Kurdish Ethnicity, Conspicuous consumption, and Kurdish Cultural Apparel consumption in Iraq

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Abstract

The main objective of the study is to examine the impact of Kurdish ethnicity on the Kurdish Cultural Apparel consumption in Iraq. Ethnic identification is the common identity of a group of people based on their shared history and heritage as well as their understanding of differentiating markers such as nation, religion, and language. In addition to that the multidimensional construct of Conspicuous consumption. Statistical software programs SPSS and PLS were used to analyze the findings of this investigation. A self-administered questionnaire was used by the researcher to collect data. Respondents to this survey were citizens of Iraq's Kurdish area who purchased clothing from Kurdish businesses and self-identified as clients of these companies. The researcher chose to gather data from 500 pupils and randomly picked them. The researcher received just 272 replies from the 500 participants in the study. The study's findings have supported the predicted outcomes. All hypotheses are accepted except for Kurdish Ethnic Identity (KEI) -> Status (ST) -> Consumption of Cultural Apparel. A significant yet undiscovered aspect of consumer marketing has been uncovered by the research. The study's conclusions will be useful for policymakers. Observing Kurdish fashion textiles being sold in the markets of al-Sulaymaniyah was associated with a feeling of achievement and happiness, according to the study's results.

Keywords: *Kurdish Ethnicity, Conspicuous consumption, Cultural Apparel, Kurd, Iraq*

1.0. Background

Kurds comprise between 15 and 20 percent of Iraq's population, making them the country's biggest ethnic group, according to the CIA World Factbook. The government of Iraq recognises Kurdish as an official language. Throughout their entire history, the Iraqi Kurds have had difficulty adjusting to a variety of administrative structures. Originally, it was anticipated that the Treaty of Sèvres would provide the Iraqi Kurds complete independence; nevertheless, their political history has been turbulent in recent years. After Saddam Hussein's demise in 2003, Iraqi Kurds, who are currently governed by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), find themselves at a crossroads in the political trajectory of Iraqi Kurdistan. Kurdish variety and factions, Kurdish ties to the United Nations, Iraq's central government, and neighboring states, prior political agreements, contested territory, and Kurdish nationalism all play a part in shaping their fate.

Cislaghi and Heise (2020) defines an ethnic group as a group of people who share normative traits within a wider population and interact with people from other groups within the social

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system. In other words, members of an ethnic group share characteristics and attributes. "Ethnic identification" is defined by Rodriguez and Blaney as "the process through which a person actively seeks and maintains a sense of belonging and pride in his or her own ethnic group" (2021). Similar to how I have described ethnic identification, Gale, Yogeeswaran, and Verkuyten (2021) defined it as "one's self-perceived categorisation that is emotionally tied to one's ethnic history". According to a second definition, ethnic identity is "a significant aspect of a person's social identity and a composite of subjective feelings, attitudes, knowledge, and behaviours concerning a person's ethnicity" (Atatoa Carr et al., 2022). Accepting multiculturalism and cultural variety does not contradict the preservation of one's ethnic or cultural identity (Yogeeswaran, Gale, & Verkuyten, 2021). Several subcultures within a dominant culture assimilate into the mainstream culture, according to the notion of multiculturalism. Because they are not completely assimilate able into the mainstream culture, subcultures can maintain their ethnic cultural traditions while fulfilling a functional role within it (Erbaşii, 2019).

Researchers in the United States and Canada who conducted intergenerational research with members of different ethnic groups concluded that, despite acculturation, a certain degree of loyalty to the non-dominant culture was maintained across multiple generations. Although it was inevitable that a portion of a person's original ethnic identification would be lost via the process of acculturation, the degree of ethnic connection did not decline linearly between generations (Tahu Janakievska, 2022). Expressions of ethnic identification include sticking to traditional practices, participating in cultural events and gatherings, talking in the original language, and engaging in religious activities, among others. It also manifests itself in the cohesiveness of groups, such as families, social ties, and the communal lifestyle of neighbourhoods (Miao, Wu, & Sun, 2019). People with a strong connection to their culture are more likely to have strong ethnic attachments and participate in practises and activities that are centred on their ethnicity (Feliciano & Rumbaut, 2018). Researchers have amassed a great deal of evidence suggesting that ethnicity has a big effect on consumer attitudes and behaviours from previous studies (Abdullah et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2022; Sun et al., 2022). However, the great majority of studies on ethnic consumers neglected the fact that the extent to which individuals within a culture identify with and belong to their ethnic group varies from individual to individual. Another individual within the same ethnic group may have a strong sense of connection to his or her ethnic culture (Bunce et al., 2021).

