

MEDIA, ETHNICITY AND BODY IMAGE DISSATISFACTION

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*SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD
OF
BA (HONOURS) SOCIAL SCIENCE*

*DBS SCHOOL OF ARTS
APRIL 2013*

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THIS IS AN ORIGINAL WORK. ALL REFERENCES AND ASSISTANCE HAVE BEEN
ACKNOWLEDGED*

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My special gratitude goes to God Almighty, for his strength and direction throughout the entire period of this course and beyond.

I would like to sincerely acknowledge and thank my supervisor, Dr Bernadette Quinn for her patience, support, knowledge and guidance during this research project. Without her I would have been lost.

I would also like to thank my participants whose information made this study possible.

I dedicate this book to my lovely family for their encouragement and support during the course period.

ABSTRACT

The pervasiveness of media and its ideals appears to be dominating and spreading to all cultural milieus. The media has been found to be the most powerful and pervasive conveyor of sociocultural values regarding ideal body, size and shape; which has been linked to body image dissatisfaction and other mental health related concerns such as depression, anxiety, low self esteem, and eating disorder that disproportionately affects women. The prevailing view in psychological and other literature is that White women experience greater body image dissatisfaction than Black women. The present study investigated ethnic difference in levels of body image concern using 200 undergraduates, 100 Nigerian women (Black) and 100 Irish women (White), above the ages of 18 years. A quantitative non-experimental correlational design was used. Participants completed a questionnaire booklet containing three different questionnaires such as Rosenberg self esteem, trait self-objectification questionnaire and media influence scale questionnaire. The results revealed that there is ethnic difference in the levels of media internalization and related appearance concerns and that Black women could also be affected by body image related concerns; even if they are somewhat protected, they could not be so immune to the bombardment of sociocultural messages regarding appearance disseminated by the media and peers.

KEY WORDS: media, ethnicity, body image dissatisfaction, body image concern, internalization, self-objectification, self esteem, eating disorder, thin ideal, Western values, cultural values

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Poor body image is widespread in our society that it's almost considered normal (Schooler, Ward, Merriwether, & Caruthers, 2004). According to research the massive media coverage of the „perfect body’ must take at least some of the responsibility. Studies have consistently demonstrated that the media prime focuses on thin female images, in turn; perpetuate body image distortions and dissatisfaction among women (McCabe, Butler, & Watt, 2007). Some researchers (e.g. McCabe, Butler, & Watt, 2007) posit social pressure to be the main factor influencing on women’s body image concerns, and the media appears to be the main source of this pressure (Cusumano & Thompson, 1997). This has led to a flourishing of research on body image.

1.1 Body Image Definition

According to McCabe et al, (2007), body image may be defined as the perceptions, attitudes, emotions and personality reactions of an individual in terms of their body. In order word, body image is that picture one hold for her body and this is often measured by rating the current and ideal body shape using series of depictions. The difference is the amount or levels of dissatisfaction. Negative body image according to research can lead to various health issues such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, disorder eating and even obesity (McCabe et al, 2007). Body image can affect one’s general social life such as career choice, confidence, who to relate with or marry. People mostly women are easily affected by negative body image because very often women receive messages from peers, families, colleagues, partners and the global fashion. Negative evaluation of one’s body has been

found to result from exposure of the thin ideal by the mass media, which can lead to poor body image, poor self-esteem and even depression (Holmstorm, 2004).

1.2 Women and Media

Nowadays, the media bombards us with image of the ideal body in our everyday lives (Graggs-Hinton, 2006). This can substantially raise expectation of the image you develop for yourself and may mean that you are constantly ready to compare your appearance with others which in turn lead to body dissatisfaction. Today women who feel their bodies and appearance fail to match up to the socially acceptable image, feel desperate to change their appearance (Graggs-Hinton, 2006). It is believed that body image disorders are in some part caused by the modern-day concept of attractiveness. The bombardment of those images of the so-called „perfect body’ by the media is engendering that desire to be slim. Unfortunately, majority of women are taken by these images, as a result allow self-esteem to be dictated by an external force (Graggs-Hinton, 2006).

According to Spurgas (2005), the propagation of the media and the unrealistic images of women that it portrays have been examined as contributing factors to poor body image among women. In western societies approximately 40%-50% of women express some level of dissatisfaction (Spurgas, 2005). Muth and Cash (1997) reported similar result in the studies conducted in US and Great Britain, that 40% of female are dissatisfied with their body. Another survey on health 2002 in Swiss using a sample 7,420 adolescents girls reported 40% dissatisfaction with appearance and their body and only 18% were boys (Knauss & Alsaker,

2008). These studies show that body image dissatisfaction is a major concern among women. Researchers have found that poor image can affect a woman's general wellbeing.

1.3 Media as a Tool

The media has been found to be the most powerful and pervasive conveyor of sociocultural values regarding ideal body, size and shape (McCabe et al, 2007). Television, internet, magazines and newspapers are used to create the current perception of the ideal body. The mass media are generally agreed to be an influential source of images and messages about idealized body that women are expected to strive for (Dittmar, 2009). Poor body image as a result of exposure to media representations of unrealistic beauty ideals can have serious repercussions, including depression and eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa (Spurgas, 2005). The media present images that promise social acceptance for thin women make this body type become highly desirable. Spurgas (2004) indicated that messages to become thin or remain thin are more prevalent in women's magazines than men's magazines. This thin image is claimed to contribute to the level of distorted perception and attitudes that women have of their body (McCabe, Butler, & Watt 2007). Survey shows over 60% of women are dieting to attain this „ideal perfect' body image (McCabe et al, 2007). Some researchers have suggested that the media's negative influence on women can make them more susceptible to permanently altering their bodies through methods such as cosmetic and plastic surgery (Spurgas, 2005). Especially those images presented in the context of advertisement for dieting and weight altering products, promote the idea that body shape and size are flexible and achieving the thin ideal is easy (Monro,

2005). These confusing messages are prevalent in all types of media, and affect women of all races, ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds.

