SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT

The Interplay of Religious Consumption and Immigrant Rituals

A qualitative study on the impact of changes in religious consumption on the rituals of immigrants in their host society

by

Amira Toufic El Lezkani

Ertugrul Melekoglu

June 2023

Master's Programme in International Marketing & Brand Management

Supervisor: Hossain Shahriar
Examiner: Jon Bertilsson
Word Count: 24,868

Abstract

In our research paper, we shed light on the various impacts of acculturation and changes in religious consumption in the lives of muslims, who have migrated from the east and are experiencing life in the west. We took into consideration the holy month Ramadan as a religious reference to our study where we examine muslims religious performance during this time. As Ramadan is considered the most spiritual month to muslims, they tend to face challenges during the month when living in non muslim countries, like Sweden. By conducting qualitative research, we chose to undergo interviews with participants experiencing Ramadan in Sweden. For data analysis, we used four tools that helped us come up with our themes: categorisation, comparison, integration and refutation. Proceeding with our findings, it showed significant alteration to the religious rituals of muslim immigrants in the west. We concluded that the relationship between religious consumption and acculturation tends to be complex despite various efforts that would aim to facilitate such a process.

Our research paper can be read by consumer researchers, marketers, managers, social actors, policy-makers, and consumers who want to know more about migrant muslim consumers and the challenges they face when living in the west, specifically during the days of Ramadan.

Keywords: Religious Consumption, Consumer Acculturation, Religion, Immigration, Islam, Muslims, Immigrants, Rituals, Ramadan, Sweden.

Acknowledgement

This thesis was developed as the final degree project of the science master's program in International Marketing and Brand Management at the Lund University School of Economics and Management during the spring semester of 2023.
First of all, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude to our supervisor, Hossain Shahriar for his guidance and encouragement throughout the whole process. We particularly appreciate his effort to make us better researchers in every manner possible. His expertise, support, and helpful criticism have been essential in forming our study. Also, we would also like to thank all the respondents for their participation in this study. This study would not have been possible without their eagerness to participate and contribute insightful information. Finally, a special thanks to our families and friends for their support and patience whenever we needed it the most in the past three months. They have helped us stay motivated throughout challenging situations by their compassion and encouragement.

Lund, May 31th, 2023

Ertugrul Melekoglu

Amira Toufic El Lezkani

Table of Contents:

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Religion-consumption and acculturation have long been well-argued subjects within social sciences and have evolved into significant issues within consumer research area (Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991; Belk, 1989; Sandıkcı & Omeraki, 2007; Armbrust, 2002). Scholars in the consumer research area have often investigated both subjects separately to understand how religious practices and acculturation shape and structure consumers' preferences and consumption practices as well as the role of consumption in the construction of rituals (Rook, 1985; O'Guinn & Belk, 1989; Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010; Luedicke, 2011). The connection of rituals and consumption-religion have been given elevated attention within the fields of consumption and together with that connection, acculturation with consumption issues being placed pivotal position in argumentations on rituals and transformation (Armbrust, 2002; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991; Rook, 1985). However, in consumer research, only a small number of scholars have examined this important connection of the consumption-religion and rituals in settings where examined religion is not traditionally dominant, that is, in settings where the religion being worked in is the predominant religious custom in a studied country (Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010). Especially, Islam has been examined scantily in the settings of Western countries and the month of Ramadan (in the Islamic calendar), which facilitates a ritualistic practice (both religion and consumption), has received even less attention, if not almost none (Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010). Elevated number of migration to European countries from Islamic countries makes the examination very important for the consumer research field (Izberk-Bilgin, 2012). Therefore, the objective of this thesis is to understand the consumption ritual changes of muslim immigrants through examining religious practices in traditionally non-dominant cultural settings.

Consumption researchers are giving elevated care to consumer behaviors in numerous religious societies in the search of cultivating strategies significant to religious traditions (Izberk-Bilgin, 2012; Sandıkcı & Ger, 2010; Miller, 1995). For example, Christmas celebration, with very few exemptions, has been studied in sociocultural contexts where Christianity is dominant, such as France, Great Britain and the United States (Miller, 1995; Belk, 1989). On the contrary, Ramadan celebrations of Muslims frequently have been investigated in countries where Islamic culture is dominant such as Turkey (Sandıkcı & Omeraki, 2007). This focus on predominant culture may conceal valuable differences of consumption-religion interaction in contexts where consumer subjects are not a part of dominant communities. With the increased migration of consumers to settings where their original religion is not dominant, raises the need for studies where their religion is not socioculturally dominant (Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010).

Acculturation, or the process of adapting to a new cultural environment, is a phenomenon that immigrants encounter as they integrate into a host society (Üstüner & Holt, 2007). When people face the intricacies of a new cultural setting, many parts of their lives change, including their religious beliefs, practices, and consumption habits (Peñaloza, 1989). Acculturation's impact on immigrants' religious consumption in host societies has been the topic of excessive research and scholarly inquiry (Berry, 1997; Luedicke, 2011; Chytkova, 2011). When immigrants settle in a host nation, they are exposed to a new religious and cultural milieu that frequently differs dramatically from their home country (Peñaloza, 1989). This encounter sets in motion a process of negotiation and adaptation in which immigrants struggle to preserve their religious legacy while also adapting into the new cultural context (Berry, 1997). Acculturation affects immigrants' religious consumption by influencing their religious identities, practices, and interactions with religious organizations and communities (Mehta & Belk, 1991). Acculturation includes both the urge to conform to the host society's prevalent cultural standards and the desire to maintain a connection to one's religious and cultural heritage (Luedicke, 2015). The balance between assimilation and cultural preservation is visible in the religious consumption patterns of immigrants (Luedicke, 2015).

Muslim immigrants' acculturation experiences in western countries provide a unique framework for investigating the impact of acculturation on religious consumption (Sandıkcı & Ger, 2011). Muslims make up a significant immigrant community in many western countries, bringing a variety of religious beliefs, practices, and cultural traditions with them (Sufi & Yasmin, 2022). The merging of Islamic faith and Western cultural norms needs an advanced understanding of how acculturation shapes Muslim immigrants' religious consumption in the west (Sufi & Yasmin, 2022). Relatively, the intersection of acculturation and Ramadan religious observance among Muslim immigrants in western societies provides a rich background for understanding the intricacies of cultural adaptation and religious consumption (Sufi & Yasmin, 2022). Ramadan holds profound significance in the Islamic faith as a month of fasting, prayer, reflection, and heightened devotion (Alghafli et al. 2019). When muslim immigrants acculturate in Western society, they have particular problems as well as opportunities in observing Ramadan while adapting to the cultural intricacies of their new surroundings (Alghafli et al. 2019). The western setting frequently differs from their countries of origin, both culturally and religiously, resulting in a difficult negotiation of religious practices, social integration, and cultural assimilation (Shahriar & Ulver 2022). As Muslim immigrants go through the process of acculturation, their religious consumption habits change as a result of the interaction between their Islamic beliefs and the mainstream cultural milieu (Shahriar & Ulver 2022). On one hand, there is a desire to preserve religious and cultural traditions from their countries of origin, such as Islamic ceremonies, prayers, fasting (such as during Ramadan), dietary restrictions, and community involvement (Lewis, 2001). Muslim immigrants, on the other hand, are exposed to new cultural norms, beliefs, and practices widespread in Western nations, which can influence their religious consumption habits (Shahriar & Ulver 2022).

Moreover, acculturation impacts muslim immigrants' religious consumption in a variety of ways (Gattino et al. 2016). Immigrants may alter their religious rituals to fit the cultural

setting of the host society while adhering to Islam's essential beliefs (Pink, 2009). Finding alternate prayer locations, changing fasting patterns to match with local dawn and sunset dates, and choosing halal food options that conform to Islamic dietary standards within the available possibilities are all examples of adaptation (Pink, 2009). Furthermore, muslim immigrants may participate in interfaith discussion, interact with other religious communities, and explore new religious manifestations within the context of their Islamic faith (Gattino et al. 2016). Acculturation can also provide opportunities for muslim immigrants to engage in interfaith contacts, share their traditions with others, and incorporate western cultural milieu elements into their Ramadan routines (Touzani & Hirschman, 2008). The preservation of religious rituals can provide people a sense of belonging and community cohesion by connecting them to their cultural and religious heritage (Touzani & Hirschman, 2008).

Acculturation, on the other hand, can offer obstacles to Muslim immigrants' religious consumption (Maes et. al, 2014). They may confront societal pressure to adapt to western cultural standards that conflict with their religious commitments, or they may face prejudice or stereotypes that impede their religious activities, or they may traverse cultural misunderstandings and misconceptions about Islam (Gattino et al. 2016). These problems might cause religious identities to be renegotiated, religious practices to be modified, or even a sense of marginalization within the host society (Sandıkcı & Ger, 2011). Furthermore, muslims in the west may face difficulties during Ramadan such as adjusting their fasting schedules to coincide with local sunrise and sunset times, balancing the rigors of fasting with the demands of work and social obligations, and looking for support systems to participate in group worship and Iftar meals as Sandikci and Omeraki (2007) argue.

Acculturation researchers have given significant attention to investigate cases of acculturation of non-muslim consumers migrating from one place to another and facing struggles related to cultural conflicts and contradictions (Chytkova, 2011; Peñaloza 1994). Other studies have negotiated muslim consumers going through acculturation as ethnic minorities in a predominant society (Larsson & Björkman, 2010; Maes et al. 2014). However, little attention has been given to topics that include analyzing the impact of acculturation on muslims rituals during Ramadan in non muslim countries which raises the need to dig into. In addition, numerous non-muslim countries include a large number of muslims which have grown gradually in the past decade (Izberk-Bilgin, 2020). Such countries are found in Europe and North America like Germany, Sweden, Finland, the United States and Canada (Izberk-Bilgin, 2020). More specifically, Sweden has witnessed a huge growth of muslims in 2016 due to welcoming refugees from the Middle East, mainly Syrians who escaped war in their homeland since the start of it in 2011 (Haodong Qi, 2020). Therefore, we chose to focus on Sweden as part of our research to study the effect of the acculturation process on muslims' religious rituals during the holy month Ramadan in Sweden.

Due to high migration of Muslims across from Islamic World to Western Europe, Islam has spread around Europe (Izberk-Bilgin, 2012). The influence of Islam can be seen in the society, markets and new migrated consumption practices (Izberk-Bilgin, 2012). Therefore, there is a necessity to investigate emerging muslim consumers in Western European Markets

to expand our understanding of consumption practices in relation to religion (Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010). The works of Sandıkcı and Jafari (2013); Sandıkcı and Ger (2010); Sandıkcı and Jafari (2015) strongly advocate that in general, there is much to be grasped from the crossroads of consumption, Islam and markets. In our thesis, we focused on Ramadan to understand the relationship of consumption and rituals by identifying the changes in consumption due to Ramadan. The reason why we chose Ramadan is that it can illustrate the change in rituals related to consumption and religion (Hirschman & Touzani, 2008).

Ramadan is a yearly rite of Islamic tradition and happens in the ninth month of Hijri calendar, comes from 638 CE (Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010). It is identified by fasting, self-purification, charity and prayers and honors the revelation of the Quran to Prophet Muhammed (Peters, 1994). Throughout the whole month, all eligible individuals are obligated to refrain from sensual desires between dawn and sunset; this involves the consumption of food and water, sexual intercourse, smoking and leisure actions (Lapidus, 2014). When the next new moon comes, the end of Ramadan is celebrated with a big joyful feasting and celebration with family and friends (Lapidus, 2014).

Ramadan is considered as a time for evaluation and spiritual control for showing appreciation for God's counseling and mercy of previous sins, for recognizing human reliance on God, as well as recalling and answering to the needs of the people who are miserable and hungry (Esposito, 2011). In spite of religious customs, existing Ramadan compliance is best precisely identified as a consumption celebration, collective experience that reunites all Muslims for a month (see e.g., Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991; Hirschman & Touzani, 2008; Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010). Even though, based on religious doctrines, the people are mandated by God and the prophet to repress their appetite, apparent over-consumption has evolved in all parts of day-to-day life, significantly in the purchase of food, clothes and leisure endeavors (Hirschman & Touzani, 2008).

The importance of Ramadan as a ritual can be seen in the work of Rippin (1993). Abundant contemporary Muslims view Ramadan "the most important of the ritual duties" and "even if a person does not comply with the requirements of five prayers a day, observance of the fast is still likely" (Rippin, 1993, p. 133). Although Ramadan is very important and pivotal for the consumption in the Islamic world, it has been understudied within the field of consumer research.

There are various indications that Ramadan, a time of praying, fasting and purification, is evolving from a holy month to a commercial and commodified holiday, throughout the Muslim world (Hirschman & Touzani, 2008). The influence of capitalism can be seen from consumption of specific items or food (e.g., Ramadan calendars, rose water) decorated with brand logos to Ramadan fast breaking dinners advertised by restaurants, and the Ramadan themed malls and markets (Sandıkcı & Omeraki, 2007). It seems that Ramadan has been evolving from a religious ritual to a holiday signified by consumption like other holidays Christmas and Hanukkah (Armbrust, 2002). Throughout the whole month commercial and advertisement landscapes are evolved and aimed towards stimulating people towards mundane and profane desires. Confronting this traditional pressure turns into a challenge,

family expenditure increases significantly and mundane desires are sensed more powerful than the rest of the year. (Hirschman & Touzani, 2008). This Ramadan dilemma, characterized by some researchers as 'Ramadan Christmasization' (Armbrust, 2002). Charmed by these progresses, our thesis investigates how changes in religious consumption impacts rituals of immigrants living in the host society. Specifically, we centralize on muslim immigrants in Sweden and discuss how ritual practices are shaped, modified and reconstructed through Ramadan practices.

Overall, by presenting a clear background of our study, we made sure to include various aspects that create a base to our following research. Having a general overview of religion consumption, acculturation, and using the theory of rituals as a theoretical framework allows the reader and the researcher to gain a complete insight of the main literature stream that will be explained later on. Also, explaining what Islam and Ramadan mean was vital to educate and inform the reader about the concepts as it will encompass the whole study.

1.2 Problematization

This part problematizes existing literature related to this study. The work is placed in and contributes to the area of consumer research, and particularly, consumer culture theory (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). To formulate the research problem, we first investigated and unveiled the limitations within the literature stream of religion-consumption and consumer acculturation. Afterwards, works on the nexus of acculturation and religion-consumption, the subject space to which this thesis mainly contributes, were problematized.

Within religion-consumption literature in consumer research, scholars have long examined the relationship between consumerism and religion (Izberk-Bilgin, 2012; Sandıkcı & Ger, 2010; Miller, 1995; Sandıkcı & Ger, 2011), how sacred and profane have intertwined (Belk, Sherry & Wallendorf, 1989; O'Guinn & Belk, 1989; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991 - 24; Muñiz Jr. & Schau, 2005), how religious holidays have turned into consumption holidays (Armbrust, 2002; Sandıkcı & Omeraki, 2007; Hirschman & Touzani, 2008), and how consumption behaviors alter rituals (Belk, Sherry & Wallendorf, 1989; Rook, 1985; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Firat & Venkatesh, 1995). Generally, these studies suggest that there is a connection between religion and consumption and this connection changes in specific cultural contexts. Influence of religion alters ritualistic consumption practices. Furthermore, the meaning of sacred and profane behaviors are interpreted variously in diverse social contexts.

The connection between religion-consumption has been examined by many authors in the context of different religions (El-Bassiouny, 2014; Belk, Sherry & Wallendorf, 1989; Miller, 1995; Wong, 2007; Kozinets & Handelman, 2004; Jafari & Goulding, 2008). Over the past few years, there has been growth of interest in works examining Islam in consumption and marketplace (Ger, 2013; Sandıkcı & Jafari, 2013; Jafari & Süerdem, 2012; Sandıkcı & Ger, 2011; Wilson et al., 2013). Consumer researchers have also examined consumption in Islamic practices such as Ramadan (Sandıkcı & Omeraki, 2007; Hirschman & Touzani, 2008;

Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010). Mainly, these studies express that different religions have different connections with consumption and contrary to prior belief, the relationship between Islam and consumption is not a negative relationship. For instance, as Hirschman and Touzani (2008) stated, there is a harmonious relationship between consumption and the month of Ramadan.

However, religion-consumption scholars have advocated that works within consumer research on Ramadan practices in non-dominant settings stay marginal and called for embracing a more deep and nuanced standpoint to appreciate the versatile and complex character of rituals in religion-consumption settings (Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010; Izberk-Bilgin, 2012)

Religious holidays have been examined by many authors (Armbrust, 2002; O'Guinn & Belk, 1989; Hirschman & Touzani, 2008). While most studies of holiday consumption are focused on Western Holidays (Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991; Miller, 1995; Belk, 1989), there are also scholars who have touched upon islamic consumption in religious holidays in Islamic countries (Hirschman & Touzani, 2008, Sandıkcı & Jafari 2013-15; Sandıkcı & Omeraki, 2007) but only handful of them have studied consumption from a religious perspective where Islam is traditionally not dominant (Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010).

Emerging literature on consumption behaviors in Islamic settings have gained attention gradually (Ger, 2013; Jafari & Süerdem, 2012; Sandıkcı & Ger, 2010; Izberk-Bilgin, 2012; Jafari & Sandıkcı, 2015). Even though there is interest in consumption practices in Islamic settings, its connection with rituals have not been explored sufficiently. Moreover, very few put Ramadan in the center of their studies to delve into understanding consumption practices (Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010; Sandıkcı & Omeraki, 2007; Hirschman & Touzani, 2008). In spite of very few literature about Ramadan in consumption research, Ramadan in the context that Islam is a non-dominant or diasporic cultural setting is understudied (Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010).

Nonetheless, the interest in studying acculturation has been significantly increasing and becoming more attractive to researchers in the past few years due to the increase of immigration all over the world (Luedicke, 2011; Hu, Whittler & Tian, 2013). Literatures on consumer acculturation have long been found and gradually grew over the years (Üstüner & Holt, 2007; Peñaloza, 1994; Douglas & Craig, 1992). According to Üstüner and Holt (2007), they show strong impact of cultural values on acculturation process where immigrants, depending on their social and personal settings, could favor some cultural values over others, and depending on how well they fit into and apply to their own life, could accept or reject certain cultural norms. Peñaloza (1994) expresses that an ethnic minority individual chooses between keeping in touch with the dominant host population and upholding one's own ethnic cultural values. Whereas Askegaard et al. (2005) argue that the acculturation process is a dynamic and ongoing activity rather than a one-time occurrence where immigrants navigate and negotiate their cultural identities through consumption behaviors.

