressed their desire to have the society be like it is in America, where they say very few people are judgmental of the average citizens daily dress. Jessica later told me a story on when she went with her American husband to America, she felt free to wear what she wanted. When she went to Las Vegas, she felt comfortable enough to wear a low cut dress, and when she needed to go to the hair salon while she was there, she was comfortable enough to walk to the salon in her pajamas where she said, no body judged her.

I then asked the girls, why they felt so strongly about the West. In a triple interview between Jessica, Ghazal, and Angela, the girls explained to me that they prefer the West and especially the United States because they are “denied” from being who they are (Jessica, Ghazal, & Angela, 2010). They further explained that they relate more to the people on the

television because they are also Christians and are allowed to wear what they want without society dictating what they should wear. “We would definitely act like any American, if we were in America,” said Jessica. She added: “I’m always saying to myself, ‘Like, when...are we gonna start wearing whatever we want?’ *Bas* here in Jordan its so hard!”

When I asked how long the current fashion trends would be here, many of the girls said, “Forever”. One girl added, “No, it won’t change. It will stay a long time. No one makes their own styles. The media has to change it” (Jasmine, 2010).

* * *

Part V: Conclusion

Jordanian Christian Women and their Identity

My original research questions were, “How do young Jordanian Christian Women identify themselves? Do their clothes reflect their identity? And if they do, then in what ways?” I found that young Jordanian Christian women between the ages of 18-24 1.) identify themselves as a minority and have more of a connection to the Western world through their single most important similarity—their Christianity—than they have to their country and their Arab past; 2.) are very much aware of their identity as a woman and all of the responsibilities and set backs it entails within their society, and 3.) are more affected by the influences targeting their age-range than they are affected by the influences of their past.

I also found that while their clothing in some ways reflects their identity (ie—cross necklace, no hijab, short sleeves on a hot day, etc.), their clothing for the most part does not reflect their full identity because according to the “Inside/Outside clothes” phenomenon, Christian girls can only show their true inner-selves to a certain extent. Many find that they need

to balance being discreet about their identity while attempting to express their personality. This usually results in the form of modest and simple, yet stylish clothing that shows nothing revealing, but is enough to help encourage inner-confidence and self-esteem.

While many girls constantly reiterated that they would not mind wearing casual clothes, pajamas, shorts, sleeveless shirts, and so on in public, in order to encourage better opinions about Christians within the minds of the surrounding 96% of the Muslim population, the Christian girls explained to me that they have made “dressing up” their “normal” (Jessica, Ghazal, & Angela, 2010).

My Hypotheses

My first hypothesis was that the clothing of young Jordanian Christian women does reflect their identities. As I had previously proven, my hypothesis was both correct and incorrect. The clothing of Jordanian Christian women between 18 and 24 *in public* does not reflect their full identities, however, when the girls are *in private*, like Muslim girls, their clothing does reflect their identities.

My second hypothesis was that rather than for religious reasons, Christian women wore what they wore because of traditional influences. This estimation turned out to be true. Tradition trumps religion. When asked about religion, the girls could not name specific places in the Bible or specific doctrine that stated dress codes for women. However, they could name societal rules for public dress very easily. Also many of the girls of Jordanian background could name traditional rules and practices and how they have carried onto today’s time. I think it is also important to note, however, that globalization and the West held more sway on the clothing habits of Christian women than tradition did.

Lastly, my third hypothesis was that I believed the identity of the people in this age group may be firmly shaped, (as many developmental theorists claim) it is not static (Kroger, Martinussen, & Marcia, 2010, p. 683). Instead, a person's identity is dynamic and changing (in varying degrees throughout a person's life).

While this hypothesis for me was a little hard to gauge at first, I found that while Jordanian Christian women seemed to have firmly found themselves within their Christian identity, the answers of this question rang true for the whole of society. Not just Christians. The identity of Jordanians, as a whole, I have found is currently shifting from that of traditional values toward that of Westernized values as is evidenced by the Ammani Girl trend, the globalization of many of the stores in the Malls throughout Amman, the Westernization of Arabic media, the overall tendency to watch American television over all types of television, and the types of stores all the girls in my study listed (the majority of the stores were Western).