1.4 Internalization of the Ideal and Body Dissatisfaction

One way to assess the influence of Western values on the development of body image dissatisfaction is to measure the extent to which an individual is aware of the importance they place on appearance and thinness in the Western culture and the internalization of these values by endorsing and desiring to follow the appearance related standards (Cusumano & Thompson, 1997). Internalization of societal ideals appears to cause higher levels of body discontent and being dissatisfied with bodies leads women to further internalize societal beauty perfects (Wood & Petrie, 2010). Western cultural values specify that appearance is central to one's value and role in society, a thin body is ideal and thinness assures success (Stice, 1994).

According to Stice (1994), internalisation of societal physical ideal mediates the relationship between awareness of cultural pressure to be thin and body dissatisfaction. Research posited that women who internalized Western thin ideal are likely to engage in behaviour design to achieve it and have an increase risk of body disturbances (Gilbert, Crump, Madhere & Schutz, 2009). Research suggest that increase exposure to Western cultural influences is related with greater internalization of the thin body perfect and risk for eating disorder behaviours (Cusumano & Thompson, 1997) and that internalization of the ideal strongly predict body dissatisfaction and disorder eating than simple awareness of the ideal (Gilbert et al, 2009). Nonetheless, a study found both awareness and internalization of

Western appearance norm were positively associated with body dissatisfaction and body image related concerns (Gilbert et al, 2009).

1.5 Theoretical Framework

To illuminate the understanding on body image problems among women, many theories have been developed to enhance our understanding.

1.5.1 Objectification Theory and Objectified Body Consciousness

Objectified Body Consciousness is a concept that helps to explain why females tend to over concern with their bodies. According to McKinley and Hyde (1996), females are more likely than males to learn to view their bodies from an outsider perspective. Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) Objectification Theory and McKinley and Hyde (1996) Objectified body consciousness are highly comparable. Both theories assumed that female body is more likely to be looked at, evaluated and potentially objectified. According to these models, this objectification may lead to body dissatisfaction or even disorder eating in women.

McKinley and Hyde (1996) showed that three components of objectified body consciousness contributed to body control, body surveillance and body shame. Body surveillance (a similar construct to „self-objectification’ propose by Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) describes self-monitoring of one’s own appearance in terms of viewing one’s own body as an outsider observer. Body shame is defined as an emotion women may feel when

one's body does not conform to internalized body ideals (McKinley & Hyde, 1996). It has been suggested that body surveillance can result in body shame by contributing to the realization of a discrepancy between one's own body and internalized body ideal (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

According to Fredrickson and Roberts (1997), girls and women are more likely to internalize an observer's perspective as a primary view of their physical selves. This view on self can lead to body monitoring, which in turn lead to body dissatisfaction and disorder eating. Objectification is likely to affect most women/girls no matter their social contacts (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). The increase in body objectification can lead women to attempt to change their physical appearance through diet, exercise, beauty and cosmetic products, surgery and unhealthy eating habits. They highlighted that objectification experiences varies differently among women, since there is differences in ethnicity, age, class, sexuality and other physical and personal attributes. However, every woman experiences some form of body objectification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Body control is the third component of objectification theory, it has not been shown to correlate significantly with body dissatisfaction nor has it been found to predict body dissatisfaction (McKinley & Hyde, 1996).

Factors also suggested to be related to objectified body consciousness are internalization of the media body ideal and perceived pressure to conform to the body ideal (Tylka & Hill, 2004). Internalization of body ideal from the media is an acceptance of socially defined body ideal as a personal standard (Tylka & Hill, 2004). The culturally

determined and internalized ideal may lead to an increase in both components of objectified body consciousness, that is, body surveillance and body shame (Moradi, Dirks & Matteson, 2005). According to Tylka and Hill (2004), body shame can result from perceived pressure to be thin, and internalization as well as pressure to conform both predicts body surveillance and body shame. It has been hypothesized that internalization of the media ideal and perceive pressure to conform to the ideal have not only been found to be predictors of objectified body consciousness, also predict body dissatisfaction in female (Moradi, Dirks & Matteson, 2005).

1.5.2 Social Comparison Theory

Festinger, (1954) Social comparison theory, provided another framework to address effect of media on body image. Social comparison theory is of the view that individuals are constantly comparing themselves to others, often people like them. Social comparison helps to explain why people feel better or worse reporting media exposure. We tend to compare ourselves to others who we perhaps believe are similar to us to know our levels of attractiveness, ability and success. According to social comparison, people may compare themselves to someone who is worse off than them to elevate their mood referred to as downward comparison. An upward comparison on the other hand, is comparing oneself to someone who is slightly better than them which will result in a depressed mood (Festinger, 1954). According to researchers comparison has positive and negative consequences on people. Body dissatisfaction is related with the propensity to compare one's body to another, which may include wilful thinking to be like or look like them. Dittmar (2009) emphasized that this could lead to emotional distress, low self-esteem, feelings of shame and

powerlessness and other emotional problems such as depression, social phobias and eating disorder.