Within the literature of acculturation, many scholars have discussed the relationship between religion and acculturation (Lindridge, 2010; Luedicke, 2011; Douglas & Craig, 1992). Researchers like Lindridge (2010) argue that ethnic minorities tend to demonstrate higher levels of religiosity than the dominant ethnic population because religions are able to provide ways of negotiating dissonance arising from differing acculturation-derived cultural interactions. Consequently, this poses the question of whether immigrants are willing to stay religiously strong and attached or not.

In addition, while religious perspectives of migrant consumers have been studied within consumer acculturation in various literatures, understanding of their ritualistic consumption practices remained unexplored. Even fewer researchers have discussed the effect of acculturation on muslim immigrants who practice Islam in non muslim countries (Vaos & Fleischmann, 2012). Therefore, we will be discussing the acculturation process of muslims in Sweden and its effect on their religious practices. Furthermore, rituals and practices such as fasting and praying during the holy month, Ramadan, were poorly given attention to explore how they were affected by the acculturation process of muslim immigrants in an opposite cultural country where Islam is not the dominant religion (Alghafli et al. 2019).

While existing research has explored the cultural adaptation of Muslims in non-Muslim countries, limited attention has been given to how the cultural context of the host country influences the way in which Muslims practice Ramadan rituals. We will be exploring how Muslims in non-Muslim countries adapt their Ramadan rituals, such as fasting, prayer, and community gatherings, to fit into the local cultural norms and practices (Touzani & Hirschman 2008). This includes understanding how Muslims negotiate the challenges of practicing Ramadan in a cultural context that may not have the same level of familiarity or acceptance of Islamic customs (Touzani & Hirschman 2008). Also, how they integrate their religious practices into their daily lives in a way that is meaningful and relevant to their acculturation experiences (Alghafli et al. 2019). Therefore, we will work on filling this gap and address the various influences of acculturation on the practices of muslims (mainly during Ramadan) in Sweden.

1.3 Research Purpose

Within the nexus of religious consumption and consumer acculturation, there is little research done in exploring the effect of alterations in religious consumption on the rituals of muslim immigrants in non Islamic countries. To address this research gap/limitations within previous literature, we study the following research question:

How do changes in religious consumption impact rituals of immigrants in the host society?

We identified a gap in the field on investigating islamic consumption practices and acculturation of muslims within non-dominant or diasporic culture. With our thesis we aim to fill this gap by examining the acculturation process of muslims as well as the changes in their religious consumption and practices in Sweden during Ramadan.

1.4 Aimed Research Contribution and Implication

The harmonious relationship between consumption and religion is a crucial factor of individuals' consumption rituals (Sandıkcı & Ger, 2010). Therefore, exploring the area of religion-consumption is important to understand the impact of religion on consumption rituals of the consumers. Our research aims to contribute to the consumer-religion area by discovering the change in consumption rituals which are affected by the holy month Ramadan. As Jafari and Sandıkcı (2015) advocates that in general, there is much to be grasped from the crossroads of consumption and religions. Nonetheless, studying the nuances of religion-consumption and consumer acculturation is crucial because of the recent rise in global migration flows and the enormous psychological, cultural, and political effects immigrants have on both their own cultural society and those they immigrate to (Berry, 2019). Discovering immigrants' acculturation experience helps in knowing how individuals and groups adapt to new cultural contexts and how they negotiate their identities in a new environment (Hu, Whittler & Tian, 2013).
By studying religious consumption of immigrants undergoing acculturation, and the experiences of immigrants in the host community, this study would have the potential to provide significant knowledge to the field of acculturation literature. It can deepen our comprehension of acculturation's intricacies and clarify the complex relationship between religious rituals and cultural adaptation (Izberk-Bilgin, 2012).
The intended theoretical contributions and practical implications of this study are discussed in this section.

1.4.1 Aimed Theoretical Contribution

This study attempted to contribute to the literature streams on consumer acculturation (Askegaard et al. 2005; Izberk-Bilgin, 2012; Peñaloza, 1994) and religious consumption (Hirschman & Touzani, 2008; Sandıkcı & Ger, 2010; Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010; Sandıkcı & Omeraki, 2007) within the discipline of culturally oriented consumer research (CCT) in order to deepen our theoretical understanding. Our research aimed to expand on the theoretical understanding of rituals and how they are altered by acculturation and changes in religious consumption by providing understanding of muslim consumers' rituals and how they become altered due to external changes of acculturation and changes in their religious consumption. By studying religious consumption, we present different consumption behaviors and practices that navigate one’s belonging and forms one’s identity. Also, studying

acculturation shows the different struggles that immigrants face in the host society which can lead to alteration in one's usual rituals and religious practices.

1.4.2 Aimed Practical Implications

Consumers, market participants, and society in general can all benefit practically from this study. The findings can aid in the policy-makers' understanding of religious conflicts among immigrants, most of whom are from Muslim nations with significant ideological differences, in society and consumption patterns, specifically in Sweden but also comparable in other European or western regions. Such a study contributes to the help of consumers who practice Ramadan in an environment like Sweden in knowing that their struggles are being heard and taken into consideration. Nonetheless, since these immigrants come from various socio-historical and culturally-ideological backgrounds, learning how to navigate these discursive difficulties can give public policy makers more insight into how to resolve issues, even ones that are just about religious practices in the society, mainly Islamic ones.
Particularly, it allows policymakers, researchers, and community leaders to recognize the diverse needs and experiences of Muslim immigrants, address barriers to religious participation, combat Islamophobia, and foster environments that support religious freedom and inclusivity. Therefore, this study tends to improve our comprehension of the unintended effects of changes in religious consumption and acculturation on muslim immigrants' rituals. This helps knowledge advance, transform conversations and resources, and inspire large-scale change-related actions. It should be highlighted that this study only makes up a very minor portion of the whole picture in the holistic macro setting.

2. Literature Review

With the aim of investigating the changes in rituals of muslims living in non-muslim countries during the holy month Ramadan, we linked our two literature streams, the effect of acculturation and altered religion consumption, to analyze different literatures relating to our topic.

Religion-consumption literature has been investigated by many scholars (Jafari & Goulding, 2008; Sandıkcı & Omeraki, 2007; Sandıkcı & Ger, 2010; Miller, 1995; Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010). Various aspects of the relationship between religion and consumption have been identified by a long research traditions on the topic such as symbolic meanings (Belk, Sherry & Wallendorf, 1989; Rook, 1985; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982), holidays (Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991; Belk, 1989) dilemmas of this relationship (Izberk-Bilgin, 2012; Wong, 2007), religious consumption practices (Hirschman & Touzani, 2008; O'Guinn

& Belk, 1989) sacred and profane behaviors (Muñiz Jr. & Schau, 2005; Belk, Sherry & Wallendorf, 1989) and rituals (Ratcliffe, Baxter & Martin, 2019; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Rook, 1985).

On the other hand, acculturation as a literature stream has been used and tackled numerously by researchers (Douglas and Craig, 1992). Linking acculturation to immigration has been greatly done to show the direct and positive relationship between both phenomena (Douglas and Craig, 1992). Relatively, acculturation and religion are interrelated as religious practices are considered to be greatly affected by the acculturation process (Lindridge, 2010). To reach our aim for this study, we choose literature explanation of Islam and acculturation effects on its practices and rituals of consumers in non muslim countries.

2.1 Religion-Consumption:

2.1.1 Relationship between consumption and religion

Consumption presents a fruitful area for individuals to exercise their personality and individual autonomy (Jafari & Goulding, 2008). Marketplace opens the way for consumption as a predominant aspect of the modern world (Zukin & Maguire, 2004) and evolves into the cause of meaning formulation, values and self-impressions (Belk, 1988; Arnould & Thompson, 2005; McCracken, 1986).

The interesting connection between religion and modernity has provoked continuous arguments among researchers. Classical sociologists claim that modernity, with its stress on individualism, threatens the spiritual and superficial features of religions (Izberk-Bilgin, 2012). Other scholars in postmodern view suggest that modernism enigmatically cherishes the chase for religious connection as the estranged and disenchanted contemporary individual hopelessly pursues purpose in life (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995). Coherent with this latter notion, consumer scholars reconfirm the notable position of religions in modern life (O'Guinn & Belk, 1989).

Contemporary studies depict how the modern world abandons consumers seeking communal feelings and religious connections in the anticipated areas (Izberk-Bilgin, 2012). Such as Kozinets (2001) displays how Star Trek fans pursue legitimization for commercial articulation of popular culture as religion; another work identifies traces of religiosity between consumption activist groups and anticonsumption affairs (Kozinets & Handelman 2004). Overall, these works have underscored the captivating dialectical relations between the market, consumers and religions (Izberk-Bilgin, 2012).
Religion is generally perceived to provide codes for the types of consumption such as apparel, leisure and food regimes and so on (Jafari & Süerdem, 2012; McAlexander et al., 2014). Studies on religion-consumption relationship address mainly on the personal impact of

religion and investigate how religious views and religion impact personal decision making process and consumption behaviors (e.g., Hirschman, 1982; Sandıkcı & Ger, 2010; Izberk-Bilgin, 2012; Jafari & Goulding, 2012).
Lastly, O'Guinn and Muñiz Jr., (2013) argue that the connection between consumption behaviors and community establish an offset point for examining the reasons behind oır consumption and ways of how we live. Researchers analyze numerous communities and display that seeking of collective consumption concerns promote spirit of unity and communal identity and help consumers to diversify themselves from other consumers (Arnould & Thompson, 2005).

2.1.2 Consumption within Islamic viewpoint

Islam has been stepping up in Islamic lands as well as in Western Europe with elevated migration (Ger, 2013). The Islamic communities in Europe have established an integrity that has a common network of meaning, perspective of life, subculture, as well as a material experience, called Islamic goods (Ger, 2013). These Islamic goods provide collectivity and empowerment to Islamic communities in Europe (Ger, 2013).

According to Sandikci and Jafari (2013), there are two research streams to identify the literature on Muslim consumers. One path examines Muslim consumers as a definite division (e.g. Delener, 1994; El-Bassiouny, 2014). The idea behind this stream is understanding the faiths, values and approaches of Muslims consumers, and making comparisons between Muslim consumers and consumers from other religions. The limitation of this approach is the lack of exploratory side due to rigid division and demarcating one consumer from another (Sandikci & Ger, 2011).

When religions are seen as a “cognitive system” (Hirschman, 1983), with values, faiths and experiences shared by followers of the same religions, it results in a homogenous and single-piece interpretations of Islam across whole world and neglects unique perceptions that individuals employ while forming their religious characters in the marketplace (Jafari, 2012). The second flow of studies constructs on this point by embracing a critical perspective and examines the connection between identity and religion and how consumption is involved in forming, connecting, and preserving identities of Muslims (e.g. Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010; Izberk-Bilgin, 2012; Jafari & Süerdem, 2012)

2.1.2.1 Conflicts on connection of Islam and Consumption

Current literature on consumption from Islamic angle displays that ongoing works primarily pivot on belief of Islamic modesty, as against the consumerism of the west (Sandikci & Ger,

2011). Furthermore, in many contexts consumer culture is oftentimes depicted as a danger or destructive to religions, because it emphasizes satisfaction, hedonism, individuality and an extravagant way of living (Wong, 2007). However, according to Jafari and Süerdem (2012) such a depiction is trivial and generally mirrors a small view which diabolizes material consumption as the dimension of unreasonable surplus and chaos, an area of heresy to be refrained from.

According to the paper of Sandikci and Ger (2010) there is a relationship in harmony between market and religion and market and Islam. Kozinets and Handelman (2004) argue that religions' -specifically Islam's- codes establish one of the most strong risk to consumption ideas of today. However, the findings of Sandikci and Ger (2010) display that there is not any threat for consumption or capitalism.

In his paper Wong (2007) argues that many upscale Muslim people relish assets of West Markets even more than their fellows in Western and non-Muslim countries do. Islamic rituals are not just religious ways of living but also market-mediated practices, such as objectification of Ramadan celebrations in Muslim dominant situations (Armbrust, 2002). In many Muslim countries such as Gulf countries, Indonesia and Turkey, omnipresence of Islamic and religious traditions in forming new consumer identities, connected with the wealth growth and increasing globalization of these countries, have concluded in vast portion of modern and empowered Muslim consumers eager to take part in modern consumer culture, yet struggling to stay devoted to their Islamic principles in their everyday life (Sandikci & Ger, 2011; Alserhan, 2010; Wong, 2007). The result is the appearance of managed multidimensional Muslim consumer identities and life views (Wilson et al., 2013).

2.1.2.2 Duality of Islam and Consumption

In their paper Jafari and Süerdem, (2012) try to explain that the notion of understanding Islamic standards as rigid dogmas which shape consumers' behaviors is questionable and there is no unyielding religious standards called 'Islam', because they argue that Islam can be found in different forms in daily life as a cultural institution rather than dogmatic one (Jafari & Süerdem, 2012)

There is an undeniable complexity, enigma and contradictions in the consumption behaviors of Muslims in Islamic Societies, says Jafari and Süerdem (2012), such as after stop drinking alcohol in holy month Ramadan, Turkish men and women celebrate the end of their spiritual cleanup by drinking alcohol or a young woman from Tehran who wears makeup and luxury clothes changes her clothes, takes ablution and say evening prayer (Jafari & Süerdem, 2012). Jafari and Sandıkcı (2015) strongly advocate that in general, there is much to be grasped from the crossroads of consumption, Islam and markets.

According to Varul (2008) distinction between the sacred and profane is not something specific for Islam; uniform religious practices of all beliefs have customarily attempted to adjust people's consumption behaviors inside the border of religious attitude. There are paradoxes like Varul (2008) stated in many consumption behaviors of Muslims (Jafari & Süerdem, 2012). Not only 'the sacred' and 'the profane' harmoniously exist (Muñiz Jr. & Schau, 2005; Belk, Sherry & Wallendorf, 1989) in these consumption scenarios but also 'haram' (unlawful) and 'halal' (lawful), and the 'Islamic' and 'non-Islamic' pair to forge mundane consumption behaviors of the people (Jafari & Süerdem, 2012). In their paper Jafari and Süerdem (2012) argue that consumption behaviors of Muslim societies are examined through the lens of "Consumer Culture Theory" (Arnould & Thompson, 2005).

2.1.3 Ramadan within Consumer Research Field

Across the whole Muslim world, various traces can be seen that Ramadan, a month for devotion to god by prayings, fasting and purification rituals, has been evolving from religious period of time to a commercial and cultural holiday (Sandıkcı & Omeraki, 2007). According to Sandikci and Omeraki (2007), Ramadan has fallen into the same commercial trappings of Hanukkah and Christmas and is evolving from a religious ritual to a holiday stamped by consumption. In their paper Sandıkcı and Omeraki (2007) try to explain the relationship between globalization and consumer culture with Islamic ideas, rituals and practices and redraw them to suit contemporary consumption-driven life.

In spite of religious customs, present Ramadan observance is most precisely identified as a 'consumption festival', a collective happening that unites all Muslims for a month (see e.g., Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991). Even though muslims should retrain from their desires by God's commands, according to Hirschman and Touzani (2008), over-consumption has become very visible in every feature of daily life, notably in clothing, leisure activities and food. This current Ramadan enigma, expressed by some authors as 'Ramadan Christmasization' (Armbrust, 2002), makes the Ramadan period unique in that it has evolved into a important study area for better knowledge of ritual syncretism -a synthesis of opponents- in the settings of consumer behavior (O'Guinn & Belk, 1989).

Even though Islamic practices such as fasting, prayers or pilgrimage are noticeable in public, very few studies (Hirschman, Ruvio & Touzani, 2010; Sandikci & Omeraki, 2007) have focused on their effects for consumption and marketing (Sandıkcı & Jafari 2013). Most of them observed the Ramadan practices in dominant cultural context. One of the exemplary studies (Sandikci & Omeraki, 2007) is studied in Turkey and identifies Ramadan in that country by showing both secular and religious features such as special Ramadan meal menus of restaurants and hotels and displays of malls with Islamic icons. As arguing that there is a trend towards secularization of the holiday periods and growing dependence on marketing contributions to execute the rituals. Therefore, materialism of the west is invading into this culturally dominant religious behavior. Another study (Hirschman & Touzani, 2008) is placed in Tunisia where the dominant cultural tradition is Islam. Study displays that between

Tunisians there is significant interruption in daily life, with the feeling a more powerful sense of Muslim identity during Ramadan.

Findings of Sandikci and Omeraki (2007) suggest that commercialization of Ramadan is not a case of cultural imperialism where tools of lifestyle of the West delete local lifestyles behind globalization (i.e., McDonaldization, Ritzger, 1993) or not case of contemporary disturbance, identified by emancipatory actions and contents deleting the borders of the contemporary project (i.e., Disneyization, Bryman, 1999). They argue that Ramadan is relatively ‘traffic in things' (Jackson, 1999). Jackson (1999) argues that commoditization is similar to traffic, in which different subjects inspire the rejuvenation and revolution of replies and meanings.

2.2. Consumer Acculturation

Acculturation is “what happens when people socialized in one (minority) culture migrate and so come into continuous first-hand contact with a new (dominant) culture” (Üstüner & Holt, 2007, p. 41). Following the increase in immigration all over the world, acculturation is hugely occurring and happening with immigrants who fled to a predominant cultural system (Douglas & Craig, 1992). Consumer acculturation is explained as “the general process of movement and adaptation to the consumer cultural environment in one country by persons from another country” (Peñaloza, 1994, p. 33). Border crossings frequently begin a complex process of sociocultural adjustment to unfamiliar economic (status), biological (health), physical (urbanization), sociocultural (family, friendships, discrimination), and ethnic (clothing, religion, language) conditions, which frequently results in significant psychological stress (Luedicke, 2011).

According to Üstüner and Holt (2007), cultural values are essential to the acculturation process because they offer a framework for comprehending and interpreting the new cultural context. They established a paradigm that makes a distinction between cultural value conflicts and value accommodations throughout the acculturation process (Üstüner & Holt 2007). Cultural value conflicts occur when people's original cultural values clash with those of the new culture, whereas value accommodations happen when people modify their original cultural values to meet the new culture. Additionally, Üstüner and Holt (2007) hypothesized that cultural values could affect the acculturation process in a variety of ways. Depending on their social and personal settings, people could favor some cultural values over others (Üstüner & Holt, 2007). Depending on how well they fit into and apply to their own life, they could also accept or reject certain cultural norms (Üstüner & Holt, 2007). Cultural values also have a possible impact on people's psychological health throughout the acculturation process because they give people a feeling of continuity and stability in the midst of cultural change (Üstüner & Holt, 2007).

