

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical and research overview of the constructs employed in this study. The literature review is subdivided into two major parts. The first part discusses the foundation concepts applied in the research. This subsection presents definitions of adolescents, culture, and subculture. The second part discusses each variable involved in the framework of the study and highlights the possible relationships between variables. The section also examines how certain variable moderate the effect of the relationship of American popular culture and five selected aspects of consumer behaviour. Since empirical research on popular culture is very scarce in the marketing field, related literature on popular culture and adolescent behaviour was also reviewed to provide some explanations of the framework of this study.

2.1 Adolescents

The history roots of Western adolescence theories emanate from the ancient Greek's concern with human nature. The word adolescence itself is actually derived from the Latin word *adolescere* meaning "to grow up" (Muuss, 1968). Adolescence is the time when children grow up from childhood through a period when their biological clock changes and calls for a rite of passage to adulthood. Associated with the physical bodily developments are psychological changes. This is a time of profound changes for

individuals as it involves difficult transformations of children to adulthood (Newman and Newman, 1997; Nielsen, 1996; Selmer and Lam (2004).

According to Connell et al. (1975), it is accepted that adolescence takes place between the age of 11 and 21 years and is divided into three overlapping stages: early, middle and late adolescence. The individual at the early stage of adolescence will be able to learn and discover at a greater pace than before, developing the ability to find things abstract and developing reasoning for it (Seifert and Hoffnung, 2000).

By the time individuals get to middle adolescence they will have developed a search for independence and will start to develop their own inner feelings (Keats, 1997; Hauser et al., 1991). In late adolescence, individuals start to secure a firmer identity of themselves and a greater independence to cope with their abilities and making decisions. They are capable of careful insight and support a greater ability in speech and expression, showing more steady emotional behaviour and thinking through their thoughts and delaying gratification (Stringer, 1994; Terry, 1995). Late adolescents are able to set themselves goals and follow them through. They are also aware of their own personal dignity and have increased self-esteem and are able to compromise with others (Hauser et al., 1991; Sebald, 1992).

The age range of adolescence, as defined by Bush et al. (2004), is between the ages of 13 and 18 years old. A study by Carroll and Anderson (2002) on body piercing, tattooing, self-esteem and body investment (a part of American popular culture behaviour) among adolescents girls defines the age range of adolescence as between 15 to 18 years old. In the Malaysian context, the study done by Abdul Razak and Safiek (2003) defined adolescence as being between the ages of 16 and 19 years old. For the

purpose of this study, we will adopt the definition proposed by Abdul Razak and Safiek (2003). The decision to choose the definition by Abdul Razak and Safiek (2003) are based on the similarities of the research with the present study. Among of the similarities are the same research settings (i.e.: Malaysia's environment and target respondents of Malaysia adolescents).

2.2 Subculture

In this section, the researcher addresses the subculture component in culture, i.e., age subculture will be address. The following sub section highlights the relationship of subculture and consumption aspect. In the same sub section, the researcher will elaborate the theoretical aspects of subcultural consumption.

In many research, subculture is often expressed with synonyms such as subunits, subgroups, split culture, cultures within culture, cultural pluralism theories and multi-cultures (Martin and Siehl 1983; Trice 1993). However, in one organization, there could be numerous cultures, which would form potential conflicting systems in the common culture (Martin and Siehl 1983; Trice 1993). Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) define subculture as “a distinct cultural group that exists as an identifiable segment within a larger, more complex society” (p. 408).

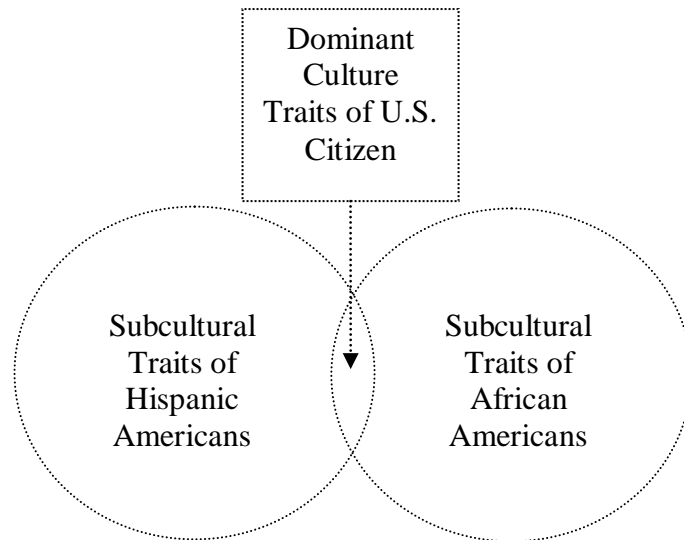
In the developed organization, group members would try to find people of similar self-identification, attitudes, communication methods, shared values, shared experiences, personal characteristics, social and economical status and educational background and gather them together (Schein, 1985). This is the so-called small group or sub-group. When these sub-groups are formed for some time they will have a different history from

the large group and develop a culture belonging to them. This is called subculture in comparison with organizational culture in general (Schein, 1985). As cited by Chang et al. (2005), Trice and Beyer (1993) argue that subculture has the same happenings of the main culture, but different settings in ideology and culture form.

In the same sense, Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) add that the members of a specific subculture possess beliefs, values and customs that set them apart from other members of the same society. Figure 2.1 depicts a simple model of the relationship between two subcultural groups (i.e., Hispanics Americans and African Americans) and the larger or “more general” culture (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). They argue that each subculture has its own unique traits, yet both groups share the dominant traits of the overall American culture.

Further argument as quoted by Chang et al. (2005) mentioned that Trice (1993) claims that the forming of subculture originated from different interactions. Organization members utilize interactions to disperse individual experiences. Through the interactions of the group, different people’s experience and individual characteristics are combined. During the combination process, individuals seek someone highly matched to them in order to form a subgroup or small group together. Schein (1985) believes the subgroup could form a common history through a certain time development, by sharing experiences, attitudes, communication methods and individual personalities, and in-doing so, give birth to subculture.

Figure 2.1: Relationship between Culture and Subculture



Source: Adapted from Schiffman and Kanuk (2007), p. 408.

Subcultures form in non-systematic groups such as parties and allies or systematic groups such as departments and management levels. To define those groups, there are subjective standards such as gender, age, race, education background, life background and social and economic status and objective standards such as attitudes, perception, ideology, interests, hobbies and individual characteristics (Chang et al. 2005). Trice (1993) argues that cohesion could tell the strength of subculture. There are three factors of cohesion: different interaction methods, shared experience and similar personal characteristics.

Van Mannen and Bailey (1981), as quoted by Chang et al. (2005), argue that subculture has six characteristics in functionality: 1) Similar perception, 2) Participating in the group, 3) Abnormal emotional demands, 4) Favourable self and social image, 5)

Extension of daily life, and 6) Sense of national superiority. In a highly developed multi-culture, the partial reason for subculture to exist is that the background and functionality of members are different (Schein, 1985). Therefore, subculture is a part of society. With self-identification, some people share criteria, values, beliefs and attitudes that are obviously different from the larger society (Sung, 1997). Subculture is a set of special values formed by the sub-society or sub-group members in a large social group. As quoted by Chang (2005), He (1985) observes that these characteristics form a set of values, attitudes and social forms different from the mainstream culture of the larger society. In any society, the generation of subculture is a common phenomenon. The reason is that different classes, professions, religions, races, regions, genders, social groups, parties and ages will have different modes of culture interaction between groups, and naturally form their own partisan culture characteristics (Sung, 1997).

a. Age Subculture

Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) believe that it is not difficult to understand why each major age sub grouping of the population might be thought of as a separate subculture. They argue that an important shift occurs in an individual's demand for specific types of products and services as he or she goes from being a dependent child to a retired senior citizen. The subcultures represent diversified needs of consumers that have received increasing attention in recent research (Kim et al., 2008). Extensive previous literature in consumer behaviour directs its focus towards four main age groups, moving from youngest to oldest: Generation Y, Generation X, baby boomers and seniors. These four age segments have been singled out in Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) because their distinctive lifestyles qualify them for consideration as subcultural groups.

Generation Y also known as “echo boomers” and “the millennium generation” can be divided into three sub segments: Gen Y adults (age 19-24); Gen Y teens (age 13-18) and Gen Y kids or “tweens” (age 8-12) (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). This age cohort (Generation Y) is often described as pragmatic, savvy, socially and environmentally aware and open to new experience. On the other hand, the age group of Generation X, often referred as Xers, busters or slackers, is aged between 23 to 37 years old. Members of Generation X often pride themselves on their sophistication. They do not like labels, are cynical and do not want to be singled out and marketed to.

Marketers have also found baby boomers a particularly desirable target audience where they are in the broad age category that extends from mid-40s to mid-60s (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). Baby boomers tend to be motivated consumers. Lastly, the senior category ranges from 57 to 67 years old. Driving the growth of the elderly population is based on three factors: declining birth-rate, the aging of the huge baby boomer segments and improved medical diagnoses and treatment (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007). Noble et al. (2000) argue that Gen Yers, Gen Xers and baby boomers differ in their purchasing behaviour, attitudes towards brands and behaviour towards advertisements. To sum up, Gen Yers, Gen Xers and baby boomers differ in their purchasing behaviour, technology, attitudes towards price-quality and brands, and behaviour towards advertisement. Table 2.1 captures some of the differences among these age cohorts (Noble and Noble, 2000). For the purpose of the present study, the researcher focuses on Gen Y teens or adolescents between the ages of 16 to 19 years old.

Table 2.1: Comparison of Selected Age Cohorts across Marketing-Related Issues

Themes	Generation Y	Generation X	Boomers
Purchasing behaviour	Savvy, pragmatics	Materialistic	Narcissistic
Coming of age technology	Computer in every home	Microwave in every home	Television in every home
Price-quality attitude	Value-oriented: weighted price-quality relationships	Price oriented: concerned about the cost of individual items	Conspicuous consumption: buying for indulgence
Attitude towards brands	Brand embracing	Against branding	Brand loyal
Behaviour towards advertisements	Rebel against hype	Rebel against hype	Respond to image-building type

Source: Nobel and Nobel (2000), p. 294.

2.2.1 Subculture and Consumption

The foundational subcultures literature has not gone uncriticized. Thornton (1997) opines that "the prefix 'sub,' which ascribes a lower or secondary rank to the entity it modifies, gives us a clue to one of the main assumptions of [the subcultures'] tradition of scholarship – namely, that the social groups investigated in the name of "subcultures" are "subordinate", "subaltern" or "subterranean" or are "deviant", "debased", "illegitimate" or of lower socioeconomic status. Transactional anthropologist Hannerz (1992) asserts that the term "sub" introduces a range of ambiguities. Is a subculture "simply a segment of a larger culture", or is it something subordinate to a dominant culture, or is it something subterranean and rebellious, or is it substandard, qualitatively inferior? "While the first of these alternatives is undoubtedly the most solidly established in academic discourse, all the others have a way of sneaking into more

popular usage, and at least as overtones, with a great potential for confusing issues” (Hannerz 1992, p. 69).

While Hannerz (1992) considers the subterranean, rebellious, and substandard inferences of the term unwelcome connotations. Thornton (1997) indicates that these are underlying main assumptions of this tradition of scholarship. Although subcultures can be studied as non deviant phenomenon, the vast majority of subculture studies tend to examine issues of deviance, often through celebrating “the intrinsic worth of groups otherwise vilified” (Slack and Whitt 1992, p. 578). Regarding the term “subculture”, Nelson, Treichler, and Grossberg (1992, p. 8) suggest that the term has sometimes been overextended. Whereas earlier cultural studies in Britain focused on cultures that, at that time, possessed “sufficient experiential and social depth and stylistic coherence to become a way of life”, they assert that researchers need to be more reflective in their use of the term and to avoid “granting subcultural status to what are essentially American leisure activities” (Nelson et al. 1992, p. 8).

Schouten and McAlexander (1995) define subculture of consumption as a distinctive subgroup of society that self-selects on the basis of a shared commitment to a particular product class, brand, or consumption activity. The characteristics of a subculture of consumption include an identifiable, hierarchical social structure, unique ethos or set of shared beliefs and values; and unique jargon, rituals and modes of symbolic expression (Schouten and Mc Alexander, 1995). Helene de Burgh and Jan Brace (2007) list eight attributes of subcultures of consumption. They are socially oriented but social dynamics focus frequently on consumption, commodity based, operates within mainstream norms, globally practised, participants communicate via many means, activity requires

commercial context, activity is dominated by commercial interest and draws from a limited variety of inspiration.

Prior ethnographies of self-selecting or achieved subcultures reveal glimpses of characteristics that make such groups especially intriguing to consumer researchers and marketers. Such a subculture typically encounters in certain products or activities cultural meanings that ultimately become articulated as unique, homologous styles or ideologies of consumption (Hedgide, 1979; Kinsey, 1982; Schwendinger and Schwendinger, 1985). Sub culturally created styles may be shared or imitated by a much larger audience or market peripheral to the core subculture (Fox 1989; Klein 1985) and many even become imitated and commercialized for mass consumption (Blair and Hatala 1991; Fox 1987; Gottdiener 1985; McCracken 1986; Schwendinger and Schwendinger 1985).

Hard-core or high-status members of achieved subcultures function as opinion leaders (Fox, 1987). Sub culturally created styles may be shared or imitated by a much larger audience or market peripheral to the core subculture (Fox, 1987; Klein, 1985) and may even become imitated and commercialized for mass consumption (Blair and Hatala, 1991; Fox, 1987; Gottdiener, 1985; McCracken, 1986; Schwendinger and Schwendinger, 1985). For instance, Fox (1987) in her study of a punk subculture, elaborates on a simple concentric structure based on the outward level of commitment to the punk ideology. Hard-core punks, for example, were at the core (or top) of the local hierarchy, due to their radically altered appearance, drug use and presumed adherence to punk's norms.

Schouten and McAlexander's study (1995) study of Harley Davidson's subculture of consumption, with higher status conferred on senior members who participate heavily in biker activities and those who display visible indicators of commitment such as tattoos, club clothing and motorcycle adornment. Finally, certain achieved subcultures have been observed to transcend national and cultural boundaries (Stratton, 1985), demographic cohorts (Pearson, 1987), racial or ethnic differences (Klein, 1985) and class differences (Harris, 1985) in their scope and influence.

2.3 Theoretical Relationship between Variables

In the present study, the research addresses and elaborates on the consumption implications of three theoretical aspects of subcultural consumption explored in past consumer research: shared ethos, boundary maintenance and hierarchical structure based on members' demonstrated commitment (Kates, 2002). Traditionally, subculture was conceptualized as a way of life expressing shared meanings and practices different from or oppositional to dominant, mainstream culture. Brake (1985) notes that subcultures invent and inscribe widely recognized and easily interpretable consumer signs and style with commonly understood oppositional meanings. Subculture style "indicates which symbolic group one belongs to, it demarcates that group from the mainstream, and it makes an appeal to an identity outside that of a class ascribed one" (Brake, 1985, p.13).

First, it requires reconsideration of the relationship between consumption and a subculture's internal ethos (i.e., shared cultural meanings that constitute the subculture). Previous studies on subcultures of consumption, mainly on American popular culture (e.g., Fox, 1987; Klien, 1986; Schouten and McAlexander, 1995), portray subcultures as

a relatively seamless configuration of compatible cultural meanings. For example, Klein (1986) describes the bodybuilding subculture's meanings of machismo and strength, while Schouten and McAlexander (1995) portray the Harley Davidson subculture as a composite of machismo, freedom and American patriotism, values associated with conventional American society but magnified in subcultural ethos.

Second, Brake's assertion above about subcultural demarcation is implicit in influential studies within the consumer research literature (e.g., Belk and Costa, 1998; Celsi et al. 1993; Kozinets, 2001; Schouten and McAlexander, 1995). To varying degrees, these studies emphasize the reflexive, oppositional characteristics of subcultures (i.e., American popular culture), the way members use product (e.g., caps, clothing and etc.) to demonstrate acceptable behaviour to the desired groups (e.g., Harley Davidson motorcyclist group), and the way these meanings are expressed in consumption practices. Yet the strict delineations associated with boundary-maintenance activities are challenged by Fine and Kleinman (1979), who critique the influential structuralist assumption that assigns distinctive cultural meanings to a geographically and demographically delineated community that reproduces its norms and traditions over time, similarly ethnic subculture (see Bouchet, 1995).

Thorton (1995) discussed the division between subculture (e.g., American popular culture) and mainstream, noting that maintaining this division is the consumers' way of creating discursive distance between themselves and the larger social world of media, parents and middle-class sensibilities while claiming adult status. Thorton's account of young rave consumers also demonstrates the ways that media, far from being oppositional to subcultural activity, are instrumental to its formation and maintenance. Similarly, Kozinets (2001) emphasizes the critical role of media for disseminating and

institutionalizing consumption meanings. Consumers' and marketers' actions render these boundaries transient, permeable and mutable, serving as interactive processes between the subculture (e.g., American popular culture) and the so-called external or dominant society (see Barth, 1969; Costa and Bamossy, 1995).

Finally, theory offers insights into the hierarchical structure of many subcultures. Fox (1987), in her study of a punk subculture (one of Americanized subculture), elaborates on a simple concentric structure based on the outward level of commitment to the punk ideology. Hard-core punks, for example, were at the core (or top) of the local hierarchy, due to their radically altered appearance, drug use and presumed adherence to punk's norms. This hierarchy is explicitly echoed in Schouten and McAlexander (1995) studied the Harley Davidson's subculture of consumption, with higher status conferred on senior members who participate heavily in biker activities and those who display visible indicators of commitment such as tattoos, club clothing and motorcycle adornment. These studies impose etic labels (such as "core" or "authentic"), suggesting that subcultural structure is objectively based on uncontested criteria (e.g., adherence to appearance norms) without considering the possibility that structure might be fluid, contested or negotiated. Therefore, one may well challenge the assumption of an unproblematic status hierarchy created through demonstrating conformity and commitment.

In addressing questions of subculture hierarchy and authenticity, Thornton (1995) raises the issue of localized cultural capital in her study of rave goers. Framing subculture as contested spaces where young people vie for status and position, she conceptualizes subcultural capital as a local variant of capital confined to an alternative social space or hierarchy (see Holt, 1998). However, Thornton's study was based on a popular leisure

activity among youth, leaving open the question of how status is negotiated through consuming in a more oppositional and historical minority-based subculture. Further, she does not address the question of how subcultural capital is unevenly distributed among insiders, leading to distinctive consumption practices. Despite the extensive work on subcultures in and out of the consumer research discipline, the component of American popular culture (subculture) remains largely under research. Therefore, in this present study special attention is given to the development of newly constructed American popular culture measurement and its effect on selected areas of consumer behaviour as well as investigating the moderating effects.

2.4 Popular Culture

In this section, the definition, manifestation, areas of popular culture and its relevance in adolescents' lives will be discussed. It is important to understand the origin and development of popular culture and cultural theory among practitioners and academicians. Therefore, this section explores critical and cultural theory to provide a grounded, yet accessible definition of popular culture. This section will begin by providing basic definitions of culture and popular culture exploration in American cultural and adolescent consumer studies.

2.4.1 Definition of Popular Culture

Many attempts have been made by cultural and critical theorists (Morrell, 2002; Adorno and Horkheimer, 1999; Docker, 1994; Hall, 1998; McCarthy, 1998; Storey, 1998; Williams, 1995, 1998) to define popular culture. These theorists saw popular culture as a site of struggle between the subordinate and the dominant groups in society. Popular

culture, they argue, is not an imposed mass culture or people's culture, it is more a terrain of exchange between the two. The texts and practices of popular culture move within what Gramsci (1971) calls compromise equilibrium. Those who look at popular culture from its perspective see it as a terrain of ideological struggle expressed through music, film, mass media, artefacts, language, customs and values.

Storey (1998) provides six definitions of popular culture that will be used in later analyses:

- a. Popular culture is culture that is well liked by many people;
- b. Popular culture is what is left over after we have decided what high culture (the notion of popular culture as substandard culture);
- c. Popular culture is mass culture;
- d. Popular culture is that culture which originates from the people,
- e. Popular culture is inspired by the neo-Gramscian hegemony theory.
- f. Popular culture can be viewed through the lens of postmodernism, which no longer recognizes the distinction between high and popular culture.

McCarthy (1998) defined popular culture as, "the historically grounded experiences and practices of oppressed women and men and the processes by which these experiences and practices come to be represented, reconstructed, and reinvented in daily life, in school, in the workplace, and in the news media" (p. 38). Mowen and Minor (1998) quoted that popular culture or pop culture is the vernacular (people's) culture that prevails in a modern society.

Table 2.2: Definitions of Popular Culture

Authors	Definitions
Storey (1998)	Six suggested definitions of popular culture: 1. Popular culture is culture that is well liked by many people. 2. Popular culture is what is left over after we have decided what is high culture (the notion of popular culture as substandard culture). 3. Popular culture is mass culture. 4. Popular culture is that culture which originates from the people. 5. Popular culture is inspired by neo-Gramscian hegemony theory. 6. Popular culture can be viewed through the lens of postmodernism, which no longer recognizes the distinction between high and popular culture.
Mowen and Minor (1998)	Popular culture or pop culture is the vernacular (people's) culture that prevails in a modern society.
McCarthy (1998)	Popular culture is define as the historically grounded experiences and practices of oppressed women and men and the processes by which these experiences and practices come to be represented, reconstructed, and reinvented in daily life, in school, in the workplace, and in the news media.
Flint (1999)	Popular culture is defined as the normative values and beliefs that are available for the general mass of people on local, national or global scale.
Harper (2000)	Popular culture is that which is “in”, contemporary and has the stamp of approval of young people.
Storey (2009)	Simply culture that is widely favoured or well-liked by many people.

Another researcher Harper (2000) simply defines popular culture as that which is “in”, contemporary and has the stamp of approval of young people. The culture dictates what become the shared norms that provide young people “with a deep sense of belonging and often with a strong preference for behaving in certain ways” (p. 2). It is “psycho-socio-cultural” in that its primary elements involve the reciprocal interaction of

individual, social and cultural forces (Harper, 2000). Flint (1999) defines popular culture as the normative values and beliefs that are available for the general mass of people on local, national or global scale. Several attempts have been made to define the construct. The recent popular culture definition by Storey (2009) defined popular culture as simply culture that is widely favoured or well-liked by many people. Table 2.2 summarises a few scholars' attempt to define popular culture.

‘From the overview of the previous literature on the construct discussed above, the present study has conceptually defined popular culture as: *“Popular culture is that which is “in”, contemporary and has the stamp of approval of young people”*. Specifically, the conceptual definition mentioned above was adopted from Harper (2000) (please refer Table 2.2).

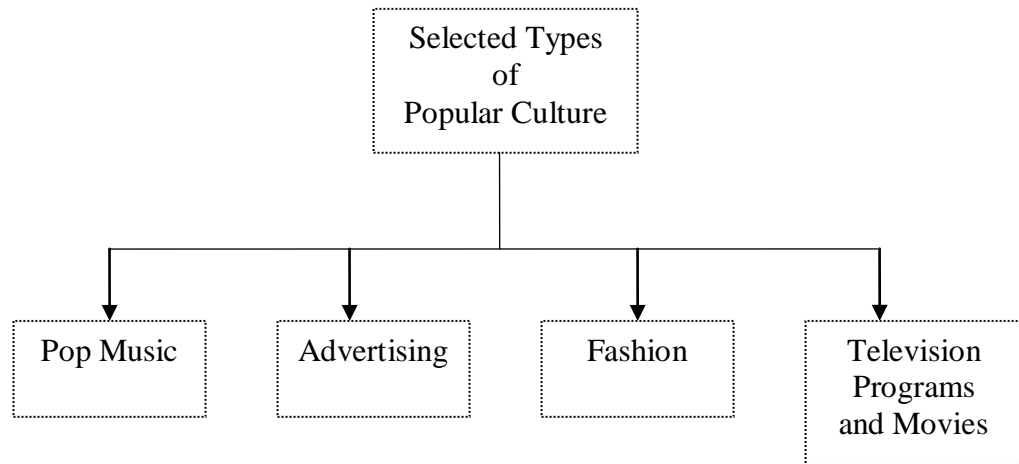
2.4.2 Types of Popular Culture

In this sub section, we will discuss several types of popular culture such as pop music, advertising, fashion, television and cinema (refer to Figure 2.2) as highlighted by Strinati (2004) and Mowen and Minor (1998).

a. Pop Music

Pop music with its mass production for a predominantly youth market, is an important sphere for the consumption of popular culture (Hogg and Banister, 2000). Mowen and Minor (1998) believe that “music also shapes popular culture” (p. 578). Popular music always has been and remains preoccupied with love and sex (Brown et al., 2002).

Figure 2.2
Selected Types of Popular Culture



Sources: Adapted from Strinati (2004).

According to a survey by Roberts (2000), 8 to 18 year olds spend on average 6 to 7 hours a day with some form of mass media. More portable and teen-focused media such as music and magazines are most appealing to older teens who listen to music even more frequently than they watch television – on average more than 20 hours per week, via radio, compact disks or tapes. Stewart et al. (2003) believe that the combined elements of frequent exposure, repetition, heavy interest among adolescents and the sociocultural power of music itself make popular music a potentially strong influence on our gender identities.

Pop music with its mass production for a predominantly youth market, is an important sphere for the consumption of popular culture (Hogg and Banister 2000). Adolescence is the period of growth between childhood and adulthood with music functioning as “an important part of adolescent culture” (Shuker 1994). Pop music is a cultural space that belongs predominantly to young people (McRobbie 1995; Thornton 1995) and where they have historically been the major consumers. Pop music is viewed as an avenue for

creative expression and excitement, which is not available within the confines of home and school (Lull 1992).

Earlier research has shown that music is important for two main reasons: "It is a means by which youth groups defame themselves and a source for determining and achieving group status" (Frith 1978, p. 46 viewed in Hogg and Banister 2000, p.1). Adolescents are thus active in the production and consumption of meaning from pop star imagery, which supports McCracken's observation (1986), that the consumer (denoted by McCracken as the 'viewer/reader') "is the final author [and]...essential participant in the process of meaning transfer" (p. 75) (see also Williamson 1978). The consumption of pop music embraces the purchase of recorded music, attendance at live performances, watching music videos, listening to the radio and the making of tape compilations. There are also secondary levels of involvement which include the reading of the music press, dancing (clubs and discos) and concert going (Shuker 1994). Another researcher, Englis et al. (1993) regard music television as a significant force in popular culture that is a hybrid of several entertainment and commercial forms of communication.

In another aspect, both commercial and editorial formats employ role models who embody characteristics calculated to engender identification in the audience. However, the stylistic accoutrements of these role models may influence the audience by delivering strong explicit messages (Solomon and Englis, 1993). Thus, the heroes of popular culture seen on television, in movies, or on stage may become icons of style, for example, Madonna's use of lingerie as outerwear, and thereby provide the prototypes that consumers strive to emulate (Englis et. al., 1993).

From a development viewpoint, researchers have to ask for reasons why adolescents like to listen to music, to be more precise, popular music, not classical music. This issue has been addressed by Thompson (1993) and further discussed by Christenson and Roberts (1998). Thompson comes to the conclusion that “unfortunately there is little empirical evidence on which to answer the issue” (p. 411). However, one can nevertheless summarize that two dimensions to an answer have been suggested. First dimension is sensation seeking. In the same sense, Christenson and Roberts (1998) highlighted mood management in their music research.

Boehnke et al. (2002) argue that current popular music, especially in its “hardest” varieties, tends to be something that parents do not like and thereby may give adolescents a chance to form an identity of their own. The main explanation of why adolescents listen to music (sensation seeking) is potentially unrelated to developmental aspirations (unless one wants to postulate that adolescence is a life phase where people need more “good feelings” than in other life phases). The second answer, however, seems to be clearly related to development. Adolescents may use popular music as a tool to enhance intergenerational distinction in a life phase where identity formation is an essential task (Boehnke et al., 2002).

Raviv (1996) believes the special importance in youth culture is the music comprises of those singers and/or bands that are seen to represent symbols. They become alternative figures of identification in the youth culture, and become the objects of idolization, worship, and imitation. The study of adolescents' idolization of pop singers, thus, is not only a study of youth culture, but also of the psychological processes characteristic of adolescence.