In the marketing literature, marketers have given a substantial amount of attention to the impact of cultural values on customer behaviour (Ali & Anwar, 2021). In recent years, culture's importance has grown due to multinational corporations' takeover of global market segments. The term "culture" refers to "learned and shared symbols, ideas, attitudes, and information" in addition to "learned and shared behaviours" (Shavitt & Barnes, 2020). Members of a culture tend to develop similar Behavioural patterns, which shape and affect them in several parts of their lives (Tamariz, 2019). Culturally related patterns of behaviour shed information on the underlying values and ideals held by the individuals of a culture (Pishghadam, Ebrahimi, & Derakhshan, 2020). Ethnic identity is one of the ways in which such shared cultural practises and ideals reveal themselves. As a distinct kind of cultural expression, it has been observed that a person's ethnicity significantly influences their shopping preferences (Shakhbanova et al., 2018). According to the in-group bias theory (Brewer, 1979), members of a specific group are biassed to feel that their own group and its products are superior to those of other groups and their products (Skinner, Olson, &

Meltzoff, 2020). Despite the fact that this phenomenon can be linked to a variety of variables, the in-group bias argument is perhaps the most convincing explanation for why it happens. Because the members of the group have the same views and qualities, the homogeneity of the group encourages its members to strongly identify with and favor the group and its products. This is due to the fact that the members of the group have similar views and characteristics. It has been demonstrated that individuals from collectivist cultures, as opposed to individuals from individualist cultures, develop tighter relationships with members of their own group and make more distinctions between themselves and members of other groups (Huppert et al., 2019). In addition, the extent to which a group constitutes, may cause members of the group to identify with one another more strongly, and the degree to which they are cohesive within the group may increase significantly. The primary purpose of this research is to investigate the effect of Kurdish ethnicity on the consumption of Kurdish Cultural Apparel in Iraq. Moreover, the multifaceted structure of conspicuous consumption.

2.0. Conceptual Framework

Ethnic identification is the shared identity of a group of people that is based on their shared history, lineage, and knowledge of differentiating symbols like nationality, religion, and language. When we talk about an ethnic group, we mean that its members have a common identity (Appiah, 2020). Several studies that looked at how ethnic identity affects consumer behavior defined ethnic identity as the degree to which a person identifies with his or her ethnic group. These studies have shown that a person's ethnic background affects how they act as a consumer. Roth and Ivemark (2018) say that the degree to which a person identifies with a certain ethnic group is a reflection of how much they really like that ethnic group. Acculturation is similar, but it is different from the strength of ethnic identity in that it focuses more on adopting parts of the host or mainstream culture, while the strength of ethnic identity focuses more on keeping parts of the culture of origin (Garcia et al., 2020). This knowledge is what contributes to the formation of their ethnic identity. When we talk about a certain ethnic group, it is implicit that the people who belong to that group have a common racial or cultural identity (Bienen, 2019). Ethnic identification was defined in a number of studies that studied the link between ethnic identity and consumer behavior as the degree to which a person identifies with his or her ethnic group. The results of this research show that a person's ethnic background has an effect on the purchasing decisions they make. According to Hjerm et al. (2020) research, the degree to which a person identifies with a certain ethnic group is a good indicator of how much they really appreciate that ethnic community. Acculturation is akin to but different from ethnic identification in that it places a greater emphasis on assimilating aspects of the dominant or host culture, while ethnic identification places a greater emphasis on clinging to traditional aspects of one's own culture (Kizgin et al., 2020).

There haven't been many studies in the marketing literature, but that doesn't mean there haven't been any at all. Some studies have been done on ethnic identity and how people from different cultures buy things, but not nearly enough to show marketers what they could learn from such research. For example, research has been done on how Chinese people in Canada use ethnic products (Jenkins et al., 2021), how Asian Americans in Hawaii and Chinese (Shimkhada, Scheitler, & Ponce, 2021) and Japanese Americans in the U.S. (Chan, 2019) use ethnic clothing, how Italians and Lebanese in Canada (Yousef et al., 2021) and Lebanese in Quebec (Le Gall & Comtois-Garcia, 2022) use food (Rodriguez & Blaney, 2021). Early immigrants to the U.S. thought it was important to assimilate into the country's dominant

