

Modest Fashion Consumables: Influence of Media in the UAE

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ABSTRACT: This study analyses how media effects and influences choices and preferences that become the basis on which clothing items are purchased by men and women in the Emirates for items in the Modest Fashion genre. This paper identifies the differences in buying behavior due to varying usage patterns. It also highlights what importance each of them give to influencers, advertorials and other media channels. It also draws information on buying patterns which refers to the way in which consumers buy goods including points like frequency, quantity, duration, timing etc. spent on sites and blogs that culminate in sales. A gap in availability of information that outlines this category of approved clothing, is seen. The findings show that the decision making elements include a fit to traditional ideology of Islamic clothing. There is a lack of a clear definition and a proper framework. It needs to be clearly defined and can then, in future, be used to promote more directed sales resulting in boost of consumer confidence in purchase and consumption patterns. The trends in Abaya styles for future and customer choices will not be bereft of evolutionary forces influencing norms and notions of women empowerment and practicability.

KEYWORDS: *Consumer patterns, buying preferences, Modest Fashion, Media influence.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The style category of 'modest fashion' that has the potential to go beyond the specifications of the religion and reach out to consumers across different faith groups. Modest fashion is recognized as a form of fashionable dressing adopted by men and women from different communities and faith. Media can contribute to identify what attributes of fashion are most appealing for modest clothing line?

The world is increasingly becoming more reliant on media and social media with billions of people generating and sharing content through various social and networking applications. Wearing the Hijab, a headscarf essential to complete a Muslim women's dress, became a popular trend amongst social media users on platforms like Instagram. The movement started with the creation and use of the hashtag #OOTD meaning 'outfit of the day'. Following this trend, #HOOTD (Hijab out of the day) became a trending hashtag amongst Muslim women on Instagram (Asiyah, 2016).

The consistently developing modest style is a reasonable impression of the changing examples in the social, political, innovative and monetary condition of a general public. The previous couple of decades have seen huge and differing changes in shopper propensities and ways of life. Finally,

clothing purchase graph has grown up, with both male and female purchasers winding up progressively brand and style cognizant.

Graph:1 Global Online Fashion sales



Source: <https://www.salecycle.com/blog/featured/online-fashion-retail-11-essential-statistics/>

With the rise of a contemporary social structure, article of clothing buy is never again the strength of ladies alone. Research, national and worldwide, elucidates the buy choices of the New Man who is ending up more design cognizant and pattern sharp with regards to clothing. This article is an endeavor to recognize certain gender orientation based forerunners of modest clothing buy contribution. An endeavor has additionally been made to recognize the key drivers that impact the basic leadership process for the purchases, independently for male and female clients. There can be a change in perspective in frames of mind of the buyers through media and advertising influences.

Most of us are aware of the Islamic fashion followed by women but are not much aware of the clothing items included for Men's modest wear. Though Islamic clothing may vary in different regions, it may always fulfill the requirements of modesty in Islamic way of dressing. Through media and social networking channels it is important to spread the Islamic way of dressing which teaches modesty is addressed on an equal platform for both the genders.

1.1. Concept of Modest Fashion

The conventional Islamic clothing for men includes traditional Islamic attire pieces for men are based on modesty. The garment worn by men is mainly a loose-fitted and long robe which covers the entire body. As per the Quran, “lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that will make for greater purity for them”. The design and silhouette of abaya has changed over time according to the different time periods. Many researches have also shown that a key revolution has taken place in the observation of fashion and, consequently, Abayas given the modifications in the requirements and desires of consumers from the gulf, considering this market is of extreme importance for both researchers and industry practitioners, from perspective of fashion.

1.2. Women’s identities have changed

People tend to believe that to be modern you have to disengage from your heritage, but that is not true. The global citizen is not one with no identity, but rather someone who openly shows with confidence and pride their culture and history, to the entire world. This is why there are fashion leaders who take risks in local fashion and set trends in the region. The capacious abaya conceals and hides their body, perceived by some, this disguise is a conquest of the wearer's individual interests and personality by forcing her to follow a uniform look. The Hijab was also never a very popular piece of garment to wear. Called out of date once, it is now considered a fashion statement all over the world thanks to fashion inspired blogs (Asiyah, 2016).