Raviv (1996) shows that idolization changes with age and is dependent on gender. First, it was found that idolization of singers' decreases with age, and second, it is more prevalent among girls than among boys. Also, the results show that while both male and female adolescents aged 16-17 idolize male singers (over 80%), at the earlier age, there are some differences. At age 10-11, girls tend overwhelmingly (about 85%) to idolize female singers and boys have a slight preference for male singers (about 58%), whereas at age 13-14, about half of the responding girls and about 75% of the responding boys idolize male singers.

b. Advertising

Advertising becomes popular culture when its images, themes and icons are embraced by the mass public (Mowen and Minor, 1998). In the same sense, Stewart et al. (2003) claim that research has demonstrated that people are influenced by the images portrayed in magazine advertising. According to a similar study done by Lafky et al. (1996) cited by Stewart et al. (2003), high school students who view advertisements with stereotypical images of women were more likely to transfer these perceptions to a "neutral" photograph. The research also found that even brief exposure to a limited role portrayal may influence a person's subsequent perceptions.

The academic literature in advertising provides ample evidence of the positive effects of using celebrities on both advertisements and brand evaluations (Ohanian, 1990). A widely accepted explanation for celebrity endorsers' effects has been that celebrities bring credibility to advertising messages (Choi and Rifon, 2007). Advertisers are well aware of the positive influence that celebrities can bring to a persuasive message;

approximately 25 percent of all United States television commercials feature celebrities (Shimp, 2000).

Advertisements are considered to be persuasive communications that emanate from several sources (Choi and Rifon, 2007). The model introduced by McCracken (1989) suggests that advertising is a way of distributing and enhancing the meanings perceived to reside in celebrities in the consumer world. Choi and Rifon (2007) argue that when celebrities are hired as endorsers in advertising, marketers hope that consumers accept and consume the meanings celebrity endorsers represent and link these meanings with their products. Choi and Rifon (2007) further argue that in today's society, consumers are constantly transporting symbolic properties out of products into their lives to construct their self.

Another scholar, Englis et al. claim that advertising targeted at teens and young adults often reflects the artistic impact of music television. Furthermore, the researcher also mentioned that commercials seen on music television often show the same performers explicitly promoting products. The study quoted the example of Michael and Janet Jackson and Madonna who star in several soft-drink commercials that are aired on MTV. Such commercials directly link a group or performer with a specific product, and these advertisements are structurally similar to music videos. Pepsi also directly adapted lyrics and exceptional style from a Van Halen video in its launch of Crystal Pepsi (Englis et al., 1993). Recently, J.W. Thomson, a major advertising agency in United States adopted the song by Akon (famous American R&B singer-song writer and rapper) in launching their Pepsi Football African 2010 commercial featuring all top football stars (i.e. Lionel Messi, Ricardo Kaka, Didier Drogba, Frank Lampard, and

Thierry Henry) in conjunction to Football World Cup 2010 in South Africa (J.W. Thomson official website).

In the Malaysian context, many multinational companies capitalized on local celebrities as their products' spokesperson. Even the style portrayed by a performer may unintentionally give rise to a marketable commodity. Madonna's early style led to several clothing lines that related to her "look". The pop-rock group New Kids On The Block, whose unique style has created a large demand for New Kids On The Block paraphernalia and licensed products (Englis, 1993).

According to related research done by Peirce (1990) it was found that the magazines most popular with adolescent girls are full of advertising and editorial copy about how to achieve the "look" that will attract the right kind of male. YM magazines (1998), one of the overseas magazines, for example, recruits readers by saying, "If you like finding out about yourself and guys and fashion and relationships and beauty...subscribe now" (p.17).

c. Fashion

Fashion is also regarded as one of the types of popular culture (Mowen and Minor, 1989). According to Zollo (1995a), some of the top reasons that make a brand a "cool brand" among teens are: "quality", "it's for people my age", "advertising", "if cool friends or peers use it" and "if cool celebrity uses it". Thus it appears that advertising, peers and celebrities/role models have the potential to contribute to brand choice among young people. Bao and Shao (2002) argue that teens want to be "cool" and "sweet", that is, they want to be exclusive and cutting edge in terms of fashion. An article by Scotti

(2000) titled, “The Same, Only Different” discussed youth culture phenomenon. She mentioned in his article that an overwhelming 45 percent teenagers like trying new products before they become popular. Scotti further argued that teens tend to be characterized by individual taste, style and attitude, e.g., body piercing (Bao and Shao, 2002).

Other fashion related activities such as tattooing and body piercing have become increasingly prevalent in popular culture over the last 30 years (Featherstone, 1999; Sweetman, 1999). Martin (1997) argues that adolescence is a time when a teenager finds that body modification becomes particularly appealing as adolescents struggle for identity and control over their changing bodies. Nevertheless, some assume that body piercing and tattoos are nothing more than fashion accessories (Craik, 1994). As mentioned earlier, fashion is one of the relevant sources of popular culture.

Past research also suggests that teenagers watch music videos to learn the latest fashions (Brown et al., 1986; Ledbetter, 1995; Bjurstrom, 1990). Thus, the heroes of popular culture seen on television, in movies, or on stage may become icons of style, as quoted by Englis et al., (1993), Madonna’s use of lingerie as outerwear provides the prototype that consumers strive to emulate. The researchers also reveal several differences in consumption imagery as a function of musical genre. As compared with other genre, dance music videos contain the most fashion-oriented imagery – including preference to and consumption activities involving clothing, jewellery, lingerie, hairstyle and make-up. Although dance videos contain a great deal of fashion-related products, they were lowest in brand appearances. Another related study, done by Hogg and Banister (2000), revealed that pop stars have the power to make certain looks popular and fashionable.

The researchers found that the imitation of fashion trends was an important instrument for meaning transfer from the pop stars to the adolescents.

Nearly half of the space of the popular magazines for teenage girls is devoted to advertisements, mostly for fashion and beauty products, and fashion/beauty is a prominent topic of the articles in these magazines as well (Evan et al., 1991). Magazines for adolescents' girls also provide abundant "information about boys and the intricacies of heterosexual relationships"; such relationships are the most common topic of feature articles in these magazines (Evans et al., 1991). Other related research done by Zollo (1995b) argued that girls rank magazines just after friends as the most important source of information on the latest trends, fashions and lifestyle choices and they often "shop print ads and editorial fashion photos as if they were catalogs".

From the review of the literature, no research has been conducted to relate American popular culture and fashion consciousness. Nevertheless, a number of studies try to link role model (American popular culture dimension) and fashion consciousness. Recently, Kavak and Gumusluoglu (2007) explored the segmentation for foreign and domestic food markets in Turkey, claim that fashion conscious people admire the West and see western products as being modern and fashionable (an act of being highly influenced by American popular culture). They argue that the respondents perceive those who prefer domestic products as traditional. Kavak and Gumusluoglu believe that the Turkish go to McDonald's not only for the product, but for its western and fashionable character (i.e., American popular culture). They further argue that McDonald's itself is the fashion for many Turkish individuals. Further discussion on the studies conducted pertaining to this issue will be highlighted later in this chapter.

d. Television Programmes and Movies

Mowen and Minor (1998) argue that “television does more to create popular culture than other medium” (p. 578). Indeed, Alley quoted by Inge (1989) proclaims that television has “become pre-eminently the popular culture and a primary purveyor of values and ideas” (p. 1368). Gen-Y has been heavily influenced by media, including movies and television (Bennett, 2006). Many elementary-school students spend more time watching television than they do sitting in a classroom (Brook-Gunn et al., 1979 cited in Stewart et al., 2003). Media consumes a large portion of the segments time, often between 33 and 38 hours per week (Henry J. Kaiser Foundation, 1999).

A related study done by Larson (1995), adolescents use television as a way of turning off the stressful emotions that have accumulated during the day. However, Cordiner (2001) argues that most adolescents are media-savvy and consume multiple forms of media. Many in this segment listen to music via the radio; have access to an average of 62 television channels and are frequent movie goers (Morton, 2002).

For the length of time that the young people watch television, the image they receive of male and females is out of the hands of parents or teachers and in the hands of scriptwriters and advertising agencies (Stewart et al., 2003). According to a similar study done by Strinati (2000), television determines what people think and what they do and thus controls them psychologically and socially. It is used by many adolescents as a way of diverting themselves from personal concerns with passive, distracting, undemanding entertainment (Larson, 1995).

A study by Roberts (2000) on United States youths' accessibility and exposure to the full array of media, as well as the social contexts in which media exposure occurs found that more than 97 percent of the homes represented in his study have televisions, VCRs and audio systems. He also found that 70 percent have video game players; and more than two-thirds have personal computers. Arnett (1995) argues that teenaged adolescents watch more movies than any other segment of the population. In the same sense, Englis et al. (1993) regard music television as a significant force in popular culture that is a hybrid of several entertainment and commercial forms of communication.

According to the article written by Weiss (2003) on Generation Y consumers, the MTV's researchers were shocked when they added up the hours and found that the average time totalled more than 24 hours a day. "Young people managed to squeeze 31 hours into a 24-hour period", says Betsy Frank, executive vice president of research and planning for MTV Network, New York. In the article written by Weiss (2003) quoted that Betsy Frank added the young people read magazine while watching television and going online. She mentioned further that young people are the masters of multitasking.

One good example of a popular movie or television programme is Star Trek. It is perhaps one of the great consumption phenomena in the year 1994. The science fiction series has been hailed as "the most successful and lucrative cult phenomenon in the television history" (Entertainment Weekly, 1994). Up to 2001, the original Star Trek television series (which ran from 1966 to 1969 and became enormously popular in syndication) has spawned four spin-off series and nine major motion pictures and it has accounted for billions of dollars in licensed merchandise revenues. Exemplifying a

cultural phenomenon, Star Trek fans run the gamut from commonplace mainstream viewers to highly devoted members of an alternative subculture (Kozinets, 2001).

The commercial and cultural impact of Star Trek demonstrates the important role that mass media images, objects and texts play in contemporary cultural life (Hirschman and Thompson, 1997; Kellner, 1995). It is also widely accepted that subculture provides influential meanings and practices that structure consumers' identities, actions and relationships (McCracken 1997; Schouten and McAlexander 1995; Thornton 1997). Previously, consumer researchers have studied mass media texts and influences (Hirschman and Thompson 1997; Holbrook and Hirschman 1993), cultural consumption meanings and practices (Holt 1997; Thompson and Haytko 1997) and consumption-related subcultures (Belk and Costa 1998; Schouten and McAlexander 1995). Another example of popular movies around year 2008 to 2010, for instance, Iron Man2, Transformers, The X-Man: Wolverine, The Karate Kid, The Twilight Saga: Eclipse and others. While the teen television drama series, for instance, Glee, The Vampire Diaries, Gossip Girl, True Blood and others have been the world greatest influence among teenagers consumers (TV Fanatic Website).

According to Peter Rice, the Fox Networks Group entertainment Chairman, United States claimed that in one year, Glee (television drama series) has transcended the television landscape and emerge as a global pop culture phenomenon (Hollywood Insider Website). The finale Glee lured nearly 11 million viewers and finished the year as the highest rated season-ender for all freshman series, according to preliminary ratings (Hollywood Insider Website). The Fox Network Group Entertainment also claimed that the finale Glee also represented the show's highest rated telecast without a lead-in from American Idol. All above mentioned popular movies and teen television

drama series are produced in United States. It is undeniable that all of the popular movies and television programs are heavily embedded with American lifestyle and culture. Therefore, the transmissions of American lifestyle and culture throughout the world using the medium of popular movies and television programs have become a source of popular culture among the teenagers.

2.4.3 American Popular Culture Construct

In this subsection, the researcher will discuss the definition of American popular culture and the dimensions involved in constructing the American popular culture variable.

a. Definition of American Popular Culture

Based on the previous discussion, popular culture comprises several elements (such as origin, penetrating effect throughout the world or widely liked by many people) and could be seen as people's culture in the modern society is associated with young people. Explicitly, the study defines American popular culture as the influence of popular culture originated from United States (Mowen and Minor, 1998) and has a penetrating effect throughout the world (Storey, 2009). Thus, American popular culture is how young people throughout the world being influence by popular culture from United States. Specifically, American popular culture construct is seen as being more than normative values and beliefs that is available for the general mass of people on local, national or global scale (Flint, 2000).

Therefore, the researcher has come to a conclusion for the conceptual definition of the American Popular Culture construct as: *"American popular culture is the influence of*

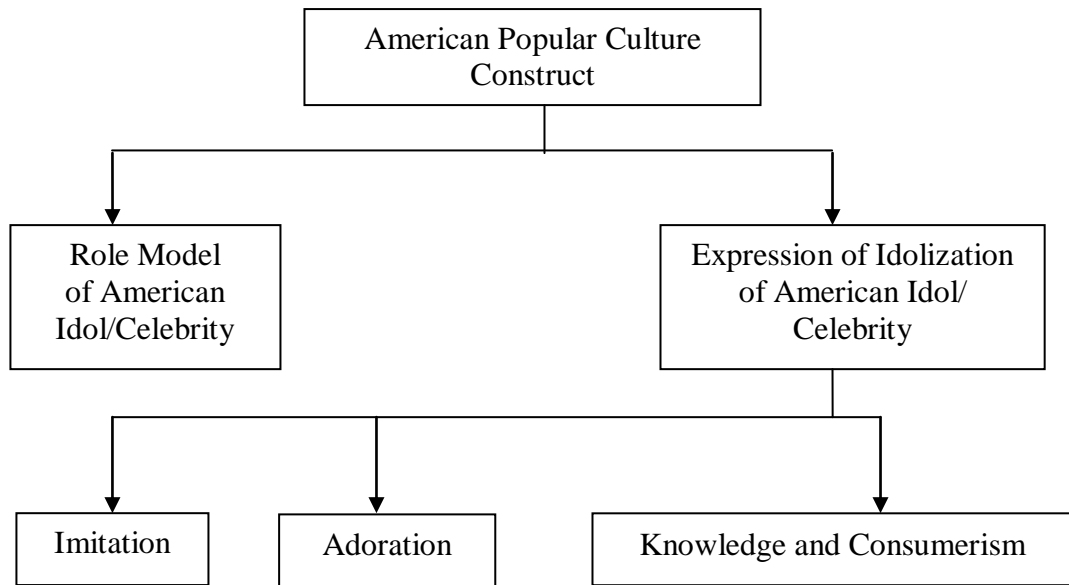
popular culture originated from United States and has a penetrating effect throughout the world”.

b. American Popular Culture Dimensions

Earlier, American Popular Culture was conceptualised as “the influence of popular culture originated from United States and has a penetrating effect throughout the world”. The meaning of popular culture used covers a set of generally available films, music records, clothes, television programmes, advertisements, etc. It involves dimensions of role modelling and expression of idolization (adapted from Raviv et al., 1996; Harper, 2000; Hogg and Banister 2000; Martin and Bush 2000; and Bush et al., 2004) as illustrated in Figure 2.3. The following sub section will elaborate the conceptual foundation of the role model, namely, consumer socialization or consumer modelling. It explores further American popular culture dimensions i.e., role model and expression of idolization.

Studies have revealed a significant effect of role model and idolizations phenomenon to adolescents’ consumption behaviour (Raviv, 1996; Hogg and Banister 2000; Martin and Bush, 2000 and Bush et al., 2004). Hogg and Banister (2000) discuss the movement of images and meanings from the culturally constituted world of young consumers aged 11 to 15 years old via a number of production subsystems in British music industry to pop stars. They also explore how these meanings and images are subsequently transferred to individual consumers. Based on the study’s findings, image encompassed a pop star's appearance, personality and lifestyle, and also included the sound or style of the music.

Figure 2.3
The Dimensions of American Popular Culture Construct



Sources: Adapted from various sources (i.e., Raviv et al. 1996; Harper 2000; Hogg and Banister 2000; Martin et al. 2000 and Bush et al., 2004).

In the same sense, a study by Martin and Bush (2000) examine the influence of role model on adolescent consumer purchase intentions and purchase behaviour. They suggested that the vicarious role models such as entertainers and athletes can be important influencers of teens' lifestyles and consumption patterns. In later study by Bush et al. (2004) examine that the effect of athlete role models on teenagers' purchase intentions and behaviours. They found that celebrity sports athletes have a positive influence on adolescents' favourable word-of-mouth and brand loyalty. This suggests those celebrity sports athletes are important to adolescents when they make brand choices and talk about these brand positively. Based on these findings, we would expect vicarious role models such as athletes to positively affect teens' intentions and behaviours.

Another study by Harper (2000) explores the aspects of youth popular culture. She argues that popular culture has aspects that cross racial, ethnic and geographical boundaries and while all youth do not behave or think in the exact same ways, many similarities suggest that the vast majority of adolescents fit somewhere within the mainstream of an American youth popular culture. She believes that hip-hop culture is America's dominant youth popular culture. Harper (2000) quoted that "something that's the whole culture, the whole picture of the movement which is the break dancing, the graffiti art, the rapping, the scratching, the deejaying, the style of dress, the lyrics, the way you look, the walk, it's all this combined...the attitude" (p. 5).

Later research by Raviv et al. (1997) examines the phenomenon of adolescent's idolization of pop singers believe that the special importance in youth culture is the music comprises of those singers and/or bands that are seen to represent symbols. They proposed that idolization of pop singers, in excess of the consumption of music and collection of basic information about it, which also reflects a normal appreciation of music, is based mostly on two important components: worship (adoration) and modelling. Raviv et al. (1997) define adoration (modelling) as an unusually intense admiration and reverence of an idol. This can be expressed in such behaviour as actively collecting information and artefacts related to the idol or trying to meet him/her personally. Raviv et al. (1997) then define modelling as the desire to be like an idol, which may involve imitation of the idolized figures by, for example, copying their dress, hairstyle, speech, activities, and any other social behavioural patterns. Based on the arguments above, we conclude that the dimension of role modelling and expression of idolization will help in explaining American popular culture construct.

i. Role Model as a Dimension of American Popular Culture

As mentioned earlier, this sub section will elaborate the conceptual foundation of the role model, namely, consumer socialization or consumer modelling. Consumer socialization or consumer modelling is the process by which “young people acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the marketplace” (Ward, 1974, p. 1). A socialization agent may be any person or organization directly involved with the individual. Socialization agents commonly used in the literature include parents, peers, mass media, school, and television viewing (Bush et al., 2004).

A multitude of studies has examined how individual consumers learn what to consume (Keillor *et al.*, 1996; Moschis and Churchill, 1978). The concept of consumer socialization has been utilized to determine, among other things, how consumers learn thought processes and consumption behaviour through modelling (Moschis and Churchill, 1978). Many of these studies are based on the foundation of social learning theory, which proposes that individuals learn general behaviour and attitudes from past experiences. Previous research has established that these learning experiences may be vicarious, indicating that consumers learn or model behaviour, values, attitudes, and skills through the observation of other individuals, or through observations of electronic or print media (Bandura, 1977).

Positive reinforcement from these outside individuals or media can reinforce preferences in deciding which behaviour, values, attitudes, and skills are appropriate or accepted in a social context (Mitchell *et al.*, 1979). Hence, previous research recognizes that people acquire a significant portion of their behavioural tendencies through the

observation and imitation of others in a social context (Bandura, 1986), and that these individuals are often considered role models (King and Multon, 1996).

Included in the social learning process is the more specific acquisition of consumption-related behaviour. Through exposure to social models, consumers acquire the knowledge, skills, and disposition needed to make purchase decisions (Ward, 1974). Role models can be anyone the individual consumer comes in contact with who potentially influences the consumer's consumption decisions (Bandura, 1977). From the above arguments, it is obvious that parents, teachers, peers, or relatives can all be considered as role models. In fact, many recent research studies have analyzed how parents and/or peers influence the consumption attitudes of individual consumers (Bush *et al.*, 1999; Carlson *et al.*, 1994; Keillor *et al.*, 1996; Laczniaik *et al.*, 1995).

Many research studies, however, have not specifically investigated the impact of role models with which the adolescent has little or *no direct* contact. A recent study examining the impact of role models on self-views of adolescents recognized that "individuals of outstanding achievement can serve as role models to others," motivating adolescents to adopt certain self-images and lifestyle patterns (Lockwood and Kunda, 1997, p. 91). Included in this category of role models would be models from electronic or print media that influence consumer consumption attitudes and patterns without ever directly contacting or meeting adolescents. These role models are the *vicarious* role models acknowledged by Bandura (1986). Thus, a role model for an adolescent can be anyone the individual comes in contact with, either directly or *indirectly*, that potentially can influence the individual's consumption decisions (Bandura, 1977). However, for the purpose of the current study the role model for adolescents focuses on singers or music bands.

Englis et al. (1993) believe that icons of American popular culture are ubiquitous throughout the world. In the recent study by Hogg and Banister (2000) they argue that one of the most important instruments for the transferral of meaning and imagery from the pop star to adolescents is fan behaviour, i.e., being a fan involves liking, fancying or being influenced by the pop group, but does not require liking all the songs in the album. One of the most important developmental challenges of adolescence, from the perspective of most developmental psychologists, is the identity formation, the cultivation of a conception of one's values, abilities and hopes for the future (Arnett, 1995). Hogg and Banister (2000) support the argument saying that media represents the other important system in the construction and transfer of meaning and images.

Numerous studies mention that gender role identity is an important aspect of identity formation, and one for which adolescents especially make use of media (Steele and Brown, 1995; Greenberg et al., 1992; Arnett, 1995). While, another related study done by Frith (1987) claims that teenagers tend to consume conspicuously, particularly pop music, as a means of expressing their identity. Besides, adolescents also take ideals of what it means to be a man or a woman partly from the media, which present physical and behavioural gender ideals in images through music (Ackerman, 1997), movies (Greenberg et al., 1986), television (Brown et al., 1990; Hogg and Banister, 2000) and magazines (Denski, 1992 in Hogg and Banister, 2000; Evan et al., 1991). Girls who are just beginning to gain sexual and romantic experience are especially fascinated by media depictions of male-female relationships (Steele and Brown, 1995).

Adolescents use the information provided in the media to learn sexual and romantic scripts (Brown et al., 1990). For both girls and boys, gender, sexuality and relationships are central to the kind of identity exploration and identity building for which

adolescents use media (Ward, 1995). A qualitative research done by Brown (1993) found that more mature girls actively sought out information about sexuality in the media, sometimes plastering their walls with images of male media stars and female models whose “look” they wanted to emulate. Girls who had more actual experience in heterosexual relationships were more critical of the image of women and relationships offered by the mainstream media. Roe (1995) calls this phenomenon as socially disvalued media, such as heavy metal music and comic books with female heroines, to find what they considered to be more authentic images.

This argument is supported by findings from the survey done by Princeton Survey Research Association (1996). The survey finds that the frequency and consistency of sexual portrayals across the media adolescents attend to and the relationship reticences of other sources of information suggest that the media could be important sex educators. The survey revealed further that teens claim that they would prefer to get sexual information from their parents, but more than half of the adolescents report that they have learned about pregnancy and birth control from television and movies, and more than half of teen girls say they learned about sex from magazines. Other related studies done by Brown (1993) and the Kaiser Family Foundation (1996) reveal that older teens have a better understanding of and feel more comfortable with televised sexual innuendoes than younger teens. While Thompson (1993) finds that girls tend to use the media to learn about interpersonal relationships more than boys do.

A longitudinal study conducted by Robinson et al. (1998) on 14 and 15 year old adolescents’ finds that for every extra hour per day the adolescents spend watching music videos, they are 31% more likely to begin drinking alcohol during the next 18 months. An extra hour of regular television viewing increases their chances of drinking

by nearly 10%. Young people who are already leaning towards riskier behaviour, such as music videos that portray and sometimes glamorize such behaviour and in the process have their emerging attitudes and behaviour reinforced. Studies also suggest that even those who are not seeking such lifestyles may be influenced by the ubiquitous and apparently normal use of alcohol in most media content (Brown et al, 2002). Stewart et al. (2003) also quotes that the research literature on female images in rock music and other popular music forms reveals mainly negative stereotypes of women. In general, role portrayals are highly stereotypical; women are wives, sweethearts, mothers or wicked witches (Stewart et al., 2003). These stereotypical images of females can be found in all areas of popular music; including pop, country and rock.

The effect on children of television portrayals of violence has been the most extensively studied health issue in mass communication research (Brown et al., 2002). The author added that the social scientific evidence investigating the effect of the media on adolescents' health is more robust for some health issues and some media than others. Although a great deal of research has been conducted over the past 40 years on the effect of televised violence on aggressive behaviour, we have only a few studies that have investigated the impact of any of the media on youth suicides or illicit drug use (Brown et al., 2002).

A study by Comstock et al. (1990) suggests that 5% to 15% of violent behaviour in the United States can be attributed to television viewing. The extensive research done in investigating the impact of television on the young generation shows consistent accumulating evidence that these portrayals and images do have an effect on those who read, view and listen to them. Adolescents come to the media with individual characteristics and from families and communities that already have pushed them in

certain directions and that have provided models of healthy and unhealthy behaviour (Brown et al., 2002).

In a recent study conducted by Hogg and Banister (2000), image represented a major influence on consumption decisions, both in the choice of pop stars and music. Based on the study's findings, image encompassed a pop star's appearance, personality and lifestyle, and also included the sound or style of the music. As indicated by one of their respondents, *"It's looks and personality, reputation as well"* (Rosie, 15). Another respondent in the study indicated that the perceptions of image was not restricted to visual elements but extended to the behaviour, attitude and personality of pop stars: *"Sometimes it's their attitude that puts you off, say with Oasis"* (Beccy, 15). Certain messages about pop stars are communicated through looks; which attracted both positive and negative comments: *"They [Oasis] do good music, but he's got all druggy eyes, he's got them horrible glasses, he never shaves."* (Vallis, 14).

Of the visual aspects, physical attractiveness and dress sense were particularly important: *"I think that most bands get where they are today because of their looks and dress sense, more than their singing or dancing really."* (Beccy, 15). Whilst good looks were generally important for the artists' success they were often not sufficient by themselves. Musical talent was also necessary to ensure success: *"..if you are just good looking and you are not very good [as] a singer, you are not going to make it."* (Ricardo, 14). The role of imagery in pop star success confirmed earlier research (Buxton 1983; Denski, 1992 in Hogg and Banister, 2000).

According to Solomon and Englis (1993), both commercial and editorial formats employ role models who embody characteristics calculated to engender identification in

the audience. However, the stylistic accoutrements of these role models may influence the audience as strongly as the explicit messages they deliver (Solomon and Englis, 1993). Teen marketing experts claim that adolescents admit that advertising is a more important trend source than DJs, VJs, movies, celebrities or the coolest (Zollo, 1995).

Brown et al. (2002) argue the need to investigate the possibility of restricting alcohol and tobacco advertising in venues where children and teens congregate and also consider calling for a ban on lifestyle advertisement and celebrity endorsements, given that these appear to have a powerful appeal for teens. Based on the foregoing discussion, previous research shows that figures from advertisements are viewed as an important trend source. In other words, the heroes of popular culture seen on television, in movies or on stage may become icons of style and have a tremendous effect on the younger generation.

Brown et al. (2002) stressed the need to divert our attention to the array of media that our teens attend to other than television. The authors further argue that music, magazines, movies, video games and now the Internet are vital to the everyday lives of teens. Similar to other media, the Internet represents an agent of socialization, as well as providing teens with a new resource for fulfilling various needs. As the Internet rapidly penetrates American popular culture, it is important to understand how this new medium may affect adolescent allocation of time spent with other media, as well as how the Internet can be used to fulfil existing adolescent needs.

Magazines with a high degree of pop music content feature significantly in the respondents' reading habits. The main incentive to buy magazines is to find out information about pop stars and obtain posters to put on the wall. The purchase of

posters and sticking them to the wall are part of the “second stage of trajectory” in McCracken’s (1986, p.72) framework to conceptualize the process of meaning transfer of pop star imagery. Magazines are a medium where gender role identity formation is an especially common implicit theme, particularly in magazines for adolescent girls (Arnett, 1995).

Many adolescent heavy metal fans are inspired by the music and by their admiration for heavy metal stars to express an intention to pursue a career in music themselves (Arnett, 1991). In assembling materials towards identity formation, they may develop admiration for media stars. Decorating their bedroom walls with the images of stars who seem (to adults) to reject the values of the adult world, stars who may in fact reject the very idea of “growing up” to a responsible adulthood (Steele and Brown, 1995).

Studies suggest that teens are paying attention to these media messages and are applying them as their own bodies develop (Brown et al., 2002). Demographic differences in teens’ attitudes about weight correspond to media portrayals: Anglo and Hispanic girls are more likely than African-American girls or boys of all races to be concerned about their weight. Close to half (44%) of all female adolescents think they are overweight and 60% are actively trying to lose weight, although technically most are within normal weight ranges (Ozer, et al., 1998). Although an emphasis on fitness increased, between 1970 and 1990 in the teen girl *Seventeen* magazines, the body shape of models became more and more “linear” (Guillen, et al., 1994).