Implications

The implications of my study are 1.) that this study is a confirmation that the society in Amman/Jordan has a more collectivist-mindset than an individualist-mindset; 2.) that because the society does not allow much room for people be creative in their clothing choices and because it follows much of what they see on the billboards and magazines, this is very much evidence that the West and globalization has dominated in this society; 3.) that according to one of the girls I interviewed, until the media changes the fashion trends, the fashion trends will remain "fashionable" in Amman, and that all one needs to do to rise in the fashion industry here in Amman is to make something "fashionable", and society will follow, and 4.) that Christian women in Amman between 18 and 24 are more willing than ever to make the change and follow their identities to the fullest.

Part VI: Limitations of the Study

There were three limitations that I could point out for this study. First, I did not have much time to conduct this study, and I only had 25 participants in total. I believe that the data could have been more sound if I had more time, could have expanded my research to more of Amman, and could have included more people in my research. Second, this study was only done in Amman. I did not venture very far around the city. Because of this, my data may not reflect the whole of society outside of Amman. And lastly, there were a few mistakes in my research. For one of my interviewees, I forgot to show her the picture of the wedding dress, and there were places where people did not fill out information on their surveys (however I did tell them that it was their right to not answer a question). Because of this, there is a high possibility that my data may be skewed.

*

*

*

Part VII: Recommendations for Further Study

To further expand this research, I have considered comparing this study with that of the Muslim minority in America. I was also thinking about exploring male fashion trends in Amman and whether the clothing of Christian men reflect their identity. Another idea I had was to explore older generations and comparing fashion trends of young Jordanian women to that of middle-age women and seniors. And lastly, I could also expand my research by seeing if there is a difference between Amman's fashion trends and fashion trends in other cities throughout Jordan.

Part VIII: Bibliography

"Fashion". (2005). *The New Oxford American Dictionary*. New York: Oxford University Press (USA).

1 Timothy 2:9. (1611). *Bible*. London: King James Version.

Akou, H. M. (2007). Building a New "World Fashion": Islamic Dress in the Twenty-first Century. *Fashion Theory*, 11 (4), 403-422.

An-Nur 24:31. In *Qur'an*.

Christina. (2010, November 20). Identity and Fashion: A Look at Jordanian Christian Women and How Their Identity is Portrayed through Their Clothing. (B. Witcher, Interviewer)

Elberg, K. (2008). *Fashion Goes Global*. Minneapolis, MN: Iconoculture.

Huitt, W. (2007). Maslow's hierarchy of needs. *Educational Psychology Interactive* .

Ibrahim. (2010, November 14). Identity and Fashion: A Look at Jordanian Christian Women and How Their Identity is Portrayed through Their Clothing. (B. Witcher, Interviewer)

Jasmine. (2010, November 21). Identity and Fashion: A Look at Jordanian Christian Women and How Their Identity is Portrayed through Their Clothing. (B. Witcher, Interviewer)

Jessica, Ghazal, & Angela, a. (2010, November 28). Identity and Fashion: A Look at Jordanian Christian Women and How Their Identity is Portrayed through Their Clothing. (B. Witcher, Interviewer)

Kelley, H. (2008). *Christians and Muslims in Jordan: A Look at the Effects of Religion and Culture on Lifestyle*. SIT Study Abroad Jordan. Vermont: SIT .

Kroger, J., Martinussen, M., & Marcia, J. E. (2010, Oct). Identity status change during adolescence and young adulthood: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Adolescence* , 683-698.

Mardini, I. (2010, October 27). Christians in Jordan. (S. Lecture, Interviewer)

Moghadam, V. M. (1993). *Modernizing Women: Gender & Social Change in the Middle East*.

Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Reinner Publishers.

Taylor, C. (1989). *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Cambridge,

Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Youth, H. C. (2010, September 15). Youth in Jordan. (S. Lecture, Interviewer)

*

*

*

Part IX: Appendices

Order of Appendices:

1. Sample of Place Observation
2. Sample of Media Observation
3. Sample of Church Observation
 4. Survey Cover Letter
 5. Survey Consent Form
 6. Survey
7. Sample of Survey Data Analysis
8. Interview Consent Form
 9. Interview Questions

1. Place Observation

Ex.