1.6 Literature Review

Body image has been seen as a core aspect of our psychological and physical well-being. Researchers have found that body image can influence a woman's self-confidence, assertiveness and attitude regarding eating and exercise habits (Spurgas, 2005). Body image dissatisfaction is defined as negative self-evaluation of one's physical appearance (Warren, Gleaves, Cepeda-Benito, Fernandez, & Ruiz 2005).

The question remains whether the ideal perfect image from the mass media is the only risk factors for negative body image of women. Nevertheless, previous studies for example (Ferguson, Winegard & Winegard, 2011), have identified some factors that can contribute to body image dissatisfaction particularly among women. Much of this dissatisfaction is focused on achieving the thin ideals. Some researchers argue that body dissatisfaction may be an important factor in the beginning of eating disorder, and consequently body dissatisfaction has dangerous potentials of causing psychological problems (Ferguson et al, 2011). There is therefore the need to have a broader knowledge of the risk factors on body dissatisfaction.

1.7 Media and Ethnicity

Mass media are believed to play an important role in propagating the ultrathin ideal for women. Unfortunately, this ideal is unachievable to the vast majority of women especially

Black women, contributing to depression, low self-esteem and anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa (Roberts, Cash, Feingold & Johnson, 2006) . For instance, researchers have revealed that prevalence eating disorder exist among various ethnic groups (Harris, 1989, Hiebert, Felice, Winegard, Munoz and Ferguson, 1988; & Gilman 2003). These findings are important because it shows that ethnic minority may be affected by this perfect ideal and that ethnic minority are not immune to eating disorder but, just as vulnerable to eating disorder as their White counterparts.

In fact, research conducted on African-Americans women by Gilbert, Crump, and Madhere (2009) indicated increasing evidence that occurrence rates of eating disorders for African Americans are in the same range as those found for European Americans and are the highest of any ethnic minority group (Mullholand & Mintz, 2001). This rising prevalence of eating disorder among ethnic minority may be as researchers have speculated due to increase level of exposure to Western cultural influences (Abrams, Allen & Gray, 1993). Although the research on this issue is inconclusive (Gilbert et al, 2009), a meta-analysis of 25 experimental studies that examined the effect of viewing thinness-idealizing media on women's body image found participants were significantly more dissatisfied with their bodies after viewing thin models than after viewing average size models. Regardless of actual weight, the majority of women living in the Westernised cultures are concerned about being thinner. This was supported by Miller and Herberstadt (2005) that most British women believe their lives will be better off if they lost weight, whereas Garner (1997) found out that 89% of American women want to lose weight. While it is believed that the majority of Western women experience body dissatisfaction, Dittmar et al (2000) pointed out that most research has been

conducted in North America, and more recently Australia generalization are somewhat limited.

Black and White women living in Ireland have not been fully investigated as to whether adult females also experience the body dissatisfaction that is considered normative among women in the Western culture. Thus, this current study aims to gather data from a sample population of Black and White women living in Ireland. The current study also proposes that there will be a marked difference in body image concern among Black and White women.

1.8 Psychological Consequences

Research shows that body image distortion can have negative consequences on women's mental and physical health such as low self-esteem, obesity, depression, and disorder eating and body dysmorphic disorder (Dittmar, 2009). A longitudinal study confirmed that negative body image is one of the most consistent and precursor of negative self-perception, negative emotional states, and unhealthy body related behaviours (Dittmar, 2009). Body dissatisfaction shows negative evaluations of one's body and this has been found to be the result of exposure to thin ideal by the media, which in turn leads to low body image and other body related concerns (Holmstrom, 2004). Exposure to the thin ideals from the media has been seen to be an important contributor to body dissatisfaction and eating disorder in women (Ferguson, Winegard & Winegard, 2011). It can also lead to unhealthy consequences such as cosmetic surgery, unhealthy balanced diet or steroid abuse. This message of the body perfect ideals is communicated to children from a very young age

especially through the media and could have a long lasting psychological effect and negative body image. Negative body image especially for women can lead to negative self perception, feeling of inadequacy, and unhealthy body related behaviour (Dittmar, 2009). Other risks related to eating disorder include cardiac problems, amenorrhea, nutritional deficiency, infertility, ovarian cancer and increase exposure to infections. These related issues are very serious indeed, if is not disclosed or poorly treated could lead to death (Dittmar, 2009).

1.9 Body Image and Self-Esteem

Many women worry about their appearance more than achievement, success in career and thinking ability (Graggs-Hinton, 2006). However, only few think about their appearance in a more positive way. They either hate certain parts of the body and look or hate the way they look altogether. This unfortunately have a knock-off effect on confidence and self-esteem. Consequently, these feelings may lead to negative mental health outcome such as depression and disorder eating (Sabik, Cole, & Ward, 2010).

Furthermore, women tend to link their appearance to their overall self-worth more than men, possibly because women often encourage women to draw feelings of self-worth from their appearance (Sabik et al, 2010). Many women believe that possessing a thin, conventionally attractive body will lead to happiness and overall success. There is no doubt that Western women are subject to a great deal of pressure to conform to the thin ideal of the feminine beauty (Harper & Tiggemann, 2008). As a result of this pressure to conform, many women use weight control pills and majority engaged in rigorous exercises to get the look. According to McCabe et al (2007), unstable perceptions of body image are mirrored in the

distorted perception of body size and the affect women have about their bodies, which results in discrepancies between one's ideal self and actual size. That is, discrepancies between what they actually look like and what they think their bodies should ideally look like. This real ideal discrepancy, in turn, is believed to lead to body image concerns and dissatisfaction reported among women (Wood & Petrie, 2010).

