

ATTIRED AT HOME, DISGUISED IN THE WORLD: DRESS CHOICES OF
SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN IN NORTH-CENTRAL WEST VIRGINIA

A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to locate the identity negotiations of a group of South Asian women living in the United States within the daily choices of their dress. The population consists of ten women, eight Indian and two Pakistani, ages 43 – 65, who live in the North-Central region of West Virginia. These subjects are part of the post-1965 wave of South Asians immigrants to the United States; all of whom came between 1974 and 1992. The wave of South Asians who migrated to the U.S. after the Johnson Administration relaxed the immigration and naturalization policies has received scholarly scrutiny from the social sciences as to how this “model minority” has assimilated into the fabric of America. The extensive body of literature on the South Asian diaspora focuses on the individual and communal negotiations of the immigrants’ identities. The research questions which frame this study are: How have these Indian and Pakistani women of this post-1965 generation of immigrants adapted their dress to America and West Virginia? Who are these women when they make dress choices? This research was inspired by fictional immigrant characters of diasporic literature who aspire to “fit in” to new settings where the climate and culture are new but who are mostly stuck in traditional behavior and dress. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in individual and group settings to uncover how these women’s relationships to their clothing inform their adaptive relationship with American culture and their own self-identification. The concepts of spatial-dress divisions, emplacement, cross-dressing performance and appearance management were used to analyze the interviews in three collective case studies. Spatial-dress divisions reach as far back as the Vijayanagara Empire in the subcontinent and these

public/private divisions of dress carry through to modern day South Asia. The spatial-dress choices of the ten participants were examined in the diasporic context to uncover how they have altered to include a tertiary space defined in this study as the “semi-private” space. This third space is a community specific space where a collective South Asian identity is performed through nostalgic modesty and dress. Sensory culture theory includes a wide variety of concepts to interpret people and spaces from a sensed perspective. From this body of theory, emplacement was chosen to understand the subjects’ dress choices beyond an embodied perspective and in a mind-body-environment perspective. The subjects of this study maintain Western and South Asian wardrobes and fluidly move between them based on environmental and occasional contexts. Marjorie Garber’s work on cross-dressing performance and Susan Kaiser’s social-psychological work on appearance management are brought together in the third case study to explore how identity is negotiated by divisions and combinations of South Asian and Western. The one constant which exists with all the subjects is their sense of modesty learned from their upbringings in India and Pakistan. The result is a cross-dressed experience where Western dress and South Asian modesty blend into a diasporic language of dressing. This research concluded that the participants in this study renegotiated their dress choices through the processes of cross-dressing and appearance management in order to redefine traditional spatial-dress divisions in the American context.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Mario J. Roman is a native of Fairmont, West Virginia and an alumnus of Cornell University. He completed his Bachelors of Science in 2000 from the then Department of Textiles and Apparel. After Cornell, Mario moved to Brooklyn, New York and worked in the fashion industry in fabric research and development focusing on print and pattern design. He worked for Phoenix Hand Embroidery, Ann Taylor LOFT and Dana Buchman over the course of seven years. As a graduate student, Mario sought engagement in academia beyond his departmental walls. A voting member of the Graduate & Professional Student Assembly (GPSA), Mario represented his field and Cornell Masters students as Masters-At-Large. He served on the GPSA subcommittee, Student Advocacy, advocating for better mental health care for the graduate and professional student population. A member of the *Embodied Modernities* reading group, he and six other students from Comparative Literature and History of Art received a grant from the Institute of Comparative Modernities to explore issues of race, identity and representation through material and sensory readings. Mario plans to pursue doctoral studies in the future exploring the Indian fashion industry, the burgeoning men's luxury market in South Asia, and its visual representation in national and global media.

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my great-grandmother, Victoria Oliverio, whose crocheting hands and hydrangea roots left Calabria for the mountains of West Virginia to inhabit our state motto, *Montani Semper Liberi*,
Mountaineers Are Always Free.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study is an examination of the dress of a particular population that seeks to understand their personal and communal dress adaptations within the daily lives of a specific group. I propose that these adaptations create a distinctive language of dress that varies within certain contexts that differ from simply choosing the principal dress practices of American culture.

This research focuses on a community of women and their dress choices as told through their remembered immigrant experiences. Eight Indian and two Pakistani immigrants participated in this project. Each subject came to the United States after changes were made to immigration and naturalization policies by the Johnson administration in 1965. These ten subjects; however, predate the 1990 Lottery system, which would usher in a separate and socio-economically distinct generation of South Asian immigrants. The research was situated in North-Central West Virginia, a seven county region within the state, of which the participants were spread across four counties. The region is mostly rural but includes small cities and towns. Dress and social science literature was skewed to urban and suburban populations; therefore, it was decided that an exploration of a non-urban context would contribute a new perspective.

My research was inspired by diasporic authors like Jhumpa Lahiri, who use dress as a tool to enhance understanding of the differences between mother-daughter, Indian-American, and the various kinds of Indian immigrants.

The following highlights the latter contrast between two immigrant women from Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth*, "Part Two: Hema & Kaushik".

That night, lying on the cot in my parents' room, wide awake though it was well past midnight, I heard my mother and father talking in the dark. ... My parents were at once critical of and intimidated by yours, perplexed by the ways in which they had changed. Bombay had made them more American than Cambridge had, my mother said, something she hadn't anticipated and didn't understand. There were remarks concerning your mother's short hair, her slacks, the Johnnie Walker she and your father continued to drink after the meal was finished, taking it with them from the dining room to the living room. ... She remarked that your mother had become "stylish," a pejorative term in her vocabulary, implying a self-indulgence that she shunned. (Lahiri 2008, 235-236)

These mothers represent two very different ideas of what it means to be an Indian immigrant. Kaushik's mother, Mrs. Chouduri, is the stylish transnational whose chic fashion came from the flashy streets of Mumbai. Hema's mother is an immigrant living in Cambridge, Massachusetts who has maintained traditional saris and behavior in her foreign home that keep her firmly in the role of the respectable Indian mother and wife. Hema never describes what her mother wears. Her clothes are only described when Mrs. Chouduri is forced to wear one of her brightly-colored nylon saris as she awaits her lost suitcase. Hema's mother's dress choices are rendered as embarrassments even in the re-telling of her memories. Instead she chooses to focus on the voguish ensembles of her friend's mother. Excerpts like the one above highlight the difference between two very different worlds, the modern Indian woman and the other, which is the focus of this research, the women of the South Asian diaspora.

Going back through her other works and the writings of other diasporic authors, I was struck by the collective characterization of South Asian mothers living in the North America as stalwarts of tradition. Memories of my childhood recalled a very different picture, mothers who wore Western dress more than

South Asian dress and balanced American birthday parties and swim meets with Indian dance performances and religious festivals. Additionally, immigrant mothers were often secondary in studies on dress and South-Asian identity, which frequently focused more on the American-born generation. I decided to interrogate the fictional woman against the remembered images of Indian and Pakistani mothers from my youth through their daily wardrobe decisions.

The following were the two research questions from which I began this project.

1. How have these Indian and Pakistani women of this post-1965 generation of immigrants adapted their dress to America and to West Virginia?
2. Who are these women when they make dress choices?

The first question seeks to understand how dress choices are negotiated in quotidian contexts. The second question strives to uncover how these choices affect the participants' sense of self. These questions were intended to focus on the topic of dress choices in a specific location and population. The observations drawn from these questions can contribute to further study which can expand these questions spatially, with additional variables and a larger, more diverse sample.

This thesis consists of a review of literature, explanation of the research design, profiles of each subject, case studies and research conclusions. The literature review selectively covers Indian and Pakistani dress as well as historical and contemporary notions of South Asian modesty. The theoretical concepts reviewed are spatial-dress divisions, emplacement, cross-dressing performance and appearance management. These provide a foundation for

understanding and interpreting this specific community and their dress choices in a contemporary context.

The research design covers the methods and procedures used to develop and frame the project. Semi-structured interviews for individuals and one group of ten women were used to gather information. Case studies were then developed from these interviews using three theoretical concepts to understand and interpret the dress choices of this particular population.

The profiles section introduces each subject. This chapter is useful in giving a more fully developed picture of each subject and their individual thoughts on topics discussed. The profiles also give better understanding of them for the case studies where the subjects and their responses are analyzed together.

There are three case studies which examine the dress choices of the ten subjects; they are public/private spatial analysis, emplacement theory and cross-dressing/appearance management examination. A spatial analysis was chosen because it is a concept which is used to understand how Indian society developed under colonial rule. Re-examining this idea in a modern context would be useful in uncovering whether these spatial divisions continue. Emplacement is the focus of the second case study; it is a concept from the field of sensory culture. During my second academic year, I participated in a graduate reading group that explored sensory culture literature. I found the combination of mind, body and environment examined together rather than as separate ideas intriguing and useful for exploring the dress of individuals who are as conscious of their environment as they are of their bodies and wardrobe decisions. The third case study examines the dress choices through the lens of cross-dressing and appearance management

theory. Marjorie Garber's work on cross-dressing looks at the idea discursively so that it can be applied to everyday spaces with everyday people instead of being confined to a specific community. Pairing this idea with appearance management is very useful in assessing who these women are in their dress choices in different settings.

The conclusion will bring together the case studies to look at the findings collectively to examine how this specific set of individuals chose to adapt after migrating across space and time. During the course of the interviews, the topic of identity became an increasing part of the discussions, and so this emerged as an important aspect of the study. As I listened to the subjects' explanations of identity, I also read a variety of literature that explained diasporic identities. After a review of the findings, the conclusion will argue against the limitations of hyphenated identities and transnationalism in search of a language which speaks to the everyday dress choices of the subjects of this study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of relevant writings and the ways in which they pertain to my research objectives. Section 2.2 provides a discussion of the terms *dress* and *fashion* as they are used throughout this thesis. Section 2.3 discusses the Indian and Pakistani dress mentioned during my subjects' interviews, as well as, a review of South Asian¹ modesty. The remaining three sections consider literature relevant to each of the case studies that will follow. Section 2.4 focuses on spatial-dress divisions of the Vijayanagara and colonial periods. Section 2.5 covers sensory culture literature focusing on the concept of emplacement. The final section reviews cross-dressing performance, focusing mostly on the work of Marjorie Garber, and Susan Kaiser's concept of appearance management.

2.2 Terminology: Dress Versus Fashion

Before beginning the literature review it is necessary to define the terms *dress* and *fashion*, which in everyday conversations are often used interchangeably, however, are two terms separated by nuance.

The work of anthropologists Joanne B. Eicher and Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins has provided commonly used definitions of dress and fashion for the field:

¹ The usage of the term "South Asian" in this thesis is derived from the U.S. State Department's definition of South Asia. The State Department defines South Asia as the countries of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

...dress of an individual is an assemblage of modifications of the body and/or supplements to the body. Dress, so defined, includes a long list of possible direct modifications of the body such as coiffed hair, colored skin, pierced ears, and scented breath, as well as an equally long list of garments, jewelry, accessories, and other categories of items added to the body as supplements (Eicher & Roach-Higgins 1992, 1).

Missing from the above definition of dress is an explanation of time. As Jean Hamilton explains, "Dress is present for all human groups though time and space and, therefore, exists at all levels of socio-cultural complexity" (Hamilton 1990). Dress therefore lacks spatial and temporal confinement, as it exists throughout these categories. A more recent definition of dress by Eicher, Evenson and Lutz accounts for the effects of human imagination, scientific ingenuity, and sensory perception,

We view *dress* as a product and as a process that distinguishes human beings from other animals. As a product, many items are involved in dress that are a result of human creativity and technology. As a process, dressing the body involves actions undertaken to modify and supplement the body in order to address the physical needs and to meet social and cultural expectations about how individuals should look. This process includes all five senses...regardless of the society and culture into which an individual is born (Eicher, Evenson & Lutz 2000, 4).

While the Eicher and Roach-Higgins definition limits dress to modifications and supplements to the body, the Eicher, Evenson and Lutz definition incorporates human creativity and the affect the five senses has on the dress experience. Both definitions by Eicher, Evenson and Lutz, and Hamilton account for dress as a phenomenon present in all cultures and societies. Only Hamilton attributes dress as a timeless experience. I believe it is necessary to keep all three of these definitions in mind when establishing dress because neither definition is complete.

In order to develop a contemporary definition of fashion, Eicher and Roach-Higgins clearly researched historical writings of fashion from Darwin to Young. In 1939 Herbert Blumer argued that fashion is a phenomenon not limited to dress but impacts the fine arts and hard sciences. Eicher and Roach-Higgins similarly define fashion discursively, beyond dress, but limit their scope to “cultural products”. Georg Simmel (1904) imposes the idea of cycles onto fashion. For Simmel’s classic definition, fashion occurs in a trickle-down cycle of imitation; imitations by lower classes to motivate the upper classes to redefine themselves, which repeats *ad infinitum*. Eicher and Roach-Higgins revise the trickle-down theory into cycle, which is not class – based but is bounded to particular groups or populations.

The term fashion lacks the precision...for it refers to many different kinds of material and non-material cultural products (e.g., houses, music, automobiles, scientific theories, philosophy, recreation). Further...it forces positive and negative value judgments on body modifications and supplements and their properties on the basis of their relative positions within a fashion cycle of introduction, mass acceptance, and obsolescence (Eicher & Roach-Higgins 1992, 3).

In contrast to dress, fashion is not limited to bodily modifications and supplements but extends to numerous cultural products. Fashion, unlike dress, possesses spatial temporal limitations. The cycle mentioned above of “introduction, mass acceptance and obsolescence” limits the fashion life of a product. A product’s fashion life expectancy is determined by a group who judge its length or breadth. All groups do not accept fashionable items as fashion at the same time. Fashion, therefore, is determined by space, time, and judgment. The value judgments coupled with mass acceptance indicates that a person or group chooses to apply positive or negative judgments to a

garment or accessory, thereby determining its fashion acceptance within a particular wardrobe or other cultural space.

2.3 South Asian Women's Dress and Concepts of Modesty

The following two sections provide an overview of South Asian women's dress and modesty. The first section on dress provides a discussion of two forms of dress, tailored and draped. The review is not an exhaustive discussion of all forms of South Asian dress but reviews the forms and garments mentioned by the Indian and Pakistani participants of this study. This section; therefore, is a guide to the dress of the particular group.

On the other hand, the section on modesty explains how modesty is a shared part of the broader South Asian dressed experience. While it relates mostly to the exposure and/or coverage of parts of the body, modesty also possesses a behavioral component. The earliest recorded document for women's modesty in South Asia, body coverage and behavioral aspects of modesty is discussed in the context of more recent practice and values. Modesty is a key component in later analysis because it is the element which can explain one's approach to dress choices.

2.3.1 Indian and Pakistani Women's Dress

Indian and Pakistani women's dress is divided into the categories of tailored, or mostly Muslim, and unseamed, or mostly Hindu. This division of dress remains today in the subcontinent; however, in India the divide between Muslim and Hindu and/or tailored and unseamed is breaking down. While the following is not meant to be an exhaustive review of Indian and Pakistani dress, it will cover the garments and ensembles that were mentioned by

subjects of this study. The review will highlight where the division between Muslim and Hindu dress for women is less clear.

Muslim women's dress typically consists of three garments which comprise the popular ensemble the *salwar kameez*: a *kameez* or tunic garment which extends to the knees, drawstring pants of various volume called *salwar* and a *dupatta* or shawl of varying sizes. Below are two examples of salwar kameez. The first salwar kameez is worn by a young woman from Kerala in South India (Figure 2.1). The second example shows colorful salwar kameez from the streets of New Delhi (Figure 2.2). The kameez can also be worn over tight-fitting pyjama style pants or *churidars* (Figure 2.3), which resemble gathered leggings below the knee.



Figure 2.1 Salwar Kameez worn in Kerala, India (Osella & Osella 2007)



Figure 2.2 Salwar Kameez worn in Bangalore, India (Rick Elkins 2008)



Figure 2.3 Churidars Detail (Rigv Collections 2010)

The last group of Muslim dress includes veiling garments like the *burqa*. The burqa is essentially a hooded robe, which obscures the shape of the woman's body and covers her face completely. Below are examples of a burqa worn in Afghanistan and Northern region of Pakistan (Figure 2.4) and a burqa worn on the streets of New Delhi (Figure 2.5). Some less conservative women will wear instead an additional robe or *chador* over their salwar kameez when in public. These less conservative women will cover their heads as well with a headscarf. Headscarves are worn by both Muslims and Hindus in South Asia. Traditionally, South Asians wear *dupattas* in three ways: covering the head, resting on the shoulders and falling over the chest, or resting on the shoulders and falling down the upper back. Its usage depends on where the woman is, how much modesty she needs to perform and/or regional or ethnic group usage. When worn as a headscarf, the dupatta does not obscure the face and the hairline can be visible (Figure 2.1). How it is secured also depends on regional, religious or ethnic preferences.

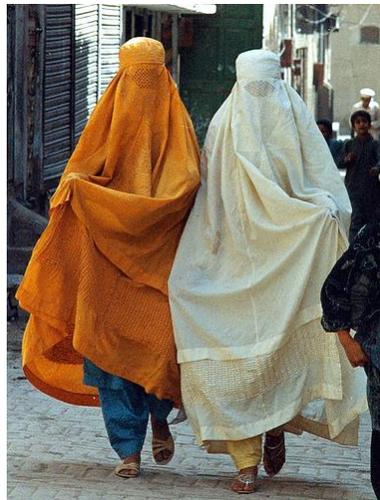


Figure 2.4 Burqa worn in Pakistan (Turkveil 2008)



Figure 2.5 Burqa worn in Bangalore, India (Rick Elkins 2008)

The term *hijab* (which is an Arabic term used in the Koran to recommend seclusion or modesty for women) has come to be used for a headscarf that has increased in popularity amongst South Asian Muslims, and many other Muslim women worldwide. The hijab as worn in specific regions of Pakistan would be a specific form of veiling, worn in a particular way (with variations according to local practice). The adoption of the hijab is the result of the revival of a pan-Islamic identity in the region. As Osella and Osella explain, "...contemporary veiling is indicative of a more developed consciousness towards Islam and is linked to global styles of Islamic 'decent dress' in which only the face, hands, and feet are revealed" (Osella & Osella 2007, 241). South Indian men who migrate between the subcontinent and Arab Gulf states for employment bring back Arab dress, like the *abaya* (an outer garment which covers the body except for the face, hands and feet), for their wives. These various ensembles are seen as a status symbol (Osella & Osella 2007, 243).

The main garment of Hindu women's dress is the sari, an approximately six yard length of uncut and unseamed cloth which is draped, pleated and tucked around the body in various ways. The different styles in which the sari is draped denote caste, class, religious affiliations and modesty, which need to be performed. For example, the sari can expose or conceal the body depending on how modest a woman chooses to be (Figure 2.6). In Figure 2.6, the patola sari leaves the waist, upper chest and back exposed. The South Indian sari is wrapped to cover the woman's mid-section. Lastly, the Bengali sari is conceals the mid-section, upper body and covers the head. When saris are worn in a veiling manner, this is often the practice of orthodox Hindus, not necessarily Muslims who also wear the sari (Figure 2.7).



Figure 2.6 Saris Styles: Patola, South Indian and Bengali (Dongerkerly 1960)



Figure 2.7 Three Stages of Sari Veiling (Tarlo 1996)

Muslim groups particularly in the Western part of South Asia, like Bangladesh, and in South India do wear the sari as their primary, and often, singular form of dress. The sari can be worn with two other garments, the *choli* and petticoat. The *choli* is a cropped tight-fitting bodice, which covers and supports the breasts. The petticoat is an underskirt, which is used to create volume and further obscure the legs. While the petticoat is attributed to the influence of European notions of modesty, discussed below, the *choli*'s appearance is less clear. Some scholars assert that the *choli* is the result of Muslim or British influences; however, this seems unlikely as chest covering garments are represented in art at ancient historical sites in India. Dress scholar, Chatal Boulanger states that the *choli*'s earliest artistic representation is on the walls of the Anjanta caves which date from the 2nd century BCE (Boulanger 1997, 110). B.N. Goswamy notes that wall paintings showing a *choli*-like garment are found in Anjanta Cave I, dating from the 6th century. Goswamy makes the further distinction that there were two types of chest covering garments: a simple band of untailed cloth and another which was tailored (Goswamy 1993, 7). The exact details of form and how these two garments were worn are unknown; usage and construction can only be

interpreted from artistic representations. Bhushan notes that a cloth bodice was reserved for respectable women and goddesses (Bhushan 1958, 20).

Lastly, Hindus have their own lexicon of tailored garments: *ghagra choli* and *lengha*. The *lengha* is a full gathered skirt often worn with a *choli* and scarf. The *ghagra choli* is also a full gathered skirt, *choli* and long scarf. Though the ensemble is the same, the word *lengha* is used more in North India, while *ghagra choli* is used more in South India. The term *half-sari* is used by some areas of the South India to refer to the *ghagra choli*. The long scarf of the *ghagra choli* is tucked into the side of the skirt and draped across the torso in the same manner as a *sari*. The end of the scarf is used to cover the head when modesty is necessary (Figure 2.8).



Figure 2.8 Jalia Woman in Half-Sari (Tarlo 1996)

2.3.2 South Asian Modesty

The principles of modesty for Pakistani and Indian dress are based in history that applies to most of South Asia. The earliest Sanskrit religious law, or *dharmasastra*, to discuss women is the *Stridharmapaddhati*, or *Guide to the Religious Status and Duties of Women*. This text was composed between 1720 and 1750 in Thanjavur in southern India (Leslie 1992, 198). Though focused mostly on duties for women, this religious text does detail women's dress after menarche. Prior to menarche, young girls are free to be naked publicly; however, this physiological change causes public embarrassment, which requires women to cover themselves. From this point on women are expected to, "...not show her navel. She should wear garments that extend to her ankles. She should not expose her breasts. She should not go outside without an upper garment" (Leslie 1989, 91). Leslie notes that the covering of ankles and breasts are distinctions of social class. Women working in agriculture or fishing tuck up their saris so as to provide easy movement. Middle class women covered their breasts with their palloo (the decorative end of the sari) but without a bodice. Low class women left their breasts uncovered (Leslie 1992, 202-3).

While Indian modesty differs according to setting and time, the chest, navel and legs are covered in public. Married women are expected to communicate their marital status so as to be recognized as unavailable to others (Leslie 1989, 91). The idea of fully covering the legs is relaxing in urban locations of India, which some attribute to the influence of Western fashion. Emma Tarlo's work, *Clothing Matters*, while focusing on issues of public and private space does incorporate a discussion of modesty throughout her book. Tarlo confirms the aforementioned rules in both colonial and

modern context and attends to the practice of veiling, which became a particular issue throughout her fieldwork.

In some parts of India, particularly in the North with orthodox Hindu and Muslim families, it is immodest for a woman's head or face to be exposed in the presence of certain men. "A woman is expected to cover her face, if not her entire upper body, in front of all men senior to her husband in her conjugal village" (Tarlo 1996, 160). Veiling should be understood as a form of portable private space, which allows women to be functional in public. The *pallu* and half-sari (a cloth which covers the chest and head) used for veiling is in a constant state of adjustment based on who is present. The face can be exposed when attending to household duties; however, when an older male enters the space, the veil is pulled forward over the face. It is pulled back when he leaves. When the father-in-law appears a woman may pull the veil forward to cover her face and torso and tuck her hands beneath. This is considered a full-veil as it renders face and body completely obscured. If shopping in the market, she can cover her face so that she can interact without exposing herself, which would shame herself and her family. Only the wealthiest families can afford to seclude their wives and daughters at all times (ibid, 160-4).

Himani Bannerji's research on Bengali colonial ideas of the gentlewoman, or *bhadramahila*, show that modesty is more than simply how one dresses but incorporates their behavior as well.

...one cannot be truly modest (possess a sense of shame) simply by veiling one's face and not speaking to anyone. In fact not speaking to people might express pride. Those who are truly modest cannot have hearts which contain pride or insolence, they are adorned by gentleness, politeness, good manners, tranquility, etc. (Soudamini 1872, 99-100).

Bannerji continues to explain that the modest and well-mannered *bhadramahila* works at deterring and attracting male attention. She deters attention from those from which she desires not to draw attention through covering and behavior. She lures attraction by selectively exposing her body and her behavior (Bannerji 1995, 81).

The conflict of female bodily exposure arose when Indian notions of modesty encountered Victorian ideas of modesty. As Tarlo explains, while it was acceptable for women to wear a backless bodice, they were expected to cover their chest and head with a half-sari. As she states,

Thus the modest well-bread woman had her back uncovered but her face and head covered beneath a veil, and her legs well hidden beneath large quantities of cloth in the form of a long silk skirt. ... Influenced by the Western...Victorian tradition...requires that the back should be covered but the head and face exposed. It asserts that the uncovered back is naked and indecent...but the covered face is backward and oppressive (Tarlo 1996, 195).

Though the colonial era is well in the past, modesty remained an integral part of South Asian dressing. Modesty, and its daily usage, did not leave the minds of the subjects of this study after immigration to the U.S. As will be discussed later, modesty was one of the aspects of South Asian dress which conflicted with adoption of Western dress, as in Tarlo's colonial example above. In that example, colonial Indians had to choose how to incorporate Victorian notions of modesty with their own. These particular choices recreated Indian dress and modesty in what was then considered "modern" Indian dress, which it should be noted was adopted only by the women of the educated and propertied-classes. The subjects of this study encountered a similar conflict, between their notions of modesty and Western notions of modesty in dress. In each of these dress-modesty confrontations, these women would experience disconnections with their dressed environments and

have to make contextual dress choices. How modesty affects these ten participants' dress choices, as well as disconnections resulting from dress-modesty will be examined in the three case studies.

2.4 Spatial-Dress Divisions: Public, Private and Beyond

In Rabindranath Tagore's 1916 novel *The Home and the World*, a love triangle revolves around the changing spatial divisions in Bengal. The narrative is one of the finest fictional examples of how Indian society was reformulated under the influence of colonialism and enlightened ideas. The public/private space issue had its own unique issues for each gender. Indian men wrestled with how much Europeanness to allow into the home and how much Indianness to allow into their public lives. For women, the public/private reorganization of space centered on preserving their role as conservators of private space while incorporating women into the public sphere. Allowing women entrance or increased access into the world beyond the *zenana* (the familial inner apartment) meant that many aspects of their lives would need to change. Dress was hotly debated because traditional South Asian dress began to be criticized when it was viewed through Victorian notions of modesty.

The following sections will review literature that examines how the spatial-dress divisions developed in historic contexts. In later analysis, I will discuss how my ten subjects' dress choices mimic and/or veer from their historical predecessors spatial-dress divisions. As discussed in the historical contexts below, national, political, religious and modesty concerns, as well as, aspirations of progress and aesthetic fascination would cause Indian dress and space to alter. A spatial-dress analysis similarly will address how and why concerns developed for the particular diasporic population used in this study.

2.4.1 Spatial-Dress Divisions: Adopting Muslim Garments in the Vijayanagara Empire

This section and the following focus on men's spatial-dress divisions during two specific historical periods of India. Section 2.4.1 reviews the Hindu kingdom, the Vijayanagara Empire, whose relationship with its Muslim counterparts to the North necessitated new spatial-dress divisions. Section 2.4.2 looks at the redefining of men's spatial-dress divisions under British rule. It is necessary to review men's spatial-dress divisions as these models of dress adaptation are useful for understanding spatial-dress divisions in the contemporary setting of this research.

Bernard S. Cohn and Phillip B. Wagoner address the issue of Hindus changing or adopting clothes to meet particular experiences. Cohn focuses on Hindus in service at Muslim courts in the North and Wagoner attends to Hindu aristocracy of the South interacting with their Mughal counterparts. In both analyses, these authors show that dress can be employed to be present in certain spaces, as well as, can create new spaces. These authors' ideas will be used to explain spatial-dress divisions and how they are separated in later analysis.

Prior to colonialism during mostly Muslim rule in princely states, Hindus were employed in the courts of their Muslim rulers. As with dress codes in European monarchies of the day, these princely states had dress codes of their own and required employed Hindus to wear Muslim dress when in court or on official business of the state, "Even Hindus whose work required them to wear Muslim-style stitched clothes...would change into a *dhoti* [men's unseamed waistcloth] when arriving home" (Cohn 1989, 332).

Phillip B. Wagoner presents a detailed discussion in his paper “‘Sultan among Hindu Kings’: Dress, Titles, and the Hindu Culture at Vijayanagara” of the role dress played during the interactions of Hindu rulers with their Muslim counterparts. Wagoner argues that the Hindu aristocracy of the Vijayanagara donned Muslim garments when interacting in the public arena so as to display their equal status.

The Vijayanagara Empire endured from the mid-fourteenth through the mid-seventeenth centuries, encompassing the lower Deccan to the Southern tip of India. Wagoner draws attention away from the religious focus in his argument stating, “If one moves...to examine the secular culture of Vijayanagara’s ruling elite, one begins to recognize the extent...Islamic-inspired forms and practices altered Indic courtly life in the Vijayanagara...and...impress on many aspects of the ‘Hindu’ culture of South India even today” (Wagoner 1996, 852). According to Wagoner, the shift to adopting Muslim dress in Vijayanagara courts was during the later part of the empire’s existence beginning in the fourteenth century. The Vijayanagara courts had to interact with a world dominated by Islamic culture, which necessitated this change. The “...*kabayi*, a long tunic, derived from the Arab *qaba*, and the *kullayi*, a high, conical cap of brocaded fabric, derived from the Perso-Turkic *kulah*,” were the additions to the Vijayanagara’s court wardrobe (ibid, 853). Prior to the introduction of these foreign items of dress, men at South Indian courts did not traditionally wear garments on the upper body. A long rectangular piece of cloth called *ambaram* was draped on the shoulders on occasion. Constructed hats of fabric were unknown to these courts. Rulers were depicted as wearing a jeweled crown called a *kirita* or *karanda-makuta*, while courtiers and chiefs swathed the head in a turban or *sirovesthi*

(ibid, 860). Additionally, the author mentions European travelogues of the period, which depict members of small South India principalities not part of the Vijayanagara Empire and lower class people of the empire only covering their lower body with draped cotton fabric (ibid, 859).

Where most authors gloss over the differences between the Hindu and Islamic modes of dress, Wagoner moves beyond merely reporting on the textual and visual components used to interpret his findings. For Hindus, he explains that the body is integral to displaying the inner being of a person. “Within such a cultural context, the function of clothing is not to conceal the body but to reveal, frame, and accentuate its forms” (ibid, 864). Covering the body with a garment would hide the person; in contrast, a simple draped cloth accentuates the body. Wagoner’s interpretation is interesting; however, it seems too romanticized. The exposure of the body in Hindu dress is more simply a different conception of modesty. Men’s bare chests, lower legs and uncovered heads were not seen as immodest in public for either the aristocracy or proletariat, but this does not necessarily mean that the intention is active display of the body.

The Islamic notion of dress and body is diametrically opposed to the Hindu view. “The uncovered body is held to be naked and shameful, and it is said that clothing has been provided by God to cover man’s nakedness...” (ibid, 865). The various tunics and robes of the Islamic mode; therefore, accomplish this task of covering the body to achieve modesty while obscuring its form. The adoption of the *kabayi* and *kullayi* by the Vijayanagara courts acts as a *lingua franca* for interaction with the wider Islamic world.

In the last section of Wagoner’s paper, he stresses that these adopted items of dress were calculated adoptions for situations where it was necessary

for rulers and courtiers of the Vijayanagara to perform a particular broader persona. The world of the Vijayanagara aristocracy was thus divided between “performative” and “residential”. Wagoner refers to A. K. Ramanujan in this terming of spatial divisions as performative and residential and not public and private, “...the *domestic* and the *public* – between...the immediate kin within the four...walls of a house and the larger circles of the extended family, the subcaste, the caste, and the society at large” (Ramanujan 1986, 49-50). The residential becomes the space where foreign forms of dress are excluded because this realm houses the sacred space of the family. The performative domain welcomes the *kabayi* and *kullayi* in order to maximize opportunities with a larger world (Wagoner 1996, 875).

Where the authors to be discussed below will differ from Wagoner is their defining of the spaces as simply “public” and “private”. I find Wagoner’s usage of “performative” and “residential” problematic because it suggests dress is staged only outside of the home and not within. Though an adopted identity may be left at the threshold of the home and an authentic identity put on, performance is still involved within the intimacy of the home. Additionally, Susan Kaiser explains that private dress performance is a way to experiment with and adopt dressed identities for outside the home (Kaiser 1990, 182). From the literature reviewed, public and private seem to be the more commonly accepted words for spatial divisions. These two words define the spaces by who is present and what action occurs within; the action is not specific to dress. In later analysis, I will revisit defining of spatial-dress divisions in this manner.

2.4.2 Spatial-Dress Divisions: Indian Men Changing Clothes and Altering Space

This section will continue with spatial-dress divisions of India's colonial era. Across the British Empire, a common dilemma debated amongst the colonizers was how to civilize the dress of the native inhabitants, which was deemed immoral, without having the colonized appear too British (Tarlo 1996, 39). During this time, Indians debated their new role as a British colony and with this new role dress became a disputed topic as Indian identities began to change. What these authors and Wagoner share is the idea that individuals or groups adopt or alter their dress for social and political betterment. This era of men's spatial-dress divisions differed from the Vijayanagara in two ways. Men's dress choices were not confined to the ruling class but affected the educated and propertied classes as well. Secondly, there was much more experimentation and conversation amongst men about how to solve the problem of "what to wear", either Indian dress or European dress. The following will review Hindu and Muslim men's dress and how dress became an integral part of the debate about bifurcated identities of Indian civil servants. The review of men's spatial-dress divisions in the colonial era is particularly germane because as later analysis will show each woman experimented with her dress which included South Asian and Western wardrobes.

Before clothing came under the jurisdiction and colonial influence of the West, Hindu and Muslims had different styles of dress whose remnants remain today. Muslim dress was tailored, meaning cut from cloth and stitched. A typical everyday outfit consisted of a kurta and pants of varying volume, which were typically secured at the waist by drawstring. Hindu dress in comparison was uncut and unseamed pieces of cloth that were draped, folded, and tucked

around the body². The typical ensemble for Hindu men consisted of three pieces of uncut cloth³, “One the dhoti, is wrapped and folded in various ways, and covers the lower half of the body. A second piece, worn in cooler weather, is a cotton shawl, or *chadar*. The third piece, a long narrow strip of cloth which is wrapped around the head, is the turban or *pagri*” (Cohn 1989, 332). The preference for untailored dress for Hindus also is due to the association with tailored dress as Muslim. Bayly draws two fundamental points about Indian dress that the division between Hindu and Muslim dress was based on religious scripture for both communities and a desire to distinguish the groups from one another (Bayly 1986, 296).

Indian opinion of European dress was rapidly changing by the late nineteenth century but head-to-toe dressing in Western dress was still not fully practiced. Civil servants working in government and commercial offices of urban centers had adopted an unofficial uniform, which was a mixture of Indian and European. The bricolaged uniform consisted of an untucked white European shirt overtop a quality draped white dhoti, white socks held up by garters, and either patent leather pumps or short boots. S. C. Bose commented in 1881 that the upper-class elite Bengalis were under the impression that a change of dress would bring them the benefits of “modern civilization” by “wearing tight pantaloons, tight shirts and black coats of alpaca or broadcloth...” with “a coquettish embossed cap or a thin folded shawl turban” (ibid, 341). As items of European dress caught on and eventually became head-to-toe dressing, Hindus and Muslims refused to adopt European

² This division of dress along religious lines is a generalization for simplicity purposes. There are examples of untailored dress in Muslim cultures and tailored dress in Hindu cultures. For this discussion, see Bhushan, Goswamy and Tarlo.

³ Hindu dress was composed of lengths of cloth because uncut fabric was viewed as ritually pure. For a complete discussion, see Bayly, Cohn and Tarlo.

headgear. These other two communities retained their ethnic turbans, and/or mostly brimless caps (ibid, 333-334).

Emma Tarlo's *Clothing Matters* reviews how Western clothing did not meet the cultural expectations of the educated and upper classes of Indian during colonialism. "Western clothes did not fit into the existing classifications of appropriate caste, regional or religious styles... It not only made an Indian man look different from his fellows, but meant that he also behaved differently" (Tarlo 1996, 44). Western clothing and Indian clothing presented ideas of respectability, hierarchy, lifestyle, and caused the wearers to act differently. Western clothing; therefore, required the Indian man to change his behavior. Trousers made it difficult to sit cross-legged on the floor and impossible to enter temple; however, they made it easier to move as British sports were becoming popular. "With the clothes of the European came a whole new etiquette which often conflicted with accepted Indian ideas of respectable behavior" (ibid, 44).

The adoption of European dress called into question the values of these Indian men who were expanding their wardrobes. The anxiety over suits changed into concern over cherished norms. The risk of familial alienation became reality for a few but criticism was showered on many. The division between man/woman, husband/wife, son/mother became wider, as men were given freedom to experiment while women were expected to remain as keepers of tradition (ibid, 45).

The allure of dressing in the British style, as explained by Tarlo, was related more to what Western dress symbolized than to either its representation of self or the aesthetic fascination. Indians who adopted British dress were concerned with their employment in the Indian Civil Service and

incorporation into regional governance. It was the Indian elite, who violated their caste by traveling abroad to England to be educated, that desired most the promises of the British Crown: "...superiority, progress, decency, refinement, masculinity and civilisation" (ibid). The desire for these meant the adoption of British lifestyle and etiquette and the shunning of the Indian identity; therefore, a change of dress was the first visual representation of the change towards modernity and civilization. Tarlo also presents a question here in her proposal of symbolism useful to this project: What draws a person or people to dressing in unfamiliar garments? She suggests that employment and education encouraged a change of dress that spoke to the larger ideas of modernity and civilization. Employment and education are situations which reappear in the lives of my subjects to influence future dress choices and ultimately speak to larger issues.

Tarlo explains that during the beginning of this dress conflict for the Indian elite, there was not a clear distinction between the wardrobes, "Rather, there was a gradual incorporation of Western elements. The problem of what to wear for elite Indian men in the nineteenth century can perhaps best be defined as the problem of how much foreignness to allow into one's clothes" (ibid). Indian men began to mix pieces together. For example, when attending a formal function an Indian man might wear a formal jacket, shirt, top hat, and leather shoes but wear a fine muslin dhoti. The mixing of cultural wardrobes; however, received criticism from both the British and conservative Indians. Since dress whether, European or Indian, was deemed unacceptable in particular situations, the mixing of the pieces was viewed as disgraceful because it did not truly satisfy the dress codes of either cultures (ibid). Tarlo's discussion shows that Indian men initiated many ideas that would also shape

the dress choices of women including the participants in my own study. In this process was genuine experimentation of dress coupled with social feedback from the outside world, both Indian and English. The same processes of dress experimentation and social feedback will be evaluated in the lives of my subjects.

The solution to the dress problem was to separate the European and Indian wardrobes instead of combining them. This solution made it possible for an Indian man to maintain separate but distinct personas while satisfying the dress codes of particular circumstances. Full European dress pleased the colonizer, while Indian dress satisfied his family (ibid). The peculiar result of this solution for men was where to change their clothing. Conservative Hindu families were so rigid in not allowing the polluting European dress into the inner sanctum of their homes that men had to choose a solution that satisfied their families' particular desires.

Father [Motilal Nehru] was particular about the way he dressed and disliked equally sloppiness of attire and sloppiness of mind. He was always well groomed...Like Indians of his class and generation, he mostly wore European clothes outside the home. In the house his dress was the traditional pajama and kurta of Uttar Pradesh – wide trousers and a knee-length coat or achkan with white trousers that are close-fitting and look like leggings (Pandit 1979, 36-37).