Setting: Rainbow Street Lookout

Observed: people & street

Observation #2

Observer involvement: just sitting at the lookout

Date & time: November 10, 2010; 4:45pm

Place: Lookout

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 young Jordanian girls are talking to each other<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ 2 have white hijab/ other doesn't◦ 2 girls wear long-sleeves and long t-shirts over top (layered look), all tight-fitting; wearing jeans.◦ Other wears short-sleeves, vest, and tight black jeans.◦ Minimal makeup• 2 women walk over to the lookout<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ one is wearing bright orange long-sleeves, vest, patterned gold hijab & tight jeans.◦ Other no hijab, loose long-sleeve shirt, and jeans (not tight-fitting/not too loose).• Girl passes by with boyfriend<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Wearing white skirt, tight white long-sleeves, pink t-shirt, pink hijab.• 2 foreigners passby wearing<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ capris (one in khaki, the other in jeans) and loose short-sleeves shirt• Woman sitting behind me wearing patterned flower hijab & jilbaab• Two women walk by with hijab<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ One with jilbaab◦ Other with gouchos & long loose shirt | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• So what I've noticed here is that every woman here is intentionally dressed.<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ All their clothes match◦ Every woman looks in some way or another "wonderful"◦ It seems as if every article of clothing was thought out• I also noticed that nearly everyone is in some type of pair or group<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Rainbow street is obviously the place for dates because I have counted more than ten couples throughout my time there (2 pm-6pm)◦ Rainbow street is also the hangout spot for groups of shabaab and binat. Girls generally travelled in pairs and triples while shabaab ranged from being single to groups of four or more. (The guys all seemed to converge at the lookout and quite a few were found sitting outside cafes and stores.)◦ I also found a surprising amount of mothers walking with their children on Rainbow Street. Rainbow street is not very kid-friendly. However, there are |
|--|---|

2. Media Observation

Ex.

Setting: R&B Diner, Rainbow Street

Observed: TV: MHits (Music video)

Observation #1

Observer involvement: watching TV

Date/Time: November 10, 2010; ≈3:00pm

Place: R&B Diner

1st Video: Joe Askar (Mhaypar)

- All women in the video are wearing short white dresses
 - Have long hair ranging from black to blonde
 - The entire scene is like a harem of goddesses
 - All are wearing big earrings; and a considerable amount of makeup
 - All are wearing masks as if in a masquerade.
- It was almost as if all the women in the music video (there were around 20 of them) were perfect in every way and there was no flaw in them.
 - The main woman Joe Askar was seducing/singing about was the most perfect of them all—dark and lovely.
 - A lot of skin shown and the skin was perfect, the hair was perfect (all long and flowing), and the dresses were very loose (goddess look).

2nd Video: Carole Samaha

- Brown hair w/blonde highlights
 - Black dress, short-sleeved, low-back
 - Dark eyeliner
 - Silver watch
 - Displaying all her affluence
- Carole's look was that of simple affluence.
 - She wore a snug-fitting black dress that had sleeves that ended at the bend of the shoulder.
 - While the dress covered most things in the front, it had a very low U-shaped back.
 - V-neck front.
 - Not a whole lot of make-up but just enough to be almost too much.
 - The black mascara and
-

3. Church Observations

Ex.

Setting: West Amman Baptist Church

Observed: Church Service (Baptist)

Observation #1 (Church)

Observer involvement: Watching and worshipping

Date/Time: November 14, 2010 (6:26 pm)

- I come early (although the time says arrive by 6:30 pm).
- Only 8 people besides myself have shown up
 - Of the women, what appears to be the lead singer is wearing:
 - A long brown shirt
 - Brownish/ black slacks
 - Her hair is curly and mid-length
 - Not a lot of makeup/ some mascara
 - Enough to accentuate the face.
 - Eyebrows done.
 - Covers head with lace scarf during service.
 - Looks to be in early 30s.
 - Turns out to be Sophie's homestay mother.
- As the women walk in, I notice
 - When I asked Sophie's mom, Linda, if she knew of any Jordanian women from 18-24 years old, she told me that the church is "a family church. There is no one here between those ages."
 - As I was about to leave, Linda ran up to me with a friend, named Suzy.
 - Suzy is a Jordanian of Armenian origin whose daughter is 18 and is in her 1st year of college at the University of Jordan. She said I could interview her if I met up with her next Sunday.
 - I told her "Insha'allah", but now that I think of it, I'm not so sure how everything is going to work out.
 - She gave me her number and told me to call her any way...