1.10 Body Image and Ethnicity

Historically, Black women reported being comfortable with full figure and accepting a large body type while Western women strive for a thinner looking figure (Spurgas, 2005). According to research this trend is changing due to acceptance and influence from mass media to become thin. Research has showed African women attempt to alter their appearance to reach the goal they cannot easily attain, therefore become dissatisfied with their physical appearance (Spurgas, 2005). However, as women are bombarded by thousands of images weekly of the perfect body, they become even more dissatisfied with their body image or appearance (Graggs-Hinton, 2006).

Furthermore, the majority of these research based on comparisons of Black and White Western women are more specifically in the US women. Although much of the research (e.g. Akan & Grilo 1995; Perez & Joiner, 2003) has supported the hypothesis that Black women exhibit healthier, more realistic perceptions of their bodies than White women, the differences between Black and White women have been attributed to a variety of causes, including disparate beauty ideals in Black and White culture. However, researchers have reached a consensus that Black and White women's physical self-perceptions are becoming

more homogenous (Spurgas, 2005). Recent studies suggest that both Black and White women are becoming more susceptible to problems related with poor body image, including disordered eating (Wood & Petrie, 2010).

1.11 Ethnicity and Eating Disorder

To understand the development of eating disorders, researchers have acknowledged the need to identify the risk factors (Stice et al, 1994). In particular social pressure regarding thinness and attractiveness, internalization of societal ideals and body discontent (Wood & Petrie, 2010). According to Warren, Gleaves, Cepeda-Benito, Fernandez, & Rodriguez-Ruiz, (2005) researchers need also to evaluate sociocultural influences properly to determine whether diverse ethnic groups with distinct value orientations and physical ideals display different prevalence rates and manifestations of unhealthy eating. As Wood and Petrie (2010) argue, a major gap in the literature was the lack of data concerning ethnic minority. In fact, women from different ethnic groups may likely experience many of the same sociocultural risk factors (Warren et al, 2005).

Ethnicity is generally defined as the acceptance of the norms, values and practices of one's culture of origin (Warren et al, 2005). The literature review that addresses racial differences between Black and White women and body image concern indicates that body image dissatisfaction, dieting and disorder eating are more common in White female than Black females (Abrams et al 1993; Akan & Grilo, 1995; Perez & Joiner, 2003; Grabe & Hyde 2006; and Kelch-Oliver & Ancis 2011). In addition, research conducted in America by O'Neill (2003) specify that African American women who had same levels of drive for

thinness as their European American counterparts reported significantly lower rates of eating disturbances (Sabik et al, 2010). This ethnic group differences are somewhat surprising because Black women on average weigh more than White. It appears that Black women have a higher degree of weight acceptance and are less affected by thin images and may mean a lower incidence of weight-related concerns and eating disorders in Black women. These observations were supported by much research (e.g., Perez & Joiner 2003; Evans & McConnell, 2003).

1.12 Ethnicity and Physical Attractiveness

Idealization of thinness is typical in the dominant culture/Western culture. Rather than using thinness as a standard of beauty, Black women define physical attractiveness in terms of body shape stylishness rather the size (Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011). Furthermore Black beauty ideal accept a broader range of weights and types as attractive compared with White ideal body shape (Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011). Therefore, less societal pressure may exist for Black women to be thin compare with White (Perez & Joiner, 2003). These findings suggest that physical attractiveness and ideal image are culturally defined. With a thin image as dominant White culture's ideal standard of beauty (Evans & McConnell, 2003; and Perez & Joiner, 2003) and a larger body image type in Black culture (Perez & Joiner, 2003). Moreover, identification with Black culture and its ideals, rather than the mainstream culture play a protective role for Black women (Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011). Previous studies with Black samples indicates that their body satisfaction was closely tied to successful rejection of the White model and lack of recognition of the mainstream value of a thin body perfect (Evans & McConnell, 2003).

1.13 Ethnicity and Body Dissatisfaction

According to Abrams, Allen and Gray (1993), extreme body image dissatisfaction and other related body concerns in Blacks may be associated with assimilation into the dominant culture and acceptance of mainstream culture ideals of attractiveness as thin (Abrams, Allen and Gray, 1993). Upward mobility to some Black women also entails the rejection of their own ethnic group values, leading to body discontent (Sabik, Cole & Ward, 2010). Although previous research hypothesized that Black women are more satisfied with their bodies, less likely to express desire to be thin compared to White women, this does mean they are protected from societal messages regarding body appearance. In actual fact, Black women may be impacted by other Western features if not thinness, such as hair texture, skin colour, and colour of the eyes etc., used to decide attractiveness in the mainstream culture (Harris et al, 1994).