Although estimates vary widely, it is suspected that 0.5% to 3% of the general population and 4% to 22% of college-age females engage in anorexic or bulimic behaviour in an effort to be thin, and these proportions have increased as media women

have grown thinner over the past 30 years (Harrison, 1997). A national survey conducted in the United States found that of 1,200 children aged 10 to 17, 16% of girls and 12% of boys said they had dieted or exercised to look like a television character (Children Now, 1997).

Although boys may be increasingly affected by the portrayals of muscular men in the media (Katz, 1995), most research has focused on the effects of media portrayals on girls' eating and dieting habits. Numerous studies have demonstrated that exposure to thin-ideal media images is related to internalization of the thin ideal, body dissatisfaction and eating-disorder symptoms (Botta, 1999, 2000; Field, et al., 2001; Harrison, 2000; Hofschire, et al. 2002 and Stice, 1994). The effects are stronger when girls personally identify with the thin models (Harrison, 1997). Experimental work shows that exposure to thin media models can have immediate effects on young women's perceptions of and satisfaction with their own bodies (Meyers, et al. 1992; Sumner et al., 1993).

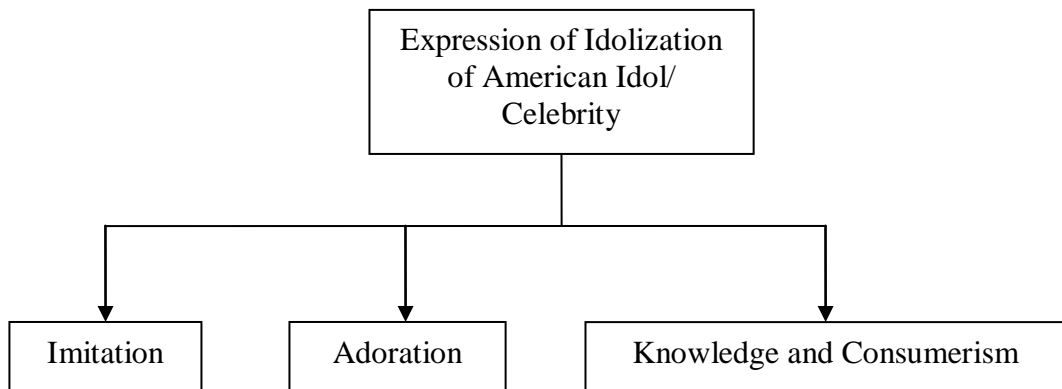
In a recent and related study by Brown, et al. (2002), they quoted a study on the etiology of severe eating disorders that shows that these are complicated illnesses unlikely to be caused solely by observation of thin media models. But it is reasonable to believe that many teens are affected by the unrealistic images of women's and increasingly men's bodies promoted by the media.

ii. Expression of Idolization as a Dimension of American Popular Culture

Dimension

In the previous subsection, the researcher has illustrated role modelling and expression of idolization as dimensions of the American popular culture construct. In this subsection, the researcher will discuss further the sub dimensions of expression of idolization (one of American popular culture dimension). As seen in Figure 2.4, expression of idolization is further explained by three sub dimensions, i.e., imitation, adoration and knowledge and consumerism (adapted from Raviv et al. 1996).

Figure 2.4
Expression of Idolization Dimensions of American Popular Culture Construct



Source: Adapted from Raviv et al. (1996).

Raviv et al. (1996) argue that the phenomenon of idolization is a special characteristic of early adolescence. The objects of idolization come from various domains of life such as sport, entertainment, music, politics and religion. Thus, sport champions, movie actors/actress, television personalities, pop stars and political or religious leaders can all become idolized figures. In most westernized youth culture, the idolized figures come

from sport, entertainment and music. These domains and the celebrities who excel in them receive wide exposure in the mass media and concerts (Raviv et al. 1996).

Earlier research done by McCracken (1986) and O'Guinn (1991) supports the argument mentioning that exchange, grooming, possession and divestment can be seen in the consumption rituals associated with fan behaviour. They further argue that spending money; collecting and swapping things are important aspects of the exchange, possession and divestment rituals. Fan behaviour can also extend into other areas of activities such as imitation, e.g., supporting the same football team as the pop stars. In other cases, participants joined fan clubs to bring them in closer contact with their heroes, i.e., 'touching greatness' (O'Guinn, 1991). A study conducted by Hogg and Banister (2000) further explores the fan behaviour. They found that the main incentive to buy magazines was to find out information about pop stars and obtain posters to be pasted on the wall.

In assembling materials towards identity formation, adolescents may develop adoration for media stars, decorating their bedroom walls with the images of stars who seem (to adults) to reject the values of the adult world, stars who may in fact reject the very idea of "growing up" to a responsible adulthood (Steele and Brown, 1995). An analysis of adolescents' idolization has to be framed within the characteristics of the particular age period. On the one hand, adolescents are still shaping their individual identity and, on the other, they become members of a peer group that exerts significant influence on their lives. Thus, while they eagerly differentiate themselves from adults, structuring their own youth culture, they also follow their peers strictly so as not to differ from that alternative culture (Brown 1990; Sebald 1984; Schultze et al. 1991).

Raviv et al. (1996) argue that during early adolescence, peer group plays a special role in influencing the individual. Since adolescents are in a transitional stage from family system to society at large, and have a marginal status in adult society during this period, they seek the guidance and support of their peers. They are dependent on their peer group and conform to its values, attitudes and patterns of behaviour that are typical of youth culture. In this culture, idols emerge and ways of idolization are set (Raviv et al., 1996). In fact, idolization is often a required element of the youth culture, and this behaviour is promoted, supported, and rewarded by peer groups. Denisoff (1986) suggests that the basis of idolization is fantasy. He argues that adolescents have a need to believe in idols who by definition cannot realize their wishes and dreams. In this way, they do not have to put their fantasies to the test, as the celebrities are unavailable, and this saves the adolescents from disillusion.

Sebald (1984), as quoted by Raviv et al. (1996, p.633) specified conceptually the following six sources of adolescents' idolization:

- a. Romanticism, which involves projection of one's own unrealistic dreams and desires on a person whose fame and success appear the fulfilment of these wishes and fantasies.
- b. Sex and fetishism refers to substitution and sublimation of sexual tension by means of a fetish – a tangible whole or part of an idol.
- c. Ecstasy, which allows an expression of extreme emotional behaviours.
- d. Fascination with the bizarre and the absurd, which fulfils teenagers' need for excitement and thrill.
- e. Identification, which expresses the image to which adolescents aspire.
- f. Heroes as “messengers” function to provide teenagers with a value orientation.

Idolization of pop stars has unique characteristics for adolescents. First, the mere activity of listening to this music is age segregated and, therefore, sometimes outside the realm of parental controls (Raviv et al. 1996). In this way it provides a basis of self-expression, the construction of self-identity, the achievement of independence, and intimacy. Indeed, some adolescents' most pressing questions find an answer through listening to pop music. It has been established that the music itself that adolescents revere often plays an important function (Fine et al. 1990; Schultze et al. 1991). It appeals to salient adolescents' concerns, from sexual relations through alternative cultural values to rebellion and autonomy. The lyrics, rhythms and harmonies provide stimuli that youth draw upon in learning sex roles, composing their sexual identities, shaping their values and establishing their independence (Cooper 1991).

Behavioural expression of idolization can be seen as a series of rituals that involve such activities as listening to music in a group, collecting records, cassettes and or CDs or joining fan clubs (Raviv et al. 1996). The climax of these rituals usually is participation in a concert, often along with thousands of peers, in which the idol can be seen performing in real life. This can be viewed as a type of "sacred ceremony" that involves certain ritualistic behaviours such as dancing, swaying, lighting candles, screaming and even fainting (Raviv et al., 1996).

Raviv et al. (1997) believe that the important aspect in considering idolization among adolescents is their reliance on idols. Their study uses the concept of epistemic authority in examining the extent and scope of adolescents' reliance on the idolized singers'. This concept was introduced as an integral part of Kruglanski's (1980, 1989) laid epistemic theory, which describes knowledge acquisition. Epistemic authority was defined as a source of information that exerts definitive influence on a person's knowledge.

Individuals consider information from epistemic authorities as true and valid, and use it as a basis for constructing their social reality.

The concept of epistemic authority offers a unique focus on subjective beliefs regarding the information sources. A source can become an epistemic authority to the extent that individuals believe it/he/she possesses the characteristics that turn it/him/her into such an authority. Individuals may rely on epistemic authorities as a function of age and domain (Bar-Tal et al., 1991; Raviv et al. 1990a; Raviv et al. 1990b). It is reasonable to assume that idolized pop singers serve as epistemic authorities for adolescents. Past research in psychology, sociology and communication has consistently shown that adolescents rely on popular celebrities from the fields of entertainment, music, film and television for information about everything ranging from preferred dress-style to desired values (Brown and Hende, 1989; Pratkanis and Aronson, 1992).

As they come to be a model of imitation, idolized singers' references to various topics and walks of life are very likely to serve as true knowledge for adolescents. As such, Raviv et al. (1997) in their study use the sub-dimension of knowledge and consumerism as one of the dimension to explain expression of idolization dimension (one of American popular culture dimension). Based on the study by Raviv (1997), we conclude that the sub dimensions, i.e., imitation, adoration and knowledge and consumerism will help in explaining expression of idolization (one of American popular culture dimension).

2.5 American Popular Culture and Its Effects on Five Selected Aspects of Consumer Behaviour

In this section, we will discuss the effects of American popular culture on five selected aspects of consumer behaviour, i.e., conspicuous consumption, price sensitivity, brand sensitivity, fashion consciousness, and American music television exposure. In each sub section, we will discuss the definition and past literature of each construct before suggesting the proposition.

2.5.1 American Popular Culture and Conspicuous Consumption

As the standard of living improved significantly, further stimulated by the changing lifestyle, adolescents today are granted greater latitude of freedom from their parents to make their own shopping and consumption decisions. As a result adolescents' ability to spend has rapidly increased as more of them are entering the marketplace. This is not surprising considering that shopping has become one of the leisure activities most often participated in by young Malaysians (Md Nor and Ong 1993).

Adolescents' eagerness to undertake an active role as consumers is evident in their greater participation of purchasing a wide range of consumer products such as clothes, cosmetics, food, sports equipment, video games and entertainment services, which in turn has led to the rising phenomenon of conspicuous consumption behaviour among young Malaysians (Tsuruoka 1992). In this sub section, the researcher will discuss the definition of conspicuous consumption, Veblen's Theory of Conspicuous Consumption and the summary of conspicuous consumption literature.

a. Defining Conspicuous Consumption

Veblen (1899) in his book “The Theory of the Leisure Class” was the first to coin the term conspicuous consumption. He defines conspicuous consumption as the waste of money and/or resources by people to display a higher status than others. Later study by Brooks (1981) claims that conspicuous consumption is the acquisition and visible display of luxury goods and services to demonstrate one’s ability to afford them. Md Nor (1988) believes that conspicuous consumption is basically concerned with the ostentatious display of wealth. In another consumer behaviour book, Blackwell et al. (2001) define conspicuous consumption as “people’s desire to provide prominent visible evidence of their ability to afford luxury goods” (p. 548).

In the same sense, Piron (2000) refers to conspicuous consumption as consumers’ desire to provide prominent visible evidence of their ability to afford luxury goods. Arnold et al. (2004) argue that consumers’ conspicuous consumption of status symbols is a frequent by-product of economic development. A recent study done by O’Cass and McEwen (2004) defines conspicuous consumption as the tendency for individuals to enhance their image, through overt consumption of possessions, which communicates status to others. Several attempts have been made to define the construct. A summary of the definitions in Table 2.3 shows the different definitions of conspicuous consumption.

After the overview of the past voluminous literature pertaining to the construct, we noticed it comprises several elements (e.g., lavishness and intention to show off). Conspicuous consumption construct also could be view as peoples’ desire to provide visible evidence of their ability to afford luxury goods (Blackwell et al., 2001). As such, the definition proposed includes both elements of lavishness and intention to show off.

Therefore, the present study defined conspicuous consumption construct as the excessive and lavish consumption of goods and services (Brooks, 1981) with the intention of displaying wealth (Md Nor, 1988) (Piron, 2000). Therefore, we would like to propose the following definition: *“Conspicuous consumption is the excessive and lavish consumption of goods and services with the intention of displaying wealth”*.

Table 2.3: Selected Definitions of Conspicuous Consumption

Scholar	Definition
Veblen (1899)	The waste of money and/or resources by people to display a higher status than others.
Brooks (1981)	The acquisition and visible display of luxury goods and services to demonstrate one’s ability to afford them.
Md Nor (1988)	Ostentatious display of wealth.
Piron (2000)	Consumers’ desire to provide prominent visible evidence of their ability to afford luxury goods.
Blackwell et al. (2001)	People’s desire to provide prominent visible evidence of their ability to afford luxury goods.
Arnold et al. (2004)	Status symbol is a frequent by-product of economic development.

Specifically, the conceptual definition mentioned above was proposed based on previous studies done by Veblen (1899), Brook (1981), Md Nor (1988), Piron (2000), Blackwell et al. (2001) and Arnold et al. (2004) (please refer Table 2.2). The definition for conspicuous consumption was chosen based on the suitability to the present research. As such, the inclusive of both element: excessive consumption and showing off are very important in explaining the concept of conspicuous consumption.

b. Summary of Conspicuous Consumption Literature

Conspicuous consumption is regarded as a key to many aspects of consumer behaviour (Redding and Ng, 1983). Numerous empirical studies have been conducted pertaining to the issue of conspicuous consumption as indicated in Table 2.3. In the same perspective, Belk (1986) who quotes numerous empirical studies and journalistic accounts found that yuppies not only view conspicuous consumption positively but they seem to be engaged in it.

As shown in Table 2.4, the research done in the 20th century enriches conspicuous consumption literature and use the conspicuous consumption construct as an independent variable. In the same sense, Marcoux et al. (1997) dealt with the influence of socio-cultural variables on preferences of Polish consumers towards specific products made in Poland versus the same product made in Western countries. They examined the impact of ethnocentrism, susceptibility to interpersonal influence, conspicuous consumption and demographics variables on the preferred country-of-origin of clothing, cosmetics and electronic products. They found that social status demonstration, as a dimension of conspicuous consumption, is related to the preferences towards Western products.

In the study by Wong and Ahuvia (1998) noted the conceptual linkages between existing theories of conspicuous consumption and materialism. Another study done by Yoon and Seok (1996) investigated the reciprocal relationship between conspicuous consumption and self evaluation of own status in Korea. The sample of 531 Korean urban household confirm that conspicuous consumption tends to inflate a household's self evaluation of its own social status beyond the social status determined by its other

socioeconomic statuses (i.e., education, income, occupation, and wealth). The study found that those households which consume conspicuously tend to inflate self evaluations of social status, the maintenance of which in turn requires more conspicuous consumption.

Table 2.4: Summary of Conspicuous Consumption Literature

Authors	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Wong and Ahuvia (1998)	Conspicuous consumption	Materialism
Marcoux (1997)	Conspicuous consumption	Country-of-origin effect
Yoon and Seok (1996)	Conspicuous consumption	Subjective social status
Shukla (2008)	Psychological and Brand Antecedents	Conspicuous consumption
Chen et al. (2005)	Chinese ethnic identification	Conspicuous consumption
O’Cass and McEwen (2004)	Status consumption Brand Gender Interpersonal influence Self Monitoring	Conspicuous consumption
O’Cass and Frost (2002)	Symbolic characteristics Degree of self- and brand-image congruency Feelings towards brand Brand familiarity	Conspicuous consumption
Chung and Fisher (2001)	Immigration Length of residency Ethnic identification	Conspicuous consumption
Piron (2000)	Country-of-origin effect	Conspicuous consumption
Wong (1997)	Materialism	Conspicuous consumption

On the other hand, a number of studies in 21st century show that conspicuous consumption has been explored as dependent variables. A quantitative research by Shukla (2008) within the region of South-East of United Kingdom addressed the issue of conspicuous consumption among middle age consumers, focusing on the psychological and brand antecedents, using the context of automobile buying behaviour. The study's finding suggests that psychological and brand antecedents are of crucial importance among middle-aged consumers in influencing their conspicuous consumption. Chen et al. (2005) investigated the moderating and mediating effects of acculturation dimensions on the relationship between Chinese identification and conspicuous consumption by ethnic Chinese consumers in Toronto, Canada. The result of the study reveals that a strong relationship between Chinese identification (independent variable) and conspicuous consumption (dependent variable).

Another study conducted in Australia by O'Cass and McEwen (2004) explored the theoretical and empirical separation of consumers' status consumption and conspicuous consumption. Their findings indicate that status consumption and conspicuous consumption are distinct constructs. They believed that the value of treating status consumption and conspicuous consumption as separate yet related constructs lies in the fact that each descriptor carries a unique set of consumer behaviour and consumption motives. They also note that conspicuousness is essential if consumers want to gain recognition, approval or acceptance from their reference groups. In the study, they found that status consumption influences the desire to consume conspicuously, therefore the more status a brand carries, the more likely it will be used in a conspicuous manner. Based on their findings, young males place more importance on the conspicuousness of product use. However, they found that the self-monitoring show no significant effect on conspicuous consumption.

A study conducted by O’Cass and Frost (2002) explored the understanding of brand perceived status towards conspicuous consumption among 315 young Australian consumers. They found that symbolic characteristics, self- and brand-image congruency and feelings are also strong predictors for the dependent variable conspicuous consumption. Their results indicate that all variables beside brand familiarity had a significant effect on conspicuous consumption at the specific brand level. In the same sense, Chung and Fisher (2001) examine the relationships between the dependent variables (immigration and consumer acculturation) and a person’s ethnic identification towards conspicuous consumption. Their sample consisted of 214 respondents reported Hong Kong as a point of origin to migration to Canada. The results of the study conducted in Greater Metropolitan region in Ontario, Canada provide little support for all independent variables (immigration, length of residency and ethnic identification) towards conspicuous consumption.

Piron’s (2000) study examined the impact of country-of-origin on consumers’ purchasing intention of products that are consumed conspicuously. The study was conducted in Singapore conclude that a product’s country-of-origin has a stronger effect when considering luxury products. However, they found that the conspicuous aspect of the consumption comes second. Research done by Wong (1997) investigated the relationship between two existing conceptualizations of materialism and conspicuous consumption. The research done in Midwestern University, United States, found that two dimension of envy and success are positively correlated with conspicuous consumption. For the purpose of the current study, we are interested in looking at conspicuous consumption as a dependent variable.

c. Linking American Popular Culture and Conspicuous Consumption

Despite the importance of relating the concept of American popular culture and conspicuous consumption, there is none empirical research and theoretical model on the nature had been explored. However, recent empirical studies suggest that there is a positive relationship between role model (dimension of American Popular Culture) and conspicuous consumption (O’Cass and McEwen, 2004; Piacentini and Mailer, 2004). For instance, O’Cass and McEwen (2004) argue that factors like country of origin, media use, lifestyle, values, brand personalities and alternative consumption-relevant concepts could all realistically be tested to yield further insights into conspicuous consumption. In a way, the authors imply that brand personalities (e.g., Michael Jackson) play a significant role model (American popular culture dimension) in consuming products conspicuously.

Consumers acquire, own, use and display certain goods and services to enhance their sense of self, to present an image of what they are like, to represent what they feel and think, and to bring about the types of social relationships they wish to have (Goffman, 1959; Belk, 1988; Ewen, 1988; Braun and Wicklund, 1989). The above mentioned researchers went to argue that consumers might have a particular role model (American popular culture dimension) and wanted to show to others that they could afford the products.

Raviv et al. (1996) argue that adolescents are dependent on their peer group and conform to its values, attitudes, and pattern of behaviours that are typical of youth culture. Therefore, in order to conform to group norms, adolescents try to consume products conspicuously to indicate their belongingness to their peer group. This is

where the situation permits conspicuous consumption to play its role. In a study done by Scitovsky (1992), he argues that sense of belonging to groups is both necessary and psychologically satisfying to humans.

Adolescents imitate (American popular culture dimension) group members in order to be accepted as group members themselves. Scitovsky (1992) goes on to argue that the desire for status involves more than assurance of group membership. The respondents also seek distinction and recognition within their groups and strive to gain this. Implicitly, saying that adolescents who share the role model (American popular culture dimension) due to peer group pressure will lead to purchase product conspicuously to show their conformance to group norms.

Researchers argue that individuals use goods as materials with which to create, foster and develop their identity (Piacentini and Mailer, 2004; Lee, 1990; Erickson et al., 1984). The symbolic meaning of goods is used as an outward expression of their self concept and connection to society. This means that idolizing the role model (American popular culture dimension) will lead to usage of certain products as a means to create or foster and develop their identity. That may lead to consuming products or services conspicuously in order to show off to the public that he/she has developed their identity according to their idols (American popular culture dimension).

In another related study, Erickson et al. (1984) argue that the image variable is defined as “some aspects of the product that are distinct from its physical characteristics but that are nevertheless identified within the product” (p. 694). The authors continue to argue that the image variables emerge from four cognitive representations individuals have of their environment: the symbolism of advertising, the celebrity endorsement, the brand

and the country of origin of the product. In other words, the authors suggest that the images from the role model (American popular culture dimension) may lead consumers to consume conspicuously, which will reflect their social standing.

Thus, it can be established that individuals with higher American popular culture influences will be more likely to have higher conspicuous consumption. Based on the above discussion, we would like to suggest the following proposition:

P1a = The higher the American popular culture influences on adolescents
the higher will be the conspicuous consumption.

The hypothesized relationship is investigated in this present study.

2.5.2 American Popular Culture and Price Sensitivity

In this subsection, the present researcher will discuss the definition of price sensitivity and the summary of price sensitivity literature. The relationship between American popular culture and price sensitivity also will be discussed.

a. Defining Price Sensitivity

Monroe (1973) and Wakerfield and Inman (2003) define price sensitivity as the extent to which individuals perceive and respond to changes or differences in prices for products or services. In a related study, price sensitivity is defined as the consumer's tendency to make price a more important criterion vis-à-vis other shopping orientations in a purchase decision (Md Nor, 1988). Sirvanci (1993) defines price sensitivity as the degree of reaction provoked in an individual by price differentials. While Anglin et al.

(1994) define price sensitivity as the degree to which consumers prefer and search for lower price. Muncy (1996) define the variable as the consumers' willingness to select a lower priced alternative if one such alternative exists. Goldsmith and Newell (1997) define the construct as an individual difference variable describing how individual consumers react to price levels and changes in price levels.

Table 2.5: Selected Definitions of Price Sensitivity

Scholar	Definition
Monroe (1973); Wakerfield and Inman (2003)	The extent to which individuals perceive and respond to changes or differences in prices for products or services.
Md Nor (1988)	The consumer's tendency to make price as a more important criterion vis-à-vis other shopping orientations in a purchase decision.
Sirvanci (1993)	The degree of reaction provoked in an individual by price differentials.
Anglin et al. (1994)	The degree to which consumers prefer and search for lower price.
Muncy (1996)	The consumers' willingness to select a lower priced alternative if one such alternative exists.
Goldsmith and Newell (1997)	An individual difference variable describing how individual consumers react to price levels and changes in price levels.
Foxall and James (2003) and Shimp et al. (2004)	Seeking low prices and is less likely to buy when prices rise.
Hsieh and Chang (2004)	The level of a consumer's response when faced with price increases.
Goldsmith et al. (2005)	Price sensitivity is how consumers react to price levels and to price changes.
Choi et al. (2006)	The willingness on the part of the customer to purchase from other retailers that offer better price.

Studies in the 21st century, as shown in Table 2.5, define price sensitivity as seeking low prices and being less likely to buy when prices rise (Foxall and James, 2003 and Shimp et al. 2004). In the same sense, Hsieh and Chang (2004) define price sensitivity as the level of a consumer's response when faced with price increases. Goldsmith et al. (2005) define the construct as how consumers react to price levels and to price changes. Lastly, Choi et al. (2006) define price sensitivity as the willingness on the part of the customer to purchase from other retailers that offer better price.

Based on the discussion pertaining to the construct, the present researcher noticed price sensitivity comprises several elements (e.g., perception and price changes or differences). Specifically, the construct can also be viewed as how customers react to price levels and price changes (Goldsmith et al., 2005). Therefore, the present study would like to adopt the definition proposed by Monroe (1973) and Wakerfield and Inman (2003) which covers both important elements, i.e.: consumer's perceptions towards price changes or differences.

As such, the present study adopts the definition by Monroe (1973) and Wakerfield and Inman (2003): *"Price sensitivity is the extent to which individuals perceive and respond to changes/differences in prices for products or services"*.

b. Summary of Price Sensitivity Literature

Earlier studies on price sensitivity by Gabor and Granger (1964) argued that the actual structure of prices in the market place further implies the belief that, besides the tendency to react to relative rather than absolute price changes, consumers also show a heightened price sensitivity at critical points where a slight increase in price results in a

substantial drop in sales. A number of empirical studies have been done pertaining to the issue of price sensitivity as indicated in Table 2.6. Price sensitivity construct has been examined as a dependent variable in almost all past study viewed.

Studies have revealed a significant variation in price sensitivity research. Murphy (1978) conducted a study examined the effect of social class effect on price sensitivity for specific supermarket products among women from a large south-western city of Milwaukee, United States. He found that there are no significant different among the lower, middle and upper class women's price sensitivity for specific supermarket products. Krishnamurthi and Raj (1985) investigated the effect of advertising intensity on consumer price sensitivity for frequently purchased consumer products. Their experimental based research proves that frequently purchased products demonstrate higher advertising and lowers price sensitivity. Another research conducted by Schroeter et al. (1987) examined the effect of advertising on price sensitivity in the market of legal services. They found that price sensitivity goes up as advertising increases. Their measure of advertising is the proportion of attorneys who advertise in a specific market.

Kanetkar et al. (1992) estimated a brand choice model at the customer level using scanner panel data. They found that higher advertising leads to higher price sensitivity. Another study conducted in Midwestern state of United States by Sirvanci (1993) attempted to identify the product characteristics and the specific shopper profiles which cause the variation in price sensitivity in the context of eight grocery items. He found that price sensitivity depends on both product characteristics and shopper profiles. The findings revealed shopper profiles are identified on the basis of price sensitivity representing consumer demographics, shopping behaviour and price awareness.

Table 2.6: Summary of Price Sensitivity Literature

Authors	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Gabor and Granger (1964)	The effect of advertising	Price sensitivity
Murphy (1978)	Social Class Differences	Price sensitivity
Krishnamurthi and Raj, (1985)	Advertising Intensity	Price sensitivity
Shroeter et al. (1987)	Proportion of advertisement	Price sensitivity
Kanetkar et al. (1992)	Advertising level	Price sensitivity
Sirvanci (1993)	Product characteristics Specific shopper profiles	Price sensitivity
Anglin et al. (1994)	Stress	Price sensitivity
Papatla (1995)	Dynamic effect of advertising exposure	Price sensitivity
Muncy (1996)	Brand parity Brand loyalty	Price sensitivity
Mela, Gupta and Lehmann (1997)	Price-oriented advertising	Price sensitivity
Mulhern et al., (1998)	Promotional frequency Market share of brand Ethnicity Income	Price sensitivity
Kalra and Goodstein (1998)	Nonprice advertising positioning	Price sensitivity
Shankar et al. (1999)	Benefits of information search Costs of information search on non-price attributes Costs of information search on price	Price sensitivity
Lynch and Dan (2000)	Lower Search Cost for Quality Information	Price sensitivity

Table 2.6, continued: Summary of Price Sensitivity Literature

Suri and Manchanda (2000)	Effect of acculturation	Price sensitivity
Erdem et al. (2002)	Brand credibility	Price sensitive
Krishnamurthi and Papatla (2003)	Consumer loyalty	Price sensitivity
Wakerfield and Inman (2003)	Consumption occasion Social context Income Consumption context	Price sensitivity
Hsieh and Chang (2004)	Four aspects of consumer participation - preparation - relationship building - information exchange - intervention	Price sensitivity
Sudhir and Talukdar (2004)	Store brand	Price sensitivity
Munnukka (2005)	Innovativeness level Price perception Service bundles Service satisfaction Demographic variables - Gender - Age - Marital status - Number of children in household - Education - Income	Price sensitivity
Goldsmith and Newell (1997); Goldsmith et al. (1996); Goldsmith et al. (1999); Goldsmith et al. (2005)	Innovativeness Gender	Price sensitivity
Choi et al. (2006)	Customer Loyalty and Disloyalty	Price sensitivity
Erdem et al. (2008)	Brand loyalty	Price sensitivity
Ramirez and Goldsmith (2009)	Product involvement Consumer innovativeness Perceived brand parity Attitudinal brand loyalty	Price sensitivity

Another scholar, Anglin et al. (1994) examined the role of stress on price sensitivity among adults in Michigan, United States. In their study, stress was measured by three dimensions called time consciousness, life events and marital satisfaction. They found that price sensitivity is related positively to the three measures of stress. Papatla (1995) proposed a choice model and estimation procedure to investigate the dynamic effects of advertising exposure on price sensitivity at the individual level while controlling for heterogeneity. His results support the view of other researcher that the advertising decreasing price sensitivity.

