

WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU WEARING?
HOW BLACK AMERICAN WOMEN ON YOUTUBE INTERPRET THE LOLITA FASHION
SUBCULTURE

by

Clover Hannah Mulo Farenkia

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)

With Honours in Department of Communication and Languages

Cape Breton University

April 2026

©Copyright by Mulo, 2026

This thesis by Student's Name
is accepted in its present form by the
Department of Communication and Languages
as satisfying the thesis requirements for the degree of
Degree Program with Honours

Approved by the Thesis Supervisor/Co-Supervisors

(insert typed names here) Date

Approved by Readers/Committee

(insert typed names here) Date

The author retains copyright in this thesis. Any substantial copying or any other actions that exceed fair dealing or other

exceptions in the Copyright Act require the permission of the author.

TABLES OF CONTENT

ABSTRACT.....	VI
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	VI
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY.....	1
INTRODUCTION	1
BACKGROUND	1
PROBLEM STATEMENT	3
RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS.	4
METHODS.....	4
POSITIONALITY	5
DATA ANALYSIS.....	5
THESIS ROADMAP	6
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	7
INTRODUCTION	7
SUBCULTURES	7
FASHION SUBCULTURES.....	8
LOLITA FASHION	9
LOLITA FASHION SUBSTYLES.....	11
LOLITA FASHION AND FEMININITY	12
LOLITA AND CONSUMPTION.....	13
ONLINE COMMUNITIES AND LOLITA FASHION.....	16
BLACK LOLITAS.....	17
INTERSECTIONALITY	19
BLACK WOMEN AND FEMININITY	20
BLACK WOMEN AND DIGITAL FEMININITY	21
SENSE OF BELONGING	22
GAP IN LITERATURE	23
CHAPTER 2 CONCLUSION	23
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	25
INTRODUCTION	25
PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS	25
INSIDER PERSPECTIVE	27
SAMPLING.....	28

KAWAII MELANIN COLLABORATION VIDEO QUESTIONS	30
INCLUSION CRITERIA.....	31
EXCLUSION CRITERIA.....	31
KAWAII MELANIN COMMUNITY.....	32
KAWAII MELANIN COMMUNITY MEMBERS	32
DATA COLLECTION.....	33
KAWAII MELANIN COLLABORATION VIDEO QUESTIONS	34
DATA ANALYSIS.....	35
REFLECTING IN REFLEXIVE THEMATIC ANALYSIS	35
JOURNALING.....	36
POSITIONALITY	36
WHY DID I KEEP A JOURNAL?.....	37
DATA ANALYSIS.....	37
ETHICS.....	44
LIMITATIONS	44
CHAPTER 3 CONCLUSION	45
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	46
INTRODUCTION	46
SELF-EXPRESSION AND RESISTANCE	46
FOSTERING BELONGING THROUGH SHARED IDENTITY	48
ANTI-BLACKNESS IN LOLITA	52
PREDOMINATELY BLACK LOLITA ONLINE COMMUNITIES	55
CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSION	57
CHAPTER 5: THESIS CONCLUSION	58
REFERENCES	61
APPENDIX A: KAWAII MELANIN: LIFE AS A BLACK LOLITA COLLAB TRANSCRIPTS	72
CONTENT CREATOR: ASAMI MOON	72
CONTENT CREATOR: KIMBUUCHA	79
CONTENT CREATOR: RAINBOW SODA.....	83
CONTENT CREATOR: CALLISTA.....	86
CONTENT CREATOR: TASHA B. SPOOKY	90
CONTENT CREATOR: THEFLUFFERDOME	94
CONTENT CREATOR: MARIANAKEI.....	98

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1 OLIVE MAGAZINE COVER VOL 169

FIGURE 2 CUTiE MAGAZINE COVER VOL 3 1988 | LOLITA HISTORY GALLERY, N.D.....9

FIGURE 3 LOLITA FASHION HISTORY: WHAT MAKES A LOLITA COORD ACCORDING TO KERA IN APRIL OF 1999, 2014 10

FIGURE 4 NOPARSLEY2469, N.D 12

FIGURE 5 COLLECTIONS – BABY, THE STARS SHINE BRIGHT SAN FRANCISCO, N.D.; BABY, THE STARS SHINE BRIGHT – BABY, THE STARS SHINE BRIGHT SAN FRANCISCO, N.D..... 14

FIGURE 6 PROTO LOLITA OUTFIT, N.D. 14

FIGURE 7 BABY, THE STARS SHINE BRIGHT SAN FRANCISCO 店, N.D. 15

FIGURE 8 ELEGANT GOTHIC & LOLITA LIVEJOURNAL COMMUNITY BANNER (THE EGL COMMUNITY, N.D.) 17

FIGURE 9 @KIMBUUCHA, 2018) (@THE_FLUFFERDOME, 2020) (@ASAMIMOON, 2024) (MAGICALGIRLME_OFFICAL, 2022 18

FIGURE 10 REFLEXIVE THEMATIC ANALYSIS JOURNAL ENTRIES 36

FIGURE 11 SEMATIC CODES ON CONTENT CREATOR'S TRANSCRIPT 38

FIGURE 12 CODING THE CONTENT CREATORS' TRANSCRIPTS BY USING DESCRIPTIVE LABELS ON MICROSOFT WORD VIA TRACK CHANGES. 39

FIGURE 13 EXAMPLE OF A CODE CLUSTER 40

FIGURE 14 WORD DOCUMENT LABELED IN NUMERICAL ORDER WITH PREPARATORY THEMES FOR THEMATIC ANALYSIS. 40

FIGURE 15 DESCRIPTIVE LABELS THAT WERE PUT INTO CODE CLUSTERS WITH A DISTINCT THEME. . 41

FIGURE 16 ALL 21 THEMES WITH CODE CLUSTERS ON WHITE POSTER BOARD 42

FIGURE 17 POSTER BOARD WITH 5 FINAL THEMES FOR THEMATIC ANALYSIS 43

FIGURE 18 HARAJUKU FASHION MAGAZINES (LEFT GOTHIC & LOLITA BIBLE MIDDLE KERA RIGHT FRUITS MAGAZINE) 49

FIGURE 19 JAPANESE LOLITA BRAND CATALOGS (LEFT MILK, MIDDLE INNOCENT WORLD, LEFT MOI-MÊME-MOITIÉ BOTTOM BABY THE STARS SHINE BRIGHT ADVERTISEMENT)..... 50

ABSTRACT

Lolita is a fashion subculture that initially started as a street fashion trend in Japan. In the 1990's, Japanese alternative fashion magazines such as *CUTiE*, *Olive*, and *FRUiTs* depicted young women wearing Lolita fashion. As these fashion magazines received global distribution, women around the world were introduced to Lolita fashion. As a result, women outside of Japan began to wear Lolita fashion—they created communities to share their passion for Lolita both in-person and online. Although Lolita is a notable fashion subculture amongst women, studies have yet to recognize how Black American women engage with the fashion subculture. This study therefore explores how Black Lolita content creators on YouTube interpret the Lolita fashion subculture, seek to understand Black women's experiences within it. Additionally, this research maps how they experience a sense of belonging within the Lolita fashion subculture. The data was collected from a predominantly Black online Lolita community named “Kawaii Melanin.” By performing a reflexive thematic analysis on seven video interviews from this community, this research offers fresh insights into how Black women experience the Lolita fashion subculture, such as how the sweet Lolita substyle acts as a way for Black women to renegotiate their sense of femininity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to thank my amazing thesis supervisor, Dr. Shannon Landers. Her energy, excitement, and expertise were instrumental throughout this research endeavor. I am deeply grateful for her unwavering support as it kept me highly motivated throughout this journey.

To all my professors from the Department of Communication and Languages: your ongoing support is greatly appreciated. Your invaluable insight and guidance have helped shape me into the researcher I am today. Additionally, the Communication lab—including the Peer Lab Facilitators, Coordinators, and instructors—consistently demonstrated the art of effective communication.

To the Kawaii Melanin community: thank you for inspiring Black women across the world. I value your commitment to radical authenticity, in a world that often polices and dictates Black Femininity. Your sense of courage is exemplary; you are a foundational cornerstone of the Lolita fashion subculture. Your outfits are unique, subversive, complex, and are a constant source of inspiration for me.

Lastly, I will extend my profound thanks to my friends, family, and online community for always encouraging me to explore my interests in unique ways. To my parents, Bernard Mulo Farenkia and Elise Mulo Farenkia: thank you for the immense sacrifices you have made to provide me with a bright future. By immigrating across the world with four children, you modeled what it means to be brave. To my dearest sister, I cherish our relationship and the guidance you have always given me. I get to be myself, for myself because of all of you. I am so incredibly lucky to have you in my life.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Many alternative fashion subcultures that existed in-person shifted toward digital platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although global lockdowns and social isolation restricted how people could interact with each other in person, social media platforms made it possible for fashion enthusiasts to engage with their communities. A sense of belonging once fostered in person through fashion subcultures was now being transferred to digital spaces. During my own quarantine, the TikTok algorithm exposed me to alternative Japanese street styles from Shoichi Aoki's *FRUiTS* magazine, one of many Japanese fashion magazines that documented youth street styles and emerging fashion subcultures from the streets of Harajuku. Engaging with others who shared the same interest in *FRUiTS* gave me a sense of belonging and community in an online space. One fashion subculture documented in *FRUiTS*, Lolita, has built a global online community across social media platforms. This study aims to investigate Black women's experiences and sense of belonging in the Lolita fashion subculture.

BACKGROUND

Lolita is an extension of Japanese street fashion subcultures. While scholars cannot pinpoint the exact year Lolita was established, many cite the 1990s for its emergence in Japan (Moden, 2008; Wong, 2020; Cheung 2021). Similar to the punk subculture of the 1970s, Lolitas adopted their fashion aesthetics as a form of resistance. Lolita fashion was used to defy societal expectations for Japanese women such as child-rearing, housework, and modesty (Cong, 2020; Cheung, 2021). Unlike other youth fashion subcultures written about by cultural theorists, Lolita is a female-centered and female-dominated (Nguyen 2012). No exact definition of Lolita fashion exists; the name of the style refers to the type of garments worn within the fashion subculture. Lolitas cite influence from both the Victorian (1837-1901) and Edwardian (1901-1910) eras. Lolitas commonly wear rocking horseshoes, doll-like dresses, knee high

socks, bonnets, and petticoats (Pelea, 2020, p.2; Moden, 2020; Cong 2022). Lolita fashion has a multitude of substyles; the three crucial substyles are classic, sweet, and gothic (Monden 2008; Nguyen 2012).

While Lolita is primarily a fashion subculture, the cuteness aspect—*kawaii*—is crucial in how Lolitas construct their identity. *Kawaii* is a Japanese word that best translates to *cute* in English. *Kawaii* has also been used to describe fashion aesthetics/fashion subcultures used by women to escape rigid gender norms in Japan (Lieber-Milo, 2026). Lolita uses the concept of *kawaii* and its emphasis on child-like innocence, vulnerability, and cuteness to challenge gender norms (Jones, 2021).

Japanese fashion magazines helped to globalize Lolita fashion (Nguyen, 2012; Shuai, 2020, Curated, 2021) and so did the creation of online Lolita communities (Moden, 2013; Zhao, 2025). Online Lolita communities function as a platform for Lolitas to interact about the fashion, educate newer Lolitas, provide resources on where to shop, construct a subcultural identity—shared values, beliefs, styles, behaviors, and manners of speech—amongst Lolitas (Moden, 2013; Jadedisland, 2020; Zhao, 2025).

Globally, the Lolita fashion subculture and Lolita communities have helped to create a sense of belonging amongst women (Zhao, 2025; Nguyen, 2012; Adele, 2019; Carriger, 2019). Lolita has intersections of gender and alternative fashion. It also has the potential to create communities that support and center Black female narratives. Intersectionality, a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), highlights the unique oppression experienced through the intersections of race, gender, class, sexuality, among other marginal social identities, in a society (Crenshaw, 1989).

Naturally, Lolitas all share the identities of being a woman and a Lolita. However, the combination of being a woman, Lolita, and Black creates a unique experience for Black Lolitas. Since Black women share similar intersecting identities, they have been able to carve out a space for themselves within this fashion subculture beyond the dominant culture. This study will continuously refer to the dominant culture, which can be understood as the values, norms, and ideas that hold the most power or significance in society overall. An aspect of the dominant culture in fashion is fast-fashion—a business model that

rapidly produces inexpensive clothing, responding dynamically to the most current fashion trends (Mizrachi & Sharon, 2025) Moreover, dominant culture within this study refers to the most prevalent values and identities within a North American context. These include Judeo-Christian traditions, cisgender identity, and white femininity. Black Lolita communities are an extension of the Lolita fashion subculture that exist both in-person and online.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite limited academic research on Black Lolitas, Black women are evidently active in this fashion subculture. This includes online communities such as *Kawaii Melanin Girls*, n.d., *Black EGL Community*, 2013, *Kawaii Black Youtuber Community*, 2017 and *Jadedisland*, 2020, which devote themselves to Black women's participation in the fashion subculture. One such community is *Kawaii Melanin*, which showcases Black women's general love of Japanese fashion with a particular focus on Lolita fashion (*Life as a Black Lolita - Kawaii Melanin Collab*, n.d.-b). The community's name situates melanin, a feature commonly associated with Black women and darker skin, as being cute, which stands in contrast to the media representations of Black femininity that have portrayed them as inherently aggressive, hypersexual, and strong (hooks, 1992; Jerald et al., 2017).

For this reason, the choice to link Kawaii (cuteness) and melanin together is significant because it subtly defies the expectation that Black femininity is aggressive. Instead, the name positions Blackness as cute, sweet, or innocent. Through video collaborations on YouTube, Kawaii Melanin tells stories about their experiences as Black women in the Lolita fashion subculture and share wardrobe tours. Most importantly, Kawaii Melanin provides community resources for Black women interested in Japanese fashion. Most studies have focused on Lolitas in Japan and China (Nguyen, 2012; Adele, 2019; Carriger, 2019; Zhao, 2025). However, there has been little focus on how Black women online interpret the Lolita fashion subculture and how they experience a sense of belonging in Lolita.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS.

The key aim of this study was to gain a comprehensive understanding of how Black women experience the Lolita fashion subculture. Black women play a significant role the subculture, by promoting alternative fashion and subverting norms.

The objectives of this study were to:

- ✓ Explore the role of Lolita fashion in creating a sense of belonging among Black women.
- ✓ To assess the relationship between Black women and Lolita fashion.
- ✓ Analyze the ways in which online communities have created a sense of belonging for marginalized individuals.

This study's primary research question asks: how do Black American Lolita content creators from the Kawaii Melanin community on YouTube interpret the Lolita fashion subculture? Related questions include:

This study's sub questions are:

1. How do the YouTubers describe their motivations for joining the Lolita fashion subculture?
2. What meanings do they attach to their subcultural identity?
3. How do they experience belonging and self-expression within the Lolita online community?

METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative approach, situated in the Critical Theory paradigm. Data was collected by analyzing seven content creators' video interviews from the Kawaii Melanin community on YouTube. They created a video series, *Life as a Black Lolita: Kawaii Melanin Collab*, granting access to Black Lolitas experiences. For this study, I analyzed interviews from seven content creators: @Magicalgirlme,

@Marinakei, @RainbowSodaa, @TheFlufferDome, @Asamimoon5789, @MzPirateQueen, and @Kimbuucha. These members provide a distinct interpretation of the online Lolita community.

POSITIONALITY

Similarly, as a researcher, I acknowledge that I am not neutral in this process. As a Black Lolita who has been participating in the online community since 2024, I bring an insider perspective to the research (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). Similarly, I have used community hashtags such as #Blackgirllolita and #BlackLolita on my social media platforms by posting outfits and connecting with mutuals—people who follow each other on social media—within the online community. My Identity as a Black woman and a Lolita inspired my interest in understanding other Black women's experiences in the Lolita fashion subculture.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data was analyzed through a Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) approach developed by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2019). RTA entails “the researcher’s reflective and thoughtful engagement with their data and their reflexive and thoughtful engagement with the analytic process” (Braun and Clarke, 2019).

As a Black Lolita who has been participating in the online community since 2024, I possess first-hand knowledge about this community (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). Similarly, I have used community hashtags such as #Blackgirllolita and #BlackLolita on my social media platforms by posting outfits and connecting with mutuals—people who follow each other on social media—within the online community. This study applied Reflexive Thematic Analysis, alongside my insider perspective and intersectional identity as a Black Lolita. I recorded my reactions to the interviews in a research journal where I reflected on my experiences in relation to other Black women in Lolita.

THESIS ROADMAP

The existing literature surrounding this topic is covered in Chapter Two. Chapter Three then covers the methodology and details from my insider perspective. Chapter Four presents the key findings and themes that emerged from the data and then provides an analysis. Chapter, finally, reconsiders the main research questions and objectives, and explains the study's significance while providing avenues for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Fashion subcultures have been researched from numerous perspectives in the literature. One major theme ponders how marginalized individuals cultivate identity through fashion subcultures. This literature review examines the Lolita fashion subculture, focusing on its substyles, femininity, patterns of consumption, and online Lolita communities. By using an intersectional lens, it explores Black women's participation in Lolita, Black femininity, and digital Black femininity. Finally, it explores how being a part of one or more non-dominant identities can impact a person's sense of belonging, both in-person and online. Extensive scholarship has explored the history of Lolita fashion and its impact on women across the world (Nguyen, 2012; Adele, 2019; Carriger, 2019; Zhao, 2025). However, a critical gap remains in how a growing population of Black women experience the Lolita fashion subculture in virtual spaces.

SUBCULTURES

One way people who feel like they do not belong create a sense of identity is through subcultures. In his book *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, Dick Hebdige defined subculture as “movements toward speech that offend ‘the silent majority,’ which challenges the principle of unity and cohesion which contradicts the myth of consensus” (Hebdige, 1979 p. 18). Likewise, Baron (1989) defines the term as a value system shared among a group of people to cope with shared experiences or social problems separate from the dominant culture (Baron, 1989). Scot (2022) claims that the dominant culture includes the ruling practices within a political, social, or economic organization that many cultures live within. Additionally, Scot notes that a subculture is defined by a group of people who separate themselves from the dominant culture, creating a culture with their own unique practices. Haenfler (2013) takes this position a step further stating that that subcultures are not simply small pieces of dominant culture; rather, they are symbolic blueprints that give meaning to people’s identities, beliefs, perceptions, values, behaviors, and

even their material items (Haenfler, 2013). People within subcultures tend to appropriate humble objects from the dominant culture and turn them into symbols of deviance or defiance.

FASHION SUBCULTURES

Fashion subcultures function similarly to subculture in general, but demand considering the shared aesthetic choices involved. Hebdige (1979) believes that the embodiment of style, how people chose to dress themselves, was used as a form of symbolic resistance and a way for youth to build community beyond the dominant culture (Hebdige, 1979). A major part of fashion subcultures is using garments to represent one's identity, internal feelings of difference, attitudes, and political views. Punk is a subculture which originated from working-class struggle after World War Two. Clothes, in punk, were used as a protest against the establishment. Moran (2010) elaborates this in their study of Do It Yourself (D.I.Y.) ethics in relation to the core values of punk, finding that participants gained comfort in rebelling against consumer culture and authority (Moran, 2010). Fashion subcultures are unique in how aesthetic choices are used amongst community members to construct identity and signal shared values.

Marginalized people may feel that aspects of their identity are not represented in fashion subcultures. Jankovljevic (2006) points out how the punk scene was dominated by white people, which led to Black people feeling alienated within the subculture. Since white people within the punk subculture did not always understand how race is politicized, Black individuals sought to carve out their own space within Punk, deeming it Afro-punk (Jankovljevic, 2006). Ensminger (2010) interviewed Afro-punks and found that participants believed that their racial identity was intertwined with being a punk. Additionally, Afro-punks argued that these oppressive power structures have also permeated the punk subculture (Ensminger, 2010). Although marginalized people may enjoy aspects of a fashion subculture, the spaces may not fully represent or value parts of their identity. Thus, marginalized people can take what they value from a fashion subculture to then create a space that celebrates their identity.

LOLITA FASHION

Japanese fashion magazines from the 1980s documented young women with outfits that had traces of Lolita's fashion aesthetics and spirit. Nguyen (2012) maintains that the core of Japanese fashion magazines, such as *CUTiE* and *Olive*, was individuality, as well as self-expression through fashion trends. Exposure to these magazines' styles and values motivated girls to express themselves through fashion (Nguyen, 2012). Shuai (2020) highlights how the Lolita style documented in fashion magazines in the 1980s emerged out of a street style trend seen in Japan (Shuai, 2020). It is difficult to pinpoint an exact year that Lolita became an established fashion subculture, but scholars credit 1990 for when it fully emerged as a cultural phenomenon in Japan. Wong (2020) writes, "Lolita, with the doll-like and Western classical costumes, was a Japanese born youth subculture around the 1990s" (Wong, 2020). Additionally, Moden (2008) explains how in the 1990s, Lolita had emerged onto the street fashion scene in Japan (Moden, 2008, p.24). Cheung (2021) asserts Lolita fashion functions as a way for Japanese women to defy societal expectations placed on them, which include motherhood and work. Cong (2022) agrees, saying that the child-like aesthetics of Lolita were used by women to escape pressures associated with female adulthood (Cong, 2022). As a result, Lolita's attitude is built on countering what is considered conventional for women in society: full-time childrearing, domestic labour, and work.



Figure 1: *Olive Magazine* cover Vol 16



Figure 2: *CUTiE Magazine* cover Vol 3 1988 | *Lolita History Gallery*, n.d

Moden (2020) writes about how Lolita fashion, as a style, does not have an exact definition, but refers to fashion trends within the subculture. Lolita fashion itself draws influence from nineteenth-century Europe and consists of frilly knee-high socks, bonnets, rocking horseshoes, and doll-like dresses (Moden, 2020; Cong 2022). Moreover, Pelea (2020) asserts that Lolita is influenced by multiple European fashions ranging from the Victorian era (1837-1901), Edwardian era (1901-1910), and, stretching further back, the style of Rococo Art movement was an additional point of reference for Lolita fashion aesthetics. (Pelea, 2020, p.2). The term *kawaii* is used among Lolitas to construct identity. *Kawaii* is used by Lolitas to embody a type of cuteness commonly associated with a childlike innocence. Alternative Japanese fashion subcultures and aesthetics have also been described as *kawaii* (Lieber-Milo, 2026), affording women a space to express a unique type of femininity.