The home; therefore, was the space designated for Indian dress. The work world with the British was the space designated for European dress. A metaphorical line was drawn between work and home. Men of lower rank and property status were literally seen removing their British clothing in the streets before entering their homes. Second and lower class railway cars were another site where men changed into European dress so that they could enter first class carriages due to dress code restriction. The most common solution

was donning or doffing clothing in a transitional space on the edge of the home and on the threshold of the world (Tarlo 1996, 52). Wealthy Hindus in the late nineteenth century added a Western style dressing room attached to the master bedroom. Often these rooms were fitted with Western wardrobes as well for properly storing these foreign garments. The men would change into the traditional wrapped garments before entering into the inner apartment or courtyard where the women lived and deities presided (N. C. Chaudhuri 1976, 57).

Dress, therefore, was a tool to reinforce social spaces. Indian men of the colonial era defined space based on public and private divisions. These definitions would also provide a framework for women's dress adaptations. These spaces are defined by who is present within them, what action occurs within and what is worn. One could even argue that the spaces are restricted to who is allowed within, not just who is present. In the contemporary context of my research, how social spaces are constructed will be viewed through dress choices. I will consider the colonial binary of public and private to see if this division of space continues in the lives of my particular population.

Though the above example of transition in dress between work and home became the more common example of private dress and public dress, the division also expanded between larger realms like city and country, and/or between India and abroad. Tarlo recounts a memory of Ramanujan's father writes:

My father, on his annual trips to his home state of Kerala, in the 1940s, felt compelled to remove his Western suit at the border town of Alwaye. On one occasion he forgot to take off his suit and ran into ridicule everywhere he stopped. People who waited on him made it clear that they found his suit an affront (Ramanujan 1984, 32).

Susan Bean reviews how Gandhi's sartorial avatars influenced his later decision to adopt *khadi* as part of the swadeshi movement. As Susan Bean points out, even this early in Gandhi's life he "was sensitive to the connection between costume and social status, and perceived that changes in social position required changes in costume" (Bean 1989, 356). These different dressed identities are also a good example of spatial-dress divisions between India and abroad. Gandhi was known to wear European dress while he studied abroad in London. When he arrived in Southampton in September of 1888 he wore a white flannel suit. Much to his dismay, Gandhi soon discovered that no one wore white in September. Having traveled with Bombay-style clothes, he quickly replaced these with British tailored garments from Bond Street, "an evening suit...patent leather shoes, and a high silk hat" (ibid). In 1891, Gandhi returned as an educated barrister to his home in Rajkot in the Western state of Gujarat. He promoted westernizing his environment, which included adding pieces of-European clothing to his daily ensemble. It was his move to South Africa in 1893; however, which would change his wardrobe once again, mixing European dress with Indian turbans. South Africa, as a British colony, was a more racist environment than its subcontinental counterpart. It was here as Bean notes that, "he confronted his indelible Indianness" (ibid). Gandhi found that the mixture of Indian and European dress did not work for his advancement in this diasporic situation because dressing as impeccably as any Englishmen did not erase his Indianness or his skin color. He began to doubt the possibility of a merging of a proud Indian and an English gentleman. It was at this moment of realization that Gandhi would turn away from Western dress and explore what Indianness is through his dress (ibid). Gandhi's sartorial paradigm shift back to the

traditional left the indelible mark on Indian dress that can still be seen today in India and with Indians abroad. Draped forms of men's dress, like dhotis, are worn when the idea of "traditional India" is performed. A few of the subjects of this study will encounter the permanence of their race as did Gandhi during his time in South Africa. Although unlike Gandhi, they will talk around the issue of race in an attempt to mollify its impact on their current dress choices.

For the British, Indian dress remained a mark of inferior status. As time progressed and more and more Indians traveled and studied abroad, European dress became the accepted dress for men while in public, "As these 'England-returned' took up important professional posts and became reincorporated into the Indian elite (who had at first shunned them), they set new standards for the anglicised Indian male" (Tarlo 1996, 56). These "England-returned" became so comfortable with the dress and manners of European dress that they choose not to wear Indian dress in the home. Indian dress for these men was reserved for religious and ceremonial functions. Defining one's ethnic identity with dress was no longer a necessity for these men and eventually this slowly became acceptable for a greater portion of society (ibid, 55-56). In the end of her discussion of men's spatial-dress divisions, Tarlo shows how Western dress eventually became an accepted pattern of behavior. Tarlo's conclusion is revisited in the spatial-dress case study as it applies to women. I will discuss each subject's present spatial-dress divisions to see whether dress continues to be a spatially-dividing factor for subjects.

2.4.3 Spatial-Dress Divisions: Indian Women's Change of Dress and Conflicts with Space

The change that Indian women's dress underwent in the subcontinent during colonialism was more contentious than that of their male counterparts.

Though Indian men discussed and experimented with changes of dress and fashion, Indian women were more restricted in their re-fashioning. The debate over what women wore was cause for discussion from both the colonizer and the colonized (Bhatia 2003, 328). While both sides disagreed over solutions both thought Indian women's dress particularly Hindu dress of the literate middle-class, as immodest (Bhatia 2003, 328). Indian society was changing and women regularly engaged in intellectual and political discourse within the elite, educated and propertied classes. Hence, during the Indian dress reform of the nineteenth century, women contributed to the sartorial discussions of the day through cultural texts of the day and public forums (Bhatia 2003, 328).

Prior to the age of colonial social reform, women of the propertied classes were excluded from the outside world. Living behind the protected walls of their *zenana*, they carried out their domestic and social lives within these inner worlds. This exclusion along with the practices of *sati* (widow immolation), child marriage and the lack of women's education were criticized by the British as proof of India's antiquated society. While women's position was criticized, Indian women became the source of exoticization by the British through their perceived exclusion and protectedness.

Hindu women's dress, particularly for the orthodox, at the time consisted of a singular sari. A Hindu commentator observed that, "They [upper class women] wear very fine [transparent] clothing and appear at ease in front of their male and female servants" (Soudamini 1872, 99-100). In

cooler weather, shawls were wrapped about the body for extra warmth. Tailored clothing was not accepted in the Hindu home, as noted above in the discussion of men's dress. As men began to accommodate to the British social and dress expectations, the question of women's role in this new world was raised: what was the ideal female or *bhadramahila* to look like? The nationalist rhetoric answered this question with a division of worlds into the material and spiritual spheres. The material world became the world beyond the home while the home was reinvented as the spiritual realm specifically for women. This delineation of terrain effectively kept the majority of women out of the political and commercial spheres, which were regarded as decidedly masculine (Chatterjee 1993, 117). The new spiritual location became the site of the nation's traditions, cultural values and spiritual core (decidedly Hindu) and therefore, should be free of Western influence. While Indian men were not able to fully control their changing masculine world as a result of colonization, the home and women became a location where they could exert command, "It followed that as long as India took care to retain the spiritual distinctiveness of its culture, it could make all the compromises and adjustments necessary to adapt itself to the requirements of a modern material world without losing its true identity" (Chatterjee 1993, 120). Women, their bodies and their dress became the sites of contestation for preserving the nation's culture. Though this bodily location was challenged, exoticized and questioned, the collective desire sought to improve women's position, which ultimately would elevate the nation.

Women were encouraged to become as mannered and accomplished as their British counterparts. While asked to keep their traditional values they were encouraged to adopt some Western values. Nowhere was this debate

more intense than with women's dress, particularly in regards to bringing non-related males within the inner quarters of the home (Bannerji 1995, 71), "What Orientalists saw as signs of backwardness and exoticism in the clothing of Indian women was reinforced by the nationalist patriarchy as a sign of the preservation of Indian culture and traditions" (Bhatia 2003, 331). The traditional orthodox dress of a singular sari was a rather exposing garment by Western standards, "Suddenly we are reminded of the 'uncivilized' piece of cloth, lacking the undergarments to conceal their breasts and lower bodies" (Bannerji 1995, 9). Indian men became particularly cognizant of the exposure of their wives and daughters bodies and sexual potential as the prospect of visitors into the home became a reality, "...clothes of the denizens of the women's quarters were reformed...that is was impossible to appear in front of men [non-kin] in the Bengali women's usual garb of only a *sari*" (Debi 1916, 3). The debate then centered on the relationship, "...between the inner and outer self of women and saw her clothing as a moral signifier of her social role..." (Bannerji 1995, 73). To argue this point, the Indian intelligentsia contrasted the honor of Indian women with that of English women, who freely circulated in public spaces in dress seen as immodest by Indian standards, "What good were the Hindus, says Nidhuram, if they, like their rulers, let 'mothers and sisters...wander about the streets'" (Chattopadhyaya 1875, 66).

During this spatial debate, advice manuals circulated amongst the literate classes. These handbooks served as a way to introduce women to 'Enlightened' concepts and Western ways of being. Most of these writings were authored by young Indian men who had been educated abroad (Bhatia 2003, 331). They brought back their knowledge of feminine etiquette and dress from England and codified what they thought Indian women should

adopt, “Men sought to become experts in all matters pertaining to women, flouting existing social properties deeply grounded in a sexual/cultural division of labour” (Bannerji 1995, 71).

To counter the encouragement of Western ways and dress from these English-returned⁴, a group of writers and thinkers lobbied against such adoptions. Jyotirindranath Tagore, Amritlal Bose, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, etc. were among these who discouraged women from becoming *memsahibs*, European women (Bhatia 2003, 332). As Partha Chatterjee explains these writers were primarily condemning behavior and etiquette, which ran contrary to the constructed ideas of the *bhadramahila* and dutiful wife:

It was, of course, a criticism of manners, of new items of clothing such as the blouse, the petticoat, and shoes (all, curiously, considered vulgar, although they clothed the body far better than the single length of sari that was customary for Bengali women...until the middle of the nineteenth century), of the use of Western cosmetics and jewelry, of the reading of novels, of needlework (considered useless and expensive...), of riding in open carriages. What made the ridicule stronger was the constant suggestions that the Westernized woman was fond of useless luxury and cared little for the well-being of the home (Chatterjee 1993, 122).

Chatterjee’s point that the sari is less modest than European dress shifts our attention to the real issue, Indian women’s potential to change too much. The idea relates back to English colonizers concerned with how to civilize the colonized without making them too English. Indian men wanted their women to modernize but prevent them from becoming *memsahibs*. If Indian women adopted European dress, the worry was that they would behave as “modern” Western women shirking their responsibilities as biddable Indian wives.

⁴ A term used to describe the population of upper class Indians who went to England, mostly for education. The term carries derogatory connotations to describe the Western habits, including dress, which this group of individuals often adopted and brought back with them.

The above group of writers along with deistic groups such as the Brahmo Samaj⁵ advocated that women adopt Muslim women's dress or *peshawaj* (a gathered skirt ending below the knee with an attached bodice worn with tight-fitting trousers). At first this solution was lauded as an acceptable answer since the outfit was of non-Western origin and covered the woman's body completely while obscuring the female form (Bannerji 1995, 72-73). Others groups not wanting to completely cross religious lines added pieces to the *sari*. For example, a woman might add a *piran* (short-sleeved shirt), a *kamij* (long shirt with long sleeves), and/or a jacket on the upper body. *Ijar* (a pant, tight-fitting below the knee) or *pyjamas* (drawstring trousers) might be added under the *sari*. Shoes and socks were completely optional, as bare feet were not viewed as shameful. These solutions had limited success. Rising tensions between Hindus and Muslims were expressed in critical writings of the Mughal period and various colonial policies, which favored one group over the other, caused Hindus to rethink women adopting Muslim dress. Jackets and shoes were criticized as being too "Anglo". The *peshawaj*, *kamij*, and *ijar*, were criticized as being too "masculine" and too "Muslim" (Bannerji 1995, 95-96).

Around the 1870s, the women's intelligentsia centered in Bengal stepped into the world of public debate about their role, their dress, and their attitudes in this rapidly changing environment. Not content to allow their male counterparts to have complete control on the sartorial question, they formed their own discussions and journals to flesh out their ideas. A common opinion shared between some men and some women was that, "...clothes are to be seen as a sign of progress, marking moment in moral/cultural advancement

⁵ A spiritual society founded in 1828 by Ram Mohan Roy, which moved away from devotional Hinduism to a rationalist and monotheist spirituality influenced by the ethical idealism of Christianity and monotheism of Islam, respectively (Metcalf and Metcalf 2006, 86).

from primitivity to civilization” (Bannerji 1995, 77). Unlike their male counterparts the women’s opinion of dress reform veered away from adopting Western dress as it was seen as a national pride issue. Women commented that to wear European dress would be artificial as imitation was deemed a low class status. Commentary in journals at the time spoke of Western dress as immodest, distasteful and ill-suited for Indian women, “...wearing clothing which shows one’s national culture, covers one’s body fully and which indicates that one is a woman of Bengal” (Bannerji 1995, 95).

The nationalist rhetoric; however, was unable to produce an adequate solution that was fully Indian, meaning fully Hindu. The members of the Brahma Samaj who criticized their original adoption of Muslim dress proposed another solution, which mimicked the earlier bricolage dress of Indian men where dhotis and turbans were mixed with European jackets and shoes. For women, they combined the sari with items of European dress which created a more modest ensemble, “...known as the brahmika sari (a form of wearing the sari in combination with blouse, petticoat, and shoes made fashionable in Brahma households) became accepted as standard for middle-class women” (Chatterjee 1993, 130). This mixture of sari and European items satisfied the nationalist objectives the most, since the solution did not contain items of Muslim origin. More importantly, the addition of Western dress items moved women out of their sartorial past and into the colonial present.

The brahmika sari did not erase spatial divisions of public and private for Indian women. Instead these demarcations became reinforced with this new ensemble. Like Indian men changing between the home and the world, Indian women eliminated these tailored items when performing tasks which required them to be in traditional orthodox unsewn dress, “...women who, by

the late nineteenth century, had taken to wearing a choli, a sewn blouse or petticoat, which they removed while cooking food. Cooking had to be done in a specially designated and ritually cleansed area of the house” (Cohn 1989, 332). Other tasks included *pujas* (a Hindu worship ceremony), family ceremonies, fasts, temple visitations, and pilgrimages. Bricolaged dress would reappear in contemporary India and abroad as “ethnic chic”.

Nationalist concerns over appropriate dress for women and acceptable forms of etiquette are two issues which fueled the desire for cultural autonomy. As a result of the patriarchal nationalist struggle, both Bannerji and Bhatia conclude that women ultimately surrendered to the spatial-dress dicta imposed by men. Indian women continue to bear the weight of protecting spiritual India and preserving the space of the home. Women’s dress in present-day India is still defined in terms of “traditional” and “modern” (Bhatia 2003, 340). The sari endures as the appropriate dress for Hindu women to wear for social occasions such as marriages, festivals, ceremonies and pilgrimages (Joshi 1992, 214). When representing the nation abroad, female diplomats and/or the wives of male diplomats normally represent India with the reimagined nationalist outfit of the sari, choli, and petticoat.

Dress concerns did not leave contemporary Indians or Pakistanis as they moved abroad. These national, religious and modesty concerns of appropriate dress will reappear in a diasporic context. The above authors defined which spaces these concerns exist in, public/private or material/spiritual and how these spatial concerns then altered the dress of colonial Indian women. In the later analysis, I will seek to uncover how the ten women of this study divide up their wardrobes through their personal dress concerns. Interestingly, modesty will reappear as the primary issue which

motivates these women's dress choices. Unlike their colonial counterparts, the subjects of this study will talk about their dress choices as solely theirs with little or no interference by their husbands.

2.4.4 Spatial-Dress Divisions: Negotiating 'Home' & 'Ethnicity'

Heema Govindjee explores identity, community and dress in her Masters Thesis *South Asian-American Women: Clothes, Identities, and Communities* from University of California at Davis. Govindjee proposes that South Asian-American women's identities are not fixed but fluid as they move through different contexts. Dress is the medium through which these women negotiate their identities between contexts and express the meaning of their hyphenated identities:

For immigrant South Asian bodies, clothing can be thought of as a space, not just as a way of looking South Asian-American, but as a way of *becoming* South Asian-American. In this line of thinking, clothing choices articulate the process of becoming; it marks the process of working through the spaces in-between that are characterized by the hyphen (Govindjee 1997, 4).

Govindjee interviewed twenty-one women between the ages of 20 and 54 through a series of unstructured interviews. Some interviews involved interacting with women and their wardrobes to uncover which items of clothing were worn in particular contexts and how their clothing was organized. All but one of her subjects separated South Asian dress and American dress, often in completely separate wardrobes or locations. Govindjee proposes that this division of wardrobes is more than just a simple compartmentalization of Eastern dress and Western dress but a division based on usage. As she explains, South Asian dress are put-together outfits while Western dress are separates that are mixed-and-matched, "Due to the constructions of 'looks,'

there is little or no mixing and matching of garment pieces within the South Asian wardrobes. The 'looks' may travel across context: day to evening, formal and informal...But garments are not used as separates" (ibid, 43). For this reason, the two wardrobes cannot exist together because they are not used or stored in the same fashion.

The issue of communal choice appeared in her discussions as well. Govindjee's sample admitted that family and/or community concerns often exerted pressure on what they wore. This should not be understood as being told what to wear but rather influence. A mother-in-law's dis/approval of the salwar kameez may determine when a young woman wears this outfit. Knowing that community members will wear saris at a gathering, influences a woman to don a sari as well (ibid, 52). The issue of communal choice was an interesting finding on Govindjee's part because this form of social feedback is unspoken. The women in her study all gravitated to South Asian dress when community functions were discussed. The subjects reinforced the unspoken collective pressure to conform in those spaces.

Govindjee's main objective was to uncover the relationship between dress and identity with her particular sample. It was through her conversations about, "...*here* in America, and longing for home, *their* birth country, *their* family and friends in *other* countries" (ibid, 49) where the complications of identity and dress reveal themselves. She proposes that these multiple locations of self require multiple forms of dress as these women travel between connections, communities and countries. "Thus, the clothed body provides a space for negotiating home and ethnicity" (ibid). Govindjee concluded fluctuations between dressed identities brings about the acceptance of a hyphenated identity. I found Govindjee's conclusion

confusing for two reasons. A hyphen implies a combined meaning; therefore, if Govindjee's subjects truly accepted combined selves they would have expressed them as such. Only one of her twenty-one subjects defined themselves with a hyphen. Govindjee's discussion of separate wardrobes based on the difference between how American and South Asian clothes are put together additionally does not express combination. If their selves were hyphenated, Govindjee's subjects should have stored items of their wardrobes together or combined items from both dress systems with some frequency. In the end, Govindjee focused too much attention on the hyphen and trying to locate hyphens within closets.

I would have liked Govindjee to explore further the idea of negotiating home and ethnicity through the clothed body. She spoke of the fluidity of her subjects' dress but this discussion lacked the spatial discussion of public/private or material/spiritual. Her analysis looked only at her subjects' dress choices contextually. Govindjee says that movement between wardrobes expresses movement between particular dressed identities to render a feeling of home or comfort. But how are the spaces divided where these expressed identities are performed? Do certain wardrobes belong to particular spaces? The following section expands on the idea of body and space through a review of sensory culture literature. Where Govindjee ended with negotiating home and ethnicity on the body, sensory culture literature will expand this idea to incorporate one's environment in such an analysis.

2.5 The Emplaced Dress Experience

The Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader edited by David Howes brings together scholarship which views subjects through the sensed

experience, “The ‘senses,’ in fact, are not just one more potential field of study, alongside, say, gender, colonialism or material culture. The senses are the media through which we experience and make sense of gender, colonialism and material culture” (Howes 2005, 4). In his introduction, Howes maps out common notions regarding the senses. The senses are to be understood as interrelated, which encourage and develop experiences. For example, the sight of silk satin elicits the memory of a cool tactile quality before the fabric is touched. The sensory faculties; therefore, are often difficult to separate. This important sensuous co-dependency is called intersensoriality. Howes explains that intersensoriality is more than sensory combinations which evoke feelings but the synthesis of the ideas behind each of the five senses, “...the multi-directional interaction of the senses and of sensory ideologies, whether considered in relation to a society, an individual, or a work” (ibid, 9).

The researchers in this collection move beyond embodiment, or the integration of mind-body, to that of mind-body-environment, termed emplacement. When considering the sensory experience, embodiment is limited because it only views the senses as an internal experience. The incorporation of environment, or exterior view, creates a simultaneous interior-exterior relationship, or as stated above a “multi-directional interaction”. Emplacement is defined as “The sensuous interrelationship of body-mind-environment. This environment is both physical and social, as is well illustrated by the bundle of sensory and social values contained in the feeling of ‘home’” (Howes 2005, 7). Our senses often elicit negative feelings; therefore, emplacement’s opposite is displacement, or feeling disconnected from one’s physical and social environment (ibid, 7).

Howes's ideas are particularly salient to the discussion of dress and the diaspora because I believe that the immigrant's dress experience is an emplaced experience. While literature exists covering the sensory experience and dress, it is limited and focuses on simple sensory reporting and/or the sentiments dress elicits. A discussion of the dressed experience as emplaced or displaced is missing from these writings; therefore, these ideas should be applied to the discussion of dress in the following ways. Emplaced dress views the sensory interactions of dress within the physical and social interrelationship of body-mind-environment to render a feeling of self-satisfaction. A displaced dress experience occurs when one's dress choices create a feeling of disconnection with one's physical and social environment. An affective response of the displaced experience is registered where dress and environment do not agree. The collision of body, dress, senses, space and experience require the person to make dress choices in order to adapt to the new setting; a re-inscription of one's human ecology. The subjects of this study focused as much on the dressed environment around them and how they were perceived as much as they commented on their individual dress choices. These separate views of inward and outward perceptions working together are why I locate the subjects' decisions as emplaced rather than embodied.

2.5.1 Emplaced Dress: Dystoposthesis, The Abnormal Place Experience

Christopher Fletcher's idea of dystoposthesis, is a more severe form of displacement. Defined by Fletcher as "abnormal place experience", it is a description of the sensory experience for a group of conditions known as Environmental Sensitivities (ES). "In essence, ES is an incompatibility of the

bodies with the spaces they inhabit. It is a sickness that is characterized by highly divergent physical, affective, and behavioral 'reactions' to an equally broad list of environmental triggers" (Fletcher 2005, 380). The "highly divergent...reactions" and "broad list" are the factors which contribute to medicine's failure to deal with the condition. Mainstream medicine desires specific and measurable stimuli located in the body in order for a condition to be defined and treated. ES's location in the senses makes it harder to diagnosis and points to modern medicine's inability to think beyond physical realities (ibid, 386).

Fletcher studied ES in the Canadian Maritime Provinces, particularly Nova Scotia where ES received heightened attention. This particular area seems to possess a high toxic load as a result of its industrial past, continued pollution within the province and toxic migration from outside the provinces' borders, such as from the U.S. (ibid, 383). Fletcher uncovers two worlds that exist side-by-side in the same space: the pluralistic sense environment and the sensorially reduced environment. In Nova Scotia, the particular form of ES that finds prominence is olfactory. Fletcher encounters public spaces designated 'Scent Free Zones' like libraries, schools, offices and elevators. He visits Nova Scotia Environmental Health Centre where olfactory sufferers are treated. Friends and relatives of the ES afflicted tell him of experiences where they have to shun those who refuse to reduce their "smelly" ways. Lastly, ES sufferers express agony because they must renegotiate their world with the olfactory world (ibid, 384-390). For example, a common problem amongst sufferers was church. Perfumed, shampooed, deodorized and after-shaved congregations forced out those unable to surround themselves with scents.

Fletcher analyzes how this ES population inhabited the Maritime Provinces through subjectivity, which is socio-environmental and not bodily. ES is understood, therefore, as a collective and social condition. The consumption of odors moves unconsciously between bodies causing conflict with those possessing ES. People with ES must then mitigate the olfactory effects by reshaping place externally and internally, or physical environment and how one's environment is conceived.

Through witnessing the body's response to particular locales a sensory geography of reactions is developed. From these, people construct new ecologies for themselves reshaping their immediate world accordingly and creating new spatial itineraries that allow for the relatively comfortable movement through space (ibid, 387).

What Fletcher argues in this essay is that sickness can possess a third dimension, that of space, along with body and mind. Lastly, Fletcher puts forth "A theory of body alone cannot capture this process. Indeed, my argument is that an appreciation of the interactions of sensation and experience with place – a theory of emplacement – needs to emerge before ES can be rendered fully sensible in social and bodily contexts" (ibid, 393).

As with the ideas of emplacement and displacement, there is no dress literature that incorporates Fletcher's concept of dystoposthesia with dress. I define dystoposthetic dress as the experience of environmental marginalization as a result of the dress choices a person makes in relation to their surroundings. The sensation of alienation is registered, causing the person to make different choices about their dress in relation to the experienced environment. In short, displacement is understood as a simple disconnection while dystoposthesia is understood as a more serious disconnection or marginalization that would call for a more drastic response on the part of the individual.

The emplacement case study analysis below focuses on displacement and dystoposthesia. The individuals of this study each expressed periods of dress adjustment, which lasted from a few weeks to many years. Before an emplaced experience of self-satisfaction could be reached, they each encounter dressed experiences which were either displaced or dystoposthetic. These ideas of environmental disconnection will be explored further through the concepts developed above of dress choices and experiences of emplaced exclusions.

2.5.2 Emplaced Dress: Senses and Sentiments

Eicher, Evenson & Lutz's definition of dress, discussed above (2.2) established the phenomenon of dress as occurring in all social and cultural contexts. Integral to this definition is the impact of the five senses on the dress experience. As they state at the end of the definition, "...This process includes all five senses of seeing, touching, hearing, smelling and tasting – regardless of the society and culture into which an individual is born" (Eicher, Evenson & Lutz 2000, 4). The edited collection, *Dress Sense: Emotional and Sensory Experiences of the Body and Clothes*, examines dress from the senses. The following section will look at Linda Welter's ideas of dress and sight and sound in Greek festival dress, and Mary A. Littrell and Jennifer Paff Ogle's notions of how Indian women's sensory dress experiences change after immigrating to America. What these researchers accomplish through an embodied interpretation is uncovering the affective response that dress creates when viewed through the senses. Without considering environment in sensory analysis, spatial-dress narratives lack context. I will discuss their work and seek to move it into an emplaced interpretation, in order to show the

importance of considering the environment beyond the clothes. Looking at these writings as descriptions of emplaced experiences will uncover moments of spectacle as developed through a relationship between dress, space, sentiment and community.

Linda Welters' chapter "Sight, Sound, and Sentiment in Greek Village Dress" in Johnson and Foster's edited collection *Dress Sense: Emotional and Sensory Experiences of the Body and Clothes*, examines the visual and auditory aspects of Greek village dress in six Greek provinces and how sentiment is elicited based on sensory reaction. Welters establishes that dress represents a geographical place through one or more of the following categories:

1. Use of locally available materials to make clothing
2. Emergence of a specific style based on collective physical and social needs of a region's inhabitants
3. Use of unique local or regional words to name an item of dress
4. Use of dress by an individual to express identity with a community
5. Use of dress to symbolize place through memory and representation (Welters 2007, 7).

It is the last category which Welters focuses on to explain sentiment of Greek folk festival dress.

Festival dress that Welters encountered was considered the finest items of clothing in a young woman's wardrobe. Visually, the dress consisted of delicate white fabrics, embroideries in reds and blacks, fringe attached to hems, sleeves and aprons, dressed hair, jewelry and fine scarves. This dress was worn for religious holidays, saints' days, weddings, and national holidays when towns gathered for food and music. On such occasions, the young women dressed in their festival costume would gather together to dance. The gathering of numerous young women dressed in white finery dancing was a

commonly repeated memory. Festival dress was classified as collective in each town and community, “Women who wore such clothes in their youth emphasized the communal aspects of the style rather than their own individual beauty. They identified the clothing in the photo albums as ‘ours’ rather than ‘mine’” (ibid, 9).

Festival dress possessed a sound dimension as well. Covering the chests of the young women were coin necklaces that produced jangling sounds when the women danced. In some cases, these coin necklaces resembled bibs rather than necklaces as they covered the shirt beneath. Earrings, buckles, hair ornaments and bracelets contributed to the rhythmic echoes of the music (ibid, 13).

Welters locates sight and sound as the senses which evoke shared memories of festival dress for these Greek communities. The combined sensory experience of fine white fabrics, colorful embroidery, clinking coin jewelry, etc. places festival dress in the specific memory location of sentiment. What Welters successfully proves is that sight and sound are as important to evoking sentiment of customs as taste and smell are remembered with food.

I would add to Welters analysis that the environment where Greek festival dress is performed contributes to the mental sentimentality. As one of her interviewees said, “When the holiday came about, they were going to the threshing floor all dressed up. They were dancing on the threshing floor wearing nice aprons and embroidered jackets” (Welters quoting Eugenia Spilioti 2007, 11-12). As another participant explained, “If it was plain, it wouldn’t be decent to go dancing at the Church. We needed to show off” (Welters quoting Sirmo Serafim 2007, 12). Hidden in these quotes about sight are the spatial and spectacular contributions: location, action and special

occasion. The threshing floor and church are the sites of festival dress performance. The music commences the spectacle of whirling white dresses, blurring colorful embroideries and the jangling of coins. The holidays or weddings allow the festival attire to be worn. These three factors are as important to the sensory dress experience as the items themselves.

Welters touched on the collective dress experience when she explained that the women discussed the beauty of their festival dress as 'ours' instead of 'mine'. Christopher Fletcher had also explained that smell is not a singular experience but a collective sensation that moves between bodies. You hear and are heard. You see and are seen. You smell and are smelled. These binaries also work psychologically when the affective sides of the senses are considered. For Welters study, the collective spectacle of Greek festival dress is what I believe to be the root of the sentimentality expressed by her population. While the dresses and items of adornment are kept and displayed in homes today (Welters 2007, 14) the memory of festival dress is retold in the trope of community.

The sensory elements of sight and sound reappear in the retellings of dressed experiences from my subjects when they spoke of community gatherings. They placed particular people within these community spaces and located the spaces in particular environments. What is discussed in later analysis is how like Welters' subjects these ten Indian and Pakistani women created similar spectacular spaces and evoked sentiment through the retelling of occasional dress experiences.

Mary A. Littrell and Jennifer Paff Ogle's chapter "Women, Migration, and the Experience of Dress" assesses the sentiments brought from one country to another with the Indian diaspora in the United States. Interviews

were conducted with seventeen women who were raised in India and have lived in the U.S. for a minimum of three years. The age range of the population is from mid-twenties to mid-fifties. All participants live in communities with lively Indian communities (Littrell and Ogle 2007, 121-122).

Scholars such as Banerjee & Miller, Shukla, Tarlo and Trivedi also discuss the complex dress rituals and adornment practices of Indian women. From saris to salwar kameez, jewelry and embroidery, henna and sindhur, Indian dress provides a truly object-oriented experience for the wearer. Littrell and Ogle add to these complex narratives of dress ritual by highlighting the sensory experience. Vivid saris bathe the wearer in pastel and saturated colors. Kurtas and kameez sparkle with embellishments. Bangles clink as the wearer moves about. Heavy silks and starched cottons rustle. Hair is oiled once a week to make it shiny and soft. Marigolds, jasmine and rose perfume brides.

When these women immigrated to the U.S., as young brides or students, they encounter a different conception of self. "Dress challenges for many women centered on colors, textures, make-up, fit, body exposure, appropriateness, and what they observed as a boring commonality, along with lack of attention to grooming" (ibid, 125). Littrell and Ogle focused on fit, body exposure and appropriateness, which I would collapse into a singular idea of modesty. One participant commented on overweight Americans wearing jeans and shorts, which Indians would never wear publicly because they are not loose, show the shape of the legs and were seen in public. All factors which relate to Indian sense of modesty in dress. Attention was also paid to the prevalence of neutral colors and similarity of what Americans wore. Variety was missing in their new environments. I believe this explains Indian

immigrants' shock and confusion at what appears to them as an ungroomed America. The visual that is presented at the grocery store, pharmacy and picking children up from school lacks attention to appearance. Americans seem to communicate not wanting to be seen even when they are seeable. This idea of being unseen conflicts with an Indian cultural norm where one is viewed constantly by profane and spiritual eyes. Pravina Shukla discusses at length in her text the importance of viewing and being viewed by a bride and groom at a Hindu wedding (Shukla 2008, 26-40). The wedded couple is displayed in a similar fashion to deistic couples viewed in statuary and calendar art. The exchange of darshan with the newlyweds is seen as a blessing. In the quotidian world, Indians engage in the constant acts of viewing and being viewed by one another. As noted above, Indian dress communicates many clues to the wearer's identity. The assemblage of clothing, accessories and cosmetics communicate who the wearer is communally and individually. The exchange of the visual representation between wearer and audience is the most important sense in Indian dress.

Littrell and Ogle also do not mention the collective experience of shopping Indian immigrants are used to. In America shopping is a more individualized experience after adolescence. Important purchases like wedding gowns, engagement rings, first interview suits, etc. may require input from family or friends, but regular shopping is often done alone or with little interaction. As Pravina Shukla describes in her book, shopping even for everyday dress is a collective experience for women. Sari shopping involves sitting with relatives on high mattresses while tea and snacks are served. Salesmen unfold saris one-by-one to show the palloo and body of the sari. Discussion between the sales staff and shoppers is often animated and takes

up a significant amount of time. When Indian women arrive in the U.S. the sales representatives are not as forthcoming with assistance, the selection of clothing lacks individuality and the entire experience is done standing and walking. This is where the connection between Christopher Fletcher's work with Environmental Sensitivities and the displaced and/or dystoposthetic dress experience begins. The experience of shopping from collective to individualistic and sensory overload to Spartan creates an abnormal place experience for the new immigrant. The new shopping geographies influence the re-inscription of their human ecology.

Littrell and Ogle discuss the gradual adaptation of this new cultural system of dress through social feedback. These new immigrants often sought advice from Indian family and friends who were here longer. They also relied on the comments from non-Indians they encountered at school and work. Gradually they learned the cultural appropriateness of certain fabrics, colors and dress for particular seasons and social settings.

Indian dress identifies the wearer's identity, "Across the life span, a richly layered identity tells of a woman's marital status, social class, economic status, political viewpoint, and religious practice" (ibid 121). I would add caste to this list of markers as well. In America, however, these signals are lost and begin to fade within the Indian community. Littrell and Ogle propose that immersion in the U.S. develops a new language of dress. One that is transnational. Dress expectations must be maintained between Indian and American cultures (ibid, 128). These scholars close by saying that these women's expanded ideas of dress result from a multi-sensory experience which supported the development of a transnational sense of self (ibid, 131). While I agree with Littrell and Ogle that a new language of dress develops

from the diasporic experience, I question whether terming it “transnational” may be an attempt to align it with a wider body of literature which may be inappropriate. Transnationalism focuses on the flows of ideas, people and economies between nation-states. While the individuals of their study have migrated with their dress, their daily dress choices exist in a particular time and place, not across national borders. Concerns of nationality, ethnicity or religion appear as latent impetuses rather than primary motivations when viewing their participants’ wardrobe decisions. Rather than imposing an expansive geographical notion within the small spaces of closets, Littrell and Ogle could view the ensembles in context. I will revisit Littrell and Ogle’s ideas in later analysis as I will examine the dress choices in context rather than across nation-states.

2.6 Cross-Dressing

In *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing & Cultural Anxiety*, Marjorie Garber takes her readers beyond the commonly held idea of the cross-dresser, or a person who inhabits the dress of the opposite gender. For Garber, cross-dressing is a discursive concept covering categories of class, race, ethnicity, condition, and behavior. This broader idea of cross-dressing is used in later analysis as it applies to the dress choices of the immigrants in this study who cross-dress in particular situations for non-sexual reasons. Garber’s focus on two questions of cross-dressing both related to the word “success”. The first question is rather obvious: Is the cross-dresser successful in their sartorial disguise? The second question: Does the cross-dresser succeed in their objective of dress impersonation? The second question is important to Garber’s expansion of the idea of cross-dressing because she shows that common fictional and real-

life narratives of cross-dressing in the West occur for socio-economic reasons. These two questions will serve as the starting points for a cross-dressing as “success” analysis in its various personal meanings became a recurring theme amongst these ten subjects.

A second important point in her overall discussion is that the act of cross-dressing opens up staid binaries like male/female, rich/poor, fashionable/unfashionable, etc. These new tertiary categories then question the binary’s representation and relevance. The binaries of East/West, Indian/American, Pakistani/American, and Modest/Immodest were brought up repeatedly in the interviews. When situations or years of cross-dressing between these categories are explored a tertiary space emerges in the lives of these particular women.

2.6.1 Cross-Dressing Successfully, Cross-Dressing to Succeed

Throughout Garber’s text, she works through the many sub-categories of gender cross-dressers. In Chapter 2, “Cross-Dress for Success”, Garber focuses on male-to-female and female-to-male cross-dressers who seek to inhabit the persona of the other gender. As mentioned in the introduction to this section, one question Garber poses asks the cross-dresser and the viewer how successful is the cross-dresser performance? For cross-dressers this question is played out in the gender segregated sites in our society: the men’s room, the women’s room, the locker room and the cosmetics counter. As she further explains, these locations involve more than just garments but very specific forms of gendered behavior. For example, can a male-to-female cross-dresser successfully apply make-up in a women’s room and possibly interact with others in the room if approached (ibid, 47-48).

In a more discursive example, Garber examines John T. Molloy's *Dress for Success* and *The Woman's Dress for Success Book* where Molloy addressed the issue of upward mobility through dress. For Garber, Molloy's rules are about cross-dressing because they advise the reader on how to appear as something they are not. The advice covers gender, age, stature, race, ethnicity and sexuality. For example, Molloy advises men of shorter stature to wear "super-adult" garments to increase their authoritativeness. Garments should be well-tailored, in expensive fabrics and in classic colors and patterns, e.g. dress that is not available to boys (ibid, 41-44). The visual trick that Molloy encourages is changing the short man from "cute" and "diminutive" to "authoritative" and "masculine".

Garber brings together the ideas of "successfully" and "to succeed" in her examination of jazz legend, Billy Tipton. Tipton, born Dorothy Lucille Tipton, began cross-dressing as a man to get work as a musician. Later Tipton would marry and adopt three sons and live an outwardly "normal" life. Tipton arranged with his former wife, Kitty Oakes, that their marriage would not include sexual intercourse. He also never removed the bandages, which bound his breasts. More importantly, Tipton's musical persona was not suspicious because she performed the part of a jazz musician on and off the stage. Tipton's cross-dressing was successful. What Garber points out in this examination is what many viewers miss; Tipton cross-dressed to succeed. The jazz world was often closed to women throughout the 1930s to 1950s. Women were welcomed as singers but, their incorporation often ended there. In order for Tipton to get work as a piano player, and later as a bandleader, she chose to cross-dress. Or more simply, to succeed in jazz, she became a he. While Garber's analysis of Tipton's cross-dressing proves her point well,

Garber does not address fully why Tipton continued to cross-dress in her private life as a man. Did Tipton have some additional gender or sexual reasons for cross-dressing? Or did Tipton experience a psychological struggle where one persona took over another? I pose these questions because I believe Tipton's performance to be a layered experience not simply a singular one motivated by economic gain. Garber also works through additional narratives of popular movies to view the trope of cross-dressing for success, including *Sylvia Scarlett* (1935), *Some Like It Hot* (1952), *Tootsie* (1982), *Victor/Victoria* (1982) and *Yentl* (1983). Through each of these coupled with real-life examples, like Billy Tipton, Garber solidifies her point that cross-dressing is not always sexually driven but often motivated by other social barriers (ibid, 67-69).

Each is 'compelled' by social and economic forces to disguise himself or herself in order to get a job, escape repression, or gain artistic or political 'freedom.' Each, that is, is said to embrace transvestism unwillingly, as an instrumental strategy rather than an erotic pleasure and play space... (ibid, 70).

In my analysis of cross-dressing, I will revisit Garber's idea as I believe some of the immigrants in this study abandoned their South Asian personas after immigration to the U.S. to be more successful in their work and daily lives. Though I hope to prove that cross-dressing is not motivated by singular objectives but is rather the result of multiple intentions such as success, class, race and social conformity, adopted to achieve a particular comfort with one's surrounding environment.