culture in order to be successful. Because of this, at least some of this phenomenon may be traced back to those early immigrants (Atatoa Carr et al., 2022). Because of how well the information was taken in, there was no longer a need for this study. On the other hand, despite the influence of the mainstream culture, a large number of new immigrants work hard to keep their cultural identities (Ward et al., 2018). There is no doubt that the demographics of new immigrants have also played a role in this. Because most of the early immigrants were European, they were easier to integrate than today's immigrants, who are mostly Asian or Hispanic (Ogden, Ogden, & Schau, 2004). Still, the fact that marketing literature on this subject is still young has had an extra effect. Because of this, the idea of ethnic identity is not well defined (Brisset, Gill, & Gannon, 2021). The article says that this difference in language is especially troublesome because it shows that people have different ideas about what ethnicity is. Most of the first studies on ethnicity used an etic method, in which the researchers drew conclusions about the ethnic backgrounds of the people who took part based on things like their last names or the languages they spoke at home (Joannides De Lautour, Hoque, & Wickramasinghe, 2021). It claims that when people originate from the same ethnic background, have the same history or lineage, and speak the same language, it is only normal for them to act differently from members of other groups. This is the foundational idea that underpins the concept of objective ethnicity (Butcher & Gonzalez, 2020). Despite the fact that these processes are objective, they often end up producing inaccurate classifications. It is quite unusual for people with Irish or Italian surnames to have little or no connection to their past in the United States. This is especially true for those who are the second or third generation of immigrants from their respective countries. This is particularly true for people whose parents or grandparents came to the United States from another country. This suggests that there is not yet a well-established method for taking an impartial approach to analyzing ethnic identity. However, there are some scholars who investigate ethnic identity from a viewpoint that is more subjective. These studies suggest that "ethnic self-identification more accurately reflects how people feel about how they have personally experienced their own cultural experiences" (Cerchiaro, 2021).

Hamer et al. (2020) state similarly that "ethnic identity is distinct from ethnic origin and other objective but imprecise criteria such as race and birthplace." In other words, ethnic identity is when a person's ethnicity is an integral component of their sense of self, while ethnic origin is their lineage. In this approach, a person's ethnic identity is built on his or her sense of belonging to a certain group. Under this pretense, a person who does not often adhere to his or her culture's standards might nonetheless have a strong feeling of ethnic allegiance. This is known as ethnic symbolism or ethnic loyalty. Even if a person does not adhere to their cultural beliefs, they may still have a strong sense of loyalty to their ethnic community (Elk et al., 2020). Among the researchers who support the subjective viewpoint are Cooley and Brice. They discovered that a person's subjective ethnic identification, or the degree to which he or she identifies with his or her ethnic group. This concept asserts that ethnicity is not just determined on an individual basis but also varies based on factors such as whether a person is among members of their own group or members of a different group.

Our study is among the ground-breaking study found that participants of Asian, Hispanic, and Anglo American origin who were surrounded by people of diverse nationalities, such as during a business lunch, decided not to consume cuisine that was deemed to be culturally appropriate. This was found to be the case even when the participants were given the option to consume the food. "Social science research," they continue, "supports the concept that

conditions impact the consequences of ethnicity on behavior." This perspective considers ethnicity as fluid and changing, not as a social attribute that is always expressed in the same manner, which is contrary to the common belief that ethnicity is a stable social feature that is always manifested in the same fashion (Morning & Maneri, 2022). "Theory supports the concept that an individual's cultural identity is not fixed but rather dynamic, In fact, this illustrates that even people with strong ethnic identities are capable of modifying their behavior in response to the effects that are caused by their surroundings. Due to the fact that it takes into account the subject as well as the environment, this methodology has the greatest potential to duplicate the subject's behavior.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework
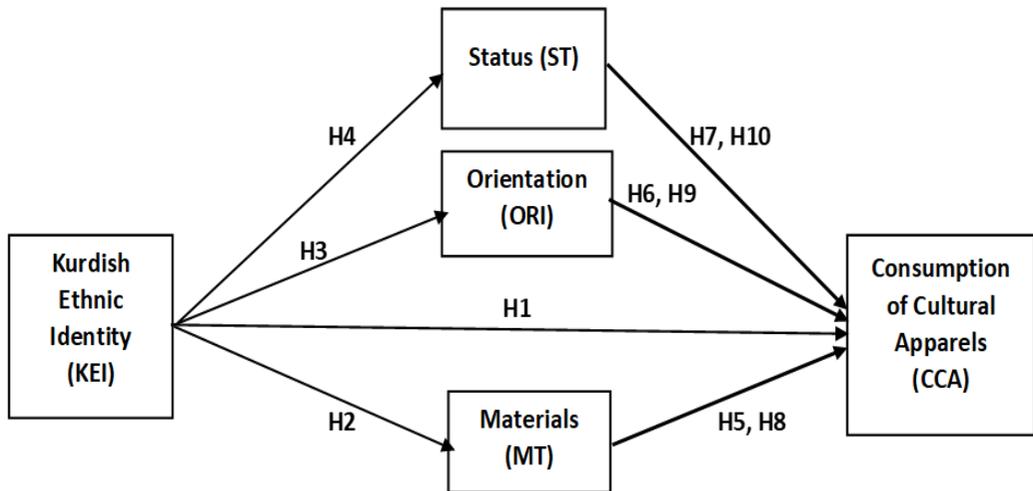
According to Veresiu and Giesler (2018) definition of ethnic clothing as "ensembles and body modifications that capture the history of a group's members, the pieces of tradition that are worn and shown to represent cultural heritage," ethnic clothing is "worn and shown to represent cultural heritage." They claim that people in one group wear ethnic clothes to demonstrate that they belong to that group and that it is a means for individuals in that group to distinguish themselves from people in other groups who do not wear the same attire. According to the findings of the study, one may demonstrate their ethnic identity to others by their choice of dress, particularly when they are in the presence of members of different groups. There have only been a few studies (Atatoa Carr et al., 2022; Butcher & Gonzalez, 2020) that have investigated the correlation between how individuals feel about their own ethnicity and how they feel about the clothes of other cultures (Almalki et al., 2019). This definition was based on the findings of the study conducted by Forney and Rabolt (1986). They determined how it would be utilized by considering where, when, and why the participants wore their ethnic clothing, as well as whether or not the participants' clothing displayed ethnic pride. According to the findings of this research, those who performed well on a test of ethnic identification also reported having a stronger connection to their ethnic heritage and wearing apparel reflective of that heritage on a more regular basis.