Nguyen (2012) contends that Lolita is both female-centered and female-dominated. Thus, the fashion removes itself from the male gaze; it focuses on the wearer's individual determinants of beauty and femininity (Nguyen 2012). Furthermore, Lolita removes itself from mainstream fashion trends like other fashion subcultures but differs in how it engages with its values. Rahman et al. (2015) highlight that Lolita differs from other alternative fashion subcultures in that its acts of rebellion are covert. While the punks of the 1970s were overt and actively resisted societal structures by force—including protests, vandalism, and aggressive lyrics—Lolita fashion's resistance resides in the individual attitude of the wearer; the garments themselves opposing certain beliefs



Figure 3: Lolita Fashion History: What Makes a Lolita Coord According to Kera in April of 1999, 2014

(Rahman et al., 2015). The fashion subverts the idea that women should cater to men's preferences and their ways of sexualizing women.

LOLITA FASHION SUBSTYLES

Lolita fashion is rich in diversity, and as a result, the fashion subculture has grown to include many different substyles used to create a “coord,” which Mubanga (2025) defines coord as a coordinated Lolita outfit (Mubanga, 2025). Lolitas create their coords with clothing from the various substyles, three of which remain integral to the subculture: sweet, classic, and gothic (Monden 2008; Nguyen 2012). Robinson (2014) points out how Lolitas sometimes combine substyles according to a personal preference (Robinson, 2014). Mubanga (2025) asserts that Lolita is densely populated with the sweet substyle which draws inspiration from light pastel colors, sugary motifs, and prints directly on the dress itself (Mubanga, 2025). Zhao (2024) adds that prints on sweet Lolita dresses reflect cuteness by using patterns of animals, toys, desserts, fruits, and shapes (Zhao, 2024). Adele (2011) maintains that the classic substyle is characterized by specific rules such as a high neckline, full tights, hemlines that hit after the knee, and longer socks; the style is inspired by Victorian era children’s dresses (Jiang 2018). Bernal (2019) explains Gothic Lolita comes from the combination of Goth and Lolita fashion, which comprises black fabrics, black lace, black ribbon, and smoky eye shadow (Bernal, 2019). The diversity of fashion aesthetics in Lolita fashion allows Lolitas to express their femininity.



Figure 4: NoParsley2469, n.d

LOLITA FASHION AND FEMININITY

Lolita fashion uses its child-like, doll-like, graceful, delicate, and sweet aesthetics to create a unique expression of femininity as the wearer sees fit. Alexander (2025) maintains that past and present iterations of Lolita are worn as a response to strict gender roles, harshly policed notions of adulthood, and uniform culture (Alexander, 2025). In Japan, Nguyen (2017) interviewed Lolitas in the age range from teenagers to adults in their mid-40s. Her findings reveal that Lolita fashion helps participants reclaim their autonomy as well as improve the perceptions of others (Nguyen 2017). Lolitas use the fashion to express their gender identity without having to exude the sex appeal commonly associated with womanhood. Winge (2008) counters this by explaining that Lolita fashion has received mixed reviews in Japan because it can come across as an attempt to fetishize the clothing young girls wear for the male gaze (Winge, 2008). Harvey (2011) agrees about the uncertainty regarding Lolita fashion, acknowledging that the name of the fashion subculture ultimately derives from Vladimir Nabokov's 1955 novel *Lolita*. Since the book became popular in the West, people who hear the book title, may therefore wrongly assume that Lolitas engage with or condone pedophilic relationships. Additionally, sexualized depictions of young girls

dressed in styles that portray Lolita have been featured in Japanese manga and anime that cater to older men (Harvey, 2011).

Rahman et al. (2015) disagrees with Harvey (2011), arguing that Lolita as a fashion subculture has nothing to do with Nabokov's 1955 novel *Lolita* and that the fashion subculture removes itself from sexuality. Lolitas opt out of sexualization via a focus on fantastical clothing (Rahman et al., 2015). While sexualized depictions of young women are common in media, the intent of this subculture is not to amplify that, but to instead escape the over-sexualized nature of media by using child-like aesthetics in a modest way.

Gagne's (2008) explores linguistic strategies used in counter-public discourse about Gothic Lolita, finding that they have a fear of coming across as trying to garner sexual attention instead of earnestly expressing creativity and femininity. Gothic Lolitas had anxieties about gathering in Harajuku since it was a trend for middle-aged men to film Lolitas without their consent and use the imagery however they wished (Gagne, 2008). Scholars' suspicions of the Lolita fashion subculture sharing the same name as Nabokov's 1955 novel *Lolita*, and the sexualization of young women wearing fashion reminiscent of Lolita, raises valid points. However, it has been widely argued by scholars (Rahman et al.; Gagne, 2008; Nguyen 2017; Alexander, 2025) that the fashion subculture itself does not have anything to do with the novel's content. Instead, the Lolita fashion subculture champions the reclamation of women's femininity.

LOLITA AND CONSUMPTION

During Lolita's early stages, outfits often took inspiration from popular musical artists part of the Visual Kei subculture; the Victoria and Albert Museum (2024) notes how Lolita fashion's popularity can be credited to Visual Kei. Visual Kei is an alternative Japanese music/fashion subculture that Lolitas drew inspiration from to construct their coordinates. Rahman et al. (2015) note that Lolitas who focus on a do-it-yourself (DIY) style to construct unique fashion aesthetics within the fashion subculture to reflect

aspects of their identities (Rahman et al., 2015, p. 11). The style began to grow in popularity within the alternative Japanese fashion scene in Harajuku. Ngai (2022) proposes that Lolita fashion’s popularity led to Japanese brands trying to commercialize the fashion for profit; “each piece of Lolita clothing from major brands costs \$455 on average, about 50 times the minimum hourly wage in Japan” (Ngai, 2022, p.2). Rahman et al. (2015) maintain that for Lolitas, their ideal selves within the fashion subculture are constructed using Japanese Lolita brands.



Figure 5: Collections – *BABY, the Stars Shine Bright* San Francisco, n.d.; *Baby, the Stars Shine Bright* – *BABY, the Stars Shine Bright* San Francisco, n.d



Figure 6: Proto Lolita Outfit, n.d.

production. In return, this adds to Lolita fashion’s perceived exclusivity and artistic integrity (孙花, 2024).

Lolitas favor popular brands such as *Baby the Stars Shine Bright*, *Victorian Maiden*, and *Metamorphose* (Rahman et al, 2015, p. 11).

Japanese Lolita brands such as *Baby The Stars Shine Bright* with physical locations in Japan have since established locations within Europe and the United States (Ngai, 2022, p. 2). Japanese Lolita Brands differ from fast fashion. 孙花 (2024) argues that Lolita brands within and beyond Japan are known for their artistry, construction, and embroidery. The inherit craftsmanship of Lolita fashion do not allow for a rapid pace of



Figure 7: *BABY, THE STARS SHINE BRIGHT* San Francisco 店, n.d.

Lolita fashion maintains a global interest. To profit from the growing global market, Japanese Lolita brands, and second-hand j-fashion stores based in Japan, now ship products worldwide. Lolibrary (n.d) writes about how Closet Child focuses on Lolita, goth, and punk items which has physical locations in Japan. The store has also extended itself to the global vintage reselling market, opting to list clothing items on Japanese auction sites (*Closet Child - Lolibrary Wiki*, n.d.; クローゼットチャイルド, n.d.). Moreover, the vintage Lolita reselling market has become increasingly popular worldwide, and includes sites such as Lace market, Mercari Japan, Wunderwelt, Maiden Clothing, The Lolita Collective, and Yahoo Auctions (*Mercari: Japan's Largest Marketplace*, n.d.; Lolita Collective, n.d.; *Maiden Clothing*, n.d.) *Lace Market*, 2022; *WunderWelt*, 2026; *DirectItems Auction -Buyee Japanese Proxy Service*, 2026). Lolita fashion maintains a global market despite the high price point. As a result, this makes participation in the subculture exclusive because it may be unaffordable and alienate women from a lower-class

background. To engage with the fashion, women part of the Lolita fashion subculture may take their enthusiasm to an online community.

ONLINE COMMUNITIES AND LOLITA FASHION

When people engage on the internet over shared values, beliefs, and hobbies, they begin to form what is known as an online community. Preece (2015) asserts that the definition of community used to focus on a group of people in a single location, bonded by values, beliefs, or activity. However, digital technologies have allowed the meaning of community to transcend face-to-face interaction and traditional forms of engagement (Preece, 2017). Rheingold (2000) agrees, noting that that with advancement in digital technologies and mediated communication, people form social groups regardless of time, geographical location, and space. Like in-person communities, virtual communities are social aggregations: people bond over time to form long-lasting relationships in cyberspace but still conjure feelings of intimacy and connectivity between users (Rheingold, 2000).

Japanese fashion magazines were instrumental in helping to globalize Lolita fashion, but online Lolita communities were equally crucial in connecting Lolita enthusiasts worldwide. Haenfler (n.d.) explores how some subcultural spaces that once took place primarily in-person have now become more accessible through social media platforms (Haenfler, n.d.). Moden (2013) agrees, describing the LiveJournal community “Elegant Gothic and Lolita,” where primarily Anglophone Lolitas interact. Kang and Cassidy (2015) refer to LoliGothUK, an online community of British Lolitas who participate in subcultural activities such as giving advice, recommending products, sharing information, and planning events (Kang and Cassidy, 2015, p. 10). Zhao (2025) considers online Lolita communities in China. Newcomers in the Lolita Tieba community received help with their purchasing habits and coords from senior Lolitas, and upload images of themselves dressed in Lolita. As a result, newcomers were engaged in a cohesive community and subcultural identity construction (Zhao, 2025).



Figure 8: *Elegant gothic & Lolita livejournal community banner (The EGL Community, n.d.)*

BLACK LOLITAS

Research on Black Lolitas is limited, but there are many Black women that actively participate in the fashion subculture. While there have been studies of other demographics (Zhao, 2025; Nguyen 2012; Adele, 2019; Carriger, 2019), a focus on online Black Lolita communities remains to be developed. Specifically, nothing appears to be written on how Black women experience a sense of belonging in Lolita. Yet within the Lolita fashion subculture, Black women have in fact created a community where they interact internally and with the broader fashion subculture. Jadedisland (2020) writes, “By documenting and sharing the experiences, stories, and contributions of Black individuals in the Lolita fashion community, we can ensure that their voices are heard and their presence is acknowledged” (Jadedisland, 2020). Black Lolitas occupy a unique space in the fashion subculture; they are situated between worlds where their two identities intersect. Marie (2023) explains that using hashtags such as #Blacklolita and #BrownLolita has helped to showcase the community’s fashion content on social media platforms (Marie, 2023). As Black Lolitas engage in the fashion subculture both online and offline, they offer a unique perspective for Lolita at large. SaxsonBlues (2019) proposes five pros of being a Black Lolita: inclusion, indie brand representation, Black-owned Lolita business, emerging resources, and cultural exchange and exposure (SaxsonBlues, 2019). Similarly, Marie (2023) notes how visible

representation in Lolita fashion helps Black Lolitas find tips for flattering dresses, hairstyles, and makeup suited to women with a darker complexion or kinkier hair texture (Marie, 2023). Black Lolitas' racial identity, however, may cause them to be marginalized within the Lolita fashion subculture.



Figure 9: @Kimbuucha, 2018) (@The_flufferdome, 2020) (@Asamimoon, 2024) (Magicalgirlme_offical, 2022

Culture is typically defined as the shared values, beliefs, and practices among a group of people.

However, this definition may construe culture as passive rather than a dynamic set of relations in society.

For Raymond Williams, culture is a “particular way of life which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning, but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour” (Williams, 1989, pg. 93).

Culture is both traditional and creative, and is sustained through dynamic relations (Williams, 1989). The value of any culture lies in the myth of consensus, which takes the ‘process of normalisation’ as natural; it is through this process that dominant cultures form. Similarly, Scott and Marshall (2009) argue that a dominant culture's values and ways of living are imposed on subordinate cultures through economic and political power (Scott and Marshall, 2009). Roberts et al. (2002) agree, stating that dominant culture is layered, reflecting the different interests of the dominant class (Roberts et al., 2002). Since the dominant culture sets the standards for values, beliefs, and practices, individuals who do not share these societal norms can be marginalized.

Marginalization is a form of social exclusion in which one's identity can impact the treatment one receives in society. Carter et al. (2023) identify that this mistreatment can manifest overtly through established societal structures such as laws, government, and education. Covertly, this mistreatment takes the form of values and beliefs held by a society (Carter et al., 2023). Harry et al. (2024) demonstrate that a dominant culture's norms can influence how individuals are treated. They found that students of color attending universities with predominately white students in the Southeastern United States often face racism and have a decreased perception of belonging among their peers (Harry et al., 2024). Marginalization is complex, and dependent on the ruling class values and enforcement by the dominant culture. To understand Black Lolitas' experiences, it is crucial to look at them through an intersectional lens.

INTERSECTIONALITY

Lolita, as a fashion subculture intersects, with concepts of womanhood, femininity, kawaii, and politics. The concept of intersectionality coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw is a well-suited framework to discuss this study. Crenshaw (1989) created the term intersectionality to analyze how the intersection of Black women's identities—being Black and being a woman—cause them to be further marginalized by societal power structures (Crenshaw, 1989). The intersectional nature of Black Lolitas' identities reflects Crenshaws' concept. Moreover, as Black Lolitas navigate the fashion subculture, the intersection of their social identities can influence their experiences within Lolita. As Lolita communities have formed online (Kang and Cassidy, 2015; Zhao, 2025; Jadedisland, 2025) the fashion subculture becomes mediated, which further impact Black women's experiences within Lolita. Black women's use of Lolita is reminiscent of intersectionality within the Afro-punk subculture. Hanefler (n.d.) **writes** about **how** in Afropunk, Black individuals could explore how aspects of their identity shape how they experienced the subculture (Hanefler, n.d.). For Black women, Lolita can be used to explore the intersections of their identity and to understand their experiences. One way that Black Lolitas' experiences are shaped is through the media's depictions of Black women.

BLACK WOMEN AND FEMININITY

How Black women's femininity is represented in media is complex and can lack nuance. In the *Black Looks and Representation*, hooks (1992) outlines multiple reoccurring tropes of Black women in Western media: the mammy, who acts as a servant for white people; the strong Black woman, who can endure extreme emotional pain without support; the jezebel, a hypersexual Black woman; and the sapphire, a sassy, crass, and rude Black woman (hooks, 1992). These tropes reduce Black women to stereotypes instead of providing audiences with a nuanced understanding of how fluid Black femininity can be. Kelly et al. (2020) point out how these tropes and media portrayals of femininity can be internalized by Black women. When Black women view their femininity only within the constraints of how media portrays them—a primary caregiver, hyper-sexual, and or a strong being—they have internalized the dominant culture's message about them which in return creates what is known as “toxic Black femininity” (Kelly et al., 2020, p. 55). To combat toxic Black femininity, some Black women have opted to create alternative representations of Black women in media.

Alternative representations of Black femininity in traditional media have characterized Black women as quirky, awkward, flawed, and ordinary. These depictions highlight that Black women's experiences are not defined solely by racial trauma but also by their everyday stories at work, romance, and in friendships. Anderson (2023) explains how the modern television landscape has allowed for more diverse and authentic portrayals of Black femininity. In an appearance on the Good Hang Podcast with Amy Pohler in 2025, Creator of *Abbott Elementary*, Quinta Brunson, reflected on the series' Black female protagonist Janine Teagues. Brunson spoke about focusing on writing Janine to be realistic—a quirky, complicated, and eager schoolteacher—instead of the absolute best or ideal portrayal of a Black woman. For Brunson, Janines' depiction highlights the value of showcasing that Black femininity can also be ordinary (Anderson, 2023; Good Hang with Amy Poehler, 2025). Likewise, *Insecure*—a HBO television series created by Isa Rae—depicts two Black women navigating friendship, love, and work. Rae depicts Black femininity to relay Black women's experiences instead of race-relations. Snoadmin (2022) writes about

how *Insecure* depicts darker skinned Black women in everyday situations— where they make their own choices and have control over their lives while being vulnerable— imperfect, real, and awkward (Snoadmin, 2022). These alternative representations add more variety to how Black femininity is understood within media.

Tropes like the jezebel, mammy, and strong Black woman still exist in traditional media (hooks, 1992). Yet showrunners such as Issa Rae and Quinta Brunson have created alternative representations of Black women that depict them as being awkward, ordinary, and quirky (Snoadmin, 2022; Anderson, 2023; Good Hang with Amy Poehler, 2025). Social media has made room for Black women who do not work in traditional media to represent their femininity. Therefore, more representations of Black women are able to emerge through social media.

BLACK WOMEN AND DIGITAL FEMININITY

Scholarship has written on how social media platforms have been used to create spaces that center narratives surrounding Black women's femininity. From one perspective, Mutero (2025) writes about how social media algorithms and users work to create spaces that regulate Black women's femininity. Within these spaces, content creators have argued that Black womanhood should be devoid of feminism for the sake of cultural preservation; feminism is viewed as a threat to Black females and gender equality is perceived as a threat to the Black family unit (Mutero, 2025). Procope (2024) proposes the concept of tactical patriarchal femininity, “a performance used to attract the financial provision of an economically stable Black man.” On social media sites, Black women use tactical patriarchal femininity via posting about embracing a submissive role towards Black men and the benefits of doing so (Procope, 2024). Since some internet media polices Black femininity, many Black women decide to create spaces that celebrate or reimagine it.

From another perspective, Bowen and Martin (2017) recount how CaShawn Thompson created the hashtag #BlackGirlsareMagic—now known as #BlackGirlMagic—which celebrates Black women across

digital platforms. The hashtag provides a self-identifier for Black women to celebrate their femininity (Bowen, and Martin, 2017). Olayinka et al. (2021) add that CaShawn Thompson's hashtag was created in response to a Psychology Today article that deemed Black women to be the least attractive race (Olayinka et al., 2021). Mason (2019) argues that #BlackGirlMagic rearticulates Black femininity, challenging how Black women are perceived in an oppressive space (Mason, 2019, p.719). #BlackGirlMagic is a space that celebrates Black femininity; these spaces can influence a person's sense of belonging.

SENSE OF BELONGING

Being a part of one or more marginalized groups can impact a person's sense of belonging. Flet (2021) contends that a sense of belonging is vital for humans to function and that social acceptance allows for people to flourish (Flet, 2021). While belonging to a local community is fundamental for one's wellbeing (Michalski et al., 2020; Shields, 2008; Ross, 2002), a sense of digital belonging has become just as important in recent years (Waugh, 2019; Lee et al., 2019). Bayram and Barut (2023) found that a sense of belonging within people's social groups, schools, and communities now manifest in virtual spaces; arguably, in recent years, traditional means of belonging have been replaced with virtual ones (Bayram and Barut, 2023). Although the ubiquity of virtual spaces provides an opportunity for people to create a sense of belonging, they are not without issues. For example, Amarikwa (2023) examines how virtual communities can reproduce prejudices held offline, mapping predation and discriminatory practices on TikTok. They identified that digital Blackface—online users taking imagery of Black people (particularly Black women) to convey emotions—is commonly accepted on TikTok, primarily in the comedy sector where non-Black individuals profit off the use of Black people's images, sounds, and voices (Amarikwa, 2023). While online communities have their limitations, the internet's diversity can allow for inclusive spaces that could potentially uplift people who feel like they do not belong and help to create a sense of identity (Ridings, et al., 2006; Ho, 2023).

GAP IN LITERATURE

The Lolita fashion subculture has spread globally. While there are many studies on Lolita fashion subcultures in Japan, China, Mexico, and the United States (Zhao, 2025; Nguyen 2012; Adele, 2019; Carriger, 2019), there is a dearth of studies on Black Lolitas, despite it being a growing fashion subculture. Jadedisland is a virtual space where Black women find identity through fashion expression. According to @Jadedisland, “the world needs to see more Black Lolitas represented. I mean, look at the unity of the style and the culture. One of my favorite aspects of Black Lolitas is the creativity and elegance with our hair” (Jadedisland, 2025). The visibility of Black Lolitas has grown on social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram. Pages dedicated to Black women's participation in the Lolita fashion subculture amass millions of views. **Jade island's** views confirm the idea that fashion subcultures can support Black female narratives, creating a sense of belonging amongst a marginalized group of people.

In many ways, the growth of the Japanese Lolita fashion subcultures mirrors the articulation and rearticulation of the punk movement. Prior studies have provided the foundation for understanding how fashion subcultures are formed. This literature pays a great deal of attention to the Japanese Lolita subculture but lacks an exploration of how Black women experience the Lolita subculture. Moreover, existing literature falls short of understanding how Black women experience a sense of belonging in the Lolita subculture.

CHAPTER 2 CONCLUSION

This literature review examined how marginalized individuals can cultivate a sense of identity through fashion subcultures. The review revealed that the dominant culture significantly shapes the experiences within fashion subcultures. Moreover, this review suggests the importance of an intersectional lens when it comes to the Lolita fashion subculture to capture femininity, consumption, and the lived experiences of Black women. This review also highlighted how Black women's experiences within the Lolita fashion

subculture is informed by traditional and online media portrayals of Black femininity. Although extensive scholarship has addressed the Lolita fashion subculture and its online communities, it is time to understand how Black women engage in the Lolita fashion subculture in virtual spaces.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the methodological approach used to explore the lived experiences of Black women in the Lolita fashion subculture online. This study analyzed seven individual YouTube interviews with Black Lolita content creators from the United States of America (USA) who collaborated with the Kawaii Melanin community on June 19th, 2020. The aim of this study is to explore how Black women experience a sense of belonging within the Lolita fashion subculture, specifically predominately Black online Lolita communities. It was principally interested in their motivations for joining the fashion subculture, how they experienced a sense of belonging in the fashion subculture and how they navigated intersectional issues in predominately Black online Lolita communities. The sections that follow will describe the study's philosophical foundations, insider perspective, sampling approach, data collection method, data analysis, ethics, and limitations of the study.

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS

This study adopted a qualitative approach, seeking thick descriptions of the subjective experiences of the phenomenon under investigation (Lin, 2024). A qualitative approach was best suited for successful examination of how Black Lolitas on YouTube interpret the Lolita fashion subculture. In the Lolita fashion subculture, women use fashion to question societal norms; for this reason, this study was situated in the Critical Theory paradigm. Max Horkheimer believed that Critical Theory can “penetrate the world of things to show the underlying relations between persons.” For Horkheimer, Critical Theory aims to critique normative power structures in society with the intention of seeking or creating social change (Horkheimer, 1972, p.xiii). By co-opting Lolita, Black women carved out their own space within the fashion subculture. Predominately Black online Lolita communities have the potential to redefine the cultural understanding of Black femininity both inside the broader Lolita fashion subculture and within the dominant culture.

Additionally, this study was situated in the Critical Theory paradigm to explore the relationship between Black women and fashion subcultures. By using cuteness, Lolitas' use of fantastical clothing helps each wearer create a unique interpretation of femininity. Intersecting with concepts of cuteness, politics, womanhood, and femininity, Lolita uses fashion to challenge established cultural norms within society. Lolitas oppose the idea that women inherently want the responsibilities that come with female adulthood—being a housewife and garnering sexual attention from men (Nguyen, 2017, Alexander, 2025). Lolitas' resistance against the expectations for adult women is noteworthy: it can be viewed as a gentle form of protest. Whereas punk rebelled through protests and force, Lolita rebels by giving women agency against strict gender norms (Rahman et al., 2015). The Lolita fashion subculture challenges these gender norms by rearticulating the concept of being cute to create a space where womanhood can be explored on one's own terms.