4. Survey Cover Letter

Sunday, November 14, 2010

Dear participant,

My name is Brittany Witcher, and I am a third-year undergraduate student from Arcadia University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I am currently studying abroad here in Amman, Jordan through SIT (the School for International Training), a small, intensive study abroad program in Amman. As part of my studies, it is my responsibility to conduct independent ethnographical research on a topic of my choosing in what is called the "Independent Study Project" (ISP). For my ISP, I have chosen to study Jordanian Christian women between the ages of 18-24 and how their identity is portrayed through their clothing. The **goal** of my research is to find out **how young Jordanian Christian women identify themselves and if their clothes reflect their identity; and if they do, then I want to find out in what ways their clothes reflect their identity.** Doing this research is important for both Jordanians and the world because 1.) there is a remarkable lack of information on fashion (particularly among Christians) in this part of the world; 2.) this information can be used to better cater to the people of this nation through companies, organizations, and even governments that would have a better understanding of their cultural values; and 3.) this information would better inform the world not only on the values of this small sect of people in Jordan, but also of another face of the Middle East.

Your help in my research is most appreciated. The attached survey is short and straightforward. The survey itself should take between 10-15 minutes maximum. Please answer each question as honestly and truthfully as you can. As a participant, it is your right to know that:

1. *None of your personal information will be shown or given to anyone .*
 - a. **All of this information (including the consent form) is confidential.**
2. You **WILL** be anonymous.
 - a. I am not collecting any names or contact information such as phone numbers, email addresses, home addresses, etc.
3. Should this survey cause any psychological, mental or physical distress or if you feel in the slightest sense uncomfortable, **you DO have the right to either not answer a question or not continue with my survey.**
 - a. You also have the right to not participate or skip a question **at any point** in the survey.
 - i. *You are not obligated to answer any question.*
4. Please note that by participating in my survey, no monetary incentive will be given (this is purely voluntary); however, if you would like a copy of my final report, just email me at bwitcher@arcadia.edu requesting a copy, and I will email you a copy free of charge.

Again, thank you very much for your support and participation in my project! Should you have any further questions, feel free to ask. Just contact me at bwitcher@arcadia.edu. The information you will provide will go a very long way, and in the long run, I hope that you will one day reap the benefits of this research.

Sincerely,



Brittany Monique Witcher

5. Survey Consent Form

**IDENTITY AND FASHION:
A LOOK AT YOUNG CHRISTIAN WOMEN
AND HOW THEIR IDENTITY IS PORTRAYED THROUGH THEIR CLOTHING**
Brittany Witcher, Arcadia University, Glenside, Pennsylvania, United States
School for International Training – Jordan: Modernization and Social Change

Instructions:

Please read the following statements carefully and mark your preferences where indicated. Signing below indicates your agreement with all statements and your voluntary participation in the project. Please ask the researcher if you have any questions regarding this consent form.

I am aware that this interview is conducted by an independent undergraduate researcher with the goal of investigating how Jordanian Christian women identify themselves, whether their clothes reflect their identity, and in what ways their clothes reflect their identity.

I am aware that the information I provide is for research purposes only.

I am aware that in this study, I will be fully anonymous, and that upon request the researcher will omit all identifying information from both notes and drafts.

I am aware that I have the right to refuse to answer any question and to terminate my participation at any time, and that the researcher will answer any questions I have about the study.

I am aware of and take full responsibility for any risk, physical, psychological, legal, or social, associated with participation in this study.

I am aware that I will not receive monetary compensation for participation in this study, but a copy of the final study will be made available to me upon request.

I [do / do not] give the researcher permission to use data collected for this survey in this study.

I [do / do not] give the researcher permission to use data collected for this survey in a later study.

Date

Participant’s Signature

Researcher’s Signature

Participant’s Printed Name

6. Survey

**IDENTITY AND FASHION:
A LOOK AT YOUNG JORDANIAN CHRISTIAN WOMEN
AND HOW THEIR IDENTITY IS PORTRAYED THROUGH THEIR CLOTHING**
Brittany Witcher, Arcadia University, Glenside, Pennsylvania, United States
School for International Training – Jordan: Modernization and Social Change

PART I

1.) Are you a Jordanian citizen?
Yes No

2.) Your age range:
Under 18 18-24 25-55 55+

3.) What is your religion?
Muslim Christian

a.) If you are Muslim, are you:
Sunni Shi'a Sufi Druze Other

b.) If you are Christian, are you:
Roman Catholic Roman Orthodox Eastern Orthodox Evangelical Coptic
Maronite Protestant Other

4.) Are you married?
Yes No

5.) Do you have children?
Yes No

6.) Where do you currently reside?
West Amman
East Amman
Outside of Amman

7.) Do you work?
Yes No

a.) If so, do you make:
a. JD 200-JD 500/month
b. JD 500-JD 1000/month
c. More than JD 1000/month
b.) If not, then does the person who provides for you make:
a. JD 200-JD 500/month
b. JD 500-JD 1000/month
c. More than JD 1000/month

Never considering
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always considering

g.) When you **wear** your clothes, how much are you considering **your personality**?