Muncy (1996) examined perceived brand parity and brand loyalty impact on price sensitivity. He believed high brand parity perceptions consumer appear to be more price sensitivity. Muncy further points the strong relationship between brand loyalty and price sensitivity. In the study done by Mela, Gupta and Lehmann (1997) utilized panel data for frequently purchased packaged good. They investigated the impact of price-oriented advertising on consumers' price sensitivity in long run. They found that in the long run, price-oriented advertising make both loyal and non loyal consumers more price sensitive. They argued that these promotions reduce the price sensitivity of loyal consumers but significantly increase the price sensitivity of non loyal consumers.

Mulhern et al., (1998) explored brand and consumer characteristics effect on price sensitivity across stores in the same retail chain. They examined the effect of promotional frequency, market share of brands, ethnicity and income on price sensitivity. Their study revealed that promotional frequency, market share of brands, ethnicity and income indicate a significant effect on price sensitivity. An experimental study across different product categories conducted by Kalra and Goodstein (1998) found that specific types of non-price advertising positioning increase price sensitivity.

Shankar et al. (1999) examined the effect of online information search on two dimensions of price sensitivity: price importance and price search. They concluded that web sites can reduce price sensitivity by providing in-depth information (both price and non-price) that is available through a highly interactive interface. The perceived content of the site (in terms of price versus non-price orientation) does not influence price sensitivity.

Three studies in the United States have suggested a negative correlation between innovativeness and price sensitivity (Goldsmith, 1996, 1999; Goldsmith and Newell, 1999). Goldsmith (1996) in his exploratory study for new restaurants found a correlation between innovativeness and price sensitivity. Goldsmith and Newell (1997) conducted a survey at a large university in south-eastern United States study on innovativeness and price sensitivity: managerial, theoretical and methodological. They found negative relationship between product innovativeness and price sensitivity. They believed that innovators seem to be less price sensitive than later buyers. In the same sense, Goldsmith (1999) surveyed adults United States consumers on the topic of fashion innovativeness. He found a negative correlation between fashion innovativeness and price sensitivity. While, another study conducted in Korea by Goldsmith (2005) found similar findings. They also found negative correlation between innovativeness and price sensitivity.

An experimental based research in Massachusetts, United States conducted Lynch and Dan (2000) on the effect of lowering search costs on price sensitivity in buying wine online. They found that lowering cost of search for quality information reduced price sensitivity. A survey study conducted by Suri and Manchanda (2000) examined the effect of acculturation on the price sensitivity of Asian-Indian consumers. They found

that as Asian-Indians' acculturation levels increase, higher price sensitivity. In particular, this appears to be true more for Asian-Indian females than males.

An analysis on four products (i.e., frozen concentrate juice, jeans, shampoo and personal computers) conducted by Erdem et al. (2002) investigated the impact of brand credibility on price sensitivity. They found that brand credibility decreases price sensitivity among university student in United States. Another study by Krishnamurthi and Papatla (2003) investigated the relationship of consumer loyalty and price sensitivity. They proposed an approach wherein the price sensitivity parameter of a brand choice model was specified as a function of loyalty with three parameters. First parameter represented the maximum possible reduction of price sensitivity. Second parameter affected the type and shape of the relationship between price sensitivity and loyalty. Lastly, third parameter captured the rate at which price sensitivity falls as loyalty increases. The findings of their study revealed that the relationship of loyalty and price sensitivity is dynamic and heterogeneous across consumers. They suggested that an entire schedule of price promotions with each level of promotions targeting consumers at a different loyalty level.

A survey study done by Wakerfield and Inman (2003) fielded in a medium-sized Southern city in United States addressed two key issues in their study. Firstly, they examined the effect of consumption situation (functional and hedonic) and social context on price sensitivity. Secondly, they explored the interaction effect of household income and consumption context on price sensitivity. The findings revealed that consumers are less sensitive to price in categories that are perceived as primarily hedonic in nature. Furthermore, they pointed that the difference in price sensitivity for hedonic and functional products is not large for lower income respondents. In contrast,

respondents in the highest income group reports much lower price sensitivity for hedonic categories than for the functional categories.

Hsieh and Chang (2004) attempted to clarify the association between consumer participation and price sensitivity among consumers of fast food restaurant and hair salons. In their study, they identified four dimensions of consumer participation. They were preparation, relationship building, information exchange and intervention. Their results indicate that the first three dimensions are negatively associated with price sensitivity except the intervention dimension. There are also significant differences between industries. The same levels of relationship building, information exchange and intervening in a hair salon are associated with lower price sensitivity than in a fast food restaurant respectively.

A study by Sudhir and Talukdar (2004) conducted in North Eastern; United States investigated the store brands contribution to greater store differentiated or price sensitivity. Their results leads them to conclude that store brands contribute to greater store differentiation, rather than increased price sensitivity in the market. Munnukka (2005) investigated the dynamics of price sensitivity among the mobile service customers in Finland. She examined the effect of customer's level of innovativeness, satisfaction, price perception, willingness to acquire mobile services in bundles and demographic variables (gender, age, marital status, number of children in household, education and income) on price sensitivity. Her study revealed that customers' price perceptions and innovativeness level are accurate indicators of price sensitivity among mobile services customers. However, she found that service bundle, service satisfaction and demographic variables do not obtain adequate significance value in the regression analysis.

An empirical study have been conducted in Seoul, Korea by Choi et al., (2006) investigated the impact of customers' disloyal and loyal in internet retail stores on price sensitivity. The study concluded that price sensitivity is negatively influenced by an increase in loyal behaviour, and positively influenced by an increase in disloyal behaviour.

Erdem et al. (2008) utilised Nielsen scanner panel data on four categories of consumer goods to examine the impact of advertising on price sensitivity. They found that for all 18 brands of consumer goods examined, advertising reduces consumer price sensitivity in the sense of increasing the number of consumers willing to pay any given price for a brand. A survey of United States consumers conducted by Ramirez and Goldsmith (2009) investigated the influence of enduring involvement, consumer innovativeness, perceived brand parity and attitudinal involvement on price sensitivity. The results of their study confirmed that price sensitivity is positively related to brand parity but negatively related to brand loyalty, innovativeness and product involvement. Product involvement is shown to influence price sensitivity through its impact on innovativeness, which has not only a direct influence on price sensitivity but also an indirect influence mediated by brand parity and by brand loyalty.

c. Linking American Popular Culture and Price Sensitivity

There is a lack of research have linked American popular culture and price sensitivity. The present researcher would like to highlight a few research have been done on culture and price. Among the studies exploring the relationship of culture and price are Seock and Lin (2011), Kim and Chen-Yu (2005) and Stenquist et al. (2004). However, there is a related study done on role model (dimension of American popular culture) and price

done by Martin and Bush (2000). A survey conducted in 74 different high schools from a large metropolitan area in United States by Martin and Bush (2000) examined the role models influences to teenagers' purchase intentions and behaviour. They found that adolescents do not appear to be strongly influenced by potential role models when price is a central issue. In short, any slight price increase will have a greater impact on the buying decision of adolescents. Therefore, the less the influence of the role model, the more price sensitive they are. In other words, the highly price sensitive consumers will be less influenced by the role model (famous icon – e.g., popular singer/music band).

Based on the preceding discussion, we would like to propose the following relationship:

P1b = Adolescent with high American popular culture influences tend to be less price sensitive as compared to those having low American popular culture influence.

The hypothesized relationship is investigated in this present study.

2.5.3 American Popular Culture and Brand Sensitivity

In this sub section, the researcher will discuss the definition, summary of brand sensitivity literature and the linkages between American popular culture and brand sensitivity.

a. Defining Brand Sensitivity

A brand is defined as “a name, term, sign, symbol or design, or combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors” (Kotler, 1997, p. 442). It is undeniable

that brand potentially plays many roles in affecting consumer behaviour (Erdem et al., 2002). Thus, there has been a great deal of attention devoted to capturing the effects of brand on consumer choice. An enormous series of studies in the literature has been recorded pertaining to brand. However, quite a few researchers have an interest to further investigate brand sensitivity in consumer behaviour study. In response to this call for research, the current investigation is designed to assess Malaysian adolescents' brand sensitivity. Therefore, to further enrich the brand sensitivity literature, the researcher of the current study has taken the challenge.

Table 2.7: Definitions of Brand Sensitivity

Scholar	Definition
Kapferer and Laurent (1983); Odin et al. (2001)	A psychological individual variable, which is defined as the degree to which the brand name plays a key role in the choice process of an alternative in a given product category.
Hutton (1997)	The likelihood of buying a well-known brand instead of an unknown or generic brand of product, based on differences in product and situational variables.
Lanchance et al. (2003); Nelson and McLeod (2005)	Brands play an important role in the psychological process that precedes the buying act.
Muratore (2003)	As the consideration by the consumer or influencer of the "brand" information in a given line of products.
Nelson and Devanathan (2006)	The degree to which the consumer notices or uses brands as information important to purchase decision.
Brown (2007)	The value that a buying centre representative places on a well-known brand, instead of an unknown or generic brand of a product offering in the product evaluation process.

The value that a brand captures is in the concept of brand sensitivity. Brand sensitivity is a psychological individual variable, which is defined as “the degree to which the brand name plays a key role in the choice process of an alternative in a given product category” (Kapferer and Laurent, 1983, p.17; Odin et al., 2001). As shown in Table 2.7, Hutton (1997) defines brand sensitivity as the likelihood of buying a well-known brand instead of an unknown or generic brand of product, based on differences in product and situational variables.

The value of branding is determined to a large part by how much impact the brand has on the buyers purchase decision (Brown, 2007). According to Lanchance et al. (2003), brand sensitivity is defined as “brands play an important role in the psychological process that precedes the buying act” (p.49). They further point out that conceptually speaking, it is different from brand loyalty, which is a behavioural concept that can be measured by examining patterns of repeated buying over time. Essentially, the authors believe that a consumer is brand loyal when he/she has a strong tendency to buy the very same brand within a certain period of time. In the same sense, Nelson and Devanathan (2006) define brand sensitivity as the degree to which the consumer notices or uses brands as information important to purchase decision. Another brand sensitivity scholar, Muratore (2003) defines brand sensitivity as the consideration by the consumer or influencer of the “brand” information in a given line of products. Brown (2007), in his exploration of business-to-business and the consumer market, defines brand sensitivity as the value that a buying centre representative places on a well-known brand, instead of an unknown or generic brand of a product offering in the product evaluation process.

The past literature showed that brand sensitivity construct can be seen consist elements such as, the importance of brand name and purchase decision. In other words, the construct can also be seen as the degree to which the consumer uses brands as information important to purchase decision (Nelson and Devanathan, 2006). Specifically, brand sensitivity is a how the brand name plays a key role in the choice process of an alternative in a given product or services categories (Kapferer and Lauren, 1983; Oden et al., 2001).

Based on the discussion earlier, the study proposed the following definition for brand sensitivity: *“Brand sensitivity is the degree to which brand name plays a key role in the choice process of an alternative in the buying decision”*. Therefore, the definition for brand sensitivity was chosen based on the suitability to the present research. As such, it is important in highlighting the brand name as most critical factor in buying decision.

b. Summary of Brand Sensitivity Literature

Numerous empirical studies have been done pertaining to the issue of brand sensitivity as indicated in Table 2.8. A significant amount of brand sensitivity studies have attempted to investigate brand sensitivity as an independent variable. In the same sense, Odin et al. (2001) focused on conceptualized and operational aspects of loyalty. The synthesis led to a proposal of differentiation of the repeat purchasing behaviour by the concept of brand sensitivity. They examined the level of brand sensitivity to differentiate loyalty from inertia. They concluded that their approach enables to distinguished inertia from brand loyalty.

Baltas and Argouslidis (2007) explored individual characteristics and demand for store brand among Greek consumers. Brand sensitivity was examined as an independent variable in their study. They found that the brand sensitivity variable has a negative and significant correlation parameter. They believed that consumers who attach a lot of importance to brand names are less likely to switch to a private label. D'Astous and Gargouri (2001) and Su (2006) likewise found that consumer evaluations of brand imitations are negatively related to brand sensitivity. This explains that when consumers are more sensitive to branded products, they will have less favourable evaluations of imitations.

An experimental research conducted by D'Astous and Gargouri (2001) examined the impact of the goodness of imitation, the presence of the original brand, the image of the store as well as five personal characteristics (involvement with the product category, product familiarity, price sensitivity, brand sensitivity, and brand loyalty) on consumer evaluations of brand imitations. They found that these four consumer personal characteristics are correlated negatively with evaluations of the brand imitations (i.e., involvement with the product category, product familiarity, brand sensitivity, and brand loyalty).

Unpublished manuscript by Su (2006) replicated D'Astous and Gargouri (2001) study that examined a comprehensive set of factors that might influence consumer evaluations of brand imitation. She re-examine D'Astous and Gargouri's hypotheses in various product categories, with a focus on luxury brands. Her experimental study found that the overall effect of brand sensitivity is in predicted direction as in D'Astous and Gargouri (2001) study. She concluded that the effect of brand sensitivity shows differently in the two product categories. In the case of Burberry's wallet, brand

sensitivity shows significant impact on consumer evaluation. However, in the case of Louis Vuitton's handbag, the effect is not significant. Her results indicated that consumer evaluations might be decreased when they had more brand sensitivity, but the significance of the influence differed in different product categories.

Voluminous literature have investigated brand sensitivity as a dependent variable (please refer Table 2.6). An earlier study on brand sensitivity by Kapferer et al. (1983) (1986) argue that one of the factors most directly related to brand sensitivity is consumer involvement in a specific product category. According to Kapferer and Laurent (1992) and Froloff-Brouche et al., (1995), involvement in a product range is a minimum requirement for potential brand sensitivity. Specifically, Hutton (1997) investigated the influence on brand sensitivity of variables principally related to the product (e.g., price, service requirements, potential for obsolescence) and the buying situation (e.g., time constraints) in an organizational buying context. He found that organizational buyers are likely to brand sensitive and to select well-known brands under certain conditions, including when the risks of organizational or personal consequences are high.

A seminal work on the concept of brand sensitivity, in the context of consumer products, comes from France (Kapferer and Laurent, 1988) quoted by Hutton (1997). Their study focuses on national brands with unbranded products and private label brands. They measured the strength of a brand not by its market share or its number of customers but by the number of its customers who are brand sensitive. They argued that the average brand sensitivity was meaningless because within-market variation is so great. In their study, they categorised their respondents into three subgroups of high, moderate or low sensitivity. Kapferer and Laurent concluded that consumers do not

exhibit consistent levels of brand sensitivity across categories. They examined the association between brand sensitivity and certain functional and situational variables. The study revealed that the variables significantly associated with brand sensitivity are perceived difference of performance between brands (positive correlation), consumers' competence in product category (positive), symbolic value of brand (positive), perceived risk (importance) of brand choice (positive), interest in product category (positive), past disappointment with product (negative) and fast-moving or fast-changing category (negative).

Studies in the 21st century recorded a number of researches using brand sensitivity as the dependent variable. Degeratu, Rangaswamy and Wu (2000) used data obtained from Peapod to compare the behaviour of online grocery shoppers to physical world shoppers. They found that brand sensitivity can be higher among online customers. Lachance et al., (2003) study the influence of these three socialization agents, namely, parents, peers and television, on the development of French Canadian adolescents' brand sensitivity in apparel. The results of the survey revealed that peer and father influence are positively related to brand sensitivity for girls. However, they found that the peers' influence remains the only influential agent on brand sensitivity among boys. The findings of the survey further revealed that television exposure is not related to adolescents' brand sensitivity.

A survey research conducted by Muratore (2003) investigated the child's cent-off sensitivity and brand sensitivity in influence situations. Her study underlined three important influences of product involvement, cognitive development and parents' socialization on child's cent-off sensitivity and his brand sensitivity. The study found that product involvement and parents' socialization have a positive and significant

relationship with brand sensitivity. She further argued that product involvement appears to be an important condition when the child goes in a store with his parents and the presence of different brands on a range of products available. Her study also revealed that the child's cents-off sensitivity has a positive impact on the child's brand sensitivity. On the contrary, she found that cognitive development turns out to be a not significant predictor to brand sensitivity.

In the same perspective, Beaudoin et al. (2003) verify the differences among five distinct categories of adopters with respect to brand sensitivity. They found that innovators and early adopters are the most important groups in the process of fashion diffusion because of the role they play as models for later fashion consumers. To this extent, their findings tend to corroborate the idea that these two groups are the most brands sensitive. They argue that even though there is no evidence that innovators and/or early adopters are intentionally promoting brand names, it is clear that they do influence later fashion adopters by at least providing exposure to brands. Interestingly, the findings seem to show a direct relation between brand sensitivity and fashion innovativeness.

Another scholar, Beaudoin and Lachance (2006) conducted a survey to understand the interest of adolescents in clothing brand names and to ascertain how different psychological, social and socioeconomic variables explained variance in their brand sensitivity. Their findings revealed that susceptibility to peer influence, gender, fashion innovativeness, consumer competence, self-esteem, brand importance and age are significantly related to brand sensitivity. A recent study by Brown (2007) investigated the determinants of brand sensitivity in the organizational buying context. He examines branding in organizational contexts versus consumer contexts by developing and testing

a conceptual model that suggests the conditions that are likely to increase or decrease organization's brand sensitivity when selecting suppliers. His study found that the level of intangibility is the key determinant of brand sensitivity in such settings.

Table 2.8: Summary of Brand Sensitivity Literature

Authors	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Odin et al. (2001)	Brand sensitivity	Brand loyalty and inertia
D'Astous and Gargouri (2001); Su (2006)	Brand sensitivity	Consumer evaluation of brand imitation
Baltas and Argouslidis (2007)	Brand sensitivity	Store brand proneness
Kapferer and Laurent (1988)	Perceived difference of performance between brands, consumers' competence in product category, symbolic value of brand, perceived risk (importance) of brand choice, interest in product category, past disappointment with product and fast-moving or fast-changing category.	Brand sensitivity
Kapferer and Laurent (1983), Laurent and Kapferer (1986), (1992) and Froloff-Brouche et al. (1995)	Consumer involvement	Brand sensitivity
Hutton (1997)	Product and buying situation	Brand sensitivity
Degeratu, Rangaswamy and Wu (2000)	Online grocery shoppers Physical shoppers	Brand sensitivity
Lachance et al. (2003)	Socialization agents - Parents - Peers - Television	Brand sensitivity

Table 2.8, continued: Summary of Brand Sensitivity Literature

Muratore (2003)	Product involvement, cognitive development and socialization	Brand sensitivity
Beaudoin et al. (2003)	Categories of consumer adopters and fashion innovativeness	Brand sensitivity
Beaudoin and Lachance (2006)	Susceptibility to peer influence Gender Fashion innovativeness Consumer competence Self-esteem Brand importance Age	Brand sensitivity
Brown (2007)	Buying centre, purchase situation and product/relationship variables	Brand sensitivity

c. Linking American Popular Culture and Brand Sensitivity

The lack of studies on brand sensitivity in the literature has limited the references for the present researcher to explore further on this aspect. The present researcher would like to highlight a few studies done on culture and brand, for example, Demir and Yuzbasioglu (2011) and Monga and John (2007). However, there is a related study done on role model (dimension of American popular culture) and brand conducted by Bush et al. (2004). He tried to associate the positive relationship between role models (American popular culture dimension) and brand. They argued that the stronger agreement among peers about their favourite athlete role models (American popular culture dimension) will influence adolescents to recommend products or brands to others and encourage their friends or relatives to purchase certain products or brands (Bush et. al, 2004).

O’Cass and McEwen (2004) argued that brands are seen as important in creating an identity, a sense of achievement and identification for consumers.

An earlier study by Shermach (1997) found that the notion that people use brands for social acceptance is consistent with the study done by O’Cass and Mc Ewen (2004), showing how group affiliation can be promoted or identified through the use of a particular product via susceptibility to interpersonal influence. This implies that the selective behaviour in choosing brands is biased towards imitating the role model. Importantly, product and brands have the ability to communicate messages to others, in that product styles determine how consumers who own them are perceived by others (Holman, 1981; Belk, 1978; Solomon, 1983).

Based on the preceding arguments by several scholars, one can speculate that sharing the same role model (American popular culture dimension) among friends may lead to classification of brands or formulating brand sensitivity among them. As mentioned earlier, the stronger agreement among peers about their favourite athlete role models (American popular culture dimension) will influence adolescents to recommend products or brands to others and encourage their friends or relatives to purchase certain products or brands. As such, the influence of famous American role models encourages consumers to be more selective in choosing brands to gain a sense of achievement and identification among their peer group. Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that adolescents who are highly influenced by American Popular Culture tend to be more brand sensitive in gaining a sense of achievement and identification.

More empirical evidence of brand sensitivity was found by Martin and Bush (2000) in United States, which indicates that vicarious role models (American popular culture

dimension) have a much greater impact in terms of influencing adolescents to switch or alter their brand choice (a notion to be more brand sensitive) instead of encouraging adolescents to remain loyal. They believe that athletes act as role models (American popular culture dimension) and that many teenagers and adolescents look up to them for what's "cool" in products and brands. In short, vicarious role models (American popular culture dimension) have a greater impact in encouraging consumers to be more selective in choosing brands.

Quite a number of articles in business and sports websites reported series of evidences where these popular athletes (role model as a dimension of American popular culture) are being capitalize to promote famous brands in the market. According to the article written by Darren Rovell in the ESPN Sports Business Website, the victories by Venus Williams (famous American female tennis player) at Wimbledon and the U.S. Tennis Open in year 2000 led to a five-year, \$40 million contract with Reebok, the largest single endorsement deal ever signed by a female athlete. Darren Rovell added that the success in recent years, including Venus William's defence in the Wimbledon and the U.S. Tennis Open titles in 2001, made her the hottest property in tennis. He mentioned that the sports marketers have tried to capitalize on their dominance of women's tennis, and Avon, Wrigley and McDonald's collectively have invested more than \$20 million to use the sisters (Venus and Serena Williams) as marketing vehicles. In the same sense, Forbes Website also reported that the younger sister, Serena Williams (famous American female tennis player) signed a \$2 million deal with Hewlett- Packard in 2008 that adds to her hefty endorsement income, and she partners with Kraft, Nike and Wilson.

While another related study by Zollo (1995) mentions that some of the top reasons that make a brand a “cool brand” among teens are “quality”, “it’s for people my age”, “advertising”, “if cool friends or peers use it” and “if a cool celebrity uses it”. Thus, it appears that idolizing celebrity/role models has a potential to contribute to create a brand sensitivity phenomenon among teens. The peer influences adds the pressure to adolescents to conform to their group norms. In a similar study conducted by Lim and O’Cass (2001), they argue that nowadays, increasingly brands are seen as important in creating an identity, a sense of achievement and identification for consumers. It is also proven that certain brand dimensions and associations lead to increased marketplace recognition and economic success as a result of the value consumers place on them. Therefore, the researcher of the present study concludes that having a role model (American popular culture dimension) of a public figure may lead to brand sensitivity.

Based on the preceding discussion, we would suggest the following proposition:

P1c = The higher the American popular culture influences on adolescents the higher will be the involvement in brand sensitivity.

The hypothesized relationship is investigated in this present study.

2.5.4 American Popular Culture and Fashion Consciousness

In this sub section, the researcher will discuss the definition, summary of fashion consciousness literature and the linkages of American popular culture and fashion consciousness.

a. Defining Fashion Consciousness

A few attempts from past research tried to define fashion consciousness. One of the earliest research on the related construct was done by Wells and Tigert in 1971 (please refer to Table 2.9). The researchers believe that fashion consciousness deals with the extent of an individual's interest in and attention to the latest fashion trends, the degree to which the individual dresses in style and is up to date with what is new in the market (Wells and Tigert, 1971; Manrai et al., 2001). Other scholars Nam et al. (2007), in their exploration on fashion conscious behaviour of mature female consumers, defines the construct as a person's degree of involvement with the styles or fashion of clothing. In the same sense, a study on understanding college students' purchase behaviour of fashion counterfeits by Lee (2009) defines fashion consciousness similarly with Nam et al. (2007).

Another survey done by Sung and Jeon (2008) investigated on internet users by fashion lifestyles to profile the demographic and internet usage characteristics defines fashion consciousness as the inclination to be aware of the latest fashion trends. A study on the effect of generational cohorts, gender, fashion consciousness, attitudes and impulse buying on fashion expenditure by Pentecost and Andrews (2010) defines fashion consciousness as the extent to which a consumer is engaged with and devoted to consuming fashion.

From the overview of the previous literature on fashion consciousness, the present researcher noticed the construct comprises a main element of involvement with latest fashion trends. Specifically, fashion consciousness construct is seen as the extent to which a consumer is engaged with and devoted to consuming fashion (Pentecost and

Andrews, 2010). Thus, fashion consciousness is how individual aware of the latest fashion trend in the market.

Therefore, the study adopted the following definition by Wells and Tigert (1971) and Manrai et al. (2001): *“Fashion consciousness is the extent of an individual’s interest in and attention to the latest fashion trends, the degree to which the individual dresses in style and is up to date with what is new in the market”*

Table 2.9: Selected Definitions of Fashion Consciousness

Scholar	Definition
Wells and Tigert (1971); Manrai et al. (2001)	The extent of an individual’s interest in and attention to the latest fashion trends, the degree to which the individual dresses in style and is up to date with what is new in the market.
Nam et al. (2007); Lee (2009)	A person’s degree of involvement with the styles or fashion of clothing.
Sung and Jeon (2008)	The inclination to be aware of the latest fashion trends.
Pentecost and Andrews (2010)	The extent to which a consumer is engaged with and devoted to consuming fashion.

b. Summary of Fashion Consciousness Literature

A significant amount of research have added colour to the literature by investigating the effect of the fashion consciousness construct as independent variable (please refer to Table 2.8). One of the earliest studies on fashion consciousness was done by Wells and Tigert (1971). They developed the measurement for the construct in their study on

consumers' activities, interests and opinions. For instance, Lumpkin (1985) found that a high proportion of active mature consumers were relatively heavy spenders on clothing, and, therefore, concluded that fashion conscious segments do exist among older apparel shoppers.

Previous studies have also investigated the relationship between the fashion consciousness of mature consumers and the fashion information sources used by members of that market segment. Greco and Paksoy (1989) found that fashion-conscious shoppers rely more on mass media information sources than do non-fashion-conscious segments. Specifically, O'Connor et al. (1997) believe that fashion conscious women are three times more likely to smoke than their male counterparts. Other scholars, Clodfelter and Fowler (2001) claim there is no significant difference in the ability of fashion conscious consumers to judge apparel quality than other consumers. Another study done by Lee (2006) believes that consumer fashion consciousness is positively related to consumer acceptance of a virtual store. While, a recent study conducted by Seock and Bailey (2008) claim that fashion consciousness is significantly and positively related to both information searches and purchases online for apparel products.

As shown in Table 2.10, fashion consciousness has been also used as a dependent variable. As such, Wan and Wells (2001) argue that researchers have explored fashion-related traits, consumption or behaviour in several ways. A number of scholars (Gould and Stern, 1989; Gurel and Gurel, 1979; Summers, 1970; Demby, 1972; Crask and Reynold, 1978) take both social and psychological aspects as the dependent variable into consideration when examining fashion-related concepts. Specifically, fashion-conscious consumers are related to traits such as self-assertive, competitive,

venturesome, attention seeking, self-confident (Summers, 1970); creative, upwardly mobile, innovative and sociable (Demby, 1972); slightly younger, better educated, higher income, actively at travel and sports and entertain frequently (Crask and Reynold, 1978).