The black and white robe was once considered to be plain, garment only to conceal; however, today, the garment is a “stylish, personalized coat” that women enjoy flaunting, allowing an expression of individuality. The “Modest fashion” is now available in variety of fabrics, colors and cuts elaborated with countless ornamentations. Many fashion designers lure motivation from the very same western influences that many of the Arab women wear beneath their abayas, while others pull from flairs and humanities from around the globe. Once modest fashion was not simply just a look but a choice of modernity, designers all over the world chose to create garments that best suited them with all resources that were abundantly available to them. However with this trend, there was a gap in consumer purchasing of modest clothing in the market as retail stores were not yet catering to the world. Soon enough, retailers started pitching in and modest clothing was available for consumers to indulge in from physical and online stores (Islamic Fashion and Design Council, 2016).

The abaya/ Kandura now are not only a spiritual or social manifestation, but an appearance of personality for oneself in the Gulf, greatly influenced by and also vice-versa, thus prompting fashion from the west and develop international influence. The customary clothing serves as a significant symbol of nationalistic and Islamic identity for individuals in the Arab region, but with growing development of the new, modest fashion, encounter has occurred between neo-fundamentalist cleric cohorts of the traditional clothing and the Islamic fashion supporters of the new “Modest Fashion”. Having traversed this landscape via a visual journey this study endeavors to highpoint the effects of several factors including globalization of modest fashion, as a fashion

trend and upon the emerging symbolic personalities of the women who wear the Fashion abaya round the globe. (Shukla V, Gupta R. 2019).

1.3. The Past

Understanding the regional background in order for us to look ahead we need to first understand the beginnings of the Abaya, via sociological and cultural perspectives. Modest fashions in the UAE are continually evolving in ‘clash’ among fashion and modesty. ...but why is there a clash in the first place?

Once the “clash” amid modern trends and traditional modesty is examined and observed the affected Emirati women’s fashion necessities, and has thus prejudiced the progression of abaya designs, it’s been evidently seen the creativity with which these challenges have been tackled. The styles which are modern do not tend to “challenge the abayas’ local and conventional look, fashion designers from the local region still consider it as a symbol of tradition and respect that women should maintain in the UAE. The abaya, is a plain, loose over-garment that is basically a robe worn by women in Islamic countries. At least, that's how the Abaya is described on the internet. For the "Modistas," nevertheless, the garment is trendy, wearable, and fashionable, and hence the garment has a greater value. Who could have imagined an abaya with fur or a brightly colored belt? It was a felony to add a belt to the abaya, since it accentuates a woman's shape by combining unconventional materials. The above are only but a few examples of the limits that are being pushed without breaking the framework. . The abaya has evolved from a practical garment to a "style statement symbolizing beauty, sophistication, and charm" thanks to Emirati women's inherent desire for change, self-expression, inclusion and the need to remain current. The abaya's cultural origins and place in UAE society will always be the most influential factors in determining styles and cuts. It's for this reason that there are many local fashion pioneers who are willing to take risks. (Raj V, Gupta. R. 2019).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conflicts of Identity

The functional robe held dear by Emirati ladies is going through a change that uncovers it as an exquisite and smooth piece of clothing accessible in a scope of tones and textures, while holding its customary allure. The Islamic apparel fills in as a vital appearance of both stringent and public personality in the Middle Easterner Bay states. As seen over the most recent twenty years, another pattern has arisen, which is another structure and a transformation of the conventional, plain dark abaya into a stylish, customized article of clothing custom-made to suit the particular tastes of the client. This new pattern has tested the accustomed abaya in it's use, inconspicuously subverting

the conventional social request and the strict and public personalities represented by the abaya's conventional structure.

