RUNNING HEAD: ESSAY

Essay

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# Introduction

Cultural appropriation can be defined as the theft of the rituals, behavior, cultural expression and aesthetic standards from a minority culture and applying it to any unrelated culture. It is usually used when the motive is social, economic or political. This phenomenon is applied without logical reasoning of the original culture and then implementing it on some other culture and promoting it. Some artifacts have been so much exploited by this modern pop culture which would do anything to stay in news diminish the original meaning of art (Crayton, 2018). Fashion, artifacts and traditions have become the center of expression and approach in this society. Fashion is a trend which is extremely popular among the public and accepted much wider audience. Items of clothing, jeweler and other accessories are an important part of defining cultural identities and traditions. Today, it is quite normal to get inspirations from other cultures and individuals of cross-culture.

It is a by-product of many elements in our society such as capitalism, imperialism, oppression and assimilation. Imperialism is responsible for creating and maintaining an unequal cultural and economic relationships between stated and noticing the engagement of people with other states and the search or empirical roots and functions on the basis of domination and subordination. The concept of cultural appropriation is actually profitable. The models, actors, artifact and traditions of different kind cultures are exploited at the hands of dominant cultures but they accepted it as exotic and desirable because it will generate profit for them (McAuliffe, 2015) . Capitalism thrives well in such settings where people are not an individual identity but differences among their cultures are studied well and then adopted by mature and dominant cultures. Diverse culture identities have been mostly stripped away in the recent times. Fashion is generally coined as a way of self-expression and is a very important component of cultural identity. For example braided hair for Africans and use of an ink mark on face in Indian culture and surprisingly these things become one of the most popular fashion culture (Vezina, 2019).

Famous stars be them actors, models or any media personality have stolen the spotlight for so many cultural instances which has ultimately brought in the question of adapting culture appropriation. These celebrities utilize their fame and access to mold cultural patterns for drawing attention to themselves and most of the times it is some sort of advertising culture. Only the seller doesn’t and cannot sell it. Similarly, fashion designers and consumers defined the expression of freedom and against the desire. Fashion is sometimes considered as most dry and difficult because it requires expressing one own self and keeping the cultural values and norms safe (Soh, 2018).

Another dimension of cultural appropriation is that it can be regarded as a practice that exploits and assimilates the marginalized and colonized cultures. It also deals with survival of subordinate cultures, their resistance and resilience towards dominant cultures. Cultural identity is classified due to social beliefs, myths and rituals. Fashion is something that exhibits including one’s the class and wealth. For some, fashion is the representation of tradition. Fashion and clothing system reinforce social ideologies and it is expect the ideologies and cultural identity is their own perception. If clothing is reinforces as social and cultural identity, it is important to know where it came from and its significance and what place did it take among fashion trends. Some perceive fashion as a superficial things and it offends people who tend to maintain and honor the heritage. Sociologists recommend that appropriation is linked with anticipation and as people still remain part of the fashion machine and others try to engage and communicate with them. The cross-cultural interaction could become a real trick and play role in placing itself into pop culture (Alspaugh, n.d.).

Several theories offer a comprehension about the concept of cultural appropriation and how it is taken in modern world today. The Cognitive Theory by George Gebner can be utilized to predict the influence of cultural appropriation within the fashion world. It suggested that what we view on TVs or on social media, influences our vision of the world. For example, if we observe an artifact or an attire in fashion on social media, we realized that though fashion media is so common but still it may not be enough to call cultural evidence. Fashion critics ask if fashion instills cultural inspiration in a few departments, it cannot be generalized for all. It is imperative to know that why is that fashion unable to reach its roots where it originate from on its own. It is a grave offence in cultural appropriation if there is knowledge of culture and yet inspire fashion.

The fashion industry is the most visible form to influence today’s society. Fashion campaigns can be seen everywhere on TVs, billboards, magazines, movies etc. to make a statement and influence people to get it too. But sometime, fashion industry is involved in offensive advertisements for example, romanticizing less diet plan or making shirts they have depressive stuff painted on it. It is quite offensive that companies start promoting their brands though this network of cultural appropriation. Cultural values and identities have huge significance to whom they belong and hurting them is quite offensive. Cultural appropriated is a better version of herself but the staff needs someone who can be trusted. People write critique on industry’s transparent use of cultural appropriation but as to date it remains a challenge for minority cultures (Abisambra et al., 2016).

The famous denim brand Good America cofounded by Khloe Kardashian and Emma Grede gives us the idea of a thriving career by the only black woman. She had been forced into thinking that she was incapable of doing what she did because of her race but instead of making it her weakness, she made it her strength and it gave her the confidence to go anywhere and do whatever she wants without the fear that she is a person of color and her culture is different from the whites, yet she managed to fit herself in and earned a place. She said someone had to lead forward and accept the role of being the first black woman in that company but with time you realize that these things shouldn’t matter. Her cultural identity is nothing she needs to hide from or not avail the opportunities. This confidence and self-assurance is very inspiring for others especially black women who want to make a name in fashion. But it is to be remembered that these things are only coping mechanisms. Fashion world does not simply greet everyone with open arms but you have to struggle to be confident over you cultural identity (Titton, 2015).

It is considered that cultural appropriation is a very powerful phenomenon yet others think that it has its own negative impacts on the fashion world. And it tends people to emphasize on ego and pride which changed by using innovation and prestige strategy cultural appropriation is observed on attires, jewelry, hair , makeup and any other fashion related things. It is empirical to examine the fashion history as it keeps borrowing elements from past and future. Another example of cultural appropriation is the cornrows which is the traditional hairstyle of African culture. This hairstyle is much more than just a hairstyle, it has a rich history behind it. It was considered as an art to make different hairstyles and designs engraved in the scalp. It had a spiritual and social significance which had been intrinsic to the origins of their cultures thousands of years ago. This is the reason hair is not an entirely groom up thing for West Americans. Each specific style represented different characteristics of the culture. It was like a religion and a sacred matter for the community.

# Conclusion

Culture appropriation is the use of a phenomenon by those people who have no association with a culture that they try to represent in the fashion industry. This way, the heritage underlying is being cheapened. It can be in any form, be it denigration for the minority groups and it also hurts their culture. The challenges and complexity have been increasing drastically and within a pluralistic society, people should interact and explore more about cultures. Though the motive of cultural appropriation might be deep exploration of inter-cultural settings and finding any element of xenophobia. The occurrence of this issue has increased and it is time to eliminate such a thing from our society.

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