According to Peñaloza (1994), he explains that an ethnic minority individual chooses between keeping in touch with the dominant host population and upholding one's own ethnic cultural values. Peñaloza (1994) discusses four different acculturation outcomes that result from this strategy according to Berry (2019): Integration which refers to equal involvement in engaging with both the ethnic and the dominant cultures, Separation which means the rejection of the dominant culture in favor of the ethnic culture, Assimilation which refers to the refusal of their ethnic culture in favor of the dominant culture, and lastly Marginalization which means the rejection of both cultures, the original and the host. Generations of scholars have been motivated by Berry's (2019) work to investigate how migrant consumers become assimilated.

Relatively, different models of acculturation concentrated on the individual level of cultural differences through consumption practices (Chytkova, 2011). The acculturation process, according Askegaard et al. (2005), is a post assimilationist process and ongoing activity rather than a one-time occurrence. They argued that consuming is crucial to this process because immigrants navigate and negotiate their cultural identities through consumption behaviors. A conceptual framework for comprehending the acculturation process and the function of consumption in it was also put forth by Askegaard et al. (2005). They suggested four types of hybrid identity crafting: hyperculture, assimilation, integration and pendulum (Askegaard et al. 2005).

Furthermore, acculturation has been directly linked with marketing actions which are considered to have a strong influence on acculturation, considering the market to be a fundamental acculturation agent (Douglas & Craig, 1992). In early times, Peñaloza (1994) argued that acculturation is a difficult process that requires negotiating and creating new cultural identities in addition to adopting new cultural practices. She recommended that when creating marketing strategies for multicultural consumers, marketers should pay particular attention to the acculturation process. Peñaloza (1994) specifically suggested that marketers should acknowledge the diversity and complexity of multicultural consumers' experiences and refrain from drawing conclusions about them from a crude understanding of their culture or race. Immigrants' consumption activity was seen as a performance of their roles as members of one or both cultures (Connor, 2010). Moreover, cultures are considered systems of signals acquired in the marketplace that may be adopted, modified, or abandoned, and that via consumption of different goods or signs one may take on multiple identities (Chytkova, 2011). Thus, consumers use market products to build their identities and escape the structural limitations of gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status (Chytkova, 2011).

2.2.1 Religion and Consumer Acculturation

The existence of two homogeneous cultural environments, the culture of origin and the culture of immigration, influence the acculturation process (Lindridge, 2010). Family, friends, media, and social and religious institutions from both cultures act as dual sets of acculturation (Luedicke, 2011). Therefore, it is vital to discuss religion that serves as an

acculturation agent (Izberk-Bilgin, 2015). Besides assimilating into the prevailing social and cultural norms, migrants may also adopt particular social, religious, or racial subcultures (Douglas & Craig, 1992). Lindridge (2010) argues that ethnic minorities tend to demonstrate higher levels of religiosity than the dominant ethnic population because religions are able to provide ways of negotiating dissonance arising from differing acculturation- derived cultural interactions. Relatively, the impact of acculturation on religious consumption varies depending on several factors, including the level of religiosity, the degree of exposure to the host society's culture, the availability of religious support networks, and the receptivity of the host society towards religious diversity (Berry, 2005). Immigrants' religious consumption can range from the preservation of traditional practices to the adoption of new religious expressions or the emergence of hybrid religious identities (Berry, 2005). Under potentially challenging circumstances, such as when encountering racial discrimination resulting from ethnic-group disparities, religion gives people a feeling of their own ethnic self identification (Lindridge, 2010).

When it comes to individuals' social interactions, social-level choices refer to both the formal rules and laws of a religion as well as informal social standards, such as suitable dress for religious occasions, gift-giving to mark religious holidays, and related family gatherings (Izberk-Bilgin, 2015). Individuals' level of religious observance and their desire to express their ethnic identity, which is derived from their culture and religion, both heavily influence their personal choices (Lindridge, 2010). As a result, a person's consumption patterns ultimately reveal their amount of acculturation, as well as how strongly they identify with their religion and their ethnic community (Douglas & Craig, 1992).

2.2.2 Islam and Acculturation

Lindridge (2010) explains in his article that muslims are strongly identified with their religious identity in terms of their beliefs and behavior. Many studies conducted on muslim immigrants turned out to show the common and powerful attachment and obedience of individuals to their religion’s rules and standards (Güngör et al., 2013). However, this didn't conflict in coping with a predominant society (Lindridge, 2010).

Muslims in the west come from a strong religious background that is greatly influenced by their indoctrination of their religion due to their upbringing (Cesari, 2002). Muslims live normally like any other individuals eating, wearing, and practicing common activities like other individuals of different religions (Lindridge, 2010). However, those practices must comply with Islamic law by referring to the Qur’an (Güngör et al., 2013). Practices such as praying in the mosque and fasting during the holy month Ramadan are considered sacred to most muslims and a necessity to practice wherever they are present (Lindridge, 2010). The mosque is considered an epicenter for their religious socialization which brings muslim a greater sense of their religious identity (Vaos and Fleischmann, 2012).

On the other hand, acculturation of muslims in the west has brought some challenges and difficulties for them to practice Islam correctly (Gattino, et al. 2016). The west has definitely changed the way muslims wear clothes as Islam forbids revealing so much skin for women, a lot of muslims in the west are not following those rules because of acculturation taking place (Maes et. al, 2014). Also, as wearing hijab is considered the most religious statement muslim women can make, younger women now are rethinking about wearing hijab and if it is a necessity or not in the modern days and western regions (Sandıkcı, & Ger, 2010). Also, food consumption by muslims falls into religious beliefs and requires food to be Halal (Lindridge, 2010). Nonetheless, looking at the current world today, and with the increase of granting rights and existence to the LGBTQ+ community in the west, Islam stands against all rights given to individuals who belong to this community and tends to clash with it and forbid it to any muslim who might want to join it (El-Tobgui, 2022). Muslims fear such a phenomenon to influence their younger generations and therefore try to educate them at home and tell them how inappropriate and offensive this is to their religion (El-Tobgui, 2022).

Remarkably, newer generation muslims are showing willingness to disrupt their family's status quo and challenge their parents' cultural values (Lindridge, 2010). As religion is strongly linked to one's culture, living in a different culture of different practices and traditions tends to lessen one's beliefs and loyalty to their religion (Ogada & Lindberg, 2022). Therefore, muslims are facing acculturation conflicts massively as they are obliged to give up some religious standards to cope with the dominant society standards (Martinovic & Verkuyten, 2012). In addition, with the increase of muslims lately in the west according to Haodong (2020), more acculturation is taking place where the growth of the muslim community sort of facilitates the acculturation process.

2.2.3 Stigmatization and Discrimination against Muslims

As muslims are a significant part of immigrants in the west, their population has increased gradually in recent years (Larsson & Björkman, 2010). Following the incident of 9/11 and the post consequences that took place against muslims and changed people's attitudes towards them lead to the appearance of what is called Islamophobia. Islamophobia is an “anti-muslim racism” as described by Larsson and Björkman (2010). Muslims became fearful of how others would perceive them and behave with them (Sufi & Yasmin, 2022). They were treated with discrimination and hatred which made it hard for them to engage in society (Izberk-Bilgin, 2015). It became hard for them to practice their own beliefs and religious practices when at the same time they wanted to stay resilient when confronted with Islamophobia in the west (Lindridge, 2010).

Muslims described this situation as very complex as they faced hatred incidents of Islamophobia (Vaos & Fleischmann, 2012). For example, women who wear scarves or Hijab were spat at and sworn at in public and private places in Belgium (Larsson & Björkman, 2010). In addition, in Italy, where violence and discrimination against Muslims are common, nationalism and prejudice toward Muslims have grown (Perocco, 2018). Certain European

cities or countries have banned the wearing of headscarves in schools, government offices, and other public places (Vaos & Fleischmann, 2012). As a result, the acculturation process affected muslims' mental health and overall well-being as living in western countries made them receive a lot of hatred and discrimination behavior (Giuliani et al., 2018).

2.2.4 Influence of Acculturation on Ramadan Practices

With all oppositions targeted against muslims, they are resilient and faithful enough to not allow external interventions and false propagandas to stop them from practicing their religion in western countries (Perocco, 2018). Therefore, it is interesting to discuss how muslims behave during the holy month Ramadan and how acculturation of consumers living in the west has changed their consumption manner and rituals during this month (Sandıkcı & Omeraki, 2007).

As explained before, Ramadan is about fasting from dawn to sunset, praying (in a mosque or in a house), purifying the body and soul, and spending time in community (Buitelaar, 1993). However, Muslims living in non-Muslim countries may face challenges in managing their fast in a societal context where eating and drinking are not restricted during the day (Sandıkcı & Omeraki, 2007). This can include dealing with temptations, social pressure to eat or drink, and finding suitable spaces for prayer and rest during the day (Sandıkcı & Omeraki, 2007). In addition, as most countries where muslims have been allocated have longer sunset hours, especially in northern Europe and America, consequently leads to longer daylight hours and longer fasting periods (Alghafli et al. 2019). Nonetheless, conflicts might take place between work or school expectations and religious obligations, which might navigate requests for time off or accommodations for religious practices (Buitelaar, 1993).

Although such a holy month is known for being practiced in a warm loving atmosphere with family and friends, there are some obstacles that muslims face in non-muslim countries during Ramadan (Buitelaar, 1993). Because of acculturation of muslims in western countries, a significant number of muslims tend to not celebrate Ramadan and fast during this month due to acculturation with the dominant culture of the country and becoming less religious, less muslim (Buitelaar, 1993). Other muslims who celebrate Ramadan in the western countries tend to miss the spirit and proper atmosphere of Ramadan that is mainly about family gathering and praying in religious places like mosques (Sandıkcı & Omeraki, 2007). During Ramadan, the "Adhan" is heard from one's house where the sound is coming from a nearby mosque, to break the fast, or to start the fast in muslim countries (Buitelaar, 1993). Whereas in western countries, no mosques are allowed to say any Adhan at any time, and that's what muslims miss during times like this (Touzani & Hirschman, 2008).

Although acculturation takes away much of muslims rituals and tradition in the west, there are some benefits resulting from acculturation that makes it easier for muslims to adapt in western countries such as having the opportunity to get to know other ethnic muslims (Touzani & Hirschman, 2008). Such acquaintances bring back some of the Islamic traditions

such as food sharing, mutual home visits, iftar invitations and group praying (Alghafli et al. 2019).

3. Theoretical Framework

In order to understand how muslim immigrant consumers in Sweden navigate changes in ritualistic consumption practices, we borrow the notion of "Ritual Dimension of Consumer Behavior" of Rook (1985) as a theoretical lens in this study. In our theoretical framework, we will be discussing the ritual dimension of consumer behavior and how they are interrelated along with discussing rituals and acculturation effects on consumers' rituals. In this study we wanted to examine the changes in religious consumption behaviors of muslim immigrants through the lenses of rituals. We want to discover different patterns related to religion and rituals to understand the immigrated muslim consumers better.

3.1 Ritual Dimension of Consumer Behavior

As Rook (1985) stated, there are various ritualistic behaviors of individuals which have different meanings, values and aspects. In this theoretical framework, we used the concept of rituals to analyze the consumption behaviors of immigrated consumers. The ritualistic aspect of consumption behaviors helped us to examine the connection of consumption and religion better. Therefore, the influence of religion on ritualistic consumer behavior is analyzed through the lens of the concept of rituals.

Rituals have been well-investigated within the consumer research field (Rook, 1985; Belk et al., 1989; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Goodwin, Smith and Spiggle, 1990; Fox, 2003). Symbolic meanings and transformation in the understanding of rituals have been delved into by many scholars (Belk, Sherry & Wallendorf, 1989; Firat & Venkatesh, 1995; Rook, 1985). Many consumer research scholars have dealt with consumption rituals to uncover ritualistic behaviors of consumers (Ratcliffe, Baxter & Martin, 2019; Hirschman & Touzani, 2008; Rossano, 2012). Transformation of ritual practices, symbolic meanings of rituals for consumers in holidays and meaning of sacred ritual consumption have been examined primarily in the context of Western Holidays and Christianity (Rossano, 2012; Miller, 1995; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991; Belk, Sherry & Wallendorf, 1989).

In daily life, human beings engage routinely in a range of ritualized actions, both as individuals and as a part of bigger communities (Rook, 1985). Ordinary people also depend on diversified ritual actions to stamp particular life changes as graduation, marriage or religious changes (Rook, 1985). Ritual experiences are vastly diversified types of articulated behavior that happen in many various contexts (Rook, 1985). The 'ritual' phrase refers to a

settled series of acts that transport allegorical messages, instead of utilitarian, and are formal and repetitive (Belk, Sherry & Wallendorf, 1989; Rook, 1985).

Belk, Sherry and Wallendorf (1989) explain ritual as a feature of the sacred, which do not have to be restrained to religion but rather refer to that which is in opposition to profane or everyday. Ritual also diverse from bare routine or habit; difference is that habits or routines are done repeatedly but rituals have more rigid and strict essential actions, such as artifacts usage, metaphors, and lead to more engagement (Rook, 1985) such as steps of birthday celebration: having birthday cake, candles, 'Happy birthday song', secret wishes (Rossano, 2012)

Ritual artifacts might frequently take the form of consumer goods (Douglas & Isherwood, 2002) that escort or are employed in a ritual framework - ceremonial apparels, food or candles (Rook, 1985). Certain rituals may be viewed as rather mundane, such as consuming coffee or tea, while some rituals are usually understood to have more raised meanings or links, such as feasts at Christmas and Thanksgiving (Ratcliffe, Baxter & Martin, 2019). According to Sandıkcı and Omeraki (2007) commercialization emerges as a pivotal factor underlying the practicing of rituals, be it Ramadan or Christmas, and collaboration between observance and commerce carries on to evolve strong. Ratcliffe, Baxter & Martin (2019) suggest in their article that consumption rituals are crucial not only for their applicability to daily life, but also for the understanding they provide respecting the role of signs in comprehending rituals. According to (Fox, 2003) there is a strong connection between order of food consumption while having a meal and ritual; such as, having dates before breaking the fast.

The attraction in rituals as occurrence of symbolic consumption have influenced consumption literature to explore various consumption rituals (Belk, Wallendorf & Sherry 1989; Holbrook & Hirschman 1982; Rook 1985). The work of Sandıkcı and Omeraki (2007) argue that capitalism, consumption and globalization shape rituals in two major ways. First, specific local traditions and rituals can disappear, be reinterpreted or be reinvention of an already disappeared rite through glass of the modern consumption behaviors. Second, any rituals can travel between cultures which did not originally have them. In such cases, the elements of rituals, these are scripts, artifacts or performances, can be reinvented in the host culture and is experienced with a mixture of new elements of rituals and old ones. (e.g., Christmas in Japan, Ramadan in Sweden). Homogenization of non-Western rituals and Western rituals in diversified parts of the world can be seen in new forms of local rituals (Sandikci & Omeraki, 2007).

With the attraction in rituals as occurrence of allegorical consumption (Belk, Wallendorf & Sherry 1989; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Rook, 1985) various studies examine plentiful consumption rituals in the marketing literature (Sandıkcı & Omeraki, 2007). Plenty of these studies address the features and associations of consumption during ritual events such as Thanksgiving (Wallendorf & Arnould, 1991) and Christmas (Belk, 1989). In contrast to Rook's perspective which is that rituals are resistant to modernization (Rook, 1985), many works display that rituals and its aspects can be altered by changes (Goodwin, Smith &

Spiggle, 1990), that rituals are shaped by and shape social and traditional contexts (Belk, 1989).

3.2 Ritual Dimension of Consumer Acculturation

Through the eyes of cultural assimilation and cultural preservation, acculturation's impact on rituals may be understood (Berry, 2005). While cultural maintenance refers to the preservation of the original cultural practices and beliefs, cultural assimilation occurs when individuals or groups adopt the practices and beliefs of the dominant culture (Kim, 2001).

Different rituals may blend as a result of acculturation, where customs from various cultures are combined or altered to form novel hybrid rituals (LaFromboise et al. 1993). According to (Sandikci & Omeraki, 2007), this can occur when people or organizations incorporate certain rituals from a different culture while retaining others that are unique to them. These customs could converge eventually and develop into fresh rites that combine elements of both civilizations.

However, as people or groups adopt the customs of the dominant culture, acculturation can also result in the loss of ancient rituals (Shiraev & Levy, 2017). This can happen when the dominant culture urges people or groups to give up traditional traditions in favor of those of the prevailing culture because it believes them to be outmoded or inferior (Shiraev & Levy, 2017). As a result, there may be a decrease in the group's cultural diversity and a loss of its cultural identity (Sandikci & Omeraki, 2007).

Overall, how much people or groups accept new cultural practices and how much they hold onto their original practices will determine how acculturation affects rituals. The attitudes of the dominant culture toward the traditional traditions and the degree of acceptance of the new cultural practices both have an impact on it.

4. Methodology

4.1 Introduction

In this part, the “how” part of the thesis and evaluation of the methodological concepts are handled for tailoring and analyzing the data to work with the research question. First, research philosophy is transformed to research design. In the following section, research design is demonstrated describing how this study was conducted, including procedures of interviews and sampling technique of the thesis. The data collection method and how data is analyzed is explained afterwards. In the later section reflexivity, quality, and limitation of the

analysis is discussed. In the end of this section, ethical subjects that need to be taken into consideration are also emphasized.

4.2 Research Philosophy

This study's research methodology is a synthesis of social constructivism and interpretivism (Johnson & Clark, 2006). By understanding that consumers' experiences and views of acculturation and religious consumption are impacted by their particular cultural origins, social circumstances, and personal interpretations, this method respects the topic under investigation's complexity and subjectivity (Johnson & Clark, 2006). Also, by using a deductive approach to our research, we initiated with a theory or existing body of knowledge and tested it through the collection and analysis of empirical data (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). In this approach, we began with a hypothesis or a set of research questions derived from a theoretical framework and seeked to gather evidence to either support or refute the theory (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018).