The new-form abayas – The Fashion-abayas, are individualized, sometimes flamboyant in outlook, yet retain the physical requirements for modesty, i.e. covering all skin but the hands and feet, but vaguely defies religious prescriptions against drawing attention to oneself with accessorizing. Women wearing abayas in the Gulf Bay states a specific status and characteristics with specific personality to them, yet the new-structure adaptation, can regulate that status, giving ladies more individual flexibility while seeming to keep up the norm. To comprehend the pressures that outgrew the this present symbol's development, it is necessary to understand the reasonable contrasts between the "Legal" abaya - the abaya as thought about appropriate by ordinary Islamic law specialists in the Bay, and the new-structure, Design abaya. A recent study provides the criteria to define the traditional, “Judicial” abaya, where the garment should fit six provisions:

1. It must be heavy and non-sticking.
2. It must be 'all-covering,' that is, of the whole figure and free to such an extent that it does not depict the forms of the body.
3. It should be open just in front, while the sleeve opening ought to be small.
4. It must not contain attraction, which may pull in the eyes, and along these lines ought to be liberated from drawings, adornments, works, and images.
5. It should not be like the garments of nonbeliever ladies or men.
6. It must be set from the top of the head.

The evolution of new modest fashion has caused social implications in the shift of the above points and does not fit much of this definition by design, as it has a multitude of cuts, colors, and adornments. However, its many proponents feel that, since the piece of clothing is for the most part "all covering" actually like the Legal abaya, there is no mischief in decorating the piece of clothing itself. These ladies underscore humility in mentality and activity over actual unobtrusiveness, albeit actual humility is as yet a significant piece of their confidence. (Gupta. R. Shukla. V, 2019).

It is noticed and commonly seen that the veil serves as a “symbolic mediator” for the women, “expressing and ameliorating women's concerns arising at the intersection of work and family” while keeping up new opportunities. By embracing the new moderate dress, the hidden lady, and with it the regard because of faithful, customary ladies in their networks, easing a portion of the pressing factor applied by conventional sex standards and their own blame at abusing the customary no-no of ladies working external the home. By taking the cover, the ladies were consequently distinguished as great Muslims, great spouses, and great moms, on the grounds that their adherence to conventional sex jobs was accepted. For these ladies, rehearsing one profoundly esteemed practice (veiling) assisted with amending their breaking with another (working external the home), both inside and inside their networks.

Some media conservatives say, that the coats must be dark, wobbly and without shape. The line between suitable and unsuitable abayas is blurred. “The abaya should not be like a dress,” indicating that designs with belts or a nip in at the waist are improper. Abaya should be loose and shield to the body. The traditionalists believe that those who wear new-form ones are misses who want to draw attention. The modest fashion has become “an element integral to contemporary social practices in the region,”

Although the abaya holds fundamental perspectives, the change of the 'abaya addresses a move away from the vertical type of subjection toward one that advances progress. Disregarding male centric endeavors to reassert authority over the abaya's appearance, the modest fashion and its advocates have successfully designed an "abaya development," giving ladies new opportunity to communicate paying little heed to what some strict pioneers say .In addition to the fact that it challenges man centric control of female conduct, yet it challenges the strict and social personality of the networks where it is worn. (Sadatmoosavi, Zohreh & W Ali, WZ & Shokouhi, Mohammad Ali. 2016).

As per media discourse, the abaya is symbol of religious identity and national, but the modest fashion moves beyond “Arab,” “Gulf,” and “Islamic” individuality standards to identify with a larger, international global culture. It partakes in worldwide design patterns, drawing motivation from different societies, making another cosmopolitan character desired by the rich residents of the Bedouin Inlet states. The new-structure not just changes the relationship ladies and moderate strict pastors in the Middle Eastern Inlet states, yet in addition the connection among ladies and their own public societies however the impact of globalization.

2.2. History of Abayas

Abaya is an extended, large robe worn over other clothes by many Muslim ladies, particularly in the Arab world. It is generally dark in shading, and is typically worn with a light, coordinating cover called a shayla. As per sources, the 'abaya is the overwhelming type of female dress all through the Bedouin Inlet states, and wearing the 'abaya establishes a veiling practice and is a systematized type of dress that is socio-lawfully carried out by the authority of the state. Nations, for example, the Assembled Bedouin Emirates do not expect ladies to wear the abaya, in spite of the fact that it is the authority public dress and ladies are advised to dress in a minimalistic manner. Clashing records of the abaya's sources exist in current composition. Numerous creators guarantee that the abaya is a centuries-or centuries old custom. Notwithstanding, different specialists offer an alternate story, portraying the abaya's ascendance in Inlet culture as a generally new pattern, arising just in the 20th century.