According to research ethnicity may be protective against body dissatisfaction because non-Western culture of origin do not idealize an ultrathin figure, accept larger body perfect, and if less value is placed on physical appearance as a defining feature of self-worth, role in society and indicator of success Warren, Gleaves, Cepeda-Benito, Fernandez, & Rodriquez-Ruiz, (2005). In this way, ethnic minorities living in the Western culture may have comparable level of awareness of thin ideal but may not internalize because of an affiliation with culture of origin that does not esteem such values and ideals. This was supported by Baugh, Mullis, Mullis, Hicks and Peterson (2010) that Black women who do not internalize messages from the society are more protected from body image dissatisfaction and other related concerns. In the research carried out with a sample of Black women, a greater ethnic

identity appeared to increase feelings of lower depression and greater acceptance of extra weight (Baugh et al, 2010). Regardless of these findings, newer research indicated that Black women are not unaffected and often exhibit body image dissatisfaction and other symptoms of eating disorder (Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011). This current study therefore, proposes that by virtue of being a woman subjected to sociocultural messages that emphasize women's beauty and appearance above other dimensions of self, Black women are also susceptible to body image concern, these women may feel pressure to achieve standards of beauty related other aspects of their physical appearance beside size, such as their hair texture, skin colour, as well as their ethnic group's standard of ideal or beauty. So they are not immune to the influence of media.

Problems with previous researches on body image have been based predominantly on White samples. However, may be inapplicable to racial or ethnic diverse groups. The research on body image failed to include issues relevant to Black women and other possible factors that can perpetuate body image dissatisfaction. However, women from different ethnic/racial background may vary in the extent to which they are dissatisfied with their bodies because meaning of the body depends on cultural and social context (Grabe & Hyde, 2006). This present study aims to investigate ethnic differences and factors that can influence or mediate body image dissatisfaction among Black and White women living in the western culture (Ireland).

1.14 Age and Ethnicity

The relationship between age and ethnic differences in body image dissatisfaction was another issue that needed consideration because most of the research has been conducted on college-age sample (Robert et al, 2006). It is not clear whether differences in body image occur in Black and White older or younger sample population. However, research supports the notion that there are age-related changes in body image dissatisfaction but report that those trends are dependent on ethnic background (Grabe & Hyde, 2006).

1.15 Aims and Objectives

This present study aims to examine differences in levels of body dissatisfaction among Black and White women. Specifically, this study proposes that internalization of societal ideal would mediate the association between media influence and appearance concern between Black and White women.

1.16 Rationale for Research

The first purpose of this current study is to provide a detailed understanding of body image dissatisfaction among women. Secondly, to investigate ethnic differences in body image by testing how internalization of media body ideal and perceived pressure to conform to cultural beauty standards are associated with body image dissatisfaction among White and Black women. And thirdly, rather than focusing only on internalization of media and pressure to conform to cultural standard of beauty among women, the intention also is to examine and

evaluate relationships of other possible factors such as ethnicity, self-esteem, age, media that can influence body image dissatisfaction among Black and White.

As many investigators have demonstrated that Black women are more satisfied with their bodies than white women (e.g., Schooler et al, 2004). It would be informative, however, to know whether these ethnic differences have remained stable or whether the gap between Black and White is narrowing especially for those living in Ireland. Furthermore, some investigators have also questioned the notion that body dissatisfaction is higher among Whites than Blacks (Robert et al, 2006). And have suggested that incidence of eating disorders and body image dissatisfaction will increase among Black as they become more assimilated into the dominant society (Abram, Allen & Gray, 1993).

1.17 Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: The first hypothesis predicts that there will be significant negative correlation between self-esteem and appearance concern for White women.

Hypothesis 2: The second hypothesis states that there will be ethnic difference in levels of media internalization and appearance concern. White (Irish) women will be more influenced by the media than Nigerian women (Black).

Hypothesis 3: The third hypothesis states that there will be significant difference in the levels of appearance concern between Nigerian and Irish women such that Irish women would score higher on appearance concern than the Nigerian women.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Participants

In this present research, a total of 200 participants was used from two different ethnic backgrounds, Nigerian women (n = 100) and Irish women (n = 100) above the age of 18 years. Age ranged from 18 years to 56 years for Irish women, the average age was 28 years and 18 years to 49 years for Nigerian women, the average age was 33.6 years. Overall the Nigerian women have been living in Ireland for 2-17 years, on average they have lived in Ireland for 10.3 years. These women and girls were of different age and ethnic backgrounds within the DBS campus.

2.2 Procedure

The content and structure of the questionnaire was checked by the project supervisor to ensure the questionnaire was efficient and suitable for distribution. An approval was given by the supervisor before questionnaires were given out. The participants were conveniently approached in the DBS Campus and majority were distributed in the classrooms during lectures with permission from the lecturers at different times to complete anonymous research questionnaires. Before the distribution, a brief overview of the aim and objective of the research were relayed to the participants as well as ethical considerations and rights of participants during the process of research.

The researcher was present in the classrooms when the questionnaires were being completed. The questionnaires were only given to participants above the age of 18 years. Once the questionnaires were completed, they were collected and enveloped to ensure anonymity. On average, it took participants approximately 5-10 minutes to complete the

questionnaire. The participants were thanked for taking part in the study and for their time taking. Statistics Package for the Social Science (SPSS) (PASW) statistics 18 software was used to compute and analyze the results given on the questionnaire

2.3 Material/Measures

Different questionnaires have been used in different research concerning body image dissatisfaction such as Rosenberg self-esteem; Media influence scale, Objectified body consciousness, Trait self-objectified consciousness, body image, satisfaction of life etc. some of which these study used. Participants were asked to complete a short booklet of questionnaires containing some demographic questions such as age, ethnicity and how long they have being in Ireland followed by three valid questionnaires which were Self-esteem measure, Media Influence Scale and body image questionnaire (Trait Self- Objectification questionnaire).