Nonetheless, interpretivism placed a strong emphasis on the value of comprehending the arbitrary interpretations individuals gave to their experiences (Saunders et al. 2009). It acknowledged that people actively create and interpret their realities as a result of their interactions with others, societal influences, and personal convictions (Healy & Perry, 2000). It provided for a thorough examination of immigrants' living experiences, religious practices, and how they managed the acculturation process while preserving or modifying their religious beliefs in the framework of this research (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

According to the social constructivism theory, knowledge is socially built via interactions and shared meanings (Johnson & Clark, 2006). It recognized how social and cultural factors influence the way individuals behave, believe, and practice (Healy & Perry, 2000). In the context of this study, social constructivism aided in understanding how interactions with other religious communities, cultural norms, and institutional structures, as well as other social, cultural, and institutional factors within the host society, affected immigrants' religious consumption (Remenyi et al., 1998).

The research's philosophy is in line with a qualitative research approach that enabled an in-depth investigation of people's viewpoints, experiences, and meanings related to religious consumption and acculturation (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). In-depth interviews, participant observations, and narrative analysis are all used in this method to fully represent the diversity and complexity of immigrant experiences (Healy & Perry, 2000).

The research philosophy also recognized the possible impact of the subjectivity and reflexivity of the researcher (Johnson & Clark, 2006). Efforts were made to engage in reflective thinking and adopt an empathic stance toward participants' experiences, respecting their agency and different points of view (Saunders et al. 2009). This was done while being aware of the researcher's positionality and biases (Saunders et al. 2009).

The overall goal of this study is to understand the relation between acculturation and religious consumption among immigrants in the host society. It is guided by the interpretivist and social constructivist research paradigms. It emphasized the value of unique experiences, cultural settings, and common meanings while recognizing the subjective and socially developed aspect of the phenomena. Our study aims to develop knowledge, influence policy, and foster a better understanding of the complex link between acculturation and religious consumption through qualitative research and a deductive approach of research.

4.3 Research Design

"A research design provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data" (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 40). Therefore, we explain our research design and show different aspects of it. By choosing to use a deductive approach to our research, it is an approach that begins by evaluating existing theories, and then tests the theories by developing and testing hypotheses, which is known as the scientific process (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). We think such an approach is suitable for our research since we are examining existing theories about religious consumption and consumer acculturation, and interpreting them in new ways. Following our approach, we choose qualitative research methods that we believe are beneficial for collecting rich and detailed data. They allow researchers to investigate subjective experiences, discover complex social dynamics, and offer fresh insights that lead to the creation of theories and a better understanding of human behavior and social phenomena (Bryman & Bell, 2011). More specifically, we chose to use interviews as our data collection method. Interviews are useful for gathering our data as they provide detailed, participant-centered, and culturally embedded information (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). They enable researchers to delve into participants' views, feelings, and experiences, resulting in a more in-depth understanding of the research issue. Interviews provide adaptability, flexibility, and the potential to create rapport, resulting in rich and useful data that contributes to the research process (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

We collected data through systematic and semi-structured in-depth online interviews. Each interview lasted between forty-five minutes to one and half hours. A total of eighteen interviews were conducted with people who migrated from different Muslim countries and backgrounds in a way that provided diversity within the sample at the degree of age, gender and social background criteria. However, the sample was restricted geographically to the south of Sweden due to the demographic structure of south of Sweden by being host for multinational society from different parts of the world and religions.

Some interviews were done by one of the researchers and the others were done jointly. Each interview was transcribed to be shared between researchers and discussed to reach greater insights. The interviews were conducted during Ramadan to take into consideration probable behavior change or to find potential specific ritualistic behaviors for a certain period of time during ramadan. It was also beneficial that it was easier for our respondents to reflect and discuss from their immediate practices rather than trying to remember things from the past.

Interviews were made amongst immigrants in Sweden who have different age, gender, income and educational level to explore and interrogate various ritualistic behaviors from various environments. We had just one requirement which is fasting in Sweden and in any Islamic county before coming to Sweden. We sought to acknowledge their acculturation experiences and how they were influenced from various resources, traditions and religious codes to shape their ritualistic behaviors and consumptions they come across in Sweden. It was crucial to understand their religious, traditional and ideologically produced meanings of ritualistic consumption behaviors and consumer acculturation which were shaped by different religious practices to dig into their practices and behaviors in the host country.

4.3.1 Interviews

In this work, the design of empirical data collection was basically what McCracken (1988) referred to as “long interviews" which were in an environment where we could capture the background and context of interviewees better in a conversational style. Religion is very individual experiences, therefore we spent a significant amount of time understanding the in-depth background and unique experiences of participants. However, it was difficult to grasp that background in some cases, as we had to have interviewees in digital due to being away from Sweden.

The reason why we chose interviews is that we wanted to have conversations with the participants to delve into their religious experiences. The method of having interviews allowed us to spend a considerable amount of time together with the participants to reach the more accurate data. Talking about religion could be challenging sometimes, therefore we needed to encourage the participants to share their knowledge and experience with us. Hence, interviews provided the best possible options for us to create an intimate environment to connect with interviewees. We wanted to reach the changes, experiences and behaviors of the consumers to answer our research question. Interviews provided us to detect the changes in behavior of consumers and helped interviewees to explain their experiences freely and easily. In order to answer our research question, participants sometimes needed to realize the stuff they didn’t realize before having the interviews with us. Therefore, spending time together with the participants helped both us and participants. Hence, interviews provide us unique opportunities to reach unique data. We also considered the limitations of interviews such as understanding and interpreting the participants' responses in a specific way. Therefore, when we had the data we tried not to add our opinions and cross checked each researchers’ interpretations. Another limitation was the potential bias of the researchers. Therefore, we were unprejudiced and didn’t affect the respondents in a certain way during the interviews. Since religion is a sensitive topic, our behaviors could significantly disrupt the data we collected.

We set structured questions before conducting the interviews. Each question served different purposes to reach greater insight. Some interviews were done online through Zoom and the others were done face-to-face. One of the reasons we chose this is the limited time frame we have been provided to conduct our research and the other reason is we wanted to reach people from wider geographical areas. Hence, having online interviews helped us to reach the participants we wouldn't reach, and it made our data more diversified. However, having online interviews made the researchers job harder to connect more genuine relationships with the participants. Since, it was challenging to dig up the data which were not the first things that came to mind of participants. Furthermore, having mixed interviews, face-to-face and online, caused the different interpretations of the data by the researchers due to the change in behaviors of diverse participants in different settings. Nevertheless, the benefits of having mixed interviews overcame the limitations of this structure and helped our study considerably.

Each researcher was well-informed in religious practices and traditions of Ramadan. However, both of the researchers have unique Ramadan experiences due to different backgrounds. We used these unique experiences to enrich each others' knowledge to reach more fruitful findings. Moreover, to be prepared for the interviews and find the key questions to elicit more insightful responses, we would occasionally turn to one another to explain different practices to understand what were behind those which were encountered during interviews. These discussion sessions had the unforeseen advantage of leading each researcher subsequently to review and recheck his/her own religious knowledge, presumptions and biases and aided intra-personal, as well as inter-personal interpretation formation. It helped with the reflexivity of the research. The reason why we have semi-structured interviews is that religious experiences and Ramadan practices can be unique for each person, therefore we didn't want to restrict ourselves and had decided to have a more flexible way of having interviews with people. It enabled us to dig deeper and ask follow up questions.

Each interview opened with a question 'tell me about your Ramadan'. Before starting the interviews, we informed the participants about the purpose of our research, how their answers are going to be used and clarified their question in their mind. We got their consents to be recorded before starting interviews. While conducting the interviews, the objective was the production of point of views and comments about Ramadan and ritualistic consumption behaviors connected to Ramadan. A conversational approach was employed and to make the participants experience more relaxed hesitancy, pauses and unnecessary developments were not subject to any mention or objection. Moreover, interviewees had a chance to choose between English, Arabic, Swedish and Turkish to explain their experiences. This opportunity really helped us to gain elicit answers from the respondents and removed the language barrier. Respondents tended to use specific words from their native language to explain the situations better, also they felt more comfortable when we had interviews in their native language. When the interviews were done, for the purpose of identifying the main themes,

each transcription of each interview was analyzed several times. When the recording was in another language other than English, it was translated to English for the researchers and quotations.

4.3.2 Sampling Technique

In our thesis, the main subjects are the people who have migrated to Sweden from different Muslim countries and have fasted both in their origin country and Sweden at least once. There is no certain age group or time spent in Sweden, because we want to simply explore the process and power of acculturation and types of change without any requirements other than fasting in Sweden and any Islamic country before coming to Sweden. The research consists of empirical data from semi-structured interviews with eighteen immigrant consumers from different countries living in Sweden. Participants were selected based on our network, and, consequently, these respondents aided us to find more participants. Therefore, we embraced convenient snowball sampling (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015) to reach participants for this work. However, these sampling techniques are diminutive, it was applicable to this work because this was the best possible way to reach to Muslim immigrants in Sweden. Participants' main purposes for migration diversified between studies and work opportunities.

First, we started with people we already knew that are muslims and have already fasted in Sweden. Then, we asked them to introduce us to their social environment to find other participants to our interviews. However, due to having some interviews online, not every candidate was suitable for our study. Participants were identified through professional, social and religious affiliations. The purpose of our research was described as understanding the consumption rituals change and acculturation by examining religious practices. In order to follow this purpose we made interviews with people who fasted during Ramadan in Sweden. Anonymity was promised to the people who showed interest in participating in the interviews. We splitted some of the interviews among researchers by convenience in terms of language and the people who introduced us. Native languages of the researchers are Arabic and Turkish, therefore interviews were done by the researchers whose native language fitted with the participants. If there was no fit, interviews were conducted by the researcher who was introduced by the person who has already met.

Since the limitations of the convenience and purposive sampling techniques as both of them are considered very reductive, we tried to pick the participants who could provide the most

diversified background such as different languages, nationalities or educational level to overcome the limitations of our techniques. Our unique background helped us to understand and connect with the people from different countries and we had a chance to speak with them in different languages, therefore we were able to vary our samples. Furthermore, we could manage to reach diverse people from various countries due to the demographic structure of Sweden which consists of immigrated people from various nationalities. However, as much as we tried to overcome there are still reductive aspects of the convenience and purposive sampling techniques. Nevertheless, we diversified our sample by reaching unique participants and enriched data from each participant.

4.3.3 Data Analysis Method

When we started to collect the data we came to recognize that we need to identify and investigate the acculturated consumption practices together with inherited accustomed consumption practices of consumers before coming to Sweden. This approach helped us to understand the ritualistic behaviors of consumers more significantly by helping us to highlight the difference between acculturated consumption behaviors and prior ritualistic practices while having ramadan.

The research design generated a complicated analytical layout in which particular details may limitate ‘seeing the bigger picture’. We used four tools to overcome the complicated layout and analyze the collected data: categorisation, comparison, integration and refutation (Spiggle, 1994). ‘Categorization’ is coding and regulation of mass of interview transcribes based on interviewees’ respondents (Spiggle, 1994). We hired ‘comparison’ to pair and compare numerous categories captured to investigate similarities and contrasts within transcribes, responses and across texts from numerous respondents’ stories (Spiggle, 1994). ‘Integration’ was employed to consolidate some categories and trim the data. Finally, in the ‘refutation’ specific data were cleared away as they did not match the emerging conceptual frameworks (Spiggle, 1994).

In a more detailed concept, the initial stage in data analysis was sorting (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). The transcribed information was divided into groups according to content to facilitate sorting (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). In order to identify patterns, a thematic sorting technique was used, paying particular attention to themes, phrases, and words that were frequently repeated as Thompson et al. (1994) explain. We also achieved greater clarity by limiting the number of themes. Additionally, we ensured that the final themes had a significant relation to the study question and covered a considerable part of the data (Thompson et al. 1994).

4.4 Research quality and reliability

To guarantee that we carry out a well designed and organized research, we referred to the quality criterias of Bryman & Bell (2011) which are: relevance, credibility, dependability, reflexivity. Firstly, our research is considered relevant as it contributes to social integration, intergroup interactions, mental health, policy formulation, multicultural education, and academic scholarship. It advocates for an inclusive society that observes religious variety, respects individuals' rights and identities, and encourages harmonious interaction among ranged communities. To make our work more credible, we inform our participants about our research topic and goal, and what we are looking for when interviewing (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Credibility is achieved when reaching logical and real outcomes of our findings (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). Dependability is also achieved in our research study (Bell et al. 2022). Nonetheless, dependability of our research is expected to become higher with time as our topic is so relevant and continuous that it might be used in other future studies (Bell et al. 2022). Reflexivity of the researchers helped in improving the study and enhancing its perspectives and outcomes. A reflective study is vital as it ensures the acknowledgment and awareness of the authors throughout their study (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). Lastly, as reliability refers to a measure's accuracy dependent on data analysis, we made sure to ensure the authenticity of the data gathered and took into account multiple problems (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

4.5 Methodological Limitations

Because of the nature of qualitative research, sample sizes are often smaller than in quantitative studies (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). While qualitative research emphasizes thorough examination and detailed descriptions, the findings may not be generalizable to a larger population. The individuals' specific setting and features could limit the findings' application to larger immigrant populations or diverse backgrounds.

Bias is a potential in any research that involves interviews. Participants' responses can be influenced by the researcher's presence, opinions, and questioning techniques (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). Participants may also demonstrate social desirability bias, providing answers that they consider to be favorable or in line with societal norms (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). Steps were attempted to counteract these biases, such as establishing rapport with participants and maintaining a nonjudgmental environment, but it is essential to be aware of their potential impact. While interviews provide valuable qualitative data, they also represent the participants' subjective experiences and perceptions (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). The study may not represent the entire spectrum of experiences or viewpoints within the immigrant population. In addition,

interviews rely on participants' ability to recollect and describe their experiences accurately (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018) . Limitations and biases in memory recall may alter the accuracy or completeness of the information presented. We made an attempt to create a comfortable atmosphere for participants to recall and discuss their experiences, but it is important that you acknowledge the potential limits of self-reported data (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). As we study and make sense of the data, qualitative research requires interpretation and subjectivity (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). various researchers may interpret the same data in various ways, perhaps introducing bias or alternative explanations. Maintaining transparency, reflexivity, and properly documenting the analytical conclusions made during the research process are essential.

Conducting qualitative research, especially interviews, can take a long time. Due to time and resource constraints, the number of interviews done and the depth of data obtained may have been limited (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). It is critical to recognize any constraints in the breadth and depth of the data obtained, as well as their potential impact on the richness and comprehensiveness of the findings. Nonetheless, acculturation and religious consumption research encompass sensitive themes such as religion, cultural identity, and personal opinions. Therefore, informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and cultural sensitivity are all important ethical considerations. It is essential to be sensitive to participants' cultural and religious backgrounds in order to avoid possible harm or misrepresentation.

As a result, understanding and recognizing these methodological limitations is important for appropriately interpreting and contextualizing the study's findings. These limitations, while there, do not undermine the study's contribution to a larger understanding of the topic. Rather, they open up opportunities for future study to overcome these limitations and improve our understanding of the complex interplay between religious consumption and acculturation among immigrant consumers.

4.6 Ethical concerns

The empirical research conducted for this thesis underwent careful procedures to follow ethical principles and standards in order to protect the research participants and the credibility of the research community (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). Throughout our research and data collection, we made sure to not harm participants mentally and spoke the appropriate words (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). Also, we respected the participants' dignity and ensured that we got the consent of all the participants (Bell et al. 2022). In addition, we made sure that the research participants' privacy is secured and their confidentiality is ensured (Bell et al. 2022). One of the most important aspects to take into consideration is ensuring the anonymity of individuals or institutions after performing the interviews (Bell et al. 2022). Having full transparency and honesty of what our research goal

is about is vital to be informed to the participants (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). And finally, we made sure to exclude any wrong or misleading information throughout our study findings to avoid any fraud (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018).

5. Empirical Data

After our data collection, we analyzed our data and created different themes and sub-themes to answer our research question. We discovered how changes in religious consumption impact rituals of immigrants in the host society in three ways: (1) using food-related consumption (2) using social relationships and (3) using their acculturation experience. Each theme has unique sub-themes which elaborate the themes to highlight specific rituals and practices.

5.1 Food-Related Consumption

Food is an important part of Ramadan that drives its rituals, such as fasting means abstaining from food or breaking fast means having some particular types of food. The behaviors of Muslims are shaped by the food during Ramadan. Abstaining from food disrupts and alters social life, individuals' behaviors and rituals. Our findings show that the influence of Ramadan on rituals of food consumption is the area which people experience the change the most. In our analysis, we didn't solely focus on the physical aspect of food consumption, but also its altered meanings and its role for consumers throughout the month of Ramadan. In our findings it can be discerned that food is not something our body needs but also it is needed by our soul.

5.1.1 How to Prepare and Consume

Mahmud and Aisha, in the following excerpt, named meal preparation for fast-breaking as 'very demanding and complex' by respondents who cook for other people such as friends or family. Respondents were addressed different parts of food selection that are critical based on what they cook and their background. For instance, the selection of ingredients, when they start to cook and decide which food goes well with other food is very important for the respondents. Therefore, they change their food purchasing behaviors in accordance with rituals which they are accustomed to when Ramadan comes.

> "When I cook in Ramadan, I remember my mum's hustle to overcome the complexity of being ready for the iftar. People were expecting the best meals on time when they were breaking the fast, therefore it was a very stressful thing to cook for everyone in the iftar, even though it was also very satisfying to cook for someone else in the Ramadan. During the rest of the year, my mum doesn't cook that often due to having a small family, and I don't cook in Sweden that often due to living on my own. It is certain that Ramadan increases how much I cook at home." (Mahmud)

> "When we fast in Sweden, we try to cook at home due to missing the traditional food of our country. Also, there are not many options to have good meals at the restaurants in the iftar. Due to the importance of the iftar we try to find the best ingredients and recipes, however it is not very easy to find some ingredients in Sweden, thus we have given up cooking specific meals. However, in general we don't have many problems reaching the food or ingredients we need." (Aisha)

Mahmud and Aisha, also called the food preparation rituals in Ramadan as "complex decision-making processes." They shared the meaning of food preparation for their family when they cook in their home country and for themselves when they cook in Sweden. The change in this meaning shows the influence of different cultural settings on food preparation and consumption. Moreover, they also stressed that their frequency of cooking at home is quite different from the rest of the year. They also provided different reasons why they cook at home and what rituals they follow to cook traditional food at home. In these excerpts, it can be discerned that Ramadan has a huge influence on every aspect of food from purchasing the ingredients to where to consume food. This influence on food, together with the importance of food itself on life during Ramadan, have an undeniable impact on daily life and transforms considerable practices of consumers. Therefore, as Ratcliffe, Baxter and Martin (2019) stated, rituals of food consumption have a crucial role in people's daily life and Ramadan increases the impact of this role.