It has been argued traditional ethnic clothing, are important ways for a person to show how they feel about a certain ethnic group or how they feel about being part of that

group. Using Norwegian-Americans as a sample group, the researchers found a strong link between owning ethnic clothing and following ethnic traditions. People who took part in Norwegian ethnic traditions had more traditional clothing than people who didn't. Jacobsen and Gates came to the conclusion that the clothes that Norwegian-Americans owned and wore showed that they were Norwegian. Almalki et al. (2019) study of Chinese and Japanese Americans found that people with strong ethnic identification wore traditional ethnic clothing more often than those with weak ethnic identification. We thought that a person's level of ethnic identification would be linked to his or her attitude (e.g., wanting to wear ethnic clothing to show pride in their ethnic history) and behavior (e.g., owning ethnic-inspired clothing) toward such clothing. This study was different from others because it looked at modern clothes with ethnic influences instead of traditional ethnic clothes.

Yousef et al. (2021) conducted research on Asian American consumers' perspectives towards wearing and owning ethnic fashion. He defined ethnic clothing as contemporary items that are influenced by ethnic customs. The findings of this research were analyzed. They found that customers who indicated a higher level of ethnic identification also owned more items of contemporary clothing with an ethnic theme. This is in line with the findings of Forney and Rabolt (1986), who found that customers who owned more items of contemporary clothing with an ethnic theme indicated a higher level of ethnic identification. Due to the association between ethnicity and expenditure, the current study makes the assumption that Arab Americans living in the United States would purchase a greater amount of food, clothes, and entertainment originating from the Middle East. It is also expected that the extent to which a person identifies with their racial or ethnic group will have a direct correlation with the amount of money that they spend on things that are connected with that group. The importance of local culture will be highest for categories that, owing to their culturally-bound qualities, are more resistant to the impacts of outsiders. Examples of such categories include regional cuisines and clothing, as has been shown on several occasions. The influence of such designations is extremely likely to increase among Arab-Americans. Saeb (2021) Aspects of the Arab American culture that have always been portrayed include things like the cuisine, the importance of family values, and religion. The cuisine of the area is where one can most clearly see the influence of Arab culture. Because food plays such an important role in Lebanese culture, "the Lebanese see cooking as an art to be handed down from generation to generation, even when living abroad," which demonstrates how important food is to the culture of Lebanon. Based on the preceding discussion the following hypothesis was developed for this study:

H1: *Kurdish Ethnic Identity has signficnat impact on the consumption of Kurdish cultural apparel.*

According to this model, the term "ethnic identity" refers to "the retention or failure to shed components of an individual's culture of origin," which might be shown by an individual's attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors. Many studies have found a link between a person's level of ethnic identification and their purchasing habits (Gholamian, Maleki, & Rezaii, 2021). Since the beginning of human civilization, people have been concerned with displaying their wealth through what is known as "conspicuous consumption." On the other hand, it is more widespread in nations that emphasize consumer culture. There is a mountain of data to suggest that a significant number of people and organizations spend more money than is required (Unal, 2022). Veblen claimed in 1899 that the showy