For Black women, their racial identity also intersects with Lolita, giving limitations and affordances. On one hand, the fashion subculture's use of cuteness as a form of resistance can be used strategically for Black women as a way to reclaim their sense of femininity. Black women's sense of femininity has been historically policed and demonized in media (hooks, 1992). Lolita fashion aesthetics grant Black women access to embodying traits such as girliness, softness, and cuteness that have often been denied to them in the mainstream. This way, the fashion creates a means for Black Lolitas to reject negative media portrayals of Black femininity, internalized toxic Black femininity, and to embrace femininity on their own terms.

On the other hand, failure to conform to how Black femininity is represented in the media can have negative repercussions for Black women. Media plays a crucial role in how Black femininity is understood. Sobande (2020) argues, “media images and the meaning-making that they catalyse can appear to be a unifying communication force, while also mirroring social hierarchies” (Sobande, 2020, p. 43). The media's construction of Black femininity reinforces a culture where Black women's presentation of femininity is policed, potentially leading to being further marginalized in the dominant culture and

even within fashion subcultures. Moreover, the cultural understanding of Black femininity within the dominant culture can be replicated in the Lolita fashion subculture. In the context of this study, the dominant culture refers to mainstream fashion and ideas in western, white, heterosexual, capitalist, male society, mainly in North America. Since all Lolitas are connected through feminine identities, femininity is still rooted in structures of power where white femininity and proximity to white femininity is rewarded. This manifests in power structures that privilege White and Asian Lolitas while simultaneously excluding Black Lolitas.

INSIDER PERSPECTIVE

Being a part of the broader Lolita fashion subculture and the online Black Lolita community allows me to have an insider perspective. An insider perspective refers to when a researcher is a part of the population or community that they are researching and share similar practices, experiences, or identities (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). This perspective allows me to both relate and understand the experiences discussed by the content creators in their question-and-answer videos. As I identify as a black Lolita, I had to ensure I engaged with the data more critically. I had to reconcile my thoughts and feelings with the Kawaii Melanin community to ensure rigor, credibility, and trustworthiness. To do so, I decided to keep a journal during the data collection and analysis process. According to van Manen (1984), “to be aware of the structure of one’s own experience of a phenomenon may provide the researcher with clues for orienting oneself to the phenomenon and thus to all the other stages of phenomenological research”(Van Manen, 1984, p.52).

Phenomenological research addresses the nature of human experience; being aware of my position as Black Lolita in this study allows me to acknowledge how my own experiences within the fashion subculture influenced how the study was conducted, analyzed, and interpreted. I personally felt as though cuteness within alternative fashion can act as a form of resistance for Black women since my femininity has often been questioned. Writing down these kinds of thoughts helped me to filter through

my experiences in relation to the Kawaii Melanin community's experiences to make sense of the data. I did this by referencing the existing literature on fashion subcultures, Lolita, Black femininity, and Digital Black femininity. This jotting down my thoughts while cross-referencing them with literature allows me to be transparent about the biases I bring to the research from being a part of the population that was under investigation.

SAMPLING

Black Lolitas are an under-researched group, which makes it challenging to gain insight into their perspective and experiences. For the project I was principally interested Black women's experiences in the Lolita fashion subculture and how they experience a sense of belonging within it. To achieve this goal, I identified multiple online content creators. Given the scope and timeframe of the project, I used question and answer videos of Black Lolita content creators on YouTube. This was not coincidental and perfectly aligned with the research aims and objectives. First, it was intentional to select Black women who are Lolitas and part of an online Lolita Community. Second, the Kawaii Melanin YouTube Collaboration happened at a pivotal point in history. In 2020, the murder of George Floyd was captured and circulated on social media from a video recording taken by a bystander (Levine et al., 2025). This resulted in widespread protests across the United States (and globally) under the hashtag “#BlackLivesMatter.” The context of these interviews is significant because it highlights the intersectionality of being Black, female, and a part of the Lolita fashion subculture. The interrelated experiences of these intersecting identities cannot be ignored.

The Kawaii Melanin community created seven video interviews focusing on the experiences of seven Black Lolita content creators. The content creators called this series their “Juneteenth collab” as the videos were uploaded on Juneteenth, a holiday which celebrates Black identity and the end of slavery in the United States (Martínez et al., 2024). While this study is not concerned with these movements, the videos are situated within this context. The movements were significant to this study as both speak about

the freedom, agency, and reclamation experienced by Black individuals. Juneteenth celebrates the end of slavery in the United States, which is similar to the freedoms Black women experience deviating from the mainstream portrayal of Black femininity by wearing Lolita. The #BlackLivesMatter as a movement empower Black individuals by advocating against white supremacy, police brutality, and focusing on the liberation of Black individuals—including those who are marginalized by gender, sexuality, and disabilities. The #BlackLivesMatter movement is similar to the Kawaii Melanin community in that they both advocate against anti-Blackness, question representational practices, and focus on ways to positively shape Black women's experiences.

Research aim, objectives, and questions:

1. How do Black American Lolita content creators from the Kawaii Melanin community on YouTube interpret the Lolita fashion subculture?
2. How do the YouTube content creators describe their motivations for joining the Lolita fashion subculture?
3. What meanings do they attach to their subcultural identity?
4. How do they experience belonging and self-expression within the Lolita online community?

Objectives:

- ▶ To explore the role of Lolita in creating a sense of belonging among Black women
- ▶ To assess the relationship between Black women and Lolita Fashion.
- ▶ To analyze the ways in which social media creates a virtual community for marginalized people.

I found this sample by browsing through the hashtags #blackgirllolita and #blacklolita on both Instagram and TikTok. This study acknowledges the abundance of content creators on Instagram and TikTok, but the short form length of content was not fit not fit the research. The short form visual formats did not

provide enough data that could clearly illustrate Black Lolitas' lived experiences in the fashion subculture.

KAWAII MELANIN COLLABORATION VIDEO QUESTIONS

The Kawaii Melanin community posed the following questions. These questions aligned with the core research aims and objectives of this project, which is to understand their experiences in the Lolita fashion subculture, and how they experience a sense of belonging within.

1. What has been the reaction from family and friends of you wearing Lolita? Negative, positive, extreme, neutral?
2. What is something that you think affects Black Lolitas differently than non-Black Lolitas?
3. Have you ever experienced racism while wearing Lolita and do you think it was any worse because you stood out more?
4. How do you deal with the belief that Black people shouldn't wear sweet Lolita or more pastel colors e.g. Black people can't wear bright colors/certain colors don't go well with dark skin?
5. If I want to join a predominately Black Lolita community, where and how could I find one?
6. What advice would you give to someone that was nervous about wearing Lolita due to their race?

On YouTube, creators can upload longer form visual content. YouTube long-form visual format was well suited for this study, as the platform allowed for Black Lolitas to share their in-depth experiences wearing the fashion by doing a question-and-answer video. YouTube had an extensive catalog of content that was suited to the research questions and objectives. This led me to find the Kawaii Melanin community, where I received access to videos with rich descriptions of Black Lolitas' experiences. An inclusion and exclusion criteria was created to narrow down which content creators' videos will be used for this study.

INCLUSION CRITERIA

1. The content creator's video was uploaded for public viewing on YouTube.
2. The video is titled: *Life as a Black Lolita: Kawaii Melanin Collab.*
3. The content creator identifies as Black.
4. The content creator identifies as a woman.
5. The content creator identifies as a Lolita.

EXCLUSION CRITERIA

1. The content creators' video was not uploaded for public viewing on YouTube
2. The video is not titled: Life as a Black Lolita: Kawaii Melanin Collab
3. The content creator does not identify as Black
4. The content creator does not identify as a woman
5. The content creator does not identify as a Lolita

The inclusion and exclusion criteria emerged after I identified the Kawaii Melanin collaboration as the dataset for the study. I included seven videos based on the lists of criteria. The final sample used in the study was purposive. Campbell et al. (2020) explain that “purposive sampling strategies move away from any random form of sampling and are strategies to make sure that specific kinds of cases of those that could possibly be included are part of the final sample in the research study” (Campbell et al., 2020). Thus, a purposive sampling technique was well suited for this study as the *Kawaii Melanin: Life as a Black Lolita* collaboration series aligned perfectly with the research aims and objectives.

KAWAII MELANIN COMMUNITY

The data for this study was collected from the Kawaii Melanin: Life as a Black Lolita video collaboration series. Kawaii Melanin is a predominately Black online Lolita community that creates content about j-fashion, with a focus on Lolita fashion. The Kawaii Melanin community is also linked to other predominately Black j-fashion and Lolita fashion communities, with an aim to uplift Black women who love all things kawaii. (*Kawaii Melanin Girls*, n.d.; *Black EGL Community*, 2013; *Kawaii Black Youtuber Community*, 2017). In this YouTube collaboration, Black Lolitas reflected on their experiences in the fashion subculture in a question-and-answer video format.

KAWAII MELANIN COMMUNITY MEMBERS

@Magicalgirlme is a plus size Black Lolita who found Lolita fashion in 2006 and across social media platforms. She has amassed 11k followers (Magicalgirlme, n.d.).

@Marinakei is a Black Lolita who has been wearing the fashion since 2015. She is a Japanese fashion reporter who has garnered 7.7k followers (Marinakei, n.d.).

@RainbowSodaa is a Black Lolita who has had a lifelong interest in alternative fashion. She first found the Japanese fashion subculture fairykei as a teenager, and then soon after became a Lolita, creating an audience of 2.3k people (*Rainbow Sodaa*, n.d.).

@TheFlufferDome is a Black Lolita active in the fashion subculture since 2017, with 3.1k followers across platforms (TheFlufferDome, n.d.).

@asamimoon5789 is a plus size Black Lolita and Lolita mentor who helps newcomers progress in the fashion subculture. She has a joint audience of 18k followers across social media platforms (asamimoon5789, n.d.).

@MzPirateQueen was newly introduced to Lolita fashion at the time this video collaboration series took place. Despite being interested in the fashion since 2010, she has been a Lolita since 2020 and has a total of 47.1k followers on her social media sites (MzPirateQueen, n.d.).

@Kimbuucha is a Black Lolita and Lolita model who has amassed 8.4k followers across social media platforms (Kimbuucha, n.d.).

These seven members of the Kawaii Melanin community all fit the inclusion criteria of this study; each brings a unique perspective. Some participants have been an active participant in the fashion subculture since the 2010s, while others have joined recently. The sample features diverse body types, including plus-sized Black Lolitas and Lolitas that are moms. Additionally, it includes Lolitas who take on unique roles within the fashion subculture, such as modeling for fashion shows and mentoring. The diversity in the Black Lolitas lived experiences allows for unique themes to emerge from the data. For a well-rounded analysis, this study made use of all seven videos present within this online collaboration.

DATA COLLECTION

In each of the videos, the content creators were asked the same set of questions. The question-and-answer videos lasted between 8-25 minutes. These set of questions elicited responses from Black Lolitas that reflect how they interpret the fashion subculture. The questions allowed for them to reflect on how they experience belonging within Lolita and how they have used the fashion to help construct their identity. Their responses generated detailed qualitative data with rich description that matched this studies aims and objectives: to describe how Black Lolitas interpret the fashion subculture, their motivations for joining, meanings that they attach to their subcultural identity, and how they experience both self-expression and belonging within the Lolita fashion subculture, particularly in online spaces. Their videos focused on the intersection of being Black, a woman, and participating in the Lolita fashion subculture.

As each video aligned with the selection criteria, they were suited to be a part of the data set. Each of the content creators' videos provided access to Black Lolitas answering questions that were linked to both the aims and objectives of this study. The videos ranged from 8-25 minutes and were posted during 2020 a time of political unrest and activism for the #Black-Lives-Matter movement and Black individuals in America and around the world. I downloaded transcripts of each of the content creators' videos. When the transcript was downloaded, I put them into a Microsoft word Document and organized them by their channel usernames.

KAWAII MELANIN COLLABORATION VIDEO QUESTIONS

The questions posed to the Kawaii Melanin community allowed me to answer the main research questions of this study, how do Black American Lolita content creators from the Kawaii Melanin community on YouTube interpret the Lolita fashion subculture? How do the YouTube content creators describe their motivations for joining the Lolita fashion subculture? What meanings do they attach to their subcultural identity? How do they experience belonging and self-expression within the Lolita online community?

1. What has been the reaction from family and friends of you wearing Lolita? Negative, positive, extreme, neutral?
2. What is something that you think affects Black Lolitas differently than non-Black Lolitas?
3. Have you ever experienced racism while wearing Lolita and do you think it was any worse because you stood out more?
4. How do you deal with the belief that Black people shouldn't wear sweet Lolita or more pastel colors e.g. Black people can't wear bright colors/certain colors don't go well with dark skin?
5. If I want to join a predominately Black Lolita community, where and how could I find one?
6. What advice would you give to someone that was nervous about wearing Lolita due to their race?

DATA ANALYSIS

The most appropriate method to make sense of the data in this study was a Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2019; 2021). The approach is based on Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke's (2006) earlier work on thematic analysis, where they argued it as a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns as well as themes within data. Thematic analysis takes the data a researcher has collected and describes it in rich detail (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Patterson (2015) refers to a benefit of reflexive thematic analysis being to, "engage in reflexive practices that position the researcher as being in conversation with the data rather than understanding it from a position outside of or apart from it" (Patterson, 2015, p. 48). In a reflexive thematic analysis, it uses the researchers' subjective experiences to familiarize themselves with the data so they can gain a better understanding of emerging themes in order to produce a story from them. When Braun and Clarke (2019) revisited their earlier work, they revised thematic analysis into a reflexive thematic analysis. Reflexive thematic analysis helps researchers be transparent about how their own experiences and unique perspectives can influence the interpretation of data, which provides them with a more nuanced understanding of the data. Reflexive thematic analysis is critical, in that theoretical assumptions are reported in detail during the analytic process and reporting of the research (Braun and Clarke, 2019). I used this approach to the analysis because it aligned with my insider perspective.

REFLECTING IN REFLEXIVE THEMATIC ANALYSIS

To begin my reflexive thematic analysis, I first watched each of the videos listed in the Kawaii Melanin Collaboration playlist in full. Then, I wrote down the set of questions used in their collaboration in my research journal. Starting from question one, I wrote down my responses to the questions (listed under the data collection section). After answering each question, I went back to rewatch the videos. I created journal entries of my reactions to their experiences. Additionally, I wrote about assumptions I had made

about their lived experience in the fashion subculture, whether I disagree with their answers, whether my mood fluctuated while watching, and how I related to their experiences.

JOURNALING

I created journal entries reflecting on my own and the participants' experiences to understand the biases I bring to the study. I wanted to reconcile with my lived experiences in the Lolita fashion subculture with the content creators (See Figure 10).

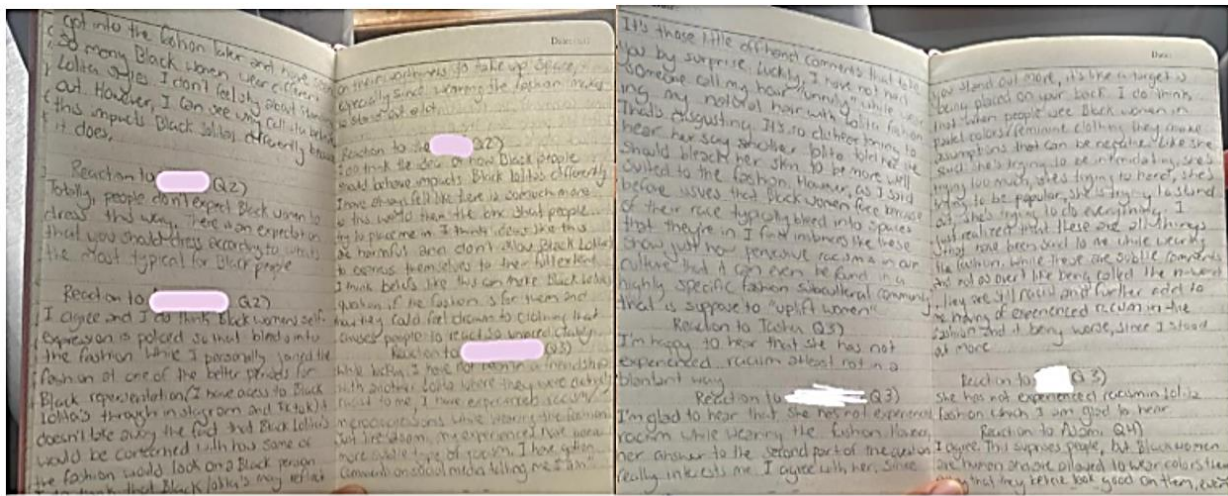


Figure 10: Reflexive thematic analysis journal entries

POSITIONALITY

I am a Black Lolita and have been a part of the online community since 2024. My interest in the fashion subculture began in 2023, when I began to follow Black Lolitas on Instagram and TikTok. By participating in the online Lolita community, I have posted my own Lolita coordinates, shared brand recommendations, sold items on the vintage resale market, and made online mutuals with other members apart of the community. I am interested to understand the way Black women navigate their sense of belonging within Lolita and what predominately Black online Lolita communities mean to them. My interest and participation in the fashion subculture were invaluable to this research as I already have a

cultural understanding of the broader Lolita fashion subculture and Black Lolita subculture. By using self-reflexivity, I actively acknowledged my unique position as the researcher for this project.

WHY DID I KEEP A JOURNAL?

During my research I kept a journal so that I could remain reflexive in the research process. As many of my entries were reactions to the Black Lolita content creators' experiences, the journal helped me to think critically about my role as the researcher. As I identify as a Black Lolita, there are assumptions about the Lolita and Black Lolitas experiences in the fashion subculture I brought to the research. One major assumption I had was that organized community events for Lolitas are spaces where Black women would feel the most appreciated. The journal entries allowed me to be transparent about how these assumptions influenced the way the data was interpreted. Trainor and Bundon (2020) reflect on journaling during the research process detailing how journal entries were invaluable in the way they help the researcher to think critically about their role and the assumptions they bring to their work (Trainor and Bundon, 2020, p. 709). Journal entries helped me to keep rigor as they were an effective way to manage the biases I brought to the project and to notice patterns that emerged from my entries. I identified a pattern where I associated the Lolita fashion subculture as a space where Black women could inherently cultivate a sense of belonging amongst other Lolitas. I was able to maintain rigor in the study by consistently looking for experiences from the Kawaii Melanin community that demonstrated the dynamic nature of the Lolita fashion subculture in how it might not always be a space of fixed belonging for Black Lolitas.

DATA ANALYSIS

To immerse myself in the data, I downloaded a transcript of each of the content creators' videos. I was guided by Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach which is when the researcher makes sure to familiarize themselves with their data by reading the transcripts and making sure to take notes down (Braun and Clarke, 2019). When each transcript was finished downloading, I copied them into a Microsoft Word document. When each transcript was copied into a Microsoft Word document, I began to refine each

transcript. The transcripts were refined to correct spelling errors and to capture the full context of the content creators' answers. By using a split screen feature on my desktop computer, I played each content creators video while simultaneously editing their transcript on Microsoft Word. Patterson (2018) details the process of rewatching the samples videos, “after the first round of transcribing, I often returned to the videos to ensure transcription accuracy or to glean additional insights from the informant” (Patterson , 2018, p. 764). By refining the transcripts, I was able to make sure the data was as authentic to their experience in the Lolita fashion subculture as possible.

After refining the transcripts on Microsoft Word, they were ready to be printed on sheets of white office paper. I printed all seven of the Kawaii Melanin: Life as a Black Lolita collaboration transcripts. After printing, I separated each content creator's transcript by their YouTube account username. The transcripts were read thoroughly to ensure that the printer did not make any mistakes before I began generating initial codes. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) this would be the second stage of reflexive thematic analysis where the researcher generates initial codes that are what stood out about the data; these could

have possible relevance to a potential theme later on.(Braun and Clarke, 2019). To generate semantic codes for the data set, I first highlighted what stood out to me in each transcript by using a pink highlighter. Then, I wrote down phrases in the transcripts margins and gutters that describe what was highlighted. Furthermore, in these semantic codes, similarities across transcripts were noted (See Figure 11).

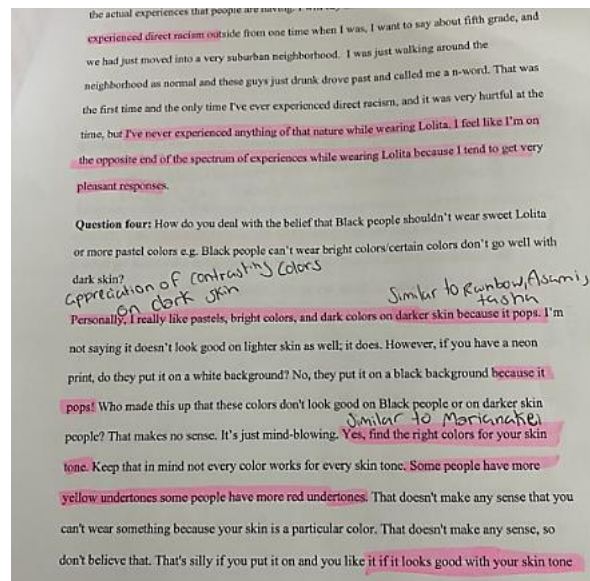


Figure 11: Semantic codes on content creator's transcript

After generating sematic codes on the transcripts, I then began to code the text further. By using track changes on Microsoft Word, I generated descriptive labels to describe the data. These descriptive labels were sentences aimed to help contextualize what the content creators were saying in relation to the study's research questions, aims, and objectives (See Figure 12).