2.6.2 Cross-Dressing: Tertiary Possibilities

In her introduction, Garber challenges the idea of the "third sex", which is an idea that confuses a binary sexual relationship. "The 'third' is that which

questions binary thinking and introduces crisis – a crisis which is characterized by *both* the overestimation *and* the underestimation of cross-dressing” (ibid, 11). Garber looks to the third actor in Greek classical drama to explain. By adding a third person on stage, the binary of protagonist and antagonist is broken; however, the effect is a more substantial story and presentation. The third actor adds information and can play multiple roles. Garber also presents the “Third World” as an example. The Third World existed only as a result of the Former Communist Bloc and The West’s formations.

What the so-called Third World nations have in common is their post-colonial status, their relative poverty, their largely tropical location, their largely non-Caucasian population, and the fact that they were once subjected to Western rule. ... ‘Third World’ is a political term, which simultaneously reifies and dismisses a complex collection of entities” (Garber 1992, 11).

Garber points out that the emergence of Third World nations questions the myopic global view of the other groups; therefore, changing the relationship of the Communist Bloc and the West. Garber’s point with these two examples is a binary lacks contextualization without the tertiary actor challenging the other two.

As Garber returns to the cross-dresser throughout the remainder of the book, she revisits the idea of the third. As noted above in sections 2.6.2 and 2.6.3, cross-dressing for success not only questions the male/female relationship but class relationships as well. Cross-dressing, therefore, contextualizes gender, class, race, representation and orientation. Additionally, she argues as one category is placed in context another is questioned. “One of the cultural functions of the cross-dresser is precisely to mark this kind of displacement, substitution, or slippage: from class to gender, gender to class; or, equally plausibly, from gender to race or religion” (ibid, 36-

37). In my analysis of cross-dressing, I will revisit Garber's idea of a third. In this case it will be a tertiary space called the semi-private space. Bakirathi Mani, discussed below 2.6.4, argued that South Asian-American diasporic youth questioned the very borders of South Asian and American nation states through performative dress choices in public/private spaces. I will propose that these teenagers' mothers created similar questions through their dress choices after immigration. It will be asserted that the South Asian diaspora necessitated the formation of a third space because the immigrants live between South Asia and America in a space which is fluid and wholly their own.

2.6.3 Cross-Dressing: Motilal Nehru's Dress Performance in India

Garber's discursive concept of cross-dressing is a concept that can be used to describe aspects of dress behavior in India. As discussed at length above in the section on spatial-dress divisions (2.4), socio-economic cross-dressing was already present in the subcontinent since the Vijayanagara. Cross-dressing appeared to reach its apogee during British colonialism when Western dress was experimented with and ultimately adopted by a large portion of the population. Though I will not rehash the ideas already stated above, I will merge the idea of spatial divisions with Garber's idea of cross-dressing to show how these ideas function together when South Asian and Western dress are at odds. To do this, I will discuss two sartorial avatars of Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru's father, who in my opinion established one of the greatest cross-dressing performances for political gain and in the interest of the Indian nation.

“Although he had always continued to wear Indian styles of dress inside his own home, the public knew him as the extravagant man of European fashion and in the early twentieth century he was frequently accused by the Indian press of ‘being a foreigner’” (Tarlo 1996, 102). Emma Tarlo reviews the numerous sartorial changes Motilal Nehru went through from the 1890s through the 1920s. An established lawyer, Motilal followed the fashion of the West much to the disapproval of his fellow Indians. In 1899 while on a visit to London, Motilal was photographed in long black double-breasted overcoat with white collared shirt and necktie. He wore a silk top hat, slim leather gloves, held a walking stick and completed his look with a greased handlebar mustache. A later photograph from around 1920 shows short-haired Motilal wearing a fine dhoti and kurta with a shawl draped over his shoulder and a beautiful leather sandal on one foot. He is seated, wearing reading glasses while glancing at a book. To an outsider, these photographs seem to show two different people but in fact these photographs show the same person performing for two different audiences.

In the photograph from 1899 (Figure 2.9), Motilal is showing his upper-class, educated standing in Indian society. Motilal, like many Indian men of similar social rank, associated himself with the British ruling elite through cross-dressing in British fashions. “This apparent quest for integration was not so much motivated by admiration for the British as by acceptance of the idea that India’s development could be brought about through cooperation with European values and ideas of progress” (ibid, 320). To bring about change, Motilal adopted European dress outside of the home, thereby dividing his Indian and British-favoring personas. The 1899 photograph depicts some clear cross-dressing signs which Motilal wished to communicate. The

ensemble communicated his high social rank and education, as well as, wealthy status for his ability to purchase an expensive and well-tailored European men's outfit in England. This choice of dress communicated to the public Motilal's political views at the time on cooperation with the British for India's betterment. The English dress, however, erased who Motilal was as an Indian. Distinguishing markers of caste, community and religion are stripped from his ensemble. Lastly, Motilal is participating in British fashion. As Garber indicates, the objective for a cross-dresser is to pass as the gender or class one is inhabiting, e.g. not to appear as a man in woman's clothes or vice versa. With the exception of race, Motilal plays the part of an English gentleman in every sense: dress, manners and opinions at the time.



Figure 2.9 Motilal Nehru in European Dress (Tarlo 1996)

By 1921, the members of the Congress Party cast-off their European clothes for the humble dress advocated by their leader, Mohandas K. Gandhi, known as *khadi*. Gandhi's idea of *khadi* referred to hand-woven cloth made from hand-spun threads, which was not embellished in any manner, including

color. Khadi possessed two purposes: the first to unite the Indian nation as a whole, erasing all social markers; the second was to restart Indian industries which the British crippled with the Industrial Revolution. The objective was to drive the British out of India and achieve self-rule.

In the second photograph (Figure 2.10), though in Indian dress Motilal Nehru is once again cross-dressing. Since khadi erased all social markers as well, Motilal appears as an Indian nationalist. Caste and religion are missing from the picture. His upper-class status is still discernible. The khadi he wears drapes well and is shown to be of fine threads, noticeable at the folds laying on his shin. Though khadi was meant to remove class status as well, the upper-class were not comfortable looking like the poor or even middle-class. Many, like the Nehrus, commissioned finer versions of khadi. So while Motilal only temporarily cross-dressed as a commoner, he and other elites opted to cross-dress as distinguished citizens in charge. As Lisa Trivedi comments on Motilal's son, "Nehru's high-count khadi clothing marked him both as a consummate subject-citizen to the nation and as a representative of his nation to the British" (Trivedi 2007, 94). By doffing his British attire and donning khadi, Motilal transformed himself into member of the nationalist struggle and in doing so merged colonial public and private spatial divisions back together creating a national imaginary for India.



Figure 2.10 Motilal Nehru in *Khadi* (Tarlo 1996)

It is apparent that in each of the above examples of Motilal Nehru's dress choices, he manipulates boundaries to advance his personal needs, the needs of his class or the needs of the Indian people. His transvestic choices were on the whole, successful according to Garber's rubric. In each instance he passed as that which he sought to be, which is confirmed by the criticism he received, i.e. social feedback. As noted in a previous quote taken from Emma Tarlo, the Indian press frequently criticized Motilal for 'being a foreigner'. When Motilal redressed himself as a nationalist the *Times of India*, a British-owned newspaper during this period, criticized Motilal for becoming common. Whether classing-up or classing-down, Motilal confirms that the mechanism of cross-dressing during this period is important for understanding how spaces are manipulated among South Asian immigrants today. In later analysis, the spatial-dress divisions will be mapped out to understand where cross-dressing can occur and how spatial divisions alter through cross-

dressing. The subjects' memories of social feedback will be examined to address the failure or success of these women's cross-dressing choices.

2.6.4 Cross-Dressing: 'Diasporic Dress' & Performance Among South Asian Youth

Bakirathi Mani's essay "Undressing the Diaspora" looks at South Asian-American youths' dress choices through a performative lens. In her essay, she focuses on the mixture of clothing items from South Asian and Western systems of dress. She defines her population as young women and men in their late teens and early twenties who come from a middle or upper-class background. Subjects are either first or second generation Americans. While Mani's study deals with a very different generation of South Asians, her ideas of how the performative nature of dress impacts personal and communal identifications are germane to interpreting these identifications for the subjects of this study.

Mani argues that historically, dress choices were performative in nature because Indians were putting on clothing unfamiliar to their dress lexicon and refashioning 'Indianness' in the public space. Whether colonial or nationalist in origin, those wardrobing changes continue to affect the dress within South Asian countries and in particular the diasporic dress of South Asian-American youth (Mani 2003, 121).

Whether "*kurtas* over khakis" (*ibid*, 117) or "the casual twirling of a dupatta over denim" (*ibid*, 122) the confusions of wardrobes confound culture and its narratives. Mani asserts that the performances of these youths resemble the performances of the feminist and/or gay communities. Ethnicity replaces gender/sexuality and calls into question the American idea of ethnic

pluralism just as the aforementioned movements question the state's idea of women's roles and a limited sexual narrative. Relating this idea to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's example of the ACT-UP t-shirt announcing the wearer's homosexuality⁶, Mani argues that the combination of South Asian and Western dress announces and performs who the wearer is in a less obvious way than the ACT-UP promotion. Instead the combination of anklets with short skirts, or the *khanda* (Sikh religious symbol) emblazoned on a jacket broadcasts a mixed message to both South Asian and Western audiences.

Mani turns to Esther Newton work on drag queens and street fairies where spatial misdemeanors occur. Newton contends that the drag queens are safe transgressors in a hetero-normative world because they rarely cross the boundary of the performance stage. Street fairies, defined as those always in drag, transgress into the everyday world disrupting both public (hetero-normative) and private (queer) spaces. These individuals receive criticism from both worlds because they cross a fixed demarcation by bringing both inside and outside worlds together (Mani 2003, 126). Mani sees the dress performances of South Asian youths akin to drag queens and street fairies. If youths choose to don acceptable dress combinations, defined as 'ethnic chic', then they have created a hybridity that is acceptable. If their dress confusions fall outside the idea of 'ethnic chic' then these youths disrupt the normal multicultural national and diasporic narratives (ibid, 125-126).

Mani continues by arguing that these dress mix-ups are constantly at work inside and beyond national borders, "...the clothing practices of diasporic

⁶ I disagree with the effectiveness of Mani's use of Sedgwick's ACT-UP t-shirt example. An ACT-UP t-shirt does not announce to the viewer the sexual orientation of the wearer but rather that the wearer is an AIDS activist. ACT-UP is not a gay organization; rather it is a non-partisan group. To get this idea across, Sedgwick and Mani should employ more banal queer t-shirt example like, "I Can't Even Think Straight" or "I'm Not Gay But, My Girlfriend Is".

youth signal outwards towards an imagined community of 'South Asia', but also inwards to the very real fault lines in the racial paradigms of the industrialized states" (ibid, 122). Outside of America, diasporic youth call into question the image of South Asia. Inside U.S. borders, this South Asian-American dress performance destabilizes the 'color' of the South Asian minority and appearance of the American majority. Mani's study calls into question the singular narrative of the assimilated South Asian community who struggles with 'what to wear' in the sartorial strains of public and private spaces. She concludes that, "...the problem of what to wear shifts from being a constant dilemma for diasporic South Asian youth, to an epistemological confrontation with the narrative paradigms of multicultural states" (ibid, 130). The young adults of Mani's study not only question the category of assimilated immigrants but are proposing other categorical and/or spatial possibilities, which are not necessarily constructed along national borders. I think what her population proposes is a distinctive category which is experienced only by these first and second generation youths.

Mani's conclusions project too much politically onto everyday dress choices of college-aged individuals. Where Mani sees young adults purposefully performing sartorial mixtures to destabilize racial and national lines, I see young adults negotiating identities on a college campus where they have to tackle the identity question for the first time. A kurta over khakis or a dupatta worn over denim appears more as what Mani terms "ethnic chic" and less so as political statements of sartorial forms. Her example of a Sikh khanda is her best example of a dress statement purposefully announcing who the wearer is and what they believe. What I appreciate from Mani's analysis is her wrestle with dress and space, which raised many ideas for my own

analysis. Again, I think Mani goes too far with her interpretations as she confines her spatial analysis to primarily South Asian and American and secondarily to public and private. Mani misses the point that dress and/or fashion choices are not made primarily to fit larger spatial categories but are chosen for personal comfort within particular environments and social situations. National, religious and/or racial identities are the latent intentions behind situational, functional and aesthetic concerns when young adults are pulling clothes from their wardrobes. The idea of choosing who one is in particular context is termed *appearance management* and will be discussed below in section 2.6.5.

2.6.5 Appearance Management

While the scholars discussed above (2.2) worked to define the cultural phenomena of dress and fashion and how these work within and between cultures, Susan Kaiser's work *The Social Psychology of Clothing: Symbolic Appearances in Context* examines "...the various means people use to modify the appearance of the body, as well as the social and psychological forces that lead to, and result from, processes of managing personal appearance" (Kaiser 1997, 4). *Appearance management* specifically deals with the planning and organization of appearances. As the following will show, addressing the intentions behind dress choices leads beyond the mere assemblage of garments to an understanding of identity and self.

Appearance management is a combination of thought process and physical process where one's appearance is modified or altered daily and often multiple times throughout the day. As Kaiser explains,

Appearance management encompasses what we do to and for our bodies visually, as well as how we plan and organize these actions...

Individuals may vary in their level of involvement with clothing and appearance concerns. However, appearance management is a universal concept. All individuals engage in some form of appearance management on a daily basis (ibid, 5).

Appearance management is a method for *self-presentation* or “a process of displaying an identity to others in a social context” (ibid, 181).

Like the spatial dress divisions discussed above, appearance management considers the public and private contexts of the self. The private context deals with how we understand ourselves in a setting, which “...may include experimentation and/or fantasy” (ibid, 182). The private context, therefore can be a space where different presentations are considered for the public context. The public context is concerned with how others perceive us in a situation. The public/private contexts consider if we dress differently in private than in public. These fluctuations between public and private for the purpose of appearance management can be understood as a performance, in a similar manner to Marjorie Garber’s explanations of cross-dressing as a performance in the above sections. Kaiser presents Erving Goffman and Kenneth Burke’s work with dramaturgy as a means of understanding appearance management. *Dramaturgy* uses four components of theater to make comparisons with behavior; these components are performance, setting, audience and the self as actor/actress (ibid, 192-193). An actor’s performance does not always present the true self but presents roles and/or other identities. As Kaiser explains,

- *Self*: The most abstract and inclusive concept; a global sense of who one is, composed of a subset of identities
- *Identity*: Self-in-context; constructed and negotiated through social processes (person interacting in context); composed of a subset of roles
- *Role*: Typified response to a typified expectation; most tangible of the three concepts – refers to performance or enactment (person

acting, following a script that is prescribed); may or may not be included in an identity (ibid, 193).

More simply, the role is what one does. Identity is who one is in context. Self is composed of the various identities. Roles are not always part of identity. For Kaiser's work, dress is a tool used in the process of performing and evaluating roles and/or identities. "Therefore, clothes may be viewed not only as props in the performance of a role but as means for negotiating an identity in social contexts" (ibid, 207). After negotiations occur dressed identities are accepted or dismissed as part of the larger self.

Identity and identities will be examined throughout the case studies because it is what defines who these immigrant women are in particular situations at particular times. Erving Goffman presented the idea that cultures provide individuals with identity kits. These kits contain social conventions particular to a culture. These social conventions can be rearranged, juxtaposed and combined in various ways to stay within or break out of that convention (ibid 187-188). Identity kits are used in both public and private contexts to experiment with developing and maintaining identities in context.

Identities are managed through self-assessments, as well as, feedback from others when moving within and between social situations. The process of expressing an identity is called *self-identification*. Appearance management is the tool which "...allows [a person] to anticipate what identities they would like to have in a social situation" (ibid, 187). *Self-disclosure* is the presentation of an identity when considering the situation and the audience (ibid, 187-186).

After expressing an identity and presenting it to others, the individual will choose the identity's relevance and/or value to the self. This process of judging a particular identity and its value to the self is called *identity salience* (ibid, 188). The process of identity salience occurs after social interactions

know as *identity negotiation*. As Kaiser explains, “When a wearer and perceiver are able to come to a shared understanding of the wearer’s identity through a process of interpretation and re-interpretation, using appearance and verbal communication” (ibid, 188).

Appearance management will be used as a tool to bridge and further explain connections between cross-dressing and the dress choices of my subjects. On its own, Garber’s cross-dressing focuses most of its attention on the performance and the individual. While Garber discusses social perception of cross-dressing there is lacking a conversation about it in an everyday context. Appearance management will help fill this void by looking outwardly to the social interactions of dress between performer and audience.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will review the research design originally proposed and the employed methods and procedures utilized in the field. As discussed below, the proposed methods and procedures were initially meant to view each immigrant from multiple perspectives, including not only interviews, but also photographs and closet interviews. However, due to a low response rate the project was revised from a survey model to a case studies model. Also the subjects were unwilling to permit photographs or closet interviews. The characteristics of the location and population are discussed along with background information on immigration policies for South Asian immigrants in post-WWII era.

Emma Tarlo's *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India* and Pravina Shukla's *The Grace of Four Moons: Dress, Adornment, and the Art of the Body in Modern India* helped to shape my ideas of dress in a diasporic context and initially formed my methodological direction. Both of these scholars situate their work in traditional ethnographic practice; however, they blur the lines of structured and unstructured interviews and the boundaries between participant and observer. Tarlo lived in a Gujarati village not only as an observer but; as a participant in the everyday activities of the village, which I believe gave her access into intimate family discussions (and arguments) over items of clothing. This work supplies dress researchers with obstacles and solutions one will encounter with dress in India and by implication, among Indian immigrants. Most importantly, her oft-quoted phrase 'what to wear' is

an unending problem to be answered by participants and researchers alike. For Shukla, the city of Banaras was not conducive for an intimate living experience; therefore, Shukla became an observer-interviewer when following a selected handful of individual women in their daily dressing rituals and shopping experiences. In Shukla's book, her writing took forays into a form of journal narrative where some experiences seem to be shared between friends rather than subject and object. The result for both of these researchers was projects that were ambitious, comprehensive and detailed.

3.2 Proposed Methods & Procedures

The original research objective sought to uncover what women from a non-Western clothing system experience when they immigrate to the United States and encounter a new clothing system. This objective is qualitative because it seeks an understanding rather than mere factual reporting. Field research is employed when the intention is to understand aspects of social life. Through observation and interaction in a natural setting, as opposed to a controlled environment, the research is able to view a particular problem in its natural uncontrolled setting. A natural setting is especially appropriate for eliciting unaffected attitudes and behaviors. Lastly, field research is not confined to the limitations of experimentation but allows the researcher flexibility to adapt to a situation as new opportunities present themselves (Babbie 1992, 285-286).

I proposed to obtain a sample through a snowball method (Babbie 1992, 292). Initial contact with the population sample was through letter and e-mail. These first contacts within the South Asian community in West Virginia would provide contacts beyond this initial group. The intention was that a chain reaction would continue extending to women outside my scope of

familiarity. The fieldwork was intended to last from mid-July 2008 through February 2009.

The proposed data collection would be conducted in as many as three stages depending on the willingness of each participant. All subjects would be interviewed preferably in their homes. There are two main categories which interviewing falls into, structured or unstructured. Structured interviews ask a respondent a specific set of questions with a limited supply of responses. Unstructured interviews begin with a general topic to be explored but allow the situation and the subjects to determine the course of the interview (Fontana & Frey 1994, 363 – 366). Since my initial methodological inspirations were Tarlo and Shukla, the structured interview was too rigid. The unstructured interview however, was too open for a thesis project. It became obvious that I needed to go in-between structured and unstructured for a semi-structured interview. Such a middle ground would allow for deviations in topic but staying within the intended objectives. The semi-structured interview (Appendix A) would be audio and/or video recorded. The aim of these interviews is not simply to elicit a set of facts but to create a conversation with each woman about the immigrant experience as expressed through her clothing choices. Open-ended questions would be the primary question type used throughout each interview in order to create an exhaustive response. Open-ended questions are employed when respondents' own opinions are central to constructing the analysis. Receiving exhaustive responses is important so that the participant includes all opinions and details as they relate to a particular question. Closed-ended questions would only be used to obtain demographic information (Babbie 1992, 147-148). Lastly, as noted in the interview guide the questioning follows a particular sequence rather than randomizing

question sets (Babbie 1992, 157). The general layout begins with demographic questions then moves into childhood dress memories, which is intended to jog the subject's memory about primary experiences with dress. The questions continue following a linear history from higher education, emigration patterns, settling in the United States, final settling in West Virginia, then finishing with attitudes and opinions of South Asian and Western clothing.

The second stage of data collection was intended to be picture content analysis. This second method was intended to create a life history aspect for the project. Life history researchers normally seek written documents such as diaries and letters to gain a more intimate perspective beyond an interview (Watson & Watson-Franke 1985, 1-6). Since this project studies material culture, family photographs would be a better marker of a life history than a diary since the clothing in question would be viewable in its current usage(s) and prior context(s). Additionally, photographs are a form of content analysis where garments and setting can be coded for later comparative analyses. These picture analyses would also take the form of an interview. I would ask the subject about the setting and content of each picture (Appendix B). Like the interviews, these picture conversations were meant to create a narrative about the woman and her dress.

Closet interviews (Green 2006), were the proposed final stage, involving video recording. In a closet interview (Appendix C) the participant discusses and interacts with items in her current closet. The objective was to encourage the women to discuss the clothing pieces in a narrative form as opposed to merely identifying garments. The elicited narrative seeks for the interviewee to move beyond the what, when and where of the outfit into the

how and why. The how and why questions aim to situate the ensemble beyond item and into an extension of the interviewee's self.

The proposed time limit set on each interview was one to three hours depending on which stages the participant agrees to do. The sessions were to be broken into multiple sessions depending on the needs of the participant. However, participant unwillingness to take part in photo analysis or closet interviews limited the data collection to interviews only.

3.3 Demographics

This section discusses the characteristics of the location and population where the interviews were conducted. Census data for South-Asians immigrants living in North-Central West Virginia is also provided. The section will begin with a review of changes in immigration and naturalization policies after World War II up to the Green Card Lottery for persons of South Asian origin. This review is necessary for understanding how changes in these laws helped to shape the generation of South Asian immigrants to the U.S. after the Johnson administration.

Prior to 1965, immigration and naturalization policies restricted the number of persons of Asian origin allowed to enter the United States. Persons of South Asian origin were grouped together with East Asians and Southeast Asians under a racial grouping known as "The Pacific Barred Zone". 1946 Indians received a change in their quota as a result of India's support of The Allied Forces during World War II; however, a quota continued to regulate the number of Indians allowed into the country (Chandrasekhar 1982, 22-23).

However, this situation changed with the Immigration Act of 1965 (INA) signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson set the following in motion:

1. The national origins quota system will be abolished as of July 1st, 1968...
2. The bigoted Asia-Pacific Triangle provision of the Immigration Act of 1917 is repealed immediately.
3. A ceiling of 170,000 immigrant visas for Eastern Hemisphere nations exclusive of parents, spouses and children of U.S. citizens is established on a first-come, first-serve basis.
4. A ceiling of 29,000 immigrant visas annually for any one country.
5. A ceiling of 120,000 immigrant visas for natives of independent Western Hemisphere countries, exclusive of parents, spouses and children of U.S. citizens.
6. A system of seven selective preference categories are established – four of which provide for the reunion of families of U.S. citizens and resident aliens, two for professional and skilled and unskilled workers needed in the U.S., and one preference for refugees including those displaced by natural calamities” (ibid, 25).

Though South Asians praised the 1965 Act, Indians criticized it also for the small quota India received. Due to India’s population, which constituted 15.3 percent of the world’s population at the time, many Indians believed that the quota should have made a concession for their nation’s large population (ibid, 25). The new law; however, did something that was unheard of at the time by other federal governments; it treated all emigrating groups equally. The act’s most important feature was its relinquishing of control over the future ethnic and racial makeup of the United States (Chandrasekhar 1982, 26).

Each of the participants of this study predate or did not participate in the Diversity Immigrant Visa Program, which is a mandated lottery program amended to the 1965 Immigration Act in 1990. More commonly known as the Green Card Lottery, this program made available 50,000 permanent resident visas to countries with low immigration rates to the U.S. India was ineligible for these visas from this program’s inception because India a high immigration rate to the U.S. Pakistan became ineligible as of 2002. The other nations grouped under South Asia by the State Department, Afghanistan, Bangladesh,

Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka were and remain eligible (U.S. State Department 2009, 473-496).

The immigrant populations that make up the 1965 INA generation and the 1990 Green Card Lottery generation differ in two respects, education level and socio-economic status. The 1965 INA population comprises highly educated men and women, often with post-bachelors degrees, from middle and upper-class backgrounds (Leonard 1993, 168-169). The post-1990 Green Card population's educational make-up and socio-economic status is lower. Graduate degrees are significantly less common among this group. The participants of this study; therefore, are a very specific group when this distinction is understood. They are not only specifically Indian or Pakistani, with the age bracket of 40-65 but are all educated and accomplished individuals from upper-class backgrounds (U.S. State Department 2009, 473-496).

According to U.S. census data⁷ the total Indian diasporic population in the state of West Virginia in 1970 was 905 people. This number had swelled 58% by 2000 to 1560 people. Kanawha County, home to the state capital, usually possessed the largest South Asian diasporic concentration. Monongalia County, where West Virginia University is situated, controlled the largest concentration in the 1980 census and has remained in the 2nd or 3rd seat of concentration throughout the examined censuses. Statistics for foreign-born persons of South Asian origin in West Virginia were not available prior to the 1970 census (Appendix F).

⁷ All U.S. census data was accessed through www.socialexplorer.com accessed March 17th, 2009.

A particularistic view narrows the setting and scale of the population to manageable proportions within specific time constraints (Babbie 1992, 41). The project focused on exploring the dress choices of immigrant women from a South Asian community situated in North-Central West Virginia. A rural area was chosen for two reasons. My preparatory reading noted the meager amount of attention the social sciences have paid to the South Asian diaspora situated in non-metropolitan areas. Secondly, West Virginia is familiar to me and would allow me better access to the South Asian diaspora.

The initial study plan sought a representative population sample of 30 South Asian immigrant women. The age range of these women was to be between 40 and 65 years old. The interviews were to comprise only the immigrant population and not the successive American-born generations.

As noted by Dr. Proshanta K. Nandi, South Asian-Americans who live in non-metropolitan areas are likely to form connections with other South Asians that are outside their caste, religious affiliation and nationality. In observing the South Asian community of North-Central West Virginia, it was noted that they do confirm Nandi's findings by socializing across the aforementioned boundaries. When recruiting for this study, the sample was open to all nationalities of region of South Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. As noted above, the West Virginia consists mostly of South Asians of Indian and Pakistani origin. The population for this study includes eight Indians of Hindu, Sikh and Jain faiths and two Pakistanis, both of whom are Muslim.

The North-Central West Virginia area comprises the counties of Barbour, Doddridge, Harrison, Marion, Monongalia, Preston and Taylor. This particular region was chosen for three reasons. The primary reason was that

it was the area where I grew up, making this particular South Asian diaspora familiar. Secondly, Harrison and Monongalia counties consistently possess South Asian populations from 1980 onward according to census data accessed. Marion County's South Asian population appeared in census data from 1990 onward. In this area of North-Central West Virginia, this particular South Asian diaspora consists of mostly Indian and Pakistani immigrants who immigrated to the U.S. after the relaxation of the immigration laws under the Johnson administration in 1965 (Table 3.1) (Dasgupta 1998, 16n8, 114, 210).

Table 3.1 North-Central West Virginia South Asian Immigrant Statistics
(Social Explorer 2008)

2000 Census						
<i>County</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Total S.A.</i>
Doddridge	7403	-	-	-	-	-
Taylor	16089	-	-	-	-	-
Preston	29334	-	-	-	-	-
Barbour	15557	-	-	9	-	9
Marion	56598	-	-	38	7	45
Harrison	68652	-	-	91	-	91
Monogalia	81866	36	60	368	48	512
Total	275499	36	60	506	55	657
1990 Census						
<i>County</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Total S.A.</i>
Doddridge	6994	-	-	-	-	-
Taylor	15144	-	-	-	-	-
Preston	29037	-	-	-	-	-
Barbour	15699	-	-	-	-	-
Marion	57249	-	-	29	2	31
Harrison	69371	-	-	9	-	9
Monogalia	75509	-	-	214	44	258
Total	269003	-	-	252	46	298

Key
A = Afghani
B = Bangladeshi
I = Indian
P = Pakistani
S.A. = South Asian

The research conducted covered three towns and four counties of the seven counties of North-Central West Virginia: Morgantown, Monongalia County; Fairmont, Marion County, Bridgeport, Harrison County; and Taylor County. The total population sample is ten women between the ages of 43 and 65. All women are classified as immigrants are not from successive American born generations.

3.4 Employed Methods & Procedures

After conducting my first two interviews, it became clear that the study would need to be altered. The following section will discuss how methods and procedures were altered to accommodate and attract more participants.

After sending interview solicitations to fifteen women via e-mail or letter, I was invited to attend a community dance performance in my hometown. The mother who organized the performance suggested that this would be a good way to meet other women and ask for participation. During the meet-and-greet reception prior to and dinner that followed the performance, I spoke with women that I had previously contacted and met approximately ten others. It was apparent at the reception, even with the women who knew me, that there was a general reluctance and/or skepticism about the project. After discussion with my committee, it was concluded that being a male interviewing Indian and Pakistani women who are of a particular generation about their dress choices could be a deterring factor. On my third interview, the subject confirmed this complication as she jokingly commented that it is odd for a male to be asking her these questions, since if we were in her home of Pakistan, our interview would be conducted through male intermediaries since we would be in separate rooms. At the conclusion of each interview, I asked for the

participant's assistance in securing more subjects. Each woman provided assistance; however, few of these snowball contacts resulted in an interview. The positive side to this assistance is that it helped me to secure five additional women interviewees whom I had contacted previously.

During the first two interviews, it became apparent that the family photographs and closet interviews were too intrusive. Even documenting the interview through audio-recording was met with wariness. It was clear that I was overly eager and needed to gain trust and respect from my subjects beyond mere familiarity before intruding in private family photos and crossing gender lines by allowing an outside male into a woman's wardrobe.

After discussions with my committee, the family photos and closet interviews were removed from my solicitation e-mail (Appendix D) and letter (Appendix E) as participation options. Instead, I would ask for one or both of these during or as part of a follow-up after completing the interview. Secondly, a case study method was recommended as a new format. After discussing what case studies entail, this was adopted, as it was still in line with my desire to mimic Tarlo and Shukla's work on a smaller scale.

Case studies can be singular or multiple, simple or complex. The common factor amongst all case studies is specificity, "We may simultaneously carry on more than one case study, but each case study is a concentrated inquiry into a single case" (Stake 1994, 237). Robert E. Stake points out that understanding the complexities of each case will allow the researcher to accomplish their objective of understanding the make-up of a collection of cases or attempts to understand phenomena.

The case study method breaks into three categories: intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. The intrinsic case study "...is undertaken because

one wants better understanding of this particular case” (Stake 1994, 237). The instrumental case study is employed to provide deeper inquiry into a topic or readjustment of a theory. Inquiry into “...phenomenon, population, or general condition” (Stake 1994, 237) requires utilizing a collective case study. This project falls into intrinsic and collective categories because I am concerned with the individual narratives and what these collective conversations say about this particular population. In the following chapter, each woman’s personal narrative is transcribed. Though each transcription is a condensed re-telling of the interview, care is taken to use their words and their descriptions of dress. In the chapter which follows these narratives are deconstructed and integrated to analyze the population and their general attitudes towards dress choices in West Virginia in the context of three case study topics. These topics will be public/private spatial divisions of dress, emplacement sensory theory, and cross-dressing/appearance management.

Group interviews were discussed as an additional method of reaching more subjects. The one-on-one interviews could be seen as a deterrent for those individuals who found the intimacy of singularity too intrusive. A group interview could provide a more realistic conversational context and help more cautious individuals to feel at ease. I conducted one true group interview and another semi-group interview. The semi-group interview was a one-on-one interview where I allowed a participant’s niece to sit in on the interview. I did not discourage her participation. It was obvious that this helped the primary participant feel at ease. The subject’s niece encouraged dialogue and helped jog the interviewee’s mind at times. At times, I allowed them to converse with one another and found that they answered some questions without being prompted. The true group interview was a gathering of four women organized

by one of the participants. As Fontana and Frey say in their discussion of group interviews, “The group interview is essentially a qualitative data gathering technique that finds the interviewer/moderator directing the interaction and inquiry in a very structured or very unstructured manner...” (Fontana & Frey 1994, 365). My experience proved to be exactly as per this textbook description. After demographic information was logged, the interview took a life of its own. The women began discussing things with one another and as with the semi-structured interview, answered many of my questions on their own. In this particular interview, I allowed greater deviation from topic as I found these sidebars helped further explain the main objectives in unexpected ways. In the future, I would conduct more group interviews as I found the participants more relaxed and more talkative.

CHAPTER 4

PROFILES

4.1 Introduction

The following sections will introduce each subject and give a synopsis of each interview. These synopses are based on the audio-taped record of each interview. Each write-up will highlight key topics brought up by each subject, which explain their particular dress choices before and after moving to the United States. My interpretation of the subjects' opinions will be interjected in the write-ups as well. Each profile will be followed by a flow chart, which shows how a subject separated her wardrobe when living in South Asia, here in the U.S., and in a few cases when living abroad. Each section heading lists the subjects' nationality, their age (if given) and their status as a multiple migrant or direct migrant.

Multiple migrants, as defined by Parminder Bhachu, are immigrants who have moved between multiple nations. A direct migrant is an immigrant who moves from one country to another. Bhachu argues that twice, thrice and multiple migrants are more adaptable than direct migrants in her discussion of consumption and the British-South Asian diaspora. As Bhachu explains, twice, thrice, or more migrants possess three areas of knowledge, which aid in their assimilation: command of the English language, powerful communication networks and understanding of Western bureaucracies. These comprehensive understandings allow these transnationals to reproduce their communities and cultural bases quickly and completely. With each migration, the process of reproducibility becomes easier (Bhachu 1995, 223-225). These ideas from Bhachu are important in viewing the assimilation of the South Asian

diaspora at a community level. While interpersonal conflicts exist at the individual level, the post-1965 South Asian diaspora integrated well into the American landscape because they were viewed as contributors to the nation. While multiple versus direct migrant will be assessed during the case studies, I bring it up here to help further distinguish each subjects' experience, as well as, allow the reader to contemplate this idea while reviewing the profiles.

The below table gives the relevant demographic information of each subject (Table 4.1). Since the majority of the subjects requested anonymity, each subject was given a pseudonym. The following maps highlight the subjects' places of origin (Figure 4.1) and their current places of residence in West Virginia (Figure 4.2).

4.2 Prof. Kapoor: Indian, 65, Multiple Migrant

Prof. Kapoor's is semi-retired and currently lives in Morgantown, West Virginia. She and her husband run a uniform supply shop, focused on healthcare. Our interview took place in this store. Prof. Kapoor wore a pink, white and blue textured, printed nurse's top with blue drawstring pants and comfortable shoes. She wore a simple gold necklace and earrings.

Prof. Kapoor holds a doctorate in mathematics from India Institute of Technology (IIT) in New Delhi. She left India in 1964 with her husband and moved to Trinidad/Tobago. The couple happily sought teaching opportunities outside of India. As she explained, India offered few teaching and research positions for the amount of graduates that the young nation was producing at that time. The couple taught mathematics in Malaysia and Africa before coming to the United States in 1988 and settling in St. Cloud, Minnesota. Prof. Kapoor taught mathematics at St. John's College for fifteen years. The reason

Table 4.1 Subjects' Demographics

	Prof. Kapoor	Mrs. Lahiri	Mrs. Khan	Mrs. Mehta	Mrs. Chodhari
<i>Interview Date</i>	8.9.08	8.15.08	10.11.08	10.12.08	10.13.08
<i>Country of Origin</i>	India	India	Pakistan	India	India
<i>Province</i>	Chhattisgarh	Andhra Pradesh	NWFP	Maharashtra	Uttarakhand
<i>SA City/Town of Residence</i>	Raipur	Velleteuru	Swat	Bombay	New Delhi
<i>Age</i>	65	52	55	58	44
<i>Religious Background</i>	Sikh	Hindu	Muslim	Hindu	Jain
<i>Immigration Date to U.S.</i>	1988	1974	9.1975	1976	1990
<i>1st Place of Migration</i>	Trinidad/Tobago (1964)	Miami, FL	Brooklyn, NY	Chicago, IL	Netherlands
<i>2nd Place of Migration</i>	Malaysia	-	-	Columbus, IN	New York, NY
<i>3rd Place of Migration</i>	Africa	-	-	Louisville, KY	Stonybrook, NY
<i>4th Place of Migration</i>	St. Cloud, MN	-	-	-	Cleveland, OH
<i>Date Moved to WV</i>	2003	1978	6.1980	1983	-
<i>Current Town of Residence</i>	Morgantown, WV	Fairmont, WV	Fairmont, WV	Fairmont, WV	Taylor County, WV
<i>South Asia Education</i>	PhD Mathematics, IIT Delhi	High School	High School	Bachelors	Bachelors, U Delhi
<i>Abroad Education</i>	-	-	-	-	Masters, Netherlands
<i>U.S. Education</i>	-	Bachelors	-	2 Masters, In PhD	-
	Dr. Naidu	Dr. Rao	Dr. Ravula	Dr. Kilari	Dr. Zadari
<i>Interview Date</i>	3.16.09	3.16.09	3.16.09	3.16.09	3.19.09
<i>Country of Origin</i>	India	India	India	India	Pakistan
<i>Province</i>	Andhra Pradesh	Andhra Pradesh	Andhra Pradesh	Andhra Pradesh	-
<i>SA City/Town of Residence</i>	Guntur	Vijayawada	Guntur	Hyderabad	Islamabad
<i>Age</i>	-	-	57	-	43
<i>Religious Background</i>	Hindu	Hindu	Hindu	Hindu	Muslim
<i>Immigration Date to U.S.</i>	6.4.1981	8.1975	10.30.1977	1975	6.1992
<i>1st Place of Migration</i>	Alabama	Malaysia	St. Louis, MO	Ireland	Morgantown, WV
<i>2nd Place of Migration</i>	Jackson, MS	Northern Ireland	Brooklyn, NY	England	Quiet Dell, WV
<i>3rd Place of Migration</i>	-	New York, NY	Patchogue, NY	Jersey Islands	-
<i>4th Place of Migration</i>	-	Brookline, MA	-	Chicago, IL	-
<i>5th Place of Migration</i>	-	-	-	Wyoming	-
<i>6th Place of Migration</i>	-	-	-	Chicago, IL	-
<i>7th Place of Migration</i>	-	-	-	Buffalo, NY	-
<i>Date Moved to WV</i>	8.8.1988	12.1982	10.15.1982	1988/1989	6.1992
<i>Current Town of Residence</i>	Fairmont, WV	Fairmont, WV	Fairmont, WV	Fairmont, WV	Bridgeport, WV
<i>South Asia Education</i>	IIT Delhi	Medical School	Medical School	Medical School	Aga Khan Med College
<i>U.S. Education</i>	-	-	-	-	WVU

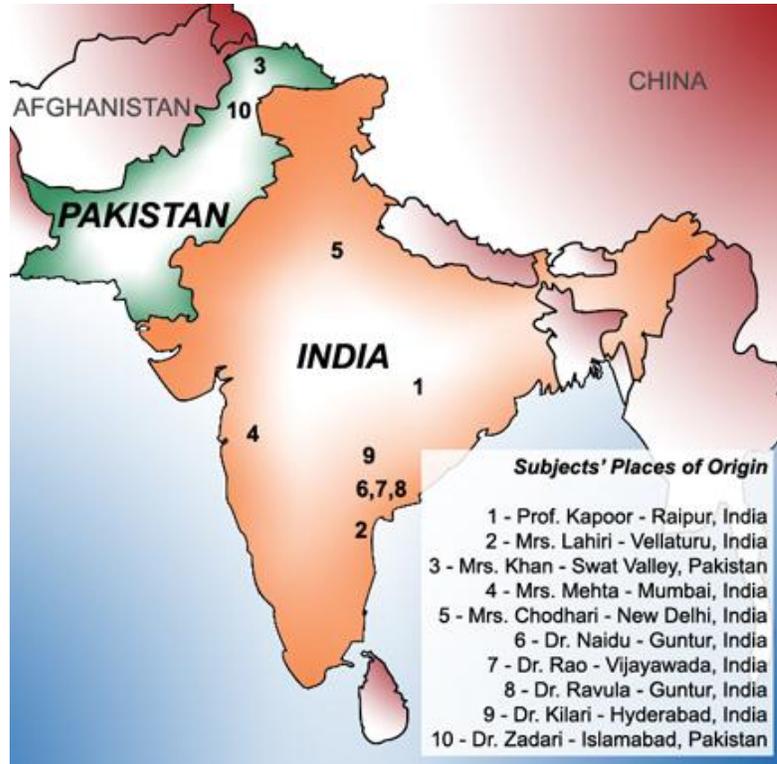


Figure 4.1 Subjects' Places of Origin (Map by Author)

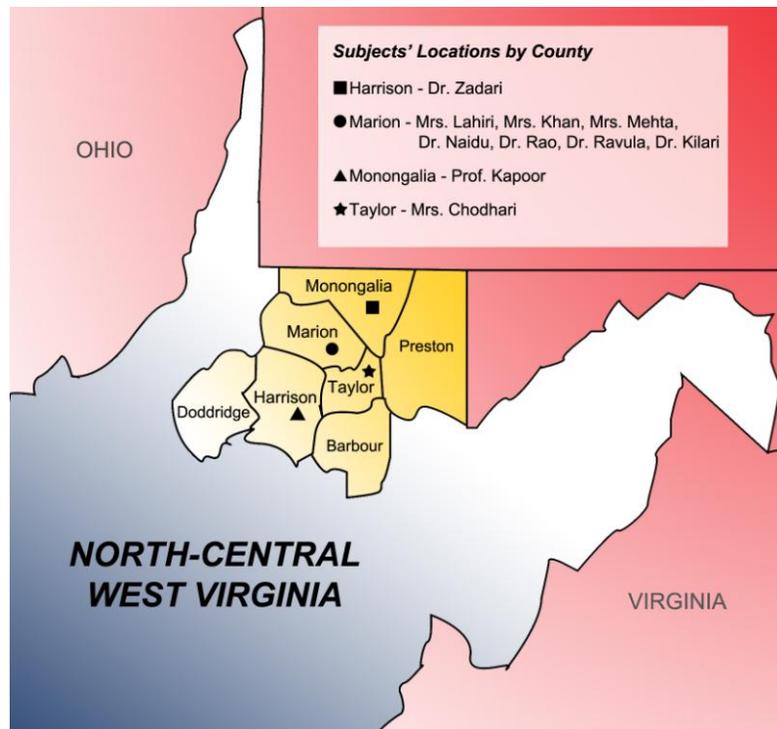


Figure 4.2 Subjects' Locations by County (Map by Author)

for moving to the U.S. was job-related but the primary reason was that her children were attending college in the Midwest and both parents desired to be closer to their children. This appears to be a rare reversal, as usually children follow the parents. When the couple reached retirement they settled in Morgantown, West Virginia because they liked the hills and scenery.