consumer wished to win the respect of others by the display of his wealth in order to maintain or improve his social status. He did this by trying to impress others with his wealth. In Karakoç and Sarıgil (2020) put forward the hypothesis that showy spending is mostly about showing off one's riches. A model that includes "Kurdish identification and attachment" and "conspicuous consumption" 1. The arrow in this model illustrates how the various components are thought to interact with one another. The concept is based on the assumption that causes can only ever work in one direction. The term "showy consumption" serves as the dependent variable, while "Kurdish identity and attachment" serves as the independent variable. The level of conspicuous spending may be measured in a number of different ways, including by status, ostentation, and materialism. The writings of Moftizadeh, Zagefka, and Barn (2022) were the first to investigate how people and their consumption contribute to societal advancement. The practice of buying expensive or extravagant products only for the purpose of showing them off is known as conspicuous consumption (Unal, 2022). At the present time, researchers in the fields of sociology, economics, psychology, and biology are of the same opinion. A technique for garnering the respect or admiration of one's contemporaries is to engage in displays of conspicuous expenditure (Gholamian et al., 2021). Rich people drink it not just because they can purchase it with ease but also because poor people want to give off the appearance that they are affluent. It is possible that the wasteful spending would lower the amount of money available for the growth of human capital (Hamer et al., 2020). It's possible that encouraging people to spend less money on flashy products and care less about their status will have positive effects on society as a whole. People could purchase expensive and noticeable objects in order to flaunt their increased riches. [Citation needed] People show off their social position by flaunting expensive possessions such as luxury vehicles, fancy apparel, and watches, among other things. There is evidence to suggest that people's social position has an effect on the decisions that they make (Elk et al., 2020). In the theoretical models, the relevance of status products for signaling and positioning issues has been taken into consideration. Individuals might be motivated to care about their social standing by a variety of different circumstances. Forney and Rabolt (1986) state that our demands for status could be hardwired into our brains or the product of natural selection. Another possibility is that we care about status because it enables us to get benefits.

Consumption was first studied to establish social status, it is an idea served as the impetus for the development of this field of research (2022). An example of a showy spending is the purchase of products that are obviously expensive. This concept is now widely accepted in a number of academic fields, including sociology, economics, psychology, and biology, among others. Spending above one's means is a strategy for drawing attention to oneself and impressing others (Veresiu & Giesler, 2018). Therefore, not only the affluent, who are able to purchase it, but even the poor, who wish to seem wealthy, eat it. If money were taken away from areas of spending that were not vital, it may be detrimental to the development of human capital (Cislaghi & Heise, 2020). It is possible that society would be better off if resources were redirected away from extravagant spending displays and the chase of superficial social status symbols. This is a possibility. Those who want to demonstrate their better social position may employ products that are both showy and costly. It is easy to discern a person's social standing by looking at the kind of automobile they drive, the labels that they wear, the cost of their accessories, and the wristwatch that they wear. According

to the results, the social standing of a person within their circle of peers has an effect on the decisions that they make (Gale et al., 2021). Several theoretical models have investigated the significance of status goods in signaling, establishing social status, Gale et al. (2021) were among few reseaechers who examined the importance of status goods in signaling. According to a number of different sources, this is the case. According to research done by Yogeeswaran et al. (2021). There are a variety of factors that might give birth to someone becoming concerned about their place in society. It's possible that some individuals are born with an innate inclination for higher social status, but it's also possible that this tendency may be instilled in people via the study of psychology (Erbaşii, 2019). On the other hand, these advantages may be accompanied by new concerns about one's place in society. Based on the preceding discussion the following hypothesis was developed for this study:

H2: *Kurdish Ethnic Identity has signficnat impact on the material of Kurdish cultural apparel.*
H3: *Kurdish Ethnic Identity has signficnat impact on the orientation of Kurdish cultural apparel.*
H4: *Kurdish Ethnic Identity has signficnat impact on the status of Kurdish cultural apparel.*
H5: *Material of Kurdish cultural apparel has signficnat impact on the consumption of Kurdish cultural apparel.*
H6: *Orientation of Kurdish cultural apparel has signficnat impact on the consumption of Kurdish cultural apparel.*
H7: *Status of Kurdish cultural apparel has signficnat impact on the consumption of Kurdish cultural apparel.*
H8: *Material of Kurdish cultural apparel mediates the relationship between the material of Kurdish cultural apparel and consumption of Kurdish cultural apparel.*
H9: *Orientation of Kurdish cultural apparel mediates the relationship between the material of Kurdish cultural apparel and consumption of Kurdish cultural apparel.*
H10: *Status of Kurdish cultural apparel mediates the relationship between the material of Kurdish cultural apparel and consumption of Kurdish cultural apparel.*

3.0. Methodology and Findings

Consumers from the Iraqi Kurdish community were the population of the study. A technique known as convenience sampling was used to obtain data from the population that was the focus of the investigation. The collection of data using this method is economical both in terms of money and in terms of time. The information was gathered via a quantitative research strategy and a methodology based on surveys. As part of a study, we employed questions that respondents were free to administer to themselves. Because the researcher can explain the ideas of the study to the respondent, the strategy of using a questionnaire that the respondent self-administers is particularly successful. As a direct result of this, quantitative research methods and survey questionnaires were used in the course of this investigation.