Merging several interpretations by media practitioners in the Middle East (and from the globe) feel that loose, enveloping robes and hijabs are required for Arab women, though other elucidations are popular in parts of the world, even in the Gulf region. The fact that the abaya is

worn by women across the Arab Gulf states arguably presents a harmony that surpasses national limitations. The remedy of national dress for the citizens irrespective of gender category is part of the supremacy self-motivated between citizens and state and aids to reserve “the self-identity of national culture” in resistance to the “rapid pursuit of modernization in the Arab gulf and the increasingly disproportionate ratio between national and expatriate communities. Rapid modernization, the influx of expatriate workers, and the exponential growth in cross-border industries in the Gulf region are all symptoms of globalization.”

Though globalization has influenced every sphere of life in different ways, its effect on the modest fashion industry remained subtle. Designers would shy away from incorporating western styles and fabrics into their own clothing, but would draw inspiration from Westerns and give their creations a modern twist (Shimek, 2012).

The loose robes hung loosely over the body so that the shape of the body is not revealed which served the main purpose of wearing an abaya. These outfits are worn with a face veil, niqāb. (Fig: 1) Some women also wear gloves (long & black) to cover their hands as well. They are worn for various occasions like casual wear, party wear and also for special occasions like weddings.



Figure 1. Historical Abayas with different veils.

2.2.1 Abayas: Were they originally black or colored? Prehistoric Era

The traditional abayas in this era were more conservative and reserved. They were mostly in color black and or large square piece of fabric which is draped from head or shoulders as a long caftan. Niqaab and Burkha were the most worn along with abaya, in this time period. Other than abayas, other traditional garments like jelabiya was common in that era. Jelabiya was also a long loose

garment that was elaborately adorned and included a head covering. They were mostly used on special occasions and weddings. (Mumin. N. A., 2010)

The abayas during the medieval ages of the gulf were robe like, less loose fitted compared to prehistoric abayas and draped all over the body in order to not showcase the female's body silhouette. Abayas were always black with usually a touch of embroidery in certain areas. Abayas during this time when worn had amounts of folds and required the women to carry their garment on the arms or they would wear broaches. Women wearing abayas always had their head covered with a hijab and their faces covered with a nakabh. There are small slits left in the veil portion of the abaya so the women can see. (Macdonald, M. 2006). Women wearing abayas were covered from neck to toes. Medieval abayas also mostly resembled kaftans and other loose fitted garments. The abayas didn't consist of many designs but some designs were there and they were variations of flowers or swirls, and the abayas usually had a solid color border at the end of the abaya or the end of the hijab. There weren't many options or variations in how a female should wear an abaya, this was due to the culture women was oppressed to and not given appropriate freedom. Women usually start wearing the abaya at the first sign of puberty. With time Abayas have greatly evolved from being the simple black ones to colour ones with heavy embroidery and stylish cuts. In the Medieval ages the Abayas were fully covering and was complemented by a niqab or burqa. (Anna-Mari Almila, David Inglis. 2018). The shape of the Abaya was extremely free flowing mainly because women did not choose to show their body figure. Closed Abayas, Chadar Abayas, Milhafa Abayas, Kaftan style Abayas and Abayas with batwing sleeves were very popular. Many women also wore gloves to cover their hands. During this age, women did not believe and were not introduced to stylising their Abayas and therefore they were very simple. While researching on medieval Abayas it was also found that 2 piece garments also existed at that time, women would wear a piece from head to thigh and another piece from the waist to feet. In addition, the golden colour burqa mask (Battoulah) was also very popular among women in the UAE. Covering the hair was a priority for all women and in some cases even young girls were asked to do so. (Boulanouar, A. W. 2006).