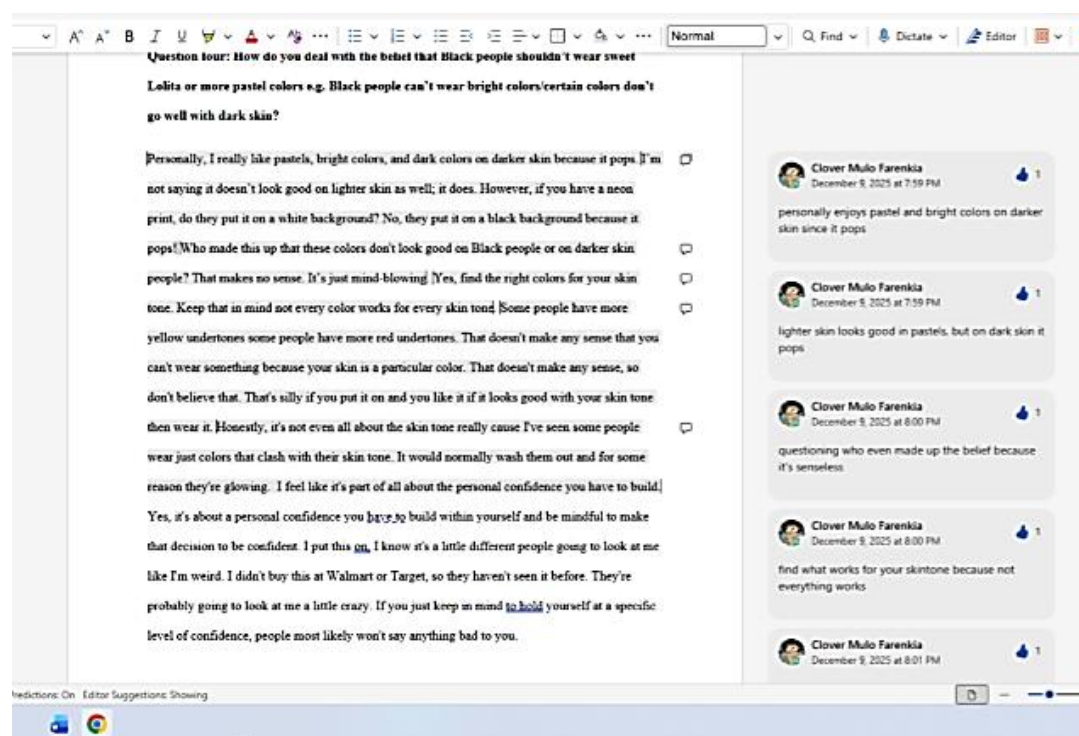


Figure 12: Coding the content creators' transcripts by using descriptive labels on Microsoft word via track changes.

These descriptive labels were then put into a separate word document. After the descriptive labels of each transcript were put into a word document, I grouped them together by code clusters. After grouping the descriptive labels into code clusters, (See Figure 13) generated preparatory themes. Braun and Clarke (2019) define this as step three of reflexive thematic analysis, where the researcher must search the data to collect codes to create potential themes (Braun and Clarke, 2019).

Adding each descriptive code label to a word document helped to organize the data set since the content creators' transcripts were rich. Each descriptive code was sorted by the questions that the content creators were asked in the YouTube video collaboration series. Each question was labeled in numerical order, ranging from number one to number six and had a preparatory theme for thematic analysis (See Figure 13). I categorized the themes together based on my research questions and made sure that each one could align with at least one.

Smaller cluster of codes name: stereotypes, Black women and Lolita fashion

Black Lollitas think about whether they are loud and rowdy
 Black Lollitas think about whether they are worthy of occupying space
 nervous about being perceived as loud and extra as a Black woman
 Things that aren't stereotypically black are questioned within the black community
 society sees black women in a stereotypical way
 Surprising to see Black women wear girly outfits
 Black Lollitas get negative pushback for coordinates being historically inaccurate while sweet
 Lolita's of other races do not as much
 people are more critical of black Lolita's because of a lack of representation
 shy to experiment with the fashion due to already standing out as a black woman
 Black people should behave and dress a certain way
 Being Black makes you stand out in the fashion because people don't associate it with Black
 culture/identity

Figure 13: Example of a code cluster

Another word document was created to sort the descriptive labels into code clusters with a distinct theme. A total of 21 themes were generated from the data set and code clusters in relation to the research questions. Braun and Clarke (2006) refer to this as step four in reflexive thematic analysis, where the researcher reviews the themes to ensure that they reflect the data set and then generate a map to prep for analysis (Bruan and Clarke, 2019). By generating 21 themes, the data was closely inspected to fully capture the

Question Two
 Themes: Lolita fashion is associated with a specific standard
 Black women worry about how they will be perceived while wearing Lolita
 Black identity impacts how Lolita is received within the Black community
 Criticism tied directly to race
 Lack of representation within Lolita creates lower perceptions of belonging amongst Black women
 Natural hair texture impacts black Lolita's
 Black Lollitas think about whether they are loud and rowdy
 Black Lollitas think about whether they are worthy of occupying space
 nervous about being perceived as loud and extra as a Black woman
 Wig styles and colors on skin tone impacts black Lolita's
 while she is a Lolita, she faces problems that exist in real life
 construct black community holds can be limiting but change is happening
 A friend experienced a mom with limiting beliefs arguing Lolita fashion makes her not black enough
 wanted to do things differently and questioned what it is that black people do
 Limiting yourself to a specific idea of what it means to be black is limiting
 The black community has a difficult time expanding their mind about things that are different
 Things that aren't stereotypically black are questioned within the black community
 society sees black women in a stereotypical way
 Surprising to see Black women wear girly outfits

Figure 14: Word document labeled in numerical order with preparatory themes for thematic analysis.

content creators' experiences. This way, even smaller patterns could be recognized in the data to ensure a comprehensive analysis (See Figure 15).

2. Racism and discrimination within Lolita subculture impact Black Lolitas belonging within Lolita

5. The Lolita subculture can be discriminatory toward Black Lolitas natural hair texture and skin tone

Smaller cluster of codes name: hair/skin tone

Natural hair texture impacts black Lolita's

Skin needs to be a certain color to be picked for brand fashion show regardless of if your coordinate is beautiful

Wig styles and colors on skin tone impacts black Lolita's

There are Lolita brands who don't pick out models with a darker complexion

race impacts decision to apply for a Lolita fashion show

6. Lolita fashion has particular race associated with it which causes alienation within the subculture for black women

Smaller cluster of codes name: Lolita and blackness

Lolita fashion not associated with blackness

the way that Black women experience belonging in Lolita fashion is catered towards Japanese and white women despite the fashion being global

Accusation of cultural appropriation is something Black Lolita's experience

Being Black makes a coordinate not historically accurate

Limiting yourself to a specific idea of what it means to be black is limiting

The black community has a difficult time expanding their mind about things that are different

The expectation that Lolita is for white people Lolita having a particular race associated with it and fixation on paler skin tone

Older Lolita content has outdated beliefs of the fashion before progress was made in the subculture

A lack of representation in Lolita fashion leads to a feeling of not belonging

Figure 15: Descriptive labels that were put into code clusters with a distinct theme.

All 21 themes were printed out onto white office paper and then transferred onto poster board. I organized each theme and code cluster by number, making sure that the data set covered the entire poster board.

Braun and Clark refer to this as step five in reflexive thematic analysis, “defining and naming themes:

ongoing analysis to refine specifics of each theme, and the overall analysis that the story tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme (Braun and Clarke, 2019).

Additionally, I added descriptive quotes from the transcripts that aligned with each theme and code cluster. Mapping out the data onto a poster board allowed me to condense the themes into five that described the data set. A combination of digital tools and traditional tools in the coding process ensured to fully capture Kawaii Melanin's interpretation of the Lolita fashion subculture (See Figure 16).



Figure 16: All 21 themes with code clusters on white poster board

After transferring these 21 themes with code clusters onto white poster board, I condensed the themes down to five on another small poster board. The five themes produced were rich as I became familiarized with the data set through the process of coding both traditionally and digitally (See Figure 17). I used the initial sematic codes, code clusters, preparatory themes, and distinct themes to generate my final themes. This was a reiterative process as I had to reexamine my themes to ensure that they successfully captured the depth of the Kawaii Melanin communities' experiences. An additional aspect of this process was that I had to refer to literature to support my findings and claims.

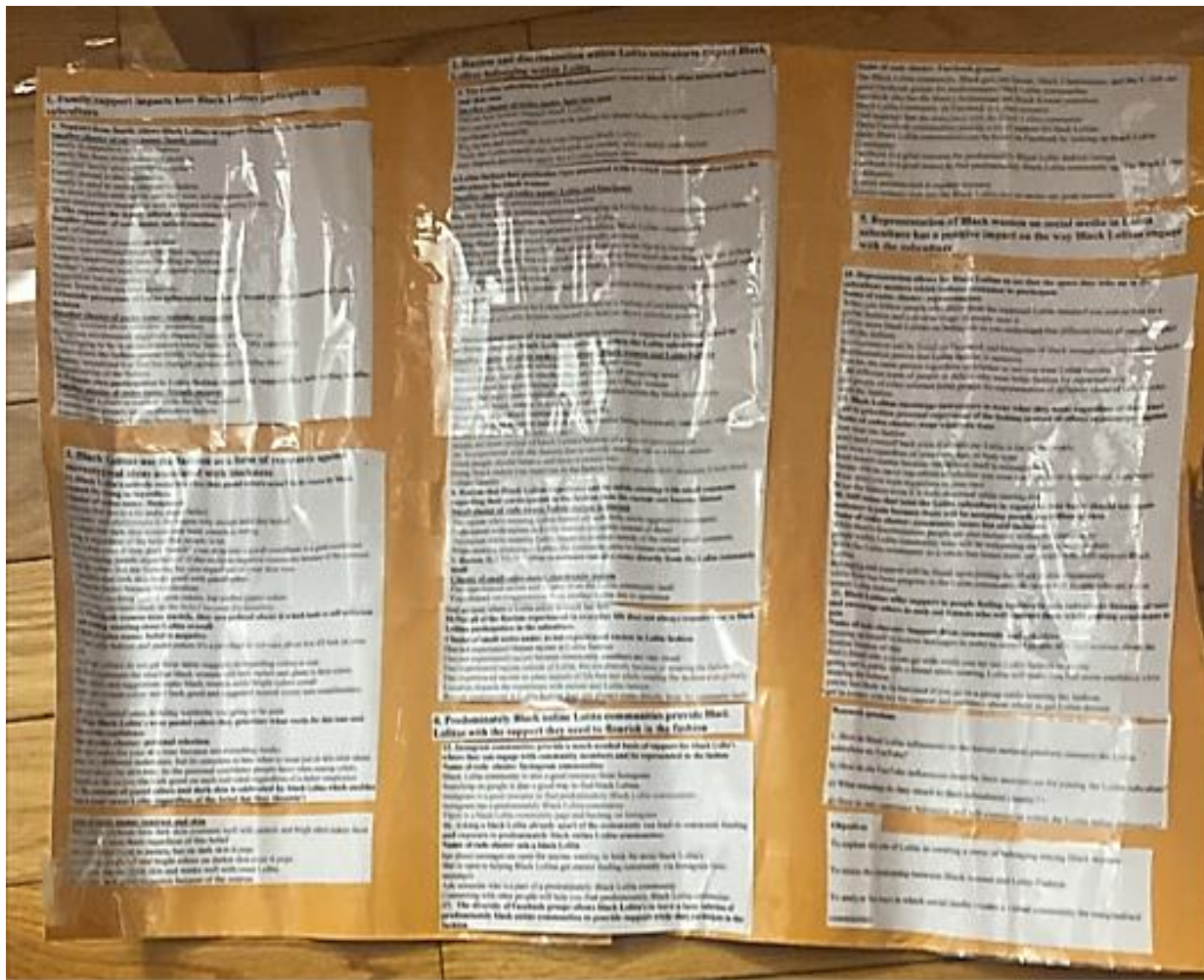


Figure 17: Poster board with 5 final themes for thematic analysis

The final themes generated from the data analysis were:

1. Self-expression and resistance
2. Fostering belonging through shared identity
3. Anti-Blackness in Lolita
4. Predominately Black Online Lolita communities

ETHICS

Despite not having any human participants in the study, I still had to consider ethical considerations in using YouTube videos as data. Patterson (2018) points out that YouTube videos are available to anyone who has access to the internet (Patterson, 2018, p. 761). For the Kawaii Melanin community, their Life as a Black Lolita: Kawaii Melanin collab series was explicitly posted on YouTube with the intent to educate audiences about the experiences of Black women in the Lolita fashion subculture. @Marinakei says, “myself and a few other these beautiful ladies here we're going to be telling you our stories as a Black Lolita. Experiences that we've gone through good or bad neutral, and I really want you to just listen to our stories. Experiences that we've gone through good or bad neutral and I really want you to just listen to our stories” (Marinakei, 2020, 2:36-2:55). As this study is directly concerned with Black Lolitas experiences and stories, their collaboration series was a perfect fit. While the Kawaii Melanin community is not directly involved with this research project, I am concerned with humanizing the participants. I tried to keep the work as authentic to the Kawaii Melanin communities' voices as possible, even using direct quotes from their transcripts in the findings chapter.

LIMITATIONS

This study was interested in examining Black Lolitas motivations for joining the fashion subculture and how they have created a sense of belonging through doing so. The question-and-answer video format and collaborative nature of the content creators' videos were well suited to my research questions and objectives. However, a sample size of 7 Black Lolitas could not capture the experiences of all Black Lolitas. Moreover, the entire sample was located in the United States, which did not account for the diversity in nationality of predominately Black online Lolita communities. However, given that this is an exploratory study, the initial findings provide avenues to expand the study textually and ethnographically.

CHAPTER 3 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an overview of the philosophical foundations, research design, sampling approach, data collection method, data analysis, and limitations.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will provide an analysis of the four main themes that emerged from the data. The first theme is self-expression and resistance. Next, I analyze fostering belonging through shared identity. Then, I interpret anti-Blackness in Lolita. Finally, I examine predominately Black online Lolita communities.

SELF-EXPRESSION AND RESISTANCE

The findings revealed that the sweet Lolita substyle creates an opportunity for Black Lolitas to renegotiate their relationship to femininity. Femininity refers to socialized psychological traits or qualities that are associated with people who were born female (Mehta and Henry, 2017). Perceptions of Black women's femininity have been negatively influenced by Western film and television tropes such as the mammy, jezebel, and the strong Black woman (hooks, 1992). For Black Lolitas, Lolita fashion is a way to positively represent themselves outside of the Western medias' depiction of Black femininity. As Lolita fashion includes various substyles, sweet Lolita has been integral to the fashion subculture and a favorite amongst participants.

Aesthetically, sweet Lolita dresses have graphic prints of candy, toys, desserts, and animals. Additionally, sweet Lolita coordinates have pastel colors, ranging from pink, blue, yellow, and purple (Zhao, 2024; Mubanga, 2025). Historically, Black femininity has been policed within filmed entertainment and on social media (hooks, 1992; Procope, 2024; Mutero, 2025). As a result, this has led to Black women internalizing a view of their femininity that is toxic (Kelly et al., 2020, p. 55). When participants wore sweet Lolita, it was treated as a means to reconfigure a simplified understanding of their femininity. For participants, the sweet substyle pushed them to renegotiate their own cultural understandings of Black femininity that have been shaped by the dominant culture. These findings align with the literature, in that the dominant culture values can be imposed onto subordinate cultures (Scott and Marshall, 2009). The

Lolita fashion subculture and even members from the Kawaii Melanin community internalized Western medias portrayal of Black femininity. By internalizing these stereotypes, the view of Black femininity within Lolita was tainted. Consequently, Black Lolitas took to the sweet substyle to reconceptualize their femininity.

@marinakei explains, “I prefer more pastel colors. With wearing pastel colors and wearing Lolita fashion, it’s a privilege in its own to not care about wearing bright colors or pastel colors. For me like I've always had to think if this color will look good on me or so-and-so. It's really such a privilege to not even have that mindset.”

@magicalgirlme states, “I am that person that if someone tells me I can't do something and there isn't a good reason for it, I'm going to do it if I want to do it. That's what I do. People told me you know you can't be a sweet Lolita your skin is too dark. You can't wear it. I am a sweet Lolita. All I wear is pastel colors pretty much. I have one dress that isn't pastel and it's black. I wear it. I love it. I love the way it makes me feel. I love the way the colors look with my skin, but even if you want to wear a color that doesn't quote on quote match your skin do it.”

For Black women, the sweet Lolita substyle functions as a framework to deconstruct an internalized toxic Black femininity—within the fashion subculture and outside of it. Since sweet Lolita is characterized by its cuteness, whimsy, and youthfulness the substyles wearers automatically embody these traits (Rahman et al., 2015). By wearing sweet Lolita, Black women unambiguously position themselves as not only embodying these traits but also being kawaii. This study is focused on Black female content creators from North America so it cannot account for all Black Lolitas experiences. However, these experiences do confirm what existing literature says about how Black femininity is not only perceived but also experienced. Their Blackness is not in direct opposition to the sweet Lolita substyle. Instead, for participants, Black female identity and sweet Lolita operate seamlessly to subvert expectations of Black femininity. The pastel colors commonly associated with sweet Lolita for Black women shift from being

reminiscent of a childlike-innocence or girlhood. Rather, for participants, the pastel colors that make the sweet Lolita substyle are a potent symbol of the reclamation of their femininity.

@asamimoon says, “I love to wear bright colors. That girl that I mentioned before did make a little comment before to me about wearing really bright colors with dark skin. She felt like it looked unnatural. I’ve had other people that say that bright colors on dark skin it just doesn't match and that bright colors look a lot better when your skin is like paper white or very very light because it blends more, but I live for a contrast. I love it. I love pastels on Black skin.”

As participants recalled their femininity being policed within the dominant culture, the sweet Lolita substyle provides space for self-governance over Black femininity. Many regarded the sweet substyle as a way to explicitly signal to the world that Black women can also be cute. When participants wore sweet Lolita, it was a conscious choice to dictate their femininity within multiple cultures that police it. Their use of pastel colors is subversive as it challenges the commonly held stereotypes associated with Black femininity—being too aggressive or hypersexual. The pastel colors within the substyle pushback against these narratives, by allowing Black women to reclaim autonomy and express gender identity through dressing. This aligns with the literature in how Lolita fashion focuses on the wearers own individual determinants of beauty and how the fashions garments oppose ideas about women's sexuality—their bodies inherently being sexual (Nguyen 2012; Rahman et al., 2015).

FOSTERING BELONGING THROUGH SHARED IDENTITY

The data uncovered that bonds shared amongst Black Lolitas are often rooted their shared racial background that further marginalizes them within the broader Lolita fashion subculture. The dominant culture—white male, white femininity, heterosexual, Christian, mainstream fashion, and fast fashion—can impose its values onto fashion subcultures. This way, fashion subcultures can be spaces where people from a non-dominant identity can experience further marginalization by values and norms held within a fashion subculture. (Carter et al., 2023). For Black women, their racial identity must be negotiated within

the Lolita fashion subculture. While all Lolitas must reconcile with their newfound subcultural identity, the intersection of the Black female identity and Lolita fashion posed a challenge for participants. Their experience with race within the fashion subculture is similar to what the literature has said about Black punks. Afropunk's believed their racial identity was intertwined with being punk (Jankovljevic, 2006). By that means, participants felt a sense of alienation within the broader Lolita subculture. The alienation that participants felt, led to stronger bonds being fostered amongst other Black Lolitas. Additionally, participants fostered belonging through a love of Lolita fashion and the disconnect of how the fashion subculture was built on uplifting female identity but is rooted in systems that ostracize Black Lolitas.

The belonging fostered amongst Black Lolitas ties back to what the literature says about intersectionality. Similar to other Lolitas, Black Lolitas use the fashion and fashion subculture as a form of resistance regarding their gender identity. However, Black identity is still integral to their lived experiences. Intersectionality, a term coined to explore how different facets of a Black woman's identity can impact their experiences (Crenshaw, 1989), influences how Black women experience the fashion subculture. The Lolita fashion subculture originated in Japan and was primarily populated with Japanese women. However, the subculture and its fashion were not mainstream in Japan but still managed to reach a niche global audience due to Harajuku fashion magazines such as FRUiTS, Kera, CUTiE, and Gothic & Lolita Bible receiving international distribution (Carriger, 2018; Shuai, 2020) (See Figure 18).



Figure 18: Harajuku Fashion Magazines (left Gothic & Lolita Bible middle Kera right Fruits Magazine)

As many of these Harajuku fashion magazines showcased Japanese Lolita's coordinates, people overseas took an interest in shopping for Japanese Lolita brands from catalogs. Japanese Lolita brands primarily target an East Asian audience, however, brands such as *Jane Marble*, *Innocent World*, *Milk*, *Pink House*, *Moi-même-Moitié*, *Alice auaa*, *Victorian Maiden*, and *H. Naoto* feature mostly white petite blond women in their catalogs (Ngai, 2022) (See Figure 19). While many of these Japanese Lolita brands were initially marketed toward East Asian women, the brand catalogs became overly populated with white models. Despite the catalogs newfound global marketing, Japanese Lolita brands such as *Baby the Stars Shine Bright* and *Angelic Pretty* remained featuring primarily East Asian women in their catalogs (Ngai, 2022).

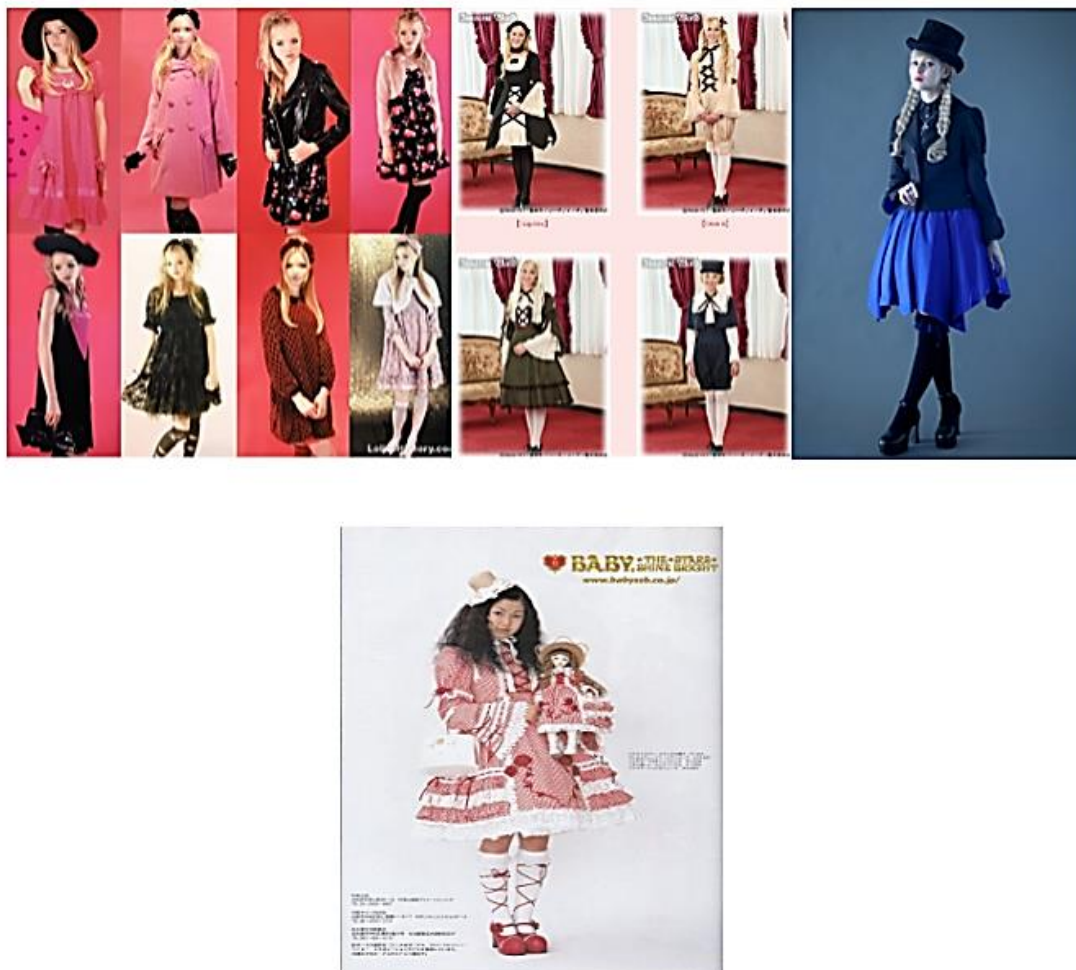


Figure 19: Japanese Lolita Brand Catalogs (left Milk, middle Innocent world, left Moi-même-Moitié bottom Baby The Stars Shine Bright advertisement)

Through global magazine distribution and Japanese Lolita brand catalogs, the forefront of Lolita fashion imagery became East Asian women and white women. As a result, this alienated Black women. The costliness of Lolita fashion within the fashion subculture complicates the hierarchies of intersectionality. Lolita is an expensive fashion subculture which makes it exclusive; dresses from Lolita brands are expensive ranging from, “\$455 on average, about 50 times the minimum hourly wage in Japan” (Ngai, 2022, p.2). A Black Lolita can feel alienated due to their racial background in the Lolita fashion subculture. Yet, participation in Lolita alienates women who cannot afford the fashion that then participate in mainstream fashion, particularly fast fashion out of financial necessity.