3.1. Questionnaire designing

The questionnaire is divided into two distinct sections. The demographic information of the respondents is requested in the first portion of the questionnaire. This information may include age, gender, and other details. The second part of the investigation is a set of scale objects that will be used to measure the variables. A Likert scale with five points was used to evaluate each item that comprised the scale. The items on the scale that were used to evaluate the variables were developed from research that had been done in the past.

3.2.   Procedure:

Researcher used self-administrative questionnaire method was applied to collect the data. Respondents to this survey were people living in the Kurdish area of Iraq who purchased clothing from Kurdish companies and considered themselves to be consumers of such brands. The researcher decided to gather data from 500 different pupils and chose them at random from marketplaces of al-Sulaymaniyah. The researcher only collected 272 replies from the total of 500 people that participated in the survey.

3.3.   Analysis Technique

The results of this study were evaluated by utilizing the statistical software packages SPSS and PLS. The fundamental demographic analysis of the study was performed using SPSS, and then the measurement model and structural model were analyzed with PLS. Both programs were used interchangeably throughout the process. The measurement model was studied to establish the reliability and validity of the constructs, and the structural model was used to investigate the supposed connection between the variables.

### 3.4.   Respondents Demographics

Table 1: Respondents Profile

		(N=282)	
Demographic Variables	**Categories**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Age	15-25	158	56
	26-35	73	26
	Above 35	51	18
Daily Income Rate	Below USD$2	122	43.26
	Above USD$2	160	56.73
Gender	Male	136	48.23
	Female	146	51.77
Occupation	Employed	104	36.88
	Unemployed	178	63.21

Iraqi Kurdish participated in this research as respondents. The demographic study concluded that there were 48.23% male respondents and 51.77 % female pupils. 56% of respondents were between the ages of 15 and 25, while 26% were between 26 and 35. The remaining 18% of respondents were older than 35 years of age.

4.0.   Results

Researchers determined the convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability of the components by using Smart-PLS to conduct the evaluations. This allowed them to identify the components' respective convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability. The values of loading, Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability (CR) were used in the evaluation of convergent validity, and the average variance extracted (AVE) was used in the examination of convergent validity (Hair Jr et al., 2014). It is required that the loading value threshold be set at 0.50, the CR value be set at 0.70, and the AVE be set at 0.50. (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Figure 2, Tables 2 and 3, and Table 4 illustrate the results that were obtained by using the measurement model.

Figure 1: Measurement Model
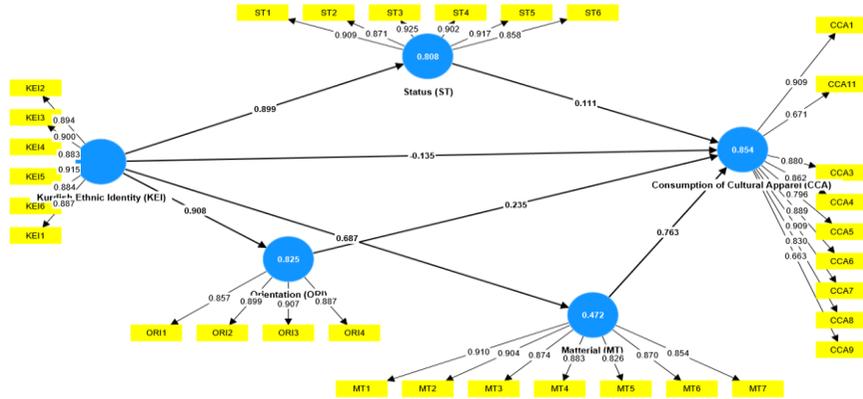
The outer loading value of all items is above the threshold level of 0.6. The items with the loading greater than 0.6 are deleted from the model (see Table 2).

Table 2: Item Loading's

	Consumption of Cultural Apparel (CCA)	Kurdish Ethnic Identity (KEI)	Material (MT)	Orientation (ORI)	Status (ST)
CCA1	0.909				
CCA11	0.671				
CCA3	0.880				
CCA4	0.862				
CCA5	0.796				
CCA6	0.889				
CCA7	0.909				
CCA8	0.830				
CCA9	0.663				
KEI1		0.887			
KEI2		0.894			
KEI3		0.900			
KEI4		0.883			
KEI5		0.915			
KEI6		0.884			
MT1			0.910		
MT2			0.904		
MT3			0.874		
MT4			0.883		
MT5			0.826		
MT6			0.870		
MT7			0.854		
ORI1				0.857	
ORI2				0.899	
ORI3				0.907	
ORI4				0.887	
ST1					0.909
ST2					0.871
ST3					0.925
ST4					0.902
ST5					0.917
ST6					0.858