2.2.2 Beginnings of modern Modest Fashion

According to research sources in the beginning of 1980's, the shopping district of Jeddah, the Abaya designers tried different things with unobtrusive changes to the abaya by utilizing new materials and styles, like shirt texture and wide square sleeves. One of her strong moves was adding gold tone to the dark abaya. People kept on pushing for more assortment in styles as other abaya shops arose. Notwithstanding, it was possibly close to the 1990s when slick abayas started to be sold in different stores. A small bunch of plans began to show up, for example, the butterfly cut plan, and got famous among a specific gathering of ladies who were available to dressing elegantly out in the open. As unfamiliar brands and retail locations were presented around there, prepared to-wear design turned out to be more open. Correspondingly, nearby abaya tailors consolidated vivid adornments, designs and new textures and messed with sleeve styles. Several consumers, reluctant to adapt to the change in the abaya styles, would approach tailors with their own designs and styles in a way such that the bay still remained traditional from afar, but on a closer look, small

black embellishments and details provided the abaya with a more modern and pleasing look (Lindholm, 2010). “Black and plain abayas or Plain White Kandura are mundane,” were generic exclams from some members of the public, who were instrumental in the development of the abaya, that from then happened at a more fast pace. The market requests quickly led the way for the rise of local designers and trends.

2.3 The Present

The Modern times, why did the abaya have to be reinvented? The local stylists today have found their ways to revolutionize a customary clothing, making them more appealing for the non-conventionalists and “generation Z” to wear, as modish and trendy look, and not as a cultural responsibility. Reinvigorating and reinventing the abaya was essential, in the recent times for the social climate. Women are becoming liberated from traditions and patriarchal rules, seeking independence and education that translates into their way of dressing. (Lucy siegle, 2008), Social media has allowed millennials, influencers and designers to make use of various platforms and create new and trendy garments that soon became popular all over the world. (Sayyed, B. J. W., & Gupta, R. 2020, June). Through this creative expression in the media, Abaya has become, much more independent in terms of catering to a wider range of age groups. The fashionable and style savvy have to no longer estranged for wearing a cloak.

We cannot ignore the recent growth of modest fashion as an entity of high fashion, in the Middle East region. The good old Arabic robe is marrying style with tradition. New designs have seen reflections of a unique form of traditional wear mingled with cross regional staples like the Indian saree, the Japanese kimono, and sometimes pantaloons, too. As mentioned earlier, the very fact that the abaya is worn by womankind across the Gulf states arguably presents a unity that excels national boundaries. Quick modernization, the inundation of ostracize laborers, and the outstanding development in cross-line enterprises in the Gulf district are for the most part side effects of globalization. Wearing abaya characterizes ladies in the area as an image of strict trustworthiness and public persona, but then women in this and new media in the modest fashion industry. (Radwan, Maha & Kamal, Mohamad & Khavarinezhad, Sepideh & Calandra, Davide. 2019). The modest fashion owes its growth as the womanly clothing of choice in part as a protection against the effects of globalization, but it too is shifting with response to worldwide trends for fashion. Social Media in present time has played an important role to bring women together worldwide—they are assembling into an online, “fashion community” who give-and-take design ideas—so a far-eastern fashionista can be inspired by a young student in Europe or a New-Yorker by the styles of fashionable women in the Arab world. In today’s global village, a woman’s freedom of choice plays an increasingly important role in how she chooses to present herself to the world, asking us to look beyond the fashion to see the individual.

2.3.1 Reintroduction of the colored abayas & Kandura

Exceptional stories like these where the individual, a design and architecture student who was fed up of black abayas and admiring about arts and colors took the lead in crafting a colored abaya for herself. Like her, others rapidly made a name for themselves, started making the novel, exclusive abayas for their family and friends. Most had a common ideology that wearing colors makes one

feel fresh, specifically in hot climate. One feels more comfortable in color. Attempts to tackle black were not gradual. Several designers immediately started to experiment freely with colors, including yellow, blue, green and red hues. Abayas should be easy since the ladies wear them all day were the common thoughts, considering that abayas represent an Arabian woman's individuality and ethos.

