

PIP Title: Mask On or Mask Off?

Extract from Central Material

It is understandable that emigrated Pakistanis strive to belong in their host country and change their cultural identity through aspects of globalisation, technology and media. The practise of assimilating to the western culture is a strong belief held by 35% of participants and their main reason was “*it’s not my country so I have to follow their rules*”- female 17 years, or to “*not be an outsider*”- female 13 years.¹ This ideology of persons having to change their cultural identity is derived from the fear of not being accepted in the host country. From media which has been globalised at a macro level, Pakistanis are able to view Australia’s mores through technology. For instance, the Sydney Morning Herald reported a news article² where “*A Muslim mother... fears her grandchildren will end up in a concentration camp. To be Muslim is to be judged for everything you do, says a Brisbane woman*”.³ This negative portrayal of the experiences persons encounter is a possible reason as to why newly Pakistani immigrants change their cultural identity to blend in or feel as part of the dominant culture.

A different perspective can also be interpreted as to why my respondents feel the need to conform to the western society, where 85% of my participants changed their traditions to more westernised norms. Clothing has been the largest change (refer to *Figure 1*) and the possibility for this western appearance would be because it’s the public way of showing that a person has assimilated. As part of my focus group, I queried why this was the case and Participant 1 attested: “*These days westernisation isn’t very different to*

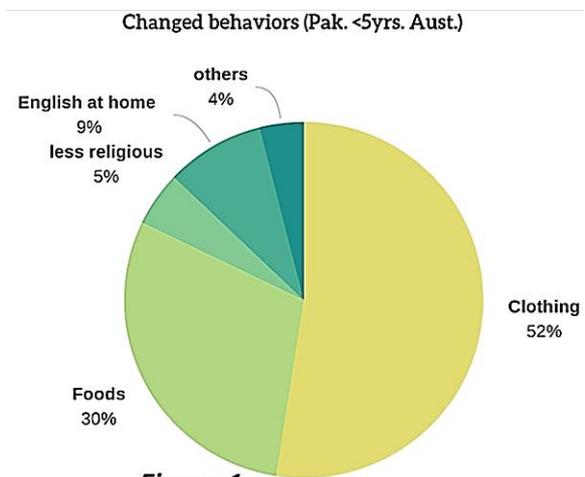


Figure 1

Pakistani culture because they have a lot of aspects combined together... so yeah there is

¹ My Questionnaire ‘Pakistanis <5yrs. In Australia’

² “Muslims on what it’s like to live in Australia” (May 2016)

³ Donnelly, B. (2017). Muslims on what it's like to live in Australia. [online] The Sydney Morning Herald. Available at: <http://www.smh.com.au/national/muslims-on-what-its-like-to-live-in-australia-20160429-go1953.html> [Accessed 5 Jun. 2017].

some sort of blend in both countries and it does make fitting in easier for me".⁴ This new and more recent change is becoming more prevalent, as newly migrated Pakistanis⁵ are pre-exposed to western customs and when living in Australia their surrounding environment only further influences them to gradually westernise and change their cultural identity.

Through this research I have determined that technology is a powerful tool for change and the influence of the media on non-western migrants explains why western norms are more familiar. This results their ability to quickly assimilate and cooperate with the host's environment, as their cultural identity is dynamic and relative to environmental influences.

⁴ My Focus group 'Pakistanis <5yrs. In Australia'

⁵ However, this depends on the location in Pakistan, where in developed cities such as Islamabad they're more exposed to and consume western customs through advertisements, TV-shows, fashion shows and other promoting platforms. Whilst in developing or rural areas the people are still more traditional and have less access to technology, hence the impact of globalised industries and media is limited, thus they are more likely to experience cultural shock.