Table 3: Reliability

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Consumption of Cultural Apparel (CCA)	0.941	0.950	0.951	0.686
Kurdish Ethnic Identity (KEI)	0.950	0.950	0.960	0.799
Matterial (MT)	0.949	0.949	0.958	0.765
Orientation (ORI)	0.910	0.911	0.937	0.788
Status (ST)	0.952	0.952	0.961	0.805

The internal consistency reliability (also known as construct reliability), discriminant validity, and convergent validity for each latent concept were assessed in order to assess the measurement model. In this line of study, the PLS approach was used to establish the dependability of individual items as well as other measurement model evaluations. Since all of the loadings, alpha CR, and AVE values fulfill the standards, Tables 3 and 4 illustrate that the current study satisfies the criteria for reliability and convergence validity. These tables show that the research satisfies the criteria for both reliability and convergence validity.

Table 4: Discriminant Validity

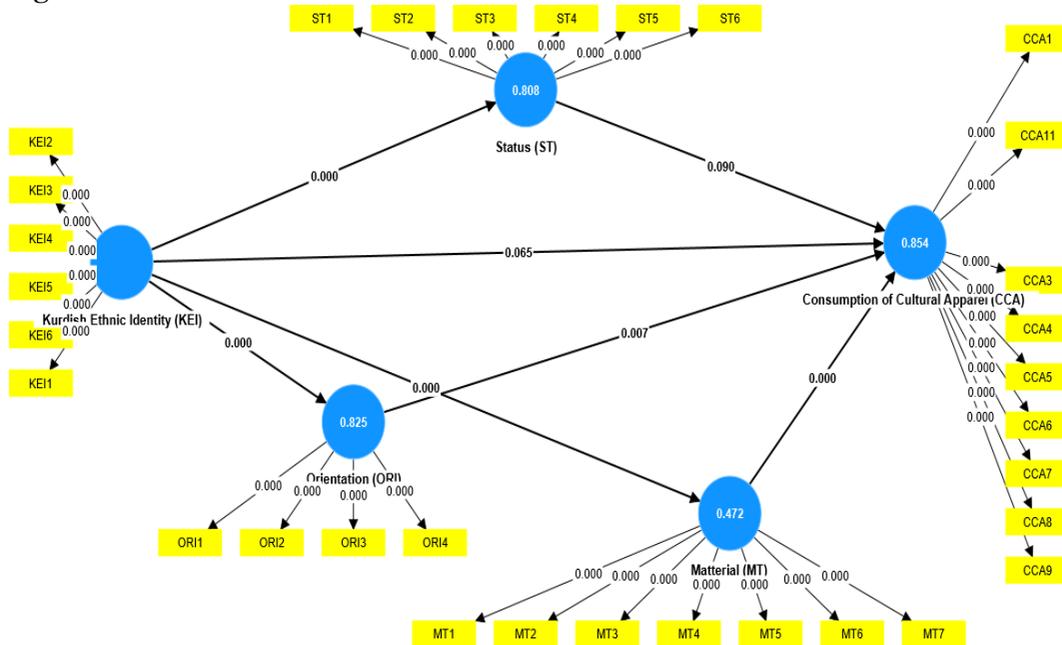|	Consumption of Cultural Apparel (CCA)	Kurdish Ethnic Identity (KEI)	Matterial (MT)	Orientation (ORI)	Status (ST)
Consumption of Cultural Apparel (CCA)	0.828				
Kurdish Ethnic Identity (KEI)	0.703	0.894			
Matterial (MT)	0.708	0.787	0.875		
Orientation (ORI)	0.747	0.708	0.697	0.888	
Status (ST)	0.714	0.799	0.665	0.719	0.897

The R Squared statistic is used to examine the Behavioural differences that might result from endogenous vs external effects (s). Falk and Miller (1992) suggest that R2 values should be equal to or greater than 0.10 when determining whether or not an endogenous construct's variance explanation is adequate. According to the findings of Cohen's research, the R2 values for endogenous latent variables may be categorized as either 0.26 (considerable), 0.13 (moderate), or 0.02. (1988) (weak). The r-square value of our model is shown in table 5 below.

Table 5: R-Sqaure

	R-square
Consumption of Cultural Apparel (CCA)	0.854
Matterial (MT)	0.472
Orientation (ORI)	0.825
Status (ST)	0.808

This section provides an explanation of the structural equation model that was applied to the data in the subsequent analysis. For the purpose of this study's model analysis, the PLS-SEM approach was used. The bootstrapping method was used in order to test whether or not the direct or indirect hypotheses were correct. The results are summarized in the table which can be seen below (figure 3).