The past era has seen a boom in fashion designers selling colored abayas from home and then gradually moved to stores. A woman in fashionable abaya tries stand out from the masses and express herself. Although colored abayas are getting popular, black still remains the prime color for individuals who want to blend in, there was an evident need in the market, demand showed. There were a section of individuals who were also against it, nevertheless and had to be convinced that the aim was not to invite attention but inspire to wear color.

“With the rise in awareness of trends and social media nowadays, people want to define their sense of fashion identity,” “It's different from the past where one would own an abaya or two in their closet. Now, there are abayas for each occasion, like work wear, informal wear, eveningwear, and so on.” In many new lines, the conventional outfits are being preserved as an overlay for an external piece of dress. Evidence of experimentation with fabrics, is prevalent. Use of fleece, jacquards, brocades, dyed fabrics, cotton mix, and, brocades is seen.

With the introduction of colors and Heavy experimentation in new cuts and styles, Abaya in the modern times is not just linked to faith but is also considered to be a fashion statement. The Fashion abayas show indications of blends with the western attire and narrow and wide belts were introduced to emphasize the body shape (Fig: 2).

Abaya designers have started to emerge and become widely popular and started to experiment with different fabrics, colors and textures into the abaya. Lace embroidery, Ruffles, Pastel colors, etc are some of the current trends in abayas. A sports-friendly variety of the modest gown was once reflected as a sign of social rebellion in conservative parts of the Arab world, but it is rapidly becoming the new normal. “There is a big demand for sports abayas. Having them in different colors is empowering,” said one popular designer.



Figure 2. The stylish Abayas/Modest fashion of present times.

2.4 Modest Fashion and Globalization

The powers of globalization have assumed a critical part in the abaya's advancement, impacting everything from its assignment as public dress in the Arab Gulf states to the look, creation, and offer of the actual abaya. Globalization's impact is diverse: by all accounts, the prevalence of Western style is verifiably necessary to the development of the present bunch of tones, cuts, and plan components. The language used by planners and media correspondents concerning the pattern exhibits the new, "worldwide" nature of the abaya as an item both of Gulf culture and strict sensibilities and of the more unpretentious expressive and social impacts from around the world. Numerous transcendent fashioners have Western plan degrees or worked with top European plan houses. Indeed, even the way Fashion abayas are sold be indebted some impact to models created outside of the gulf regions. (Lodi. H, 2020).

The prevalence of Western style in the Arabian states is uncontested, and patterns in high design affect the plan of numerous abayas. In media articles on the new-structure and meetings with arising fashioners, this impact is guaranteed, referenced in passing however never clarified. Clients come for interesting, tailored abayas made to coordinate "the shade of their fashioner sacks and high heels by brands like Christian Dior, Hermes, Chanel, and Gucci". Best designers, have sensibly created websites where prospective consumers can see designs which are pre-made and request tailored pieces. There are sites that bring together products from top designers from the Gulf and ships global, permitting the designers it helps to sell their imports to an extensive audience, and customers to procure clothes from multiple designers in one easy source. One well known Abaya designer says "there are plans to tap Asian markets like China and Korea, as well as countries closer to home like Iran and Afghanistan because the potential for further growth is massive... It's still untapped, it's a niche market and the potential is enormous" women around the globe, presently don't have to head out to Dubai or Jeddah to purchase abayas; the Internet has acted the hero, permitting worldwide access for clients and higher benefits for the designers. (Paulicelli, E. 2014).

Websites have opened another boondocks for these business people and another purchasing experience for their clients, yet the adjustments in abaya deals don't end with the Internet. Different fashioners use new innovation, yet coordinate extraordinary live encounters past actual customer facing facades. Like top style houses in Europe and America, numerous Gulf architects show their products in the twice-yearly Dubai Fashion Week, held in the Spring and in the Fall. Abaya architects send their pieces down the catwalk before pressed groups one next to the other with evening outfits, dresses, and pantsuits, featured by fantastical make-up and props ("Dubai Fashion Week").