In the same sense, Gurel and Gurel (1979) identify five factors as central components of clothing interest (i.e., concern with personal appearance, experimenting with appearance, heightened awareness of clothes, clothing as enhancement of security and clothing as enhancement of individuality) were interpreted as primarily personality variables. In a study conducted by Barak and Stern (1985), fashion-conscious women often feel younger than their chronological age. However, no relationship was found between age perception and fashion consciousness in Chowdhary's (1988) study. She also observes that although 80% of persons aged 65-91 said that they prefer to wear 'stylish clothing'; only 25% actually chose apparel that is currently fashionable. The remaining 75% selected classic styles more fashionable in previous decades, suggesting that perceptions of what is fashionable may vary with age.

Another scholars, Kwon (1997) and Gould and Stern (1989) show that there are gender differences with fashion consciousness as the dependent variable. Women as compared to men, indicate a greater interest in clothing (Kwon, 1997). Moreover, fashion conscious women pay more attention to external appearance while men are more private or internalized self-identify and maleness (Gould and Stern, 1989). In the same sense, Barak and Gould (1986) quoted by Gould (1987) also revealed that women have been found to score higher in fashion consciousness and fashion leadership than men.

Table 2.10: Summary of Fashion Consciousness Literature

Authors	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Wells and Tigert (1971)	Fashion consciousness	Activities, Interest and Opinions
Lumpkin (1985)	Fashion consciousness	Apparel shoppers
Greco and Paksoy (1989)	Fashion consciousness	Information source
O'Connor et al. (1997)	Fashion consciousness	Smoking behaviour
Clodfelter and Fowler (2001)	Fashion consciousness	Apparel quality
Lee (2006)	Fashion consciousness	Consumer's acceptance of virtual store
Seock and Bailey (2008)	Fashion consciousness	Online information searches Online purchases
Summers (1970)	Traits - Self-assertive - Competitive - Venturesome - Attention-seeking - Self-confident	Fashion consciousness
Demby (1972)	Traits - Creative - Upwardly mobile - Innovative - Sociable	Fashion consciousness
Crask and Reynold (1978)	Traits - Younger - Better educated - Higher income - Actively travel - Sports and entertained frequently	Fashion consciousness
Gurel and Gurel, (1979)	Traits - Conformity - Modesty - Attention to Comfort	Fashion consciousness
Barak and Stern (1985)	Chronological age	Fashion consciousness

Table 2.10, continued: Summary of Fashion Consciousness Literature

Barak and Gould (1986)	Gender	Fashion consciousness Fashion innovativeness
Chowdary (1988)	Age perception	Fashion consciousness
Kwon (1997); Gould and Stern (1989)	Gender Schema	Fashion consciousness
Wan and Wells (2001)	Psychological and behavioural characteristics Demographic factors (gender, age and income)	Fashion consciousness
Manrai et al. (2001)	Demographic factors (ethnicity, gender, age and income)	Fashion consciousness
Parker et al. (2004)	Demographic factors (ethnicity, gender, age and income)	Fashion consciousness
Bakewell et al. (2006)	Generation Y male consumers	Fashion consciousness
Guo et al. (2006)	Shopping frequency Nationals' egoism	Fashion consciousness
Blyth (2006)	Gender	Fashion consciousness Fashion brands
Nam et al. (2007)	Chronological age Cognitive age Social involvement with fashion Clothing budget Preference of trousers over dresses	Fashion consciousness
Kavak and Gumusluoglu (2007)	Demographic factors (gender, age and income)	Fashion consciousness
Seock and Bailey (2008)	Demographic factors (gender)	Fashion consciousness
Safiek (2009)	Intrapersonal religiosity Interpersonal religiosity	Fashion consciousness

Another scholar, Guo et al. (2006) examined on the antecedents of international shopping behaviour among Mexican nationals in the United States. They argued that one of the immediate motives (i.e., fashion consciousness) is positively related to cross border shopping frequency for Mexican nationals in the United States. They also found that two inner motive (i.e., nationals' egoism) have a positive relationship with fashion consciousness among Mexican nationals. They believed that Mexicans shopped in the United States to get an access to the latest fashions and new products to fulfil their egoistic desires.

The overwhelming interest in fashion consciousness as a dependent variable continues with demographic variables (Wan and Wells, 2001; Manrai et al., 2001), gender differences (Blyth, 2006) and religiosity (Safiek, 2009). Specifically, Wan and Wells (2001) found that certain demographic variables (e.g., gender and age) are significant predictors to fashion consciousness. In their study on identifying the key psychological characteristics that make consumers sensitive to images and physical appearance, Wan and Wells (2001) claim that education and income variables do not emerge as significant predictors of fashion consciousness. In the same sense, research indicates that females tend to be more fashion conscious and are more knowledgeable about fashion brands (Blyth, 2006).

Interestingly, a study of fashion consciousness in the East Europe market shows that Westernized Hungarian young male respondents who have the highest income are more fashion conscious than their female counterparts (Manrai et al. 2001). In the Malaysian context, a study by Safiek (2009) found that no significant differences between intrapersonal religiosity (cognitive) and fashion consciousness. However, he argues that low and medium groups of interpersonal religiosity (behavioural) show significant

relationship towards fashion consciousness. In Safiek's study, the cognitive dimension focused on the individual's belief or personal religious experience while behavioural dimensions concerns the level of activity in religious organization.

Parker et al. (2004) in their study using fashion consciousness as a dependent variable found that indicators of ethnicity, gender, age and allowance have a significant effect on fashion consciousness. Their findings may support the idea of market differences in fashion consciousness between developed and less developed countries. However, any attempt at explaining the differences found between United States and Japanese teens requires a discussion of the similarities between those two countries. First, the United States and Japan are among the world's wealthiest nations. The samples from the three countries in Parker et al. (2004) study were purposefully drawn to be relatively equivalent in terms of socioeconomic status (all samples were drawn from middle-class areas).

The fact remains that middle class Chinese have considerably less disposable income than those in either Japan or United States. Despite China's recent economic success, average incomes remain at one-tenth those of the United States, which limits the purchasing power of many Chinese (Anderson and Hee, 1998). Moreover, Chinese parents in one-child families have high expectations for their children's futures and as such education may be given a higher priority than fashion. In families with limited incomes, it may not be possible to commit significant resources to their child's stylishness as well as their child's education. At any rate, commitment to fashion may be given a much lower priority than education. In support to this, Wysocki (1997) reported 26 percent of the disposable income of one-child families went towards the child's school supplies. This study showed that while females were significantly more

fashion conscious than males in both Japan and the United States, there were very little differences between genders in China on this variable.

Bakewell et al. (2006) in their exploration of United Kingdom generation Y male fashion consciousness argue that there is a relatively high level of fashion consciousness but not necessarily fashion adaptation. In the same sense, Kavak and Gumusluoglu (2007), in their exploration on the food market, also use fashion consciousness as dependent variable in their study. Their findings revealed that income and fashion consciousness are negatively related. Kavak and Gumusluoglu argue that fashion consciousness is positively related with gender and age. They further argued that female respondents are more fashion conscious from their male counterparts.

Recent studies by Nam et al. (2007) and Seock and Bailey (2008) also examined fashion consciousness as a dependent variable. Specifically, Nam et al. (2007) argue that an individual does not have to be either a fashion opinion leader or a fashion innovator to be considered fashion conscious. Seock and Bailey (2008) claim that fashion consciousness is significantly and positively related to both information search and purchase online for apparel products as mentioned earlier in this section. They also found that female respondents had a significantly higher level of fashion consciousness than male counterparts.

c. Linking American Popular Culture and Fashion Consciousness

There is no research have linked the relationship between American popular culture and fashion consciousness. However, a number of studies try to link role model (American popular culture dimension) and fashion consciousness. Specifically, Sproles (1979)

argues that the concept of fashion is defined as the set of behaviours temporarily adopted by people because they are perceived to be socially appropriate for the time and situation. From this perspective, fashion involves the adoption of symbols to provide an identity. The symbols may be from any socially visible object that communicates meaning within the popular culture. Sproles believes that fashion tends to grow slowly, remain popular for a while, and then declines slowly. Based on past literature, the influence of famous role models (American popular culture dimension) is one of the contributors of popular culture (specifically American popular culture) communicates fashion symbols that provide an identity to adolescents who are trying to establish their personalities. Therefore, we believe that a higher influence from the role model (American popular culture dimension) will lead to a higher tendency for fashion consciousness.

In the same sense, Harter (1989) found that adolescents' communication, selection of clothing or hairstyle express their difference from adults to children and similarity with their peers (Harter, 1989). They develop their different appearance in part by imitating idols (sub-dimension of expression of idolization) such as pop singers (role model). It presents viewers with new "televisual experience" that includes among its elements real and surreal portrayals of the "personal style" of the icon of teen popular culture (i.e., rock star) (i.e., American popular culture dimension) (Kaplan, 1987). A research by Hogg and Banister (2000) argue that clothes play an important role in a pop star's appeal to their fans, and clearly communicate certain messages about that pop star's identity and also their music. In short, the more adolescents are influenced by pop stars (role model as American popular culture dimension), the higher the tendency to be more fashion conscious.

A number of scholars also argue that products and brands have the ability to communicate messages to others. They believe that product styles determine how consumers who own the product are perceived by others. In other words, the products or services consumed by the role model (American popular culture dimension) may affect consumers' fashion consciousness (Solomon, 1983; Holman, 1981; Belk, 1978). Other scholars, i.e., Raviv et al. (1996), argue that modelling a role model (American popular culture dimension) refers to the desire to be like an idol, which may involve imitation of the idolized figures by for example copying their dress and hairstyle (expression of idolization dimension). Explicitly, they posit that consumers try to express their idolization of their role model (American popular culture dimension) through fashion such as dress and hairstyle. In other words, the more influenced American popular culture has on adolescents, the higher the possibility they will be fashion conscious.

The vogue of linking role model (American popular culture dimension) and fashion consciousness continues with the studies of Solomon and Englis (1993) and McCracken (1986). Specifically, Solomon and Englis (1993) claim that the stylistic behaviour of these role models (American popular culture dimension) may influence the audience as strongly as the explicit messages they deliver. Thus, Solomon and Englis (1993) argue that the heroes of popular culture seen in television, in movies, or on stage may become icons of style. For example, Madonna use of lingerie as outerwear and thereby provide prototypes that consumers strive to emulate. As some have noted, the heroes of popular culture influence the verbal expressions, hairstyles, clothing, music, food preferences, and even the basic social values of adolescents (see Rice 1981). Another scholars, Goldsmith et al. (1996) and Gould and Barak (1988) argue that by owning the latest styles of clothing, consumers gain prestige among their peers (imitation as one of American popular culture dimension). Based on the argument by Solomon and Englis

(1993), Goldsmith et al. (1996), Rice (1981) and Gould and Barak (1988), we believe that the role models, e.g., famous entertainers (American popular culture dimension), stylistic behaviour (in terms of clothing and behaviours portrayed) may lead to fashion consciousness among consumers.

In the same sense, clothes plays an important part in pop stars' appeal for fans, and clearly communicate certain messages about that pop star's identity and also their music (Hogg and Banister, 2000). When the fans criticize the fashion sense of pop stars, they are often voicing their disapproval of the kind of music produced by that artist. Pop stars have the power to make certain looks popular and fashionable. Imitation (American popular culture dimension) of fashion trends is an important instrument for meaning transfer from the pop stars to the adolescents; and can be linked to the grooming ritual identified by McCracken (1986) for the transfer of meaning from products to consumers. Thus, the heroes of popular culture seen on television, in movies, or on stage may become icons of style and thereby provide prototypes that consumers strive to emulate. We believe it is reasonable to infer that the greater the influence of American popular culture, the higher the possibility the consumer will be fashion conscious.

Previous researchers in psychology, sociology and communication have also consistently pointed out that adolescents rely on popular celebrities from the fields of entertainment, music, film and television for information about everything ranging from preferred dress-style to desired values (Brown and Hendee, 1989; Pratkanis and Aronson, 1992). Englis (1991) postulates that a famous pop-rock group 'New Kids On The Block' (as an icon of role model) conveyed messages that are not linked directly to a particular product but to a particular style. Englis believes that the clothing and

lifestyles that this group represents have had a tremendous impact on the teenage audience.

Interestingly, Strinati (2000) states that the further expansion of advertising and sponsorship has meant that an increasing number of television programmes have become consumer guides in all but name. In his writing, he also highlighted that the number of television programmes aired, however indirectly, shape viewer's lifestyle and consumption. They are about organizing an appropriate consumer life-style for viewers, but it is in the areas of clothes, cooking, travel, motoring, entertainment, etc., or, more generally, about how to be a good consumer.

For instances, Paula Abdul appeared as one of the three judges or personality for the reality television music competition series, American Idols from 2001 to 2009. Paula Abdul Jewellery homepage on QVC reported that her American Idol wardrobe often includes a number of necklace, rings, bracelet and earrings that she designs and she often gives show contestants custom-design jewellery. In 2007, Paula Abdul Jewellery launched its nationwide consumer debut on QVC (multinational corporation specialized in televised home shopping broadcasts in four countries – United States, United Kingdom, Germany and Japan), with the tagline “fashion jewellery designed with heart and soul” (Paula Abdul Jewellery homepage on QVC).

Paula's first QVC appearance resulted in 15 sell outs of her first jewellery collection involving more than 34,000 pieces (Guyot Brothers Company, Incorporation Official Website). This indicates that the personalities (role model as dimension of American popular culture) in the television programmes indirectly guide adolescents in formulating their style such as in clothing, motoring, etc., (an act of being more fashion

conscious). In short, the more viewers are influenced by television personalities (role model), the higher the tendency to be more fashion conscious.

More empirical evidence has found a link between role model (American popular culture dimension) and fashion consciousness. Wan and Wells (2001) argue that highly fashion conscious people have colourful entertaining activities. They believe that fashion conscious consumers are more likely to go to concerts and movies. Compared to other facets of fashion consciousness, individuality is more correlated with activities such as going to pop or rock concerts and movies. Importantly, this indicates that highly fashion conscious people are more likely to be influenced by American popular culture.

Recently, Kavak and Gumusluoglu (2007), who explore the segmentation for foreign and domestic food markets in Turkey, claim that fashion conscious people admire the West and see western products as being modern and fashionable (an act of being highly influenced by American popular culture). They argue that the respondents perceive those who prefer domestic products as traditional. Kavak and Gumusluoglu believe that the Turkish go to McDonald's not only for the product, but for its western and fashionable character (i.e., American popular culture). They further argue that McDonald's itself is the fashion for many Turkish individuals.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the relationship between American Popular Culture and fashion consciousness can be summarized as follows:

P1d = The greater the American popular culture influences on adolescents the higher will be the adolescents' fashion consciousness.

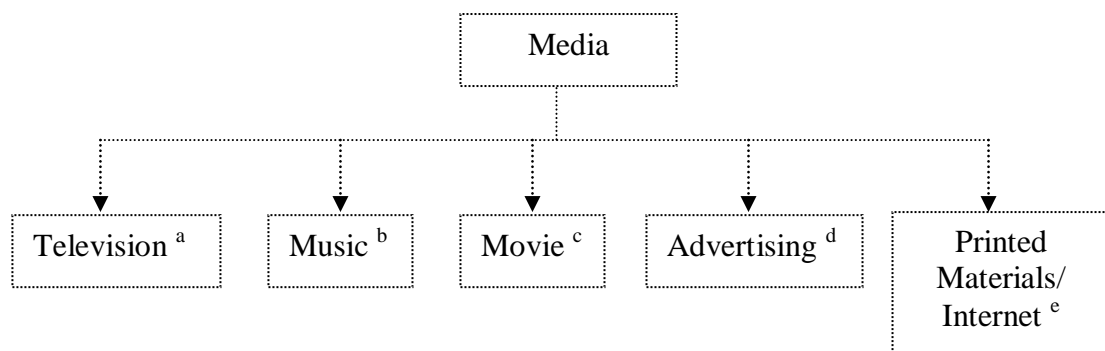
The hypothesized relationship is investigated in this present study.

2.5.5 American Popular Culture and American Music Television Exposure

In this sub section, the researcher will discuss the definition and summary of American music television exposure literature. Since not much research has been conducted on the American music television exposure construct, this study will first define media exposure and television exposure. This study will make an attempt to further explore the American music television exposure construct.

Figure 2.5 has been adopted from various sources (i.e., Roberts, 2000; Brown and Witherspoon, 2002; Stewart et al., 2003; Brown et al. 2006). All the aforementioned authors have divided mass media used by adolescents into five main types. They are television, music, movie, advertising, and printed materials and the Internet.

Figure 2.5: Mass Media Used by Adolescents



Sources: Adapted from various sources (i.e., Roberts, 2000; Brown and Witherspoon, 2002; Stewart et al., 2003; Brown et al. 2006).

^a Include broadcast and cable television, taped TV shows and commercial videos.

^b Includes radio, CDs and tapes.

^c Includes commercial videos, movies on television and in theatres.

^d Includes advertising in all media.

^e Includes newspaper, magazines, other printed materials and the Internet.

As indicated in Figure 2.5, Roberts (2000), Brown and Witherspoon (2002), Stewart et al. (2003) and Brown et al. (2006) include broadcast and cable television, taped TV shows and commercial videos in the television medium. With regards to music, they include radio, CDs and tapes. For the movie medium, they include commercial videos, movies on television and in theatres. In the advertisement medium, they include all advertisements from all mediums. Lastly, in printed materials and the Internet medium, they include newspaper, magazines, other printed materials and the Internet.

a. Defining Media Exposure

Table 2.11 shows a number of scholars' attempt to define a media exposure construct. In this report, we will discuss five different definitions by five authors. A study conducted by Summers (1972) on media exposure patterns of consumer innovators define media exposure as amount of television viewing, radio listening and readership for magazines and newspapers among respondents. Specifically, Adamchak and Mbizvo (1991) in their exploration on media exposure among Zimbabwean men define the construct as the ability to read, access to various types of media and the frequency with which the respondents use different media.

In the same sense, a study on media and youth by Roberts (2000) defines media exposure as the total amount of time they spend with each individual medium. Slater and Rasinki (2005) in their research using media exposure as mediating variable influencing social risk judgement define media exposure as Assessment of each medium being viewed or read. In a recent study on preadolescent girls, Harrison and Hefner (2006) define media exposure as a sizable degree of variance in media consumption habits.

Table 2.11: Selected Definitions of Media Exposure

Scholar	Definition
Summers (1972)	Amount of television viewing, radio listening and readership for magazines and newspapers among respondents.
Adamchak and Mbizvo (1991)	Ability to read, access to various types of media and the frequency with which they use different media.
Roberts (2000)	The total amount of time they spend with each individual medium.
Slater and Rasinki (2005)	Assessment of each medium being viewed or read.
Harrison and Hefner (2006)	A sizable degree of variance in media consumption habits.

b. Defining Television Exposure

Table 2.12 indicates a number of scholars' definitions on television exposure. Scholars have assessed the viewing of specific television programmes – on the previous day (e.g., Green et al., 1969), over the course of a week (e.g., Goodhardt et al., 1975; Palmgreen et al., 1981; Webster and Wakshlag, 1982; Robinson et al., 1998; Van Den Bulck and Buellens, 2005) or several weeks (e.g., Frank and Greenberg, 1980; Gensch and Ranganathan, 1974). All the aforementioned scholars define the television exposure construct as the viewing of specific television programmes over a specific time frame (i.e., previous day, over the course of a week or several weeks). In the same sense, A.C. Nielsen Co. (1982) and Bower (1973) define the construct as the amount of viewing done by various segments of population.

Table 2.12: Definitions of Television Exposure

Scholar	Definition
Greenberg, Dervin and Dominic (1968)	Viewing of specific television programmes for on the previous day.
Goodhardt et al. (1975), Palmgreen et al. (1981) and Robinson et al. (1998)	Viewing of specific television programmes for over the course of a week.
Gensch and Ranganathan (1974) and Frank and Greenberg (1980)	Viewing of specific television programmes for several weeks.
A.C. Nielsen Co. (1982) and Bower (1973)	Amount of viewing done by various segments of population.
Webster and Wakshlag (1982)	An act of choice in which an individual selects from a range of television programmes.
Van Den Bulck and Beullens (2005)	Volume of television viewing for each day of the week.

c. Defining American Music Television Exposure

Due to the absence of an available definition in the earlier literature for the American music television exposure construct, the present researcher has taken the challenge to define the American music television exposure construct. However, the explorations of media exposure and television exposure literatures are taken as guidance in defining American television music exposure construct.

The media exposure construct involve media frequency element (Roberts, 2000; Slater and Rasinki, 2005; Harrison and Hefner, 2006). While, television exposure construct can be seen as having elements of viewing of specific television programmes for a specific duration (Van Den Bulck and Beullens, 2005). As mentioned earlier, the

exploration of American music television construct definition is guided by both media exposure and television exposure constructs.

Based on the foregoing discussions on the elements involve in media exposure and television exposure constructs, the present study would like to purpose the following definition of American music television exposure: “*American music television exposure is the extent one is exposed to American music television programmes*”.

As such, the definition proposed comprises all the elements in both media exposure and television exposure constructs.

d. Summary of American Music Television Exposure Literature

The MTV network brought music videos to the United States cable television audience for the first time in 1981 (Englis, 1993). Since 1981 MTV has served as one of the primary media outlets aimed at youth (McGrath, 1996). In terms of both reach and influence, MTV is widely distributed and has a strong global presence (Potratz, 2007). MTV also has, more or less, shaped the way that youth look and talk, both in the United States and abroad (Smith, 2005).

Many research have been done with respect to music television exposure as an independent variable (please refer to Table 2.13). Most of the scholars utilise the music television exposure construct as an independent variable. Specifically, a book by Goethals (1981) highlighted that music programmes and music television are important for communicating the visual images of pop stars as icons. However, videos are generally viewed as being of secondary importance to the song. This linked to the

emphasis placed on the lyrics of the songs. A British music industry study conducted by Hogg and Banister (2000) believed that the primary impression is that videos are for communicating and promoting a pop star's image. In Hogg and Banister (2000) study, respondents identify the following functions for videos: as products in their own right, sold through retailers; to promote an artist on television; to entertain. And yet, clearly videos promote the stars as 'icons' which is comparable to the ritual of 'integrating individuals into a social whole' (Goethals 1981) in this case integration via the rituals of fan behaviour for 'possession' of the star's image.

In the same sense, a number of research done in United States (Peterson and Khan, 1984; Strouse and Buerkel-Rothfuss, 1987a, 1987b; Brown and Newcomer, 1991; Strouse et al., 1995) found that exposure to sexually suggestive materials, especially music television (MTV) and R-rated films – is significantly associated with premarital sexual permissiveness among youth. Despite MTV's heavy influence on youth and trends both within and outside the media industry, the majority of the work conducted in United States that has been published on MTV relates to the content of the music videos (Baxter et al., 1985; Brown and Campbell, 1986; Sherman and Dominick, 1986; Greeson and Williams, 1986; Waite and Paludi, 1987; Hansen and Hansen, 1989; Middleton, 2001; Smith and Boyson, 2002; Smith, 2005).

A number of studies conducted in United States pertaining to rock music videos in MTV programmes have been found to have a high level of sexual and violent content (Baxter, De Riemer, Landini, Leslie and Singletary, 1985; Brown and Campbell, 1986; Sherman and Dominick, 1986; Waite and Paludi, 1987; Hansen and Hansen, 1989), the concern of the National Coalition on Television Violence (1984) and others (Gore, 1987; Steinem, 1988) that rock music videos may be unwholesome viewing for young

people, seems warranted. Besides being high in sex and violence, rock music videos are replete with portrayals of non-violent forms of antisocial behaviour (Brown and Campbell, 1986; Hansen and Hansen, 1989), such as rebellion against parental and lawful authority, drunkenness, promiscuity and derogation and devaluation of women, the work ethic and family values. Also, rock music videos in MTV programmes almost always portray antisocial behaviour in a positive light, making the behaviour seem desirable and commonplace.

Despite numerous content analyses and concern pertaining to the content, the prevalence and popularity of music videos is a relatively new phenomenon, and only a few experiments have been conducted in United States to study their effects on viewers (Greeson and Williams, 1986; Hansen, 1989; Hansen and Hansen, 1988, 1990). Research by Hansen and Hansen (1991) and Zillman and Mundorf (1987) link music television exposure and specific behaviour such as aggressiveness and sexuality.

Englis et al. (1993) consider music television as a significant force in popular culture that is a hybrid of several entertainment and commercial forms of communication. In his study that utilise United States and Sweden samples, Englis et al. (1993) argue that classic rock, the oldest of the genres, may reflect the growth in prevalence of consumption imagery in popular music and especially in music video. In his earlier study, Englis (1991) believes that music television presents viewers with information concerning the products consumed and the lifestyles lived by highly attractive role models, especially for the teenaged audience. Music television presents consumers with powerful consumption images. Englis (1991) further posits that consumers view rock stars in settings other than the typical concert stage. He also found that in many

instances, these “rock idols” are seen using a wide array of products, ranging from clothing, food, entertainment, product categories and automobiles.

In a somewhat recent study, Ebenkamp (2003) reports that Cheskin Research principal Christopher Ireland mentions that MTV is the foremost influence on youth in terms of fashion, sexuality, music and visual style. In the same sense, recent research conducted in Belgium by Van Den Bulck and Buellens (2005) believes that music television exposure is a significant predictor of adolescents’ alcohol consumption.

As indicated in Table 2.13, a significant amount of music television studies have attempted to investigate music television exposure as dependent variable. A survey of United States teenagers by Sun and Lull (1986) shows that the teenagers watch music television because they perceive it to be more interesting and more socially relevant and because they find other television programmes boring. The analysis of the study also reveals that the visual element of music television has a direct impact on adolescents’ sense of the “meaning” of music. One of the respondents quoted: “What better way to listen to music than by watching it too?” According to the researchers, in general, music television is thought to be more visually profound and relevant than other television programming. In their survey of 603 ninth through twelfth graders they found that 80% report viewing music television. The results also showed that the “average” amount of exposure per day to music television is 2 hours, with weekend use slightly more than weekday use. Empirical studies have emphasized the motivations underlying teenage viewing patterns (Brown et al., 1986; Sun and Hull, 1986).

Table 2.13: Summary of American Music Television Exposure Literature

Authors	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Goethals (1981); Hogg and Banister (2000)	Music television exposure	Visual images of pop stars
Brown and Newcomer (1991); Peterson and Khan (1984); Strouse and Buerkel-Rothfuss (1989); Strouse (1987); Strouse et al. (1995)	Music television exposure R-Rated Films	Premarital sexual permissiveness
Baxter et al. (1985); Brown and Campbell (1986); Hansen and Hansen (1989); Sherman and Dominick (1986); Waite and Paludi (1987); Greeson and Williams (1986); Middleton (2001); Smith and Boyson (2002); Smith (2005)	Music television exposure	Content analysis on sexual and violent behaviour
Brown and Campbell (1986); Hansen and Hansen (1989)	Music television exposure	Non-violent forms of antisocial behaviours (i.e., rebellion against parental and lawful authority, drunkenness, promiscuity and derogation and devaluation of women, the work ethic and family values)
Hansen and Hansen (1991); Zillman and Mundorf (1987)	Music television exposure	Aggressiveness and sexuality
Englis et al. (1991)	Music television exposure	Consumer cultures and consumption messages
Englis et al. (1993)	Music television exposure	Consumption imagery

Table 2.13, continued: Summary of American Music Television Exposure Literature

Ebenkamp (2003)	Music television exposure	Fashion, Music and Sexuality
Den Bulck and Buellens (2005)	Music television exposure	Alcohol consumption
Sun and Lull (1986)	Demographic factors (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity and income)	Music television exposure
Sommers-Flanagan et al. (1993)	Gender role	Music television exposure
Thelen (2002)	Gender	Music television exposure

In the same sense, another study conducted in United States by Sommers-Flanagan et al. (1993) analyzes music television music videos across gender role based content categories. Their results included the following: (a) men appeared nearly twice as often as women; (b) men engaged in significantly more aggressive and dominant behaviour; (c) women engaged in significantly more implicitly sexual and subservient behaviour; (d) women were more frequently the object of explicit, implicit and aggressive sexual advances. Thelen (2002) conducted a study in United States investigated the influence of music television on aspects of social identity including clothing, hairstyles and noticeable attitude. She found that female participants scored higher than the level of influence measure than male participants.

e. Linking American Popular Culture and American Music Television Exposure

Despite the importance of relating the concept of American popular culture and American music television exposure, there is none empirical research and theoretical

model on the nature had been explored. However, recent empirical studies suggest that there is a positive relationship between role model (dimension of American Popular Culture) and American music television exposure. The overview of related previous literature on adolescents' socialization identifies the teens' ability to observe and learn from the media, as well as allowing them to call on the media to satisfy various individual needs (see Englis et al. 1991). Often, adolescents are described as using media for the purposes of entertainment, identity formation, sensation-seeking, coping and youth-formation identification (Arnett, 1995; Steele and Brown, 1995). The findings from past research support the idea that adolescents use media to help define the world around them (Arnett, 1995; Davis and Davis, 1995). Media channels (newspaper, magazines and television) also represent the other important system in the construction and transfer of meaning and images (Negus, 1992).