@asamimoon5789 recalls, “Like, I went out in groups of friends who were Lolitas, but they were predominantly like white Lolitas and Asian Lolitas. People just looked at me like the polka dot in the group and like thing that didn't belong. So, I feel that just being a Black Lolita you stand out a lot more.”

@theflufferdome said, “you definitely can find like-minded people of hair and skin to help you with your coordinates or just you know just general support. They are out there, and it is very useful when you have people that look like you to help support you and this odd fashion choice that we've chosen.”

@asamimoon5789 noted, “I belong to Black Lolita community, Black fashionista Society, Black Lolitas of YouTube and I'm telling you like the level of support that I get from these people has helped my confidence to grow as a Lolita like astronomically. I would not be the person that I am today without these communities. One community in particular DC kawaii style was the very first Lolita community that I ever belonged to. The owner is a very dear friend of mine. She's kind of like a Lolita mom I would say. She is so protective and she's so supportive and she really genuinely wants to help everybody be the best person that they can be especially if you are like a Black Lolita.”

A unique challenge that participants all had to navigate were racial hierarchies within Lolita. In Lolita, racial hierarchies manifest as the inclusion of predominately Asian and white Lolitas in Lolita centered media such as magazines, brand fashion shows, and fashion catalogs (Ngai, 2022). Despite having spread

globally (Zhao, 2025; Nguyen, 2012; Adele, 2019; Carriger, 2019) when the fashion is represented in media, it continuously uses Asian and white models. By only representing these groups of women, it creates the idea that Lolita is only for women that are Asian or white. When Black Lolitas engage in the fashion subculture, they are then met with hostility for not fitting the Lolita standard set by media representations. Lolita's, irrespective of racial background, join the fashion subculture with the intent to belong to a community with a set of values that differ from the norm. Yet not all Lolitas upon joining the fashion subculture experience racial hierarchies that work to further marginalize them. Consequently, a sense of belonging fostered amongst Black Lolitas is out of resourcefulness.

@Kimbuucha reflected, "Representation and I know we say representation a lot, but y'all. If you grow up, you spend your entire life barely seeing people and ads that look like you. How do you think that makes you feel as a member of society. Like you don't belong. That's how Lolita also makes us feel. Like we don't belong. If we can't fit in within the mainstream, at least here in our little, tiny sliver of the world, maybe we could fit in here."

ANTI-BLACKNESS IN LOLITA

The data demonstrates that non-Black Lolitas associated Black women's skin tone and hair texture with a failure to meet Lolitas aesthetic standards. Anti-Black refers to the treatment and sentiment held towards Black people that seeks to further marginalize them. It is a core part of systemic racism in how negative connotations are associated with the mere existence of Black individuals, without further context (F.D. Signifier, 52:50, 2023). Anti-Blackness operates systemically as society is conditioned to internalize negative ideas about Black individuals. Intentionally or unintentionally, this messaging can cause people to meet the presence of Black individuals with hostility or even leave them out of spaces entirely. Comparable to what the literature argues about marginalization manifesting at the covert level and overt level, anti-Blackness shares a similar function in society (Carter et al., 2023) Since Lolitas origin, it has had an appreciation for European fashion, specifically drawing inspiration from the Victorian and

Edwardian era (Pelea, 2020). Lolita has not only appreciated European fashion aesthetics but has become beholden to Eurocentric standards of beauty. Japanese Lolita brands catalogs primarily targeted east Asian women. However, when the fashion became global, white women became overrepresented in brand catalogs (Ngai, 2022). As catalogs began to center white females, it conveyed that aesthetically, a Lolita is pale, has a loose hair texture, and is petite. Non-Black Lolitas work to uplift Eurocentric standards of beauty within the fashion subculture by policing Black Lolitas aesthetic presentations of femininity. Participants recalled being told by non-Black Lolitas that darker complexions do not go with sweet Lolita. For participants, their use of sweet Lolita was met with the most hostility as the substyle is deliberately cute (Zhao, 2024; Mubanga, 2025). For non-Black Lolitas, darker skin tones and kinkier hair textures already exist outside of the Lolita standard.

@callista noted, “However, I noticed that I connected with a community and at first, it was just like little things. Just little off-handed comments like “oh I really like how you're not wearing a wig” because this was back when you weren't supposed to wear wigs a Lolita fashion. “I like that you're not wearing a wig but maybe you should braid your hair next time and that way it won't look so unruly.” [“unruly, adjective disorderly and disruptive and not amenable to discipline or control”] At the time it was just a simple hairstyle, it was an afro. I had pulled it back and wore a crown with it. It caught me off guard because we were just enjoying the day and walking around. I wasn't asking for any outfit advice and this Lolita thought it would be okay to make a comment like that.”

@rainbowsoda “Unfortunately, not all Black Lolitas get all positive comments about their natural hair. I mean we wear wigs just as often, so I guess it doesn't really affect us that much. I think it's an expectation. You see like Lolita models especially for Japanese brands Chinese brands they are really pale Asian girls, or you know the occasional white girl and you get the image in your head that the Lolita look has pale skin.”

When Black women wore the sweet substyle, Non-Black Lolitas saw it as a further shift away from Lolita aesthetic standard as Blackness was seen in direct opposition to cuteness. For non-Black Lolitas, participants skin tone and hair texture were automatically viewed as trying to subvert the Eurocentric beauty standards of Lolita.

@magicalgirlme, “I was older, so I wanted to experiment with like aristocratic Lolita because I thought I was too old to wear sweet Lolita. When I became really driven to wear sweet Lolita just because I loved sweet Lolita it was recommended that I lightened my skin. I was kind of thrown off guard. I was like, do you mean, wearing sunscreen to prevent tanning? No, this person was referring to bleaching my skin. If you're not aware, bleaching your skin is exactly what it sounds like. This would help my skin complexion look better with pastel colors in this Lolita's opinion.”

Within the Black community Black women's interest in Lolita fashion was viewed as a direct departure from Black identity. Within the Black community, toxic media portrayals of Black femininity have been internalized (Kelly et al., 2020). As a result, an internalized anti-Blackness manifested as questioning how the Black identity can coexist with Lolita fashion. Lolita already has limited representation of Black females within their media (Ngai, 2022). Within the Black community individuals also work to uphold the Lolita standard—Eurocentric beauty—as participants experienced being further marginalized within the fashion subculture from their own racial community. The participants experience with anti-Blackness and Lolita fashion was a double-edged sword, in that it came from both inside the fashion subculture and from the Black community. As a result, this meant that for Black Lolitas, they did not only have to deal with other racial groups upholding Eurocentric beauty standards but also had to face an internal conflict. Black Lolitas had to face their own community's restrictive mindset. This reveals that while alternative fashion spaces can seek to be more inclusive, they can also co-opt elements of North America's beauty standards—being pale, having straight hair, or being white—to enforce their own set of standards. In return, this complicates the commonly held view that alternative fashion spaces are inherently spaces of inclusion.

@TheFlufferDome explained, “So, in the Black community there's this mental construct of Black people don't do that. This goes for anything different, anything not stereotypically Black. There's this mindset that Black people don't do that. There's a mindset that we can't expand beyond our immediate surroundings and latch on to and accept and be a part of something outside of our small communities. That's very hurtful because that's not the truth. There's so much world out here there's so much of it. The fact that we close ourselves off to this small area, and we don't learn, expand ourselves mentally, and spiritually it's really stunting. It's very stunting.”

PREDOMINATELY BLACK LOLITA ONLINE COMMUNITIES

The findings revealed that predominately Black Lolita online communities can disrupt the cultural understanding of Black femininity within the fashion subculture and outside of it. Additionally, these spaces allow Black women to find community and to feel a sense of belonging. Digital communities are spaces where people can connect regardless of time or geographical location. These spaces create a means for social groups to connect over their shared passions, which could have been difficult otherwise due to restraints such as geographical location and time (Rheingold, 2000) For participants, predominately Black online Lolita communities were a way to connect with the Black Lolita fashion subculture regardless of time and place. In doing so, Black Lolitas could have an online space that centers their experiences in the fashion subculture.

Some predominately Black Lolita online communities are private and involve an authentication process for new members to join (*Black EGL Community*, 2012; *Kawaii Black Youtuber Community.*, 2017).

However, anyone with internet access can come across an online community that is visible to the public (*Kawaii Melanin Girls.*, n.d.; *Life as a Black Lolita - Kawaii Melanin Collab.*, n.d.; JadedIsland, 2024).

With access to these communities whether someone is within or outside of the Black Lolita subculture, they are instantly presented with a space that champions Black identity. These spaces show imagery of Black women that subvert both the Lolita and dominant cultures understanding of Black femininity.

These spaces expand Black femininity by depicting Black women as cute. While there have been depictions in Western television of Black women being quirky, imperfect, awkward, and real (Snoadmin, 2022; Anderson, 2023; Good Hang with Amy Poehler, 2025) predominately Black online Lolita communities expand representation of Black Femininity within the fashion space as well.

In these spaces, Black women's use of Lolita fashion is celebrated and the space that they take up in the fashion subculture is looked at with pride. The visibility of predominately Black Lolita online communities allows people outside of the Black Lolita fashion subculture to see how Black women are challenging the status quo. Predominately Black online Lolita communities use the oppositional Black gaze—a concept created by bell hooks that describes a rebellious way of looking—to challenge mainstream representations of Black people in media. hooks (1992) argues, “to stare at the television, or mainstream movies, to engage its images, was to engage its negation of black representation. It was the oppositional black gaze that responded to these looking relations by developing independent black cinema”(hooks, 1992 p.117). For Black women in predominately Black online Lolita communities, engaging on social media platforms is a way to respond to the negation of Black women in traditional media platforms. This way, engagement in predominately Black online Lolita communities is not only an act of resistance, but also an act of self-preservation—a measure to secure authentic representations of Black women.

@Marinakei explained, “So, on Facebook there's a few groups that I highly recommend. There's the Black Lolita community on Facebook. Of course, I'll have the links in the description. There are the Black girls are kawaii Facebook page. It's not a group as more of Facebook page so they kind of like just to show different Black girls that are in kawaii fashion or cosplay; it's kind of like a mix. Then there's another group on Facebook called Black J fashionistas Society so that's a Facebook group you can join. There is also the K club it isn't exclusively for Black people but it's very inclusive and honestly, I highly recommend that.”

CHAPTER 4 CONCLUSION

This chapter analyzed and interpreted the four main themes that emerged from the data. First, I focused on self-expression and resistance, explaining how the sweet substyle can aid in the renegotiation of Black women's femininity. Next, I shift to anti-Blackness and Lolita which details how Black women's features are associated with a failure to meet the fashion subcultures aesthetic standards. Lastly, I analyzed predominately Black Lolita online communities and their role in disrupting the cultural understanding of Black femininity.

CHAPTER 5: THESIS CONCLUSION

This study employed an exploratory design. The phenomenon of Black Lolitas was explored to understand their experiences. This study had multiple research questions. The central research question was: how do Black American female creators on the Kawaii Melanin platform interpret the Lolita subculture on YouTube? Next, how do the YouTuber content creators describe their motivations for joining the Lolita fashion subculture? Thereafter, what meanings do they attach to their subcultural identity? Lastly, how do they experience self-expression and belonging within the Lolita online community? This study had three main objectives. First, to understand the role of Lolita in creating a sense of belonging among Black women. Second, to assess the relationship between Black women and Lolita fashion. Third, to analyze the ways in which social media creates virtual communities for marginalized communities.

The central research question of this study was answered by generating four key themes from 7 video interviews done by Black Lolita content creators apart of the Kawaii Melanin community. The four themes generated were self-expression and resistance, fostering belonging through shared identity, anti-Blackness in Lolita, and predominately Black online Lolita communities. The second research question was answered within these themes, as findings revealed that the content creators had a lifelong interest in alternative fashion which made them gravitate toward the Lolita fashion subculture for both self-expression and community. The third research question was answered by the findings indicating that for Black women the sweet Lolita substyle is viewed as a framework to renegotiate their sense of femininity. Additionally, another meaning Black women attached to their subcultural identity was the sweet Lolita substyle as a space for self-governance over Black femininity. The final research question was answered by the findings illustrating how by using sweet Lolita, Black women can explicitly associate themselves with cuteness. Yet, when Black women use sweet Lolita to express themselves, they experienced hostility from non-Black Lolitas and people from the Black community.

The first objective was answered by the findings revealing that predominately Black online Lolita communities create spaces that center Black female narratives, which promoted belonging. The second objective was explored by the findings identifying how the intersection of Black women's identities influences the way they engage with the Lolita fashion subculture. The third objective was investigated by the findings illustrating that although social media is a place where marginalized individuals can build a sense of community within fashion subcultures, like in person communities, their identities must be negotiated within.

This study contributes to broader literature in that it fills a research gap on Lolita fashion subculture/Lolita fashion. Most studies have focused on the way Japanese women engage with the Lolita fashion subculture and the meanings they have attached to the fashion since its origin. However, this study has provided fresh insight into how Black women have interpreted the Lolita fashion subculture in an online context. This research substantiates that the Lolita fashion subculture is a space where Black identity must be negotiated within. Additionally, it demonstrates how different iterations of Lolita—substyles—are interpreted on the Black female body and by Black women. Likewise, this analysis challenges the idea that fashion subcultures are spaces of fixed harmony, but instead similar to other cultures in that they are dynamic; individuals are constantly renegotiating their identities within fashion subcultures.

This study had a sample of seven Black female Lolita content creators from the Kawaii melanin platform. Future research could broaden the sample to include more Black Lolitas to deepen the understanding of their experiences. In addition, this paper explores Black female content creators; future research can explore Black Lolitas who are not content creators interpret the fashion subculture. Furthermore, this study is concerned with an online context, but literature can explore Black Lolitas lived experiences off-line within their in-person communities. The Kawaii Melanin community is based in the United States. Likewise, each of the members originates from the United States as well. The sample could be broadened

to include Black female Lolitas from an online community outside of the United States, to offer a global perspective in how Black women interpret the Lolita fashion subculture.

Moreover, further research can make use of qualitative interviews, as this study was opportunistic and took advantage of available data online that already existed with in-depth descriptions of how Black women interpret the online Lolita fashion subculture. This study heavily focused on how the intersection of Black women's race and gender impacts their experiences in the Lolita fashion subculture. Whereas future research could examine other intersections of Black women's identities such as their sexuality, body type, and neurotype. In addition to that a further investigation could focus directly on how Black women interpret the sweet Lolita substyle both online and off-line.

This investigation highlights how the Lolita fashion subculture—like any other culture—is a space where identity is constantly negotiated within. While it is assumed that fashion subcultures are spaces of fixed harmony, they are in fact dynamic in how the intersections of one's identity can shape their experiences within. The Kawaii Melanin community and platforms engagement with the Lolita fashion subculture reinforces that both Lolita fashion and the Lolita fashion subculture have created an outlet for Black women to find community amongst each other. Their community emphasizes how digital platforms have helped to create spaces where marginalized individuals can build a community, irrespective of time or geographical location. For the Kawaii Melanin community, Lolita functions as a space that can uplift female Black identity while simultaneously policing Black femininity.

REFERENCES

Adèle, H. B. K. (2019). *Lolita Latina : an examination of Gothic and Lolita style in the Mexican environment : a thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Visual and Material Culture, College of Creative Arts, Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand.*
<http://hdl.handle.net/10179/15329>

Anderson, L., M. (2023, October 13). How Black women are shaping the television landscape. *Bloomsbury*. <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/discover/bloomsbury-academic/blog/featured/how-black-women-are-shaping-the-television-landscape/>

Alexander, S. (2025, February 9). *The feminist potential of the Lolita fashion subculture - anime femnist.* Anime Feminist. <https://www.animefeminist.com/the-feminist-potential-of-the-lolita-fashion-subculture/>

Asamimoon. (2024, June 26). *Sweet Lolita Outfit.*
<https://www.instagram.com/p/C8rksq6MoJt/?igsh=OWd4anBiM3c1dGpk>

Baron, S. W. (1989). Resistance and its consequences: "the street culture of punks". *Youth and Society*, 21(2), 207. Retrieved from <https://cbu.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/resistance-consequences-street-culture-punks/docview/1295984950/se-2>

Bayram, S. E., & Barut, Y. (2023). A New Approach to Sense of Belonging in the 21st Century: Virtual Belonging. *Kahramanmaraş İstiklal Üniversitesi Psikoloji Dergisi*, 1(1), 1-13.

Black EGL Community. (2012). Facebook. Retrieved February 19, 2026, from <https://www.facebook.com/groups/blkloli/>

Bowen, S., & Martin, P. B. G. (2017b, April 13). The real beauty of #BlackGirlMagic. *Refinery29*.
<https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/2017/04/149970/black-girl-magic-meaning>

Buckingham, D., Bragg, S., & Kehily, M. J. (2015). Rethinking youth cultures in the age of global media: a perspective

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019c). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport Exercise and Health*, 11(4), 589–597. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676x.2019.1628806>

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2020). One size fits all? What counts as quality practice in (reflexive) thematic analysis? *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 18(3), 328–352.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2020.1769238>

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>

Campbell, S., Greenwood, M., Prior, S., Shearer, T., Walkem, K., Young, S., Bywaters, D., & Walker, K. (2020). Purposive sampling: complex or simple? Research case examples. *Journal of Research in Nursing*, 25(8), 652–661. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987120927206>

Closet Child - Lolibrary Wiki. (n.d.).

https://wiki.lolibrary.org/index.php/Closet_Child#:~:text=1.3%20External%20links-,History,for%20clothing%2C%20accessories%20and%20music

Carriger, M. L. (2019). “Maiden’s Armor”: Global gothic lolita fashion communities and technologies of girly counteridentity. *Theatre Survey*, 60(1), 122–146. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0040557418000522>

Carter, B. M., Sumpter, D. F., & Thruston, W. (2023d). Overcoming marginalization by creating a sense of belonging. *Creative Nursing*, 29(4), 320–327. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10784535231216464>

Cong, Y. (2022). The Conformity and Subversion of Lolita Fashion to Male Chauvinism from the Perspective of Gramsci’s “Hegemony” Theory. *SHS Web of Conferences*, 148, 03019.
<https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202214803019>

Crenshaw, K. (1989) Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989, 139-167

Curated, S. (2021b, January 11). *How FRUiTS magazine embedded Harajuku fashion into the world's consciousness*. Something Curated. <https://somethingcurated.com/2020/03/31/how-fruits-magazine-embedded-harajuku-fashion-into-the-worlds-consciousness/>

Digital Subcultures Theory – Subcultures and Sociology. (n.d.). <https://haenfler.sites.grinnell.edu/digital-subcultures-theory/>

Dwyer, S. C., & Buckle, J. L. (2009). The space between: on being an Insider-Outsider in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), 54–63.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690900800105>

Ensminger, D. (2010). Coloring Between the Lines of Punk and Hardcore: From Absence to Black Punk Power. *Postmodern Culture*, 20(2). <https://doi.org/10.1353/pmc.2010.0010>

Flett, G. L. (2021b). An introduction, review, and conceptual analysis of mattering as an essential construct and an essential way of life. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 40(1), 3–36.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/07342829211057640>

Flick, U. (2015). *Introducing research methodology: A Beginner's Guide to Doing a Research Project*. SAGE Publications Limited.

Good Hang with Amy Poehler. (2025, April 8). *Quinta Brunson | Good Hang with Amy Poehler* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Gx8aYbZTX0>

Harvey, L. (2015). Frills and Thrills: Lolita fashion explained. *Qcagoldcoast*.

https://www.academia.edu/12302374/Frills_and_Thrills_Lolita_fashion_explained

Hebdige, D. (1979). *Subculture: the meaning of style*. Methuen. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203139943>

Haenfler, R. (2013). *Subcultures: The Basics*. In *Routledge eBooks*.

<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315888514>

Ho, C. (2023). Online communities, identity, and leisure: Why online communities mean so much to married women with young children. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 54(5), 560–580.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2023.2252412>

Horkheimer, M. (1972). *Critical theory: Selected Essays*. A&C Black. C2TS

Intersectionality – subcultures and sociology. (n.d.). <https://haenfler.sites.grinnell.edu/subcultural-theory-and-theorists/intersectionality/>

Instagram. (n.d.-b). https://www.instagram.com/magicalgirlme_official/?hl=en

hooks, b. (1992). *Black looks : race and representation*. South End Press.

Jadedisland. (2025, August 16). Jadedisland. <https://www.jadedisland.com/>

JDirectItems Auction -Buyee Japanese Proxy Service. (2026, January 1). Buyee.