Prof. Kapoor described her dress experience in India as typical. She wore saris mostly and salwar kameez only at home. She maintained this wholly Indian wardrobe while living abroad in Trinidad/Tobago, Malaysia and Africa. As she explained, all three of these foreign locations had large South Asian diasporas, which maintained many aspects of their culture from the Asian subcontinent: food, dress, religion, and festivals. Each country's national population did not have a problem with the South Asian community's closeness and dress choices.

Prof. Kapoor's move to Minnesota changed her frequency of wearing saris from often to occasional. The couple moved in January and she noted that it was very cold. I questioned Prof. Kapoor if climate was the major factor in this decision being that she moved from Africa to Minnesota. Prof. Kapoor conveyed that climate was a minor part of her decision. She primarily wanted to be a part of the American community. She felt that adopting Western dress, which neither she nor her husband objected to, was easier. She also stated, "I did not want to feel as a foreigner." During this part of the interview, Prof. Kapoor restated that she did not want to stand out as a different person in her new environment. She qualified this statement by saying that if something does not conflict with your values and/or self than there is no reason not to adapt to it. In this statement, she was referring to dress. Finally she stated that when living in a foreign country, one should adapt. Prof. Kapoor's

commentary on swift adaptation is an attribute of her experience as a multiple migrant. As explained above (2.4), multiple migrants adapt faster to new settings because of prior transplant experiences. Though adaptation is Prof. Kapoor's primary motivating factor, I wonder if her perception of racial lines in American society was also a component. As she followed the above by saying, "Wearing Western clothes was easier." After reviewing this statement, it could be read both ways, easier for her and easier for the outside world that views her.

Initially Prof. Kapoor felt like she was not wearing enough clothes when she changed over to Western clothing. She found that her body was more visible. What she began to enjoy about Western dress was the freer movement, ease in walking, comfort and overall sense of liberation that these garments provided.

Prof. Kapoor did not give up her saris completely; they were and still are worn for community gatherings and family festivals. If she did not wear a sari, she said that she would feel out of place particularly because her generation continues to wear saris at such gatherings. She stated that it is acceptable for the younger generation to be untraditional; however, not for her or her counterparts. Prof. Kapoor said that when she wears saris she feels more feminine. She jokingly added that when she wears a sari she does not want to drive. A sari for her is not just about the sari but all that accompanies a sari like jewelry and other bodily adornments. She classified saris as something special now, not quotidian particularly because they are difficult to launder.

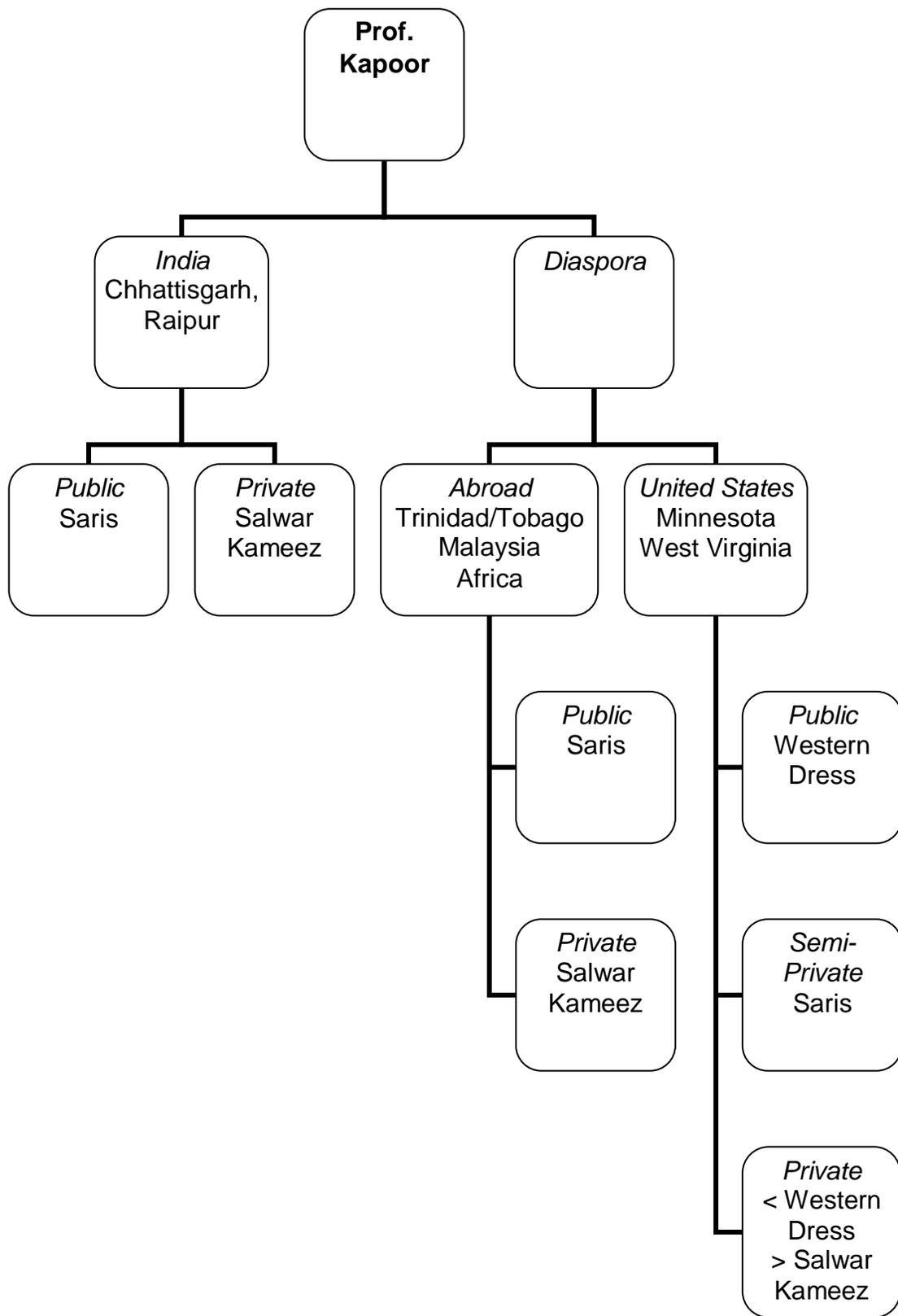


Figure 4.3 Prof. Kapoor's Wardrobe Flow Chart

4.3 Mrs. Lahiri: Indian, 52, Direct Migrant

Mrs. Lahiri is fifty-two years of age and comes from Velleteuru in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh. She completed high school education in India and completed her B.A. and Masters in English Literature from higher education institutions in West Virginia. After her children left home, Mrs. Lahiri took a job with the Federal Bureau of Investigation's branch office in Harrison County where she has been employed for the past eleven years. For the interview she wore a short-sleeved knit top, which had a bit of embroidery at the neckline with a casual khaki pant and simple jewelry.

Immediately after filling in a basic sketch of herself, Mrs. Lahiri began speaking about clothing. At first she described the dress of her native Andhra Pradesh from the '50s and '60s as fixed. As a young girl she wore a long skirt and blouse. As a teenager, she wore a half-sari and graduated to a full sari after marriage. Deviation from this progression of ensembles was not allowed. As she continued she described that the clothing was colorful, textured and varied while simultaneously emphasizing modesty. The most important factor for practicing modesty, according to Mrs. Lahiri, was covering most of the body.

When she moved with her husband to Miami, Florida in 1974 Mrs. Lahiri continued to wear saris, "I for the longest time did not give up the sari. That's all I wore living her in the States." She wore saris outside the home to her job as a medical administrative assistant. While she occasionally wore Western dress she complained, "Once and a while I try a Western style outfit but I just wasn't comfortable." In this statement, comfort refers to a mental perception in that she felt overexposed. Mrs. Lahiri's slow adjustment to Western dress is where Mrs. Lahiri differs from the other subjects. Her

discomfort with Western dress and her mental perception of herself as immodest appears as the reasons Mrs. Lahiri did not develop a Western wardrobe when living in Miami. Her work and social life in Miami did not encourage her to migrate to a Western dress. Saris were appropriate in both public and private worlds in Miami.

In 1978, the couple moved to West Virginia and started a family. It was in West Virginia that Mrs. Lahiri began to wear Western dress more often. I asked if the change in climate was a factor for beginning to wear Western dress. She laughed and said not really. When Mrs. Lahiri moved to West Virginia and she said that you really do not adapt a sari to cold weather,

...you wore the coat on top of the sari. And the socks and the shoes even though it was awkward. You've seen them [saris] they're open and they go all over the place. ... The cold, I guess wasn't the big deterrent. ... It's very interesting that's in the psyche that makes you do certain things.

Mrs. Lahiri continued that during this period in her life she went through a lot of mental and physical change. As a non-traditional student in her early thirties she enrolled in the local state college to pursue a bachelor's degree in English Literature. She conveyed a sense of being different amongst undergraduate students. Additionally, during this time she experienced significant weight-loss.

I asked Mrs. Lahiri about "sticking out" and if it was a negative. She replied that people looked at her oddly but not in a negative light. She felt that if people were staring, it was more out of curiosity than intolerance. She got into conversations with the students in her classes or around the campus about what she was wearing. She recognized that in a small town like Fairmont, West Virginia that there are not many other South Asians. Her bindhi, in particular, seemed to be a point of confusion for many people. Mrs.

Lahiri never had problems explaining these items, which she described as “talking about my culture.” Furthermore, she discussed how those who inquired complimented her clothing for being “graceful, bright and colorful.” While I agree with Mrs. Lahiri that most students who approached her did so out of curiosity, I think some must have done so with racial bias.

Once Mrs. Lahiri began working fulltime she said that she wore saris progressively less over an eleven to fifteen year period. “But now, it’s very occasional. Only when I go to an Indian party, I wear saris anymore. Or I go to the temple or something like that.” Visits to India are the exception to her wearing saris occasionally, as she chooses to wear saris exclusively there. When I asked if she has ever worn Western clothes in front of her mother her response was, “When she’s here. Not in India. She’s not crazy about it (laughing).”

Many of the subjects discussed the difficulty of caring for South Asian clothes here in the U.S. Now that many of have mostly formal versions for community gatherings, the garments are more delicate. Heavy embroidery or fine fabrics are unfamiliar to local dry-cleaners and these women are reluctant to send them out. As Mrs. Lahiri discussed silk saris which she prefers, “You can’t put them [saris] in the washing machine but the clothes here since I wore them on a daily basis made it a big big incentive to go shopping here and buy that kind of material.” She said that heavier silks tend to make the body look slimmer; therefore, she gravitates to these silks currently. Her color choices in saris have not changed over time. She still prefers reds and greens most and oranges and pinks second. She said jokingly that she still gravitates to the same bright colors but that her sister-in-law, who has excellent taste, makes sure that she brings some softer color variety into her sari wardrobe. “My

preference for color, I mean even here in the Western clothes, translates into what I buy here.”

When I asked her about wearing Western clothes, Mrs. Lahiri commented that there is a “sense of freedom”; however, modesty still prevents her from feeling as comfortable in trousers as she does in skirts because her legs became visible. Mrs. Lahiri reinforced that though modesty and self-consciousness were deterring factors for her beginning to wear Western dress, as time progressed gradually these culturally ingrained ideas slipped away.

Mrs. Lahiri said that when she was in school and began to wear Western dress she purchased long skirts and blouses mostly in silky materials. When she started working she began on the midnight shift and wore what she termed “casual stuff” like “pants and knit tops”. Mrs. Lahiri moved up in her office hierarchy and has to travel and interact with more important people, which caused her to wear more business suits. She ended the interview with the following statement about dress in her community,

I know friends of my age and they still haven’t given up, women friends of mine. There’s levels of us to generalize. Some of us have completely completely gone Western. Some of us, like me, in the middle somewhere. Some of us are sticking to their old traditions, tooth and nail. They haven’t given up. So there are all kinds I guess.

4.4 Mrs. Khan: Pakistani, 55, Direct Migrant

Mrs. Khan is from the Swat Valley in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) of Pakistan. She is homemaker and fifty-five years old. After marriage, the couple immigrated to Brooklyn, New York when their eldest child was one year old in September of 1975. The young family immigrated to the U.S. so that her husband could pursue his residency here. During the

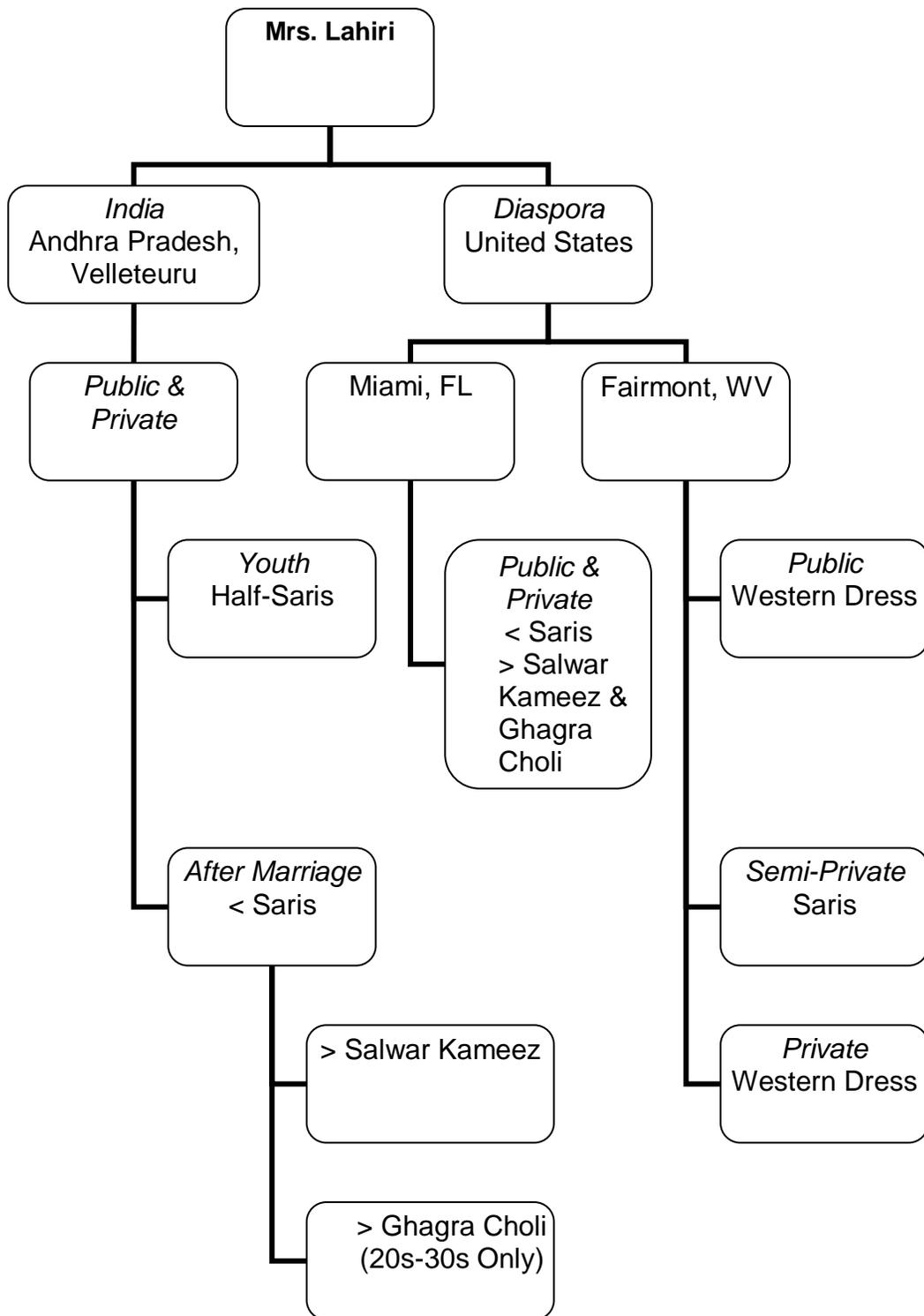


Figure 4.4 Mrs. Lahiri's Wardrobe Flow Chart

interview, her niece joined in the conversation to explain ideas if her aunt needed assistance. For the interview, Mrs. Khan wore a cobalt blue salwar kameez with black headscarf, and sparse jewelry. The cobalt tunic of the outfit was covered in a small floral print of pink and yellow flowers.

After Mrs. Khan reminisced about her village the conversation moved to dress. Mrs. Khan's niece explained that at a certain point in a young girl's life, usually at puberty or earlier if she grew quickly, her father and brothers would ask her not to play outside anymore. She would be asked to go inside. If she went outside, it was understood that she would cover her head with a long shawl known as *chaddar* (a cloth used as a head/body covering). "I actually wore burqa also. ... From age fourteen on, I wore burqa." I contacted Mrs. Khan after the interview to get a clarification on the exact details of the burqa she wore as the styles vary between region and time. Unfortunately, a response was not received from follow-up questions on this issue.

In their first five years in Brooklyn, Mrs. Khan and her family were surrounded by Pakistanis, Indians and numerous other immigrant groups. As Mrs. Khan continued, she discussed her surroundings in Brooklyn and how her dress changed with the encouragement of her husband. He suggested that she did not need to cover her head in public in Brooklyn. asked if she discussed uncovering her head with other Pakistani women she came to know in Brooklyn, she explains that it was not as much of a problem for them. Most of the Pakistanis, as mentioned above, were from urban locations like Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi. Mrs. Khan described them as "modern". She explained that it was common for those women not to cover their heads all the time, even outside the home,

The city people in Pakistan, a lot of them don't cover, even if you go to Islamabad. They are more modern than us. We are very conservative.

And those city people are very modern. So when they come here even if they wore occasionally, they were not covering.

Though Mrs. Lahiri and Mrs. Khan differ in national origin, religion and ethnicity these two women's self-consciousness with removing their respective culture's dress is related; both center on modesty. As the following shows, her adaptation with Western dress happens much quicker because of climate and from the encouragement of her husband.

I asked Mrs. Khan about her first winters in Brooklyn and how they compared to winter in NWFP. She explained that they were very different, Brooklyn being her first exposure to a real winter. When Mrs. Khan's husband took her to buy a coat for her first Brooklyn winter she was resistant because she associated coats as an item of men's dress. During a walk on a particularly cold day with their son, Mrs. Khan was unable to bear the cold. After this instance, she asked her husband to take her shopping for a coat. On this purchasing trip, they also bought for her a hat and gloves. In 1979, Mrs. Khan began to wear pants as well. She attributed her willingness to try pants to a combined sense that she was sticking out and felt as though she was not partaking in a common experience shared among Pakistani immigrants, other immigrants and Americans.

By the time Mrs. Khan and her family moved to Fairmont, West Virginia in June 1980, she said that she was wearing pants often. Mrs. Khan described her current wardrobe as consisting equally of Western and South Asian clothes. She even said that she would occasionally mix a kurta top with pants. Mrs. Khan explained that when in public, e.g. at a school function or dinner at a restaurant, she feels most comfortable wearing hijab, pants and a shirt but she does not limit herself to this outfit in public situations. Her niece explained, the salwar kameez her aunt was wearing is more for around the

house, grocery shopping, or dinner at home with the family. Mrs. Khan added that the salwar kameez is the outfit she prefers to wear because she is most comfortable in it.

Mrs. Khan talked about the importance of passing on culture to her children so that in turn they will pass their Pakistani culture on to their children someday. For her, culture was defined by food, language and dress. I inquired if Mrs. Khan and her husband discussed dress and modesty for their daughter when she was born.

I am more conservative than him [husband]. He said that clothing is not written in the religious book, what clothing to be a Muslim. For woman, the clothing is long and loose. You don't display your body and you cover properly. That's all that matters. He told me you're not going to make her wear salwar kameez if she doesn't want to. ... She mainly wore pant and shirt. ... She is more American than Pakistani (laughing). ... She wears salwar kameez only to the parties, that's it. ... She doesn't feel comfortable going to the grocery store...going to the hospital. Even in the house she only wears pyjamas.

Mrs. Khan's daughter chooses not to cover her head. She will wear the scarf but draped on the shoulders and not covering the head. She closed the interview by asking me about my research. As I explained, I wanted to understand how South Asians adapted to small town America after moving here. She commented that she thought it was different for everyone but that respecting one another's culture was important for everyone. She does not have a problem with other women wearing garments that she would never wear, like a bathing suit. It was the following comment during this discussion, which explained to me much about Mrs. Khan.

Mrs. Khan's dress choices are the most fluid of the participants interviewed. She comfortably wears salwar kameez as much as she wears pants and blouses. She additionally mixes South Asian with Western

garments into the blended ensemble of a kurta, pants and headscarf. Where she chooses to wear these outfits is the spatially dividing factor.

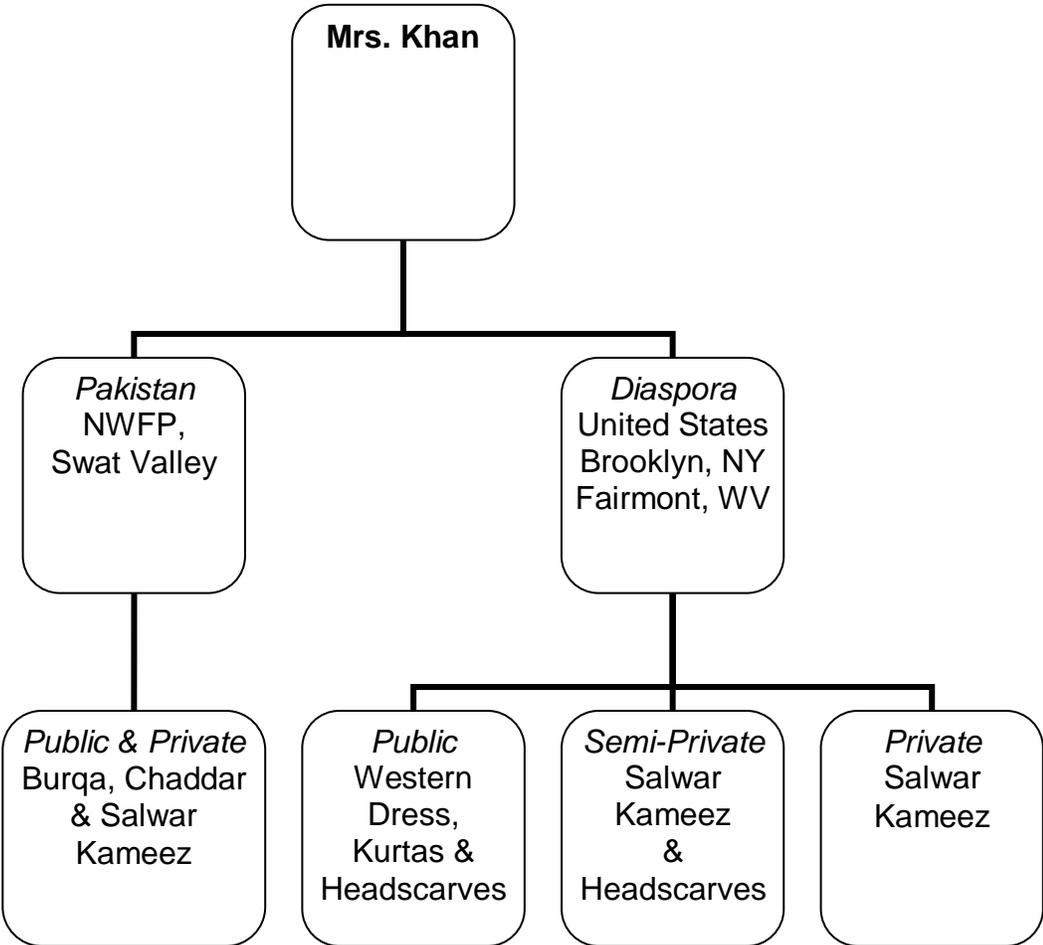


Figure 4.5 Mrs. Khan's Wardrobe Flow Chart

4.5 Mrs. Mehta: Indian, 58, Direct Migrant

My next interview with Mrs. Mehta was a complete shift in experience from Mrs. Khan. While Mrs. Khan's background was quiet, Mrs. Mehta grew up by the ocean in the posh neighborhood of Mahim in India's flashiest city, Mumbai. Her family is Gujarati and arranged a marriage for her to a Gujarati man in 1975. They immigrated to the U.S. the following year. During our interview,

Mrs. Mehta made the following statement, which I believe, sets the tone, “I think clothes are important in life. Clothes reveal a whole lot about your personality. It can tell if you’re an extrovert, introvert.” Mrs. Mehta was relaxed for the interview and wore a t-shirt and sweat pants.

Mrs. Mehta explained to me that custom-made clothes were typical for middle class and above families. For her family, a tailor typically would come to the house twice a year, take measurements of the girls and make the same outfit for all three girls. “I use to fight even as a child. I’m not in a band. I don’t have to wear a uniform.” If her sisters were wearing a particular dress, she would wear one of the others. She asked the tailor to bring more pattern books for her to look at so that she could pick out what she wanted. The tailor also made salwar kameez for Mrs. Mehta. She did not start wearing a sari until she was a teenager. In college, she got her own tailor instead of using the tailor that came to the house, “I always picked out my fabric, my clothing to the tailor and got it tailor-made.” She does not remember buying many readymade items frequently until she came to the U.S.

Mrs. Mehta talked about how Bollywood was an influence on her life in an untypical way. For many Indians, they see the movies and flip through film magazines often taking these magazines to their tailors to have the costumes copied. Mrs. Mehta lived among film stars and singers who were her neighbors and family friends. She frequently went to filmings and concerts, which she attributed as influences on her sense of fashion and self. In this cosmopolitan environment is where Mrs. Mehta learned how to wear garments from both cultural wardrobes and mix items from them as well.

Mrs. Mehta and her husband moved to Chicago in 1976. I asked why the couple chose to move to the U.S. She replied, “If you’re Indian no other

country attracts you like America, the land of opportunity.” Mrs. Mehta got a job as a bank teller where she wore many of her tailor-made garments from India. She was frequently complimented on the skirts and tops, which she described as cotton prints. She did note that at a certain point, she did run out of clothes. At the time, she was living in a joint-family situation with her brother-in-law and sister-in-law. She described how she really did not shop a lot when she first moved to Chicago. Part of it was financial but she also said that she only shopped when the family shopped. She did not shop by herself. I posed to Mrs. Mehta that because she had grown up wearing Western and Indian clothes that Chicago must not have been a surprise then, except for the cold weather. Mrs. Mehta explained that the difficulty came with ready-made clothes. She discovered that when she went shopping in Chicago there was a lot of similarity in the clothes. In fact, she encountered racks of garments that all looked exactly the same, which she described as a uniform. Mrs. Mehta was uncomfortable with the sameness of American clothes because she was use to her garments being unique and designed for her. Ready-made clothes may appear as an unimportant cultural dress issue but it speaks to the very core of Mrs. Mehta’s dress identity, which since childhood was one of differentiation. From a young age, she wanted to distinguish herself from her sisters. The thought of dressing like everyone else conflicted with her sense of self. Mrs. Mehta had to renegotiate who she was in ready-made American clothes just as the other subjects renegotiated themselves in Western dress. Unlike the majority of the other subjects modesty was not the issue, it was simply knowing that she was lost in the crowd.

Mrs. Mehta and her husband moved from Chicago to Columbus, Indiana where her husband got a job at a state hospital. The couple then

moved to Louisville, Kentucky, again for her husband's work. By this time, the couple had their first child. Mrs. Mehta's husband did not want her to stay home with the baby and encouraged her to continue with her Masters. Mrs. Mehta enrolled at the Kent School of Social Work at University of Louisville. During this period in her life, Mrs. Mehta had a frenetic schedule. Raising a child, caring for her father-in-law, household responsibilities, graduate school and shuttling her husband to and from work. All these duties forced Mrs. Mehta to adopt American clothes that were the uninteresting "uniforms" she could not bring herself to buy while living in Chicago. She had to pick convenience over style. She was finishing up the last semester of her Masters program in 1982 when her husband found a job in Fairmont, West Virginia. They moved the following year.

By the time the couple moved to West Virginia, Mrs. Mehta was regularly purchasing off-the-rack American clothes; however, still to this day she is displeased by the sameness in department stores. "It took me a long time to go from custom made to readymade clothes. By this time I got accustomed to myself [it]." Mrs. Mehta frequently traveled for West Virginia's Head Start program to cities like Philadelphia, Detroit, and Washington, D.C. She used these business trips as opportunities to shop for both American and Indian clothes since the larger cities provided both shopping experiences and a larger selection than in North-Central West Virginia. When asked what type of clothing she shopped for when she was out-of-town, casual or fancy, Mrs. Mehta talked about how it really depended on her body at the time. Dealing with fluctuating weight after multiple pregnancies, caused her to shop for what she needed at the time. It was becoming obvious during the interview that Mrs. Mehta does not confine her shopping to Indian enclaves or American

malls. She is interested in finding uniqueness and will search for such pieces wherever the opportunity provides itself,

Now, I would go to Chinatown. ... They have American clothes in Chinatown but which are different. They are a little tight fitting and the fabric is different from what you get at the department stores. ... So in Toronto, you go to Chinatown or Indiatown and you get clothes, a pant, and it has a little something different.

This is reflected in her style of dressing as well. She usually wears Indian dress at South Asian functions. When she goes to a function that mostly American she will wear either American outfits or mix a kurta with dressy pants. Mrs. Mehta will also mix Western items with her saris. She will wear a spaghetti-strap top under her saris which will cover her midriff more than a choli. She was the only subject to mention mixing a Western garment with her saris.

Though Mrs. Mehta welcomes clothes from all cultures, she seems to value the beauty of her Indian dress. Moving to the U.S. and finally to West Virginia has given her a profound sense of respect for her Gujarati-Indian culture. "Saris are forever. The old-fashioned comes back. Salwar kameez also." Mrs. Mehta continues to follow fashion and Bollywood films; it is not surprising that she prefers "...bright brilliant colors. That's Indian you know." She talked about how Indian fabrics have changed over time.

Though Mrs. Mehta follows trends, she pays equal attention to her body. She described how depending on how she feels about her body will affect which kinds of fabrics she will purchase, avoiding those which are too clingy.

At the conclusion of the interview, Mrs. Mehta and I engaged in a conversation about dress and identity. She talked about some of the other women in the community who still wear saris and those only wear saris to

functions. I asked her what she thought about those two extremes and if one is less adapted than the other. Mrs. Mehta responded with the following,

I believe more in the salad bowl not like the melting pot. That's my belief. I was never trying to melt into this pot, right from day one. ... I wasn't thinking to get Americanized. I felt like if I want to wear that I wear that, if I want to wear this I wear this, if I want to mix and match I can do that because I have the benefits of mixing the two cultures. So, I don't even think I raised my kids with that idea. It just happened that they went to American schools where there was no choice really. Coming to smaller town Fairmont, there was limited Indian people. Like major cities, my sisters and brothers and all. They are in the major cities, so weekends they go to the temple where they are teaching them language, teaching them the Indian music, dance and all those things. Those kids are exposed to those kinds of stuff there. They go to more Indian functions and the kids automatically meet more Indian kids. So they have more Indian friends. Whereas my kids have more American friends than Indian friends probably. So certain things was not available which is why I initiated in this town because I wanted them to have their heritage. I started *Diwali*⁸ in this town, I started *Navratri*⁹, the dance festival, I would give more parties here when my kids were growing up. They would meet more Indian people. Then of course I have a volleyball party, so I would have American friends. So I started telling them, doing it, it's O.K. My food also is Indian and American, Indian and American. I didn't want my kids to feel like, we are brown we are different. So right from day one, I have been working on them that it's ok to be what you are. But if you interview some of my friends, in town, the wives who never left home to work outside they have struggled. ... If you talk to them and you talk to me, I'm out of your curve (laughing).

As we concluded, I proposed to her that there might not be a formula. Mrs. Mehta responded, "You're right. There is not set formula. It's how you handle yourself."

4.6 Mrs. Chodhari: Indian, 44, Multiple Migrant

Mrs. Chodhari grew up in New Delhi and described the city as not as crowded

⁸ Diwali translates to the "Festival of Lights". The festival celebrated in Hindu, Sikh and Jain religions marks Rama's fourteen-year exile after his triumph over the evil demon Ravana.

⁹ Navratri is a Hindu festival of worship and dance. The word literally means "nine nights" during which nine forms of the Divine Mother, Durga, are worshipped.

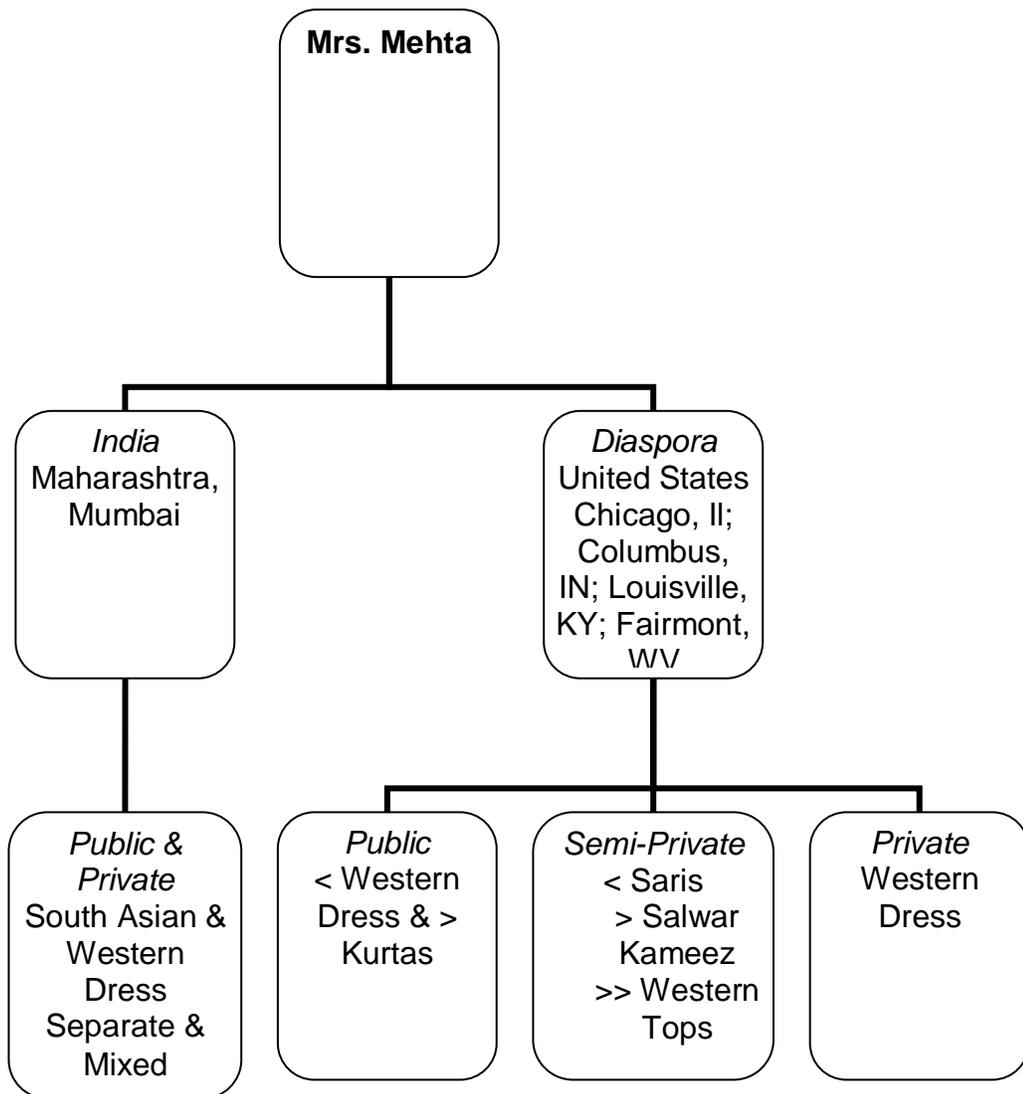


Figure 4.6 Mrs. Mehta's Wardrobe Flow Chart

as it is now. She told me how she remembers that she and her sister enjoyed reading, cycling and hanging out with their friends. She said she had a “good childhood.” She completed her undergraduate degree in Economics at Delhi University. In the early 1980s, her family moved to Holland for her father’s work. She completed a Masters in Economic Policy and Planning while living there. She returned to India to join her family, after her Masters was

completed. For the interview, she wore a casual navy blue button-down shirt untucked with jeans.