Never considering
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always considering

h.) How much is the **media** an important factor on how you perceive current styles and trends?

Not an important factor
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 A very important factor

h1.) If media is important, which forms of media do you watch/hear/read most often? (may choose more than one)

- a.) Television
- b.) Internet
- c.) Radio
- d.) Magazines/Newspapers
- e.) Other: _____

h2.) Of your most watched/heard/read forms of media, list your top three channels/shows/internet sites/magazines/and/or newspapers.

i.) How much is wearing **makeup** important to your sense of style?

Not important
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely important

i1.) If you wear makeup, list what makeup products you use most often.

i2.) In one to two sentences, please describe why makeup is either important or not important to you?

PART III

12.) How would you describe yourself?

Below is a list of words. Please circle which three words fit your personality best:

Serene	Whimsical	Decadent
Simple	Fun	Extravagant
Pure	Creative	Pessimistic
Nostalgic	Spontaneous	Optimistic
Balanced	Adventuresome	Confident
Beautiful	Thrilling	Cool
Indulgent	A leader	Individual
Youthful	Fresh	Modest

13.) How would you describe the majority of clothes in your closet?

Below is another list of words. Please circle which three words fit your clothing style best:

Personalized	Whimsical	Challenging
Serene	Fun	Competitive
Simple	Creative	Tenacious
Pure	Spontaneous	Successful
Nostalgic	Adventuresome	Ambitious
Balanced	Thrilling	Confident
Excellent	Fresh	Cool
Quality	Decadent	Individual
Styled	Extravagant	Casual
Beautiful	Affluent	Pessimistic
Indulgent	Luxurious	Optimistic
Novel	Prestigious	Modest
Youthful	Vain	Chaste

14.) What is your most favorite thing to wear? (Can include shoes, makeup and headwear)

Thank you for participating in my survey! If you have any extra comments regarding clothing and fashion among Jordanian women, please write them here:

7. Sample of Survey Data Analysis

Analysis.xlsx

New Open Save Print Import Copy Paste Format Undo Redo AutoSum Sort A-Z Sort Z-A Gallery Toolbox Zoom 100%

Sheets Charts SmartArt Graphics WordArt

A B C D E F

Analysis of the Whole

1

Part I: Demographic Stats		Part II b: Questions			
Jordanian	20	Abu Dhabi	2	Makeup imp.	8
13-24	20	Dubai One	2	Makeup not	4
Muslim	17	E!	1	Makeup some:	7
Christian	3	Fox Movies	1	Max factor	7
Sunni	17	Fox Series	2	Boots	1
Roman Cath.	2	HBO	1	Ponds	1
Roman Orth.	1	LBC	2	Lo'real	1
Married	4	Massaya TV	2	Rimmel	1
Not Married	15	NBC 4	4	Channel	1
? (did not ans	1	NBC Action	1	Lancome	1
Children	3	NBC Max	1	MAC	2
No Children	17	NBC One	4	Sephora	1
West Amman	10	Movie Chan.	1	Minam	1
East Amman	5	MTV	1	Foundation	4
Outside Amm.	3	Style Net	1	Sunblock	1
? Amman	2	Youtube	1	Lipgloss	2
Work (Yes)	5	Facebook	2	Mascara	5
Work (No)	15	thebooksmug	1	Eyeline	5
Inc. (Yes) A:	5	hyperboleand	1	Blush	2
Inc. (No) A:	3	faraway.com	1	Concealor	3
Inc. (No) B:	4	Heya	2	Eyeshadow	1
Inc. (No) C:	7	Suydah	1		
Inc. (No) ?:	1	Cosmopolitan	1		
Part II a: Questions		Zahra	1		
Buy A	17	Style 6	2	Media 2	1
Buy B	3	Style 7	4	Media 3	1
Frequen. B	9	Style 8	1	Media 4	4
Frequen. C	11	Style 9	3	Media 5	4
Religion 1	1	Style 10	10	Media 6	1
Religion 3	1	Environ. 1	1	Media 7	3
Religion 5	5	Environ. 2	1	Media 8	4
Religion 7	3	Environ. 4	1	Media 9	1
Religion 8	3	Environ. 7	3	Media 10	1