<https://buyee.jp/jdirectitems/auction?lang=en>

Kang, Z. Y., & Cassidy, T. (2015). Lolita fashion: A trans-global subculture. *Fashion Style & Popular Culture*, 2(3), 371–384. https://doi.org/10.1386/fspc.2.3.371_1

Kawaii Black Youtuber Community. (2017, October 7). Facebook. Retrieved February 19, 2026, from <https://www.facebook.com/groups/118642185497727/?ref=share>

Kawaii Melanin Girls. (n.d.). Facebook. Retrieved February 19, 2026, from

<https://www.facebook.com/KawaiiMelaninGirls/>

Kim [kimbuucha]. (2018, February 25th). *Sweet Lolita outfit*.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BfpE2kYHhgS/?igsh=MWMweDA2cXFuMzU2aA>

Lace market. (2022). Lace Market. Retrieved February 28, 2026, from <https://egl.circilly.com/>

Lee, S. H., Tak, J., Kwak, E., & Lim, T. Y. (2019). Fandom, social media, and identity work: The emergence of virtual community through the pronoun “we”. *Psychology of Popular Media*, 9(4), 436–446. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000259>

Levine, M., Walton, C., Philpot, R., & Keil, T. (2025). Bystanders and the murder of George Floyd: Analyzing bystander intervention in the course of a police killing. *American Psychologist*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0001531>

Life as a Black Lolita - Kawaii Melanin Collab. (n.d.). YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTr9f8yldeZmTJH5KBaNXcY2zU3DM>

Lolita fashion: Japanese street style · V&A. (2024, April 17). Victoria and Albert Museum.

<https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/lolita-fashion-japanese-street-style?srsltid=AfmBOorL1v0CtoxTzWw8nfmlsBjk84P7V80bikJDI9MoF7xAwYXYhIEH#slideshow=63778258&slide=0>

magicalgirlme. (n.d.). Magicalgirlme. <https://www.magicalgirlme.com/>

Mai, J., & Nguyen, A. (2017). *So Pretty/very Rotten*.

Mason, Q. M. (2021). #BlackGirlMagic as Resistant Imaginary. *Hypatia*, 36(4), 706–724. <https://doi.org/10.1017/hyp.2021.48>

Melany Amarikwa, *Social Media Platforms' Reckoning: The Harmful Impact of TikTok's Algorithm on People of Color*, 29 RICH. J.L. & TECH 69 (2024).

Available at: <https://scholarship.richmond.edu/jolt/vol29/iss3/2>

Marie, C. (2023b, October 24). *Why Is Visible Representation Important In Lolita Fashion?* — *magicalgirlme*. Magicalgirlme. <https://www.magicalgirlme.com/blog/a-hrefhttpwwwmagicalgirlmecomblogwhy-is-visible-representation-important-in-lolita-fashionwhy-is-visible-representation-important-in-lolita-fashiona>

Marie, C. [Magicalgirlme_offical]. (2022, November 19th). *Sweet Lolita outfit*. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CljW6kds9JG/?igsh=MXc1aW9pd3I1c2xuMQ>

Martínez, I. F., Eremionkhale, A., & Zhou, W. (2024). Understanding public support for Juneteenth as a federal holiday. *Research Square*. <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-4602301/v1>

Mercari: Japan's largest marketplace. (n.d.). メルカリ.

https://jp.mercari.com/en?srsltid=AfmBOop5_wQfluNXvowd67cGe_bB2gQMu7JomhfiBRyQ2YeLu5aJWaeP

Maureen Mahon. Afropunk: The “Rock ‘n’ Roll Nigger” Experience. Directed by James Spooner, 2003; produced by Ayanna Mackins. *TDR/the Drama Review*, 50(1), 183–187.

<https://doi.org/10.1162/dram.2006.50.1.183>

Mehta, C.M., Henry, V. (2017). Femininity. In: Zeigler-Hill, V., Shackelford, T. (eds) *Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-28099-8_1076-1

Michalski, C. A., Diemert, L. M., Helliwell, J. F., Goel, V., & Rosella, L. C. (2020). Relationship between sense of community belonging and self-rated health across life stages. *SSM - Population Health*, 12, 100676. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2020.100676>

Monden, M. (2020). The “Nationality” of Lolita fashion. In *Routledge eBooks* (pp. 165–178). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003084716-16>

Mizrachi, M. P., & Sharon, O. (2025). Secondhand fashion consumers exhibit fast fashion behaviors despite sustainability narratives. *Scientific reports*, 15(1), 34968. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-19089-1>

Mohajer va Pesaran, D. (2015). From Wajiro Kon to Fruits Magazine: Tokyo street fashion culture's imprint on collective memory.

Moran, I. (2010). *Punk: the Do-It-Yourself subculture*. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Punk%3A-The-Do-It-Yourself-Subculture-Moran/bf18c0f5ea7f51d9c6b975994d77b01bac82a474>

Mubanga, P. (2025). Women in Wonderland: Japanese Feminism in the Context of Lolita Fashion. *Paw Prints: The Michigan Tech University Journal of First-Year Writing*, 1(1).

Mutero, V. (2025). “As a woman. . .”: Policing Black femininity through unsolicited digital advice. *Journal of Femininities.*, 3(1), 87–112. <https://doi.org/10.1163/29501229-bja10024>

Nair, M. (2024). Fashion Subcultures: Exploring the Evolution and Significance of Alternative Fashion Movements. *Shodh Sagar Journal of Language, Art, Culture and Film*, 1(2), 8-13. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36676/jlacf.v1.i2.13>

Nkuna, M. T. (2024). Contribution of social media in Shaping Self-Perceptions: A case of Black women. *International Journal of Humanity and Social Sciences*, 3(1), 42–60. <https://doi.org/10.47941/ijhss.1930>

Nyong'o, T. (2006). *Rip It Up: The Black Experience in Rock 'n' Roll*. Kandia Crazy Horse. Right to Rock: The Black Rock Coalition and the Cultural Politics of Race.

Nguyen, A. (2016). Eternal maidens: Kawaii aesthetics and otome sensibility in Lolita fashion. *East Asian Journal of Popular Culture*, 2(1), 15–31. https://doi.org/10.1386/eapc.2.1.15_1

Nguyen, A. (2012, December 12). *Maiden's Fashion as Eternal Becomings: Victorian Maidens and Sugar sweet cuties donning Japanese street fashion in Japan and North America*. <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14721/3>

Olayinka, J. T., Gohara, M. A., & Ruffin, Q. K. (2021). #BlackGirlMagic: Impact of the social media movement on Black women's self esteem. *International Journal of Women's Dermatology*, 7(2), 171–173. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijwd.2021.01.006>

On Rejecting Normative Governance: Lolita as an Outlet for Unpatriotic Self-Service in Japan. (2021, April 7). Synergy: The Journal of Contemporary Asian Studies. <https://utsynergyjournal.org/2021/04/06/on-rejecting-normative-governance-lolita-as-an-outlet-for-unpatriotic-self-service-in-japan/>

Patterson, A. N. (2018). YouTube generated video clips as qualitative research data: one researcher's reflections on the process. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 24(10), 759–767. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800418788107>

Pelea, Cringuta Irina. (2020). Japan's Fashion Subculture. 10.4324/9781003022794-11.

Rainbow sodaa. (n.d.). YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChqZ0Paq71HJoVBhzhXa7ig/videos/videos?app=desktop>

Preece, J., & Maloney-Krichmar, D. (2005). Online communities: design, theory, and practice. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 10(4), 00. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2005.tb00264.x>

- Procope Bell, D. (2024). “Pick-Me” Black women: tactical patriarchal femininity in the Black manosphere. *Feminist Media Studies*, 24(8), 1704–1722. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2023.2262163>
- Rheingold, Howard. (2000). *The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier*.
- Ridings, C. M., & Gefen, D. (2006). Virtual Community Attraction: Why people hang out online. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 10(1), 00. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2004.tb00229.x>
- Roberts, J. C. S. H. T. J. & B. (2002). SUBCULTURES, CULTURES AND CLASS: A theoretical overview. In *Routledge eBooks* (pp. 9–79). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203224946-3>
- Robinson, Kyla. (2014). *Empowered Princesses: An Ethnographic Examination of the Practices, Rituals, and Conflicts with Lolita Fashion Communities in the United States*.
- Ross, N. (2002). Community belonging and health. *Health Reports*, 13(3), 33-9. Retrieved from <https://cbu.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/community-belonging-health/docview/207471674/se-2>
- SaxonBlues. (2019, February 28). *Chronicles of a Black Lolita, Pt. 4: Five pros to being a Black Lolita*. *Saxon Blues*. <https://saxon-blues89.blogspot.com/2019/02/chronicles-of-black-lolita-pt-4-five.html>
- Scot, A. (2022c). A brief note on dominant culture and subculture. *Global Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, 11(2), 001. <https://www.internationalscholarsjournals.com/articles/a-brief-note-on-dominant-culture->
- Scott, J., & Marshall, G. (2009). *A Dictionary of Sociology*. Oxford University Press, USA.
- Shuai, Z. (2020b). Lolita fashion, new media, and cultural hegemony in contemporary Japan. *Mutual Images Journal*, 9, 67–88. <https://doi.org/10.32926/2020.9.shu.lolit>
- Shields, M. (2008). Community belonging and self-perceived health. *Health Reports*, 19(2), 51.

Sobande, F. (2020). Black women and the media in Britain. In *Palgrave studies in (re) presenting gender* (pp. 29–64). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-46679-4_2

Snoadmin. (2022, March 31). “*Insecure*” review: *The end of an era*. The Maroon. <https://loyolamaroon.com/10034650/features/life-times/insecure-review-the-end-of-an-era/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CInsecure%E2%80%9D%20is%20loosely%20based%20on,imperfect%20with%20so%20many%20layers.>

Spencer-Oatey, H. (2012). What Is Culture? A Compilation of Quotations. Global PAD Core Concepts. GlobalPAD.

The FlufferDome. (n.d.). YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/@TheFlufferDome>

Taylor, V. [the_flufferdome]. (2020, April 8). *Instagram*. https://www.instagram.com/p/B-veOs7DBoC/?img_index=2&igsh=MTZsOWt1dTVjc3BicA

Trainor, L. R., & Bundon, A. (2020). Developing the craft: reflexive accounts of doing reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport Exercise and Health*, 13(5), 705–726.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676x.2020.1840423>

Van Manen, M. (1984). Practicing phenomenological writing. *Phenomenology + Pedagogy*, 36–69. <https://doi.org/10.29173/pandp14931>

Waugh, A. (2019). Feels Like Home: The Digital Information Practices of Teen Fans. *Journal of Research on Libraries and Young Adults*, 10(2), 1–22.

Williams, J. P. (2007). Youth-Subcultural Studies: Sociological traditions and core concepts. *Sociology Compass*, 1(2), 572–593. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9020.2007.00043.x>

Williams, R., & Gable, R. (1989). *Resources of hope : culture, democracy, socialism*. Verso.

Wong, S. F., & Lee, W. A. (2021). The Three Epochs of Hong Kong Lolita Subculture: Cultural Hybridization and Identity Construction. *IAFOR Journal of Cultural Studies.*, 6(1), 87–105.

<https://doi.org/10.22492/ijcs.6.1.05>

WunderWelt. (2026). WunderWelt. Retrieved February 28, 2026, from

https://www.wunderwelt.jp/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=p-max&gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=22823763767&gbraid=0AAAAAokNNdopQ4w135edtn8OMJQd3mAv6&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI74yoq6r9kgMVpXFHAR1pVjexEAAYASAAEgJzm_D_BwE

Yunker, T. (2011). Lolita: Dreaming, despairing, defying. *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs*, 11(1), 97-110.

Zhao, J. (2025). The decolonial paradox: negotiating global identity in China’s Lolita fashion subculture.

Media International Australia. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878x251362895>

クローゼットチャイルド. (n.d.). ロリィタ・ゴシック・パンクブランド専門 Closetchild.

<https://www.closetchildonlineshop.com/>

孙花. (2024, December 9). *Why is Lolita So Expensive?* 42Lolita. [https://42lolita.com/blogs/fashion/why-](https://42lolita.com/blogs/fashion/why-is-lolita-fashion-so-expensive?srsltid=AfmBOoqOCrmO9BkhQkRVv--Px_qk5CUpQDnxv1_yK66hhURxOJK_6ENe)

[is-lolita-fashion-so-expensive?srsltid=AfmBOoqOCrmO9BkhQkRVv--](https://42lolita.com/blogs/fashion/why-is-lolita-fashion-so-expensive?srsltid=AfmBOoqOCrmO9BkhQkRVv--Px_qk5CUpQDnxv1_yK66hhURxOJK_6ENe)

[Px_qk5CUpQDnxv1_yK66hhURxOJK_6ENe](https://42lolita.com/blogs/fashion/why-is-lolita-fashion-so-expensive?srsltid=AfmBOoqOCrmO9BkhQkRVv--Px_qk5CUpQDnxv1_yK66hhURxOJK_6ENe)

APPENDIX A: KAWAII MELANIN: LIFE AS A BLACK LOLITA COLLAB TRANSCRIPTS

Content creator: Asami Moon

Asami Moon (AM): hello beautiful people welcome back to my channel and happy Juneteenth if you don't already know what Juneteenth is it's the celebration of the emancipation or the end of slavery in America and to mark this beautiful day I am partnering with the Kawaii community to do a question and answer about my experiences as a Black Lolita so sit back relax let's get the pouring some tea. So, today we are drinking from tea bloom timeless moments, and today's tea is green tea with rose flower it's called my growing love my goodness, so let me get you set up and then we'll get into it. So, as I've said before and in a lot of my videos I've been a Lolita for six years and the majority of my experiences have all been positive but there have been sometimes where you know I've just been you know not having it here you go love.

Question 1: What has been the reaction from family and friends? Has it been negative, positive, extreme, or neutral?

Asami Moon (AM): well for me this is a pretty like mixed up question my friends I have the time were all into alternative fashion, so it was pretty like seamless with them to transition into Lolita; and a lot of my friends are Lolitas now. My family was a little bit different. I grew up in a very like oppressive I'll say religious environment, so where they put a very huge emphasis on modesty and not modesty in the way that Lolita is a modest fashion because we're not showing all of our goods but more modesty in the fact that you blend into the background you don't stand out at all. So, that one was a bit of a challenge for me. My father has always been supportive of everything that I did so he was very he was pretty chill with it like he didn't really care. My mother, on the other hand, absolutely hated it. She gave me a lot of negative feedback. The majority of the bullying that I got for Lolita when I first started was from my mom. She's become more comfortable with it over the past six years. I think she was mostly just like trying to gauge her reaction from how people around her felt and the people around her were not very accepting of it.

Like, I had a lot of people who were like calling me a devil worshipper. I had people like saying that I was a prostitute or something like that; I had people saying that I was trying to look like a little girl because I was a sweet Lolita when I first started and I think we all get that at some point and it's just like it was very, very hard for me to develop confidence in that type of environment. to really expand my abilities that I'll say and Lolita, so I'll say that my reaction was a mix of negative and positive.

Question 2: So, our next question is what something is you think affects Black Lolitas differently then non-black Lolitas.

AM: A lot of Black Lolitas get the I'm just going to say is the "Black people don't do that type of thing." So, when I first started to go out in Lolita as a Black person like people did not know what to think. Like, I went out in groups of friends who were Lolitas, but they were predominantly like white Lolitas and Asian Lolitas and people just looked at me as like the polka dot in the group and like thing that didn't belong. So, I feel that just being a Black Lolita you stand out a lot more. People who will expect odd type of things from other people but seeing it from you, and you know people think that it's not really part of your culture and it's not something that you can do. I've had a lot of people say I'm trying to be white or I'm trying to be Asian. And I feel like that sort of thing but not happen if I were not a Black Lolita. Yeah, that's something that I've dealt with as a Black Lolita. It's just people saying that I am trying to emulate a Victorian style fashion that it's just not historically accurate. I have literally had people come up to me or like online say to me that I am NOT correct purely because a Black person would not have this type of wardrobe. You know, if they wore Victorian, they wouldn't have access to nice clothes and things like that and that I just I look historically incorrect. They say that "you would look better if you wore more classical because it looks more like slave clothing." I swear to God I swear to God this was an actual conversation and it's like if I were not a Black Lolita you know that stuff would not happen. I have never seen, heard, or experienced one of my white or Asian Lolita friends being called historically inaccurate. Even if they say they're representing a Victorian fashion, but their dress has like unicorns and crap on it

like they don't get that kind of negative pushback. So, I feel like that's definitely something that is only happening to Black and brown Lolita's.

Question 3: Have you ever experienced racism while wearing Lolita and do you think it was any worse because you stood out?

AM: I could tell a million stories about this topic but I'm going to focus on one particular thing because it really disturbed me and it still disturbs me to this day. So, there was this person and I'm not going to name their name as I describe them more, you'll probably figure out who it is because they have been like negative to a lot of Black Lolita's. When I met them years ago probably like five years ago, probably around the first time I started in fashion. They weren't like mean to me or anything because they didn't say anything you know mean to me because we hung out in the same group of friends so it was her, me, another person who was Caucasian, another person who was Asian; so we hung out in the same little group and I didn't have experiences that were negative with this person for a very long time. Granted, I saw them in an extremely small doses, so I saw them for a second at a convention here, and a second tea party there an event here. and they were like everything was chill. I could tell that something was a little off about her because of her home situation; she was very much under her parents' thumb, and she didn't know a lot about the world, which was odd considering her age. So, she would make little comments every now and again, but it was purely I think out of ignorance because after I shared with her some information she never mentioned it again and she apologized but like there was a time it was about a year or so ago where I had an experience with this person that completely it made me so angry that I just had to cut them off and never speak to them again. even if it meant that I could not hang out in that group of friends anymore, so we were all staying at a friend's house out of state and I don't know if it's because I hadn't seen them in so long and they don't really have any other Black or brown friends that they just let the frickin floodgates open up with ignorance. so they were making like a lot of like Black jokes that were making me uncomfortable and I was telling her you know that that's unacceptable it's making me very uncomfortable I was stuck at the place for an entire weekend so I couldn't really like get away with them

so I was telling them you know telling her that you know she had to cut it out it wasn't okay like we're not friends like that don't make those kind of jokes about me. So, she kind of curtailed it a little bit as the weekend progressed. Then, I was showing my group of friends some pictures of my best friend and my best friend is a Muslim Lolita. She then made a comment about her wearing pants under her dresses and how like it ruins her coordinate and her not wearing the right ["I get it is a religion, but it doesn't really fit the aesthetic"]...dogging my friend out and I got so pissed off at her that I really just had to like let her know about herself because that was completely not okay and she trying to make up for it. She tried to apologize for it and all that stuff... she was saying that she doesn't like Black Lolita's well she said that they're not her cup of tea ["Black Lolita's don't look good in sweet"] When I confronted her about it she was like "well you're not Black Black" ["you don't have a lot of Black features"] and I don't know what that means because I look Black Black to me["people with dark skin don't look human to me. I don't like it."] I don't know what it means that on that Black Black but she was like well you're not Black Black your skin's not that dark and you don't look like the other Black Lolita's so I'm fine with you. But it's just a personal preference. And I'm like that's not a personal preference I was like this [blank] is racist. So, I had to tell her I could no longer be friends with her. I was like this is completely ridiculous and she did not understand why I was so upset. She genuinely did not understand what she did to offend me, which was insane. I was explaining to her that just like the idea that Black Lolita's can't be Lolita's makes me not able to be your friend because I am a Black Lolita. Just like other things she said about other Lolitas like plus-sized Lolitas ["Plus size Lolitas don't have the right to complain about companies that don't make clothes that fit them"] she has ragged on them like Lolitas who want to wear their natural hair and don't wear wigs or you know just like nobody's a perfect Lolita except for her. Which was kind of her mental idea. So, I cut her off. I blocked her on all my social media as I told her not to contact me again and she started like trying to post pictures of me after all this stuff blew up about her being racist, not that I said anything it just came out on its own. She started posting pictures of me and all this stuff and saying that we were friends and like trying to use me as her token Black friend which was completely insane. I had to message her again so I had to unblock her so I could message her again and we had another conversation.

This conversation got kind of not out of hand, but I guess she no longer had any [blank] to give so she just started being like I don't understand how you could be confident as a Black Lolita. How can you be confident as a plus-sized Lolita? How is it possible that you are able to do this, this, that and the third? That should not be possible and like. I cannot. I can't with her. So, all and all person are no longer friends. I no longer speak to them. I've blocked them on all social media. I don't want to be reminded of them. I don't have any pictures with them anymore. I ask them never to post a picture of me again and that's the end of that. Any other experiences that I've had have always been like a little subtle type of racism. I've been called the n-word and Lolita. I've been called all kinds of things. I told you guys I've been called a cultural appropriator. I've been called like a slave. I've been called all kinds of everything. Not really by other Lolita's just by like random people out on the street or when I go to like a historical house or something. But whatever. The only other things that stick out to me are like traveling with my non-Black friends, even something as simple as putting your bags into the back of an uber. Even if I'm dressed in full Lolita the uber driver puts my non-Black' bags in the back of the car and tells me to lift my bag up and put it in myself even though my bag is like smaller then theirs or larger than theirs. Or you know they greet everybody else when they when we walk into a building, but they don't greet. Very subtle things like that if you're not aware you won't even pick up on it. but as I've said before, the majority of my experiences have all been positive. I'm not tripping too hard off of that.

Question 4: How do you deal with the belief that Black people shouldn't wear sweet Lolita or more pastel colors e.g. Black people can't wear bright colors/certain colors don't go well with dark skin?

my beliefs about Black people when it comes to wearing pastels, I feel that everything is all in what looks good on you just like with any other person in any other color. When it comes to dark skin and pastels, I think that contrast is absolutely beautiful. I love seeing black Lolita's we're super-duper bright pinks and lavenders and yellows and blues because the contrast especially if you have very dark skin, it looks incredible. I will insert some pictures of some black Lolita's that I think are just like killing it when it comes to pastels. I myself, as you can probably tell, I'm obsessed with pastel pink. My entire apartment is

pastel pink. A lot of my wardrobe is pastel colors. I love to wear bright colors. That girl that I mentioned before did make a little comment before to me about wearing really bright colors with dark skin. She felt like it looked unnatural. I've had other people that say that bright colors on dark skin it just doesn't match and that bright colors look a lot better when your skin is like paper white or very, very light because it blends more, but I live for a contrast. I love it. I love pastels on Black skin. When it comes to picking colors for your wardrobe in general, I think that it's all about picking colors that look good on you. So, if you are a Dark skin Lolita who looks very good and pastel pink but not pastel green, just don't wear pastel green. Wear the colors that are more becoming on you and same if you are a non-Black Lolita. If you have like really yellow undertones and you want to wear a bright yellow dress, you're going to look like a sunflower and that might not be as flattering on you as it would be on somebody who has more pink undertones. so, it's all about picking what looks good on you. You ain't got to be racist about. Just pick what looks cute on you. Keep it cute.

Question 5: If I want to join a predominately Black Lolita community, where and how could I find one?