As a young child, Mrs. Chodhari wore dresses. As a teenager, she began to wear salwar kameez, jeans, trousers and “I even think I wore bell bottoms.” Though she wore trousers to school, salwar kameez were becoming more popular. “When I was in college, it had become more fashionable to wear salwar kameez. It was like an identity thing. ... I think the fashion industry at Delhi at that time sort of took off.” After she married in 1988, she began to wear saris but did not care for them.

I did wear saris occasionally but I have never been very formal wearing saris. I find them too cumbersome. Though my mom did give me beautiful saris for my wedding. ... I always found them cumbersome. I only wore them on formal occasions. Especially when your mother-in-law see you at family gatherings. You were your best at family occasions. Day to day I wore salwar kameez.

The couple moved to New York City in 1990 before moving to Stonybrook, New York to be closer to her husband’s residency. They then moved to Cleveland, Ohio for his fellowship before moving to West Virginia. When she first arrived in the country she wore salwar kameez mostly. She did not feel uncomfortable in salwar kameez in her surroundings, “In New York City, you do see some women wearing salwar kameez. You just feel different. Very different.” She switched over to Western dress when winter came and she described how her wardrobe became more seasonal. Western dress in the winter and salwar kameez in the summer. “Especially for the Indian get-togethers, salwar kameezes. I’ve never been comfortable wearing dresses, so even for a formal occasion I would wear salwar kameez.” She has a large selection of salwar kameez. She prefers cotton with some embroidery on it. For more formal occasions, embroidered silks. Mrs. Chodhari explained that

she does not wear salwar kameez very often in the U.S. anymore and saris even less so. She will wear them for community or friendly get-togethers with other South Asians. Like some of the other subjects, Mrs. Chodhari complained about caring for both outfits in the U.S., "It's for convenience. I mean who's going to launder those salwar kameezes and dry-cleaning is so expensive for saris." Salwar kameez for formal occasions separates Mrs. Chodhari from the other Indian women in this study who wear saris to community gatherings. Her preference has to do with where she grew up and her age. Many South Asians, including some of my subjects, consider the salwar kameez a Northern or Punjabi form of dress. When the salwar kameez was discussed in the group interview, a few of the subjects made sure it was known that they do not wear it. Mrs. Chodhari's above comment about the salwar kameez being an identity thing helps to explain this. Mrs. Chodhari's mother wears saris, "It's because that's what she's so use to." Her mother-in-law wears salwar kameez. Her sister, who is still in India, wears only salwar kameez. For Mrs. Chodhari and her sister, they were coming of age when the salwar kameez was becoming more popular amongst her generation, which her parent's generation seemed to have little contest with since the salwar kameez is more modest than the sari.

When I was a little girl, like eight or nine, my grandfather, my mom's dad, told my mother in front of me, that it's time to switch her to salwar kameezes. No more dresses for her. ... I guess the idea is that when girls grow up they should not wear dresses. You have to dress a little more conservatively (agreeing that salwar kameez is more conservative). ... Even here I don't wear dresses at all. I don't feel comfortable.

Mrs. Chodhari is currently a homemaker. She said that if she were working she thought that she would spend more money on clothes. When she buys clothes, she buys mostly for her son. At home or when running errands,

Mrs. Chodhari chooses comfort as the main characteristic for her daily dress. Comfort does have its limitations. Though she likes knits, she does not like sweatpants at all. For Mrs. Chodhari, comfort is not just physical but mental as well. She brought up her sense of self-consciousness. She prefers to wear dark colors and not wear clothes too tight, two things that she attributes to persons dealing with weight problems.

4.7 Dr. Zadari: Pakistani, 43, Direct Migrant

Dr. Zadari is from Islamabad, Pakistan. She immigrated to the West Virginia in 1992 to complete her residency in internal medicine at West Virginia University. For the interview she wore a chocolate brown v-neck with double horizontal stripes, khaki pants and one gold bangle.

Dr. Zadari is only one year younger than Mrs. Chodhari. Both of these women share two aspects regarding their youth, which make their dress experiences similar: what they wore to school and exposure to Western media. Dr. Zadari's school attire was more regulated than Mrs. Chodhari's because Dr. Zadari went to private Catholic schools where uniforms were prescribed. In co-educational primary school, she wore a white collared blouse with a grey skirt that extended below the knee, white socks, black shoes and a badge, which designated her house. For sport activities, she wore tennis shoes. Her hair had to be short or tied up at all times. Jewelry was not allowed except for a watch and small earrings. When she began her secondary education, where the sexes were segregated, her uniform changed to a salwar kameez and dupatta, which was pinned at the shoulders. She explained that the country was undergoing a religious wave, which influenced

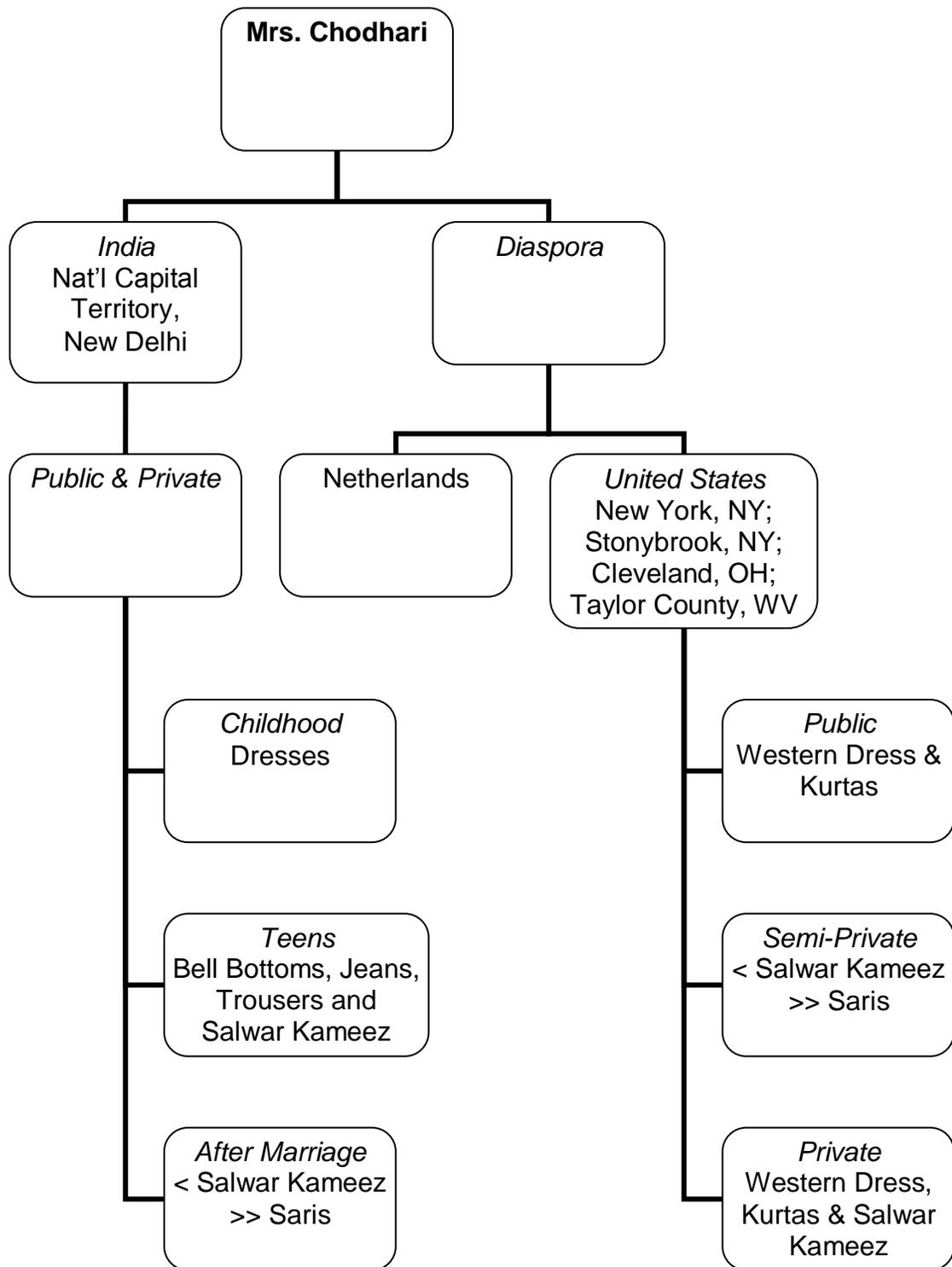


Figure 4.7 Mrs. Chodhari's Wardrobe Flow Chart

the change of school uniforms, as well as, the cultural norm of girls covering their legs around puberty. Her secondary uniform was not overly conservative, as she explained. She was not required to cover her head, even when in the presence of male instructors.

At that time, people wore dupattas. Some were broad, some were smaller. ... At that time you hardly saw people wearing a scarf to cover their heads. It just hadn't caught on. If a woman from a small town or village would cover their head, they would just put a dupatta on their head. They would normally do that if they were going to a place with men they didn't know. But the Arabic way of covering way the head just hadn't caught on.

While attending Aga Khan University Medical College in Karachi, Dr. Zadari wore Western dress, as did the other students though the medical students were given more freedom in their dress, it just had to be conservative.

While she lived under dress codes when at school, her parents were not very strict about her or her sisters' dress. Though she wore salwar kameez mostly for home and socializing, the underlining factor for her dress decisions was situational. Salwar kameez and dupatta was expected when she was socializing in a conservative situation. Her parents did not require her to cover her head. Jeans, pants and shirts were acceptable if she was in a more 'modern' environment.

Unlike many of the other subjects, Dr. Zadari wore swimsuits growing up. Swimsuits had a specific setting in which they could be worn, the local country club. Dr. Zadari's parents instilled in their daughters that their dress choices should never be the center of attention in public or small social settings, "They wanted us to dress according to the circumstances. Basically the idea was not to draw attention to yourself. ... If you were in a setting and people were dressed up like that, that was fine. Don't be the only one." The only time her parents disapproved of her dress choices was if she was

showing too much skin. They did not like sleeveless shirts, showing of midriff or exposing too much leg, which might explain her mother's dislike of skirts.

When Dr. Zadari began her residency at WVU she encountered more dress codes, though this system was less about what specifically to wear. This dress code focused on what you could not wear and when certain garments were allowed.

When I started working the dress code, they don't like you to wear jeans. They don't like you to wear T-shirts. ... Other than that you could pretty much wear anything. You pretty much wore anything that was comfortable because we were working such late hours. ... If you were on call, you could wear what are called scrubs. In the winter you could wear a sweatshirt but that was more acceptable for evenings or overnight calls. During the day, everybody wore comfortable shoes.

The only exception to the no jeans rule was if you were working with a doctor who wore jeans on his/her weekend shift.

Dr. Zadari will wear a casual salwar kameez around the house but she wears Western dress the majority of the time. As she explained, "The kinds of clothes I have now, most of my Pakistani clothes are for formal occasions. I don't have a lot that I could wear on a casual everyday basis. But, if I am and I have to make a quick stop I don't mind." If she is wearing a salwar kameez and needs to pick up her kids from school and/or stop at the grocery store, she does not mind wearing the salwar kameez in public. She specified, however, that she will not wear a salwar kameez with the sole intention of running errands. Dr. Zadari wears mostly salwar kameez to community functions but she does not rule out Western dress or a kurta with pants.

Dr. Zadari, like Mrs. Chodhari, is more motivated by her own dress preferences than what the community requires her to wear. Her personal philosophy of dress is what she learned from her parents, dress in moderation and appropriate to the situation. For example, Dr. Zadari described how for

Thanksgiving she and her family went to Mrs. Khan's house for a late Thanksgiving dinner. She wore salwar kameez for the occasion. Earlier that day, they went to an American friend's house for a Thanksgiving luncheon. Though she was in salwar kameez she did not mind wearing it in front of others who were mostly in jeans and sweaters. It was clear that her dress choice was for Mrs. Khan's dinner, which she considered the more formal occasion. Dr. Zadari's decision is to be understood not as pressure but deference to Mrs. Khan and her family. When I asked if she considered changing between the two holiday meals, she said that she would not because the outfit was not inappropriate for the first setting.

4.8 Group Interview

The following sections will profile the participants of the group interview, Subjects 6 through 9. Dr. Naidu organized the interview with three of her friends, all of whom come from Andhra Pradesh and are practicing doctors. Each subject has a brief profile below, which will be followed by a discussion of their individual and collective opinions to the questions and topics presented. The additional subsection is necessary due to the dynamic of a group interview where individual statements need to be placed in context with the assertions of others.

4.8.1 Dr. Naidu: Indian, Direct Migrant

Though Dr. Naidu said that her parents were not well-educated, education was important to her family as a whole. College was a big adjustment for her because she did not like being away from her family. She eventually ended up in New Delhi for medical school where her uncle was a professor at India

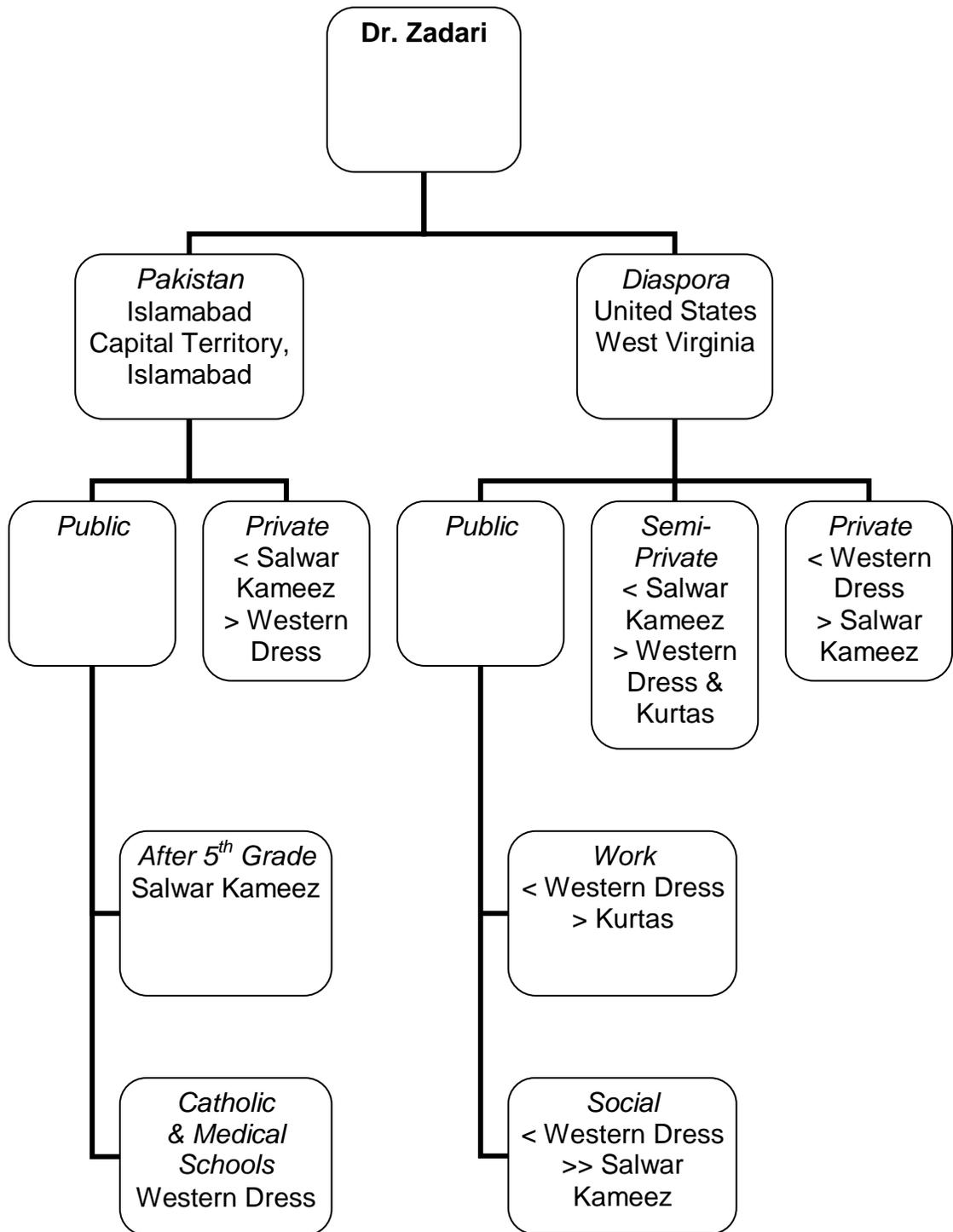


Figure 4.8 Dr. Zadari's Wardrobe Flow Chart

Institute of Technology. Dr. Naidu immigrated to Alabama on June 4th, 1981. Later she moved to Jackson, Mississippi. Finally, she moved to Fairmont, West Virginia on August 8th, 1988. She is currently a Family Practitioner. For the interview, Dr. Naidu wore an olive green silk button-up blouse with well-tailored dark khaki pants.

At medical school in New Delhi, Dr. Naidu wore saris. During this period, Dr. Naidu began to wear Western fashions when socializing on the weekends. Her foray into Western dress while in India made her adoption of Western dress in the U.S. easier. Dr. Naidu wore Western dress during her residency because it was recommended by the hospital staff. Dr. Naidu said that she acquiesced to the situation to make the doctor-patient relationship easier for both parties. It was explained to her that wearing saris would slow down her daily interactions with inquisitive patients unfamiliar with South Asian dress. Though Dr. Naidu explained that she did not view this advice as commenting on her race or the conservatism of the surrounding population, I wonder if the suggestion was in fact doing exactly that.

Later in the conversation, I questioned these women if they ever experienced a situation where they felt wearing South Asian dress hindered a professional situation. Dr. Naidu and the others responded that dress could serve as a distraction but never caused any forms of discrimination. As Dr. Kilari and Dr. Naidu explain,

Dr. Kilari – No I don't think I've ever felt that because I wearing different clothes because I'm looked at in a different way because I'm a psychiatrist. It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter if I wear a pant. Still there will be some, this is West Virginia not New York. There will be some who can't accept a female or a foreigner as their provider. So in their mind, some of the West Virginians they think still they can't accept female as their physician. For them, it doesn't matter.

...
Dr. Naidu – I've never experienced. Maybe someone went to the service chief and said, "We don't want an Indian doctor." Like right now I'm service chief, I can see how many patients are requesting an American doctor. I have to give them the same answer, "I'm sorry, I don't have that many American doctors." You know. That's very small.

Dr. Kilari – Still a small percentage.

Dr. Naidu – But I have never heard, "I don't want a foreign female doctor, I

want a foreign male doctor." It's just like, "I don't want a foreign doctor." They don't specify the gender. I see a lot of transfers in my department. They never specify the gender. The gender only comes request to me when they're saying they had an experience they would not see a male or female doctor.

Dr. Naidu's attitude towards dress in general is very accepting. She accepts what dress is appropriate for a particular situation and wears such choices.

With the issue of modesty, Dr. Naidu is less conservative than other women of the group interview. Though she maintains a sense of modesty, she accepts that this sense of modesty may not be assumed by her daughters. In the following, Dr. Naidu is discussing that her daughters wear saris; however, they prefer them to be up-to-date styles rather than the conservative saris she wears.

I don't correct as much, the reason is because they don't like completely covered up. They think it's old fashioned. They want to be in style. If you get a shirt or blouse completely with long sleeves, they don't even want to wear it. It's too old-fashioned. Just forget it. I'm not even going to invest into something that they're not even going to wear.

4.8.2 Dr. Rao: Indian, Multiple Migrant

Dr. Rao is a mother of three and a practicing Internal Medicine physician. She

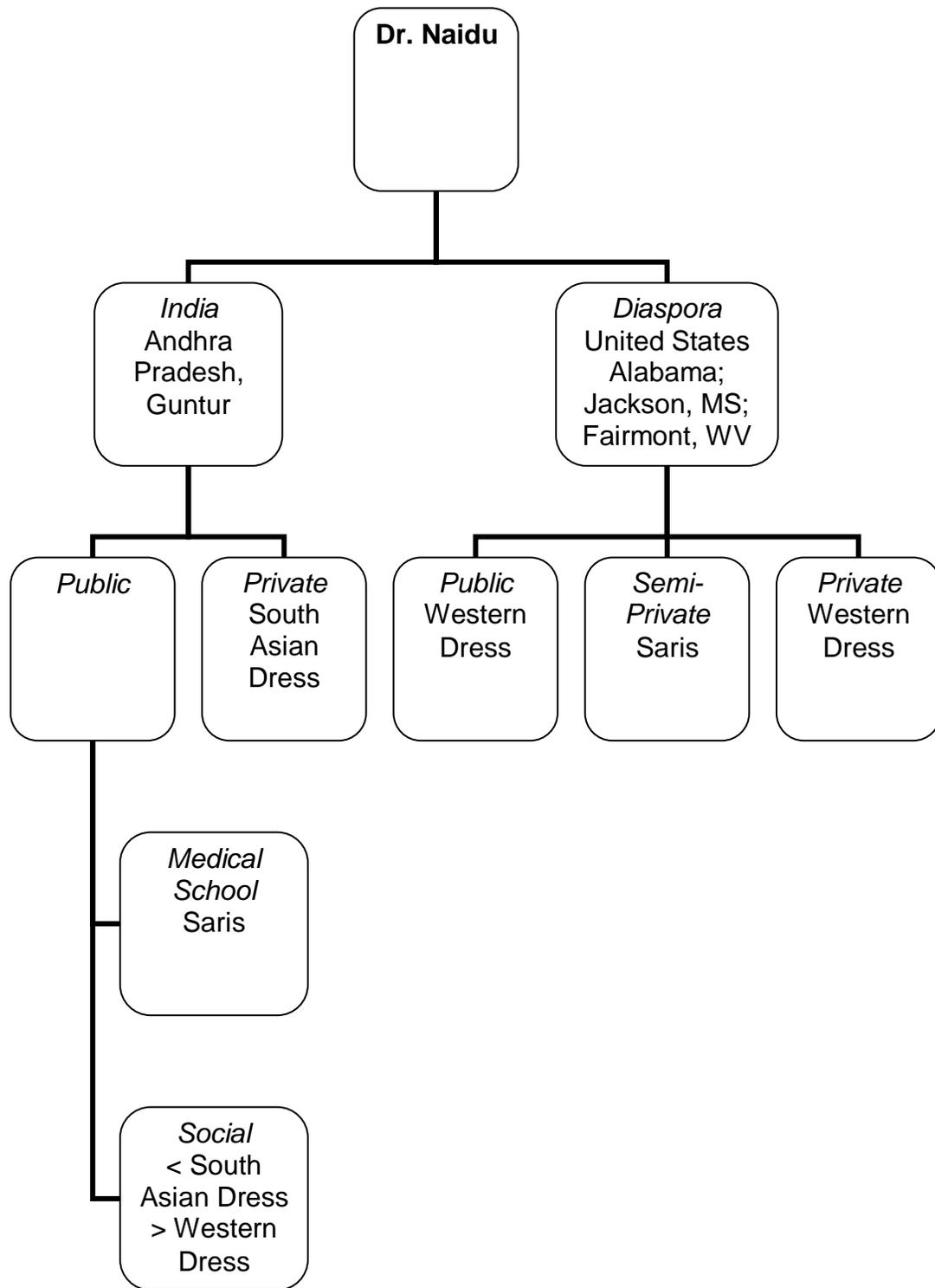


Figure 4.9 Dr. Naidu's Wardrobe Flow Chart

left India in August of 1975 for Malaysia. She then moved to Northern Ireland in 1976 before immigrating to the Boston, Massachusetts in 1977. She would remain in the Boston area for five and half years before settling in Fairmont, West Virginia in December 1982.

She was raised in a small village by her grandparents because there was a high school nearby. She succeeded at many things as a child including dancing, drawing and singing, as well as being successful in school. She went to college with her cousin's brother before pursuing medical school. For the interview she wore a black and white striped knit top with rhinestones at the neckline and khaki pants.

Dr. Rao struggled with dress when she first immigrated. During the interview, Dr. Rao and Dr. Ravula described the numerous questions they received about their saris. Dr. Rao coupled this conversation with a description of a complex dress ritual that she developed in order to inhabit particular personas in particular environments. When Dr. Rao rode the Boston Metro she wore only Western dress. When she was at the hospital Dr. Rao wore saris. She would change between these outfits multiple times in a day depending on the context. This experience is what eventually caused her to make a decision about adopting Western dress.

When Dr. Rao did not want to be recognized, she wore Western dress. When Dr. Rao wanted to be visible she wore saris. While this is one of the most extreme examples of daily dress choices, it highlights how compartmentalized selves develop. As Dr. Rao became increasingly irritated by the questions she received about her saris and the repetition of changing outfits she eventually did away with this complex ritual. She chose to become a singular persona in her public life.

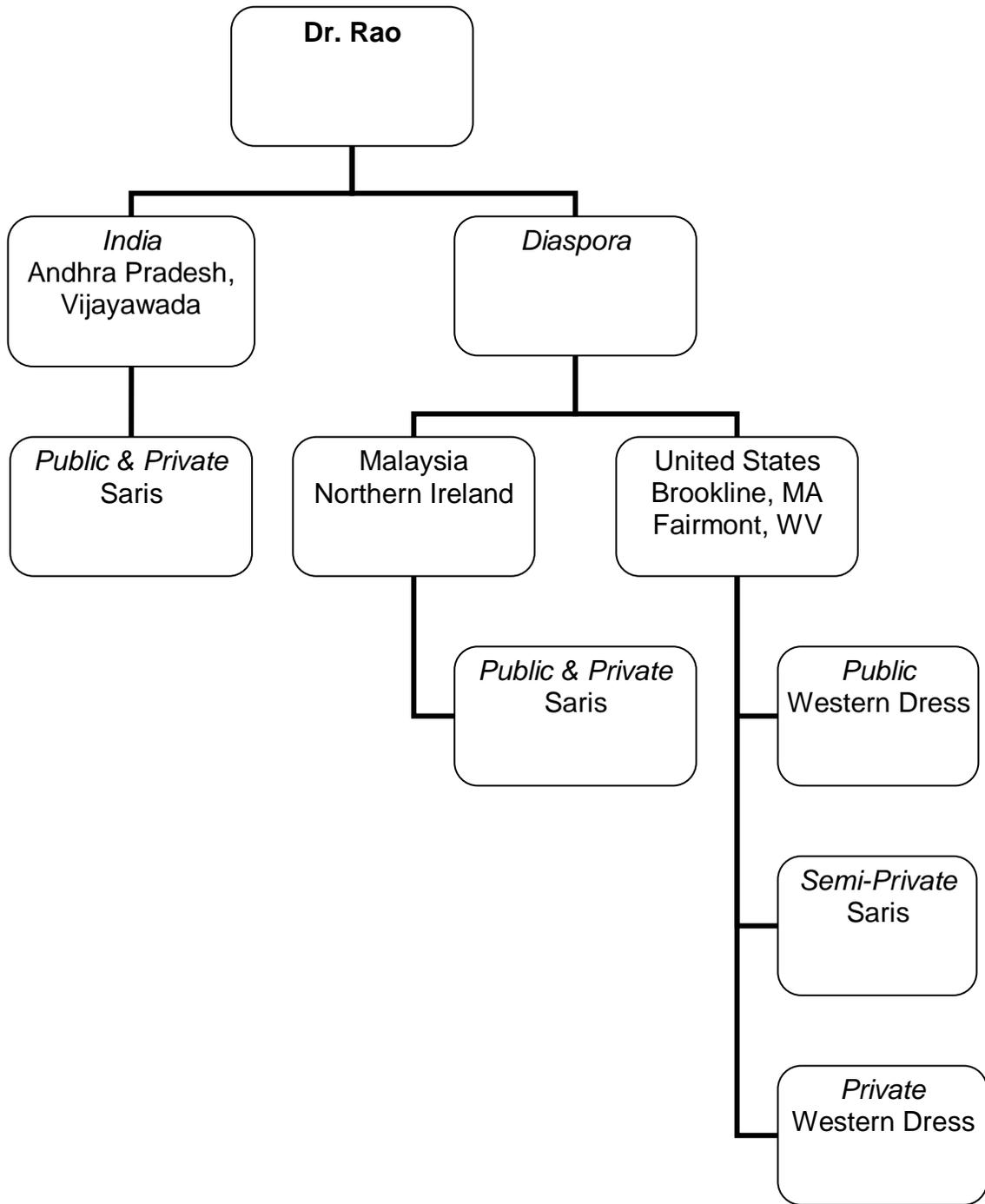


Figure 4.10 Dr. Rao's Wardrobe Flow Chart

4.8.3 Dr. Ravula: Indian, 57, Direct Migrant

Dr. Ravula was an only child. Her father was a farmer and like Dr. Naidu's family valued education. Since there was no high school in their village, Dr. Ravula moved with her grandmother to the nearest village with a high school. Dr. Ravula excelled in school and asked her father if she could continue her education without the interruption of marriage. Her father agreed and turned down a marriage proposal to keep his word. Dr. Ravula got married when she was twenty-three which she described as her choice. For the interview, Dr. Ravula wore a navy dress which buttoned down the front with mother-of-pearl buttons, ivory lace collar and three-quartered sleeves. The dress ended just above her ankles.

Dr. Ravula, like Dr. Rao, had an experience of wanting to conceal her foreign identity as much as possible. When she moved from St. Louis, Missouri to Brooklyn, New York, she began to wear Western dress but in Brooklyn she desired to look like a New Yorker. As she explained, wearing Western dress involved a certain behavior to avoid sticking out. She tried to walk like what she thought a New Yorker walked like and sought to express confidence on her face at all times. For Dr. Ravula, her experience of living in Brooklyn gave her the recognition that Western dress can require behavior beyond just putting on the chosen garments.

4.8.4 Dr. Kilari: Indian, Multiple Migrant

Dr. Kilari was raised by her maternal grandparents after completing middle school. Her father frequently traveled to England and the United States for work. After middle school, she and her siblings joined her parents in Hyderabad. From her father's travels, he brought back many things from

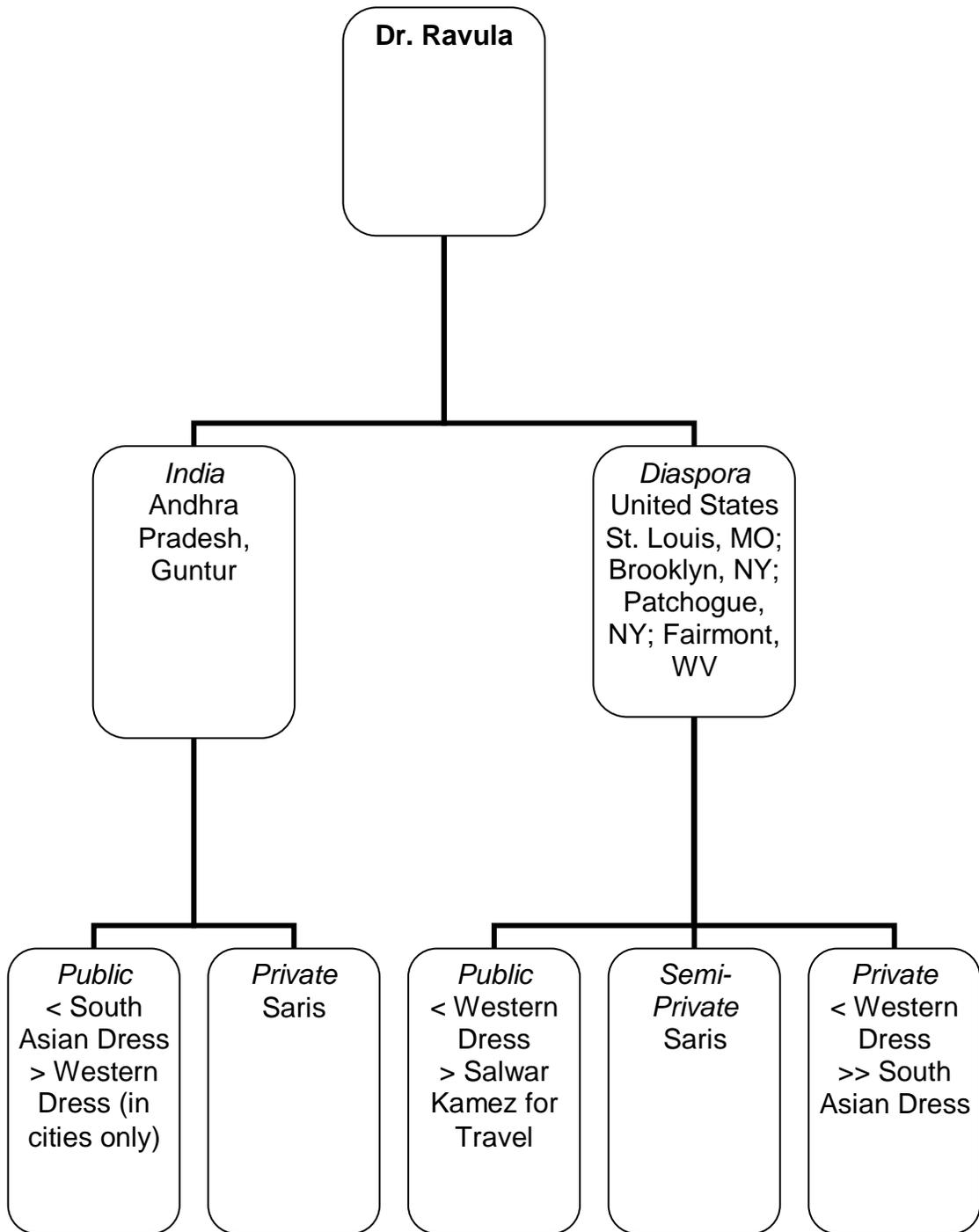


Figure 4.11 Dr. Ravula's Wardrobe Flow Chart

abroad, which exposed her to different aspects of Western culture. Western dress did not shock her because of her prior exposure to it. As she explained, “It was not a shock for me to see a different way of dressing or anything because I’m aware of that. But, until then I was wearing Indian dresses, mostly saris because that’s what the older Indian ladies wear.” For the interview, Dr. Kilari wore an eggplant colored unstructured jacket with a black shell underneath and corduroy pants. Her hair was pulled back and she wore a red bindhi on her forehead.

Dr. Kilari was insistent throughout the interview that adopting Western dress was easy for her and many other educated professional women like her. She said that the dress adaptation was a very minor part of the assimilation process because it was voluntary and was part of the adjustment for their careers. While the actual adoption of Western dress was simple according to Dr. Kilari, as will be explored further in the analysis the inhabitation of Western dress was not so simple. Issues of modesty and other South Asian cultural notions of dress affect how Dr. Kilari and other subjects wear Western dress like Americans.

4.8.5 Group Discussion

As a group these subjects first discussed the divide between villages and cities. Dr. Naidu first began to wear Western fashion on the weekends when socializing in New Delhi. Dr. Rao said that except for movies, the influence of the West had not permeated into the South. They did not wear Western dress because they did not have access to it and it was not accepted yet. As Dr. Kilari said, “Big cities, it is a little bit different because it’s like a cosmopolitan city. So you saw everybody dressing but, in the smaller southern cities, if you

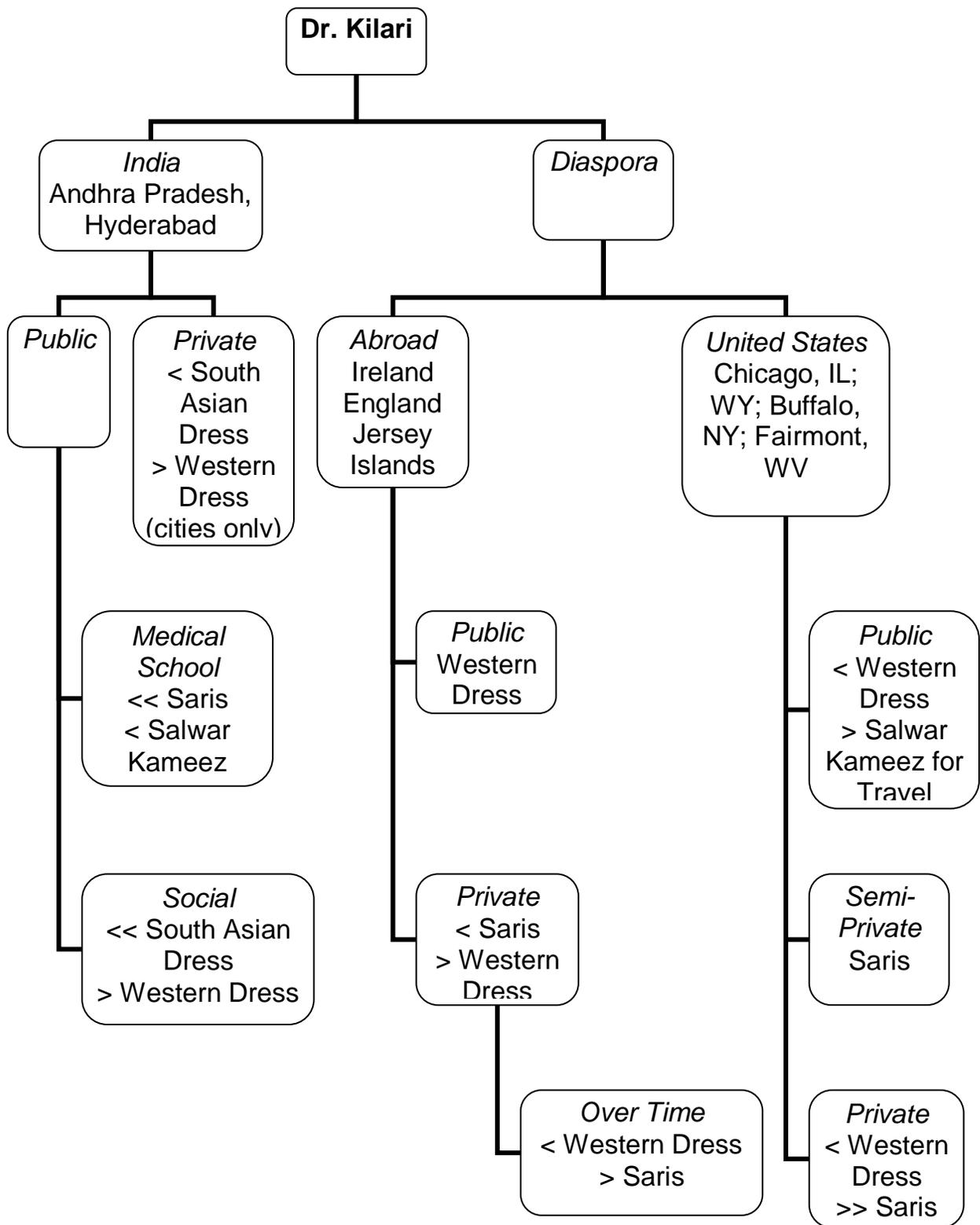


Figure 4.12 Dr. Kilari's Wardrobe Flow Chart

start wearing them, you will stand out. It is not a common thing. Sometimes it may not be looked at as a very good thing to lightly follow some Western thing, you know.” This divide between city and provincial life was mentioned in section 2.4.2. For many men during the colonial era, cities were the sites where Western dress was accepted and villages were exclusively South Asian dress. Body exposure and modesty was an issue that was discussed throughout the interview. For these subjects, the saris and other South Asian dress that they wear on return visits is modest but the conservative styling makes these ensembles dated. The subjects continue to wear cholis and saris in a way that is more modest than the mainstream because their choices are stuck in time.

The women discussed their personal dress limitations, the community’s collective modesty and the ideals they try to impose on their daughters. Dr. Kilari introduced the topic of modesty when she discussed her inability to swim. She did not learn to swim in India because swimsuits were too exposing for her. The notions of body exposure she learned persist today as clothing inhibitions. These reservations prevent her from wearing swimsuits or any garment that reveals her legs, her upper arms or much below the neck. .

