

## The Impact of Social Media on the Modest Fashion Industry

There is undeniably a modest fashion craze that has been going on across the globe this past year or two with big brands in fashion, celebrities, entrepreneurs and important forums aboard on this movement. This trend is seeing mainstream brands like Tommy Hilfiger, Mango, Zara and DKNY coming up with modest collections they never did before. We are also seeing many celebrities including Rihanna and Kim Kardashian wearing the Islamic headscarf, the hijab and Beyoncé dressing in an abaya. Many designers and entrepreneurs across the globe are now tapping into this booming market. More importantly, discussions on modest fashion are increasing in global economic forums around the world. We cannot deny this is a very significant movement, but who started it? The answer to that is social media personalities!



The modest fashion market seemed to have been forgotten. Women who dress modestly testified to not finding clothes that are stylish and modest, resulting in having to buy clothes to layer all the time. However, they did not sit back to wait for change to come, they brought it themselves. Individuals vented their frustrations positively on social media by creating unique and stylish outfits on different platforms with what was available to them. Some designed their own clothes that suited their needs because the mainstream market could not provide it. In no time, these personalities on Instagram

and several blogging sites started getting attention and they did not understand why. What they had not known was that they had given modest fashion wearers what they were looking for all along. They became the icons people looked up to for fashion inspiration.

Young hijabi Instagrammers like Maryam Asadullah, Sobia Masood and many other social media personalities have made a huge impact in the modest fashion industry. These personalities created a trend whereby they shared their stylish modest outfits, tips and tutorials while other people admired their style thus gaining them big followership. They were able to provide what the mainstream fashion industry was not giving them and the modest wearer. This inspired and helped many other young people who were following them. More and more people started sharing their modest styles on social media and it became a buzz that changed the view of modest fashion.



Top: Maryam Asadullah

Bottom: Sobia Masood



Adi Heyman an Orthodox Jewish young woman struggled to find modest clothing that would suit her age when she was a teenager. According to Tech Insider, she said everything that was modest, was more suitable for older women. She then started her Facebook page Fabologie, showcasing her style that combines vintage pieces and modern ones to create uncommon looks. Her page became so popular that it popped in pages of the New York Times and even Vogue showing her unique style.



Adi Heyman

Entrepreneurs seeing that there is a gap in the market and that the modest wearer was not catered to, also started pitching in. There are now many designers and stores even online that cater to the modest woman. Although designers like Melanie Elturk the CEO of Haute Hijab started her online hijab store a while ago, more designers and young ones continue to make notable contributions to this fresh trend. Dian Pelangi a young Indonesian designer who has a strong online presence is part of the movement bring modest designs on the runways and on exhibitions.



Melanie Elturk



Dian Pelangi

The mainstream fashion industry could not turn a blind eye to this trend that these individuals started on social media. It was to their realization that a hundred billion dollar in spending power market according to Thomson Reuters had been overlooked all along. Recently, the mainstream fashion industry has pitched in this promising trend going on. H&M had their very first even model wearing a hijab and the world really liked it. Tommy Hilfiger, Mango and Zara came up with modest collections during Ramadan. Celebrities are also supporting this phenomenal new trend. This all began on social media, with very few people and now the big brands are excitedly getting involved.





Celebrities are finding interest in this new trend and some are even embracing it during public appearances. A number of celebrities have been spotted wearing the hijab and some resorting to clothes that are covered up. Taylor Swift was credited for being the most covered up celebrity while Rihanna, Jennifer Lopez, Jada Pinkett Smith have been spotted wearing the hijab.



All around the world, important economic discussions are now including modest fashion. Modest fashion has become a topic of interest to many economies as it is a significant potential economy driver with spending power of billions of dollars according to a research done by Thomson Reuters in 2014. The Global Islamic Economy Summit 2015 included a panel discussion moderated by Islamic Fashion and Design Council Chairwoman, Alia Khan that discussed modest fashion taking Centre stage.

What started with as simple sharing of modest personal styles on different social media platforms has created this trend that is quite phenomenal. These individuals can be commended to have started what big brands, celebrities, entrepreneurs and economic analysts are interested in. They are the first movers in this movement.