2.3.1 Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Rosenberg Self-Esteem (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965), Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was used to measure self worth or self-esteem, it contained ten items such as “I wish I could have more respect for myself”, “I feel I do not have much to be proud of”, “At times I think I am no good at all”. Each item was scored on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree). Scores range from 10 - 40, higher score indicated a more dissatisfaction and lower score indicated a lower dissatisfaction. Rosenberg Self Esteem scale has been shown to have high internal constituency and good convergent validity (Swami, Airs, Chouhan, Leon & Towell, 2009).

2.3.2 Trait Self Objectification questionnaire

The last questionnaire was - Trait Self Objectification questionnaire. The Self-Objectification Questionnaire developed and validated by Noll and Fredrickson (1998) was used to assess trait self-objectification. It contained 10-items, ranging from (1 = not extremely important) to (5 = extremely important). The list included five competence-based attributes (physical coordination, health, strength, energy level, and physical fitness level) and five appearance-based attributes (weight, sex appeal, physical attractiveness, firm/sculpted muscles and measurement e.g., chest, hips, waist). The score ranged from -25 to +25. A higher score was an indication of greater trait self-objectification.

2.3.3 Media influence questionnaire

Media influence questionnaire (MIQ) (McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2001b) is a 10-item survey that was also used to assess the messages participants receive from the media regarding their body. Some of the questions asked include: “the media gives me the idea that I should be slimmer”, “I like to read fashion magazines that feature thin model”, “when I see a picture of a female model or actress”, “I pay attention to her body”. Participants responded to 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agrees to strongly disagree. This scale has demonstrated a high level of internal consistency among adolescents (McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2001b).

2.4 Design

This research was carried out using a non-experimental correlational design. Two variables were measured, predictor and criterion variables. Predictor variable include ethnicity, age, media and self-esteem, the criterion variable was appearance concern.

2.5 Ethical Principles

In order for any research to be validated, it must be ethical. So understanding ethical principles and abiding by them when carrying out research is crucial. Therefore ethical principles were taken seriously in this research. The researcher informed and explained to the participants what the research is about and was for, procedure and risks if any. The researcher ensured no participant was put at risk at any time. Secondly, voluntary participation was also considered. Researcher makes sure that no participant was forced or manipulated into participating in the research, that is, participant's right was not undermined at all. The participants were told they have the right to remain or withdraw from the research process. Thirdly, participants' anonymity was taken seriously. Information given or shared were not given or made available to the public or anyone else outside the research. Finally, the names of the participants were not required in the questionnaire to ensured that the participants' identity remain unknown.

2.6 Data Analysis

After the data was collected, negative answers were recorded, and total score were computed. The data was analysed using SPSS 18.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 Descriptive Statistics: descriptive statistics for appearance, self esteem, and media influence for Nigerian women and Irish women are represented in table one below.

3.2 **Table one:** Means and SD for all of the variables used in the analysis for both Nigerian and Irish women

Ethnicity		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Nigerians	Total	100	5.00	25.00	18.13	4.62
	Appearance					
	Total Self-esteem	100	11.00	40.00	34.27	4.29
Total Media influence	100	10.00	47.00	31.06	9.23	
Irish	Total	100	5.00	25.00	15.57	4.19
	Appearance					
	Total Self-esteem	100	14.00	40.00	30.35	5.72
Total Media Influence	100	10.00	49.00	29.58	9.07	

As can be seen from table one above, Nigerian women scored higher on all of the variables used in the analysis (appearance concern, self esteem and media influence) than the Irish women.

3.3 Inferential Statistics

3.4 Correlational Analyses

3.5 Hypothesis One: The first hypothesis predicted that there will be significant negative correlation between self-esteem and appearance concern for White women. Correlational analysis indicated a negative correlation between self objectification and self esteem for the Irish women. However, this was not significant $r = -.185$, $p = .06$. There was no relationship between self objectification and self esteem for Nigerian women $r = .039$, $p > .05$. Therefore hypothesis one was not supported.

3.6 Hypothesis Two: The second hypothesis stated that there will be ethnic difference in levels of media internalization and appearance concern. Irish women (White) will be more influenced by the media than Nigerian women (Black). In support of this hypothesis, correlational analysis indicated a significant positive relationship between media influence and appearance concern for Irish women $r = .306$, $p < .01$. However, there was no relationship between media influence and appearance concern for Nigerian women $r = .061$, $p > .05$. Therefore the hypothesis was supported.

3.7 *T-test analysis*

3.8 Hypothesis Three: The third hypothesis predicted that there will be significant difference in the levels of appearance concern between Nigerian and Irish women such that Irish women would score higher on appearance concern than the Nigerian women. However, independent sample t-test carried out indicated contrary to the hypothesis, Nigerian women scored significant higher on appearance concern than the Irish women $t = 4.105$ (df 198), $p < .01$. Therefore hypothesis was not supported.

4.0 DISCUSSION

The aim of this present study was to investigate ethnic group differences in levels of body image concern between Nigerian women (Black) and Irish women (White). This study focused on how internalization of media body ideal and perceived pressure to conform to cultural beauty standards is associated with body image concern among White and Black women. The present study extended previous research on ethnicity and body concern (e.g. Sabik, Cole & Ward, 2010) by examining other possible factors such as ethnicity, self-esteem, appearance concern, media internalization, self objectification, age, and how long has lived in country in both Black and White.