As Mahmud and Aisha commented that preparation, consumption or role of food is very crucial during Ramadan, also Abdullah addressed that how to consume items 'properly' is very critical for him. It is the focal point of Abdullah no matter where he fasts. Instead of reducing the value of food consumption, he has modified his consumption rituals to overcome the difficulty of fasting in Sweden. He also mentioned that he could give up purchasing specific products which do not fit his criteria. These types of sacrifices and modifications make individuals believe that their acts, practices and religious behaviors are more valuable if they follow specific rituals. Therefore, we can say that due to the symbolic meanings of consumption to the consumers, they can modify their decision making process while performing the rituals. Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) state that symbolic meanings of consumption rituals have huge influences on the decision-making process while carrying out the rituals by consumer, such as giving up ritual artifacts (Rook, 1985) like specific food or replacing a ritual artifact with another one. As Abdullah commented, eating rituals help him to continue fasting throughout the whole month and feel satisfied when he breaks the fast.

> "When I have a bad fast break due to not having the food I like, I get frustrated and it affects the upcoming fasting day. I remember my first Ramadan, here in Sweden, it was really hard on me. I couldn't find the food I was accustomed to eating. I needed to break my fast with fast foods which I really like on normal days but not in Ramadan. It was hard to fast when you don't feel satisfied from the prior fast breaking. Therefore, I needed to change my food-related rituals to get used to fasting

> in Sweden. I needed to make sacrifices by replacing food I was accustomed with the one which was easier to reach in Sweden." (Abdullah)

5.1.2 Changes in Meaning

Meal practice customs, orders and values of each meal obtain an extraordinary importance during Ramadan. Each meal is prepared with an excessive amount of food. Everybody expects a huge quantity and high quality of food when they break the fast. Fatih mentioned about change in his food consumption rituals due to altered meaning of eating during Ramadan. He commented that food in mind and its occupied space in mind changes dramatically between being in Islamic country and Sweden. We discovered that the reasons are lack of Ramadan spirit, lack of community and lack of food options.

> "When we started fasting in Sweden, we tried to have the joyful iftar as much as we could. However, after a couple of weeks we realized it is not the same as what we had done in our country. The spirit was lacking, the food or restaurant opportunities were not adequate and there were not many friends who wanted to share the same joy with us. Therefore, we have adjusted our expectations since that realization." (Serpil)

Important thing we found when we talked with Fatih is that change in consumption rituals are not just physical change but also change in ritualistic meanings. During the month of Ramadan, food intake gains elevated meanings, it becomes more than something the body needs. Every phase, from deciding what to eat or where to eat, to eating the food in a specific way acquires specific ritualistic meaning for the Fatih. He said that if he doesn't consume specific food in a specific way he feels that something is missing. Hence, rituals of the consumption and symbolic meaning have been altered by the influence of Ramadan.

Studies on religion-consumption relationship address mainly on the personal impact of religion and investigate how religious views and religion impact personal decision making process and consumption behaviors. Fox (2003) suggests that even order of food consumption is critical for the consumer. The comment of Fatih supports this idea and adds that although the order of food is important as symbolically, the consumption of specific food is also important. Therefore, from choosing what to eat to when to eat while having a meal have elevated meanings for consumers.

"I need to start with dates and soup, I can not change that, even though I don't eat any dates during the rest of the year. If I don't start with dates and soup, I feel all the suffering from fasting was for nothing despite all the religious requirements." (Fatih)

5.1.3 Fasting or Feasting

One of the critical paradoxes is that even though Ramdan is the month of self-control and abstinence, food and consumption is omnipresent during Ramadan. The topic of conversation, many planned activities or rituals are directly connected or indirectly related with the food.

Serpil's perspective highlights a shift in the emphasis of Ramadan celebrations. In their home culture, the focus was on sharing the same table with family, modesty, self-control, and gratitude. However, in the new host culture (Sweden), there seems to be a greater emphasis on the quality of food, spending on iftar, and showcasing wealth. Serpil expresses a preference for the Swedish approach, where people gather for iftar as friends who share the same idea, without the need for ostentation or bragging. Jafari and Süerdem (2012) express that there are contradictions in the behaviors of Muslim people, the comment of Serpil shows that these contradictions are lowered when they come to Sweden due to societal effects.

> “I don’t feel very well about the new way of celebrating Ramadan. Now, people are focused on the quality of the food more than its meaning. They are bragging about how much they spend for iftar or how much they donate. It used to be just sharing the same table with the family, not about the money. The main idea behind Ramadan is being modest, having self-control and being grateful for all the things God gives us. However, it is all about consumption rather than modesty. It is different in Sweden, nobody tries to show off when they gather around for iftar, they are just friends who believe the same idea. We share our food not to brag but to connect. This is the thing I like the most in Sweden.” (Serpil)

Salman's viewpoint reflects a concern about the excessive consumption and feasting that has become associated with Ramadan in their home culture. They argue against the unnecessary display of excess food and see it as a departure from the core principles of religious observance. However, in the new host culture (Sweden), Salman notices a different trend where such excessive feasting is not prevalent, possibly because Ramadan is not widely celebrated by everyone in that context.

From these perspectives, we can interpret that the migrant consumers are navigating and adapting to changes in their consumption rituals during Ramadan in their new host culture. They observe a shift towards a focus on materialistic aspects and excessive consumption in their home culture, which they find problematic. In contrast, the Swedish context offers a different approach, with a stronger emphasis on connection, simplicity, and shared beliefs rather than extravagant displays. These experiences and observations suggest that the migrant consumers' understanding of religion and the Ramadan experience is shaped by their encounters with different cultural contexts. They may critically evaluate the changes in rituals and express preferences for practices that align more closely with their understanding of the religious values associated with Ramadan. These findings show that what Armbrust (2002)

calls as ‘Christmasization’, which is Ramadan becoming a consumption festival, does not happen in the settings where Islam is not dominant due to change in rituals of Muslim immigrants when they immigrate to Sweden.

> “The most major change for me is that meals become feasts. I don’t like that. I have argued many times with my family to make them understand how unnecessary it is to put too much food on the table. A physical need, food consumption, becomes satisfying. This ritualistic change makes me sick when I think about how we acquired that kind of ritual like excessive consumption. It is the worst rituals we have by far. However, as soon as we come here, I see no one do that due to there is no room to do that. I believe the reason is that Ramadan is not something everybody celebrates in Sweden.” (Salman)

In their home culture, the respondents express concerns about the shift towards excessive consumption and a focus on material aspects during Ramadan. They feel that the emphasis on showcasing wealth and extravagant feasting contradicts the principles of modesty, self-control, and gratitude that are traditionally associated with the fasting period. This suggests that the feasting-fasting paradox is more pronounced or problematic in their home culture, where the excesses of feasting during Ramadan seem to overshadow the spiritual and religious dimensions of the observance. However, in the new host culture (Sweden), the respondents notice a different pattern. They mention that the focus is more on connection, simplicity, and shared beliefs rather than extravagant feasting and showcasing wealth. Here, the feasting-fasting paradox may be less prominent or even mitigated, as the excessive feasting and emphasis on material aspects are not prevalent. Instead, the emphasis seems to be on the communal aspect of sharing meals and connecting with others who share similar beliefs. Overall, these experiences suggest that the migrant consumers' encounter with the new host culture influences the way they perceive and navigate the feasting-fasting paradox. The contrast between their home culture and the host culture allows them to reflect on the changes in rituals and the shifting emphasis between feasting and fasting. Their perspectives shed light on how the feasting-fasting paradox is interpreted and experienced in different cultural contexts and highlight the role of cultural adaptation and personal values in shaping their understanding of religious practices.

In general, food consumption is interpreted, modified and understood in various aspects by consumers. Its meaning, value and physical attributes have various influences on different consumers. We detected three patterns emerging within this broader theme: (1) importance of meal preparation and how food is consumed, (2) the meaning of food alters, and (3) feasting becomes fasting again. These themes show that food is handled differently and gains specific meanings during the month of Ramadan.

5.2 Social Rituals

Our analysis showed that social rituals are very crucial especially for non-dominant cultural settings. The way of experiencing social life alters during Ramadan. Social rituals during the month of Ramadan mean how people engage with other people, spend their time and how they perform consumption practices for social purposes. In this theme, social relationships between people, purification as a social practice, diurnal disorder for Muslims and its influence on daily life and shopping during Ramadan are analyzed to examine social relationships during the month of Ramadan.

5.2.1 Social Relationship

Despite Sweden's relative cultural non-religious settings, we detected that there was a very powerful community-wide transformation in Muslim communities in Sweden throughout the whole Ramadan Month. Serpil and Salman displayed a transformation from focusing on individual daily affairs toward feeling of peoplehood and being a member of a community. Period of Ramadan is perceived as an occasion for reinforcing different types of social relationship rituals by them. Gatherings between families and friends are identified by Salman and Serpil as having feasts together, chatting around tables, a sense of joyfulness and a genuine feeling towards the community; a celebratory atmosphere conveying all the essential aspects of the rituals.

> "I spend a considerable amount of time with my family and friends when Ramadan comes. It is very odd for me, because I usually don't try to see my relatives. This is something unique to Ramadan for me. When I come to Sweden I don't feel lonely or alienated, because I find other people to spend time with, especially during Ramadan. The thing I can say is that the place doesn't change my rituals but Ramadan alters my social rituals from enjoying being alone to trying to spend time with other people." (Serpil)

> "Biggest change in how we spend our iftars is who comes to our houses. We invite our non-muslims friends to have an iftar with us to share the same joy we are experiencing. It is quite different from what we do in my country. Now, we like inviting non-muslim friends and explaining our rituals to them, it was odd to do that in my home country. Therefore, I urge myself to learn more about the spiritual side of Ramadan and therefore it changes my prayings, reading and studying the Quran to be more knowledgeable to explain the meaning of rituals to non-muslims." (Salman)

Serpil and Salman continued to show that social relationships are altered by religious practices. Therefore, the way of understanding a community, a family or a social group is different in Ramadan than the rest of the year. Social communities and relationships become something people require to cope with Ramadan especially in non-dominant cultural settings. It is interesting that Ramadan in Sweden urged Salman to delve more into their religious spiritual teachings to be able to explain these to their non-muslim guests and also inviting people from other religions in sharing their iftar experiences. Therefore, being in Sweden

increases Serpil's and Salman's connection to their religion and its rituals. This increase shows us that the harmonious relationship between consumption and religion can exist as Sandıkcı and Ger (2010) states. Even though, work of Wong (2007) states that there is a clash between consumption and religion, our findings support the idea of Sandıkcı and Ger (2010).

Javed also mentioned that there are unique benefits of fasting in culturally non-dominant settings. He stated that while mosques become gathering points, it also provides new opportunities to meet unique traditional food, practices and knowledge about Ramadan. Therefore going to a mosque as a praying ritual gains another meaning which is socializing for Javed. It is something he didn't experience before due to living in a Muslim dominant cultural setting. Tasting other traditions' food, playing traditional games of other cultures, sharing stories about how Ramadan is in their country are one of the examples he shared with us. Therefore, when we talked about fasting in Sweden during Ramadan with Javed, we found something enriching their experience.

> "When I was child my father gave chocolate to every Tarawah I attended. It was a long special prayer just for Ramadan. As I got older I gave up going to Tarawah, however as soon as I came to Sweden the meaning of the praying rituals changed for me. I put the prayings in the center of my daily rituals in Sweden during Ramadan. This is mainly because of the change in meaning of the mosques. Mosques have evolved from praying space to social gathering point for me. Now, I go to the prayers. I can hit two birds with one stone. This is one of the benefits of Sweden, non-Islamic country-, provided to me. It has changed my praying rituals and socializing." (Javed)

> "When Ramadan comes it also changes our rituals of thinking. I am a very individualistic person who wants to share his time with individual activities, however when Ramadan starts I start planning activities, meals and meetings with my social environment. Instead of saying I can watch a movie, we can watch a movie and have popcorn at my house." (Serpil)

People change their narratives when Ramadan comes. As can be seen from Serpil's comment, it is important to notice that individual discourse such as 'I' is frequently alternated with collective pronouns like 'we' and the use of statements like 'everybody' or 'all people' was very common. As she commented that the way of thinking of people changes during Ramadan. Her statement underscores the emergence of 'W concept' (Zouagui and Darpy, 2005) depicting the degree to which communal awareness is present in the approach and attitudes of the participants during the Ramadan.

5.2.2 Purification

Aisha expressed that “everything we do feels purer than usual” due to the fact that not only restricting from eating or drinking, but also by spiritually purging. Aisha addressed that she perceives Ramadan as ‘cleaning those who accumulated dirt, pollution in the body and household’. This shows the moral dimension of purification together with physical elements of purification. Also, she commented that her behaviors during Ramadan must be equipped to the path of patience, honesty and kindness. By doing so she told us that she felt doing the right thing and on the way of righteousness, being closer to the god. We witnessed that many respondents put the cleaning of the body household or their tools into their cleaning rituals. They expressed that when they stop hedonic gratifications they feel calmer, stronger and more valuable. As Mary Douglas (2002) states in her book, the meaning of dirt can vary in different settings. She also stated that the definition of dirt is something which is considered not in place by society. The purification practices of respondents and what Aisha considered as dirt can vary between people to people, especially in a culture where Islam is not dominant.

> “I can certainly say that when Ramadan comes I become cleaner. I clean my house, I clean my body and I clean my working environment almost everyday, even though it seems to be hard to do while fasting. It really changes my cleaning rituals from sloppy to very tidy. I feel that when my soul is clean it is easy to clean the physical body. Change in my cleaning rituals is something I feel the most.” (Aisha)

We discovered that the effect of the “purification” idea of Ramadan can be seen not only in spiritually but also physically such as cleaning the body and the house and shaving regularly. So, the cleansing of the soul (by fasting and being more religious and more charitable) translates into cleansing of the physical. These physical activities can be understood as an effort to eliminate the dirt. Removing the dirt was stated by Maty Douglas (2002) as an activity which is not negative, but a positive exertion to rearrange the environment. As Mahmud stated in the following excerpt, the time of Ramadan can be named as a ‘time of repentance for prior mistakes and space for self-improvement.’ Comment of Mahmud shows that the “purification” can be interpreted variously, Therefore, the traces of purification can be found in different rituals from cleaning the house to meditation. Hence, the connection between what Mamud stated and Douglas suggested that there is an effort to remove the dirt and to purify the environment and the soul.

> “I see the month of Ramadan as a redemption or a time for evaluation. During the rest of the year, I don’t spend much time on thinking about what I do, however when Ramadan comes I become kind of a judge to assess my actions throughout the whole year between two Ramadan months. It is like meditation for me. Ramadan really transforms my daily thinking from daily activities to more spiritually things. I spend almost 30 minutes every day doing this assessment. Therefore, there is a change in my daily rituals and also in personal well being.” (Mahmud)

5.2.3 Diurnal Disorder

Salman stated that their daily life 'overturned' during the holy month when they were in their origin country, however this transformation in Sweden and causes hardship on their daily life during Ramadan. He expressed that the social activities adapt to the fasting time in Islamic countries; some respondents from Asia stated that working time decreases, shops are closed until the fast breaking time and major activities postponed to a later date, however Turkish respondent (Serpil) didn't mention it. When Serpil was asked about those changes, she said that there are some examples as others stated but those are not common behaviors. These cultural differences affect their fasting experience in Sweden. Hirshcman and Touzani (2008) express the impact of diurnal disorder in Tunisian society in their work. However, as Salman and Serpil stated it is not even the case for the whole society in some Islamic countries. Thus, we argue that the impact of diurnal order can be seen only at the individual level in our context.

"When Ramadan comes we know everything we do in daily life gets slower. People don't wake up very early and want to spend their days with prayings instead of profane daily activities. Daily routine of society changes during Ramadan. But, as you said, it is not something permanent but temporary. Therefore, when my nights and mornings shifted when I fasted in Sweden, it took time for me to get used to it. I am accustomed to a slower and easier lifestyle during Ramadan." (Salman)

"In Turkey, even though we see the effect of Ramadan on society, many people don't fast. Specific parts of the daily activities alter such as restaurants, time of meetings with friends. It is not like we stop everything or see major changes. It is like we are in between two phases.Therefore, when my daily life overturned due to Ramadan, I know how to handle it due to being ready from my experience from Turkey." (Serpil)

These two different comments for the same question shows that the influence of Ramadan on people can change from person to person due to different reasons such as nationality, background or where they have lived before coming to Sweden. However, something is sure that when Ramadan comes there is diurnal disorder for everybody. Some get used to diurnal disorder in a non-dominant cultural context, where not many people shift their nights and days during Ramadan, easier than others depending on their prior experiences.

5.3 Impact of acculturation

This part of the analysis analyzes different interviewees' responses and opinions based on their personal experiences of living in the west and experiencing acculturation in the host country. By referring to the interviews done with the participants, we were able to come up with several themes and patterns that were deduced by comparing and coding their answers.
Some respondents illustrated that living in the west as a muslim made them face some challenges and obstacles that obstructed practicing Islam fully and especially during the holy month Ramadan.

Based on our findings, the challenges faced by muslims living in Sweden altered their religious practices due to the acculturation process. Outcomes differed based on different reactions of muslims toward these challenges where some muslims modified certain religious practices to align with the cultural norms of the host society, some gave up completely their religious practices to align with the culture of host society, and others maintained completely their religious practices with no alterations or engagements in the culture of host society.

5.3.1 Modifying religious practices

Several participants described their religious life as becoming modified and altered to engage in the host society. Their age ranged between 26 and 40 years old which means they are from a millennial generation. They stressed on the idea of them getting used to the culture they are currently living in and that the latter became part of their identity. However, this doesn't mean that they gave up their origin and stopped practicing what their upbringings have taught them and have been practicing it since their childhood. The respondents highly showed respect and attachment to Islam yet highlighted the obstacles they face to stay highly religious in an atmosphere like Sweden.