Dr. Ravula later contributed to Dr. Kilari’s explanation of modesty. They continue to wear Western dress with a South Asian sense of modesty and instill a modified sense of modesty on their daughters. They have accepted their daughters wearing shorts, short sleeves and lower necklines; however, they encourage them not to wear anything too short or too low.

As the modesty conversation progressed, it took a surprising turn. These participants consider today’s South Asian fashions less modest than current Western trends. The very short cholis, sleeveless cholis, exposed

backs and visible midriffs that are popular in the movies are now found on the streets. This group considers such bodily exposure indecent even though the dress is South Asian. This point is important because it shows that modesty for these participants and many of the others is the same no matter what geographical wardrobe is worn. These subjects emphasized this point through a discussion of their daughters. They each try to pass on that flaunting one's self, exposing the body too much or behaving in a certain manner will attract negative attention when wearing South Asian or Western dress. Dr. Kilari argued that often the Western clothes that their daughters choose to wear are more conservative than Indian outfits they see on return trips. These mothers complained that Bollywood fashions are "vulgar" and are inappropriate for young women to wear. They explained that though their daughters may wear shorts, at least their backs, midriffs and chests are covered. However, I believe that these daughters may have more revealing Western ensembles that their mothers are unaware of because these mothers never see these garments. "Secret wardrobes" are nothing new to South Asian-Americans living away from home or any American youth out of the watchful eye of their parents.

CHAPTER 5

CASE STUDIES

5.1 Case Study: Dress Choices and Spatial Divisions

As shown above with the aristocracy the Vijayanagara Empire and the Indian elite of British colonial India (2.4.1 and 2.4.2), the spatial divisions of public and private defined where the appropriation of another culture's dress was permitted. For the Vijayanagara, the Hindu aristocracy permitted the donning of Muslim garments when interacting with Muslim principalities to the North. These Muslim garments were removed where such interactions did not take place, particularly for the sanctity of the inner home. For the Indian elite of colonial India, European dress was permitted in the public sphere but Indian dress was expected in the private sphere. While these two periods are separated by centuries, the reasons for these spatial divisions were ultimately the same, to advance the interests of a particular group and broaden their personae to the outside world. Understanding how these divisions were carried forward is an important part of assessing particular contexts in modern South Asia and the diaspora.

To comprehend the subjects' dress choices and how these choices affected their experience as immigrants, public/private spatial analysis was used to map out their wardrobes as seen in each of the above profiles (4.2 – 4.8). In this section, the individual choices of dividing up wardrobes will be examined collectively to see the relationship between public and private space in the American diasporic context. During the course of the interview, a particular space was repeatedly referred to where community gatherings

occur. This space is where Indian and Pakistani identities are performed and dressed amongst a wholly South Asian audience. After the group interview, this particular space of community gatherings and South Asian dress was defined as the semi-private space. The reason for separating this space from the private space developed for two reasons: the participants of this study wear Western dress in the public and private spaces and South Asian dress in the semi-private. Secondly, the semi-private space involves the socializing of more than just the family members for familial and religious events. The semi-private space is the location where culture is passed on between the generations and the post-1965 generation can recapture a glimpse of their past.

5.1.1 Public/Private Dress in South Asia: Pre-Emigration

For Subjects Mrs. Lahiri, Mrs. Khan, Mrs. Chodhari, Dr. Rao, Dr. Ravula and Dr. Kilari these women essentially wore the same garment after marriage, i.e. sari or salwar kameez, everyday. Their public and private dress choices only varied in the degree of formality of the ensemble to correspond with a particular environment or situation. Prof. Kapoor is the only participant to draw a division between her wholly South Asian wardrobe worn while living in India, salwar kameez for the home and saris for public.

Like the above subjects, Dr. Naidu's South Asian dress varied in the degree of formality for a situation. Her medical education was in a city, which had afforded her the opportunity to wear Western fashion in India when socializing publicly. As explained during the group interview, Western fashion was not worn in rural India for two reasons: there was no access to it and it was not accepted. As a young medical student, whether in Delhi or

Hyderabad, she had access to Western fashion and was not in the constant eye of her family. Dr. Naidu participated in the growing popularity of Western fashion in urban locations for socializing. This subject, therefore, divided her wardrobe between city and village. The Western fashion she adopted for socializing was never worn when socializing in her natal village. Village visits from school meant South Asian dress exclusively. This re-adoption of South Asian dress only continues today when Dr. Naidu and the aforementioned subjects make return visits to India and Pakistan.

Mrs. Mehta and Dr. Zadari were the only two subjects that wore South Asian and Western dress inside and outside the home in India and Pakistan, respectively. For Mrs. Mehta, her exposure to the Bollywood film industry influenced her choices. Her parents contributed to her ability to choose by not restricting her to one culture's wardrobe. Greater freedom was given to her when she was in college and began to use her own tailor instead of her family's tailor. Through the conversation; however, Mrs. Mehta did not transgress tradition by wearing Western dress or fashion into religious festivals, wedding celebrations or other events where a sense of tradition was expected. Dr. Zadari's exposure to Western fashion came in the form of Western magazines, like *Glamour* and *Seventeen*, and television, like *Little House on the Prairie* and *Dallas*. Though her mother preferred her to wear salwar kameez and the very occasional sari, Dr. Zadari's mother allowed her daughters the freedom to wear Western clothes, including jeans, provided they were modest. When they socialized with friends or other families, Dr. Zadari and her sisters were expected to dress according to the home or event they were attending; i.e. knowing when Western dress was not appropriate and knowing when their heads should be covered. Dr. Zadari wore Western dress

for the primary Catholic school she attended and at medical school in Karachi as required by those institutions. After fifth grade, she wore a salwar kameez uniform to school as she explained that the religious wave was beginning at that time. For these two subjects, I believe their dress experience after immigration to be the smoothest because of their prior familiarity to Western dress but they still had a learning period like the other subjects. Wearing Western dress in South Asia is different than wearing Western Dress in the West.

For dress prior to immigration what emerged from these interviews were three groups:

1. South Asian Dress Only – Prof. Kapoor, Mrs. Lahiri, Mrs. Khan, Mrs. Chodhari, Dr. Rao, Dr. Ravula and Dr. Kilari
2. Traditional Public/Private Divide – Dr. Naidu
3. South Asian/Western Mix – Mrs. Mehta and Dr. Zadari

The first group was unsurprising because this was the expectation for dress prior to emigration. The second category was interesting to uncover because this participant followed public/private divisions of dress that mimic men's spatial divisions from the colonial era. As section 2.4.3 on public/private divisions explains, most women did not have South Asian and European wardrobes; rather they developed a more conservative form of traditional South Asian dress based on new cultural notions of modesty. The third group was a surprise because the possession of almost equal wardrobes and exposure to Western pop culture seemed unlikely with the closed economies of India and Pakistan during the late 1970s and early 1980s. After reviewing the interviews of Mrs. Mehta and Dr. Zadari a lot of the Western garments came from two sources both of which are essentially South Asian in origin.

For Mrs. Mehta, her tailor made Western fashions from magazines visuals and other media that she had. Dr. Zadari's Western wardrobe came from her father's trips abroad and tailor-made items in Pakistan. The only non-South Asian source here is the media. As the following sections progress through place and time, these groups will alter.

5.1.2 Public/Private Dress in South Asia: Post-Emigration

With the exception of Mrs. Mehta, the other nine subjects make regular trips to India or Pakistan to visit family and friends. Mrs. Mehta's family all have immigrated to North America, therefore, she does not feel the need to make frequent visits to her former home. For the other nine participants, however, this is a necessity. Many spoke of when their children were younger they would spend the summer months entirely in South Asia. As time progressed, these trips have become less frequent but have by no means have they ceased.

Unsurprisingly, the nine subjects who frequently return revert back to the public/private spatial-dress divisions or dress behaviors learned from their pasts of living in India or Pakistan. As young married couples, the members of the group interview explained how the airport became the site of changing from one's culture's dress into another. As time progressed, the necessity to be in South Asian dress before meeting the family waned.

Dr. Naidu – When I went on vacation. I never wore it in Andhra, I always wore my clothes [saris]. Even when we came there the first few times, I mean now we're wearing jeans, I mean pants and going there. We use to change in the airport. Kind of getting into our costume and go. Now we're going in pants. Everybody's going in pants. First few times, when we went to India...

Dr. Rao – Change in the middle of the airport.

Dr. Naidu – Change at the airport. But we don't do that anymore.

Dr. Kilari – (Agreeing) We don't do that anymore.

Dr. Ravula – Now we're getting into pants right in Hyderabad. We use to come to Madras airport and change.

Dr. Rao – No one else wore it. ...

Dr. Ravula – Even now like she said, if I go to Hyderabad I will wear. ... Get off the flight in American clothes. But when I go to the village I won't wear. The whole village will be out in front of the house in the street trying to look.

This division between city and village continues today. These four subjects may wear Western dress on visits to larger Indian cities, though they still prefer saris. The village remains for them the site of Indian dress only. These subjects added that their daughters also wear mostly saris, out of respect for their grandparents, when on visits to the villages with their families. The spatial divisions that these four women and Prof. Kapoor created recalls the spatial divide of city and village as discussed by Ramanujan (2.4.2); however, the divisions are more complicated. America and South Asia became public and private respectively. Indian/Pakistani cities developed into a public/private mix. Indian/Pakistani villages remained only private. So, within contemporary South Asia there is room for confusion of public and private dress choices in the urban context.

Mrs. Lahiri and Mrs. Khan do not wear Western dress when they return to India and Pakistan respectively. As Mrs. Lahiri explained, "When I go back even now I wear saris. Traveling I don't because it's more convenient to go in Western clothing on the plane for the long flight. But once I get home and until I come back I wear saris and I wear the bindhi and I'm completely back to the Indian way."

Mrs. Chodhari and Dr. Zadari are both from cities, New Delhi and Islamabad respectively. As discussed in their profiles neither of the women grew up with strict spatial-dress divisions but rather conditioned dress

behaviors. Their dress choices were based more on situations rather than spaces. When these two women return to India or Pakistan they continue to dress according to the occasion. Additionally, Mrs. Mehta belongs in this category. Though not a frequent visitor to India, she most likely reverts back to her blending of South Asian and Western dress when she returns and chooses how to dress based on the situation.

These subjects dress choices for return visits are:

1. South Asian Dress Only – Mrs. Lahiri and Mrs. Khan
2. Traditional Public/Private Divide – Prof. Kapoor, Dr. Naidu, Dr. Rao, Dr. Ravula and Dr. Kilari
3. South Asian/Western Mix – Mrs. Mehta, Mrs. Chodhari and Dr. Zadari

In these discussions about return trips, the subjects presented an interesting dichotomy; when visiting their homes these women revisit spatial-dress divisions of their past while the surrounding population does not keep to these strict divisions. With the exceptions of Mrs. Chodhari and Dr. Zadari, the other seven subjects still spoke of India or Pakistan as ‘home’ and the location of Indian or Pakistani traditions and culture. On these visits, these women return to their former selves rather than maintaining the dressed personas they developed in the United States.

5.1.3 Dress Choices Abroad: Pre-United States Immigration

Subjects Prof. Kapoor, Mrs. Chodhari¹⁰, Dr. Rao and Dr. Kilari spent time in another country or countries before immigrating to the U.S. As the following

¹⁰ Mrs. Chodhari spent time abroad in the Netherlands with her parental family where she completed a Masters in Economic Policy. The family returned to India sometime after her

shows there are two categories that are repeated for this intermediate stage before U.S. immigration:

1. South Asian Dress Only – Prof. Kapoor and Dr. Rao
2. Traditional Public/Private Divide – Dr. Kilari

While the third category of South Asian and Western Mix did not appear, it most likely exists. Mrs. Mehta and Dr. Zadari did not make intermediate stops before the U.S. and if they had, there is the potential for this category to exist abroad.

Prof. Kapoor and Dr. Rao maintained their wardrobes while living abroad. Prof. Kapoor explained that prior to her move to the U.S. the other countries she lived in had larger South Asian diasporas. These strong communities maintained their Indian dress and so did Prof. Kapoor. She continued to wear saris when teaching and outside the home and salwar kameez when at home. Dr. Rao experienced the same in Malaysia. Dr. Rao did not stay in Northern Ireland for a long period nor was she working at the time. It was her residency in the Boston area that forced her to reconsider her wardrobe.

Dr. Kilari slowly began to create a bifurcated wardrobe while living abroad in Ireland, England and the Jersey Islands. She adopted Western dress in the public sphere. By the time Dr. Kilari immigrated to the U.S., she almost fully favored Western dress in the public sphere.

The three categories maintain themselves in these other diasporic locations because of community and impermanence. As Prof. Kapoor explained, the strong sense of community in the countries where she had lived

Masters was awarded. Due to the limited time of this particular interview, I do not have detailed information on her dress while she lived in the Netherlands.

did not give her a need to look outside her own wardrobe for something new. While she added that the populations in these countries were very accepting, this may have more to do with their make-up as non-Western nations and former colonies themselves. The possibility may also exist of an unspoken need for some in the South Asian community to distinguish itself from the national population. None of the subjects stayed in their places of migrations for very long. This impermanence may have made it easier to stick with what they knew rather than looking to adopt.

5.1.4 Dress Choices in America: The Public Sphere

For the public sphere, all subjects primarily wear Western dress and have confined South Asian dress to the semi-private and private spheres. For most of the subjects, the adoption of Western dress for school, work, travel and errands was rather swift. Subjects like Prof. Kapoor and Dr. Ravula are two examples who did not wear Western dress prior to their immigration to the U.S. These subjects chose to adopt quickly to their new form of dress. Prof. Kapoor's own preconceptions of American attitudes towards foreigners motivated her to choose Western dress for her teaching job in Minnesota. Dr. Ravula adopted Western dress to avoid being questioned about her garments during her residency and to look like a native New Yorker.

Of the subjects without prior exposure, Mrs. Lahiri was the slowest to adopt Western dress, which I attribute to her immigrating first to Miami. Miami is a cosmopolitan city with a warmer climate, which I believe allowed Mrs. Lahiri to continue to wear her saris. Mrs. Lahiri mentioned four factors as motivations for choosing to wear Western dress once in West Virginia: age, significant weight-loss, sense of differentness, and curiosity. As she said,

I guess there was a bit of self-consciousness going out wearing the sari and bindhi. That didn't stop me. ... I don't think it was until I was thirty maybe, I started wearing more Western clothes. ...I lost a whole lot of weight and maybe wanted to try something different. But it really wasn't until I was in school...I was sticking out like a sore thumb because I was a non-traditional student in my thirties and everybody else was eighteen...that made an incentive for me to get use to the Western clothing.

Mrs. Lahiri said that it was a slow progression over 11 to 15 years before she wore Western clothes daily and confined her saris to temple and community functions.

Dr. Naidu was advised not to wear a sari during her residency in Alabama as it would distract the patients. Dr. Naidu did not see this as a negative comment on Indian dress, rather she understood it as good advice for better patient-doctor relations. As she explained,

When I joined residency in Jackson, Mississippi I was told they won't really recommend me wearing saris. I think I did go for an interview in a sari. They didn't tell me that they wouldn't recommend me wearing that. The reason they said was that it distracts the patients from interacting with you. And then, they make people questioning waste a lot of time. They may even not tell what their problems are. They think it's a different culture a different thing. They may not understand something. They want you to be one of them. Fit in as much as possible, just like one of them. So that they come to you with their problems. They don't look at you as it's a different culture you won't understand what you're going through. They don't want them to be wasting time questioning, "What is this about? What is your sari about?" Because I was told all this. They prefer once I join that I dress like I was one of them. So that's probably why I had to go ahead and get into that.

Subjects Mrs. Khan, Mrs. Mehta, Mrs. Chodhari and Dr. Zadari each spoke of mixing kurtas with pants and jeans. This ensemble appeared as the only acceptable way to combine South Asian and Western dress together in public. I would like to emphasize the singularity of this combination, as there is only one other example of combining garments from the two wardrobes from

Mrs. Mehta but which only appears in the semi-private space. As Dr. Zadari explained kurtas and pants can be viewed from the South Asian wardrobe as a Westernized version of the salwar kameez. “Now if you look at Pakistani fashion it’s not even a salwar, it’s basically a pant and a shirt. So how are you to tell where this outfit came from? ... Some of them wear pants and a kurta. As long as I blend in with the crowd.”

Since this section and the two that follow only view one spatial division the category of Public/Private is not applicable. Below the categories refer to dress only. In the American public sphere, the women undergo significant regrouping.

1. South Asian Dress Mostly – Mrs. Lahiri
2. Western Dress Mostly – All Subjects
3. South Asian/Western Mix – Mrs. Khan, Mrs. Mehta, Mrs. Chodhari and Dr. Zadari

The first group, South Asian Dress Only, almost disappears. Mrs. Lahiri is the only subject who wore South Asian dress in public for any extended period of time after her immigration; therefore, she falls into the first two categories. Most of the other subjects were making the transition to public Western dress within a matter of months. Their adoption would be completed within a few years. The second category here is for Western Dress Mostly. The ten subjects all fit here primarily as they have adopted Western dress as their principal dress personae. The third category of mixing South Asian and Western garments occurs in public but only by a few subjects and in the specific form of kurta and pants.

5.1.5 Dress Choices in America: The Private Sphere

Mrs. Khan is the only subject who wears South Asian dress, salwar kameez, exclusively in the privacy of the home. Subjects Mrs. Lahiri, Dr. Naidu, Dr. Rao, Dr. Ravula and Dr. Kilari choose to wear Western dress at home, though not with complete exclusivity. Intimate family gatherings and small dinner parties are an opportunity for these women to wear saris. I found this agreement of dress unsurprising as all of these women come from Andhra Pradesh and are working professionals. Each of these women also possesses a strong sense of culture and family tradition, which they do not impose on their children but seek to pass on to them.

Subjects Prof. Kapoor, Mrs. Mehta, Mrs. Chodhari and Dr. Zadari all wear Western dress and salwar kameez at home. Mrs. Chodhari and Dr. Zadari spoke of wearing kurtas, which I believe Prof. Kapoor and Mrs. Mehta wear as well though not mentioned during their interviews. Though there is some degree of preference between these women, Prof. Kapoor preferring salwar kameez at home and Mrs. Mehta preferring Western dress, I do not think these preferences are important. The significant factor amongst these women is that the private space is not specified with either dress category unlike Mrs. Khan and the group of subjects who prefer Western dress.

In the American private sphere, the women undergo significant regrouping but the categories stay the same from the public context above.

1. South Asian Dress Mostly – Mrs. Lahiri (early) and Mrs. Khan
2. Western Dress Mostly – Mrs. Lahiri (later), Dr. Naidu, Dr. Rao, Dr. Ravula and Dr. Kilari
3. South Asian/Western Mix – Prof. Kapoor, Mrs. Mehta, Mrs. Chodhari and Dr. Zadari

Mrs. Khan is the only subject to express her preference for wearing South Asian dress at home. Since Mrs. Lahiri had a long transition period over to Western dress, she is placed in the first two categories. The early part of her life in Miami, Florida is in the first category and her more recent time in Fairmont, West Virginia is in the second category. The second category is comprised of the working professionals. The adoption of Western dress and convenience that Western dress provided them at work ended up carrying over into the private context. The third group of South Asian/Western Mix includes those individuals who mix garments in the kurta/pant ensemble and/or subjects who wear South Asian outfits or Western separates in this space. While most of these subjects wear Western dress, they still continue to wear other ensembles as well; therefore, they needed to be separated from the above group, which wears Western dress almost exclusively.

5.1.6 Dress Choices in America: The Semi-Private Sphere

As mentioned above, I added this tertiary space called “semi-private” to explain, what I believe to be, a particular performance of South Asia(ness). During each interview I enquired about what the subjects wore to community gatherings. After reading over Mrs. Mehta’s write-up, my perception of the diasporic community gathering altered with the following comment, “Except for the parties, I continued to keep up my style. ... It still had the taste of Bollywood I guess.” This comment narrows in on the spectacle of these gatherings, where Indian and Pakistanis are obliged to not only wear a sari or salwar kameez but wear their best ensemble with all corresponding adornment. This idea was reinforced by Prof. Kapoor and the members of the group interview. Though they did not refer to their outfit choices in terms of

“style” or “Bollywood”, they chose to refer to them as “beautiful” and “feminine”.

Dr. Kilari – You literally take it because of our way that we were brought up, when we want to look good, automatically we turn to saris, you know. It’s not that there are not nice Western clothes but it’s a mindset. Because I think, because the way we feel that sari is still the most feminine beautiful outfit when compared to our Western clothes. That exception is not going to change for my generation. Most of us haven’t.

...

Dr. Kilari – But if you talk to, Indians from any state, I think majority feel sari is the most feminine and for special occasion sari is the dress. Even the people who wear Punjabi dress and different varieties, older generation. I’m not sure how the younger generation feel, you know. They’re perspective might be totally different. They may not look at it as the most beautiful feminine dress, the way they look at it might be totally different. Majority of the older generation, it’s still sari.

Dr. Naidu – When I was in Delhi that’s how I knew, they never use to wear saris before they got married they always wore salwar kameezes and things like that. The woman once they’re getting saris that meant they have the red sari. After that for every special occasion they wear sari. All my friends from the Punjab and other places, for special occasions after they got married. But before that, it’s always salwar kameez.

Though I was unable to view the wardrobes of these women, these superlative descriptions created the mental image that these ensembles are grouped separately from Western and everyday South Asian clothing items. Fine saris and beautiful salwar kameez became mostly associated with particular social situations which are neither solely public nor solely private; they are displayed in communal spaces, therefore, separated from other garments.

Subjects Prof. Kapoor, Mrs. Lahiri, Dr. Naidu, Dr. Rao, Dr. Ravula and Dr. Kilari wear saris exclusively to community gatherings. Mrs. Khan, being Pakistani, wears salwar kameez exclusively. Mrs. Chodhari, originally from New Delhi, wears mostly salwar kameez and occasionally will wear a sari.

Mrs. Chodhari mentioned multiple times during the interview of the cumbersome nature of a sari, which she finds uncomfortable. In reviewing the flow charts, it is not surprising to see that only Dr. Zadari would consider wearing Western dress to community gatherings, though she wears salwar kameez mostly. As explained in her profile (4.7), Dr. Zadari seeks to blend into a situation more so than follow unspoken dress codes. Mrs. Mehta wears saris to all community functions as well; however, she mentioned that she will wear dressy American tops in place of a choli.

I am known to mix too. Like spaghetti blouses. Traditional blouses show the midriff. ... I visited a bigger city recently. I wanted to wear a sari with a spaghetti blouse. American stores have spaghetti tops. I bought from there and wore it and people say, "Hey, I like your blouse." ... So, I mix and match all the time.

This is the only occurrence of mixing South Asian and Western dress into something other than the kurta and pants ensemble. It is unsurprising that this idea would come from Mrs. Mehta, who is more experimental with her wardrobes as noted by her and other subjects.

Dr. Zadari does not feel obligated to wear a salwar kameez to every South Asian gathering. Dr. Zadari said that for the larger gatherings, which are more celebratory, she will wear a salwar kameez. If the gathering is smaller, Dr. Zadari is comfortable wearing Western dress in front of her South Asian family and friends provided that she is modestly dressed. "If it's a bigger function with a lot more people there, I would stick to Pakistani clothes. ... If I wear Western clothes, it would be kind of something that would blend in. ... As long as I blend in with the crowd."

In the American semi-private sphere, the women again undergo significant re-grouping.

1. South Asian Dress Only – All Subjects

2. Western Dress Only – None

3. South Asian/Western Mix – Mrs. Mehta on occasion

Throughout each of the interviews, these women expressed a collective sense of belonging to their smaller communities (Punjabi, South Indian, Pakistani) and the larger South Asian community. When this metaphorical idea is brought together these women re-imagine the space as South Asian through dress, music, food and language; therefore, in this context and mindset only South Asian dress is acceptable. While Dr. Zadari said that she would wear Western dress to a community gathering, it is not with any frequency. She does not do this for the large gatherings nor would she dress this way to a gathering where she would be out of place. She wears Western dress in the semi-private to small and/or casual gatherings. Mrs. Mehta is the only exception to bring Western garments into the semi-private space. While the American spaghetti-strap top is present, its form is merely a substitute for a choli; therefore the South Asian silhouette is maintained.

5.1.7 Spatial Dress Conclusions

When viewed collectively (Table 5.1), the above spatial-dress analyses show two important points:

1. The American diasporic spatial-dress divisions altered from the South Asian context.
2. The spatial-dress divisions are more fluid in America.

Table 5.1 Spatial-Dress Divisions by Context

	South Asian Context	
1	<i>South Asian Dress Only</i>	Kapoor, Lahiri, Khan, Chodhari, Rao, Ravula, Kilari
2	<i>Traditional Public/Private Divide</i>	Naidu
3	<i>South Asian/Western Mix</i>	Mehta, Zadari
	Return Visits	
1	<i>South Asian Dress Only</i>	Lahiri, Khan
2	<i>Traditional Public/Private Divide</i>	Kapoor, Naidu, Rao, Ravula, Kilari
3	<i>South Asian/Western Mix</i>	Mehta, Chodhari, Zadari
	Interim Diaspora Abroad	
1	<i>South Asian Dress Only</i>	Kapoor, Rao
2	<i>Traditional Public/Private Divide</i>	Kilari
3	<i>South Asian/Western Mix</i>	None
	American Public Sphere	
1	<i>South Asian Dress Mostly</i>	Lahiri
2	<i>Western Dress Mostly</i>	All Subjects
3	<i>South Asian/Western Mix</i>	Khan, Mehta, Chodhari, Zadari
	American Private Sphere	
1	<i>South Asian Dress Mostly</i>	Lahiri, Khan
2	<i>Western Dress Mostly</i>	Lahiri, Naidu, Rao, Ravula, Kilari
3	<i>South Asian/Western Mix</i>	Kapoor, Mehta, Chodhari, Zadari
	American Semi-Private Sphere	
1	<i>South Asian Dress Only</i>	All Subjects
2	<i>Western Dress Only</i>	None
3	<i>South Asian/Western Mix</i>	Mehta On Occasion

While some may have expected the dress divisions of public/private to change in the diasporic context, I actually did not. While the U.S. is not culturally identical to England, our cultures are related. Since the public/private divisions were the result of British colonialism, I expected that outside the former colony and in a Western context related to England that the same divisions would reappear. What I did not take into consideration was time and choice. The public/private divisions, while they continue to exist in the

subcontinent, have themselves modified as the Victorian era faded into the past. In the modern context and in a Western diaspora, women are not necessarily confined to the traditional public/private spatial divisions. They can alter them to fit their everyday lives and are not required to apply them based on societal pressure. Additionally, choice is freer here as these women are not under the watchful eyes of their families or South Asian conventions. This explains why in the private context in America, these subjects can wear Western dress, because they choose to do it.

The second point of fluidity can be seen when all three diasporic spatial divisions are viewed. Between the three spaces there is great variety in how the women divide themselves. Even within the individual spaces the women can be assigned to more than one group, whereas in the South Asian context their public/private divisions were rigid. This fluidity may be the result of the flexibility of American culture and their individual choices. These women encountered a culture which did not specify how they were to dress. American culture allows for variety and distinctiveness, which allows for women to continue to wear only saris like Dr. Naidu's sister. As most of the profiles above showed, most of the women adopted Western dress because they felt like they were different not because it was imposed. They quickly adopted Western dress because they wanted to be part of American society.

Lastly, choice is repeated in the second point because ultimately these women choose what to wear in a situation; therefore, diasporic dress in the U.S. is more situationally dependent rather than spatially dependent. The only exception to this point is the semi-private space. In this space, the women collectively engage in the performance of their South Asian identity; therefore,

they revert back to South Asian social expectations and South Asian dress is the preponderant choice.

5.2 Case Study: *Emplaced Dress*

During the interviews, each participant talked about their dress and their experiences with dress, which focused on the senses, both mental and emotional. In the following sections, I will pick out these sensory experiences for the purpose of locating the relationship between emplacement and diasporic dress choices.

From the field of intersensoriality, I focused on the concepts of emplacement, displacement and dystoposthesia because I found these to be most salient to this project. These concepts are reviewed in the above literature review (2.5). The following analyses will contrast the dress experiences of two participants per section in order to examine how dress choices are affected by dystoposthetic and displaced experiences.

5.2.1 *The Dystoposthetic Dress Experience: Dress Choices of Direct Destination Migrants*

Mrs. Lahiri and Mrs. Khan are two women whose South Asian wardrobes are culturally different; however, both of these women's sense of self and modesty are rooted in their clothing pasts. Prior to coming directly to the U.S., these two women had similar dress experiences but their individual adaptation to Western dress was very different. Contrasting these two individuals will be useful because both participants immigrated directly to the U.S. and did not make any prior migrations. Both women lived in a large metropolitan city where their husbands were completing their residencies, Miami and Brooklyn

respectively, before moving to West Virginia. They are close in age as well, Mrs. Lahiri is 52 and Mrs. Khan is 55. Lastly, both women grew up in villages.

Throughout Mrs. Lahiri's interview she repeatedly mentioned the idea of modesty when discussing dress. As she began the interview,

...when I was growing up as a teenager, the clothing for our generation of Indian women growing up in the south in a small town was very rigid. You wore a certain type of clothing. It was not rigid in the sense of being restrictive but that's how, that was the norm and that's what we wore.

As many of the other participants described, both of these women graduated from one particular form of dress to another during different stages in their lives. Mrs. Lahiri began with a long skirt and blouse, then graduated to a half-sari as a teenager and finally to a sari after marriage. For Mrs. Khan, around age fourteen she was asked to wear a burqa in the presence of male relatives and cover her head in public with a chaddar. Neither of these two women had exposure to Western dress prior to immigrating to the U.S. Mrs. Lahiri moved to Miami in 1974; Mrs. Khan, to Brooklyn in 1975.

Mrs. Lahiri continued to wear her saris while living in Miami. Even after her move in 1978 to West Virginia to a cooler climate, Mrs. Lahiri continued to wear mostly saris. It was not until she was working full-time did she gradually decide to wear saris less. The slow progression took place over an eleven to fifteen year period beginning in the mid-1990s. Today, her saris are almost exclusively worn at community functions and temple.

Mrs. Lahiri began to flirt with Western dress while in Miami; however, she said she did not feel comfortable in it, which appears to have been for mostly psychological and somewhat physical reasons. When asked if she moved more freely in Western clothes, Mrs. Lahiri responded with the following,

Mrs. Lahiri – There is a sense of freedom. There is also something I should tell you, even wearing the Western clothes, wearing long skirts was easier than wearing pants. That's makes sense of course, the modesty part of it is drilled into you. I still have never worn shorts and I probably never will. Uh, but some of us do, some of my generation women that work outside of the home wear them I've seen them and they are perfectly fine. But I just, will not. It won't ever feel right for me.

MR– Because of the modesty?

Mrs. Lahiri – Yeah, yeah. And self-consciousness I think. That's the unfortunate thing I think, uh, I mean it's, Indian women, we grow up being told that people are watching, how to be careful and modest so I think that we're very self-conscious. We cannot lose our inhibitions. I think that's cultural. But anyways, to go back that was also gradual to be able to able to feel comfortable wearing something pants, pant suits rather than skirts and dresses. It was that difference also.

Leg coverage is a recurring theme for these women due to cultural modesty norms, which require covering the legs from navel to ankle. For Mrs. Lahiri, though her legs are covered in pants, she initially found them awkward. Mrs. Lahiri did not begin to wear pants until she was in her twenties, and the experience of breeching must have been physically and mentally uncomfortable. Wearing skirts or skirt forms until this time, Mrs. Lahiri did not have to worry a lot about her legs. In pants, her legs are physically covered but became exposed mentally. Couple this with her assumed sensory experience of being watched (and judged), Mrs. Lahiri not only becomes physically aware of her legs but self-conscious because of them.

Mrs. Lahiri herself said that she believed that she began to wear Western clothes because she lost a lot of weight and wanted to try something different. Even after this explanation, she said that it took more than a decade before Western dress became an everyday dress occurrence. The particular experience of Mrs. Lahiri with pants highlights the root of Mrs. Lahiri's dystoposthetic experience, dress adaptation and its slow progression.

Western dress and the choices available did not fit into her definition of modesty particularly, it would seem, before she lost weight; therefore, there was a long period of trial and re-trial before feeling comfortable in Western dress.

Mrs. Khan being Pakistani; however, Mrs. Khan's social-gender segregation was even more rigidly defined than Mrs. Lahiri's social-gender barriers. It is hard to convey the tone in writing of what Mrs. Khan conveyed to me about moving from the Swat Valley to Brooklyn, New York. There was a jumbled sense of wonder, shock and unknowing during this part of the interview. As Mrs. Khan told me, immigrating to Brooklyn was not easy. Most of the other Pakistanis she knew spoke Urdu and were from cities. Mrs. Khan spoke Pashto and was from a village, so there was even a sense of isolation within her community, not to mention her displacement in Brooklyn where she did not speak a word of English.

As far as dress was concerned, when she and her husband arrived in Brooklyn he told her that she did not have to cover her head,

When I came, I was use to wearing chaddar. And my husband say, 'Just put it around here (motioning to her shoulders and beneath her neck). Don't wear it.' It was very very difficult for me to just walk without covering my head. It was really hard. ... I wore it for eighteen years. In front of our family, in-laws, we have to be very respectable. Even in front of our father, brothers we were always covered. Even in the house we have to wear chaddar a small one. We can't walk in like she does (motioning to her niece who was wearing pants and a light sweatshirt). ... It was very strange. ... I put it around the shoulders. There was no way I could walk without it. It was a security for me. So I would put it around here (shoulders) to at least cover my front.

This became an additional difference between her and the "modern Pakistani women" as she referred to them. In the cities, women did not always cover their heads within or outside the home. For Mrs. Khan, however, covering the

head was a cultural imperative. Despite all of this, I found it surprising that Mrs. Khan's adaptation to Western dress was quicker than some of the other participants, like Mrs. Lahiri.

For Mrs. Khan, it was the change in climate, which forced her to buy a coat, hat and gloves two or three months after their arrival in Brooklyn.

My husband took me to buy a coat, big coat for winter. I said, 'Men wear coat. Woman doesn't wear coat. I'm not, there is no way I'm going to wear coat!' ... I bought a thick sweater. Later, we took our son for a walk and I got so cold. I told him, 'We need to go and buy coat.' ... And that's how I got my first coat.

Within the next year, Mrs. Khan began to wear pants as she explained, "Because everybody else was wearing it, I say, 'I'm missing something' ... There were not too many people wearing this kind of outfit [salwar kameez]. You kind feel like you're sticking out." It would take another year before Mrs. Khan was wearing pants often. While salwars are pants, they are a very different kind of pant from what Mrs. Khan encountered when arriving in the U.S. Salwars are drawstring pants, which are gathered at the waist and remain full throughout the body of the legs. The actual shape of the legs is not discernible. Additionally, salwars are typically worn with the kameez, a long tunic, which extends to the knees.

Mrs. Khan never transitioned completely to Western dress on an everyday basis as Mrs. Lahiri did. Though she wears Western dress Mrs. Khan still seems to feel more comfortable in salwar kameez. Though initially encouraged by her husband not to cover her head, Mrs. Khan eventually readopted a head covering. She has migrated from the traditional South Asian chaddar to hijab, in the form of a headscarf which relates to a broader Muslim identity. For our interview, she wore hijab inside her home as I was an outside guest and as she explained she wears it outside the home as well, "If I have a

luncheon with friends or PTA meeting, I feel more comfortable to wear pant and shirt. ... Going out to a restaurant, I will cover wearing hijab, pant and shirt.”

For both of these women moving first to urban locations provided a smoother transition since both cities possessed South Asian communities. Mrs. Khan’s dystoposthetic experience was immediately registered in Brooklyn. Climate and unveiling were the two factors, which caused the initial shock of abnormality. Mrs. Khan, surprisingly, adapted quickly. First the adaptation was to the new winter climate. Then she introduced Western dress into her wardrobe because she wanted to be included in her surroundings. Mrs. Lahiri did not register an experience of marginalization so quickly. Her choice to wear saris while in Miami was motivated by the discomfort Western dress created by not agreeing with her sense of modesty. Her Miami environment; however, did not alienate her. She became displaced upon moving to West Virginia. Crossing into her thirties, enrolling in a local college and weight-loss are the factors through which Mrs. Lahiri finally became marginalized by her dress within her environment. She then began a slow progression of dress experimentation to readjust herself with her environment. The final choices for these two women, being very different, are interesting because their characteristics of background and immigration were similar. Mrs. Lahiri switched over to Western dress as her preferred choice, whereas Mrs. Khan continues to wear clothing from both wardrobes. For each subject, the experience of dystoposthesia through dress required them to redefine themselves in their environments. The redefinition of self is collective for those that experience dystoposthesia but their solutions are highly personal.

5.2.2 The Displaced Dress Experience: Dress Choices of Multiple Destination Migrants

Subjects Prof. Kapoor and Dr. Kilari are the two subjects with the most diverse international experiences. In the above literature review, Parminder Bhachu says that multiple migrants are more adaptable than direct migrants because they have high command of the English language, powerful communication networks and understanding of Western cultures. Additionally, each migration increases their ability to reproduce themselves in a new setting. I agree with Bhachu's findings as they relate to multiple migrants and assimilation and believe dress choices reinforce this concept. As the following analysis will show, for Prof. Kapoor and Dr. Kilari, being multiple migrants, their adoption of Western dress is quick. Both women knew how to present themselves physically and socially so that they were able to establish sense of home in a new world. Their feelings of displacement; however, remain as part of their diasporic experience. Prof. Kapoor left India in 1964 for Trinidad/Tobago. Then she moved to Malaysia and on to Africa before landing in St. Cloud, Minnesota in 1988. She described her dress experience in India, Trinidad/Tobago, Malaysia and Africa as the same; she wore saris in public and salwar kameez at home. As she explained there were never problems in these other countries with Indians maintaining their familiar dress. She described the Indian communities as larger in these countries, as well as, closely connected.

Her immigration to Minnesota; however, caused a dramatic shift in her daily dress choices. In the most telling statement during her interview Prof. Kapoor said, "I did not want to be a foreigner." The word "foreigner" was said with a ring of negativity. Saris were reserved for the semi-private space only.

Salwar kameez continued to remain in the private realm. Western dress took over her public presentation of self. When I inquired whether the adoption of Western dress was motivated by the Northern climate, Prof. Kapoor partially dismissed this idea, saying that it was only a small part. For Prof. Kapoor, her decision was motivated by an affective desire. The word affective is used here to underscore the strong emotional content in her decision. After the climate inquiry and her above statement, Prof. Kapoor elaborated that she did not want to stand out. She followed this expression with her primary desire, "I wanted to be part of America." These two key statements bring together the negative and positive side of the same aspiration, or *not* to be something and *to* be something else. It would appear that when Prof. Kapoor first came to the Minnesota she dealt with an initial feeling of displacement. For Prof. Kapoor, displacement instead of dystoposthetic seems the appropriate concept because she never communicated that what she experienced was abnormal, unlike Mrs. Khan whose shock and wonder at Brooklyn expressed abnormality. Prof. Kapoor, by contrast, experienced a disconnection with her new American physical and social environment. As Nandi's study of non-metropolitan Indians showed, Indians in less urban locations are not surrounded by the community that they are use to in their former metropolitan locations. Prof. Kapoor never experienced an American metropolitan city; however, she experienced that insulation of a close-knit Indian diaspora in the other countries. One way to respond to this sense of displacement was to change her appearance so that she simultaneously communicated who she was and was not.

Dr. Kilari's parents were both college graduates. Her father traveled frequently to England and the U.S., which Dr. Kilari mentioned as how she

was exposed to different cultures at a young age. She discussed how when she first moved to Ireland, it was not a shock to see how people dressed. Dr. Kilari's multiple migration experience involved three locations; however, they were part of the British Crown. She left India in 1975 for Ireland. Then she proceeded to England and the Jersey Islands before landing in Chicago. Dr. Kilari differs from Prof. Kapoor in that she began to wear Western dress in Ireland.