"Dubai Fashion Week" purposefully works on pre-set western standards for style deals. Various crowds include some western planned methodologies in their occasions and abaya deals while keeping up components of customary exchange. Shows and Fairs help creators from everywhere the inlet area and give them the expectations of reaching the new client base important for modest originators to succeed. Such occasions are especially fascinating to act as an illustration of globalization, since like Abayas, they are a blend of both conventional culture across the globe,

showing globalization impact and its language, worldwide nature, and utilization of new correspondence advances, however the actual presentation felt similar as a customary souk or market. Every originator has their own specific corner, racks of exceptional manifestations prepared for clients to take a stab at, purchase, or modify.

2.4.1 Modern Abayas

Abayas in this modern era have up scaled a lot during the years, after women had got more recognition when Sheikh Zayed HH started ruling and women started feeling more empowered the changes started appearing in their garments. Abayas in the modern times were slightly more fitted, they were still black but not all of them were. now abayas could be found in a variety of colors such as blue, beige etc. Fasha-bayas started to have less volume and different types of sleeves such as the end of the sleeves would spread out more and the abayas were more free flowing and lighter on the body. They consisted of several types of embroidery and designs around the neck line and sleeve end. Hijabs were still worn but had changed to different patterns and styles.

Turbans for women came into chic styles, and nakabhs were less worn now, Printed abayas came into value and the empire line was trendier in abayas as the top of the women's abayas would be slightly more fitted and the bottom of the abaya would flow on. Abayas started to become more chic and not something to be worn for only religious reasons women started feeling fashionable and fabulous in abayas as some of the started to resemble dresses which were still modest. As the demand for modest designers amplified in the region, stylish and colorful, abayas caught the eyes globally. Recently Dolce and Gabbana launched its 1st Abaya collection in its colourful signature prints.

2.4.1.1. Bridal Abayas

Arab weddings tend to be really extravagant and grand and the abayas that the brides choose to wear for these occasions are nothing less. A wedding Abaya is worn by a bride during a wedding ceremony. Style, color, and ceremonial importance of the gown may depend on the culture and religion of the participants in the wedding. These Abayas can be called as "Soiree" which means an elegant and fancy evening wear. The word comes from French word "soir", meaning "evening" or "night." The wedding abayas can be made in layers of chiffon and satin with expensive crystals and embroideries enhanced with other embellishments. These abayas depicts femininity, delicacy and culture. Traditionally, the brides used to dress in traditional abayas that would be very extravagant and exquisitely embroidered. They used to also wear a long loose gown called 'Jalabiya' which was heavily embroidered and complemented with layers of gold accessories. (Fig: 3) The Bridal Abayas nowadays have been transformed, since they have now adopted more of the western style into the traditional design of an abaya. Greta Eagan, (March 2014).

A black Abaya to a Middle Eastern designer is what a white canvas is to an artist. There are endless Abaya designs. Each keeping the integrity of the modest garment but adding a bit of identity and styling to this traditional dress, making it an extremely elegant and classy gown within its own

right. In the weddings of the current times, Arabic Brides mostly wear heavy but modest gowns that often come with a long train at the back and complemented with hijab, which was a major influence of the west. (London College of Fashion, 2011)



Figure 3. Bridal Abayas with surface ornamentations and intricate work.

2.5 The Future

Abayas are changing from year to year then become more lavish more fabulous and more fashionable overall, the depiction of futuristic abayas are still modest but more extravagant, Fashion abayas could have more exaggerated sleeves and a more dimension to them, they could consist of net in some areas and more intricate designs and detailing in others.