A related study conducted in United States by Rice (1981) found that American heroes of popular culture influence the verbal expressions, hairstyles, clothing, music, food preference and even the basic social values of adolescents. In other words, we believe that the music television with American heroes of popular culture (e.g., famous American singers or music bands) embed information about their personality, styles and clothing. The information in the music video may lead to media preference in choosing certain types of television programme (i.e., music television). Adolescents (in particular) tend to express their idolization through seeking information about their idols in certain types of television programme (e.g., music television). They also imitate their idol's verbal expressions, hairstyles, clothing, music, food preference and even the basic social values in order to express their idolization. Consequently, the current researcher believes that it is reasonable to infer that the more adolescents are influenced by American popular culture, the higher would be the possibility of their exposure to

American music television to search for or watch their favourite American singers or music bands' styles personality and latest trends.

In the related research done by Brown et al. (1986) and Sun and Lull (1986) in United States argue that information about desirable and undesirable products and lifestyles is sifted by teens from magazines advertisements, television commercials, movies, store displays, observation of peers and celebrities, and particularly from music television. For instance, girls worldwide are imitating Lady Gaga's trademark thunderbolt streak (down the forehead and cross one eye), fingerless gloves, big black shades, long light blonde locks and wacky, three-dimensional structured clothing (Fashionstyleme Website). These messages are assimilated by teenage consumers, who construct a lifestyle representing their unique interpretations of the consumption ideal prevalent in popular culture.

Therefore, explicitly explain that teenage idolized role models (e.g., famous American singers or music bands) may be the main incentive to select types of media to find out the information about particular popular entertainers. Adolescents also try to express their idolization through imitation and finally affecting their lifestyle. Specifically, we believe that the more the adolescents are influenced by American popular culture, the higher the possibility of their exposure to American music television to search for the information about particular popular entertainers.

Other research in United States (e.g., Brown et al. 1986) and Sweden (Bjurstorm, 1992) confirm that reviewers use music television to learn about current trends. In short, it shows that music television that carries famous American role models (e.g., popular singer or music band) may lead to media preferences of choosing music television to

track down the latest trends. Therefore, adolescents (in particular) try to express their idolization towards specific American role models (American popular culture dimension) by imitating behaviour/trends popularized by their famous American idols (famous American singer or music band). We believe that it is reasonable to speculate that the more adolescents are influenced by American popular culture, the higher the possibility of their exposure to American music television programmes to learn about current trends.

Later research further investigates the issue of selecting types of media. A relevant study by Tootelian and Gaedeke (1992) argues that the media is a primary information source for three product categories. Specifically, Tootelian and Gaedeke found that television is the main source for entertainment/recreational activities/movies and personal care products. Another researcher, Zollo (1995) found that trend conscious teens are very active in utilizing the media and advertising in seeking out the latest products, services and fashions. Thus, it can be concluded that television may be the main media source among teens to search for desirable products and services. It is also known that television also carries American role models (American popular culture dimension) (e.g., famous American singers or music bands) that may fulfil adolescents' interest in particular activities (e.g., entertainment, music television programmes, etc.). Therefore, adolescents' interest to update themselves with the latest favourite American singers/music bands' information will lead to preferences in choosing specific favourite television programmes. In other words, the harder adolescents try to express their idolization (American popular culture dimension) towards a specific American role model, the higher possibility the adolescents will be exposed to their preferred media source (i.e., American music television) to get the latest information about entertainment/recreational activities/movies and personal care products.

A number of scholars (Ogletree et al., 1990; Evans, Rutberg, Sather and Turner, 1991; Pierce, 1990; 1993) argue that the emphasis on physical appearance and body type are prevalent even in children's television commercials and popular teen magazines. Both children's television commercials and popular teen magazines are also heavily emphasizes fashion, beauty and stereotypical female roles. It is a clear indication that television commercials or television programmes emphasize popular American celebrities' (popular American singer/music band) latest fashions. Therefore, it may lead to media preference of choosing television programmes to track down their American celebrities (e.g., famous American singer/music band). Therefore, adolescents (in particular) try to express their idolization (American popular culture dimension) towards American specific role models by tracking down latest fashions through related programmes, for instance, music television programmes. Sun and Lull (1986) argue that United States adolescents like to watch music videos because the images enhance their enjoyment and appreciation of the music and help them understand the message of the songs. In other words, they watch MTV to see particular groups, singers and concerts or have a generalized attraction to the musical content of MTV.

Earlier study conducted by Englis (1991) examines American music television influences on consumers, consumer culture and the transmission of consumption messages. In the same sense, Englis et al. (1993) utilise United States and Sweden samples investigate the consumption imagery in music television. They regard music television as a significant force in popular culture that is a hybrid of several entertainment and commercial forms of communication. Both studies believe that music television acts as a consumer socializing agent; it associates consumption imagery with relevant outcomes for its role models. Englis et al. (1993) also argue that MTV-Europe was launched in 1987 and is a powerful vehicle for exporting popular culture. Another

scholar, Martin and McCracken (2001) found that almost half of the music videos broadcast in the United Kingdom contain more role model behaviour outcomes than New Zealand music videos. Lastly, Potratz (2007) argues that MTV has a powerful influence on youth and is a major reference of popular culture, fashion, music and social trends.

Based on the preceding discussion, American Popular Culture construct's effect on American music television exposure can be summarized as follows:

P1e = The greater the American popular culture influences on adolescents the higher will be American music television exposure.

This relationship will be investigated in this study.

2.6 American Popular Culture and Religiosity

In this sub section, the study will discuss the definition, summary of religiosity literature and the linkages of American popular culture and religiosity. Table 2.12 shows a summary of religiosity studies literature.

a. Defining Religiosity

Delener (1990) in his research on the effect of religious factors on perceived risk in durable goods purchase decision define religiosity as the degree to which beliefs in specific religious values and ideals are held and practices by individual. In the related study, religiosity is defined as a belief in God accompanied by a commitment to follow principles believed to be set by God (McDaniel and Burnett, 1990). A research done by Mookherjee (1993) on effects of religiosity and selected variables on the perception of well-being defines religiosity as in terms of public or participatory (based on church

membership and the frequency of church attendance) and private or devotional religious behaviour (based on the frequency of prayer, bible reading and cumulative score of devotional intensity. Renzetti and Curran (1998) define religiosity as an individual's or group's intensity of commitment to a religious belief system. Miller (1998) defines religiosity as the extent one is engaged in religious belief and practice.

Studies in the 21st century, as shown in Table 2.14, define religiosity as the extent to which an individual's commitment to the religion he or she professes and its teachings, such as the individual's attitudes and behaviours reflect this commitment (Johnson et al., 2001). In the same sense, Koenig et al. (2001) define religiosity as a system of beliefs and practices that may include both internal and external forms of religious activity, such as prayer or attendance at religious services. Worthington et al. (2003) define religiosity as the degree to which a person uses adheres to his or her religious values, beliefs and practices and uses them in daily living. The supposition is that a highly religious person will evaluate the world through religious schemas and thus will integrate his or her religion into much of his or her life. Essoo and Dibb (2004) define religiosity as the degree of the respondent's belief in his/her religion. Penhollow et al. (2007) define religiosity as a various aspects of religious activity, dedication and belief. Bloodgood et al. (2008) define religiosity as an understanding, committing to and following a set of religious doctrines or principles.

Based on the discussion from the extensive literature pertaining to the construct, the present researcher noticed religiosity construct comprises beliefs (Essoo and Dibb, 2004) and commitments (Bloodgood et al., 2008) to a particular religion. Specifically, the construct can be viewed as the degree to which a person uses adheres to his or her religious values, beliefs, practices and uses them in daily living (Worlington et al.,

2003). Therefore, the current study would like to adopt the definition of religiosity proposed by Wilkes, Burnett and Howell (1986) as: “*Religiosity is the degree to which individuals show commitment to a particular religion*”. In short, the definition covers both crucial elements in explaining religiosity construct (i.e.: beliefs and commitments).”

Table 2.14: Selected Definitions of Religiosity

Scholar	Definition
Wilkes, Burnett and Howell (1986)	Degree to which individuals show commitment to a particular religion.
Delener (1990a)	The degree to which beliefs in specific religious values and ideals are held and practices by individual.
McDaniel and Burnett (1990)	As a belief in God accompanied by a commitment to follow principles believed to be set by God.
Mookherjee (1993)	In terms of public or participatory (based on church membership and the frequency of church attendance) and private or devotional religious behaviour (based on the frequency of prayer, bible reading and cumulative score of devotional intensity).
Miller (1998)	The extent one is engaged in religious belief and practice.
Renzetti and Curran (1998)	An individual’s or group’s intensity of commitment to a religious belief system.
Johnson et al. (2001)	The extent to which an individual’s commitment to the religion he or she professes and its teachings, such as the individual’s attitudes and behaviours reflect this commitment.
Koenig et al. (2001)	A system of beliefs and practices that may include both internal and external forms of religious activity, such as prayer or attendance at religious services.

Table 2.14, continued: Selected Definitions of Religiosity

Worthington et al. (2003)	The degree to which a person uses adheres to his or her religious values, beliefs and practices and uses them in daily living. The supposition is that a highly religious person will evaluate the world through religious schemas and thus will integrate his or her religion into much of his or her life.
Essoo and Dibb (2004)	The degree of the respondent's belief in his/her religion.
Penhollow et al. (2007)	Various aspects of religious activity, dedication and belief.
Bloodgood et al. (2008)	Understanding, committing to and following a set of religious doctrines or principles.

b. Summary of Religiosity Literature

Religiosity has been identified as a possible significant socio cultural factor in predicting individual differences in various aspects of personality and behaviour (Brown, 1986; Gorsuch, 1988; Hood, Spilka, Hunsberger and Gorsuch, 1996; Lau, 1989). Furthermore, religiousness may play a significant general role in the problem solving and decision making processes (Jones, 1958; Kaiser, 1991; Pargament et al., 1988). As indicated in Table 2.15, a significant number of studies have attempted to investigate brand sensitivity as an independent variable.

As such, there have been a few empirical studies that correlated religiosity to perceived risk and uncertainty. John et al. (1986) found that a relationship between religiosity and willingness to try new products and perceived risk. In a study on geographic subcultures

in United State, Gentry et al. (1988) reported that residents in areas with higher levels of religiosity perceive higher levels of risk with new products. A study by Delener (1990b) explored the effects of religiosity on perceived risks and uncertainty in durable goods purchase decision. His study was on affluent Catholics and Jewish households in the Northeast of United States for the purchase of new cars and microwave ovens. The findings of the study suggested that Catholics are more likely to be sensitive to any potentially negative consequences of their purchase decisions. This sensitivity is more apparent among consumers with a higher degree of religiosity. This attitude relates to the tendency of highly religious individuals to be less secure and low in self-confident as compared to less religious individuals.

Delener and Shiffman (1988) reported a study on the relationship between religiosity (independent variable) and role structure of husbands and wives in family decision-making process (dependent variable). The findings demonstrated that for major durable goods in Catholic households, husbands are major influence in most of the purchase decisions. In contrast, in Jewish households, husbands and wives shared equally in making most purchase decision. Their findings also indicated that husbands in pro-religious households are the dominant influence in purchasing major durable goods, as the decision making process progressed from problem recognition to final decision. In non-religious households, husbands and wives are substantially more likely to make purchasing decisions jointly as compared to their counterparts in non-religious households.

Table 2.15: Summary of Religiosity Literature

Authors	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Jones (1958); Kaiser (1991) and Pargament et al. (1988)	Religiosity	General role in the problem solving and decision making processes
Brown (1986); Gorsuch (1988); Hood, Spilka, Hunsberger and Gorsuch (1996); Lau (1989)	Religiosity	Socio cultural factor in predicting individual differences in various aspects of personality and behaviour
John et al. (1986); Gentry et al. (1988); Delener (1990b)	Religiosity	Perceived risk and uncertainty
Delener and Schiffman (1988)	Religiosity	Role structure of husbands and wives in family decision-making process for major durable goods.
Delener (1989)	Religiosity	External search information Media usage patterns
Delener (1990a)	Religiosity	Consumer innovativeness - Willingness to try new brands - Direct measure of Innovativeness
LaBarbera and Stern (1990)	Religiosity	Repeat purchase behaviour
McDaniel and Burnett (1990)	Religiosity	Importance of various retail department store attributes
Smith and Frankenberger (1991)	Religiosity	Quality sought from products Social risk involve with the purchase Brand loyal Price sensitivity

Table 2.15, continued: Summary of Religiosity Literature

Francis and Katz (1992)	Religiosity	Personality - Neuroticism - Introversion - Extraversion - Tender mindedness - Tough mindedness - Psychoticism - Lie scale score
Rodriguez (1993)	Religiosity	Purchasing patterns
Mookherjee (1993)	Religiosity	Perception of well-being
Siguaw et al. (1995)	Religiosity	Shopping behaviour - Local shopping conditions
Sood and Nasu (1995)	Religiosity	Purchasing behaviour for a sample of Japanese and American consumers.
Siguaw and Simpson (1997)	Religiosity	Sunday shopping and out shopping behaviour
Karpov (2002)	Religiosity	Political tolerance
Esso and Dibb (2004)	Religiosity	Shopping behaviour
Cukur et al. (2004)	Religiosity	Conservative values Collectivism values
Dunn (2005)	Religiosity	Substance Use Behaviour - Alcohol - Cigarette - Marijuana - Cocaine
Tarn et al. (2005)	Religiosity	Trust in one physician
Safiek (2006)	Religiosity	Shopping orientation - Quality conscious - Impulsive shopping - Price conscious
Rusnah and Ab. Mumin (2006)	Religiosity	Perceptions on unethical business practices

Table 2.15, continued: Summary of Religiosity Literature

Elci (2007)	Religiosity	Need for achievement Need for power Need for affiliation Need for hard working orientation
Penhollow et al. (2007)	Religiosity	Sexual Behaviour - Hooking Up Behaviour
Bloodgood et al.(2008)	Religiosity	Cheating Behaviour
Farhadinasab et al. (2008)	Religiosity	Locus control Knowledge about side effect of drug abuse Substance Abuse
Md Zabid and Saidatul (2008)	Religiosity	Perceived Business Ethics
Kurpis et al. (2008)	Religiosity	Commitment to moral self-improvement Importance of ethics Problem recognition Behavioural intentions
Wan Marhaini et al. (2008)	Religiosity	Main choice of bank
Shirazi and Morowatisharifabad (2009)	Religiosity	High-risk sexual behaviour
Li et al. (2009)	Religiosity	Shopping behaviour
Rusnah (2009)	Religiosity	Tolerant towards unethical business activities
Wilkes et al. (1986)	Age Gender Income	Religiosity
Smith and Frankenberger (1991)	Age	Religiosity
Ong and Moschis (2006)	Ethnicity	Religiosity
Rusnah and Ab. Mumin (2006)	Gender	Religiosity
Chaaya et al. (2007)	Gender	Religiosity

Table 2.15, continued: Summary of Religiosity Literature

Md Zabid and Saidatul (2008)	Ethnicity	Religiosity
Wan Marhaini et al. (2008)	Gender Age Family income Academic qualification Education stream	Religiosity
Barhem et al.(2009)	Gender	Religiosity
Rusnah (2009)	Gender Education stream	Religiosity

In a similar study, Delener (1989) investigated differences in external search information and media usage patterns (dependent variables) of Catholics and Jews and the associated influence of religiosity (independent variable). The findings indicated that Jews search for information more than Catholics and that the difference is greater for non-religious consumers. He also found differences in media usage between the two groups attributed to the religiosity of consumers in each religious group. In a study of religious influences on consumer innovativeness, Delener (1990a) used two types of measures of innovativeness: willingness to try new brands and a direct measure of innovativeness. The study showed that Jews are more willing than Catholics to try new movies, books and magazine. He also found that religious Catholics are more brand innovative than non-religious Catholics. In contrast, non-religious Jews are found to be more brand innovative than religious Jews.

Another study by LaBarbera and Stern (1990) explored the impact of religiosity (independent variable) on repeat purchase behaviour. Specifically, the study investigated whether intensity religious Jews engage in a higher level of repeat purchase

behaviour as compared to their non-intensity religious Jewish counterparts. Repeat purchase behaviour was measured by three distinct components: proportion of total purchases of a particular brand, individual's reaction to the absence of their favourite brand and the size of price incentives to induce brand switching. Using six non-durable products as the items of investigation, they found that Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews are differed significantly in their repeat purchase behaviour for detergent, orange juices, aluminium foil and toilet tissue for one of the three measures.

McDaniel and Burnett (1990) investigated the influence of religiosity (independent variable) on the importance of various retail department store attributes held by consumers. The results showed that one aspect of religiosity, religious commitment, is particularly measured by cognitive religiosity. Another aspect of religiosity, behavioural religiosity is significant in predicting the importance individuals place on certain retail evaluation criteria. They believed that consumers with a high degree of cognitive religious commitment view sales personnel friendliness, shopping efficiency and product quality as being of greater importance in selecting a retail store than do those low in cognitive religious commitment. Religious contribution (a behavioural component of religious commitment) is positively and significantly associated with sales personnel friendliness/assistance and credit availability.

In one of the few articles discussing religiosity effects on shopping behaviour, Smith and Frankenberger (1991) reported that the level of religiosity is positively related to age and that it affects quality sought in a product, the social risk involved with a purchase and price sensitivity among United States consumers. However, no significant effect of religiosity on brand loyalty is evidence. When the effect of religious affiliation is control, they found that the level of religiosity is related only to product quality and

price sensitivity. In the study conducted in Israel by Francis and Katz (1992) investigated on the effect of religiosity and personality. The data collected from predominantly Christian cultures in Israel suggested religiosity is associated with neuroticism, emotional stability, introversion and extraversion. Francis and Katz believed that religiosity has a positive relationship with tender mindedness and a negative relationship with tough mindedness and psychoticism. The study also revealed that there is a positive relationship between religiosity and lie scale scores.

Another scholar, Rodriguez (1993) quoted by Safiek (2006) investigated the effect of religiosity on the purchasing patterns of consumers in Peru. The findings indicated that the degree of religiosity influences the purchasing patterns of the middle and lower socioeconomic groups of the Peruvian population. In the upper class group, the influence of religiosity on the purchase behaviour was found to be indecisive even though this group is considering the most religious. His latent structure analysis of religiosity further suggested that individual and social consequence in the high group and religious values and practices in the middle and lower socioeconomic groups are the central dimensions that explains religiosity. The researcher concluded that religion, as a source of values in Peruvian Catholic societies, does not maintain its independence and is related to material behaviour.

Another study conducted in United States by Mookherjee (1993) focused the effect of religiosity, social participation and demographic aspects (i.e., gender, age, ethnicity, education, marital status and perceived financial status) on the perception of well-being. In their study, religiosity variable was explained by two dimensions (i.e., public religiosity and private religiosity). The findings suggested that public religiosity (church

membership and frequency of church attendance) are significant predictors of perception of well-being.

In another comparative study, Siguaw et al. (1995) compared the effect of religiosity on Sunday shopping behaviour for United States and New Zealand samples. They found that in the United States, individuals with high spiritual religiosity are more satisfied with local shopping conditions and less likely to shop outside their local trading area than their less religious counterpart. More religious shoppers are also more likely to shop fewer Sundays during the year and to believe that non-essential businesses should close on Sundays. The only significant effects of religiosity on shopping behaviours of the New Zealanders are on the behalf that non-essential businesses close on Sunday and satisfaction with local shopping. The researchers also noted that shoppers in the United States are much more religious than those in New Zealand. As a result of the religiousness, they are more likely to believe that non-essential businesses should close on Sundays, to spend a greater percentage of retail expenditures on Sunday shopping and to be satisfied with local shopping than New Zealanders. New Zealanders on the other hand are much more likely to out shop and to spend more Sundays shopping than United States consumers, although consumers in the United States spent a larger percentage of their retail dollars out shopping than did the New Zealanders.

Sood and Nasu (1995) conducted a cross-cultural comparison of the effects of religiosity on general purchasing behaviour for a sample of Japanese and American Protestant consumers. They suggest that there is no difference in consumer shopping behaviour between devout and casually religious Japanese individuals and this could be attributed to the fact that religion is not an important element in overall Japanese culture. On the other hand, they claimed that devout Protestants in the United States are

more economic, buying products on sale, shopping in stores with lower prices, being open to buying foreign-made goods, believing that there is little relation between price and quality, tending to not believe advertising claims while preferring subtle and informative advertisements. Another comparative survey done by Karpov (2002) examined the relationship between religiosity and political tolerance in United State and Poland. They found that in both countries, religious commitment and religious participation (both dimensions for religiosity) have very limited direct effect on political tolerance.

A study conducted by Siguaw and Simpson (1997) in five small towns centring on Ruston, Lousiana demonstrated the effect of consumers' religiosity on their Sunday shopping and out shopping behaviours. In particular, the finding indicated a negative effect of religiosity on the propensity to shop on Sunday. They found that individuals with high levels of giving to their church (monetarily and of their time) tend to spend fewer Sundays shopping per year and to spend significantly less of their total retail purchasing dollars on Sundays. In addition, they believed that consumers with high spiritual and devotional values are spending significantly less of their money for out shopping and to believe that non-essential business should be closed on Sundays.

Esso and Dibb (2004) conducted a similar study in Mauritius involving Hindu, Muslim and Catholic consumers. The results confirmed that consumers having different levels of religiosity differ notably in their shopping behaviour. In particular, devout Hindus differ from their casually religious counterparts in four shopper types: the demanding, practical, thoughtful and innovative shopper. In the case of Muslim consumers, their findings suggested that there is no difference in consumer shopping behaviour between devout and casually religious Muslim consumers, except for the trendy shopper type.

Devout Catholics are found to differ from their casually religious counterparts in four types of shoppers: the demanding, practical, trendy and innovative. The empirical findings reviewed above provide some intriguing causal link between religion and consumer behaviour, both in terms of cognitive and behavioural aspects.

Another comparative study by Cukur et al. (2004) examined the relationships between religiosity and Individualism-Collectivism construct in three countries, i.e., Turkey, United States and Philippines. Generally, the results supported the link between the variables. They found that religiosity is positively related to conservative value and negatively related to openness to change. For Muslim in Turkey, they found a negative relationship between religiosity and universalism as well as a positive relationship between vertical individualism and religiosity. A survey conducted in United States by Dunn (2005) investigated the relationship between religiosity and substance use behaviour (i.e., alcohol, cigarette, marijuana and cocaine). Their research found that religiosity is significant associate with all alcohol use variables (i.e., initiation, current and binge). They also revealed that religiosity is significant associate with cigarette and cocaine use.

A comparative survey conducted by Tarn et al. (2005) investigated the relation of patient characteristics, religiosity, acculturation, physician ethnicity and insurance-mandated physician change to levels of trust in Japanese and Japanese Americans. Interestingly, the study found that religiosity is strongly related to trust in one's physician among the Japanese American and Japanese samples. A study conducted by Safiek (2006) in Malaysia examined the religion influences on some selected aspects of consumer behaviour. He utilised consumer behaviour model of retail patronage as a framework, religious influences on the following aspects of consumer behaviour were

examined: lifestyle, use of information sources, shopping orientation, store attributes importance and store patronage. In his study, religion was viewed from two perspectives namely religious affiliation and religious commitment (religiosity). Religious affiliation is the adherence of individuals to a particular religious group while religious commitment (religiosity) is the degree in which beliefs in specific religious values and ideals are espoused and practiced by an individual. He found that there are significant differences between religiosity groups are also reveal in the areas of lifestyle, information sources, shopping orientation and importance of store attributes.

Another study by Rusnah and Ab. Mumin (2006) investigated how the religiosity of Malaysian Muslims can influence their perception of moral judgement and unethical business practices. The findings of their study suggested that the degree of religiosity has a significant influence on the perceptions of unethical business practices among Malaysian Malay Muslims. Their study revealed that the casually religious group has a more positive perception on unethical business practices compared to the devout group. A study conducted by Elci (2007) in Turkey examined the influence of religiosity on manifest needs (i.e., need for achievement, need for power, need for affiliation and need for hard working orientation). The research found positive correlation between religiosity and all manifest needs. Interestingly, the study revealed that people who both live and are born in rural regions have a significantly higher amount of religiosity than people from urban regions.

The survey conducted by Penhollow et al. (2007) focused on the relationship between hooking up and religiosity in United State. The findings revealed that religiosity played a significant role in distinguishing between those who had and had not participated in hooking up behaviours. Bloodgood et al. (2008) examined the influence of ethics

instruction, religiosity and intelligence on cheating behaviour. Their study indicated that individuals who are relatively high in religiosity cheated less than did individual who are relatively low in religiosity.

Farhadinasab et al. (2008) investigated the effect of religiosity with locus of control, knowledge about side effect of drug abuse, lifetime pattern of substance abuse, parental support among adolescents and young male users in Iran. They found that religiosity is significantly related to internal locus control, knowledge about side effects of drug abuse and substance abuse. Md Zabid and Saidatul (2008), in their study in Malaysia, focused on the effect of culture and religiosity on perception of business ethics. Their study found that religiosity had effects on perceptions of business ethics.

Kurpis et al. (2008) examined the effect of commitment to moral self-improvement and religiosity on ethics of business students in United States. They found that religiosity is positively related to commitment to moral self-improvement and behavioural intentions. The study conducted by Wan Marhaini et al. (2008) examined the role of religiosity in shaping consumer's choice of banking among Malays in Lembah Klang, Malaysia. The importance of the study can be viewed from two major findings. Firstly, the researcher found that there are significant differences between a Muslim's level of religiosity and Islamic banking as his main choice of bank and determinants of bank selection criteria. Secondly, there are also significant differences between a Muslim's level of religiosity and sources of banking financing and determinants of credit selection criteria.

A study conducted in China by Li et al. (2009) investigated the effect of religiosity on shopping behaviour. The results indicated that a kind of shoppers, namely trend shopper is consistently related to religiosity, suggesting that religiosity should be considered as a

possible determinant of shopping behaviour in the future. Another research by Shirazi and Morowatisharifabad (2009) examined the effect of religiosity (independent variable) on determinants of safe sex in Iranian non-medical students in Iran. The study's findings suggested that greater religiosity is a protective factor in high-risk sexual behaviour. Another Malaysian scholar, Rusnah (2009) investigated the relationship between religiosity and tolerant towards unethical business activities among final year students in one of the universities in Malaysia. They claimed that the level of religiosity is negative and significantly related to the level of tolerant towards unethical business practices.

A significant number of research have investigated brand sensitivity as a dependent variable (please refer Table 2.13). It also has been argued that religion is highly personal in nature and, therefore, its effects on consumer behaviour depend on the individuals' level of religious commitment or the importance placed on religion in their life. In a related empirical study of religiosity and consumer behaviour among 602 mostly Protestant consumers in United States, Wilkes et al. (1986) reached a significant conclusion that religiosity influences several aspects of consumer's lifestyle, which may eventually affect choices and/or choice behaviour. They found that religiosity is positively related to age (older persons tend to have higher religiosity) and gender (females tend to have higher religiosity value), and is slightly related to income (low income people tend to have higher religiosity value).

As mentioned earlier, a study conducted in United States by Smith and Frankenberger (1991) reported that the level of religiosity is positively relate to age and that is affects quality sought in a product, the social risk involved with a purchase and price sensitivity. Another study, Ong and Moschis (2006) assessed the effect of religiosity on

two selected types of consumer behaviour (i.e., brand preferences and store preferences) by restricting the analysis to older adults. The researchers claimed that there are differences in the strength of religiosity among the different ethnic and religious groups. They believed that Malays and Muslims score higher in the religiosity scale compare to the Chinese and Buddhist as well as the Indians and Hindus. They also found that Chinese are the least religious.