Sheet1 Sheet2 Sheet3 Sheet4

8. Interview Consent Form

**IDENTITY AND FASHION:
A LOOK AT YOUNG CHRISTIAN WOMEN
AND HOW THEIR IDENTITY IS PORTRAYED THROUGH THEIR CLOTHING**
Brittany Witcher, Arcadia University, Glenside, Pennsylvania, United States
School for International Training – Jordan: Modernization and Social Change

Instructions:

Please read the following statements carefully and mark your preferences where indicated. Signing below indicates your agreement with all statements and your voluntary participation in the project. Please ask the researcher if you have any questions regarding this consent form.

I am aware that this interview is conducted by an independent undergraduate researcher with the goal of investigating how Jordanian Christian women identify themselves, whether their clothes reflect their identity, and in what ways their clothes reflect their identity.

I am aware that the information I provide is for research purposes only.

I am aware that in this study, I **will** be fully anonymous, and that upon request the researcher will omit all identifying information from both notes and drafts.

I am aware that should I choose, I may request a pseudonym of my choosing for referential purposes in this study only.

I am aware that I have the right to refuse to answer any question and to terminate my participation at any time, and that the researcher will answer any questions I have about the study.

I am aware of and take full responsibility for any risk, physical, psychological, legal, or social, associated with participation in this study.

I am aware that I will not receive monetary compensation for participation in this study, but a copy of the final study will be made available to me upon request.

I [do / do not] give the researcher permission to use a pseudonym of my choice in the final study.

Please write pseudonym here: _____

I [do / do not] give the researcher permission to use my organizational affiliation in the final study.

I [do / do not] give the researcher permission to use data collected in this interview in a later study.

Date

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature

Participant's Printed Name

9. Interview Questions

I. Introduction

A. Reintroduce the subject you are researching

- i. Jordanian Christian women from 18-24
 1. You fit this criteria
- ii. I am researching how you identify yourselves as a whole within your society and whether your identity is somehow portrayed through the clothes you wear. If your identity is portrayed through the clothes you wear, then I'm on the hunt to find out what ways your clothes reflect your identity.
- iii. When I say identity, I mean the inner you. I mean your inner values. Your likes and dislikes. I want to know if being a Christian rubs off on your daily life, or the other way around: if Islam pressures you in a way to wear your clothes the way you do. What do you value most? What shapes and frames you? Your job? Your school? Your family? Your God? That's what I mean by identity. And that's why I am interviewing you today.
- iv. (Ask if you can turn on the mic).

B. Demographics

- i. First off, I need to know about you a little bit:
- ii. Your name (pseudonym is perfect)
- iii. Age
- iv. What do you do?
 1. Do you work?
 2. Are you still in school?
 3. Can you tell me a few of your hobbies or pastimes?
- v. Are you married?
 1. Do you have children?
- vi. (If your not married,)
 1. Do you still live with your family?
 2. Have siblings?
 3. Like to say anything about your family background?
- vii. Religion:
 1. What denomination are you?
 2. Where do you go to church?
 3. (I'll get back to religion a little later)
- viii. Jordanian:
 1. Do you live in Amman?
 - a. What part?
 2. Your family is originally from?
 3. At your work, where would you say you are on the economic class level...lower, middle, or upper class?
 - a. Reiterate that they do not have to answer this question.

II. Psychological magazine cut-out game (the fun part)

A. Identify the style of clothing

i. Cut out 10-12 different styles of clothing

Conservative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Elegant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A bathing suit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Business wear	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PJs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Athletic wear	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Traditional	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Casual	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Contemporary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wedding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Winter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ii. Show picture, let her take a very good look at it

iii. Ask "In one word, describe what she is wearing. Give me an adjective"

iv. Write down her description

v. Then ask, "On a scale from 1-10: how comfortable would you be wearing clothes the way you described in public? In your house?"

vi. "Have any other comments about the clothing?"