4.1 Self-esteem and Appearance Concern

The first hypothesis predicted that there will be a significant negative correlation between self-esteem and appearance concern for White women only. Correlational analysis carried out indicated a negative correlation between self objectification and self esteem for the Irish women. The higher self objectification the lower their self esteem. The expected pattern was found for the Irish women (White). However, this was not significant additionally there was no relationship between self-objectification and self esteem for Nigerian women. Therefore the hypothesis was not supported. This result is consistent with previous findings that Black women are more satisfied with their body, and less susceptible to body image related concerns and less likely to make investments in achieving the thin ideal which can influence self esteem than European women (White) (Sabik, Cole & Ward, 2010; Spurgas, 2004). On the other hand, for the Irish women, the non-significant correlation between self esteem and appearance concern is an indication that they were also confident

with their appearance than expected by the present study. For Irish women (White) another possible explanation would be that they are already well informed about Western cultural values that stipulate that appearance is central to ones' value and role in the society, a thin body is ideal, and thinness assures success and life satisfaction; therefore they internalized and endorsed these values (Warren, Gleaves, Cepeda-Benito, Fernandez, & Rodriguez-Ruiz, 2005).

Furthermore, an ultrathin body is presented as normative and attainable for all women (Schooler, Ward, Merriwether, & Caruthers, 2004). This result may have also been related to how the data was collected. The data was mostly collected within the DBS campus and socioeconomic background of participants was not taken into account neither was BMI or weight. As this may be consistent with Warren et al (2005) that one preventive aspiration may be due to identity factors (e.g., peer socialization, family dynamics, self esteem, personality traits,) that can protect against such internalization. This might be the reason why the hypothesis was not supported. Future research should perhaps include the general public and socioeconomic should be taking into account.

For Nigerian women higher self esteem and satisfaction with their appearance may be related to individual differences and the extent to which they are involved with the dominant cultures. This is consistent with what Wood and Petrie (2010) observed that Black women's protective effect is associated with being strongly identifying with their cultural group. Black women with strong identification may simply pay less attention to majority culture media and thus have little exposure to its messages about women and their bodies (Wood & Petrie,

2010); instead they may receive messages about women, their bodies and self-worth from culturally consistent sources, such as family, peers, churches and ethnic media outlets, which are more supportive of who they are and how they look like naturally (Wood & Petrie, 2010). In addition, women who identify more with Black culture would be more likely to hold values about themselves and their bodies that would serve to lessen their chances of adopting the general cultural value that a thin body is considered the beauty ideal (Warren et al, 2005). Specifically, Nigerian women would make the choice to appreciate and value a larger body size as ideal and would also choose to believe that their worth is determined more by internal than external factors.

4.2 Ethnic Difference in Levels of Media Internalization and Appearance Concern

The second hypothesis stated that there will be ethnic difference in levels of media internalization and appearance concern. White (Irish) women will be more influenced by the media than Nigerian women (Black). In support of this hypothesis, correlational analysis indicated a significant positive relationship between media influence and appearance concern for Irish women. The more women are influenced by the media, the more concern they have with their appearance. However, there was no relationship between media influence and appearance concern for Nigerian women. The findings from this study indicate that ethnic minorities respond differently to mainstream media and its ideal standards of beauty. This present finding supports the research by Baugh, Mullis, Mullis, Hicks and Peterson (2010) that Black women who do not internalize messages from the dominant society are more protected from body image dissatisfaction and other related concerns.

Interestingly, this present finding supports the previous research findings that Black women are generally less likely to internalize thin ideal standards of beauty than White women

(Greenwood & Dal Cin, 2012). It has been said in previous research that increased internalization of thin ideals as well as a tendency to compare one's body with that of television and movie stars predict increased body image concerns (Wood & Petrie, 2010). Possible reasons why Nigerian women may be more satisfied with their bodies compared to Irish women or cultural factors that can provide safeguard to Black women in Ireland, is because ethnic difference exist towards physical appearance (Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011); larger body sizes are preferred in Black culture and this is associated with health and prosperity in Africa and its diaspora (Sabik et al, 2010). This preference may be what is reinforced by Nigerian women in Ireland. Black women report greater comfort fuller figure even idealization of this fuller figure than White women, and still consider themselves as attractive rather than using thinness as a standard of beauty mostly depicted in the media (Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011).

Moreover, within the Black community, women's body may represent a source of strength and are positively valued because of their maternal role, as opposed to a body type that needs to be controlled and manipulated to conform to an ideal. Another plausible explanation lie to the fact that Black men prefer larger body type for women and tend to associate more favourable characteristics with larger women than do their White male counterpart (Grade & Hyde, 2006). Secondly, Black women tend not to compare themselves to women of other ethnic groups, despite their prevalence in idealized media portrayals (Sabik et al, 2010). Although both Black and White women are generally more likely to compare themselves with ethnically similar others, this comparison is linked to increased body image concerns for White women only (Greenwood & Dal Cin, 2012). Finally, Black women are more likely to define physical attractiveness in terms of stylishness, body shape rather than size (Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011). Therefore, less societal pressure may exist for

Black women to be thin compared to White women. These findings suggest that differences in cultural standard of beauty may limit negative consequences of media influence for Black and the dominant culture's investment in thinness among women.