One of the respondents, named Aisha explained that praying rituals became altered and changed during Ramadan. She showed great disappointment due to the obligation of changing her praying rituals during this month because of certain circumstances. She explained:

> "I miss listening to the *Adhan* from my house and listening to *Anasheed* and *Duaa* that come right from the mosque next to my parent's house in my homeland. Those types of practices make me feel more motivated to pray and practice Ramadan in the right way. Now that I live in Sweden, I am not praying at a mosque and rarely completing my daily prayers due to restrictions from the Swedish government that forbidden adhan. However, I always try my best to stay connected to Islam and pray even if I know that I'm not doing it in the most perfect way." (Aisha)

Another participant talked about community gatherings of common ethnicity and religion where they tend to share the same Islam practices and prayers, share the same food, and same traditional clothes. To always be engaged with one's origin and background in the host society, such practices help a lot in maintaining the balance between staying attached to one's primary culture and engaging in the host society. Selim explained:

- ***Adhan*** *is the call made to signal the start of a certain required Salah (ritual Prayer). The adhan is recited five times each day from mosques all around the world.*
- ***Nasheed*** *is a work of vocal music that is performed in accordance with a certain Islamic style or tradition and shares some similarities with hymns in terms of vocal technique.*
- ***Dua****, which translates to "call out," is an act of prayer that entails humbly and passionately asking for something. It is a form of worship for Muslims in which they beg Allah to pardon them, show them kindness, grant them His favors, and grant their wishes.*

> "In the *Laylatul Qadr*, our Indonesian community in Skåne, Sweden planned a gathering to achieve a group prayer that starts after Futoor till the dawn. Although I didn't feel so motivated, it ended up to be a great experience. We shared the famous traditional Indonesian food and recited the Quran together. Although it didn't feel like the nights I used to live in my home country, it was a good idea to try to stay connected with my fellow muslim acquaintances in Sweden." (Selim)

Furthermore, a participant sees living away from the homeland as a significant factor of losing a lot of one's religion and beliefs and that it makes a person less muslim when they are not surrounded with family and friends. Mohamed explained in the interview:

> "I barely feel Ramadan vibes in Sweden. Some days I even forget it's Ramadan because I don't feel the warm and Islamic atmosphere that surrounds you as in my home country such as Quraan reciting that can be heard everywhere, people buying their goods for Iftar and Suhoor, and gathering with loved ones after Iftar. Instead, I feel like I am really far from my religion and lonely, therefore I try to stay connected to my cousins and friends through social media, and try to cook our traditional food by myself that never turned out the way my mom used to do it". (Mohamed)

Another participant shared more about social influence and temptations. With the presence of a non muslim atmosphere, like Sweden, one can rarely encounter a fasting person that would share similar beliefs and practices. Thus, muslims might find themselves under pressure from surroundings and feel that engaging in the cultural society with peers would make them feel more belonging and eventually lead to break their fast. Nonetheless, muslims often face question marks and weird reactions when non muslims realize some practices of Islam such as fasting for a very long time and praying during work time or public gatherings.

Aisha continued and added:

> "Every year during Ramadan, I commit to fasting during this month although I work at a full time job. However, I continuously receive from my colleagues and other people questions and astonishments of how can I fast for a long time, why would I starve myself, and is it even worth it. I often deal with such questions and try to explain to them that it is part of my religious practices. At the end they do understand what I'm doing but I admit that it annoys me and makes me sometimes feel insecure about my religion." (Aisha)

- ***Laylatul Qadr,*** *the Night of Decree or Night of Power, is one of the most sacred nights in the Islamic calendar. It occurs during the last ten days of Ramadan and commemorates the night the Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).*

Furthermore, muslims seek to consume Halal food which symbolizes the allowed food that doesn't contain pork meat, or other meat that is cut in accordance to Islam laws. Consequently, muslims in Sweden tend to struggle to find Halal food more often. Although more muslims are settling in Sweden, especially in the past few years, one is unable to find halal food in all regions of Sweden. Selim shared:

> “I have lived before in Östersund where not many muslims are found there. We usually struggled to find Halal meat markets which made us obliged to consume normal cut meat. However, we ignored eating pork meat so we kind of achieve a balance in our food consumption". (Selim)

Remarkably, some muslims tend to find difficulties in managing their time between work or schools and Ramadan practices. Conversely, muslim countries during Ramadan encounter a shift in work schedules and even in schools. Also, commercial stores tend to open and close their doors a bit later than usual. Schools make sure to shorten the lecture periods and make what satisfies the lecturers and students best. It is definitely a different situation in western countries where muslims observe a huge difference in the atmosphere and routine during Ramadan.

Mohamed shared his thoughts:

> “I usually start work at 14:00 pm until 00:00 am which means I miss Iftar at 21:00 pm with my family. This irritates me a lot because I feel extra tired and at the same time I miss out the joyful and spiritual moments with my loved ones. I know I can do nothing about it therefore I try to stay motivated and not think about it much”. (Mohamed)

Selim also explained:

> “Back in my home country, shops used to close all day and open after Iftar until dawn when everyone is energetic and happy with a full stomach. We used to visit a chaotic street full of shops that makes you feel the Ramadan spirit at its best. Now that I live in Sweden, I get to lose all these beautiful moments because of course we cannot revive these nights in Sweden.” (Selim)

In addition, muslims receive some type of stigmatization during the holy month Ramadan in the west which can make it difficult for muslims to fully participate in society and to practice their faith without fear of discrimination or harassment. Some acts of discrimination can be work discrimination which mainly includes being passed over for job opportunities, being subjected to derogatory comments, or being denied breaks to pray or eat during the day. Also, public perception can be another form of muslims discrimination in which they might face negative reactions from the public if they are visibly fasting. Particularly, if they are wearing traditional Islamic attire, this can subject muslims to verbal or physical harassment, or being

refused service at restaurants or stores. Muslims tend to fight against such behaviors to proceed their lives in the west like normal people do. A real life experiences was narrated by Aisha:

> "One day during Ramdan, my friend and I were heading to a nearby praying place in Sweden where we had to wear the Hijab. As we were waiting for the bus to come, a strange guy stood next to us, looked at us in a strange way, performed the "Hitler" hand sign, and left right away. At first we didn't really get what he meant, but then we realized that it was actually targeted to us. I would say I feel sad and disappointed that some people would really care to hate in that brutal way." (Aisha)

Overall, some muslims in Sweden try to stay connected to their original culture and religion although they would often face challenges and obstacles in doing that. As we analyzed our respondents' opinions, we realized that community matters the most to them as it helps them to adapt to the social norms of the host country yet stay attached to their ethnic community.

5.3.2 Giving up religious practices

Other participants that we interviewed have shown a completely different perspective. These muslims have fully given up their religious practices to engage fully in the host society. They are often raised or born in Sweden, although coming from a muslim family, they are living a life of a normal Swedish and engaging in traditions and social norms of the country. They label themselves as muslims, however they don't practice or have stopped practicing Islamic traditions and duties. In addition, these muslims are estimated to be aged between 18 and 23 years old who are considered Gen Z. Therefore, these participants tend to engage in the Swedish community and share common traditions and rituals without practicing any previous traditional or cultural rituals.
When it comes to praying duties, this version of muslims are not committed to any prayer rituals. They are simply not into religious practices because of external influences that made them lose interest in Islamic practices. Adam, one of our participants said:

> "I was born and raised in Sweden, the fact that I have never been in very religious situations due to living in Sweden, I totally engage with my Swedish friends in everything they do. I do celebrate Ramadan and as well as Christmas and Easter. I do not celebrate Ramadan fully as I don't fast or pray the whole month, but sometimes I like to share some experiences and therefore fast for one or two days." (Adam)

Another participant, named Moustafa added:

> "I don't pray during Ramadan because I feel we live in a totally different atmosphere and vibe compared to my homeland. I even wonder how people could pray here with the absence of Adhan and other Islamic facilities in Sweden." (Moustafa)

Also, these muslims tend to lose interest in practicing Islam due to the absence of the large muslim community in Sweden. When an individual cannot find another individual that shares the same beliefs and traditions, it becomes hard for them to stay motivated and religiously committed, especially during a holy month like Ramadan. Furthermore, lack of family gatherings during Ramadan reduces the will to fast during this month in countries like Sweden. A participant called Sara explained:

> "When I got to Sweden, I was 18 years old. Due to the society's influence and situation, I stopped fasting and praying during Ramadan because I felt everything I would do here is wrong and will seem nothing like home. Also, I got influenced by my friends' lifestyle and rituals which made me way less religious and away from Islam." (Sara)

As we mentioned before, Sweden witnesses long day hours, especially during spring and summertime. Consequently, breaking the fast for muslims during these seasons becomes very late, closer to 10:00 pm and 11:00 pm. Muslims in this case find it difficult and sometimes impossible to fast. Moustafa continued to share his opinion:

> "Ever since I moved to Sweden, I stopped fasting because of how hard it is to fast during Ramadan in Sweden. Imagine that we had to fast the whole day without eating or drinking till 11:00 pm. Ever since that time I have never fasted anymore while I live in Sweden." (Moustafa)

Nonetheless, the struggle of finding Halal food in Sweden made a lot of people consume non Halal food and just give up the Islamic rules. Since Swedes are not really aware of what Halal food means, they often don't take into consideration producing such types of food. Therefore, muslims become obliged to consume Swedish food that does not comply with Islamic rules and that wont allow them to practice Ramadan fairly. Adam explained:

> "I've been consuming Swedish food that is not Halal all my lifetime. I usually don't find Halal food and I am okay with eating Swedish food; it's actually so clean and healthy. And of course I ignore fasting because I feel like I live a 100% Swedish life that does not comply to Islam in any way, although I am labeled as a muslim." (Adam)

Furthermore, respondents described how the social pressure and possible temptations drag a person away from their own beliefs. Since muslims in the west live in a non muslim society, they tend to engage in habits that are not allowed in Islam. They are more flexible and less stubborn than other muslims where they allow changes and alterations to happen to their lives. Adam explained:

> "I never felt it was Ramadan in Sweden. In fact I go out every weekend to party and have fun with my friends even in Ramadan. I personally don't see myself fasting in such an atmosphere and cannot stay neglected from my friends and from the fun vibes that we usually need to break the boredom of Sweden." (Adam)

These muslims also showed that due to work obligations and commitments, they feel fasting in Ramadan in Swedish work zones is hard and tiring. They believe that work schedules are not flexible enough to meet muslims' comfort during this month. Sara explained:

> "Due to the nature of my work, working as a nurse in a hospital and having many night shifts, I find it very difficult for me to fast and do my other Ramadan practices during work times. Since Ramadan is about 30 days, I can't have a consecutive 30 day work exception to meet my effort expectations during Ramadan." (Sara)

5.3.3 Complete maintenance of religious practices

The rest of our participants who are estimated to be aged between 45-65 years old have shown a totally different perception of living in the west than other participants. Older participants mean older generations, and older generations mean more connection and attachment to their cultural origin and background. Therefore, these participants expressed the rejection of the dominant cultural practices in favor of their religious beliefs and culture unlike the begrudging acceptance shown in the previous subtheme. This means that they don't not allow external interferences in their own beliefs and traditions that they brought with them to the host country, and that they refuse to adopt any practices that contradicts their beliefs. They even described challenges as manageable and not crucial in regards to their religious practices during Ramadan in Sweden. Hence, they tend to not share common rituals with the Swedish community and share common traditions, but at the same time they respect and appreciate the host country that afforded them with shelter and life opportunities.

Starting with the prayer rituals of these muslims, governmental restrictions on religious practices did not stop them from praying their daily five obligatory prayers even with the absence of Adhan. Unlike other participants, they see that "when there's a will there's a way", therefore, they have no excuses to not fulfill their goal towards Islam. Abdulkarim said:

> "I would never skip a day without praying and fulfilling all my duties. Personally, I see no obstacles, by living in Sweden, to not pray and do my practices. A lot of other muslims say that living in Sweden deprives me from practicing my religion for many reasons. For me, I always find a way to complete my prayers. For example, as a personal reminder, I use an application on my phone that acts as an electronic Adhan and plays at the right time to remind me to pray. It organizes my prayer schedule and even Iftar and Suhoor time during our fasting." (Abdulkarim)

Another participant named Tarek stressed:

> "In the city where I live, which is Malmö, I can find many muslims that are committed to Islam and are willing to fulfill their duties. Also, we have a mosque here that we are all proud of and helps us to achieve all our prayers at the right time especially during

> Ramadan. We have a big muslim community over here which makes it easy to stay connected to our religion as we used to do in our homeland. I can even find our traditional sweets in Arab shops that make me feel at home." (Tarek)

With the increase of the muslim population in Sweden since 2015, practicing Islam became easier and the muslim community grew much bigger in cities like Malmö. Furthermore, with the engagement of muslims in the workforce and society, people now are more familiar with what Islam and Ramadan is. In fact, people seemed more supportive and interested in knowing more about Islam where muslims saw it as an advantage to practice Islam freely even more and more. Somaya, one of our participants expressed his experience:

> "As I was discussing with my colleagues at work about fasting during Ramadan and how I am managing between working and fasting, they felt really impressed and interested in knowing more. Even two of my friends decided to fast the following day and break the fast together. I felt really supported and proud to introduce Islam to non muslims." (Somaya)

Also, Somaya shared her story to emphasize on how flexible her boss at work was regarding the Islamic holidays and occasions:

> "The last day of Ramadan I asked my boss to take two days off work to celebrate Eid Al Fitr that comes right after Ramadan. She agreed directly and was super supportive and understanding." (Somaya)

Although it is known that fasting in Sweden might be tiring and exhausting due to the long day hours, many muslims we interviewed turned out to be totally okay with that. They think Ramadan is worth giving attention and appreciation since it's one holy month out of the whole year. Since Ramadan is about feeling the poor and the people in need, many muslims would consider sacrificing their needs and want to praise God and feel grateful. Abdulkarim explained:

> "When Ramadan comes during summer, the first couple of days tend to be hard but manageable, the following days become easier as we become used to it. I try to waste some time by reading the Quran and listening to *Hadith* before it is time for Iftar. I feel proud and grateful for completing fasting Ramdan each year. There's nothing more beautiful than challenging yourself and working hard to please Allah." (Abdulkarim)

- ***Hadith*** *is the term used to describe what the majority of Muslims and traditional Islamic schools of thought consider to be a record of the sayings, deeds, and quiet approbation of the Islamic prophet Muhammad as passed down via a series of narrators.*

As Halal food is a priority in Islam and muslims tend to only consume it, muslims in the west struggle to find Halal food. However, with the increase of the number of Muslims in the west, and the opening of several markets that are owned by muslims, products that are Halal are either made nationally or imported from the muslim countries. Tarek explained his story:

> "I never happened to eat non Halal food in Sweden since it is forbidden in Islam. When I first got to Sweden in the 90s, no Halal food was available here which made us travel to Denmark each month to get our goods from there. Now, thankfully we can find numerous Halal stores in Sweden and even Halal products inside Swedish markets. This facilitated our consumption of Halal food during Ramadan and made us feel so satisfied." (Tarek)

Abdulkarim shared his thoughts:

> "I never felt like there was no food for me to consume because I can now find numerous middle eastern restaurants in Sweden that have all my favorite Halal food. I even go out with my friends during Ramadan to have Iftar in one of those places and the vibes feel beautiful. I can even have my Hookah (a type of Arabian smoking) after Iftar in those places with amazing ambiance." (Abdulkarim)

On the other hand, our findings showed that a true muslim who has sincere beliefs and loyalty to their religion, no social temptations or external influences would alter or change the way they believe or practice Islam. The strong connection of muslims to Islam justified how eager and determined they are to fully be committed to their religion. No matter where they are found, they always make sure to satisfy their spiritual self. Tarek explained more on it:

> "I don't feel tempted in any way during fasting in Sweden when I meet people eating or drinking. I might ignore going out during the day with my friends and prefer to meet them after Iftar so I can be more comfortable with them. However, nothing unworthy can make me break my fast unless I get sick or something." (Tarek)

Somaya also narrated:

> "I never personally broke my fast because I was tempted by my friends or people around eating and drinking. I mean I have a goal during this month and my determination and perseverance during Ramadan are way stronger than any other desires." (Somaya)

To sum up, these participants chose to please their ethnic culture and not allow any alteration to happen to their religious practices. They are not influenced by Swedish traditions and habits and refuse to be due to their strong attachment to their culture. They learned to find ways to uphold their religious practices and work hard to maintain their traditions that they consider sacred.

6. Discussion

This study contributes to the literature on rituals and acculturation by examining how rituals are reshaped, embraced and modified in the non-dominant settings' marketplace. We negotiated changes in religious consumption and to what extent it has affected religious rituals of muslim immigrants living in Sweden. We examined our findings and came up with a discussion which includes the main aspects of our study that supports some theories and refutes some others.

6.1 Shifts in Religion-Consumption

Jafari and Süerdem (2012) stated that Islam can be found in various forms as a social institution in daily life rather than a dogmatic set of rules. Our findings showed that all respondents interpret the Islam in their own way to apply Islamic discourses in their daily ritual practices. As Jafari and Süerdem (2012) contradict the notion of understanding the Islam as rigid dogmas, our paper also supports their argumentation and adds that there are no Islamic standards in the consumption rituals of consumers but there is Islamic way of living. The difference we want to address is people who follow the Islamic way of living, interpret and shape the Islamic discourses to execute their daily rituals, but the ones who argue there is Islamic standards, shape their lives in accordance to those standards and follow the same rigid standards for their every practice. Our paper goes forwards and says that when immigrant muslim consumers live in a culturally nondominant Islamic setting, they tend to shape and transform Islamic discourses even more to sustain a healthy social life. As we stated in the findings, people can be more religious in those settings but it doesn't mean they follow the rigid dogma, but they shape and find new ways of being a muslim, such as breaking the fast or going to mosque for socializing in nondominant cultural settings. As Jafari and Sandikci (2015) state that there is much to be grasped from the relationship between Islam and consumption, we also strongly encourage other researchers to discover the crossroads of consumption and Islam in nondominant cultural settings.