This is something that when I first started out, I struggled a lot with because I was not well-versed in Facebook or Instagram or any kind of Internet for anything. my advice to you would be to go on Facebook and look up literally black Lolita community. I'll actually post in the description of some Facebook groups that I belong to. I belong to Black Lolita community, Black fashionista Society, Black Lolitas of YouTube and I'm telling you like the level of support that I get from these people has helped my confidence to grow as a Lolita like astronomically. I would not be the person that I am today without these communities. One community in particular DC kawaii style was the very first Lolita community that I ever belonged to. the owner is a very dear friend of mine. She's kind of like a Lolita mom I would say. she is so protective and she's so supportive and she really genuinely wants to help everybody be the best person that they can be especially if you are like a Black Lolita. So definitely even if you don't live in a like a DMV area you should definitely look into joining some groups so that you can get that

community of support to help you to grow. Message me on Instagram it's not like very widely known but I am a Lolita Mentor. I am very damn friendly on Instagram, and I will answer any questions you have. I answer questions all day long. If you are looking to get started in the community send me a message on Instagram and I can help you to find like brands that will be suitable for you, styles that you would like, we can talk about like color matching or just anything you want to talk about. I want to be the person that I needed when I joined the community. I want to be that person for you. Send me a message.

Question 6: What advice would you give to someone that was nervous about wearing Lolita due to their race?

The very first thing that I want to say is that there is a place for you in this community. There is a dress for you that will fit you. There's a dress for you that's going to look incredible on you. There are people here to support you; you'd have a place here. You will be appreciated and loved and respected if you join this community. Do not be afraid of the saltiness that you hear about Lolita's. do not be afraid of the racism. There are people here that will support you and that will guide you through it and that will be your friends. So do not worry. Come on in the frills are great. so, if your reluctance is based in the idea that black or brown or whoever people can't wear this fashion, I would say to look up kawaii melanin girls or kawaii alternative fashion on Facebook and Instagram. You will get flooded with examples of melanin girls wearing these kawaii fashions and absolutely just stealing your breath away by how good they look. You can use them as inspiration. You can directly message them and ask them for advice, or you can just have the proof that this fashion really is for everybody. I cannot stress enough that Lolita is literally just clothes. it's just a dress. It's not that deep. you know I am the same person that I am in Lolita as I am in a non-Lolita dress. I am the same person. I wake up with the same face, the same attitude, the same voice, the same mind. It's just an outfit. It's not that deep. if you feel like you can't wear it because you're not an Asian or you're not white honey it's not that deep. You can do it. and you're going to look freaking beautiful. So, I guess what I'm trying to say is you can do it. I believe in you. I will be here to coach you through. do not let the haters get to you. That's all they are is just haters and it's just words. It

really means nothing. A lot of people have negative things to say purely out of jealousy or their own ignorance so just brush it to the side, brew a cup of tea with their tears, keep them moving and keep it cute. Thank you, guys, so much for watching this video.

Content creator: Kimbuucha

Hey everyone, welcome back to my YouTube channel. if you're new here I'm Kim and I upload videos once a week about Lolita fashion, J fashion, lifestyle, and my wedding. What is happening in the world right now is incredibly exhausting, and I just haven't been in a good headspace. I haven't had the motivation to film anything, I haven't had the motivation to dress up and work. I haven't felt like doing anything. I'm doing this video in a collaboration with a few other Black Lolitas. I'm really happy to talk about some of these things and share my experiences with you guys. After that I'm going to be back in the groove. I really appreciate all of your support and your patience while I haven't been kicking about any videos, but y'all understand. if you don't you had the wrong channel I'm going to try to make this video as fun as I can but also this is a very serious topic and for those of you who aren't black I don't know if you knew this but our experiences just in life in general are very different from those who are white and Asian especially in this community. Especially in alternative fashion in general, so this is going to help us make things better in the community in general for other people. it can be a little discouraging sometimes with some of the stuff that you read in here and see.

Question 1: What has been the reaction from family and friends? Has it been negative, positive, extreme, or neutral?

Overall, my experiences have been pretty positive; my family does not care what I do. Overall, my family is really positive and supportive. I think initially they're like what you are wearing, but they eventually were like alright. That's just Kim and her thing. My mom loves it! She loves the dresses. She loves dressing up. My fiancé's family also enjoys it. His mom loves it, too. She loves the idea of getting cute

and having tea. I have been in some previous relationships where they hated it, and they were the exact opposite. That's why his ass is lonely and broke and not living his best life.

Question 2: What is something that you think affects Black Lolitas differently than non-Black Lolitas?

Us feeling included in a part of this community a Lolita fashion you know originated in Japan. So, it's going to be catered towards Japanese women, I get it. However, over time we have to get with the program, angelic pretty, baby the stars shine bright, metamorphose, innocent world. There are other Lolita's that are not Japanese, that are not skinny white women that have brown skin, that have different facial features, different hair styles, can you give us something different please. Representation and I know we say representation a lot, but y'all. If you grow up, you spend your entire life barely seeing people and ads that look like you. How do you think that makes you feel as a member of society. Like you don't belong. That's how Lolita also makes us feel. Like we don't belong. If we can't fit in within the mainstream, at least here in our little, tiny sliver of the world, maybe we could fit in here. One of the very important things that I want to mention that affects Black Lolita's differently than non-black Lolita's and specifically I'm talking about my experiences is whether I decide to apply for a brand fashion show or a fashion show in general. We all know that there are some brands that have never featured any kind of model with melanin, and their skin whatsoever, and there have been fashion shows that I've applied to, but I've not gotten selected for. Now, before you say well just because you didn't get selected it doesn't mean that it was because of the color of your skin. Let's get one thing straight. I have been on this earth for 33 years. I know exactly when I'm being discriminated against, I'm a professional in that department, unfortunately. There have been fashion shows where I haven't gotten picked, and I sat back and thought about it. I'm like, well maybe it was because I didn't like my pictures. That could be it. Maybe it was because I was outside of their measurements. Maybe it was because I didn't fit their aesthetics. You know, their vision of what they want all of their models to look like and 99% of the time that is my train of thought is I don't look like any of the other models that they envisioned looking in their clothes and so they didn't pick me because of the color of my skin. This has happened not only in Lolita, but this has

happened in the professional world. This has happened in my modeling career. This has happened, you know, in school growing up, so this certainly affects us differently because we are discouraged from applying for fashion shows because we already know we're not going to get selected. It could be the best damn coordinate you've ever seen in your life, you could be under the measurements, you could have a beautiful face, but if your skin is not the right color, you are not going to get picked and let me tell you that needs to change. I don't know how many other people have experienced this that are not Black, but this is the black Lolita experience. This is what we have to deal with on a reoccurring basis. If one of our favorite brands is coming to an event or they're having a fashion show at one of their tea parties and we would love to be able to represent the brand and be able to live that dream, but we know it's never going to come true.

Question 3: Have you ever experienced racism while wearing Lolita and do you think it was any worse because you stood out more?

Honestly, I don't think I have. I've experienced it in every other facet of my life, especially being in the tech industry. oh, it's bad enough being in the tech industry as a woman, but as a black person we don't really exist much here. In Lolita I haven't really. I live in Portland. Portland is very, very welcoming of everyone. I've lived in a lot of places I think I've moved 13 to 14 times in my life. I have lived in the deep south. I have lived in the Pacific Northwest, Washington, and the DC metro area. I've lived in California. No one really cares. Portland embraces people being different. Portland embraces people who look different and act differently. If you tell me that I can't be a black Lolita in this city I would tell you, you're full of crap. I haven't experienced it here. I also haven't experienced it in other parts of the country where I've been. I didn't experience it in Japan when I went to Japan and wore Lolita. I experienced it in other parts of my life for sure. I think I got really lucky there.

Question 4: How do you deal with the belief that Black people shouldn't wear sweet Lolita or more pastel colors e.g. Black people can't wear bright colors/certain colors don't go well with dark skin?

I just assume those people are either very shallow or they're very ignorant, or they're they just are miserable in their life, and they need a reason to put someone else down. out that's how I deal with that. I feel these people are wasting so much breath and wasting exerting too much energy to type when no one asks for their opinion, not a soul.

Question 5: If I want to join a predominately Black Lolita community, where and how could I find one?

Well, my friends you're in luck because there is a Facebook group for Black Lolitas called the Black Lolita community. It's for Lolita's who identify as Black whether you are African or Afro-Latina. Everyone is welcome if you identify as a black Lolita and it's a really good space to talk about you know things that affect us. Sometimes we just want to be able to talk about how I can find a good honey blonde wig or sometimes we just want to be able to share coordinates that are African inspired. That's one place you can look. Other places are Instagram there is a Black Lolita community Instagram page now that shares different coordinates from Black Lolita in the community and of course there is the Black Lolita hashtag on Instagram which you'll probably find it there are some pictures on there that are not of Black Lolitas because people like to highjack hash tags but you can always just say don't show for this hashtag. That's a really great way to find other Black Lolitas in the community and especially other Black Lolitas with YouTube channels because sometimes those are hard to find. So, I recommend either of those three options.

Question 6: What advice would you give to someone that was nervous about wearing Lolita due to their race?

I would say you will find that there are people in this community who are very welcoming. People who are not discriminatory, people who are not here to tell you what you can and can't wear. My dad raised me to not let my skin color be a deterrent in me trying to achieve any of my goals and dreams in life because I mean honestly if I did I would not be where I am in my career. I would not be where I am even living

here in Oregon. My life would be completely different, and I was afraid to attempt to do the things that I tried to do. Lolita is no different and even though this is a niche fashion and even though the alternative fashion community can be very discriminatory at times are not inclusive, there are people who are actively making progress to make it more inclusive. There are people in this community to make it more inclusive and to make it more diverse. Don't be afraid and like I said you could find those communities online and find someone who's going to help you get that confidence that you need because there's a whole lot of other Black Lolita's. There's a whole lot of white Lolita's who like are not here for Tammy who doesn't think that black girl should wear sweet Lolita. The two black friends that I have in Portland are Lolita's and I met them through the Lolita the community. We're here! Come on over! I would love for you to join! If you are a Black Lolita or if you are an aspiring Lolita that's black or even if you're brown, Native American, or Samoan. I want to see all the colors of the rainbow in this fashion. I want to see more ranges of body shapes and fashion shows. I want to see more races and fashion shows representations in general. That was my life as a Black Lolita. My experiences are going to be completely different from other experiences which is why I think you guys should check out the other videos that I've linked below from other Black Lollitas in the community because all of our experiences are different. You're probably going to find some common themes and common answers between us. I hope you guys enjoy this video.

Content creator: Rainbow Soda

Today is going to be a very special video because it is going to be a collab with other black Lolita's and they will be linked in the description. Happy Juneteenth, this is going to be our Juneteenth collab. Life as a Black Lolita, Kawaii Melanin Collab.

Question 1: What has been the reaction from family and friends of you wearing Lolita? Negative, positive, extreme, neutral?

Honestly, it's been overwhelmingly positive. In the grand scheme of things there's nothing that my friends and family haven't seen before. It's not the first time I've worn an alternative fashion. When I was in junior high and high school I liked wearing dark stuff. I was into goth fashion, emo fashion and scene kid fashion. Then I got to college, I got a little older I started playing around with J fashion and I found fairykei. I started wearing fairykei and then I decided to take the plunge to wear Lolita and by the time I started wearing a Lolita fashion my friends and family were just like you know what you like it I love it. I get a lot of compliments, so none of my family or friends have ever made any negative or slide comments or anything. I'm pretty lucky in that aspect.

Question 2: What is something that you think affects Black Lolitas differently than non-Black Lolitas?

Definitely the hair problems. As you can see, I knew I was going to be like walking around today and I just put my hair up in a hat. I don't know like we wear our natural hair styles sometimes. For me it's always been compliments, "I love that you wore your natural hair." unfortunately not all Black Lolitas get all positive comments about their natural hair. I mean we wear wigs just as often, so I guess it doesn't really affect us that much. I think it's an expectation. You see like Lolita models especially for Japanese brands Chinese brands they are really pale Asian girls, or you know the occasional white girl and you get the image in your head that the Lolita look has pale skin. Although, I think a lot fewer people are thinking that way, especially here in the West. I'm not sure about in the East, but in the West, I think the Lolita community has been diverse for a while, but you're starting to see it more in an indie designers' advertisements and photos. You would see more diverse Lolita models so that's getting better. It's just yeah, I don't know sometimes you might be watching something old-school someone might say, maybe it's like Japanese makeup tutorial that you must have a pale skin. It's old school.

Question 3: Have you ever experienced racism while wearing Lolita and do you think it was any worse because you stood out more?

Honestly, no. Like I said, people have been overwhelmingly positive. I get a lot of compliments and sometimes I get stupid compliments that all Lolitas get that has nothing to do with race, but I haven't experienced racism in Lolita.

Question 4: How do you deal with the belief that Black people shouldn't wear sweet Lolita or more pastel colors e.g. Black people can't wear bright colors/certain colors don't go well with dark skin?

To be honest if I were to hear it, I would just dismiss it because it's nonsense. If anything, even outside of the realm of J fashion I hear from people of all colors that you know dark skin looks really good with bright colors like yellow. Dark skin looks good in white and so I mean we look really popping in pastel colors. It's kind of undeniable. If someone were to say that like an ironically, I'd laugh.

Question 5: If I want to join a predominately Black Lolita community, where and how could I find one?

Definitely the Black Lolita community Facebook don't know if there are any others like on Reddit. I've never used Amino, so I don't know anything about it, but definitely the Black Lolita Community on Facebook. It's a very cute kawaii supportive group and it's pretty lit. Check it out.

Question 6: What advice would you give to someone that was nervous about wearing Lolita due to their race?

Wear it. Just wear it. like I've started off wearing fairykei and I mean with any J fashion any alternative fashion that it feels weird at first because it's not normal clothes. I didn't start off wearing you know a lot of accessories and stuff but then I built it up over time and you know I'm sure people have said things behind my back and I don't care. Cause as I said life is too short for boring clothes. Wear what makes you happy. Your happiness is more important than the thoughts of people who are trying to bring you down. Especially if it's because of race. like It's cute kawaii fashion. [“What I'd want to say that, for example, I went to predominantly Black Junior High. Junior high kids are already quite cruel, and the pressure to

conform is high. And yet, I still went to school wearing my MCR (My Chemical Romance) t-shirt, and I had Green Day on my binder. Was it fun enduring the teasing? No. But they would have made fun of me even if I'd attempted to dress like them. So, I might as well wear what I like. Currently I am fortunate to be surrounded by supportive black families and friends. As far as being perceived by non-black people as weird for wearing Lolita: Who cares? They are going to have racist and stereotypical thoughts about you anyways even if you don't wear it. So. You might as well wear it.]

Content creator: Callista

Hello, this is Callista, also known as magicalgirlme. This is a very special collaboration video. With recent events being what they are, I have noticed an increase in questions pertaining to me as a Lolita being plus size and being part of the black community. Myself and other fellow black Lolita's in the Lolita community wanted to come together and address some of the questions that we get. I hope this video will be informative. I'd love to hear your opinions on some of the things I shared. Just please remember to be respectful when you're commenting on my videos and the other collaborators as well. I found Lolita fashion in 2006 or 2007. It's not something that I thought I would be able to participate in. When I started wearing it I just did it for special occasions, but I really loved Lolita fashion and connected with Lolita fashion. I'm fortunate now to be at a place where I can wear it more casually than just once a year. Lolita has become a huge part of my life and it's become a huge part of my identity as well.

Question 1: Have you ever experienced racism while wearing Lolita and do you think it was any worse because you stood out more?

Yes. I have experienced racism with Lolita fashion. It unfortunately didn't come from a place outside of the community; it happened from the community itself. I feel like it's really hard and I try to see the other side of the picture, but when it's happening to you in real time and face to face it's very different. I attended some Lolita events. Granted, this was years ago when I

actually, started to wear Lolita fashion. However, I noticed that I connected with a community and at first it was just like little things. Just little off-handed comments like “oh I really like how you're not wearing a wig” because this was back when you weren't supposed to wear wigs a Lolita fashion. “I like that you're not wearing a wig but maybe you should braid your hair next time and that way it won't look so unruly.” [“unruly, adjective disorderly and disruptive and not amenable to discipline or control”] At the time it was just a simple hairstyle, it was an afro. I had pulled it back and wore a crown with it. It caught me off guard because we were just enjoying the day and walking around. I wasn't asking for any outfit advice and this Lolita thought it would be okay to make a comment like that. So, it started to develop besides just little comments when I first joined the community, I was older, so I wanted to experiment with like aristocratic Lolita because I thought i was too old to wear sweet Lolita. When I became really driven to wear sweet Lolita just because I loved sweet Lolita it was recommended that I lightened my skin. I was kind of thrown off guard. I was like, do you mean, wearing sunscreen to prevent tanning? No, this person was referring to bleaching my skin. If you're not aware, bleaching your skin is exactly what it sounds like. It's taking chemicals and artificially damaging your skin so that way your skin appears lighter this would help my skin complexion look better with pastel colors in this Lolita's opinion. I am happy to say that things have changed so much from where I have come from in the fashion. I think there's been better representation, there's people taking action, there's people being lifted up there's voices that are finally able to say things. I am just really fortunate that I have been able to see this change.

Question 2: What has been the reaction from family and friends of you wearing Lolita? Negative, positive, extreme, neutral?

In the past my friends weren't really good friends, so they had pretty strong opinions about what I should and shouldn't wear. I decided that wasn't important. I was going to wear what made me happy and I found people who just accept me for who i am and let me express myself. Those are the friends you should have. When it comes to family, we have gone from my dad saying, “why would you wear that out in public.” I don't think he minded so much. I think he was worried about how in particular members of the

other sex would view Lolita fashion. He's very cautious of me, which I appreciate. He's like wear what makes you happy but make sure you go in a group and what not. He was just a little worried about how people would perceive it on me. He thought people may perceive it as a sexual thing. My mother really thought it was a costume. I had to explain to her over the course of years like it's not a costume, it's just really cute alternative fashion. I had really come from a place where I wasn't really interested in fashion so i think it was just very surprising to her. It's changed she completely supports it. She and my dad have gotten me like Lolita things from my birthday and celebrations which was really nice so I'm very happy to say that they're very supportive of it. My brother at first thought it was a fetish thing and just doubted me when I said oh it's not you know age play. I think he thought that I was really naive and I didn't realize it was age play. Now he's completely 100 behind it and my whole family my immediate family is very supportive of Lolita fashion and wants me to express myself and wear cute clothes. I have no idea what my extended family thinks of it. I used to hide this part of myself, but I'm married now and I'm out of the house. I am just going to do what makes me happy.

Question 3: What is something that you think affects Black Lolitas differently than non-Black Lolitas?

In my experiences, I find that people are more critical of you. yeah, people are more critical. You stand out and people aren't as accustomed to seeing it because it's still very underrepresented at least from what i have seen. I think it's important to get out there and show everyone you know it really doesn't matter what gender you are, what your age is, what race you are, we have to have things to stand by so if we can show examples of it. It makes it a lot easier for people to go okay yeah, I get it it's not just there's something behind those words like it's really true. This is a truly accepting community. I also believe that black Lolita's again from what I've seen and experienced and for me personally I was more shy when it came to doing something to stand out. I was very this is a true coordinate. I'm not going to really experiment because I already stand out. As long as you're sticking to the basics and what makes it a Lolita fashion you need to be able to express yourself and try new things. I think if you're hesitant to do that you're going to fall out of love with the fashion and you're not going to be able to express yourself. It's

definitely something I have come to learn over wearing the fashion and now I'm at the point where I'm like I don't mind taking that risk because it's who I am and we're definitely in a time period in our niche fashion where I feel like more voices like that and more people that are different can feel like yeah I can try this and we'll see where it goes, who knows.

Question 4: How do you deal with the belief that Black people shouldn't wear sweet Lolita or more pastel colors e.g. Black people can't wear bright colors/certain colors don't go well with dark skin?

I am that person that if someone tells me I can't do something and there isn't a good reason for it I'm going to do it if I want to do it. That's what I do. People told me you know you can't be a sweet Lolita your skin is too dark. You can't wear it. I am a sweet Lolita. All I wear is pastel colors pretty much. I have one dress that isn't pastel and it's black. I wear it. I love it. I love the way it makes me feel. I love the way the colors look with my skin, but even if you want to wear a color that doesn't quite match your skin do it. I have never seen a coordinate of someone who was too pale or too dark that I didn't like if it was a coordinate and it was a good coordinate. I don't look at people like that and people who do I think are ridiculous. You can't change your skin tone. It's something that's so personal to you shouldn't have to change your skin tone just to make someone happy. That's ridiculous and that's such a huge thing to ask someone.

Question 5: What advice would you give to someone that was nervous about wearing Lolita due to their race?

Just do it. I've had actually Black Lolita's come to me and say, "hey you know I've been so nervous to do this and then I found you and I found these other people that you follow and I can't wait." "I'm going to do it. I just bought my new dress, thank you." It really just comes back to representation. If you're nervous about it go and find people. I love my timeline because it spans everyone. I love finding new people to follow, different body types, different skin types, different styles of Lolita fashion, male, female, they, them, everyone. I love seeing it because it's fashion. Find people that are going to inspire you, drive you,

and help you do what you do. Race really shouldn't matter. I mean if you think about it Lolita fashion is based on rococo and Victorian fashion and then this was the inspiration for the Japanese to make it into a street fashion so it's already a reimagining anyway and then it's now a fashion that's worn worldwide.

Question 6: If I want to join a predominately Black Lolita community, where and how could I find one?

I use different tags under my Instagram posts or my YouTube videos, or any content. I always make sure to follow the egl community tag so I can see what's new and finding people that I really find as inspiration for myself. I would recommend doing that. Find tags that are going to help you find people. Also, if you're curious about a community or you don't know where to start, don't be afraid to ask someone who already seems to be a part of a community or even just to connect. I know that there is a new Instagram community for predominantly the Black community for Lolita's. This doesn't mean that other people can't follow it or anything like that. This is for people who want to see more people that look like them, or they want some diversity in their feed. I love having that diversity personally. There's also um a group on Amino. I know there's a specific chat for Black Lolita's but yeah connect with some Black Lolita's. Talk to them, get some advice, and ask a few questions. There's probably more communities that I don't even know about but definitely connecting with other people and finding those communities will really help if you want to know simple things like, how do i style my hair, how do you guys do deal with this, or family friends whatever with this kind of lens. It's helpful. Don't be shy. It's okay to ask for help. It's okay to want to see people that are different. It's absolutely okay. This is an alternative fashion and if you love it you should be able to wear it. I wear it and I love it and I am so much happier just being true to myself than worrying about what little box I fit into.

Content creator: Tasha B. Spooky

Hello, my lovelies, welcome back to my channel! This video is very special and very important to me because I was invited to participate in a collaboration with other Black Lolita's and we're going to talk

about our positive experiences and struggles with being a Black Lolita in the Lolita community. This video is very important because I'm going to talk more about race. As you guys know Black Lives Matter has been all over the place, right and you know sometimes being a Black person in general it can be exhausting because you sure you have your days where you're good and you think you're on top of the world. But then you have your other days we really see how a disadvantage we are and what the police are doing to us and it's just this has been going on for decades, probably centuries. It's just the only differences it's being recorded. So, like I said I collaborated with these other lovely Lolita's, right here. I'm going to leave a link in the description. At the end of my video, I'm actually going to show pictures of other Lolitas of color. The questions I'm about to answer are about my own experiences as you know. Even though I'm still new. Like I said, I'm still a baby. I call myself baby Lolita. I have one dress on the way and like I have four dresses, two of them that fit me fine.