Modest fashion can be more fashion runway worthy in the future and as for hijabs they could be a mix of extreme dimension and exaggerated placements whilst still maintaining the modest factor. Due to where the future of fashion is headed towards the road of sustainability the Fashion abayas are more likely to be made of different colors and fabrics compared to only being black. (Reina Lewis, 2013). More sheer fabric can come into place, the placements of designs can vary more and the overall cut and silhouette of the abaya can be completely changed. It speaks about Tomorrow's fashion world...Sporty Abayas (Fig: 4), future dress, futuristic , style, futuristic dress, future-fashion, cyber style, cyberpunk fashion, futuristic dress, cyber fashion cyber look, cyber dress, cyber clothes, space fashion, tech fashion etc. (Fig: 5). Cyberpunk is a sub-genre of science fiction in a futuristic setting which tends to focus on a "combination of lowlife and high tech" that features scientific achievements and advance technology, such as cybernetics and artificial intelligence. The Abayas based on cyberpunk are related to geometric designs made of leather patches and which compliment well with a pair of boots.

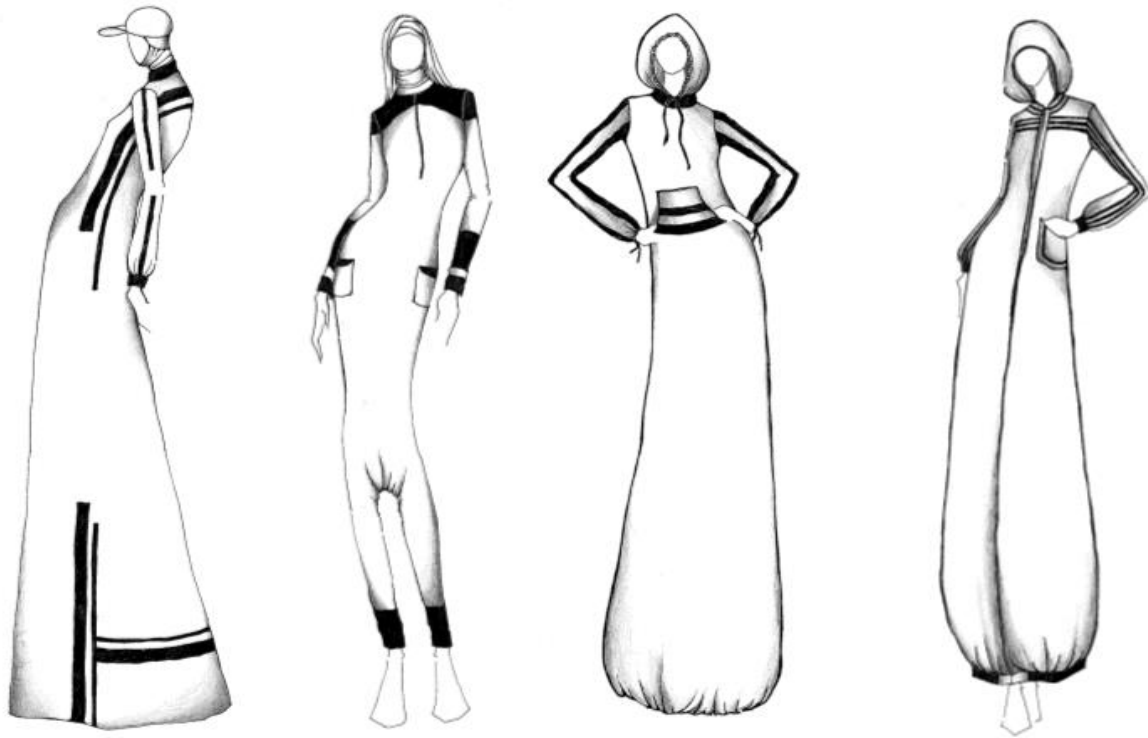


Figure 4. Future sporty abayas.



Figure 5. Various Futuristic Abaya options.

3. Conclusion

Futuristic Abaya trends may include the types of fabrics, colors, designs, and silhouettes that reflects movement, audacity, and speed. Depiction of moons, stars, silver, gold / glitter along with geometry and quilting in Abayas could be features of futuristic designs. Elizabeth cline, (2012). The powerful forces shaping the future of the modest fashion amongst others are going to be the liberalization of equality for women, gender roles, empowerment of the girl child by providing opportunities, education- the key to nation building and sustainability- a demand on the global citizen that cannot be undermined or ignored. All of these are currently working on the realm of clothing and costume! Time will tell how the future will unfold. All of us remain curious and watchful.

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