In the study conducted by Rusnah and Ab. Mumin (2006) as mentioned above, they investigated how the religiosity of Malaysian Muslims can influence their perception of moral judgement and unethical business practices. The findings of their study reported that female respondents are found to have a higher religiosity value as compared to the male respondents. In a related study by Chaaya et al. (2007) investigated the relationship between religiosity and depression among old people in Lebanon. They found that gender is significantly relate to all religiosity indicators, where females report being more involve in prayers, fasting and being more religious than males. Males report a higher regular attendance of religious activities than females.

As mentioned earlier, Md Zabid and Saidatul (2008) conducted a study on the effect of culture and religiosity on perception of business ethics in Malaysia. Another interesting finding, they claimed that Malays considered themselves to have high religiosity than the Chinese or Indians. Another survey conducted by Wan Marhaini et al. (2008) examined the role of religiosity in shaping consumer's choice of banking among Malays in Lembah Klang, Malaysia. In the same study, the findings also revealed that gender, age, family income, academic qualification and education stream (independent variables) impose effects to level of religiosity (dependent variable) among Malays.

In another study conducted in United Arab Emirates by Barhem et al. (2009) examined the relationship between religiosity and the feeling of work stress. They found that the mean score of religiosity obtain by female respondents is higher than male respondents' score. Rusnah (2009) investigated the relationship between religiosity and tolerant towards unethical business activities among final year students in one of the universities in Malaysia. The findings of their study established that both gender and education streams are significantly related to religiosity score. They claimed that more students from the religious education stream are found to be more religious and consequently, are less tolerance towards unethical business practices. The study also revealed that female Malay Muslim students are found to have higher religiosity values than male Malay Muslim students.

c. Linking American Popular Culture and Religiosity

There is no research have linked the relationship between American popular culture and religiosity. However, there is a study try to link lifestyle (American popular culture sources) and religiosity done by Sherkat (2002). A survey conducted in United States examined the religiosity commitment of heterosexuals, gays, lesbians and bisexuals (types of lifestyles in United States). They found that the non heterosexuals (gay men, bisexual and lesbian) will be less committed to religion. They also claimed that female non heterosexuals (bisexual and lesbians) are less active in religious organizations when compared to their male counterparts (bisexual men and gay men). Therefore, the higher the influence of American popular culture (i.e., lifestyle), the less religiosity values they possessed. In other words, the highly influenced by American popular culture consumers will be have lower religiosity value.

Another related study by Strinati (2004) argued that the traditional sources of identity (i.e., social class, the extended and nuclear family, local communities, the ‘neighbourhood’, religion, trade unions and the nation state) are said to be decline as a result of tendencies in modern capitalism such as increasingly rapid and wide-scale rates of social change. Therefore, the increasing rapid and wide-scale rates of social change (e.g., American popular culture), the less religiosity values the societies will possess. In other words, the highly influenced by American popular culture consumers will have lower religiosity value.

2.7 Moderating Variables

In this subsection, we will discuss each of the moderating variables i.e., religiosity, gender, ethnicity, family income level and education stream at primary level and their effect on the relationship between of American popular culture (independent variable) and five dependent variables, namely conspicuous consumption, price sensitivity, brand sensitivity, fashion consciousness and American music television exposure. It is very common for social sciences researchers to use demographic aspects (i.e., gender, ethnicity, family income level and primary education stream). There are also several recent studies including religiosity (e.g., Peterson et al., 2010 and Ramasamy et al., 2010), gender (e.g., Dreher and Lee, 2011 and Tsao and Chen, 2011), ethnicity (e.g., Dreher and Lee, 2011 and Jackson and Williams, 2006), family income level (e.g., Turkheimer, et al. 2003 and South and Krueger, 2011) and primary education level (e.g., Cano et al. 2006 and Usman et al. 2011) as a moderating variable in their research.

2.7.1 Religiosity as a Moderating Variable

As discussed before, there is a relationship between American popular culture and religiosity. In this subsection, we will discuss the moderating effect of religiosity in the relationship between American popular culture (independent variable) and the five dependent variables, namely, conspicuous consumption, price sensitivity, brand sensitivity, fashion consciousness and American music television exposure. The present researcher would like to clarify that religiosity is commonly used as moderating variable in the area of marketing and consumer behaviour research. For instance, several recent studies have included religiosity as a moderating variable (e.g., Peterson et al., 2010 and Ramasamy et al., 2010).

a. Religiosity as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Conspicuous Consumption

The relationship between American popular culture and religiosity has been discussed in the previous section. As such, this section will focus on the relationship between conspicuous consumption and religiosity. However, past literature showed that no research has been done trying to link religiosity as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and conspicuous consumption. In the related research conducted among Indians living in Britain suggest that conspicuous consumption is associated with social class, low religiosity and lower socio-economic classes (Lindridge and Dibb, 2003; Lindridge et al., 2004). Lindridge (2005) also believes that the decreasing religiosity among Indians living in Britain will lead to significantly greater conspicuous consumption when compared to Asian Indians.

Therefore, based on the arguments by Lindridge and Dibb (2003) and Lindridge et al. (2004) it is believed that a higher level of conspicuous consumption is associated with decreasing religiosity. However, the reviews of the literature showed no supporting research in determining the relationship between religiosity and American popular culture. As such, we speculate that there is a possibility that religiosity plays a significant role as a moderating variable between American popular culture and conspicuous consumption.

Thus, it is expected that the positive relationship between American popular culture and conspicuous consumption is being moderated by religiosity. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P2a = Religiosity moderates the relationship between American popular culture
and conspicuous consumption.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

b. Religiosity as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Price Sensitivity

The relationship between American popular culture and religiosity has been discussed in the previous section. As such, this section will focus on the relationship between price sensitivity and religiosity. Past literature showed that no research has been done trying to look at religiosity as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and price sensitivity. Several studies have been conducted to provide empirical evidence

of the price sensitivity effect towards religiosity. In the related study conducted by Smith and Frankenberger (1991) reported that the level of religiosity is positively related to age and that it affects quality sought in a product, the social risk involved with a purchase and price sensitivity among United States consumers. They found that the level of religiosity is related to product quality and price sensitivity when the effect of religious affiliation is control.

The research by Sood and Nasu (1995) conducted a cross-cultural comparison of the effects of religiosity on general purchasing behaviour for a sample of Japanese and American consumers. They found that devout Protestants in the United States are significantly more concerned with prices (price sensitive), buying products when they are on sale, considering products from other countries, and patronizing many retail stores. In other words, respondents with high religiosity value tend to be price sensitive. Another study conducted in United States by Lam (2006) investigated the influence of religiosity on gambling participation. In his study, he believes that price sensitivity may reduce the involvement in gambling compared to less religious consumers.

Therefore, we believe that it is reasonable to conclude that religiosity may act as a moderator between the relationship of American Popular Culture and price sensitivity. However, to the best of the current researcher's knowledge, there is no study addressing this issue. The arguments to the link between American popular culture and price sensitivity have been discussed earlier in this chapter. Thus, it is expected that the positive relationship between American Popular Culture Influences and price sensitivity is moderated by religiosity. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P2b = Religiosity moderates the relationship between American popular culture
and price sensitivity.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

c. Religiosity as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Brand Sensitivity

Past literature showed that no research has been done trying to look at religiosity as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and brand sensitivity. Earlier, the relationship between American popular culture and religiosity has been discussed in the previous section. As such, this section will focus on the relationship between brand sensitivity and religiosity.

In a related study conducted by Ong and Moschis (2006) assessed the effect of religiosity on two selected types of consumer behaviour (i.e., brand preferences and store preferences) by restricting the analysis to older adults. However, their findings do not support the hypothesized inverse relationships between religiosity and brand preference changes. However, the study done by Ong and Moschis was confined towards the scope of brand preference instead of brand sensitivity. As such, we can speculate that there is a possibility that religiosity may impose an effect towards brand sensitivity.

Another related study on religious affiliation and consumer behaviour that was done in United States by Hirschman (1981). She investigated the relationship between American Jewish ethnicity and selected aspects of consumer behaviour. In her study, she found that Jewish consumers tend to be more innovative, less brand and store loyal than non-Jewish consumers. Again, Hirschman focused on religious affiliation instead

of religiosity in her study. She also confined her study into brand concept in general. Therefore, we can speculate that there is a possibility that religiosity plays a significant role in determining brand sensitivity in this current study.

Consequently, it is expected that the positive relationship between American popular culture and brand sensitivity is being moderated by religiosity. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P2c = Religiosity moderates the relationship between American popular culture and brand sensitivity.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable will be investigated in this present study.

d. Religiosity as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Fashion Consciousness

The relationship between American popular culture and religiosity has been discussed in the previous section. Again, this section will focus on the relationship between fashion consciousness and religiosity. Past literature showed no empirical evidence to look at religiosity as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and fashion consciousness. Basically, past research is confined to the scope of the religiosity effect towards fashion consciousness and consumer behaviour in general.

Specifically, previous research in religiosity studies has shaded the literature by validating the fact of religiosity effect towards certain aspect consumer behaviour has been widely studied (Zaichkowsky and Sood, 1989; Wilkes et al. 1986; Delener 1990a,

1990b; McDaniel and Burnett, 1990). A significant amount of studies have been done to investigate relationship between religiosity and conspicuous consumption (Lindridge and Dibb, 2003; Lindridge et al., 2004; Lindridge, 2005), price sensitivity (Smith and Frankenberger, 1991; Sood and Nasu, 1995; Lam, 2006) and brand (Ong and Moschis, 2006; Hirschman, 1981). The researchers believe that religiosity has an impact on culture (American popular culture) and consumer behaviour (fashion consciousness as how consumers behave). Therefore, we believe that the level of religiosity may impose an effect towards fashion conscious. Past literature also showed significant evidence of how religiosity influences people's behaviours and consumption patterns (Hirshman, 1981; Grigg, 1995; Sood and Nasu, 1995).

In the Malaysian context, Safiek (2009) was the only research that tried to link fashion consciousness with religiosity. He examined the influence of religiosity on one aspect of consumer behaviour (i.e., shopping orientation). In his study, religiosity construct was explained by two dimensions (religious affiliation and religious commitment). In Safiek's study, religious affiliation is measured relative to religious denominational membership or religious identification of the individual. While, religious commitment is measured both cognitively (intrapersonal religiosity) and behaviourally (interpersonal religiosity). The findings of his research revealed no significant differences among groups of intrapersonal religiosity with fashion consciousness. However, significant differences were found between low and medium groups of interpersonal religiosity with fashion consciousness. Therefore, we believe it is reasonable to conclude there is a relationship between religiosity and fashion conscious depending on the respondents involve.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the present researcher believes it is reasonable to infer that the relationship between American Popular Culture and fashion consciousness can be moderated by religiosity. However, to the best of the current researcher's knowledge, there is no study addressing this issue. Thus, the relationship can be summarized as follows:

P2d = Religiosity moderates the relationship between American popular culture
and fashion consciousness.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

e. Religiosity as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and American Music Television Exposure

The review of past literature showed that no research has been done trying to look at religiosity as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and American music television exposure. In the previous section, the relationship between American popular culture and religiosity has been discussed. As such, this section will focus on the relationship between American music television exposure and religiosity.

However, a few scholars try to investigate the effect of religiosity towards foreign culture acceptance and consumer behaviour. A few scholars argued that religion, whether working through taboos and obligation or through its influence on the culture and society, is known to affect our behaviour as consumers (Delener 1990a, 1990b; McDaniel and Burnett, 1990; Wilkes et al., 1986; Zaichkowsky and Sood, 1989; Sood

and Nasu, 1995). Implicitly, the aforementioned authors explained that religiosity have an impact on consumption patterns (e.g., American music television exposure).

Another study conducted in Malaysia by Haryati (2007) found that religiosity is related to American music television exposure among adolescents. Her study revealed that the respondents' behaviours are limit within the religious, social and cultural boundaries. She further argued that the amount of freedom within an allowed circle has led the respondents to develop a more alternative thinking and record a different level of exposure to American music television. Therefore, we believe that the level of religiosity may impose a significant effect towards the exposure to American music television.

Thus, it is expected that the relationship between American popular culture and American music television exposure is moderated by religiosity. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P2e = Religiosity moderates the relationship between American popular culture
and American music television exposure.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

2.7.2 Gender as a Moderating Variable

The relationship between American popular culture and gender has been discussed in the previous section. In this subsection, we will discuss the moderating effect of gender in the relationship between American popular culture (independent variable) and the

five dependent variables, namely, conspicuous consumption, price sensitivity, brand sensitivity, fashion consciousness and American music television exposure.

a. Gender as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Conspicuous Consumption

Earlier, the relationship between American popular culture and gender has been discussed in the previous section. As such, this section will focus on the relationship between conspicuous consumption and gender. Past literature showed that no research has been done trying to look at gender as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and conspicuous consumption. In the same sense, both researcher believe that based on a number of previous studies there might be an effect of gender to conspicuous consumption. A study conducted in Australia by O’Cass and McEwen (2004) explored the theoretical and empirical separation of consumers’ status consumption and conspicuous consumption. Their findings indicated that a significant gender differences for respondents’ tendencies to conspicuously consume. They claimed that young males place more importance on the conspicuousness of product use.

Similarly, Veblen quoted by Bagwell and Bernnheim (1996) argued that men tend to practise/involved in conspicuous consumption than female. “In order to gain and to hold the esteem of men, wealth must be put on evidence...accredited canons of conspicuous consumption, the effect of which is to hold the consumer up to the standard of expensiveness and wastefulness in his consumption of goods and his employment of time and effort” (Veblen in Bagwell and Bernnheim, 1996, p. 350).

Therefore, we believe that gender plays an important role in determining conspicuous consumption. Thus, it is expected that gender moderates the relationship between American popular culture and conspicuous consumption. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P3a = Gender moderates the relationship between American popular culture and conspicuous consumption.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

b. Gender as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Price Sensitivity

In the previous section we have discussed the relationship between American popular culture and gender. This section will focus on the relationship between price sensitivity and gender. No research has been done trying to look at gender as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and price sensitivity. Basically, a number of studies had examined the relationship of gender and price sensitivity.

Several scholars found that gender has no significant effect on consumers' price sensitivity. For instance, Munnukka (2005) believed that gender has no significant effect on mobile service consumers' price sensitivity. Another study by Goldsmith and Newell (1997) also found that gender has no significant effect on consumers' price sensitivity in his product innovativeness study. In the same sense, Lundberg et al. (1998) also argued that gender has no significant effect on consumers' price sensitivity in terms of users' charges for prescription drugs.

A survey conducted in United States by Royalty and Hagens (2003) found that men are deemed to be less price sensitive on the decision to participate in health insurance and other fringe benefits offered by the employer. Another qualitative research conducted by Johnson (2000) used experiment approach found that boys are more price sensitive than girls in sixth grade class. Their results for sixth grade class are consistent with those of Andreoni and Vesterlund (1999) as quoted by Johnson (2000). However, Johnson (2000) pointed out that girls are slightly more price sensitive than boys in high school. Nevertheless, women are more price sensitive than men in college and contradict the findings by Andreoni and Versterlund (1999).

Based on the preceding discussion, we believe that it is reasonable to conclude that gender may impose an effect towards price sensitivity. Thus, it is expected that the relationship between American Popular Culture Influences and price sensitivity is being moderated by gender. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P3b = Gender moderates the relationship between American popular culture and price sensitivity.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

c. Gender as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Brand Sensitivity

A review of past literature showed that no research has been done to look at gender as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and brand sensitivity. Earlier, the relationship between American popular culture and gender has been discussed in the

previous section. As such, this section will focus on the relationship between brand sensitivity and gender.

A number of researches have examined the relationship between brand sensitivity and gender. However, the review of past literature showed mixed results in examining the relationship. A study by Nelson and McLeod (2005) argued that there is no significant difference for brand sensitivity across gender. In contrast, Bush et al. (2004) found that females are in stronger agreement that their favourite athlete role models (American popular culture dimension) influence them to say positive things about a product/ brand, recommend product/brands to others and encourage friends or relatives to prefer/buy certain products or brands. It was found that there is a significant difference between males and females when it comes to expressing their idolization on buying certain brands.

Based on the preceding discussion, we believe that it is reasonable to conclude that gender may impose an effect towards brand sensitivity. Consequently, it is expected that the positive relationship between American popular culture and brand sensitivity is moderated by gender. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P3c = Gender moderates the relationship between American popular culture and brand sensitivity.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

d. Gender as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Fashion Consciousness

In the previous section, the relationship between American popular culture and gender has been discussed. As such, this section will focus on the relationship between fashion consciousness and gender. However, no research has been done to look at gender as a moderating variable between American popular culture and fashion consciousness. A number of researches have examined the relationship between gender and fashion consciousness. For instance, O’Cass (2001) found that in the context of fashion clothing, females are significantly more involved than males, which implies that females use clothing and apparel more than males do to tell others who they are and how much status they have (Auty and Elliot, 1998; Eastman et al., 1997; Tse et al., 1989).

Another scholar Zollo (1995b) argues that for girls, fashion still rules. Zollo (1995b) found that apparel is the most important product category to teen girls; it consumes both the greatest proportion of their disposable income and their greatest parent-campaigning efforts. After fashion, girls spend the most on personal-grooming items, from mousse to mascara. Zollo believes that boys also care about fashion but they spend less of their own money on it, preferring to convince their parents to buy clothes and shoes for them. Boys spend more than girls on food, gas and entertainment. Barak and Gould (1986) quoted by Gould (1987) claim that women have been found to score higher in fashion consciousness and fashion opinion leadership than men. Goldsmith and Stith (1992-1993) found that a segment of younger women in the West have a higher degree of interest in fashion.

We personally believe that there is a high possibility that there is a relationship between gender and fashion consciousness based on the argument put forward by Kwon (1997) and Gould and Stern (1989). Both researchers showed that there are gender differences in fashion consciousness as the dependent variable. Specifically, Kwon (1997) argues that women as compared to men indicate greater interest in clothing. Moreover, fashion conscious women pay more attention to external appearance while men are more private or internalized self-identify and maleness (Gould and Stern, 1989). Zaichkowsky (1985) and O’Cass (2000) confirmed that women are better at decoding the communicative language of fashion statements and more involved in fashion.

A few fairly recent studies supported the argument of gender effect towards fashion consciousness. Wan and Wells (2001) found that gender is a significant predictor of fashion consciousness. They argued that women show a greater level of fashion consciousness than men. Research also indicates that females tend to be more fashion conscious, be more knowledgeable about fashion brands (Blyth, 2006) and read more fashion magazines than male consumers (Chamblee et al., 1993; Putrevu, 2004). Consistently, Parker et al. (2004) found that gender has a significant effect on fashion consciousness. They believe that concerning gender, American and Japanese females tend to be significantly more fashion conscious than their male counterparts. In contrast, no gender effect is observed for the Chinese teens in the study of Parker et al. (2004).

Kavak and Gumusluoglu (2007) also claimed that the less ethnocentric fashion-conscious group are identified as young and middle-aged females with middle and higher levels of income. Lastly, Seock and Bailey (2008) found that fashion consciousness is significantly different between males and females. They argue that female participants have significantly higher fashion consciousness than male

participants. In contrast, a recent study by fashion consciousness in East European markets showed that young male respondents are more fashion conscious than their female counterparts (Manrai et al., 2001). They claim that this region is characterized by a traditional environment, where men are afforded more freedom to be individualistic, while women are rewarded for conformity in the sense that they are subservient to their male counterparts. As such, they argued that men are encouraged to express themselves through fashion, while women fear being treated with less respect if they are particularly fashion conscious.

Therefore, we conclude that gender may play an important role in the notion of being more fashion conscious. However, a review of literature shows that no comparison can be made as there have been no previous studies exploring American popular culture and gender. Nevertheless, the arguments pertaining to the link between American popular culture and fashion consciousness have been discussed earlier in this chapter. Based on the foregoing discussion, the relationship between American Popular Culture and fashion consciousness can be moderated by gender. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P3d = Gender moderates the relationship between American popular culture
and fashion consciousness.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

e. Gender as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and American Music Television Exposure

Past literature showed that no research has been done trying to look at gender as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and American music television exposure. In the previous section, the relationship between American popular culture and gender has been discussed. As such, this section will focus on the relationship between American music television exposure and gender. Recent study conducted in Malaysia by Haryati (2007) found that gender do not appear to be a significant determinant in music television (MTV) exposure among adolescents.

In contrast, a number of European researchers argued that gender is one of the most fundamentally differentiating factors in media usage. In most European countries, boys are more likely to have a television in their own room and tend to watch more television than do girls. They also use videocassette recorders more. Significant differences also have been found in television and videocassette recorder content preferences in both studies by Roe (1998, 2000) reporting statistically significant differences between males and females in the ratings given to the great majority of television and videocassette recorder content categories. For television, females give higher ratings to music, talk shows and television series (“soap”); males rated action, sport and science programmes higher. In other words, saying that gender have an impact on the media exposure. As indicated by the study done by Roe (1988, 2000), there are significant differences in media exposure between genders.

A number of studies also found that females tend to listen to more music (Brown et al., Childers, Bauman and Koch, 1990, Strouse and Buerkel-Rothfuss, 1987a; Strouse,

Buerkel-Rothfuss and Long, 1995b). Thus, one would expect females to be more personally involved with music videos (e.g., American music television) and be more influenced to purchase albums than are males (Abt, 1987). Kinder (1984, 1988) reveal that young girls watch more music television than young boys. They report that their motivation in watching is to learn about the latest trends in fashion. Another scholar, Thelen (2002) also found that female participants score higher than the level of influence measure than male participants. In contrast, a recent study by Dotson and Hyatt (2005) found that boys view MTV more than girls.

A recent study by O’Cass and McEwen (2004) found that the media are a primary information source for three product categories (i.e., entertainment/recreational activities/movies/, records/tapes/compact discs and personal care products). Television is the main source for entertainment/recreational activities/movies and personal care products. Radio is most important for records/tape/compact disc. Neither newspapers nor magazines are identified as the main source of information for any of the product categories. O’Cass and McEwen take into account the gender factor in their study. However, there are a number of differences in these responses based on school and respondent characteristics. In contrast, in a study done in United States by Sun and Lull (1986) found that boys and girls do not differ statistically in their amount of reported weekday viewing but on weekends girls watch more MTV than boys.

In other words, gender differences play an important role in determining the level of exposure to American music television. It is also believed that adolescents will track down information about their favourite idols’ (e.g., American singer/music band) latest trends in fashion via MTV in expressing their idolization. Based on the foregoing discussion, we believe it is reasonable to conclude that gender moderated the

relationship between American popular culture and American music television exposure.

Thus, it is expected that the positive relationship between American popular culture and American music television exposure is being moderated by gender. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P3e = Gender moderates the relationship between American popular culture
and American music television exposure.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

2.7.3 Ethnicity as a Moderating Variable

In the previous section, the relationship between American popular culture and ethnicity has been discussed. In this subsection, we will discuss the moderating effect of ethnicity in the relationship between American popular culture (independent variable) and the five dependent variables, namely, conspicuous consumption, price sensitivity, brand sensitivity, fashion consciousness and American music television exposure.

a. Ethnicity as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Conspicuous Consumption

The relationship between American popular culture and ethnicity has been discussed in the previous section. As such, this section will focus on the relationship between conspicuous consumption and ethnicity. However, past literature showed that no

research has been done trying to link ethnicity as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and conspicuous consumption.

In a related study conducted by Wong and Ahuvia (1998) and O’Cass et al. (2004) argue that consumers’ desire for higher conspicuous goods is determined by their social networks (i.e., ethnicity) and reference group influences. Another study by Lamont and Molnar (2001) argue that African American respondents engage in conspicuous consumption to gain social membership. They believe that “in comparison to Whites, Blacks spend disproportionately more on items that they view as affirming their equal standing” (p.36).

In contrast, Chung and Fisher (2001) found that there is no relationship between conspicuous consumption and Chinese ethnicity. In another related study, Fisher (1996) as quoted by Kim and Jinyeong (2001) claims that Black people consume voraciously because they want to be viewed as good and worthy (an act of conspicuous consumption). Lamont and Molnar (2001) claim that lower and higher income Blacks like to purchase more premium brands and luxury products than Whites to gain social membership and affirm their equal standing. Despite the lower median household income and lower household expenditure in a lot of product categories, Black households outperform White households in pouring money into conspicuous consumption (United States Bureau of Consensus of the Population, 1996).

Therefore, it is reasonable to speculate that ethnicity can influence the act of conspicuous consumption. As such, we speculate that there is a possibility that ethnicity plays a significant role as a moderating variable between American popular culture and conspicuous consumption. Thus, it is expected that ethnicity moderates the relationship

between American popular culture and that conspicuous consumption is being moderated by ethnicity. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P4a = Ethnicity moderates the relationship between American popular culture and conspicuous consumption.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

b. Ethnicity as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Price Sensitivity

The relationship between American popular culture and ethnicity has been discussed in the previous section. As such, this section will focus on the relationship between price sensitivity and ethnicity. However, no research has been done trying to link ethnicity as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and price sensitivity. Basically, the past literature showed numerous studies using ethnicity as a moderating variable. Scholars have long argued that ethnicity imposes an effect on consumer behaviour. Gruber and Zinman (2000) argue that Black youth are much more price sensitive than White youth in cigarette price. Consistently, Royalty and Hagens (2003) also believed that ethnicity shows a significant effect on price sensitivity. They found that nonwhites workers are less price sensitive as compared to whites workers on the decision to participate in health insurance and other fringe benefits offered by the employer.

We believe that ethnicity has high possibilities of being a moderating variable on the relationship of the constructs under discussion. Based on the argument in Mulhern et al.

(1998), few studies have utilized actual purchase data to explore the price sensitivity of ethnic groups. Mulhern and Williams (1994) used scanner data to evaluate the price sensitivity of Hispanics relative to non-Hispanics and found that price sensitivity for grocery products is greater in stores located in Hispanic market areas than those located in non-Hispanics areas. Hoch et al. (1995) incorporated ethnicity into their analysis, but did so by aggregating African-Americans and Hispanics into a single composite ethnic group, thereby eliminating the ability to evaluate the price responsiveness of specific ethnic populations. They found that Black and Hispanic consumers are more price sensitive than White and non-Hispanic consumers. Wetzel et al. (1998) found that Black student enrolment yields are more sensitive to changes in net cost than enrolment yields for White students.

A number of the marketing literature on ethnicity maintained that African-Americans and Hispanics are more price sensitive than other consumers (Mulhern and Williams, 1994; Hoch et al., 1995). Marketing and consumer behaviour textbooks and the business press often assert this as well. However, empirical evidence is scant and equivocal. A number of characteristics have been associated with African-American shopping orientation and store attribute preference profiles suggesting that African-Americans are more price sensitive compared to the general population. For example, Wilkes and Valencia (1985) found that African-Americans indicate a greater tendency to embrace bargaining as part of their shopping lifestyle than Whites. They believe that African-Americans spend relatively more money on generic grocery purchases than Anglos. For liquor brands, high price sensitivity of African-Americans can also be expected since the absolute price levels are relatively high.

Deloitte and Touche (1990) quoted by Mulhern et al. (1998) believe that African-American women are primarily motivated by price and selection. They claim that price sensitivity is related to the tendency to buy generic products that are generally less expensive than national brands. Similarly, Mulhern et al. (1998) argue that price sensitivity is lower in the market areas with a higher concentration of African-Americans. However, Mulhern and Williams (1994) found that contradictory results and believe that price sensitivity for grocery products is greater in stores located in Hispanic market areas than in those located in non-Hispanics areas.

Previous literature shows that no comparison can be made as there has been no previous study conducted exploring American popular culture and ethnicity. The arguments pertaining to the link between American popular culture and price sensitivity have been discussed earlier in this chapter. Therefore, based on the past research, both present researchers hypothesize the notion of ethnicity as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and price sensitivity.

Thus, it is expected that the relationship between American Popular Culture and price sensitivity is moderated by ethnicity. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P4b = Ethnicity moderates the relationship between American popular culture and price sensitivity.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

c. Ethnicity as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Brand Sensitivity

Past literature showed that no research has been done trying to link ethnicity as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and brand sensitivity. Earlier, the relationship between American popular culture and ethnicity has been discussed in the previous section. As such, this section will focus on the relationship between brand sensitivity and ethnicity.

Fairly recent study by Nelson and McLeod (2005) argue that there is no significant difference for brand sensitivity across ethnicity among adolescents in United States. Specifically, Nelson and McLeod (2005) found that Caucasians and non Caucasians show no significant difference in terms of brand sensitivity. In contrast, an unpublished manuscript by Zaharah (2006) conducted a study in Malaysia found significant difference for brand sensitivity across ethnicity of Malay, Chinese Indian and others among adolescents. The findings of her study reveal that the “other” ethnic group is more likely to be highly brand sensitive than the Malay, Chinese or Indian. Based on the above discussion, the current research believes that ethnicity differences impose a higher tendency to be brand sensitive among adolescents.