Figure 3: Structural Model

The results of the study are shown in the table 6 below. The results shown in table indicate that the all hypothesis except Status (ST) -> Consumption of Cultural Apparel (CCA)

Table 6: Direct Relationship

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
Kurdish Ethnic Identity (KEI) -> Consumption of Cultural Apparel (CCA)	0.703	0.704	0.060	11.693	0.000
Kurdish Ethnic Identity (KEI) -> Matterial (MT)	0.687	0.688	0.069	9.918	0.000
Kurdish Ethnic Identity (KEI) -> Orientation (ORI)	0.908	0.908	0.017	54.215	0.000
Kurdish Ethnic Identity (KEI) -> Status (ST)	0.899	0.899	0.019	46.763	0.000
Matterial (MT) -> Consumption of Cultural Apparel (CCA)	0.763	0.757	0.053	14.374	0.000
Orientation (ORI) -> Consumption of Cultural Apparel (CCA)	0.235	0.236	0.096	2.458	0.007
Status (ST) -> Consumption of Cultural Apparel (CCA)	0.111	0.116	0.083	1.342	0.090

The results of mediation are explained in the table 7. All hypothesis except Kurdish Ethnic Identity (KEI) -> Status (ST) -> Consumption of Cultural Apparel are accepted significantly.

Table 7: Mediation Results

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
Kurdish Ethnic Identity (KEI) -> Status (ST) -> Consumption of Cultural Apparel (CCA)	0.100	0.104	0.075	1.331	0.092
Kurdish Ethnic Identity (KEI) -> Matterial (MT) -> Consumption of Cultural Apparel (CCA)	0.524	0.519	0.042	12.353	0.000
Kurdish Ethnic Identity (KEI) -> Orientation (ORI) -> Consumption of Cultural Apparel (CCA)	0.214	0.214	0.087	2.460	0.007

5.0.   Discussion

The results of the study have provided support to the previous findings and hypothesized results. The status of the ethnic group within the greater society is the ultimate factor to study in order to have an understanding of the significance and influence of ethnicity. The results also highlight that despite being a separate minority in Iraq, the Iraqi Kurds have a deep bond with one another due to their shared history, comparable persecution, and overall battle for recognition within the country. In a similar vein, it is natural to argue that ethnic identification has a considerable influence not only on purchasing behaviours but also on the socialization of individuals. For many of the same reasons, it is probable that the strength of ethnic identification also impacts the inclination of individuals to socialize with others of a similar ethnic origin. In-group individuals are viewed as superior to out-group members because there are fewer obstacles to contact and there is less fear of discrimination or rejection. If there is a positive association between the strength of ethnic identification and the consumption of culture-specific items, then it is likely that ethnic identity also impacts individuals' tendencies to consume such products. Therefore, increasing cultural consumption should be the result of improved socialization. Academic research undertaken on the topic provides substantial evidence for the notion that situational variables, such as the ethnic diversity of a particular consumption setting, can amplify and reinforce ethnic norms. Persons with comparable characteristics have greater social impact than those with dissimilar characteristics, according to this line of thought, which is consistent with previous findings on the social comparison theory. Consequently, spending time with members of one's own ethnic group leads to a larger consumption of things associated with that culture than does spending time with individuals from a range of ethnic groups. In addition, it is projected that this consumption will exceed that of ethnic identity alone. This is because it is hypothesized that the intensity of ethnic identification positively affects consumption of culture-specific commodities and the extent to which an individual socializes with people of the same ethnic background.

Conspicuous consumerism, which Veblen so graphically characterized, has gotten very little attention ever since the publication of his Theory of the Leisure Class at the turn of the century. However, concerns about one's status and prestige continue to play a significant role in shaping preferences for a great number of things that may appear to be acquired for their immediate utility but in reality, serve only as a method of demonstrating affluence and purchasing power. This is the case even though these things may appear to have been acquired for their immediate utility. The pleasure derived from a purchase by a purely

conspicuous consumer is not dependent on the item's functionality but rather on the audience's response to the purchaser's capacity to buy the object for the sole purpose of "consumption." As a consequence, the only factor that is important to him or her is the price of the item being purchased, often known as the "cost of the transaction."

6.0.   Implications

The study has highlighted an important yet an unexplored area of consumer marketing. The findings of the study will be helpful for policymakers. The findings of the study implied that the sense of accomplishment and contentment attained through the observation of Kurdish fashion textiles being sold in the marketplaces of al-Sulaymaniyah. It brings together people of all of the many different ethnicities and communities that are present within this historically significant area. The uniqueness, diversity, and singularity of Kurdish clothing may be traced back to the region's mountainous terrain and its breathtaking natural beauty. Not only is the cost of production high due to the extensive range of components and pieces of machinery that are required, but moreover, the components themselves need to be manufactured.

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