This brings us to understand the sacred and the profane in Islamic context. As Varul (2008) states that the distinction between the sacred and the profane is not something specific for Islam; other religions also try to attempt to adjust people's consumption behaviors within religious borders. Along with agreeing with this argument, we believe that what is unique to Islam is its increasing encounter with the Western lifestyle. We believe that, due to elevated migration from Islamic countries to Western Europe, this encounter will be increasing more and therefore, new ways of following the Islamic lifestyle are going to emerge. Therefore, the interpretation of the sacred and the profane for the Islamic society is going to change. The things which were sacred could be profane and vice versa. As Muñiz Jr. and Schau (2005) and Belk, Sherry and Wallendorf (1989) state that there is a harmonious relationship between

sacred and profane, we also argue that this relationship is getting stronger for the immigrant muslim consumers. Also, Islamic and non-Islamic; halal (lawful) and haram (unlawful) exist together in many contexts, as Jafari and Süerdem (2012) suggest. They also suggest analyzing these relationships through the lenses of "Consumer Culture Theory" of Arnould and Thompson (2005). In addition to that we also encourage future researchers to use the theory of "The Ritual Dimension of Consumer Behavior" of Rook (1985) to discover and express the what has changed in the way of Islamic living for the immigrants in Western Europe, to understand the effect of duration of time spent in these cultures. Even though the contradictions between consumer's behaviors and the coexistence of the sacred and the profane in Islamic countries, the effect of these is surpassed by the Islamic belief of the society, such as women can wear makeup and luxury clothes and do prayings, but there are always some boundaries and someone criticizes. In our thesis, we discovered that under culturally nondominant settings, there is an area of dispersion for the new way of Islamic living and increased coexistence of the sacred and the profane.

Hirshcman and Touzani (2008) and Wallendorf and Arnould (1992) state that traditional holidays such as Thanksgiving, the month of Ramadan and Christmas have become consumption festivals. Our findings depicted that even though there is an increase in consumption for the immigrant Muslims, respondents stated that the idea of consumption festivals was lost for them when they immigrated. Armbrust (2002) calls the modern Ramadan observance 'Ramadan Christmasization'. We agree with this idea in the context of Islamic countries but not in the settings where Islam is not dominant. In contrast to these studies, our findings show that the effect of Ramadan on consumption rituals of immigrant Muslim consumers are not very strong. Respondents stated how much they consumed when they were in their home country, and how it has reduced since they have migrated. We believe that the reason why it has lost is the loss of influence of the society. Respondents expressed that excessive consumption wss like a societal movement and they were affected by that, however when their host culture and society have changed they have lost the impact of society on their consumption rituals. Therefore, we believe that even though there is no excessive consumption amongst immigrated Muslim consumers with the influence of Ramadan, it could change in the future due to the increasing number of Muslims in the Western Europe. However, we believe it will not happen in the near future, because many immigrated muslim consumers adjust their consumption behaviors in accordance with society.

This idea of excessive consumption in muslim dominant societies brings us to the conspicuous consumption theory. Conspicuous consumption term is consuming more than practical by purchasing expensive, excessive amounts of product or luxury commodities (Veblen & Banta, 2007). It is also identified as a public display of economic power (Veblen & Banta, 2007), even though it is correct, we believe it is a partial reason for the conspicuous consumption for the Muslims on Islamic societies. We believe that the main reason is the societal hysteria to consume during the month of Ramadan. Therefore, we believe that the loss of societal hysteria of immigrant consumers is the reason why people leave conspicuous

consumption during Ramadan. Another economic behavior of people is identified as invidious consumption which is a consumption behavior to envy other people (Veblen & Banta, 2007). However, loss of social environment is the reason why the people who immigrated don't have invidious consumption practices in their rituals. Conspicuous consumption is a form of displaying personal identity (Veblen & Banta, 2007). Therefore, we believe that the people who immigrated to Sweden in our context want to be part of the society and present their new personal identity to fit the society. Therefore, this is another reason why they leave the conspicuous consumption behaviors.

We discovered the strong connection between food consumption and rituals during Ramadan. As Fox (2003) suggests, even order of food consumption while having a meal is important for the consumers. We support this argument and add also that not only the order of food consumption but also every aspect of food related rituals are crucial for the consumers. Therefore, we argue that food can evolve into a ritual artifact. As Douglas and Isherwood (2002) suggest, ritual artifacts might frequently take the form of consumer goods. Hence, we argue that food can be one of them as what Rook (1985) called a ritual artifact and escort or are employed in a ritual framework for consumers to execute their rituals. We believe that feasting, while breaking the fast, has many meanings or links for the consumers (Ratcliffe, Baxter & Martin, 2019). We argue that those meanings are artificially created and easy to be changed by the consumers. As our respondents expressed their feasting behaviors have changed when they have come to Sweden, this means those artificial meanings could be reinterpreted within different contexts. Therefore, symbolic consumption rituals (Belk, Wallendorf & Sherry 1989; Holbrook & Hirschman 1982; Rook 1985) can be seen in the practices of consumers, but prone to be reinvented and reinterpreted. We advocate that the symbolic meanings of rituals are easily affected by the dominant culture of the society even though those meanings have religious values. They are reshaped and restructured to fit in societal contexts.

We also wanted to address that even though Islamic practices such as fasting, praying or pilgrimage can be encountered in daily life, it has been under-studied. Ramadan has been mainly studied in the dominant cultural settings. As Sandıkcı and Omeraki (2013) and Hirschman and Touzani (2008) state in their paper the effect of Ramadan can be seen in all daily practices of the consumers. However, our findings showed that the influence on Ramadan can not be seen easily in the context where Ramadan is not culturally dominant. In our context, there is no interruption in daily life as Hirschman and Touzani (2008) suggest, or there is no invasion of Western materialism as Sandıkcı and Omeraki (2008) suggest. We argue that when people immigrate to the Western Europe the symbolic meaning of the rituals become more important than the consumption itself for them.

Our findings provide that purification has different meanings for different individuals. Even though the meaning of purification changes when the host society changes for an individual,,

we argue that the act of purification is sustained by the people, yet the types of act could change. Mary Douglas (2002) argues that 'the dirt' is open to change in any given society. We advocate her argument and express that people are open to change what they call 'dirty and clean' in different contexts. As we discovered that people can change their purification rituals by adding different rituals such as doing meditation or lighting candles to answer their new notion of 'dirty and clean', but they also preserve some of their existing purification rituals, despite the fact that they do not answer the new notion. Although it is not easy to find halal food in non-Islamic countries compared to Islamic countries, people still categorize food as halal (lawful) or haram (unlawful), dirty or clean. Therefore, we believe that the idea of 'pure' or 'dirt' needs to be understood within the social context. We believe that the change in what people call dirt, shows the change in their understanding and perspective, as Douglas (2002) states. Douglas (2002) also argues that cultures can create order by creating categories, such as dirty and pure. Along with agreeing with this argumentation, we also say that people form the categories as clean or dirty in effect of their religious beliefs as well without any idea of order.

6.2 Complexity of Acculturation

Relatively, our findings supported what Berry (2019) suggests where he claims that religious rituals change as a result of the acculturation process, as immigrants navigate their religious rituals within the structure of the host society. We were able to realize that changes of rituals among Muslims in Sweden demonstrate their cultural adaptation and the process of assimilating their religious practices into the host society. These changes were illustrated by our respondents according to their adaptation process during Ramadan. Additionally, our findings aligned with Peñaloza (1994) as she derived different categories of acculturation including assimilation, maintenance, resistance and segregation. Similarly, our findings were able to discover that muslims in Sweden differed in their adaptation process, specifically during Ramadan practices. Some chose to completely maintain their religious practices and refused to accept other cultural habits, some achieved balance between the host culture and their original culture, and others completely gave up their religious practices in favor of adhering to the cultural norms of the host society.

However, challenges faced my muslims in Sweden during Ramadan were handled differently as it varied according to the level of adaptation of immigrants to the cultural norms of the host society. As Luedicke (2011) explains that border crossings frequently begin a complex process of sociocultural adjustment to unfamiliar economic, biological, physical, sociocultural, and ethnic conditions, our findings showed that not all muslims in western countries tend to adjust and change to adapt to the social norms of the host society. This was highly shown by respondents who maintained a strong adherence to their religious rituals and explained that they did not allow external factors to influence their religiosity and modify their religious practices during Ramadan. On the other hand, other participants, who were less attached to their ethnic culture and were more flexible in terms of social engagement in host society, showed alterations in their religious rituals during Ramadan. Meanwhile, Luedicke

(2011) and Larsson and Björkman (2010)'s theories were supported by participants who experienced discrimination or behavior of Islamophobia. Rituals of muslims in Sweden definitely were altered due to stigmatization behavior as some respondents were mentally hurt which made them retrieve from revealing their true self to the society. Even Üstüner and Holt's (2007) theory couldn't be fully proved in our research because of proving that cultural values can be neglected and not taken into consideration in cases of total assimilation by muslims living in Sweden and practicing Ramadan. Furthermore, Lindridge (2010) who explained that ethnic minorities show higher levels of religiosity than the dominant ethnic population was oppositely proved in our thesis. Our findings illustrated several muslims who showed little engagement in Islam and some who even stopped fasting during Ramadan because of external society influence. Muslims seemed to be affected by the dominant environment of Sweden and the western lifestyle which made them lose track of Islam. In addition, the acculturation process, according Askegaard et al. (2005), is a post assimilationist process and ongoing activity. Also, they argued that consuming is crucial to this process because immigrants navigate and negotiate their cultural identities through consumption behaviors. However, our study offers the total opposite. Living in a non muslim country made muslims demotivated and engaging in the swedish society often dragged muslims away from their usual consumption in their home country. Consumption like traditional clothing, traditional food, and traditional activities often are missed by muslims in Sweden which participates in change of the cultural identity and consequently religious rituals.

Although muslims are identified as being strongly attached to their religion according to Cesari (2002) and Güngör et al. (2013), our findings have shown that some muslims have given up their beliefs and practices due to living in Sweden. Our findings showed that muslims during Ramadan faced some challenges that dragged them away from particular Islamic practices. At the same time, other participants tended to show faithful and strong attachment to Islam despite the obstacles. One can totally realize the contradicting aspects of this study and that there is a clear conflict of ideas and opinions that hold different extremes. Furthermore, finding Halal food in western countries was said by Lindridge (2010) to be difficult and hard to reach; however our findings showed that muslims in Sweden are easily reaching out Halal food. Due to the increase in muslims in Sweden in the past few years Haodong (2020), it became easier for them to satisfy their religious belonging and maintain their religious consumption. The new presence of middle eastern restaurants and shops in Sweden provided eastern muslims with many goods reminiscent of their home country. Also, some of our participants contradicted what Alghafli et al. (2019) suggests about facing conflicts during work to request time off during religious occasions where flexible and supportive reactions actually were received by the participant from the administration of their Swedish workplace. The Swedish community's acceptance of muslims seemed welcoming and embracing which was shown in many situations narrated by our participants. Therefore, previous assumptions of how muslims would be badly treated in the west and how they would always be misunderstood and mistreated are changing and people are more aware adapting to the idea of accepting muslims into the western societies. Acculturation, discovered to be a very complex phenomena, tends to affect immigrants differently depending on factors like the age, type of generation, degree of religiosity, or the origin, confirming what Berry (2005) explains. Community wise, influence of acculturation varies

depending on the cultural, social background, and moral characteristics of the society. On the other hand, several other muslims brought up how acculturation made them get to know other ethnic muslims from different cultures and backgrounds which they consider interesting. This aligns with Touzani and Hirschman's (2008) theory. Community mattered a lot to muslims when it came to maintaining religious practices and staying in contact with the original culture.

In addition, as we were analyzing our data, we noticed a common aspect or phenomena that has been shown among several participants from our interviews which is nostalgic consumption. Nostalgia seemed as a recurring theme that added on our understanding to the previous literature. Nostalgia consumption in consumer acculturation is relevant and controversial as they are interrelated. Mainly, consumers participate in consumption behaviors that arouse sentiments of nostalgia and help them reconnect with their cultural roots or earlier cultural encounters (Bardhi et al. 2001). For example, our findings revealed how muslims in Sweden during Ramadan work hard on bringing the good old days and nights from their home country. Activities like group prayings, Quran reciting with family and friends, and spending time after Iftar in the neighborhood cafe to enjoy a Hookah. Consuming things that stand for or serve as a reminder of one's former way of life or home is what it entails (Bardhi et al. 2010). Nostalgic consumption usually helps immigrants in maintaining cultural connection with their original culture or heritage (Brunk et al. 2017). Individuals can generate a sense of familiarity, belonging, and cultural identity by consuming things or engaging in experiences that reflect their cultural traditions (Brunk et al. 2013). In addition, individuals experiencing acculturation may use nostalgia as a coping mechanism (Bardhi et al. 2010). It assists individuals in dealing with the difficulties, anxiety, and feelings of disconnection that may emerge as a result of adjusting to a new culture (Cruz et al. 2014). In an unknown setting, engaging in established eating behaviors creates a sense of stability and familiarity (Cruz et al. 2014).

To sum up, the findings offered insights on the dynamics of religious rituals, the impact of acculturation, and the experiences of Muslim immigrants in the host culture by participating in a thorough discussion of the interviews with Muslims in Sweden during Ramadan. Our discussion introduced new ways of interpreting existing literature on religious consumption and acculturation of immigrants.

7. Conclusion

Coming to the end of the study, this research examined how acculturation, changes in religious consumption, and their effects on consumers' religious rituals and practices within a dominant society interacted intricately. The multidimensional nature of this phenomena and its significance for people's religious experiences have been clarified by the findings.

The study has shown that muslims' religious consumption patterns frequently see considerable changes as they go through the process of acculturation in Sweden. Consumers'

religious rituals and practices may change, adapt, or even incorporate aspects of the dominant culture as a result of the adoption of new cultural values and practices in the dominant society. Additionally, the study has uncovered a number of crucial elements that influence how acculturation and modifications in religious consumption affect consumers' religious rituals and practices specifically during Ramadan. The degree of a person's religious devotion, the degree of cultural integration, the accessibility of religious resources and support networks, and the impact of society norms and expectations are among these variables. Religious consumption during the process of acculturation faces different obstacles and varies according to different characteristics of the immigrant and the host society. Religious consumption of immigrants is a fluctuating and variable topic that keeps changing and altering public understandings and concepts.

In conclusion, this study adds to the body of knowledge on acculturation, religious consumption, and how these factors impact consumers' religious practices. It draws attention to the necessity for a nuanced understanding of personal experiences of muslims in Sweden during Ramadan and urges deeper investigation of this intricate interplay in many circumstances.

7.1 Limitations

This study has several short-comings. First, we talked only to Muslim Migrants in Sweden who live in the south of Sweden. Therefore, to have more accurate generalization about Sweden more data from different areas are needed. In addition, to generalize our findings throughout Europe more data from different countries are also needed. Therefore, there is a need to expand this study to other European countries. Second, there are various types of Islam in different Islamic countries to understand the individuals' change when they migrate to Sweden, we need more accurate data from our respondents' native countries. Third, the time frame of this research needs to be extended to unveil the influence of acculturation on rituals. Due to the limited time frame to conduct the analysis, we focused on the current answers of respondents. However, due to unique Ramadan experiences and the effect of age, time spent in Sweden and change in intellectual level of participants could change the results. Therefore, the time frame to conduct the research can be extended to have more accurate responses.

7.2 Future Research

Despite the research's limitations, our findings provide the presence of influence of changes in religious practices on rituals. Also, it supports the influence of acculturation modified rituals. Remarkably, future research can consider increasing the sample size, integrating more

immigrant populations, using longitudinal studies, and using mixed-method approaches to increase the understanding of readers. Researchers can further examine the complexity of religious consumption and acculturation by focusing on these areas for development, which will lead to a more complete understanding of the topic. The larger interaction between the behaviors of consumers and religious affiliation is yet to be explored. We can only speculate that the relation between consumer behaviors and religion or between acculturation and religious practices, as reported in the study, modify consumers' practices. While further research is required to illuminate the possibilities, we are optimistic that our existing effort may provide a modest beginning for what might evolve into an area of interest for marketing research, one that carries practical and theoretical fruit.

8. References

Alghafli, Z., Hatch, T., Rose, A., Abo-Zena, M., Marks, L. and Dollahite, D., (2019). A Qualitative Study of Ramadan: A Month of Fasting, Family, and Faith. *Religions*, [online] 10(2), p.123. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10020123.

Alserhan, B.A. (2010). Islamic branding: A conceptualization of related terms, *Journal of Brand Management*, 18(1), pp 34–49.

Armbrust, W. (2002). The Riddle of Ramadan: Media, consumer culture, and the christmasization of a Muslim holiday," *Bowen D., Early E. (eds) Everyday Life in the Middle East Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.*, pp 333–348.

Arnould, E.J. & Thompson, C.J. (2005). Consumer culture theory (CCT): Twenty years of research, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(4), pp. 868–882.

Askegaard, S., Arnould, E. J., & Kjeldgaard, D. (2005). The cultural and the global: A world divided or a world united?. Journal of Consumer Research, 31(2), 337-357.

Bardhi, F., Askegaard, S. and Arnould, E.J. (2001) Existential anxiety and shopping nostalgia: Sojourner affective experiences and implications for consumer behavior during acculturation. In: Marshall, G.W. and Grove, S.J. (eds) Summer American marketing educators' proceedings. Chicago, IL: American Marketing Association, 47–64.

Bardhi, F., Ostberg, J. and Bengtsson, A. (2010) 'Negotiating cultural boundaries: Food, travel and consumer identities', Consumption Markets & Culture 13(2): 133-157.

Belk, R.W. (1988). Possessions and the extended self, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15(2), pp 139.

Belk, R.W. (1989). Materialism and the Modern U.S. Christmas, *Association for Consumer Research*, pp 115–135.

Belk, R.W., Wallendorf, M. & Sherry, Jr., J.F. (1989). The Sacred and the Profane in Consumer Behavior: Theodicy on the Odyssey, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16(1).

Bell, E., Bryman, A. and Harley, B. (2022) *Business research methods*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

Berry, J. W. (1997). Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation, Applied Psychology, vol. 46, no. 1, pp 5-34

Berry, J. W. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 29(6), 697-712.

Berry, J. W. (2019). Acculturation: A Personal Journey across Cultures: Cambridge University Press

Brunk, K.H., Giesler, M. and Hartmann, B.J. (2017) 'Creating a Consumable Past: How Memory Making Shapes Marketization', Journal of Consumer Research 44(6): 1325-1342.

Brunk, K.H., Visconti, L.M. and Veresiu, E. (2013) Expanding the Theoretical Boundaries of Consumer Acculturation: Investigating the Role of Institutional Forces and Nostalgic Consumption. In: Botti, S. and Labroo, A. (eds) Advances in Consumer Research. Duluth, MN: Association for Consumer Research, 94-99.