Question 1: What has been the reaction from family and friends of you wearing Lolita? Negative, positive, extreme, neutral?

I love my family so much and the ones who really know me I've gotten so much positivity from me being in Lolita. First off, my grandma, I showed her a video of me and other Lolita's did of the don't rush challenge and she saw the video, and she says oh my gosh they are that's just gorgeous. She loves all the coordinates and stuff, and she even wants to host a tea party here.

I got mostly positive feedback from my family, especially when I post pictures on Facebook, but I won't say it wasn't always perfect because I've always been weird. I've been the weird kid, the weird child; I've always been like out of the box. Growing up my mom was an English teacher, so I had proper grammar instilled in me. So, when I was younger, I've been called Oreos and stuff like that like I watched anime and stuff I pretend I was Sailor Moon and people would say "why do you like that white person stuff?" I'm like, what? That's what I like! I don't know about the race of it or anything and Sailor moon isn't even white she's Japanese. Yeah, anyway that was back then, but currently right now me as a grown woman

everybody knows my sense of fashion. I know what I like and stuff, and they give me positive feedback. I actually have a couple of cousins who are actually in the same alternative fashion interests as me.

Question 2: What is something that you think affects Black Lolitas differently than non-Black Lolitas?

I guess the expectation of “that's white people stuff.” I think people don't expect Black women to dress up in these you know frilly girly outfits or something. I'm going to say it. Society sees us as ghetto mostly like they see is one only wear short shorts, weaves and all that stuff in our hair which is no different than wigs by the way and yeah I guess we're just expected to not dress like this or something like that.

Question 3: Have you ever experienced racism while wearing Lolita and do you think it was any worse because you stood out more?

Thankfully no I have not received any racism while I was in Lolita. At least none that I've seen, but honestly, the people in my community are the sweetest people in the world. I miss them so much I miss hanging out with them in you know it's going to the mall or just having tea parties and stuff and just you know traveling and stuff. No. I haven't experienced any racism you know blatant racism. I haven't sensed any racism or any anything. The only I had issues with was I'm not going to say who actually I forgot her name anyway but well there was a Lolita who was literally I was wearing my locks. This is back in February, she says oh my gosh they're so pretty, and you know the whole thing about touching hair. She asked me while she was reaching “can I touch your hair” and I'm like okay yes you can touch my hair. I didn't want to say no because I didn't want to cause a whole scene. I didn't want to be that angry black woman I guess stereotype whatever it was, but I digress. I only let a handful of people touch my hair. So, if you see me in person, if I don't know, you don't touch my hair! I don't care if you're white, Black, Latino, Asian, if I don't know you don't touch my hair.

Question 4: How do you deal with the belief that Black people shouldn't wear sweet Lolita or more pastel colors e.g. Black people can't wear bright colors/certain colors don't go well with dark skin?

First of all, that's a damn lie. Seriously. I'm actually wearing well I'm wearing black too and I'm wearing pastel or lavender anyway that's my color and like I find that to be complete and utter bull s. For us to be wearing all the bright colors I think that works perfect like it makes our skin pop if you know what I mean. If I wear all black it still looks good on me like I wouldn't disappear, I wouldn't say. If I wore all the bright colors and all the bright makeup and stuff, my skin would be popping. I've seen Black sweet Lolita's. I'm actually friends with two of them, and it works perfectly for their skin tone, especially with me I actually got complimented from the same meet from back in February. One of my friends she said that if I wore a whole entire sweet Lolita coordinate it would work for me because my skin is dark enough for it to be popping with it and I'm like oh yeah, you're right. But on the other hand, as you can see, I'm mostly gothic. I'm what you call kawaii goth. Pastels make your skin pop. Whoever says dark girls can't wear pastels, it's seriously disturbed, and needs to get a bit of a brain examination.

Question 5: If I want to join a predominately Black Lolita community, where and how could I find one?

There is a group on Facebook called Black Lolita community. You don't have to be Black to join. If you want to see more women of color in Lolita that's the page you can go to and there's actually another tag I think on Instagram, the black Lolita community. That's on Instagram and they're showing off all the women of color or Black Lolitas in Lolita. The internet is your friend's. If you know how to use it. Just type in Black Lolitas in Google and you see a whole plethora picture hey I might even show up.

Question 6: What advice would you give to someone that was nervous about wearing Lolita due to their race?

In the words of Shia LaBeouf just do it. If you want, you can contact me or instant message me and ask me like all these different websites where you can go get Lolita outfit. If you can't afford any high ends, I can feel like Angelic Pretty, Lady Sloth is an awesome brand and they do lady customizations. Glitter tale is a great place to get a custom-made dress, and they don't charge extra, but yeah just go for it. Don't let anything hold you back. If somebody says oh that's for white people. No, that's for you or that's for me, just don't worry about what they say. If you want to do it go for it. Don't hold yourself back. Please don't hold yourself back because I'm a stickler for holding myself back in the past. I've been into Lolita since I want to say 2010. 2010 is when I really started taking an interest in it but I've always been too afraid to buy a dress like even my friends show me where to get a dress and it's been saved on my Wishlist forever and ever. Now it's 2020 been 10 years and I'm barely a year into being a Lolita. Just go for it don't worry about your race, don't worry if you think you're too old, if you're too hefty. Don't hold yourself back.

Content creator: TheFlufferDome

Hi, welcome back to another edition of the fluffer dome. So today we're going to be doing something a little different. I teamed up with some other Black Lolita's, and we decided to answer a set of questions about our experience. We're going to call it life is a Black Lolita as you saw from the title. Life as a Black Lolita Kawaii Melanin Collab. So, the other youtubers I teamed up with their videos will also be released at the same time. These are the other Black Lolitas that I've teamed up with to show you what's going on in the Black Lolita community.

Question 1: What has been the reaction from family and friends of you wearing Lolita? Negative, positive, extreme, neutral?

So far, it's been positive. My immediate family, as in my husband and children, all like it. They don't seem to mind from what I can tell. My husband and I go out. I've gone out in Lolita, and he's been in normal clothes and it's just not it's not a big deal. Far as I know everybody's cool with it. My kids don't seem embarrassed by the fashion. I've definitely asked them about it. I do keep it you know more

appropriate if I have to go to their schools or anything like that. I do tone it down if I do wear Lolita in those situations. I'm not a lifestyle full 100% lifestyle Lolita so I do have some plain clothes. As my other family, I actually live in Georgia. I am originally from Philadelphia, so all of my other family members are mostly in Philadelphia. I do have a family all over the world, but for the most part my mom likes it. She actually encourages me. She thinks it's a good idea for me to randomly greet people when I'm wearing Lolita and the funny thing is being here in Georgia that's a fairly normal thing just to say hello to people for no reason. That's still truly awkward for me being from Philadelphia where we don't talk to anyone if we don't know you. It's just how it is, it's nothing against you. I just don't know you. Like I said and as far as the other family goes, they really don't know what I get up to. They're not really on social medias and I don't see them because I live here.

Question 2: What is something that you think affects Black Lolitas differently than non-Black Lolitas?

So, in the Black community there's this mental construct of black people don't do that. This goes for anything different, anything not stereotypically Black. There's this mindset that Black people don't do that. There's a mindset that we can't expand beyond our immediate surroundings and latch on to and accept and be a part of something outside of our small communities. That's very hurtful because that's not the truth. There's so much world out here there's so much of it. The fact that we close ourselves off to this small area, and we don't learn, expand ourselves mentally, and spiritually it's really stunting. It's very stunting. Growing up I personally wanted to do things outside of the norm of what Black people do and I thought what exactly is it that black people do? I had a friend who was a Black Lolita and she was upset that her mom is doing this to her. Her mom allows her to wear Lolita but at the same time but berates her about it. She tells her that she's not Black and she's not behaving like she's Black and she should be doing things that Black people do because this is not it. That blew my mind. I was grateful to have an accepting mother. When she saw me in it and saw how I looked and felt in it and then also saw how people reacted to me, it made all the difference. Not that she was against it in the first place, but she's all for it now. She loves it. She thinks it's the cutest thing ever. It's a really bad construct to hold each other back like that

when all we're trying to do is expand and learn more about this world we live in and all things like this will do is help us to progress in the future. This also makes sure that we are moving forward as people and not just being stuck. Yes, I live in this this bubble Lolita quote/unquote fantasy world but I also live in real life I also am beginning to properly educate myself on just the world and things going on. Things that I need to know about so that way I could teach my kids things they need to know about things that are not spoon-fed to you. You have to go find this information on your own, and I encourage everyone to do the same thing.

Question 3: Have you ever experienced racism while wearing Lolita and do you think it was any worse because you stood out more?

Alright, story time. My flat-out answer would be no. I don't want to tell this story, and have it subtracted from everything going on right now and the actual experiences that people are having. I will say this for myself personally. I have not experienced direct racism outside from one time when I was, I want to say about fifth grade, and we had just moved into a very suburban neighborhood. I was just walking around the neighborhood as normal and these guys just drunk drove past and called me a n-word. That was the first time and the only time I've ever experienced direct racism, and it was very hurtful at the time, but I've never experienced anything of that nature while wearing Lolita. I feel like I'm on the opposite end of the spectrum of experiences while wearing Lolita because I tend to get very pleasant responses.

Question 4: How do you deal with the belief that Black people shouldn't wear sweet Lolita or more pastel colors e.g. Black people can't wear bright colors/certain colors don't go well with dark skin?

Personally, I really like pastels, bright colors, and dark colors on darker skin because it pops. I'm not saying it doesn't look good on lighter skin as well; it does. However, if you have a neon print, do they put it on a white background? No, they put it on a black background because it pops! Who made this up that these colors don't look good on Black people or on darker skin people? That makes no sense. It's just mind-blowing. Yes, find the right colors for your skin tone. Keep that in mind not every color works for

every skin tone. Some people have more yellow undertones some people have more red undertones. That doesn't make any sense that you can't wear something because your skin is a particular color. That doesn't make any sense, so don't believe that. That's silly if you put it on and you like it if it looks good with your skin tone then wear it. Honestly, it's not even all about the skin tone really cause I've seen some people wear just colors that clash with their skin tone. It would normally wash them out and for some reason they're glowing. I feel like it's part of all about the personal confidence you have to build. Yes, it's about a personal confidence you have to build within yourself and be mindful to make that decision to be confident. I put this on, I know it's a little different people going to look at me like I'm weird. I didn't buy this at Walmart or Target, so they haven't seen it before. They're probably going to look at me a little crazy. If you just keep in mind to hold yourself at a specific level of confidence, people most likely won't say anything bad to you.

Question 5: If I want to join a predominately Black Lolita community, where and how could I find one?

I don't use a whole lot of resources. I'm pretty sure there are more out there but the only ones I'm aware of is the Black Lolita community on Facebook. You can search it right in the groups, and you just got to answer a few questions to be admitted. That is a Black Lolita created and supported group. Black Lolita community can be also found on Instagram by the same name. Facebook the Black Lolita community is in the group section on Facebook, and you also have the Black Lolita community on Instagram. Those are ones that I know of that are definitely black moderated and Black created. Next would be Amino. We do have a Black Lolita chat within Lolita Amino. I haven't checked if there is a Black Lolita amino, I should go check that and if there's not one, I'll try to create one. I did create the Black Lolita amino it is not ready, yet I will keep you guys updated when it is available. There's a lot that goes into creating an amino and setting up the rules and all of that so, but in the meantime, we did create the Kawaii Melanin club on Amino, so you guys can definitely go join that. We are still working on it though so it's work in progress but it's up so you guys can join that one. Yes, those are the resources I use to find Black Lolita

communities, and it was weird because I was just on the amino one for a longtime before I even found out about the Facebook one. That Facebook one is definitely a good one and there's also other Black j fashion groups on Facebook as well. There's the Black j fashionistas, there are Black Kawaii Youtubers I believe. That one's not heavily as used I believe we're going to try to get back to using that a little bit more, but they are definitely out there you just got a search for them and ask around. They definitely exist, and you definitely can find like-minded people of hair and skin to help you with your coordinates or just you know just general support. They are out there, and it is very useful when you have people that look like you to help support you and this odd fashion choice that we've chosen.

That was all the questions.

Content Creator: Marianakei

Today is gonna be a little bit more of a serious video there's just a lot going on in the world and if you live in United States if you're on social media in any form you're probably aware of what's going on. I identify as an afro Latina as well as Black Latina. I am American I am aware of my afro roots. I'm proud of my afro roots. I'm proud of my other side too. I'm not just of afro descent. I am Cuban and Salvadoran therefore I have also native, Spaniard, and of course Taino specifically for the native side. Honestly, I don't feel happy. I'm not happy with many things that's going on, so I kind of just want to talk to you all. I've received a lot of new subscribers so thank you for liking my content enough to be a part of my channel. Of course, it's not a very happy time for many of us especially those who are Black and afro descent yeah so, I'm gonna be transparent to you. I'm not very happy and to be quite honest it was hard for me to even make this video and yeah. If I seem tired, if I seem not happy you kind of know why and even if I make another video that tends to be on the happier side just know that I am still hurting. I am still mad but I'm okay obviously I'm safe and I can't really complain about my health but for people like me whose rights are being whose rights being questioned ["invalidated"] that's another conversation which I'm not gonna really discuss on here because today is actually a collaborative video with a few other Black

Lolitas in the Black Lolita youtubers space. Myself and a few other these beautiful ladies here we're going to be telling you our stories as a Black Lolita. Experiences that we've gone through good or bad neutral and I really want you to just listen to our stories. I just honestly like that there's this Black Lives Matter movement but honestly this is something that I've always been pro for. Even though I don't make it very vocal on YouTube. I try to separate political things from my hobbies but quite honestly, it's really not a political stance you might have heard on social media. It's a human right stance. So, I just want you to listen not just to myself but also there's a whole playlist with the other Black Lolita's that are making the same video. I will be answering the same questions as them we're all going to be giving our perspectives. We're all gonna be giving our own different stories, so yeah. I'm gonna be looking down on my notes. I have a whole thing kind of like touch points. I have the questions that I have to answer so I'm gonna be looking down on my laptop a lot. I'm gonna be showing you what questions we're all answering. I'm gonna have it there on the screen, but I'm also going to be looking on my laptop so I kind of make sure I touch on some key highlights that I have for my answers of course to these same questions the other Black Lolitas are answering, so yeah.

Question 1: What has been the reaction from family and friends of you wearing Lolita? Negative, positive, extreme, neutral?

For me, I have been blessed where I do not have a family that judges me very much for my lifestyle choices. I mean my mom knows I wear Lolita a lot. She knows I'm obsessed with Miku honestly. So really, I have been blessed with a very supportive family. I know other people could not say the same thing. I even have family in Cuba who actually loves that I wear Lolita like whenever I visit, they would tell me like oh you look so cute and your dresses etc. I just have a lot of love from family and friends. The only really negative time I've ever received from a friend was an ex-boyfriend he didn't like it. He was actually there when I started Lolita in 2015 ish. He was here from the beginning, so he didn't like it at all, so I mean that's part of the reason why we broke up so that's why he's an ex-boyfriend. In general, honestly, I haven't really lost many friends that I know of. If I have obviously I'm not friends with them

but really my friends and family have been pretty supportive. Of course, my mom she kind of questions me how much these Lolita dresses and I are don't blame her. My father, he's not in my life in case you're wondering. He actually passed away nine years ago, actually it'll be almost 10 years now so unfortunately, he wasn't able to really see these hobbies that I've got into. He can see from up above that I'm into Lolita.

Question 2: What is something that you think affects Black Lolitas differently than non-Black Lolitas?

Honestly when I first started wearing Lolita, I was afraid that certain prints wig styles, and wig colors weren't gonna look good on my skin. I thought that in general Black women are already being told that were too loud, were too extra etc. So, kind of starting in Lolita I was a little bit nervous about that but like the whole reason why I got into Lolita is because I want to express myself. So, I don't really give a flying Frick of what others might think. Black women in general are already being told that we're loud and rowdy so that is something that definitely I would think that Black Lolitas think about. It's almost like we think if we're worthy of occupying space as horrible as that sounds unfortunately that is true for a lot of Black Lolitas.

Question 3: Have you ever experienced racism while wearing Lolita and do you think it was any worse because you stood out more?

While in Lolita, I have not thankfully. I have been catcalled in Lolita, but that's a different subject. I have caught people taking secret pictures of me but whenever I see these secret pictures or videos of me, I just pose for them because obviously that's what they want. To answer the question, I have not experienced racism in Lolita. I have outside Lolita of course but not directly because of Lolita. I do know people unfortunately that have. Regarding the second part of the question, do you think it was any worse because you stood out more? I think yes. I think when people see a Black woman and see her in pastels or anything they might think she's trying to be intimidating, she's trying too much, she's trying too hard, she's trying to be popular, she's trying to stand out, and she's trying to do everything. Maybe that person is

trying to stand out. Ok. But what does that have to do with their clothes? Why can't they just dress how they want?

Question 4: How do you deal with the belief that Black people shouldn't wear sweet Lolita or more pastel colors e.g. Black people can't wear bright colors/certain colors don't go well with dark skin?

This was a big thing for me when I kind of decided that my wardrobe was gonna be pink. Kind of tying back with the other question; this is something that I have heard many many many times in my life. Oh, these certain colors won't look good on your skin, oh you should wear more nudes or more neutral colors because you're brown so it wouldn't go with your skin tone. If you look at other non-Black people wear the same colors, you can say the same for them. Neon green isn't gonna look good on anyone, but does that mean not to wear it? No! I've heard I've heard this so many times and I feel like that's part of the reason why in general just Black women or Black people that identify as women just try to avoid like bright colors. They think they might look ratchet or ghetto. That's kind of like the whole stereotype with the whole bright colors and pastels. One of my favorite like J fashion wearers she's a stripper and she wears all these neon colors, and she looks beautiful! I love her so follow her if you want like bright stripper lady colors! Follow her if you want a black woman where all she wears is neon colors. I personally don't wear neon colors honestly. I'm more of a pastel kind of person so good on her. I just don't really like neon colors. It's not my style. I don't have anything against neon colors obviously but it's just really not my style. I prefer more pastel colors. With wearing pastel colors and wearing Lolita fashion, it's a privilege in its own to not care about wearing bright colors or pastel colors. For me like I've always had to think if this color will look good on me or so-and-so. It's really such a privilege to not even have that mindset.

Question 5: If I want to join a predominately Black Lolita community, where and how could I find one?

So, on Facebook there's a few groups that I highly recommend. There's the Black Lolita community on Facebook. Of course, I'll have the links in the description. There are the

Black girls are kawaii Facebook page. It's not a group as more of Facebook page so they kind of like just to show different Black girls that are in kawaii fashion or cosplay; it's kind of like a mix. Then there's another group on Facebook called Black J fashionistas Society so that's a Facebook group you can join. There is also the K club it isn't exclusively for Black people but it's very inclusive and honestly, I highly recommend that. Aside from that don't be afraid to DM me on Instagram or Facebook if you're kind of looking for more like Black girls that wear Lolita in your life and you'll really talk to. Another resource that will be available is actually a Kawaii Melanin Club a few of the Black Lolitas that I have collaborated with I've started this cute Club for black Lolita's. Please refer to that as well. I'll have more information about that so just keep your eyes peeled. If not, I might have linked to that or something. The details of this hasn't been ironed out so just look forward to that too, but those Facebook groups I highly recommend. I'll leave the link in the description.

Question 6: What advice would you give to someone that was nervous about wearing Lolita due to their race?

This is a hard one. I would say if you can find a friend who happens to wear Lolita or any other j fashion who can be with you while out that would be great. If not, see if you can have one of your trusted friends, have you try out whatever style you want to wear and have that friend go with you in public. I say this because there's always safety in numbers always always always always and if you're afraid of being harassed you're less likely to be harassed if you're with a group of friends. Even if it's just one friend. If you're in Lolita going to Claire's or something like you're going through the mall and versus if you're alone in Lolita. It's obviously your first time ever out in public, your first coordinate you're more likely to get harassed; if you can go out with a friend, I highly recommend it. Your confidence will be boosted up and you're with someone that's safe. Another advice for someone who is nervous about wearing Lolita

due to their race I would say just join these Facebook groups that are geared towards Black, brown, and POC Lolitas on Facebook and Instagram. I feel like if you see images of other Black people in Lolita female, male or non-binary you'll see that there's all different types of people that wear this fashion that look just like you. Another tip or advice that I can give you is try to follow more Black Lolitas on Instagram. If you have an Instagram follow more Black Lolitas. I'm not saying don't follow white Lolita's. I'm not saying that at all, but if you see only one group of people then that's all you're gonna think is made for the fashion. Whereas if you see different people someone Indian, Malaysian, African, someone from the UK, Japan etc. and they look different then the supposed Lolita standard which is pink skinny and white or Asian those are the standards of Lolita that people think that little fashion should only be but obviously Lolita is a very global fashion and different types of people wear it. There are people that still think that Black people should not wear Lolita. Thankfully it's kind of changing people are being more vocal, I guess about that kind of BS thinking but there's still people that feel that way. There are still people that are toxic. There are still people are racists in J fashion and with niche communities it's really bad. Those are the only pieces of advice that I can give you and again like feel free to DM me. Feel free to message me on either it could be a comment on one of my videos or if you want to follow me on Instagram and or just send me a DM on Instagram. I don't care if you follow me or not, just send a DM on Instagram. If you want to get into this fashion and you're feeling scared and you need some sort of friend, I'll be your virtual buddy. Honestly, that's how I feel. Yeah, so that's it for this video like I mentioned the beginning this is a collaborative video with other Lolitas. There's going to be a playlist of these other videos.. This is one of the videos in that playlist so please go to the other videos and watch them. If you're non-Black, really listen to our stories. Really listen and while I haven't thankfully experienced anything too horrible it's still a mental thing that I felt even though I have not been harassed by a racist bigot on the street while in Lolita. It's still a stigma that is in many Black people's minds regardless of if they have or not. It's just been taught by our system and of course please stand with your Black creators and support as much as you can. Even if you can't donate even if you can't protest, try to donate. If you can't donate try to share information and if you see campaigns, there's plenty of black owned shops that are doing BLM

donation campaigns, try to do that. If you want to do some shopping, I would just do that. You don't have to even directly donate to an organization, you can just buy pins from these people like just spend \$30 somewhere that's still something than not doing anything, honestly. I probably bought like five or six pins from several Black-owned creators that are donating to BLM organizations legal funds bail funds etc. That's really all I have for today. I'm not sorry that this video is not happy. I just really want you to learn and please just listen that's all you need to do and there's no reason to argue there's no reason to try to invalidate someone. So, thank you for watching now, see you next one! Bye!