III. Questions

A. What are your favorite **styles** of clothing to wear in your everyday life?

i. (ex.: Do you find yourself more conservative and like to cover everything up? Or do you find yourself more outgoing and like to dress it up with jewelry and makeup? Are you cool with casual and wouldn't mind walking in pjs outside? Or do you NEED to wear that cute dress you just bought from the mall even though you are just going to the grocery store?)

ii. Would you say that the clothes you wear inside the house are different from the clothes you wear outside the house?

1. If so, in what ways?

iii. When you get dressed, are you often thinking about what society wants you to wear?

1. What about your family? Do you think about your family when you get dressed?

iv. If you could choose three words to describe your inner-self, how would you describe your personality?

v. When you get dressed, do you think about what clothes reflect your personality or your reputation?

vi. Lastly, how important is makeup to you?

1. (if imp.) What products do you wear?

- B. Let's talk about **shopping**. First off, do you buy your own clothes?
- i. If not, do you get to pick out your own clothes?
 1. If so (for both), where are your favorite places to shop?
 - ii. When you are shopping, what do you think about the most?
 1. Like price, style, modesty, environment, season, occasion... (it can be more than one).
 - iii. From my observations, I noticed that many people are dressed up when they go shopping (especially to the mall). When you are shopping, do you feel pressured to wear your best?
 - iv. Can you explain to me more about the shopping habits of Christians here in Amman?
 1. I once heard that Jordanians prefer to buy new clothes from expensive shops at places like the mall or Sweiffiyeh over say second hand clothes from a souk in the Balad or Abdali. Is that true?
 2. Which would you prefer?
- C. Let's talk about **religion**. You said you are from _____ (denomination). Are there any specific guidelines or instructions from theology or the Bible that you know of that tells women how they should dress?
1. If so, do you know where from?
 - ii. How much would you say your faith plays in what you would be wearing for the day?
 - iii. Does the Islamic world put any pressure on you to dress in a certain way?
 1. If so, in what ways?
- D. From my research and observations, I have heard many people say that for Christians, **tradition** has a stronger play in their lives than religion does. Can you tell me a little bit more about your traditional heritage?
- i. What are some of your traditions?
 - ii. Can you describe the traditional way of dress?
 - iii. Does it pressure you to dress a certain way?
 1. If so, how?
- E. As part of my research, I have been observing the **media**. I have observed music videos, commercials, news channels, magazines, etc. Would you say that the media is influencing you to dress in a certain way?
- i. If it is, what do you most often watch/hear/read?
 - ii. From my observations, I have seen that there is such a huge difference between what women actually wear in public and what they see on TV. Can you explain why this is a little bit more for me?
 - iii. Do you ever feel like you need to compete with the media with the clothes you wear?

F. Last part: **Trends**. So from my observations so far, I have noticed that a majority of the girls between the ages of 18-24 love to wear somewhat tight jeans, with a long tight long-sleeved shirt and maybe a long close-fitting t-shirt over top. Mid-length, leather boots are currently in fashion. They love a lot of makeup, (well, not too much to look like a drag queen, but enough to be a little too much). Christian girls and girls who don't wear hijab insist on either bone straight hair or wavy crinkled hair, but it must be loose. Maybe it can be in a bun, but I noticed that ponytails, braids, and other styles are not as popular. The biggest thing I noticed is that everything has to match. The colors have to be just right. And this is something I have noticed all around. Jordanians are excellent at color coordination. How true would you say this assessment is?

i. How would you describe the current fashion trends today?

ii. What do you think the motivations are behind these trends?

1. I have heard that Jordanians often think about relationships and romance when choosing clothes. Do you think this is often the case?
2. Would you say that wearing clothes for Jordanian women is form of expression for them? Almost like a form of art?
3. To a Jordanian, what makes a person "beautiful"? Would you say the focus is more on outer beauty or inner beauty?

iii. How soon do you think these styles are going to change?

iv. About you, do you find yourself switching trends often?

1. For instance, in the past two years, what you were wearing two years ago similar to what you are wearing now?
2. Say, two years from now, do you think you will be wearing different a significantly different style of clothing?

IV. Conclusion

- A. We're just about done. Do you have any other comments about Jordanian Christian women here in Jordan? I'd love to hear them.
- B. Thank you so much for participating in this interview. You have helped me more than I can say. Again, no one will hear this conversation. Only I will have access to it. Also, no one will know your name. Just the pseudonym you gave me. Thank you so much for all your help!