Bryman, A. (1999). The Disneyization of Society, *The Sociological Review*, 47(1), pp 25–47.

Bryman, A. & Bell, E. (2011). Business Research Methods 3e: OUP Oxford

Buitelaar, M. (1993). Fasting and feasting in Morocco: Women's participation in Ramadan. Oxford: Berg Publishers

Cesari J. (2002). Islam in France: the shaping of a religious minority. In Muslims in the West. From Sojourners to Citizens, ed. YY Haddad, pp. 36–51. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press

Chytkova, Z. (2011) 'Consumer acculturation, gender, and food: Romanian women in Italy between tradition and modernity', Consumption Markets & Culture 14(3): 267-291.

Connor P. (2010). A theory of immigrant religious adaptation: disruption, assimilation, and facilitation. PhD diss., Princeton Univ. 364 pp.

Delener, N. (1994). Religious contrasts in Consumer Decision Behaviour Patterns: Their dimensions and marketing Implications, *European Journal of Marketing*, 28(5), pp 36–53.

Douglas, M. (2002) Purity and Danger. London: Routledge.

Douglas, M. and Isherwood, B. (2002). *World of Goods: Towards an anthropology of consumption*. 1st edn. London: Taylor and Francis.

Douglas, S.P. and Craig, C.S. (1992) 'Advances in international marketing', International Journal of Research in Marketing, 9(4), pp. 291–318. doi:10.1016/0167-8116(92)90002-3.

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. & Jackson, P. R. (2015). Management and Business Research: SAGE Publications.

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R., Jackson, P. R. and Jasperson, L. J. (2018). Management & Business Research, 6th Edition, SAGE Publications Ltd

El-Bassiouny, N. (2014). The one-billion-plus Marginalization: Toward a Scholarly Understanding of Islamic Consumers, *Journal of Business Research*, 67(2), pp. 42–49.

El-Tobgui, C. (2022). Islam and 'LGBTQ': Gender, Sexuality, Morality & Identity. YAQEEN. Available Online: https://4713562.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/4713562/Website-Paper-PDFs/Islam%20and%20the%20LGBT%20Question-Reframing%20the%20Narrative.pdf

Esposito, J.L. (2011). Islam: The straight path. New York: Oxford University Press.

Firat, A.F. & Venkatesh, A. (1995). Liberatory Postmodernism and the Reenchantment of Consumption, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 22(3), pp. 239.

Fox, R. (2003). Food and Eating: An anthropological perspective, *Social Issues Research Centre* , pp 1–21.

Gattino, S. Miglietta, A. Rizzo, M & Testa, S. (2016) 'Muslim Acculturation in a Catholic Country: Its Associations With Religious Identity, Beliefs, and Practices', Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 47(9), pp. 1194–1200. doi:10.1177/0022022116661244.

Ger, G. (2013). Islamic marketing at the nexus of global markets–religions–politics and implications for research, *Marketing Theory*, 13(4), pp 497–503.

Giuliani, C., Tagliabue, S., & Regalia, C. (2018). Psychological well-being, multiple identities, and discrimination among first and second generation immigrant Muslims. Europe's Journal of Psychology, 14(1), 66–87. https://doi.org/10.5964/ejop.v14i1.1434

Goodwin, C., Smith, K.L. & Spiggle, S. (1990). Materialism and the Modern U.S. Christmas, *Advances in Consumer Research*, 17, pp 690–698.

Güngör, ¨ D., Fleischmann, F., Phalet, K., & Maliepaard, M. (2013). Contextualizing religious acculturation: Cross-cultural perspectives on Muslim minorities in Western Europe. European Psychologist, 18(3), 203–214. https://doi.org/10.1027/1016-9040/a000162

Haodong, Qi. (2020). The Economic Impact of Syrian Refugees in Sweden. FOCUS.
Available Online:
http://focus-refugees.eu/wp-content/uploads/focus_report_the_socio_economic_effects_of_syrian_refugees_hq210608_withcover.pdf

Healy, M. and Perry, C. (2000) "Comprehensive criteria to judge validity and reliability of qualitative research within the realism paradigm," Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal, 3(3), pp. 118–126. Available at:
https://doi.org/10.1108/13522750010333861.

Hirschman, E.C. (1982). Religious Differences in Cognitions regarding Novelty Seeking and Information Transfer, *Advances in Consumer Research*, 9, pp 228–233.

Hirschman, E.C. (1983). Religious Affiliation and Consumption Processes: An initial paradigm, *J. N. Sheth (ed.) Research in Marketing*, pp 131–170.

Hirschman, E.C. & Touzani, M. (2008). Cultural Syncretism and Ramadan Observance: Consumer research visits Islam," *Advances in Consumer Research*, 35, pp 374–380.

Hirschman, E.C., Ruvio, A.A. & Touzani, M. (2010). Breaking Bread with Abraham's children: Christians, Jews and Muslims' holiday consumption in dominant, minority and diasporic communities, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 39(3), pp. 429–448.

Holbrook, M.B. & Hirschman, E.C. (1982). The Experiential Aspects of Consumption: Consumer fantasies, feelings, and fun, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9(2), pp 132.

Hu, J., Whittler, T.E. and Tian, K. (2013) 'Resisting immigrant myths: everyday consumer practices of Asian immigrants in America', Consumption Markets & Culture 16(2): 169-195.

Islamic Help. (2021). The Power of Dua. Available online: https://www.islamichelp.org.uk/power-of-dua#:~:text=Dua%20means%20invocation%20%2D%20to%20call,favours%20and%20answer%20our%20requests

Islamic Relief Worldwide. (2020). The Spiritual Significance of the Last Ten Nights of Ramadan. Available Online: https://islamic-relief.org/news/the-spiritual-significance-of-the-last-ten-nights-of-ramadan/#:~:text=Laylatul%20Qadr%2C%20the%20Night%20of,(peace%20be%20upon%20him).

IslamOnline. (2023). The Adhan (The Call to Prayer). Available Online: https://islamonline.net/en/the-adhan-the-call-to-prayer/

Izberk-Bilgin, E. (2012). Theology Meets the Marketplace: The discursive formation of the halal market in Turkey, *Consumption and Spirituality*, pp 57–69.

Jackson, P. (1999). Commodity Cultures: The traffic in things, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 24(1), pp 95–108.

Jafari, A. (2012). Islamic Marketing: Insights From A Critical Perspective, *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 3(1), pp 22–34.

Jafari, A. & Goulding, C. (2008). We are not terrorists!' UK‐based Iranians, consumption practices and the 'torn self, *Consumption Markets & Culture*, 11(2), pp 73–91.

Jafari, A. & Goulding, C. (2012). Globalization, Reflexivity, and the Project of the Self: A virtual intercultural learning process, *Consumption Markets & Culture*, 16(1), pp 65–90.

Jafari, A. & Sandıkcı, Ö. (2015). Islamic Consumers, Markets, and Marketing: A critique of

El-Bassiouny's (2014) 'The one-billion-plus marginalization, *Journal of Business Research*, 68(12), pp 2676–2682.

Jafari, A. & Süerdem, A. (2012). An Analysis of Material Consumption Culture in the Muslim World, *Marketing Theory*, 12(1), pp 61–79.

Johnson, P. and Clark, M. (2006) Business and Management Research Methodologies. London: SAGE.

Kim, Y. Y. (2001). Becoming intercultural: An integrative theory of communication and cross-cultural adaptation. Sage Publications.

Kozinets, R.V. & Handelman, J.M. (2004). Adversaries of consumption: Consumer movements, activism, and ideology, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(3), pp. 691–704.

LaFromboise, T., Coleman, H. L. K., & Gerton, J. (1993). Psychological impact of biculturalism: Evidence and theory. Psychological Bulletin, 114(3), 395-412.

Lapidus, I.M. (2014). A History of Islamic Societie*s*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Larsson, G. & Björkman, N. (2010). South Asian Muslims in the Nordic Countries: An Overview Based on the Existing Literature, Finnish Journal of Ethnicity & Migration, vol. 5, no. 2, pp 16-23.

Lewis, B. (2001). The Roots of Muslim Rage, Policy, vol. 17, no. 4, pp 47-60.

Luedicke, M.K. (2015). Indigenes' Responses to Immigrants' Consumer Acculturation: A Relational Configuration Analysis. Journal of Consumer Research, vol. 42, no. 1, pp 109-129.

Luedicke, M.K. (2011) 'Consumer acculturation theory: (crossing) conceptual boundaries', Consumption, Markets & Culture 14(3): 223-244.

Maes, M., Stevens, G. W. J. M., & Verkuyten, M. (2014). Perceived ethnic discrimination and problem behaviors in muslim immigrant early adolescents: moderating effects of ethnic, religious, and national group identification. The Journal of Early Adolescence, 34(7), 940–966. https://doi.org/10.1177/0272431613514629

Martinovic, B., & Verkuyten, M. (2012). Host national and religious identification among Turkish Muslims in Western Europe: The role of ingroup norms, perceived discrimination and value incompatibility. European Journal of Social Psychology, 42(7), 893–903. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.1900

McAlexander, J.H., Dufault, B.L., Martin D.M. & Schouten J.W. (2014). The Marketization of Religion: Field, capital, and Consumer Identity, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 41(3), pp 858–875.

McCracken, G. (1986). Culture and consumption: A theoretical account of the structure and movement of the cultural meaning of consumer goods, *Journal of Consumer* Research, 13(1), pp 71.

McCracken, G. D. (1988). The Long Interview: SAGE Publications.

Mehta, R. and Belk, R.W. (1991) 'Artifacts, Identity, and Transition: Favorite Possessions of Indians and Indian Immigrants to the United States', Journal of Consumer Research 17(4): 398-411.

Miller, D. (1995). Unwrapping Christmas. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Muñiz Jr., A.M. & Schau, H.J. (2005). Religiosity in the Abandoned Apple Newton Brand Community, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(4), pp 737–747.

O'Guinn, T.C. & Belk, R.W. (1989). Heaven on Earth: Consumption at Heritage Village, USA, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16(2), pp 227.

O'Guinn, T.C. & Muñiz Jr., A.M. (2013). Communal Consumption and the Brand, in S. Ratneshwar and D.G. Mick (eds) *Inside Consumption Consumer Motives, Goals, and Desires*. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, pp 274–294.

Ogada, P. and Lindberg, F. (2022) 'Immigration blues: understanding market dynamics through consumer acculturation', Consumption Markets & Culture. DOI: 10.1080/10253866.2022.2107512. 1-21.

Peñaloza, L. N. (1989). Immigrant Consumer Acculturation. in: Srull, T. K., ed. Advances in Consumer Research, 1989 Provo, UT. Association for Consumer Research, 110- 118.

Peñaloza, L.N. (1994) 'Atravesando Fronteras/Border Crossings: A Critical Ethnographic Exploration of the Consumer Acculturation of Mexican

Perocco, F. (2018). Anti-migrant Islamophobia in Europe. Social roots, mechanisms and actors. REMHU: Revista Interdisciplinar da Mobilidade Humana, 26, 25–40. https://doi.org/10.1590/1980-85852503880005303

Peters, F.E. (1994). Muhammad and the Origins of Islam. State University of New York Press.

Pink, J. (2009). Muslim Societies in the Age of Mass Consumption: Politics, Culture and Identity between the Local and the Global: Cambridge Scholars Pub.

Ratcliffe, E., Baxter, W.L. & Martin, N. (2019). Consumption Rituals Relating to Food and Drink: A review and research agenda, *Appetite*, 134, pp 86–93.

Remenyi, D., Williams, B., Money, A. and Swartz, E., (1998). Doing Research in Business and Management: An Introduction to Process and Method. London: SAGE Publications Ltd. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446280416> [Accessed 28 Apr 202

Rippin, A. (1993). The Practice of Islam, in A. Rippin (ed.) *Muslims: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices: Volume 2: Contemporary Period*. London: Routledge, pp 127–145.

Ritzger, R. (1993). The McDonaldization of Society. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press.

Rook, D.W. (1985). The Ritual Dimension of Consumer Behavior, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 12(3), pp. 251.

Rossano, M.J. (2012). The Essential Role of Ritual in the Transmission and Reinforcement of Social Norms., *Psychological Bulletin*, 138(3), pp 529–549.

Ryder, A. G., Alden, L. E., & Paulhus, D. L. (2000). Is acculturation unidimensional or bidimensional? A head-to-head comparison in the prediction of personality, self-identity, and adjustment. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 79(1), 49-65.

Sandikci, O. & Ger, G. (2011). Islam, consumption and marketing: Going beyond the Essentialist approaches, *SSRN Electronic Journal* [Preprint].

Sandikci, O. & Omeraki, S. (2007). Globalization and Rituals: Does Ramadan turn into Christmas?, *NA - Advances in Consumer Research eds. Gavan Fitzsimons and Vicki Morwitz, Duluth, MN: Association for Consumer Research,*34, pp 610–615.

Sandikci, Ö. & Ger, G. (2010). Veiling in style: How does a stigmatized practice become fashionable?, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 37(1), pp 15–36.

Sandikci, Ö. & Jafari, A. (2013). Islamic encounters in consumption and marketing, *Marketing Theory*, 13(4), pp 411–420.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2009) Research methods for business students. Harlow: Financial Times Prentice Hall.

Shahriar, H. & Ulver, S. (2022). This Is Not Inclusivity: Muslim Immigrant Consumers' Negotiations of Market-Mediated Progressive Gender Ideologies. in: Barnhart, M. & Huff, A. D., eds. Research in Consumer Culture Theory: Proceedings of the Consumer Culture Theory Conference, 2022 Oregon, USA.

Shiraev, E. B., & Levy, D. A. (2017). Cross-cultural psychology: Critical thinking and contemporary applications. Routledge.

Spiggle, S. (1994). Analysis and Interpretation of Qualitative Data in Consumer Research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *21*(3), 491–503. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2489688

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (1998). Mixed Methodology: Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches (Vol. 46). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Thompson, R.A. (1994) 'Emotion regulation: A theme in search of definition', *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 59(2/3), p. 25. doi:10.2307/1166137.

Üstüner, T., & Holt, D. B. (2007). Exploring the complexities of Hispanic acculturation: A review of the literature and its implications for marketers. Journal of Consumer Behaviour: An International Research Review, 6(5), 317-342.

Veblen, T. (2007) Theory of the Leisure Class. Edited by M. Banta. New York: Oxford University Press Inc.

Voas, D., & Fleischmann, F. (2012). Islam moves west: religious change in the first and second generations. Annual Review of Sociology, 38(1), 525–545. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-071811-145455

Wallendorf, M. & Arnould, E.J. (1991). We Gather Together: Consumption rituals of Thanksgiving Day, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18(1), pp 13.

Wikipedia. (2023). Hadith. Available online: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hadith

Wikipedia. (2023). Nasheed. Available Online: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nasheed

Wilson, J.A.J., Belk, R.W., Bamossy, G.J., Sandikci, Ö., Kartajaya, H. Sobh, R., Liu, J. & Scott, L. (2013). Crescent Marketing, Muslim Geographies and Brand Islam, *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 4(1), pp 22–50.

Wong, L. (2007). Market cultures, the middle classes and Islam: Consuming the market?, *Consumption Markets & Culture*, 10(4), pp 451–480.

Zick Varul, M. (2008). After Heroism: Religion versus consumerism. preliminaries for an investigation of Protestantism and Islam under consumer culture, *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations*, 19(2), pp 237–255.

Zukin, S. & Maguire, J.S. (2004). Consumers and consumption, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 30(1), pp 173–197.

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. What does Ramadan mean to you?
2. How does your daily/routine schedule change during the month of Ramadan?
3. What are the five most important activities you engage in during Ramadan? Why are these important to you ?
4. Can you describe your ritual of breaking the fast ? Such as the order of food, what do you consume first, breaking fast with dates etc.
5. How did you observe Ramadan before coming to Sweden ?
6. How do you think your Ramadan experience is different in Sweden than from your home country? Why do you think that is?
7. What are the things that you or your family/household bought during Ramadan in your home country? And here in your host country?
8. What are the things that changed? (For example: Can you explain how your praying rituals changed during Ramadan with the fact of living in Sweden?)
9. Did you encounter any challenges in observing your traditional Ramadan practices from your home country? How have you navigated/managed such a conflict?
    a. How did the long fasting time in Sweden affect your determination during Ramadan?
    b. Can you tell me how the social pressure and temptations complicates your fasting process?
    c. Do you struggle to find halal food while fasting during Ramadan in Sweden?
    d. Do you face any struggles for taking time off from work during Ramadan Iftar time?
    e. How is your experience as a muslim in Sweden going? Have you faced any kind of discrimination or hate?

10. Do you think the challenges you encountered during this adaptation to a new culture was worth the things that you lost in your Ramadan experience? Why/why not?
11. Do you think you tried to maintain your connection to your home country's rituals/practices or do you think due to convenience or restrictions you have changed your practices/rituals?
    a. Can you think of examples to describe this?

9.2 Appendix B: Informed Consent

Consent Form Title: Change in Rituals through Consumption

Researchers: Ertugrul Melekoglu and Amira Toufic El Lezkani

Department: Lund University School of Economics and Management

Dear Participant,

We are Ertugrul Melekoglu and Amira Toufic El Lezkani, and are Master students at Lund University School of Economics and Management. We are conducting this study on religion, consumption, rituals and acculturation as a part of our Master programme. We are very grateful for your willingness to participate. You are being asked to participate in this study because of the interest you have expressed in it. First of all, your participation is entirely voluntary and before you accept to participate, we would like to give more information about the study and what your participation will mean. You are free to withdraw from the interview at any point without any results or need of explanation. Also, you can skip the questions you don't want to answer. We take the privacy of our respondents very seriously. The recording, data and personal information we collect will be handled in consideration of privacy. We may use anonymous quotes from the respondents in the final. Your personal information will not be disclosed. The sole reason for any kind of data we collected will be used for research purposes and cannot be traced back to you. The interview will be conducted privately between researchers and respondents. We will record the interviews and recordings will be deleted once the study is done. The thesis will be published for the public. If you have any objection please contact us, otherwise we will acknowledge that you have read and understood this form at the beginning of the interview and hence consent to participate.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about the study, please feel free to contact us via email.

ertugrulmelekoglu@gmail.com

amira.ellezkani99@gmail.com

Thank you for your contribution and time to our research.

Kind regards,

Ertugrul Melekoglu & Amira Toufic El Lezkani