Consequently, it is expected that the relationship between American popular culture and brand sensitivity is moderated by ethnicity. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P4c = Ethnicity moderates the relationship between American popular culture and brand sensitivity.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

d. Ethnicity as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Fashion Consciousness

The relationship between American popular culture and ethnicity has been discussed in the previous section. As such, this section will focus on the relationship between fashion consciousness and ethnicity. However, past literature showed that no research has been done trying to link ethnicity as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and fashion consciousness.

A few scholars found that there is a positive relationship between fashion consciousness and ethnicity. Blackwell et al. (2001) argue that Hispanic consumers tend to be fashion conscious, status and image driven shopping and enjoy shopping as compared to non-Hispanics consumers. Manrai et al. (2001) in their exploration of cross-cultural comparison of style in an Eastern European emerging market found that Hungarian consumers are more fashion conscious than Romanian or Bulgarian consumers. They further argue that Romanian consumers are more fashion conscious than Bulgarian consumers.

Scholars, Bryck (2003) and Morton (2002) also argued that sales of global fashion brands are expanding in growing Asian markets such as China, Japan and South Korea because young consumers in these countries are brand and fashion conscious. Parker et al. (2004) examine similarities and differences in attitudes towards fashion consciousness among Chinese, Japanese and American teenagers. They reveal that

teenagers in China are clearly less fashion conscious than those in the United States and Japan, while United States and Japanese respondents are highly similar in that regard (Parker et al., 2004).

Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the ethnicity can act as a moderating variable between the relationship of American popular culture and fashion consciousness. Nevertheless, a review of past literature shows no comparison can be made as there have been no previous studies exploring American popular culture and ethnicity. However, the arguments pertaining to the link between American popular culture and fashion consciousness have been discussed earlier in this chapter. Based on the foregoing discussion, the present researcher feels that it is reasonable to speculate that the relationship between American Popular Culture and fashion consciousness is moderated by ethnicity. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P4d = Ethnicity moderates the relationship between American popular culture
and fashion consciousness.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

e. Ethnicity as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and American Music Television Exposure

In the previous section, we have discussed the relationship between American popular culture and ethnicity. This section will focus on the relationship between American music television exposure and ethnicity. No research has been done trying to look at

ethnicity as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and American music television exposure.

Past literature found that ethnicity has no significant effect on consumers' American music television exposure. Specifically, a study conducted in United States by Sun and Lull (1986) compared five ethnic groups (Asian, Blacks, Mixed, Latinos and Whites) in their music television (MTV) viewing. They found that Latino teens are more likely than all other groups to watch music television (MTV) during the week, averaging almost an hour per day more than Asians and Blacks and about 40 minutes per day more than Whites. Weekend viewing differences are less pronounced. Latinos maintain the same level of viewing on weekend days as on weekdays; the other groups, with the exception of Asians view more music television (MTV) on the weekends. They found that no statistical differences among the various ethnic groups in their number of friends or the amount of time spent with them. Consequently, the present researcher believes that the ethnicity factor shows a significant effect on higher exposure towards music television (i.e., American music television exposure).

Thus, it is expected that the positive relationship between American popular culture and American music television exposure is moderated by ethnicity. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P4e = Ethnicity moderates the relationship between American popular culture
and American music television exposure.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

2.7.4 Family Income Level as a Moderating Variable

The relationship between American popular culture and family income level has been discussed in the previous section. In this subsection, the present researcher will discuss the moderating effect of family income level between American popular culture (independent variable) and five dependent variables, namely, conspicuous consumption, price sensitivity, brand sensitivity, fashion consciousness and American music television exposure.

a. Family Income Level as the Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Conspicuous Consumption

The relationship between American popular culture and family income level has been discussed in the previous section. This section will focus on the relationship between conspicuous consumption and family income level. Past literature also showed that no research has been done trying to look at family income level as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and conspicuous consumption.

Specifically, Wong and Ahuvia (1998) argued that consumers' desire for conspicuous goods is determined by their social networks and reference group influences. We believed that it is reasonable to assume that those social networks have a huge impact on a particular group. Those social networks related to demographic aspects (e.g., family income level). In his pioneering study, Duesenberry (1949) gave several kinds of evidence based on aggregate data to indicate the importance of preference interdependence for the explanation of consumer behaviour. Using data on consumer

purchases made in 1935 and 1936, he found that the percentage of income spent on consumption is highly correlated with the person's conspicuous consumption.

Furthermore, relevant literature quoted by Shukla (2008) mentioned that Congleton (1989) and Rauscher (1993) suggest that income factors exert an implication effect and a discouragement effect affecting conspicuous buying behaviour. Trigg (2001) supports the idea of family income level impose an effect towards conspicuous consumption. He found that one of the significant factors influencing conspicuous consumption is a form of individual emulation of the social group situated in a higher position in the hierarchy (reflecting income element). He believes that those in the higher up the social hierarchy will tend to distinguish themselves from those at the bottom.

In more specific income groups, Chao and Schor (1996) found that women with higher income are more conspicuous. Frank (1999) also argues that the top earners begin to set new standards in the pattern of conspicuous consumption. Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that family income level impose a significant effect towards conspicuous consumption. However, there is no study to support the linkages between family income level and American popular culture. As such, the present researcher sees the possibility of family income group as a moderating variable between American popular culture and conspicuous consumption.

Thus, it is expected that the relationship between American popular culture and conspicuous consumption is moderated by family income level. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P5a = Family income level moderates the relationship between American popular culture and conspicuous consumption.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

b. Family Income Level as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Price Sensitivity

The relationship between American popular culture and family income level has been discussed in the previous section. As such, this section will focus on the relationship between price sensitivity and family income level. Past literature also showed that no research has been done trying to look at family income level as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and price sensitivity.

Many empirical studies have addressed the question of whether the price sensitivity of demand varies with the level of income. An earlier study on price sensitivity by Gabor and Granger (1964) found that the lower income consumers tend to have a higher tendency to be price sensitive. Farrelly and Bray (1998) and Evans et al. (1999) argued that low income smokers are more sensitive to the price of cigarettes than higher income smokers. Consistent with the argument, Hoch (1996) argued that in the areas with higher household income, price sensitivity is lower. He further explained that the higher household income is referred to areas with higher housing values. Royalty and Hagens (2003) argued that higher income workers are less price sensitive on the decision to participate in health insurance and other fringe benefits offered by the employer. While, Lundberg et al. (1998) and Royalty and Solomon (1999) demonstrated similar findings in terms of consumers' price sensitivity decreasing with income.

Another scholars, Hoch et al. (1995) and Munnukka (2005) found no relationship between income and price sensitivity. However, an income effect may be more likely at the brand level because several close substitutes are available. Higher income consumers can better afforded higher price brands, and, therefore, may be less sensitive to price. On the other hand, lower income consumers that are constrained by a smaller budget may be more inclined to be thrifty and more price sensitive. Interestingly, Mulhern et al. (1998) in their study of how brand and consumer characteristics relates to price sensitivity across stores also found that price sensitivity is higher in lower income of residents in retail market areas. Therefore, based on past research mentioned above, we can hypothesize the notion of income as a moderating variable between American popular culture and price sensitivity.

Fairly recent research by Wakerfield and Inman (2003) supported the argument of income imposed a significant effect to price sensitivity. Their respondents' age range was between 14 to 85 years old. From the research, they found that the difference in price sensitivity for hedonic products (e.g., movie, sporting events etc.) and functional products are not large for lower income respondents but the difference becomes increasingly pronounced as income increases. The research found that respondents in the highest income group report much lower price sensitivity for hedonic categories than for functional categories. Therefore, we believe that the present study is the extension to the study done by Wakerfield and Inman (2003). In short, saying that income play a significant role in determining price sensitivity.

Previous literature showed that no comparison can be made as there has been no previous study conducted in exploring American popular culture and family income level. The arguments pertaining to the link between American popular culture and price

sensitivity have been discussed earlier in this chapter. Nevertheless, both present researchers expect that the relationship between American Popular Culture Influences and price sensitivity is being moderated by family income level. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P5b = Family income level moderates the relationship between American popular culture and price sensitivity.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

c. Family Income Level as the Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Brand Sensitivity

In the previous section we have discussed the relationship between American popular culture and family income level. This section will focus on the relationship between brand sensitivity and family income level. However, no scholar addresses the linkages between brand sensitivity and family income level. Furthermore, past literature showed that no research has been done trying to look at family income level as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and brand sensitivity. As such, we will further discuss the relationship of brand and income.

A few writers argue that there is relationship between income and brand. Specifically, Jin et al. (2006) conducted a study examined brand origin in emerging market from the perceptions of Indian consumers in India. Their study revealed that brand evaluations are related to consumers' income. They believed higher income groups show preference towards foreign brands. Based on the argument above, it can be concluded that family

income level will impose an effect to brand origin. As such, we speculate that there is a possibility that family income level plays a significant role in determining brand sensitivity.

In the related study, Kaiser (1990) and Goldsmith et al. (1996) argued that owning the latest styles of clothing is one of the most common ways consumers have of gaining prestige among their peers (that relates to their family income group). In other words, we conclude that there is a possibility that adolescents become more selective in choosing brands (brand sensitivity) according to brands being consumed by their peers to gain prestige among their peers (that relates to their family income group). The preceding discussion shows that family income level will lead to a tendency to engage with brand sensitivity. As such, we see the possibility of family income group as a moderating variable between American popular culture and conspicuous consumption.

Consequently, it is expected that the positive relationship between American popular culture and brand sensitivity is moderated by family income level. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P5c = Family income level moderates the relationship between American popular culture and brand sensitivity.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

d. Family Income Level as the Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Fashion Consciousness

The arguments pertaining to the link between American popular culture and family income level have also been discussed earlier in this chapter. This section will focus on the relationship between fashion consciousness and family income level. However, no comparison can be made as there has been no study trying to look at the family income level as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and fashion consciousness.

From the review of literature, a few scholars have attempted to link fashion consciousness and income. Specifically, Crask and Reynold (1978) claimed that fashion conscious consumers are slightly younger, better educated, have higher income, active at travel, sports and entertained frequently. Hirschman (1979) found that fashion conscious people (in the sense of being innovative in their apparel purchases) tend to shop in traditional department stores, rather than national chains or discount department stores and they also have more discretionary income.

Interestingly, Manrai et al. (2001) argued that Romanian consumers have lower per capita incomes compared with the Hungarian market. However, the Romanian market is attractive enough for marketing of fashion goods, although to a lower extent compared with the Hungarian market. Another scholar, Wan and Wells (2001) found that income does not emerge as a significant predictor to fashion consciousness. Recent scholars, Kavak and Gumusluoglu (2007) claimed less ethnocentric fashion-conscious groups are identified as young and middle-aged females with middle and higher levels of income. Parker et al. (2004) examined similarities and differences in attitudes towards fashion

consciousness among Chinese, Japanese and American teenagers. They argued that all three-country groups show similar effects on fashion consciousness, whereby allowance is positively related to fashion consciousness (Parker et al., 2004). The allowances referred to teenagers' pocket money provided by their parents. As such, we believed that the amount given to teenager as pocket money (allowances) depends on their family income level.

Therefore, both present researcher believe that it is reasonable to speculate that the relationship between American Popular Culture and fashion consciousness can be moderated by gender. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P5d = Family income level moderates the relationship between American popular culture and fashion consciousness.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

e. Family Income Level as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and American Music Television Exposure

In the previous section we have discussed the relationship between American popular culture and family income level. This section will focus on the relationship between brand sensitivity and family income level. However, no scholar addresses the linkages between American music television exposure and family income level. Furthermore, past literature showed that no research has been done trying to look at family income level as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and American music television exposure.

A related study conducted in United States by Sun and Lull (1986) found that participants' socioeconomic class (as indicated by their parents' occupations) is negatively related to their weekday MTV viewing. We believe that the participants' parents' occupation is closely related to the family income level. O'Cass and McEwen (2004) also take into account the family income factor in their study of media as a primary information source for three product categories (i.e., entertainment/recreational activities/movies/, records/tapes/compact discs and personal care products). However, there are a number of differences in the responses based on school and respondent characteristics. They argued that television is the main source for entertainment/recreational activities/movies and personal care products. A comparative study conducted in Nepal and Brazil by Geary et al. (2006) found that heavier viewers of music television (MTV) are those who have more access to satellite television and the Internet. They believed that the level of accessibility to the resources (i.e., satellite television and internet) is associated with the overall higher standard of living (i.e., family income level).

Another study conducted in Malaysia by Haryati (2007) found that the family income level is related to American music television exposure among adolescents. Her study revealed that the respondents from the lower-income group reported to be always on their own when their parents had to work late to support the family. She further argued that due to this condition, adolescents grew up in an economically disadvantage environment, they had to share some of the parental responsibility. She added that adolescents have to take care of their younger siblings and had to be content with the lack of entertainment facilities such as direct-to-pay television, Astro. Hence, the respondents do not have the full exposure to the whole range of music television (MTV) programmes which will help them understand music television (MTV) culture.

Based on the preceding arguments above, we believed that family income level impose a significant effect towards American music television exposure. Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that the relationship between American popular culture and American music television exposure can be moderated by family income level. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P5e = Family income level moderates the relationship between American popular culture and American music television exposure.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

2.7.5 Primary Education Stream as a Moderating Variable

The relationship between American popular culture and primary education stream has been discussed in the previous section. In this subsection, the present researcher will discuss the moderating effect of primary education stream between American popular culture (independent variable) and five dependent variables, namely, conspicuous consumption, price sensitivity, brand sensitivity, fashion consciousness and American music television exposure.

The primary education stream in Malaysia is divided into four main categories. They are National Based Primary School (SRKJ), Chinese Based Primary School (SRKJC), Tamil Based Primary School (SRJKT) and private schools (e.g., international schools and religious based private schools). The National Based Primary School (SRJK) is the main streams dominate by Malay community in Malaysia. While Chinese Based Primary School (SRKJC), Tamil Based Primary School (SRJKT) are dominated by

Chinese and Indian communities respectively. Basically, these three primary school streams are financially sponsored by Malaysian government. Most of the parents in Malaysia send their children to these vernaculars government schools to pick up their own mother tongue languages. Some of the parents also have s specific reasons (e.g., cultural or religious purposes) to send their children to the private schools (e.g., international schools and religious based private schools).

a. Primary Education Stream as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Conspicuous Consumption

The relationship between American popular culture and primary education stream has been discussed in the previous section. As such, this section will focus on the relationship between conspicuous consumption and primary education stream. Past literature shows that no research has been done trying to link primary education stream as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and conspicuous consumption. Furthermore, review of past literature also showed that no research has been done to look at the relationship between conspicuous consumption and primary education stream.

Therefore, we speculate that primary school education stream moderates the relationship between American popular culture and conspicuous consumption. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P6a = Primary education stream moderates the relationship between American popular culture and conspicuous consumption.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

b. Primary Education Stream as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Price Sensitivity

Based on the earlier arguments in this chapter, we found no research has been done pertaining to the relationship between American Popular Culture and primary education stream. From the review of literature, no scholars have attempted to explore the effect of primary education stream towards price sensitivity. However, we believed that education level is closely related with education stream. In related study by Munnukka (2005) found that education has no significant effect on consumers' price sensitivity.

Interestingly, past literature shows mixed findings as some scholars found that price sensitivity increases as education level increases. As such, Gruber and Zinman (2000) believed that price sensitivity rises for the more socio-economically disadvantaged groups such as those with less educated parents. The same findings are revealed by Lundberg et al. (1998) who found that respondents with university education are significantly less price sensitive than respondents with less than high school education in terms of users' charges for prescription drugs. In contrast, Royalty and Solomon (1999) found that price sensitivity decreases with increasing levels of education (corrected for income effect). Therefore, we believe that education level has a close relationship with education stream.

A direct comparison cannot be made as there has been no previous study exploring primary education stream and price sensitivity. However, the preceding discussions lead

us to speculate that primary education stream may impose a significant effect towards price sensitivity. Nevertheless, the current study expects that the relationship between American Popular Culture Influences and price sensitivity can be moderated by primary education. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P6b = Primary education stream moderates the relationship between American popular culture and price sensitivity.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

c. Primary Education Stream as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Brand Sensitivity

In the previous section we have discussed the relationship between American popular culture and primary education stream. Therefore, this section will focus on the relationship between brand sensitivity and primary education stream. However, no scholar addresses the linkages between brand sensitivity and primary education stream. Furthermore, past literature shows that no research has been done trying to look at primary education stream as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and brand sensitivity.

However, we believe that primary education stream moderates the relationship between American popular culture and brand sensitivity. Consequently, it is expected that the relationship between American popular culture and brand sensitivity is moderated by primary education stream. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P6c = Primary education stream moderates the relationship between American popular culture and brand sensitivity.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

d. Primary Education Stream as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and Fashion Consciousness

Based on the earlier arguments in this chapter, we found no research has been done pertaining to the relationship between American Popular Culture and primary education stream. From the review of literature, no scholars have attempted to explore the effect of primary education stream towards fashion consciousness.

In related study by Crask and Reynold (1978) claimed that fashion conscious consumers are slightly younger, better educated, have higher income, are much more active at travel, sports and entertained frequently. In the same sense, Wan and Wells (2001) also found that education does not emerge as a significant predictor of fashion consciousness. Therefore, we believe that education level has a close relationship with education stream.

Previous literature shows that no empirical study tries to look into the relationship between primary education stream and fashion consciousness. However, the foregoing discussions lead us to speculate that primary education stream may impose a significant effect towards fashion consciousness. As a conclusion, we speculate that primary education level may act as a moderating variable between American popular culture and

fashion consciousness. Based on the foregoing discussion, the relationship between American Popular Culture and fashion consciousness can be moderated by primary education stream and can be summarized as follows:

P6d = Primary education stream moderates the relationship between American popular culture and fashion consciousness.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

e. Primary Education Stream as a Moderating Variable between American Popular Culture and American Music Television Exposure

The relationship between American popular culture and primary education stream has been discussed in the previous section. As such, this section will focus on the relationship between American music television exposure and primary education stream. Past literature shows that no research has been done trying to link primary education stream as a moderating variable between American Popular Culture and American music television exposure. Furthermore, review of past literature also showed that no research has been done to look at the relationship between American music television exposure and primary education stream.

However, we speculate that primary school education stream moderates the relationship between American popular culture and conspicuous consumption. Thus, it is expected that the relationship between American popular culture and American music television exposure is moderated by primary education stream. The relationship can be summarized as follows:

P6e = Primary education stream moderates the relationship between American popular culture and American music television exposure.

The hypothesized relationship with moderating variable is investigated in this present study.

2.8 The Research Framework

Previous sections in this chapter have reviewed the relevant literature on the proposed research framework presented in Chapter 1. In this section, the approach taken and the research framework employed for this study are presented. Based on the in-depth review of literature related to the initial research model proposed in the previous chapter, the finalized model developed as the framework of this study is as presented in Figure 2.6. Due to no exploration from previous studies on the effect of American popular culture towards five selected consumer behaviour concepts, the model offers a truly comprehensive view.

All the five aspects of consumer behaviour chosen in the present study are related to American consumption behaviour and popular culture. Furthermore, literatures have proven that consumers who are influenced by American popular culture will imitate the American lifestyle. For example, Strinati (2000) argued that popular culture indirectly shaping consumers' lifestyle and consumption, i.e., conspicuousness, price, fashion consciousness, brand and music television exposure. However, lack of empirical research in this subject limits the understanding of American popular culture and whether its impact towards consumer behaviour concepts. This pressing managerial problem raises questions in terms of the academic understanding of American popular

culture and its impact to consumer behaviour concepts. It is therefore the study's intention to explore American popular culture, specifically, whether American popular culture could have some influence on consumer behaviour aspects.

The independent variable as depicted in the model is American Popular Culture, and is based on role model and expression of idolization. The five dependent variables involved in this study are conspicuous consumption, price sensitivity, brand sensitivity, fashion consciousness and American music television exposure. The relationships between each of the American Popular Culture and five dependent variables are posited to be moderated by religiosity and demographic variables (gender, ethnicity, family income level and education stream at primary level).

Nevertheless, there is none empirical research and theoretical model on the nature had been explored, despite the importance of relating the concept of American popular culture and conspicuous consumption. However, a few recent empirical studies suggest that there is a positive relationship between role model (dimension of American Popular Culture) and conspicuous consumption (O'Cass and McEwen, 2004; Piacentini and Mailer, 2004). For instance, O'Cass and McEwen (2004) implying in their study that brand personalities (e.g., Michael Jackson) play a significant role model (American popular culture dimension) in consuming products conspicuously. Therefore, the current researcher predicted that American popular culture will have a positive effect on conspicuous consumption.

The relationship between American popular culture and price sensitivity is explored in this study. From the review of the literature, there is no research have linked American popular culture and price sensitivity. However, there is a related study done on role

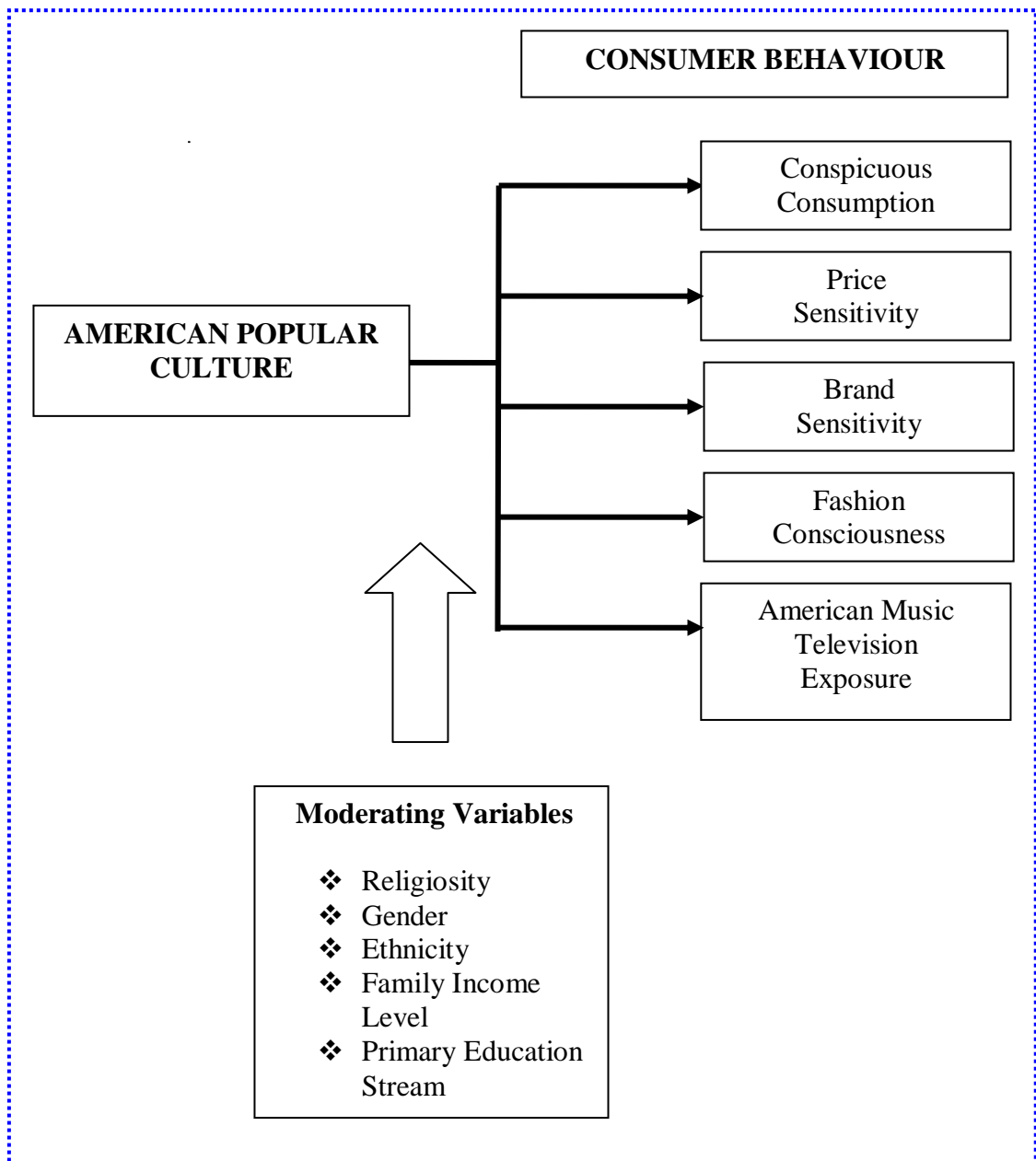
model (dimension of American popular culture) and price done by Martin and Bush (2000). In the survey conducted by Martin and Bush (2000) in United States examined the vicarious role models (i.e., entertainers and athletes) influences to teenagers' purchase intentions and behaviour. They found that adolescents do not appear to be strongly influenced by potential role models when price is a central issue. Thus, it is predicted in this study that American popular culture will have a negative effect towards price sensitivity.

Additionally, the relationship of American popular culture and brand sensitivity is included in the model. Due to the lacking research in this aspect, only a few studies conducted on role model (dimension of American popular culture) and brand conducted by Bush et al. (2004) and O'Cass and McEwen (2004). For instance, Bush et al. (2004) tried to associate the positive relationship between role models (American popular culture dimension) and brand. In the same sense, O'Cass and McEwen (2004) argued that brands are seen as important in creating an identity, a sense of achievement and identification for consumers. Therefore, it is expected that American popular culture will have a positive effect on brand sensitivity.

Furthermore, another relationship of American popular culture and fashion consciousness is also included in the model. Despite of no research have linked the relationship between American popular culture and fashion consciousness. However, a number of studies try to link role model (American popular culture dimension) and fashion consciousness. For example, a study conducted in Turkey by Kavak and Gumusluoglu (2007) claim that fashion conscious people admire the West and see western products as being modern and fashionable (an act of being highly influenced by American popular culture). They argue that the respondents perceive those who prefer

domestic products as traditional. Kavak and Gumusluoglu believed that the Turkish go to McDonald's not only for the product, but for its western and fashionable character (i.e., American popular culture). This study infers that American popular culture will have a positive effect towards fashion consciousness.

Figure 2.6: Research Framework



The relationship of American popular culture and American music television exposure is also explored in this study. Despite the importance of relating the concept of American popular culture and American music television exposure, there is none empirical research and theoretical model on the nature had been explored. However, a few empirical studies suggest that there is a positive relationship between role model (dimension of American Popular Culture) and American music television exposure. For instance, Englis et al. (1993) argue that MTV-Europe was launched in 1987 and is a powerful vehicle for exporting popular culture. Another scholar, Potratz (2007) argues that MTV has a powerful influence on youth and is a major reference of popular culture, fashion, music and social trends. In light of these past studies, it is suggested in this study that American popular culture will have a positive effect on American music television exposure.

As depicted in Figure 2.6, the framework suggests that each of the relationship of American popular culture and five selected aspects of consumer behaviour are expected to be moderated by religiosity and demographic variables (gender, ethnicity, family income level and primary education stream). The inclusion of religiosity as a moderator is suggested in this study. The detailed speculated discussion pertaining to religiosity as moderating variable to each relationship will be in the later sections in this chapter. Thus, the study posited that religiosity may impose a moderating effect of American popular culture and five selected aspects of consumer behaviour.

In addition, four demographics aspects are also included as moderating variables for each relationships mentioned earlier. Later subsection in this chapter will discuss the moderating effect of each four demographic aspects (i.e.: gender, ethnicity, family income level and primary education streams) in the relationship of American popular

culture (independent variable) and the five dependent variables. Finally, we predicted that all four demographic aspects will impose a moderating effect towards the relationship of American popular culture and five selected aspects of consumer behaviour.

2.9 Chapter Summary

A review of the literature in the area of consumer behaviour and psychology clearly shows that empirical research on American Popular Culture influences towards the Malaysian adolescent market is very scarce even though the market represents a tremendous market opportunity in the industry. Past studies in marketing indicate that there is extensive empirical evidence pertaining to all five dependent variables involved in the present study. Literature on the psychology suggests that subculture plays an important role in adolescents' consumption behaviour. Finally, role model and expression of idolization are derived as the two main components of American Popular Culture after an in-depth review of the literature in the present research. The consumer behaviour and psychological concepts are employed in this study as the framework enjoys considerable support. The methods employed to carry out this study will be completely discussed in the chapter that follows.