It was not a shock for me to see different way of dressing or anything because I'm aware of that. But, until then I was wearing Indian dresses, mostly saris because that's what the older Indian ladies wear. Once you start working because it's not convenient...we switched to pants when working. But at home, we still preferred for many years to wear Indian dresses. Slowly with time there was not that much difference between Western ladies or us, because we are so use to wearing them. We feel more comfortable.

Later Dr. Kilari would further reinforce the comfort of Western dress by agreeing with Dr. Ravula that it provides easier movement. Dr. Kilari followed this assertion and added that Western dress is more convenient; apparently what she was trying to express was that saris require constant attention and Western dress does not.

For me, also it's convenience because I find it on windy days it's very difficult to maintain saris. You'll be always conscious about your sari being flying and always worried about your legs and petticoat being exposed. So when you wear pants, you don't have to worry about all those things. You can just be free.

The key statement which encompasses Dr. Kilari's opinions about dress, her environment and assimilating to America can be reduced to one idea, adapt to advance.

You may get a totally different response from somebody a housewife because we're prepared to get adjusted. We've all gone through colleges or exposed to mixed populations. Whatever is convenient. Whatever helps our career. We're all prepared to adjust from the beginning. So it is not very difficult for us to change and to become.

Nobody forced us to come to this country. Nobody forced us to take citizenship. We all did it. And we all wanted either for our studies or whatever it is. We made that choice. It's all voluntary. So it comes very easy. Whereas if you talk to a housewife, she might be in this country because her husband is here. It might be a lot more difficult for her to accept all these changes. And uh, she may still feel very uncomfortable with Western dress. Whereas we are different. We're working Indian females.

Dr. Kilari repeated throughout the group interview that changing to Western dress was not difficult for her. She, however, came back to the issue of dress modesty, which was and continues to be an issue. Early on in the group interview, Dr. Kilari became the first to mention modesty. She discussed how she does not swim because she does not feel comfortable wearing a swimsuit because it exposes too much of the body. Even in the summer, Dr. Kilari mentioned how she wears long skirts and pants because modesty prevents her from wearing shorter skirts and shorts. As she explained in the following, her ingrained sense of modesty creates self-consciousness about dress.

They [the group's children] don't have this linger things like we have, you know. So, I feel a little bit uncomfortable if I have to wear, forget about short skirt, even mid-length skirt. I prefer to ankles. They don't have those sort of hang-ups. They can wear saris and Punjabi dresses there [India] and they can wear shorts here and feel more comfortable. It is how we are brought up. We always have some hang-ups because of that. ... So, coming to clothes issue I don't think it's a big thing either for my generation or for them to adapt. Except that we may have certain inhibitions.

Dr. Kilari discussed behavior as part of modesty, which was an integral part of colonial modesty as shown by Himani Bannerji (2.3.2). Dr. Kilari expressed that one does not want to attract attention to oneself.

For the younger generation, I still try to teach my kids too. You can't just flaunt yourselves and not attract attention, you know. So, when you want certain things, you want respect and things like that you also have to behave to in certain way too. ... So, I feel how we dress and how we behave can have consequences too, you know.

Her wish to maintain modesty is not solely rooted in an embodied perspective but also in an emplaced one, as Dr. Kilari is considering environment and social perception of herself and her children. What she maintains is a nostalgic modesty, which longs to be in another spatial-temporal location of a more traditional India. A modesty which is fading in her natal country.

Dr. Kilari did make clear how much *choice* is an aspect of becoming part of America. As she said, “We made that choice. It’s all voluntary.” Dr. Kilari’s statement reinforces why these two subjects’ experiences are displaced. They were both aware of their surroundings because prior exposure to different cultures increased their awareness of what was required to assimilate. Both women decided to change to Western dress for their public personas. Both women chose to become American citizens. For Dr. Kilari, she and her husband chose to stay here after their children were born. She made the necessary choices to move forward. In her moving forward, however, her sense of modesty still prevents her from putting all feelings of dissociation behind. Dr. Kilari will never adopt a complete American wardrobe nor will she wear Western dress in the same way as non-immigrant Americans. These dress choices are not wrong, rather they show that in a diasporic context she will always need to deal with dress and displacement. While Prof. Kapoor focused less on modesty, her remnant feelings of displacement creates an underlying need to show who she is and is not on a daily basis; i.e. an American, not a foreigner.

5.2.3 Emplaced Dress Conclusions

After working through this case study, I was perplexed by the sense of negativity which runs throughout the analyses. I re-read the interviews attempting to locate subjects whose dress experience in the diasporic context was free of negative affect and renegotiations of self; i.e. no dystoposthesia or displacement. All the subjects; however, experienced some negative reactions to Western dress in America, even if they had prior exposure. The realization occurred that though the subjects carry with them the dystoposthetic/displaced experiences in their current everyday dress choices, it is not necessarily a wholly negative experience, rather it is who they have become. Their emplaced dress choices are a part of who they are as a diasporic community. What is created is an emplaced dress experience, which can truly be referred to as diasporic. The subjects showed that they can put on and/or remove their South Asian identity or don and/or doff an American self. The following case study will interrogate the putting on and taking off more closely through an examination of cross-dressing.

5.3 Case Study: Cross-Dressing & Appearance Management

This section will look more closely at the idea presented above that these women fluctuate between wardrobes and identities through cross-dressing. With each example the subjects presented of their dress, the first question to be asked is who are they in that moment, in that space? As Bakirathi Mani argues about the dress choices of the Indian elite during the colonial era, those dress choices were performative. The dramaturgical perspective will be used to view how the performance, setting, audience and subject-actress contribute to the formulation of identities in the American diaspora. This

section will focus on the public space because this is where these women encountered dystoposthesia and displacement, which encouraged their cross-dressing. What will appear is a process of organizing identities through a process known as appearance management. In this process, experimentation and self-expressions of dress are enacted with an audience in mind. The result is a process of displaying an identity to others in a social context known as self-presentation (Kaiser 1990, 181). Cross-dressing; therefore, is an experiment with a vocabulary of dress with the purpose of expressing a particular identity in a particular environment. The last question to be posed is how successful are they in their cross-dressing? This final question is important because it relates to an individual's incorporation into the diaspora and the greater American public as well. Lastly, this question answers when a cross-dressed identity becomes an integrated part of defining the self.

5.3.1 Cross-Dressing in Public: Shedding the Immigrant Persona

When the subjects discussed the transition to Western dress, they discussed it as if they were attempting to hide an aspect of themselves with a sartorial disguise. This shedding of a particular identity through cross-dressing serves the purpose of wanting to be something that each subject initially is not. In each context the subjects experienced a public dress performance of a new identity. As Kaiser says, "...clothes may be viewed not only as props in the performance of a role but as means for negotiating an identity in social contexts" (Kaiser 1990, 207). The example of Motilal Nehru in the above literature review (2.6.3) discussed how he adopted different personas through dress in order assert his political agenda. The women discussed below are

repeating this visual trick to situate themselves more comfortably in new situations.

Dr. Rao and Dr. Ravula did not wear Western dress prior to their arrivals in the U.S. As the members of the group interview explained about exposure to Western dress and their villages,

Dr. Rao – Well there's nothing there at the time. Except in the movies, we didn't see [Western dress]. You see everything now.

Dr. Ravula – There's no reason. They were not available.

Dr. Rao – We didn't have the Western influence in the South at the time.

Dr. Ravula – There was no reason for us to really think about it, to look different.

Dr. Naidu – But it was different in Delhi. When we went out we always wore jeans.

Dr. Kilari – Big cities, it is a little bit different because it's a like cosmopolitan cities. So you saw everybody dressing. But in the smaller southern cities, if you start wearing them, you will stand out. It is not a common thing. Sometimes it may not be looked at as a very good thing to lightly follow some Western thing, you know.

These ideas stuck with Dr. Rao and Dr. Ravula as they moved to the U.S. Initially both subjects would not see a reason to adopt another form of dress, particularly because it was something that was unfamiliar and/or they considered it as something Westerners wore.

Dr. Rao developed the most complex daily dress ritual of the subjects interviewed. She explained that her daily commutes to Cambridge City Hospital could be fearsome for her, "From here to here [subway to neighborhood], when you get on and go home people keep looking at you. They never said anything. You after one week, you get scared of them and then I bought some pants." Later she explained her full routine of cross-dressing a few times during the day,

In the beginning when I use to get scared on the subway, all these blacks sitting in here and go there. I use to go in the pants, then go

there, I change my clothes into sari, I work there. Then, change my clothes back into pants and come back home. Because I was so hesitant to wear the pants quickly into and see my other people (laughing), you know. No way, I didn't want anyone to see me in pants at that time. Others who don't know me they can see me in pants. That inhibition I use to have in the beginning. And then, when doing my internship my quarters are in the hospital they gave me a hospital apartment. So I just go straight with sari and work.

This story has two different scenes contained within it; the first takes place outside of work and the second takes place at work. Beginning with the non-work scene, the four dramaturgical elements of this are 1) Actress – Dr. Rao, 2) Setting – Neighborhood Walk & Subway, 3) Audience – General Public/Strangers, 4) Performance – Cross-dressing in Western dress for safety. For Dr. Rao, the purpose of this complex performance of cross-dressing was to be invisible during a public commute and walk through a neighborhood, which scared her.

Dr. Ravula mentioned a similar example of cross-dressing for invisibility when she was living in Brooklyn. Dr. Ravula cross-dressed in Western dress to shed her immigrant appearance in order to look like someone who lived in that Brooklyn neighborhood for years.

In Brooklyn, I stayed there and at that time the Brooklyn neighborhoods, which are mostly good now were not. So but when you're walking through New York streets but you will see people on the street asking for quarters, money and all that. At least I felt secure more wearing American clothes or blue jeans. And, I tried to walk as though I'm here for a long time. And I wanted to have that confidence and look on my face as though, so when somebody looks at it, 'She a stranger she doesn't know what New York is like' so I didn't want to feel threatened. I didn't want to see the fear in me, them to see that fear. So, I felt more comfortable wearing blue jeans and pants. Look like New York, New Yorker (laughing).

In presenting these performances, Dr. Rao and Dr. Ravula were not displaying their selves rather they were introducing identities with others in mind, which is known as self-disclosure.

The four elements of the Dr. Rao's work scene are 1) Actress – Dr. Rao, 2) Setting – Hospital, 3) Audience – Hospital Staff & Patients, 4) Performance – South Asian/Immigrant Doctor. At the hospital it was acceptable for Dr. Rao to be noticeable, in fact preferable, so she wore saris. In the beginning, she was comfortable identifying as an Indian doctor, which is an expression of her own identity, or self-identification.

Though dressing in saris at hospitals was acceptable for Dr. Rao and Dr. Ravula, it was not necessarily approved by those they interacted with daily. Both subjects would experience identity negotiation in which they communicated with their audience about their dress choices. Dr. Rao and Dr. Ravula discussed that they encountered many questions about their choice of saris at the hospitals where they were interning or in residency. Oddly for both subjects, the inconvenience of changing in and out of two wardrobes for their commutes did not push them to adopt Western dress; it was the constant questions about their saris. As they explained,

Dr. Rao – You know when I start working, when I was doing internship, I use to wear saris everyday. And then, a little later people use to ask so many questions, 'What's that? How long you have that? How many saris do you have? How many yards?' In the beginning, I use to explain but the more and more I got sick of it and I just changed my clothes.

Dr. Ravula – They use to ask, "What does the color mean? Does the color blue mean you're available? Does the color red mean you're married?"

...

Dr. Rao – We had tons of saris. People don't understand we just got so many. ... So if you tell I have many 30-35 saris. I'm sure everybody has more than a hundred now. And they use to be surprised, "Oh my God, that many dresses you have?" After a while, you just change. You just change clothes so nobody will question you.

For both subjects, while questions on the surface were annoying the questions identified them as not as regular doctors but as foreign doctors. The realization that they were and would always be perceived of as something different helped these subjects to adopt Western dress in the workplace; a cross-dress for success. The issue of public safety, though an important component of the decision-making process, becomes a secondary factor. The exposure to Western dress through cross-dressing in those settings gave Dr. Rao and Dr. Ravula the familiarity required to develop the Western dressed-doctor identity for their hospital settings.

Dr. Naidu differs in her residency experience in Jackson, Mississippi as she was advised to wear Western dress. Though she was not forbidden to wear a sari, they advised her that it would affect her doctor-patient interactions. Dr. Naidu did not view this piece of advice as directed negatively towards her. The advice had to do with the “very conservative” population she served. She acquiesced and her transition to a Western wardrobe began. In Dr. Naidu’s dramaturgical chart of the first three elements remain the same as Dr. Rao’s above but her performance alters 1) Actress – Dr. Rao, 2) Setting – Hospital, 3) Audience – Hospital Staff & Patients, 4) Performance – Cross-dressed into Western dress to blend in. While both women cannot hide their ethnicity, Dr. Rao’s choice to wear saris made her immigrant status was more identifiable than Dr. Naidu’s. By choosing to follow the advice of her employer, Dr. Naidu’s immigrant status was less obvious because she was blending in, visually, to the hospital staff.

Dr. Rao and Dr. Ravula were the only two subjects to express cross-dressing for safety purposes. None of the following subjects discussed this issue; however, they each had similar experiences of recognizing that they

were somehow different. For Prof. Kapoor she knew that what she wore, a sari in public and salwar kameez at home, defined her as a “foreigner”. Prof. Kapoor first began to wear Western dress when she moved to Minnesota from Africa to teach mathematics at a small liberal arts college. For Prof. Kapoor, the college became the scene of her foray into cross-dressing. Her four elements are 1) Actress – Prof. Kapoor, 2) Setting – Academia/The Classroom, 3) Audience – Colleagues/Students, 4) Performance – Cross-dressing in Western dress to blend in. Her statements, “I did not want to feel as a foreigner” and “Wearing Western clothes was easier,” tell of strong reactions, inwardly and outwardly, to herself and her environment. By saying she did not want to feel as an immigrant she expressed her desire not to stand out. Adopting Western dress helped to make her less noticeable, in her eyes, and therefore less visible publicly through the process of self-disclosure. As discussed above (4.2), Prof. Kapoor signals to racial barriers in America through these statements because for her “foreigner” possessed a negative connotation. By cross-dressing into a persona that looked American she downplayed her foreignness.

Mrs. Lahiri moved to the U.S. in 1974 but did not begin to wear Western dress with any frequency until 1978 after her move from Miami to West Virginia. Like Prof. Kapoor, she related her slow adoption of Western dress to being noticeable publicly. She enrolled in a local college as a non-traditional student and became aware of her outsider status; she was older and dressed significantly different than the other students. As she said, “I was sticking out like a sore thumb because I was a non-traditional student in my thirties and everybody else was eighteen. In addition to that having the sari that made an incentive for me to get use to the Western clothing.” Again Mrs. Lahiri is

repeating the four elements of Prof. Kapoor with a slight alteration of audience, 1) Actress – Mrs. Lahiri, 2) Setting – Academia/The Classroom, 3) Audience – Professors/Other Students, 4) Performance – Cross-dressing in Western dress to blend in. “Fitting in” was her initial incentive to cross-dress into Western outfits. Her age and ethnicity were recognizable; however, she blended into the classroom better by relating her dress to those around her. Unlike Prof. Kapoor though, Mrs. Lahiri seemed to have a more positive perspective on her situation. She had lost a lot of weight and expressed wanting to try something different. She did not perceive the students around her as staring at her negatively but out of interest. All of this simultaneous life change: school, weight-loss, curiosity, propelled her into a new wardrobe.

In a very comical moment during Mrs. Khan’s interview, she exposed the immodesty of her niece, whose head was not covered at the interview. Mrs. Khan was relating her niece’s comfort to her own discomfort she felt when she had moved from Pakistan to Brooklyn and began to uncover her head. After Mrs. Khan became more comfortable with uncovering her head, she began to adapt to Western garments because of climate. She was hesitant to wear a coat, which she associated with menswear. Mrs. Khan commented that she was on a walk with her family and she had covered herself with heavy shawls. This dress adaptation was not substantial enough for a winter with which she was not familiar. Mrs. Khan considered what she was doing was avoiding the more common definition of cross-dressing, wearing a man’s garment. Her first frigid day in Brooklyn changed her opinion and her husband bought her a coat. Mrs. Khan’s cross-dressing dramaturgy was played because of climate; her four elements are 1) Actress – Mrs. Khan, 2) Setting – Brooklyn in Winter, 3) Audience – Her Family, 4) Performance –

Cross-dressing to stay warm. Mrs. Khan's discomfort probably subsided when she realized that everyone in Brooklyn, including the many other Pakistani immigrants, wears coats in winter. Later in the conversation, Mrs. Khan said in 1979 she began to wear pants because she became aware of what everybody else around her was wearing. Out of curiosity she tried out pants and progressively adopted more and more items of Western dress. Mrs. Khan's appearance management when she first moved to Brooklyn remained steadfast in her identity as a Pakistani immigrant. Little concern was given to how others dressed. Once Mrs. Khan began to experience Western dress she quickly went through much experimentation and self-expression until she devised a formula, which was right for her.

Mrs. Chodhari's experience was similar to Mrs. Khan's. She came to New York wearing salwar kameez but bought Western garments with the onset of winter. She followed her explanation of climate by saying, "In New York City, you do see some women wearing salwar kameez. You just feel different. Very different." For Mrs. Chodhari, like Prof. Kapoor and Mrs. Lahiri, she was aware of she did not fully fit in to her new environment. Unlike the others, Mrs. Chodhari's choice to cross-dress was the simple realization that what she was wearing was different, not that she was somehow different. Mrs. Chodhari's prior exposure to Western dress, while growing up in New Delhi, could explain her reaction not being as strong as the others.

Dr. Kilari, like many of the other subjects, mentioned the convenience of Western dress.

But, until then I was wearing Indian dresses, mostly saris because that's what the older Indian ladies wear. Once you start working because it's not convenient...we switched to pants when working. But at home, we still preferred for many years to wear Indian dresses. Slowly with time there was not that much difference between Western

ladies or us, because we are so use to wearing them. We feel more comfortable.

Later she would respond to Dr. Ravula who defined Western dress as easier to move in by stating that you do not have to fuss with or attend to Western garments.

For Dr. Kilari, convenience was the focus of her transition to Western dress. Like the other women of the group interview, Dr. Kilari first began to cross-dress for work. But as Dr. Kilari began to draw fewer dress distinctions between her work and home, Western dress eventually became her preponderant choice. As Kaiser said, "People may come to expect some consistency, even across contexts, in a person's appearance as well – at least in terms of general themes or standards such as degree of modesty, creativity, conservatism, and the like" (Kaiser 1990, 206). While Kaiser is describing the audience's appearance expectation for the performer, this idea can be applied to the performer as well. Dr. Kilari's experience relates back to Dr. Rao's whose daily dressing and undressing multiple times wore her out. Dr. Kilari accepted the convenience that Western dress provided and replaced cultural familiarity with American dress utility. In the end, consistency of dress across contexts became a desirable solution.

Cross-dressing for these subjects was the result of safety, climate, wanting to blend in, convenience and professional respect. For many of these subjects it was not a single impetus which caused them to cross-dress but often a few of these working in tandem. These subjects left South Asia because their nations could not support them, or their husbands, as advanced degree graduates. They each sought opportunities abroad. During the group interview, these subjects confirmed that they initially expected to return to India. For all of the subjects, having children and success at work for

husbands and wives, changed these immigrants' direction to within America instead of returning home. These aforementioned stimuli; however, are the superficial reasons. Beneath each of these reasons is the significant purpose of wanting to succeed professional, academically and/or in their daily lives as part of America; not to succeed in America as immigrants. The decision for the women was simple, "cross-dress for success".

5.3.2 Cross-Dressing in Public: Classing Down, Becoming American

Mrs. Mehta is unique in her cross-dressing experience. Though related to the above subjects in terms of convenience, Mrs. Mehta's experience eventually classed her down. Mrs. Mehta was used to custom tailored clothing in India. Her custom wardrobe included both Indian and Western clothing. When she came to America, it took her a number of years to get use to off-the-rack clothing in America. When Mrs. Mehta was young, she worked with the family tailor to distinguish herself from her sisters. In America, she was surprised that people would wear the exact same clothes as one another. As she explained,

I couldn't shop because it was like a uniform. You see one shirt and there are ten other same shirt like that. You see one dress and there are fifteen other dresses like that. ... So for quite a while until I was living with them [joint family] I don't think I purchased any clothes. Unless somebody gave me a gift or something because I couldn't make myself to do that. My mom would ask me from India, 'What do you want?' And I would say, 'I miss my [Western] clothes.' She would ignore that and say, 'You'll be fine.'

As her life changed, Mrs. Mehta admitted to choosing convenience over style for her public persona.

Later on, I think it was more just convenience kind of, because I was struggling for time. ... So I don't think everyday I would be fashion conscious. I just became a blue jeans person, Nikes you know. Waking up early, being with the baby at night...the fashion wore out on

me. The reality hit me that you are no longer a princess in India with my family. I have to do my dishes and cook my meals... Day-to-day life was ordinary clothes that anyone would wear.

Mrs. Mehta's dramaturgical elements are 1) Actress – Mrs. Mehta, 2) Setting – Department Stores, 3) Audience – Herself/Family/Friends, 4) Performance – Cross-dressed into the convenience of readymade. It took Mrs. Mehta six years to go from custom made to readymade clothes. Once Mrs. Mehta moved to West Virginia in 1982, she admitted that she was buying off-the-rack clothes regularly. Though her audience includes family and friends, in this particular situation Mrs. Mehta's primary audience is herself. Herself as audience is the result of this scene being mostly an internalized conflict where Mrs. Mehta relies more on how she perceives herself than on any feedback she receives. Mrs. Mehta continues to be displeased by the sameness she sees in American clothing stores today.

For Mrs. Mehta, the difficulty in adjusting to dress in America was a different realization from the other subjects. The connection though is that like all of the subjects above, Mrs. Mehta was adjusting to a new cultural dress. For the subjects in 5.3.1, they negotiated new items of dress to hide who they are. For Mrs. Mehta, she became accustomed to garment fit across a population rather than to the individual. Mrs. Mehta differed from the other subjects because she never discussed herself as an immigrant. Her negative feelings were towards an American fashion system, which made her blend into the crowd, an idea which was both unfamiliar and recalled bad memories of wearing matching dresses with her sisters. Mrs. Mehta expressed something more than just immigrant status; she was struggling with culture and class. As Marjorie Garber explained above, when binaries are destabilized by a third category they often lead to slippages in other categories. For Mrs. Mehta,

Indian dress was either tailored to the body or part of traditional draped forms, like saris. When she was introduced to garments fitted for the masses, an American cultural convention, and this led to an unintended cross-dressing confrontation with class. By cross-dressing into middle-America, she was living the life of a young married working American mother and lost her “princess” persona. She classed down through cross-dressing.

5.3.3 Compounding Wardrobes in Public: Blending Identities

Mrs. Khan, Mrs. Mehta, Mrs. Chodhari and Dr. Zadari each discussed occasionally mixing garments from each of their South Asian and Western wardrobes. All four described the same outfit, a kurta with pants. This particular ensemble was mentioned as an outfit for parties and semi-casual functions, like dinner with friends, American and South Asian. Dr. Zadari discussed how this outfit is worn by others to the Pakistani gatherings.

If it's a bigger function with a lot more people there, I would stick to Pakistani clothes. ... If I wear Western clothes, it would be kind of something that would blend in. Now if you look at Pakistani fashion it's now even a salwar, it's basically a pant and a shirt. So how are you to tell with this outfit came from? ... Some of them wear pants and a kurta. As long as I blend in with the crowd.

None of the subjects mentioned such an outfit in their past South Asian youths. Mrs. Mehta could be the exception as she discussed mixing wardrobes, though she never singled out this particular outfit. These subjects bring up this ensemble in the diasporic context. As Mrs. Mehta explained,

For all Indian occasion, I usually dress up Indian. But an Indian top and American pant if I'm going to an American thing. People like it because it's unusual. So I feel fortunate to mix and match because I have both the cultures.

Kaiser discussed the idea of “identity kits” introduced by social-psychologist E. Goffman. Identity kits contain various cultural tools and conventions for

inhabiting accepted identities within a culture (Kaiser 1990, 188). Mrs. Mehta grew up with two identity kits, South Asian and Western and therefore was comfortable with the cultural dress of both. Blending the two wardrobes was nothing more than adolescent experimentation for Mrs. Mehta, which continues today. Kaiser further explains, "...but we may break out of traditional kits provided for us by rearranging, juxtaposing, and combining elements of different kits" (Kaiser 1990, 188). For the other three subjects, they had to reach a certain amount of comfort with the Western identity kit before this kind of rearranging began. The kurta and pants combination has moved outside of the South Asian diaspora and worked its way into the American wardrobe as "ethnic chic". These four women, however, are not wearing it as such. It is a safe blending of their two cultures.

Mrs. Mehta was the only subject to mention another combined outfit, a sari mixed with an off-the-rack top.

I am known to mix too. Like spaghetti blouses. Traditional blouses show the midriff. ... I visited a bigger city recently. I wanted to wear a sari with a spaghetti blouse. American stores have spaghetti tops. I bought from there and wore it and people say, 'Hey, I like your blouse.' ... So, I mix and match all the time.

In Heema Govindjee's thesis (2.4.4) only one of her subjects mixed garments between their South Asian and Western wardrobes. She proposed that her subjects' dress divisions and choice not to mix wardrobes was based on usage of each culture's dress. South Asian dress is composed in ensembles while Western dress is created as separates to mix-and-match. I agree with this observation; however, wonder if the reason is something deeper. While the four subjects discussed here occasionally mix a kurta with a pant, they seem more comfortable separating their wardrobes. As Govindjee discussed, the South Asian-American identity is fluid because they transition frequently

between both wardrobes. Going between two wardrobes is the dominant practice amongst these women because they see themselves as separate identities in particular contexts, not as a hyphenated identity. Only a few subjects who compounded their identity blend wardrobes for simultaneous presentation of identities in the kurta-pant “ethnic chic” outfit.

5.3.4 Bi-Cultural Dressers: South Asian & Western Wardrobes

Mrs. Mehta and Dr. Zadari’s early usage of Western dress cannot place them in the category as diasporic cross-dressers. As discussed above, Mrs. Mehta experienced cross-dressing through class. Both subjects’ familiarity with South Asian and Western dress from a young age allowed them the comfort and freedom to move between both easily as they aged. As Mrs. Mehta explained,

I was always exposed to both cultures. You know the Western culture and the Indian culture. That’s the one advantage I had. So, I always wore both mixed and matched in that way. So when I came to this country, I was not in shock. ... I pick and choose at the parties what I wear and I can mix and match.

During the interviews, neither of these subjects discussed South Asian or Western dress with trepidation resulting from modesty or other perceptions. At the beginning of Mrs. Mehta’s interview, she told how at an early age she and her mother often argued over Western dresses that their tailor showed them.

He would get all the Western pattern books and I would point to this dress and that dress. Of course, the dresses that I wanted were very frilly and required more material. ... When I picked the pattern he told us you can only stitch one dress out of this and not three dresses because [Mrs. Mehta] is picking out the dress that requires twice as much fabric. ... I guess right from childhood I always was fashion conscious. ... The more [my mother] told me to restrict, the more I went beyond. ... My mother would argue, “This girl has blue eyes. You don’t have blue eyes. You can’t have this dress in the picture.”

Sometimes I would get my way. Sometimes my mother would get her way.

Mrs. Mehta's mother's racially-tinged comment about the model's blue eyes was attempting to curb her daughter's fashion enthusiasm. The story, however, does demonstrate how Mrs. Mehta did not see a difference between herself and the blue-eyed girl. She simply saw fashion that she wanted. It was not until Mrs. Mehta was more mature that she would draw a distinction between Western and South Asian dress.

Dr. Zadari began wearing Western dress at a young age as well, "When I was younger I would wear skirts and dresses too." When she began primary education at a Catholic school, Western dress was her uniform. She wore the pleated skirt and white blouse familiar with Catholic school students in the West. Dr. Zadari and her sisters were rarely restricted to what they could wear, "Sometimes I would wear jeans. When I was younger I would wear skirts and dresses too. As I got older, my mom didn't mind if I wore pants and jeans, but she didn't like the idea also." Her parents asked their daughters to be modest and appropriately dressed for each occasion.

If you're wearing a skirt or you're wearing a dress a lot of people would object to that. If you're wearing jeans or pants and you're not showing you're legs and you're wearing a shirt that's not too short, totally acceptable. ... It also depends. If you were going somewhere and the family was conservative, my mom expected us to wear a salwar kameez and dupatta. Not on the head or anything but around the neck. If you were going somebody who was 'modern', didn't mind. In the high school years, she kind of didn't like the idea of wearing a skirt too much.

Dr. Zadari spent a lot of time looking at Western media as well; American and British fashion magazines, as well as, television shows. When her father went abroad on business trips, she tore out pages of *Glamour* and *Seventeen* of garments or products she wanted her father to bring back. This upbringing with clothes and exposure to Western media is why Dr. Zadari only

drew one situational distinction with dress. If there is a large gathering of the Pakistani community, she will only wear salwar kameez. In all other situations, she admitted to wearing a particular culture's dress more but said she would never have a problem with wearing the other. For Dr. Zadari, being modest and appropriately dressed is the more important issue not being culturally identifiable.

The attitude these women share towards their wardrobes classifies them as Bi-Cultural dressers. Early exposure to cross-dressing of both South Asian and Western cultures obviated the need for these women to experience a new system of dress. These two women moved fluidly move between wardrobes, knowing what to wear and when for particular situations.

5.3.5 Questioning Cross-Dressing: South Asian Modesty in Western Dress

The above sections addressed the idea of cross-dressing amongst the subjects of this study. Appearance management was used in the cross-dressing analyses to help explain issues of self-presentation, identification, disclosure and contextual negotiations. The cross-dressing analysis questioned the experiences of the subjects when they encountered dress completely unfamiliar to them or wearing familiar dress in a new context (5.3.1 – 5.3.3). Lastly, the analysis looked at those subjects whose early experiences of cross-dressing created a familiarity with both cultures' wardrobes (5.3.4). These subjects; therefore, moved beyond cross-dressing before immigration and established themselves as bi-cultural dressers. In each instance, the cross-dressing performance was viewed from a dramaturgical perspective in order to define such components as performer,

audience, setting and performance being played. Mapping these components helped to compare scenes against one another and led to understanding of the performance objective of each scene. As Marjorie Garber explained, the objective of cross-dressing is passing as another desired category. G. P. Stone said that “Appearance is a dimension of all reality, and it is, of course, real itself” (Stone 1977, 10). Kaiser follows Stone by saying, “Part of the relations between appearance and reality pertains to others’ perceptions of one’s credibility in a ‘performance’” (Kaiser 1990, 195). While Garber’s focus of cross-dressing is “passing” or possibly even deception, Stone and Kaiser point out that any appearance involves viewing by others and judging of that presentation. While these dress choices are interpreted through performance, they are in fact real and each performances’ believability are judged. The second question posed in the introduction seeks to locate credibility: How successful were these subjects at crossing into new dress experiences? In addition to Garber’s question of success, I would add: When they dress today in either wardrobes, do they truly inhabit the garments?

These questions arose as the issue of modesty appeared throughout most of the interviews. As Dr. Kilari explains in the following, culturally ingrained ideas of body exposure have not left her or the women of her generation once they emigrated. Their sense of modesty does not affect their appreciation of Western dress, however, it affects what they choose to wear from the Western closet.

Even in Hyderabad, I never learned swimming because I felt very shy to wear swimming dress. Culturally exposing body was not looked at as something nice. It’s not a bad thing, you know. But still, certain inhibitions you get by growing up like that. Even today, I don’t know swimming because I don’t feel comfortable wearing swimming dress and exposing myself. Not that it is a bad thing, I know my kids wear and I encouraged them to learn swimming but I never did it. Mainly,

because I don't feel comfortable. Not that it is a bad thing. I was brought up in the culture. It is very difficult for me to wear anything like that. So, when I wear Western dress for work, even in summer, you see me in pants and long skirts. I don't feel comfortable wearing shorts. Like there are many older generations, who have some inhibitions not because of they don't appreciate the Western dress, because of the way they were brought up as kids.

Dr. Kilari explained that her sense of modesty prevents her from wearing certain garments where the body is overly exposed. Some Western items of dress; however, do not expose skin but they do make the shape of the body visible. For many of the subjects, there was an adjustment period for pants. As Mrs. Lahiri explains in the following, there is increased sense of movement but an increased awareness of one's body visibility.

MR – How did you feel when you started wearing trousers in comparison to saris?

Mrs. Lahiri – The feel of it. Yeah, yeah. There is a sense of freedom. There is also something I should tell you, even wearing the Western clothes, wearing long skirts was easier than wearing pants. That's makes sense of course, the modesty part of it is drilled into you. I still have never worn shorts and I probably never will. Uh, but some of us do, some of my generation women that work outside of the home wear them. I've seen them and they are perfectly fine. But I just, will not. It won't ever feel right for me.

MR – Because of the modesty?

Mrs. Lahiri – Yeah, yeah. And self-consciousness I think. That's the unfortunate thing I think, uh, I mean it's Indian women. We grow up being told that people are watching how to be careful and modest so I think that we're very self-conscious. We cannot lose our inhibitions. I think that's cultural. But anyways, to go back, that was also gradual. To be able to able to feel comfortable wearing something pants, pant suits rather than skirts and dresses. It was that difference also.

As discussed above (2.3.2), exposure of the legs is seen as immodest in South Asian dress. For all of the women, even those who were exposed to Western dress before immigration, pants were difficult to accept as an everyday garment. Moving from saris with petticoats or salwars to Western trousers these women encountered their legs becoming either much more

visible or publicly visible for the first time. Long skirts provide the coverage that the subjects are use to without making the legs more visible.

As Dr. Ravula explains in the following that the modesty issue involves more than exposure of the body, it involves the relationship to her clothes. Though she does not say this directly, she is referring to exposing parts of the body in ways that are unfamiliar to her and the women of her generation.

I don't know if this will be really useful. I find and I think some of my friends even though as much as we adapted to the American clothes, we wear ourselves. I mean, I never even with the kids, blue jeans and all. But when it comes to still, like she said, exposing the body and we see wearing very short clothes or very low neck still it makes us feel uncomfortable. We try to do that gently or ungently, accept it or not, discouraging that. We can't help that it's in our system. Western clothes are ok but still I think exposing the body I think is still kind of bothersome.

Dr. Ravula's comment, "we wear ourselves" is confirming that she and others like her inhabit Western dress with a South Asian sensibility. Though they chose to accept Western clothes for public and private usage, modesty lingers in their minds as they wear Western dress.

All of the subjects have adapted to a Western wardrobe with their ingrained senses of modesty. To the everyday person, each of the subjects would appear to wear Western dress like any other American. When reviewing the dress choices of each participant, I unknowingly noted if a garment was loose on a subject. Mrs. Chodhari, Dr. Rao, Dr. Kilari and Dr. Zadari wore their pants loosely. Dr. Ravula's dress appeared a size too large for her. Mrs. Lahiri and Dr. Naidu were the two subjects who appear to have adjusted the best to Western fit. None of the subjects were noted as wearing clothing too tight. None of the subjects relayed any experiences where non-immigrants questioned or expressed concern over their Western dress

choices. Lastly, none of the subjects relayed any instances of discrimination or harassment over wearing Western dress.

The answers to the above questions are difficult. These women are successful in that they do pass as part of American society because they manage various identities between contexts, as does any American. Their selection of Western dress, however, is limited and their usage is different based on their sense of modesty and their own body concerns. As for inhabitation, again they wear the garments successfully but collectively and individually in their own way. Garments have passed between cultures throughout time and with each passing, usage often varies. This is what these women are doing – adopting new items of dress and wearing them differently based on modesty concerns. The answer therefore may simply be, they dress as Americans with South Asian modesty. The cross-dressing is subverted into a dress language that is familiar only to those who can read and recognize it. Dressing as Americans with South Asian modesty is something which they have integrated into all their dressed personas; therefore, it is not a particular identity because this combination is important for defining their selves. This dress characteristic which was salient to their dress choices and dressed identities developed into a dressing language particular to the South Asian diaspora in America.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This research project began with fictional accounts of South Asian immigrants living in America. These character portrayals and assimilation literature in general painted a picture of this generation of women as unchanging and holding onto tradition. I found these ideas overly critical of a group whom I remembered from my childhood as fully adapted to American society. From this conflicting imagery, the following question arose: How have the participants of this study adapted their dress to America and to West Virginia? As interviews were conducted, the secondary question emerged: Who are these participants when they make dress choices? This second question ultimately led to a larger inquiry into their individual and collective identity. The following sections will address each question before probing issue of identity for this group. Due to the small sample size, each of the below discussions, do not intend to draw broad conclusions for South Asians immigrants. The ideas presented below are an appropriate first step towards a larger study that may have broader validity for Indian and Pakistani immigrant communities.

6.2 *How have the participants of this study adapted their dress to America and to West Virginia?*

To answer the question of adaptation, concepts on public/private space, emplacement sensory theory, cross-dressing and appearance management were used to analyze their dress choices in order to understand their sartorial adaptations. This required an examination of dress patterns in India. During

the colonial era in India, most Indian women continued to wear South Asian dress in public and private spaces. The women of the Indian elite adopted conservative European blouses to cover more of their body and wore petticoats to completely shield the visibility of their legs. The subjects of this study; however, appear to follow the pattern normally associated with the most Westernized Indian men from the colonial period. In the past, the majority of Indian men reserved Western dress for public spaces and South Asian dress for private spaces. Only very liberal Indian men wore Western dress in both spaces. However, the female subjects of this study appear to have crossed the threshold of colonial era liberalism and experimented with spatial-dress divisions as men once did in colonial India. The public/private analysis mapped out how the subjects choose to divide their wardrobes. The flow charts (Appendix G) show that for most subjects, except Mrs. Mehta and Dr. Zadari, their wardrobes were mostly South Asian prior to emigration. After immigration to the U.S., the wardrobes became spatially divided as Western dress was progressively adopted. For all subjects, except Mrs. Khan, Western dress was worn in the public and private spheres. In considering all the responses, from Mrs. Mehta's first comment on her Bollywood style in America and throughout the wardrobe mapping process, I concluded that a new space was needed to define the area where performance, nostalgic style and community intersect. This space was defined as the semi-private space where South Asian dress is worn almost exclusively. Additionally, the collapse of public and private spaces into a single category, Western dress, also encouraged the suggestion for the additional semi-private space.

The second case study on emplacement argued that the dress choices of this group are informed by mental, bodily and environment stimuli. Their

immigration experiences were broken into two categories: dystoposthetic and displaced. The dystoposthetic dress experience involves the feeling of marginalization by one's surrounding environment as a result of dress choices. Subjects Mrs. Lahiri and Mrs. Khan were compared to discuss dystoposthesia and dress. I proposed that both participants had experiences where they felt alienated from those around them. In both cases, I suggested that dress played a major part in this marginalization. After a process of experimenting with their dress both women developed personal solutions to deal with their new American environments. The displaced dress experience occurs when one feels disconnected from their environment due to their dress choices. Subjects Prof. Kapoor and Dr. Kilari were contrasted to view displacement and dress. Displacement differs from dystoposthesia as the feeling of disconnection is less severe than a feeling of complete alienation. The displaced dress experiences of these two subjects showed that their adaptation was almost instantaneous after immigration. I proposed that both participants were highly aware of their differences, as multiple migrants. They sought to mollify their displacement through the adoption of Western dress in the public sphere.

The third case study used cross-dressing and appearance management to analyze the process of decision-making and identity negotiation that each subject went through after immigration. As shown in the above case studies, seven subjects (Prof. Kapoor, Mrs. Lahiri, Mrs. Chodhari, Dr. Naidu, Dr. Rao, Dr. Ravula, Dr. Kilari) experimented with their dress through cross-dressing for varying periods of time before ultimately deciding on Western dress for their public and private worlds. This collective decision developed through process of appearance management where choices were

considered in an emplaced mindset. Mrs. Khan was unique in her dress conclusion. Though she negotiated and experimented with her dress as much as the aforementioned seven subjects, she ultimately chose to continue wearing mostly South Asian dress at home. Two subjects, Mrs. Mehta and Dr. Zadari, had prior exposure to Western dress before immigration. These two subjects, defined as Bi-Cultural Dressers, may not have gone through the confusing experience of cross-dressing; however, they still had to negotiate their identities in the unfamiliar social and private contexts in the United States through appearance management.

While the subjects of the group interview dismissed dress negotiations as a minor part of the assimilation process, the above conclusions suggest that it is a more complex process than these subjects credited. Making dress choices is fraught with spatial, sensorial, and trans-sartorial processes that ultimately lead to dress adaptation, which is as individual as it is collective.

6.3 Who are these participants when they make dress choices?

Answering the question in the previous section on how the subjects of this study have adapted their dress choices presents only the results. Asking who these participants become via their dress choices turns their decisions into informed and interpreted proposals about identity. Who they are in their dress choices can best be viewed through a combined discussion of the semi-private space and notions of South Asian modesty.

The Cross-Dressing and Appearance Management case study interrogated the relationship of the participants to Western dress. In the public and private spaces, nine subjects choose Western dress. Mrs. Khan is the only subject to fluctuate between both wardrobes in both spaces. As

discussed above (5.3.5) each of the subjects in this study limited their selection of Western dress to conservative garments. No subject expressed any dismissal of Western dress as they grew to appreciate it. Many of the subjects' first difficult experiences with Western dress centered on pants. Pants were not only something unfamiliar but caused a confrontation with South Asian modesty, which proscribed the visibility of legs. Dr. Ravula's comment, "We wear ourselves" spoke to her and the participants' collective application of South Asian modesty when wearing Western garments. Their solution in the public and private spaces was to adopt Western dress in a non-Western way. What these subjects may see as dressing like Americans becomes an intersection between South Asian and American identities, each cultures' dress and notions of modesty. As stated above, it is a subversive language of dressing that is only readable by those who understand it.

As discussed above, Mrs. Mehta's interview and beginning the mapping process initiated the idea of the semi-private space. The participants in the group interview; however, confirmed this idea by repeatedly referring to a particular type of South Asian dress, which some women in modern India have left in the past. After reviewing the individual interviews, the sense of nostalgia ran through each conversation with varying degrees. As in Linda Welters' work with Greek festival dress discussed above (2.5.2), sentimentality appears when her participants expressed dress with pride in collective terms of "our" and not "mine". In Section 2.5.2, I sought to move Welters, and Littrell and Ogle's works beyond mere sensory reporting and into an emplaced experience. The confluence of environment and festival dress produces a performance of a particular space and time. For Welters' subjects, the

memory of this confluence recalled a performance of nostalgic dress in community spaces, which was spectacular.

Like Welters' subjects, my subjects expressed pride and collectivity as well as other sentiments like the femininity and the exceptionality of South Asian dress. For these immigrants, the semi-private space draws an emotional connection. I propose that they are seeking to recapture a glimpse of what they left behind in South Asia. The affective desire is nostalgic and is reflected in their dress choices. The nostalgia; however, is not the same for all participants. Some expressed simply the opportunity to wear South Asian dress while others discussed the space and their dress with stronger emotional content ranging from joy to sentimentality.

South Asian dress is worn by all subjects in the semi-private space of community gatherings and friendly South Asian get-togethers. The Indian subjects, with the exception of Mrs. Chodhari, always wear saris to these events. Mrs. Chodhari prefers to wear salwar kameez in the semi-private space, as she finds saris too cumbersome. The two Pakistani subjects, Mrs. Khan and Dr. Zadari, wear salwar kameez. Though Dr. Zadari said that she would feel comfortable wearing Western dress in the semi-private space, she did not indicate that she wore Western dress in this space with any frequency.

The range of emotions expressed had much to do with age. The younger participants, Mrs. Chodhari and Dr. Zadari, did not talk about their dress choices for the community with much reminiscence. Instead they discussed the semi-private space as an opportunity to wear their South Asian dress with the community. From these participants, they communicated less emotionally and more matter-of-factly saying that salwar kameez and saris are what you wear at these events for the community. When asked if the

community exerts pressure to wear South Asian dress only Dr. Zadari replied, “Yes they do. They exert a pressure directly or indirectly but I’m comfortable being who I am. I think I’m passed the stage of dressing how someone wants me to dress.” Dr. Zadari also said, “If it’s a bigger function with a lot more people there, I would stick to Pakistani clothes.”

The older Indian subjects (Prof. Kapoor, Mrs. Lahiri, Mrs. Mehta, Dr. Naidu, Dr. Rao, Dr. Ravula and Dr. Kilari) fixated on various aspects of the sari, the use of which was confined to the semi-private space: uniqueness and femininity. The sari is now a special item of dress in these women’s wardrobes. The sari has migrated from everyday to occasional use due to the collective acceptance of Western dress in the public and private spheres, as well as, new associations of the sari which developed. As discussed above in her profile, Mrs. Mehta was the subject who best conveyed how the sari became special for these women. Mrs. Mehta’s life changed dramatically when she came to the U.S. She went from being a socialite in Mumbai to working mother in the Midwest. Mrs. Mehta conveyed that Western dress is perceived as ordinary because of its lack of uniqueness. The convenience of ready-to-wear positions it as quotidian dress. The sari moves into the category of special because it is original and stylish in the opinion of some subjects. For Mrs. Mehta, the sari also evokes the association of Bollywood and her former chic life growing up around actors and musicians.

Prof. Kapoor and Dr. Kilari both described the sari as feminine. As Prof. Kapoor explained, she feels more feminine in a sari than in her Western clothes. She discussed how the sari is more than just the sari but all the necessary adornment that accompanies the sari – hair, make-up, jewelry and behavior. Dr. Kilari went past Prof. Kapoor’s description of “more feminine” to

the highest superlative of “most feminine”. As she explained in the group interview, when she and other Indian women want to look their best or most beautiful, they automatically pick the sari. For Prof. Kapoor and Dr. Kilari, the main adjective to evoke the sari is “feminine”. Behind the adjective of feminine is “special occasion”, superlatives, and both individual and collective expressions of its distinctive position in their wardrobes.

The above discussion of uniqueness and femininity, as well as, what Western dress represents in comparison of uniformity and convenience, explains how these women distinguish their two wardrobes. To understand why they wear saris at community gatherings, we can consider a discussion surrounding how they dress when visiting India.

Dr. Rao – You know. When someone is wearing an old sari they immediately recognize that they are from U.S. (Collective laughter)

Dr. Rao – Because.

Dr. Ravula – We are old-fashioned.

Dr. Rao – We are old-fashioned. We still have those saris here. When we go there we wear them. Anybody wearing old-fashioned sari, previous ones they're outdated fashions, immediately they are from the U.S.

MR – Compared to other women?

Dr. Rao – Exactly. Even the blouses we don't want to change immediately. They tell you, “They have short sleeves.” I don't want to go into short-sleeves. I'm going up to here. We don't change. They know immediately they are from U.S. They are the only people who wear all this old stuff. (Collective laughter).

What the above conversation explains is that these participants live in an India which is fading or does not exist anymore; a past and contradiction which Jhumpa Lahiri showed in the characters of Hema and Kaushik's mothers quoted in the introduction. The subjects' notions of modesty and style are dated and recall old-fashioned ideals, like the *bhadramahila*, and sari fashions prior to the early 1980s. This is a particular type of dress which can be

described as nostalgic dress, because of its styling and performance, and is specific to this generation of South Asian immigrants. Dr. Ravula's comment, "We are old-fashioned" is not particular to visits to India, it applies to visits home and whenever they choose to wear saris. The nostalgic dress is also worn to show deference to elder family members and indirectly giving deference to the India that once was.

But during visits to India when these subjects don saris, spectacle is absent from the return home experience because they are alone in their out-dated dress choices. On the whole, they are merely re-living past experiences and modes of behavior in everyday Indian dress. In America, the semi-private space becomes something more than simply community. It provides these individuals the opportunity to perform who they are at their finest through collective episodes of nostalgic dress. In their description of their South Asian dress, as these layers of formal, finest, feminine, colorful, and fine craftsmanship develop, the spectacle emerges.

In the semi-private space, the spectacle which is created is located in the spatial-temporal past when these subjects left South Asia. None of the women purchase the revealing Bollywood fashions as they are too immodest. Even Mrs. Mehta, who follows Indian fashion trends closely will not wear recent South Asian fashions which are too revealing or clings to her body. These women adapt the new saris they purchase here and on return visits to reflect the modest way they choose to dress in front of one another. As Dr. Rao commented in the conversation above, she was advised to make her sari blouse with short sleeves; however, she thought such short sleeves indecent as she would expose too much of her arm. The dress of these participants in the semi-private space, therefore, has not adapted to the progression of time

in silhouette, only in fabric and surface design. Mrs. Khan, Mrs. Chodhari and Dr. Zadari do not wear form-fitting salwar kameez now popular with younger women in India and Pakistan. None of these women seek to draw negative attention to themselves and a tight ensemble would draw such notice. While the spectacle of their finest attire is on display it is almost wholly nostalgic. Mrs. Chodhari and Dr. Zadari do participate in nostalgic dress performance as well. Though neither woman expressed longing for a return to their homeland, both women dress modestly in their South Asian clothing; modesty ideas learned from their pasts.

6.4 Attired at Home, Disguised in the World: The Diasporans.

Uncovering identity through dress was not an original intention of this project; however, it was brought up by Mrs. Khan. Therefore it was discussed in the interviews which followed, and follow-up questions were sent to Prof. Kapoor and Mrs. Lahiri. As Mrs. Khan said,

Honestly Mario, I think inside, and a lot of us do, that we are not really American and not really Pakistani. I feel like we are somewhere in-between. I have been here. This is my home. ... Even when I go to Pakistan, I can't wait to come home. I was eighteen when I came here. I grew up here practically. ... Sometimes when you think, where do I really belong to?

For Dr. Kilari the issue of identifying centered on being split between two places. As she explained,

We're always half and half. ... Nobody forced me to be an American citizen. I choose to be an American citizen once I realized that I'm going to be here and I want to be here. So it is, I will always wish well for both the countries. Just because I have taken American citizenship, I won't say that I'm not Indian. I will always be Indian. I will always, you know, wish well for India no matter what. ... We'll always be, when you are raised for some years, you'll always have some attachment. So, you'll always wish for my birth country. I'm an American citizen but, somebody talk to me, I still identify myself as an Indian. So, it doesn't

change. But at the same time, we appreciate being an American citizen too. It was our choice. We wanted to be part of America, the openness of this country and giving chance. ... Nobody forced us to be an American citizens. We wanted it.

Most of the subjects conveyed either an unsure or complex sense of self as noted in the above two examples. Mrs. Khan expressed confusion while Dr. Kilari expressed Indian identity and American citizenship. Only Dr. Zadari was able to answer the question on how she identifies herself with succinctness, "If anyone asks I state that I am an American citizen of Pakistani origin."

Heema Govindjee's thesis (2.4.4) focused much attention on the meaning of the hyphen in the term South Asian-American and how ownership of the hyphen comes into being through dress fluctuations. I found much of her analysis on the hyphenated identity confusing since only one of her twenty-one subjects defined themselves with a hyphen. In her study, many defined themselves singularly, e.g. Indian or East Indian. If two identities or more were expressed, most defined first of all a nationality/ethnicity and secondly a religious affiliation, e.g. Punjabi/Sikh or Indian/Hindu. For this study, even Dr. Zadari's concise answer to my question chose to separate the two identities, not join them with a hyphen. Heema Govindjee argued that dress is where her subjects claimed their hyphenated status. Again this is a perplexing conclusion because the function of a hyphen denotes combined meaning. The subjects in her study and my study move between wardrobes more than they choose to combine South Asian and Western dress. As Mrs. Lahiri explained dress has no bearing on her self-identification, "I feel completely 'normal' when I am wearing Indian clothes. The Western clothes are for convenience and are the result of being self-conscious and wanting to acclimatize. I am trying to say that wearing Western clothes does not make

me pause in identifying myself as a Hindu Indian¹¹ woman.” Dr. Naidu did not see herself as possessing a singular dressed identity but rather something fluid, “We still wear our Indian clothes any chance we get for any occasion. But I think we feel comfortable going in and out of the different cultures and different dresses.”

Today, less attention is focused on hyphenated nationalities as social scientists explore the more popular concept of transnationality. The transnational is someone who moves, communicates and establishes networks between multiple locations of their migrations. For the subjects of this study, their transnationality primarily is between the United States and either India or Pakistan. Subjects Prof. Kapoor, Mrs. Chodhari, Dr. Rao and Dr. Kilari may have additional transnational connections with other nations where they lived. When identity appeared as confusing, the ideas of hyphenation and transnationality were equally confusing to accept, particularly when each subjects’ dress choices are considered. In the many contexts presented above, each subject had to decide what to wear when, where and why. Hyphenated identities or the transnational label are difficult to apply to these subjects because national identities seem to be almost wholly absent from their decision-making process. Pants were worn because they are easier to move in and more convenient for the workplace, less so because the women wanted to identify as Americans. A winter coat is bought for warmth, not to take on a Western identity. Saris and salwar kameez are worn at community functions because the women naturally gravitate towards these garments to express their femininity, less so to perform their South Asian

¹¹ A hyphen has not been purposefully omitted from this answer. Mrs. Lahiri submitted this as a written response to a follow-up question based on my interview with Mrs. Khan where the identity question first appeared.

identities. In the everyday decisions made about who these women need to be, nation-states seem to be absent or an unconscious factor. Functional and aesthetic reasons appear to spark their dress choices.

While I do not deny the usefulness of the language of hyphens and transnationality in research, this study indicates it has possible limitations. Hyphenated identities appeared more in the literature I examined on immigrants' children who easily identify as Indian-American, Pakistani-American, Korean-American or Chinese-American. However, it does not seem to fit as well to describe the identities of this particular group from the immigrant generation. Transnationality is appropriate for identifying populations where communication, economic and consumption flows are studied. The Transnational Dress Diagram (Figure 6.1) highlights the limitation even further. When nationalities and wardrobes converge in a Venn diagram, they create separate categories where individuals can place themselves in terms of dressed personas – Western dress, South Asian dress or South Asian and Western dress. The problem with this diagram is that it enforces boundaries and national affiliation in a fixed context. Dr. Naidu said above that she and the other women of the group interview feel comfortable going in and out of their various wardrobes, which implies fluidity. Heema Govindjee found similar fluid wardrobe fluctuations in her study as well. Furthermore the cross-dressing and modesty analyses indicated that in this study these subjects and their dress choices developed highly complex creations in context. A simplistic category like “South Asian wardrobe” falls short in defining what these women wear because the actual wardrobe complexity and performance space are not accounted for. When a sari is worn with an American top in the semi-private space, Western garments worn

with South Asian conservatism at home or a kurta and pants worn to a family dinner at a restaurant the categories truly breakdown and a more fluid space is needed. When considering people, setting, dress and/or material culture broadly an idea which brings together body-mind-environment, an emplaced idea is needed.

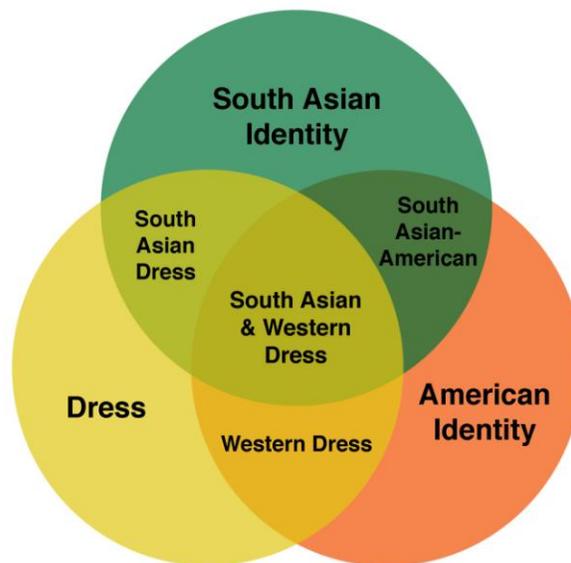


Figure 6.1 Transnational Dress Diagram (Diagram by Author)

During my preliminary research on the South Asian diaspora, I found that two words were used as adjectives, *diasporic* and *diasporal*. *Diasporic* appeared as the more commonly used adjective in American literature I reviewed. *Diasporal* was rarely used. A third, rarely used, word *diasporan* was always attached to a nationality, like Armenian-Diasporan or Israeli-Diasporan. In searching for a word that describes people who live in a tertiary space, using the word *Diasporan* on its own seemed appropriate. This word focuses attention on who these people are, migrants with their own culture living within another culture, in which they have to make daily identity

negotiations. As the Diasporan Dress Diagram (Figure 6.2) shows the primary categories of South Asian identity, American identity and Dress come together into the central idea of a Diasporan Dress space. However, the margins of different wardrobes are absent in a spatially fluid zone. In this space, immigrants are able to move about wearing Western dress, South Asian dress or combined dress of both cultures with South Asian nostalgic modesty, Western modesty or a revised blended modesty between public, private and the semi-private spaces.



Figure 6.2 Diasporan Dress Diagram (Diagram by Author)

6.5 Directions for Future Diasporan-Dress Study

In the introduction of this thesis, I introduced two of Jhumpa Lahiri's characters from her collection *Unaccustomed Earth*; Hema's mother, the direct migrant, who wore brightly colored common saris, and Kaushik's mother, the multiple migrant, who wore "stylish" Western dress. While the objective was not to find these exact characters in real life, Mrs. Mehta is a direct migrant version of

Kaushik's mother. Hema's mother; however, is missing from this study. Though efforts were made on my part and the part of some of my subjects to bring South Asian women who only wear saris into the study, none proved fruitful. During some of the interviews, these subjects were discussed and speculations were made regarding their reasons for remaining in South Asian dress. The ideas proposed by the subjects fall into one of two categories: they do not work outside the home so they never had to adapt, or they simply chose not to wear Western dress. Learning more about this missing group would be useful for a future project.

Three other topics were part of the interviews; however, were not discussed in depth because the data was insufficient. The first topic was shopping. During the interviews, I questioned the subjects about where they purchase and what they dis/like about South Asian and Western garments. With some subjects, we even discussed the differences between South Asian and American shopping experiences, some of which was mentioned in Mrs. Mehta's profile (4.5) and the analysis of her cross-dressing experience (5.3.2). Secondly, the dress choices and negotiations between generations is another topic for further study. The mothers in this study all seek to pass on South Asian dress and modesty; however, this is often met with resistance from a generation which seeks to wear fashions from the subcontinent they see in Bollywood movies and through the internet. Some daughters were not resistant and preferred the conservative styles and ways of wearing South Asian dress of their mothers and aunts. As mentioned above, other studies of dress often focus on the second generation and unfairly cast the immigrant mothers as too conservative. This negative portrayal of immigrant mothers has not received adequate attention. The key would be to interview diasporan

mothers and second generation daughters together to uncover how these two groups negotiate identity and space through dress beyond the borders of South Asia.

Four additional topics which would expand this study are the urban versus rural comparison, U.S. versus other Western countries comparison, the introduction of class and caste variables, and the topic of fashion. While this study was conducted to present a small town perspective from the body of studies on the South Asian diaspora in urban centers, no study yet provides a true comparative examination between urban and rural lives of diasporans. Secondly, the U.S. and Canadian South Asian diasporas have very similar and shared histories. Comparing dress in non-urban contexts between settings in North America could present different dress choices. Similarly, comparing the North American against British or other European diasporas could introduce different variables where immigration laws, settings and racism differ from American cultures. Thirdly, class and caste were left out of this study because literature suggested, like that of Proshanta K. Nandi, that class and caste barriers are less strict in non-metropolitan contexts. I found that the subjects of this study do indeed socialize with one another in spite of their different backgrounds. I wonder, however, if class or caste dynamics are played out within the community in a more subtle ways. In relation to dress, could an understood hierarchy establish who sets the dress codes.

The last topic which would greatly expand this project is fashion. As defined by Eicher, Evenson and Lutz (2.2), fashion is a less precise term. It is a discursive term applicable to garments, cars, theory, economics, etc. It also possesses value judgments which place the aforementioned objects and ideas along a trajectory of introduction – acceptance – obsolescence. As shown in

the Diasporan Dress/Fashion Diagram (Figure 6.3) where fashion is added, the components are more numerous and the central space expanded.



Figure 6.3 Diasporan Wardrobe Diagram (Diagram by Author)

I purposefully limited the research to the more general concept dress because of the time constraint and ambition of a thesis. Adding fashion would complicate the project by questioning the differences and appropriate usages between South Asian and Western dress, South Asian and Western fashion, and comparisons between both cultures' dress and fashion categories. By looking at fashion from a diasporan perspective one could query the spatial and temporal locations of fashion. Lastly, fashion between cultures or in a diasporic space presents the problem of who is controlling fashion and how it

is being communicated and dispersed in the diaspora. These ideas are merely the beginning of such a complex exploration as the constant shifting face of one culture's fashion makes such temporal studies difficult to locate, let alone between two cultures' or in the tertiary space of the diaspora.

APPENDIX A
(INTERVIEW GUIDE)

Interview #
Name:
Date:

- *Descriptive Information*
 - Country of Origin:
 - Birth City:
 - Age:
 - Religious Background:
 - Immigration Date/Year to U.S.:

- *Before the U.S. / Clothing Worn in South Asia....*
 - (1a) Tell me about your personal history
 - (1b) Tell me what clothing you wore while you still lived in India/Pakistan.

- *The Immigration Experience....*
 - (2a) Tell me about your experience of moving to the U.S.
 - (2a1) When did you come to the U.S.?
 - (2a2) Why did you move to the U.S.?
 - (2a3) When did you move to this town in West Virginia?
 - (2a4) Why did you move to this town in West Virginia?

 - (2b) What did you wear when you traveled from India/Pakistan to the U.S.?
 - (2b1) Do you still have that/those clothes? Or a picture?
 - (2b2) Did you consider this outfit a special outfit?
 - (2b2) If yes, what was special about it?
 - (2b2) Fabric type? Colors? Design?

- *Dress during the early years....*
 - (3) Tell me about your clothes that you wore during your first years in West Virginia.
 - (3a) Type of clothes worn
 - (3a1) Fabrics, colors, designs
 - (3b) Have you ever altered your Indian/Pakistani clothes in this new environment, tell me how you changed them?
 - (3b1) Did you wear heavier versions?
 - (3b2) Did you wear Western clothes over your South Asian clothes?

- *Dress choices today....*
 - (4) Do you wear Indian/Pakistani clothing currently?
 - (4a) If so, when?
 - (4b1) Tell me why do you choose these clothes for this/these occasion?

- *Clothing Functionality....*
 - (5a) Tell me when is Indian/Pakistani clothing comfortable?
 - (5b) Do you ever feel restricted in Indian/Pakistani clothes?
 - (5b1) If so, when?
 - (5b2) Why?
 - (5c) Do you ever feel uncomfortable in Indian/Pakistani clothes?
 - (5c1) If so, when?
 - (5c2) Why?

- *Shopping and the Diaspora....*
 - (6a) Where do you get your Indian/Pakistani clothes from?
 - (6b) How often do you travel back to India/Pakistan?
 - (6c) Do you visit cities with larger Indian/Pakistani communities?
 - (6c1) If so, which cities?
 - (6c2) When?
 - (6c3) Why?
 - (6c4) Do you purchase clothes when you visit these communities?
 - (6c4) If so, do you purchase clothes every time you visit?

- *Western Clothes and the Diaspora....*
 - (7a) Do you wear Western clothing?
 - (7a1) Tell me when you started wearing these clothes?
 - (7a2) Tell me why you normally where these clothes?
 - (7a3) Tell me how rest of your friends and/or family reacted when you began to wear Western garments.
 - (7b) When are Western garments comfortable for you?
 - (7b1) Why?
 - (7c) Do you ever feel restricted in Western clothes?
 - (7c1) Why?
 - (7d) Do you ever feel uncomfortable in Western clothes?
 - (7d1) If so, when?
 - (7d2) Why?

APPENDIX B
(PHOTOGRAPHS INTERVIEW GUIDE)

Interview #

Name:

Date:

- (1) Tell me about this picture...
 - (1a) Where are you?
 - (1b) Who else is in the photograph?

- (2) Tell me about what you are wearing?
 - (2a) Origin
 - (2b) Fabric
 - (2c) Color/Design
 - (2d) Daily dress or Special Occasion

APPENDIX C
(CLOSET INTERVIEW GUIDE)

Interview #

Name:

Date:

- (1) Show me what you most commonly wear from your wardrobe.
 - (1) Tell me about these clothes.
 - (1a) Why do you choose to wear these often?
 - (1b) How do you wear this garment?
 - (1c) Identification of the garment
 - (1c1) Origin/Designer
 - (1c2) Fabric
 - (1c3) Color/Design
- (2) Show me what you like to wear for community gatherings.
 - (2) Tell me about these clothes.
 - (2a) Why do you choose to wear these at community gatherings?
 - (2b) How do you wear this garment?
 - (2c) Identification of the garment
 - (2c1) Origin/Designer
 - (2c2) Fabric
 - (2c3) Color/Design
- (3) Show me what you wear when you visit your family in India/Pakistan.
 - (3) Tell me about these clothes.
 - (3a) Why do you choose to wear these clothes in India/Pakistan?
 - (3b) How do you wear this garment?
 - (3c) Identification of the garment
 - (3c1) Origin/Designer
 - (3c2) Fabric
 - (3c3) Color/Design
 - (4) Do you ever wear these garments here in West Virginia?
 - (4a) When?
 - (4b) Why?
- (5) Show me what you wear when your family visits you here in West Virginia.
 - (5) Tell me about these clothes.

- (5a) Why do you choose to wear these when you are visited?
- (5b) How do you wear this garment?
- (5c) Identification of the garment
 - (5c1) Origin/Designer
 - (5c2) Fabric
 - (5c3) Color/Design

- (6) Would you ever wear these garments when visiting India/Pakistan or community function in the U.S.?

- (7) Show me what you like to wear for a special occasion like a family member's wedding.
 - (7) Tell me about these clothes.
 - (7a) Why do you choose to wear this outfit for a wedding?
 - (7b) How do you wear this garment?
 - (7c) Identification of the garment
 - (7c1) Origin/Designer
 - (7c2) Fabric
 - (7c3) Color/Design

 - (8) Would you wear different clothes for a friend's wedding?
 - (8a) If yes, can you show me what this outfit would be?
 - (8b) Why do you choose to wear something different for a friend's wedding?

APPENDIX D
(RECRUITMENT E-MAIL)

Dear Dr. / Mrs.,

I am contacting you at the suggestion of (insert name) who thought you might be willing to assist me in a research project I am doing. I am a graduate student currently studying the clothing of South Asian women living in the United States. In my research project, I aim to understand what South Asian women wore when they moved to the U.S. and see if this differs from what they are currently wearing today.

This research is directed towards South Asian women who immigrated to the U.S. after 1965. The study will involve a recorded interview, which will last approximately an hour. This study will be confidential and you have the option to remain anonymous if you choose to participate. I plan to follow up this e-mail by calling you in the next week; or if you are willing to participate in this project or have any questions, please contact me at 917.859.2672 or mjr28@cornell.edu.

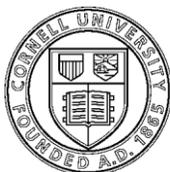
Sincerely,

Mario J. Roman

Cornell University
Dept. of Fiber Science & Apparel Design
E405 Martha van Rensselaer Hall
Ithaca, New York 14853
917.859.2672
mjr28@cornell.edu

Please note that e-mail and the Internet are not a secure form of communication. Any response to the above e-mail and/or further communication via the Internet could be read by a third party.

APPENDIX E
(RECRUITMENT LETTER)



Cornell University

College of Human Ecology

Mario J. Roman

Dept. of Fiber Science & Apparel Design

E405 Martha van Rensselaer Hall

Ithaca, New York 14853

917.859.2672

mjr28@cornell.edu

April 20, 2010

Dr. / Mrs.

City, WV Zip Code

Dear Dr. / Mrs.,

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This research is directed towards South Asian women who immigrated to the U.S. after 1965. The study will involve a recorded interview, which will last approximately an hour. This study will be confidential and you have the option to remain anonymous if you choose to participate. I plan to follow up this letter by calling you in the next week; or if you are willing to participate in this project or have any questions, please contact me at 917.859.2672 or mjr28@cornell.edu.

Sincerely,

Mario J. Roman

APPENDIX F

(U.S. CENSUS FOREIGN-BORN STATISTICS FOR WEST VIRGINIA)

County	2000					1990					1980		1970	
	Total	A	B	I	P	Total	A	I	P	Total	Total	I		
1 Barbour	15557	-	-	9	-	15699	-	-	-	16639	-	14030	-	
2 Berkeley	75905	9	-	45	16	59253	-	12	9	46775	27	36356	-	
3 Boone	25,535	-	-	-	24	25870	-	-	-	30447	37	25118	-	
4 Braxton	14702	-	-	-	-	12998	-	-	-	13894	-	12666	-	
5 Brooke	25447	-	-	-	-	26992	-	-	-	31117	-	29685	-	
6 Cabell	96784	12	-	90	11	96827	-	148	22	106835	70	106918	109	
7 Calhoun	7582	-	-	-	-	7885	-	-	-	8250	-	7046	-	
8 Clay	10330	-	-	-	-	9983	-	-	-	11265	-	9330	-	
9 Doddridge	7403	-	-	-	-	6994	-	-	-	7433	-	6389	-	
10 Fayette	47579	-	4	40	15	47952	-	49	8	57863	36	49332	-	
11 Gilmer	7160	-	2	-	4	7669	-	2	-	8334	-	7782	-	
12 Grant	11299	-	-	-	-	10428	-	5	-	10210	-	8607	-	
13 Greenbrier	34453	-	-	15	-	34693	-	-	-	37665	-	32090	-	
14 Hampshire	20203	-	-	7	8	16498	-	-	-	14867	-	11710	-	
15 Hancock	32667	-	-	-	-	35233	-	26	7	40418	43	39749	196	
16 Hardy	12669	-	-	-	7	10977	-	-	-	10030	-	8855	-	
17 Harrison	68652	-	-	91	-	69371	-	9	-	77710	25	73028	28	
18 Jackson	28000	-	-	6	5	25938	-	8	-	25794	-	20903	-	
19 Jefferson	42190	13	-	15	3	35926	-	13	-	30302	-	21280	-	
20 Kanawha	200073	-	16	430	87	207619	-	291	77	231414	127	229515	182	
21 Lewis	16919	-	-	-	-	17223	-	-	-	18813	-	17847	-	
22 Lincoln	22108	-	-	-	-	21382	-	-	-	23675	-	18912	-	
23 Logan	37710	-	-	28	-	43032	-	41	-	50679	-	46269	29	
24 McDowell	27329	-	-	8	-	35233	-	-	-	49899	57	50666	-	
25 Marion	56598	-	-	38	7	57249	-	29	2	65789	-	61356	-	
26 Marshall	35519	-	-	19	-	37356	-	-	25	41608	-	37598	22	
27 Mason	25957	-	-	13	55	25178	-	9	-	27045	-	24306	-	
28 Mercer	62980	-	10	44	10	64980	-	34	42	73942	43	63206	51	
29 Mineral	27078	-	-	9	5	26697	-	35	-	27234	-	23109	-	
30 Mingo	28253	-	11	-	-	33739	-	-	-	37336	-	32780	-	
31 Monogalia	81866	36	60	368	48	75509	-	214	44	75024	239	63714	81	
32 Monroe	14583	-	-	-	-	12406	-	-	-	12873	-	11272	-	
33 Morgan	14943	-	-	-	-	12128	-	-	-	10711	-	8547	-	
34 Nicholas	26562	-	-	33	-	26775	-	-	-	28126	-	22552	-	
35 Ohio	47427	-	17	117	2	50871	-	58	-	61389	-	64197	182	
36 Pendelton	8196	-	-	-	-	8054	-	-	-	7910	-	7031	-	
37 Pleasants	7514	-	-	4	13	7546	-	-	-	8236	-	7274	-	
38 Pocahontas	9131	-	-	1	-	9008	-	-	-	9919	-	8870	-	
39 Preston	29334	-	-	-	-	29037	-	-	-	30460	-	25455	-	
40 Putnam	51589	-	-	55	6	42835	-	30	-	38181	-	27625	-	
41 Raleigh	79220	24	-	109	37	76819	-	81	21	86821	21	70080	25	
42 Randolph	28262	-	-	12	-	27803	-	15	-	28734	-	24596	-	
43 Ritchie	10343	-	-	-	-	10223	-	-	-	11442	-	10145	-	
44 Roane	15446	-	-	-	-	15120	-	-	-	15952	-	14111	-	
45 Summers	12999	-	-	-	-	14204	-	6	-	15875	-	13213	-	
46 Taylor	16089	-	-	-	-	15144	-	-	-	16584	-	13878	-	
47 Tucker	7321	-	-	-	-	7728	-	-	-	8675	-	7447	-	
48 Tyler	9592	-	-	7	-	9796	-	-	-	11320	-	9929	-	
49 Upshur	23404	-	-	-	-	22867	-	-	-	23427	-	19092	-	
50 Wayne	42903	-	-	-	-	41636	-	-	-	46021	-	37581	-	
51 Webster	9719	-	-	-	-	10729	-	-	-	12245	-	9809	-	
52 Wetzel	17693	-	-	-	-	19258	-	-	-	21874	52	20314	-	
53 Wirt	5873	-	-	-	-	5192	-	-	-	4922	-	4154	-	
54 Wood	87986	-	-	72	-	86915	-	69	2	93648	34	86818	-	
55 Wyoming	25708	-	-	-	-	28990	-	-	-	35993	-	30095	-	
Total	1808344	94	120	1685	363	1793467	0	1184	259	1949644	811	1744237	905	

Key
A = Afghani
B = Bangladeshi
I = Indian
P = Pakistani

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GLOSSARY

The below definitions come from Pravina Shukla's *The Grace of Four Moons: Dress, Adornment, and the Art of the Body in Modern India*, and Emma Tarlo's *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India*. For many of these definitions, I combined Shukla and Tarlo's definitions. Definitions from additional sources are noted otherwise.

Abaya – An outer garment which is long and loose used to cover the shape of the body when going out in public by women practicing *hijab*. It covers the body except for the face, feet and hands. The abaya normally is made of dark colors and opens in the front.

Bhadramahila – Literally translated from Bengali to mean 'Gentlewoman'. An idea developed during the mid to late 1800s by a group of the Bengali male intelligentsia to reflect the ideal woman whose duties, pleasures and graces were appropriate to the Westernized culture of the middle classes (Bannerji 1995, 71).

Bharat – India. Often used in conjunction with the word *Mata* for the phrase *Bharat Mata*, or Mother India.

Bindhi – A dot of color on the forehead, usually worn by women as a symbol of marriage.

Burqa – A women's veiling garment in the form of a coat that often includes a hooded cap with veil to cover the head and face.

Chadar/Chaddar – A large cloth, usually cotton, used as a head and upper body covering, veil and/or shawl by Muslim and Hindu women.

Choli – A midriff-length, tight fitting woman's blouse, often backless.

Dharmasastra – Sanskrit religious law, which denotes texts that purport to describe the principles of cosmic law (*dharma*) as they are enacted at the level of the individual daily life (Leslie 1992, 198).

Dhoti – A men’s waist-cloth that is uncut and unseamed. It is worn by draping, folding and tucking around the waist and between the legs (Tarlo 1996, xii).

Dupatta (also *Chuni*): Women’s long scarf, part of an ensemble, usually a salwar kameez, worn draped over the head or across the chest.

Ghagra – Embroidered full skirt worn by women of western and southern India.

Gurdwara – A place of worship for followers of the Sikh religion. A Punjabi word, it literally translates to “doorway to the guru”.

Half-Sari – A length of cloth which is tucked into the skirt and covers the woman by wrapping around the torso and used as a head-covering in the practice of veiling.

Hijab – Literally translates to mean “to veil” and refers to spatial divisions for the purpose of modesty as expressed in the Koran. Hijab has garnered a contemporary meaning which refers headscarves and outer garments (Anwar and McKay 2004, 721). In this study, my subjects used this word to refer to a square piece of fabric used to cover the head, ears and throat.

Ijar – Trousers, worn by men or women, of varying cut. The typical form is tight and wrinkled below the knee, and too long for the leg; the consequent wrinkling has given rise to the common designation *churidar*, ‘like bangles,’ applied in the same way to wrinkled sleeves (Coomaraswamy, 1923).

Jati - Community

Kameez – A tunic which typically extends to the knee, worn by women usually in conjunction with *salwar* trousers (Tarlo 1996, xii).

Kamij – A long shirt with long sleeves (Bannerji 1995, 95).

Khanda – One of the most important symbols of Sikhism. The symbol is composed of a double-edged sword, a charka (circle) and two curved swords flanking the inner two shapes. The double-edged sword symbolizes God's sovereign power over life and death. The left sword symbolizes spiritual sovereignty. The right sword symbolizes political sovereignty. The charka symbolizes God infinite nature, without beginning or ending.

Khadi – Hand-woven cloth. The term was used by Gandhi to refer to cloth that had been hand-woven using hand-spun yarn. In North India the word *khaddar* is more common (Tarlo 1996, xii).

Kurta – A knee-length men's tunic (Tarlo 1996, xii). Today the *kurta* is worn by both men and women, its length and fit varying greatly.

Lengha – Women's full gathered skirt. Often used to describe the entire fancy clothing ensemble consisting of three pieces: bodice, full skirt, and long scarf.

Memsahib – A respectful term for a European lady.

Odhni – Veil-cloth, worn by women which is wrapped around the body and over the head.

Palloo – The decorative end-piece of the sari, often worn hanging down the back to display the intricate design and craft of the sari. It may also be used to provide more coverage to the wearer or cover the head in veiling.

Parsee/Parsi – A follower of the Iranian teacher Zoroaster (b. 660 BC) whose ethical monotheism, focused on the deity Ormazd, is predicated on a universal struggle between light and dark. 'Parsee' refers to those descendants who fled to the western coast of India from Muslim persecution in Persia during the 7th through 8th centuries (Metcalf and Metcalf 2006, xxv).

Peshawaj – A full-gathered skirt which comes below the knee with an attached tight-fitting bodice. It is worn on top of tight-fitting pyjamas (Pakistan Publications 1949, 68).

Piran – A short-sleeved shirt (Bannerji 1995, 95).

Pyjama – Loose trousers with a drawstring waist worn by men, usually with a *kurta*.

Puja – A Hindu worship ceremony.

Punjabi Suit – Another name for the *Salwar Kameez*.

Salwar – Loose trousers with a drawstring waist worn by women, usually with a *kameez*.

Salwar Kameez – Women’s clothing ensemble consisting of three pieces: tunic top, drawstring trousers, and long scarf.

Sari – A length of uncut and unseamed cloth that is 4 to 9 yards in length and slightly larger than a yard in width. The sari is wrapped, folded, pleated and draped around women’s bodies to form a garment that semi covers or fully covers the body.

Sati – Widow immolation.

Sikh – A ‘Disciple’, used to refer to the followers of the path of the teacher Guru Nanak.

Swadeshi – Home produce, literally “of one’s own country” (Tarlo 1996, xii).

Zenana – The inner apartment reserved for women and the family in some Muslim and orthodox Hindu homes.