4.3 Ethnic Differences in Appearance Concern

The third hypothesis predicted that there will be significant difference in the levels of appearance concern between Nigerian and Irish women such that Irish women would score higher on appearance concern than the Nigerian women. Independent sample t-test carried out indicated contrary to the hypothesis, Nigerian women scored significant higher on appearance concern than the Irish women. Although hypothesis three was not supported, the finding is very interesting because it indicated that Black women are not immune to body image related problems and that they can also exhibit body image dissatisfaction. Even though much of the research (e.g. Akan & Grilo 1995; Perez & Joiner, 2003) has supported the hypothesis that Black women exhibit healthier, more realistic perceptions of their bodies than White women, there is reason to believe that this trend is changing due to acceptance and influence from mass media to become thin. Researchers are of the consensus that Black and White women's physical self-perceptions are becoming more homogenous (Spurgas, 2005). Black and White women are becoming more susceptible to problems related with poor body image (Wood & Petrie, 2010). More and more Black women now attempt to alter their appearance through cosmetic and plastic surgery, cosmetic product (e.g., bleaching cream to become lighter), rigorous exercises to look like the ideal perfect which they cannot easily attain, therefore become more dissatisfied with their physical appearance (Spurgas, 2005). Other possible explanation for this finding is that of Abrams, Allen and Gray (1993) that extreme body image dissatisfaction and other related body concerns in Blacks may be

associated with assimilation into the dominant culture and acceptance of mainstream culture ideals of attractiveness as thin. Upward mobility to some Black women also implies the rejection of their own ethnic group values, leading to body discontent (Sabik, Cole & Ward, 2010). Although previous research hypothesized that Black women are more satisfied with their bodies, they are less likely to express desire to be thin compared to White women, this does mean they are protected from societal messages regarding body appearance. In fact, Black women may be impacted by other Western features if not thinness, such as hair texture, skin colour, and colour of the eyes etc., used to decide attractiveness in the mainstream culture (Harris et al, 1994). This finding showed that being a woman subjected to sociocultural messages that emphasize women's beauty and appearance above other dimensions of self, Black women are also susceptible to appearance concern. These women may feel pressure to achieve standards of beauty related to other aspects of their physical appearance beside size, such as their hair texture, skin colour, as well as their ethnic group's standard of beauty. So they are not immune to body image concerns.

Plausible cultural explanation to hypothesis three is that although Black women are generally less likely to internalize thin ideal standards of beauty than White women, those who do internalize this standard show similar level of body image concerns to White women (Greenwood & Dal Cin, 2012). Increased internalization of thin ideals as well as a propensity to compare one's body with that of television and movie stars increased body image concerns (Wood & Petrie, 2010). Although it has been suggested that ethnicity can provide a safeguard to Black women, ethnicity may only be protective against body dissatisfaction if Non-Western culture of origin do not idealize an ultrathin figure, accept larger body perfect, and if less value is placed on physical appearance as a defining feature of self-worth, role in society

and indicator of success (Warren et al, 2005). This view is supported by (Baugh, Mullis, Mullis, Hicks & Peterson, 2010) that Black women who do not internalize messages from the society are more protected from body image dissatisfaction and other related concerns. Previous research maintains the notion that Black women generally report more positive body image than White women; this is contrary to the present prediction and finding. Nigerian women (Black) appear to be more concerned about their appearance than the Irish women. However, their self esteem was not affected by this concern. Future research could use qualitative research to explore more on ethnicity and body image dissatisfaction. Specifically, research should examine sources of resiliency among Black women, as well as how mainstream influence does affect Black women's body dissatisfaction.

4.4 Summary of Findings

The findings revealed that self objectification can lead to lower self esteem; however, this was only true for the Irish women, the result showed a negative correlation between self-objectification and self esteem for the Irish only. The higher self objectification the lower was their self esteem. Furthermore, there was also ethnic difference in the levels of media internalization and related appearance concern. Additionally, this present research also found that Nigerian women (Black) were more concerned about their appearance than the Irish women; contrary to previous research that Black women are more satisfied with their bodies, less likely to express desire to be thin, and are less likely to suffer body image related concerns compared to White women (Perez & Joiner, 2003). What this result shows is that Black women are not entirely protected from body image concerns.

4.5 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

There were few limitations in this study that needed consideration. First, the sample size of the population was only 200, 100 Nigerian women and 100 Irish women. Generalization is limited due to the small sample size of the participants. 200 may have been too small to be a representative sample of Black and White population in Ireland. Future work needs to extend this research by using larger sample.

Secondly, the method used in this research to select participants could also pose a limitation to the research. Convenience sampling method was used. All participants were college students (DBS students) who were conveniently approached to complete the questionnaire and in classrooms to be able to collect the data. Socioeconomic background could have also affected the results; this was not taken into account in this research which did not control for socioeconomic status, the participants could have been from middle/higher socioeconomic background; which in the past has been shown to moderate the relationship between ethnicity and body satisfaction (Swami et al, 2009). Future research could be conducted on participants who come from a range of socioeconomic background.

Thirdly, age of the participants may have also served as a limitation to this research. Age range of the participants were from 18 – 56 for the Irish women, 18 – 49 for the Nigerian women; it is not clear in this present research whether differences in body image occur more in Black and White older or younger sample population, (Grabe & Hyde, 2006) Moreover, only college undergraduate students were used in this present study as participants, and findings may not be generalizable to other group of women. Future research could compare age group on both student and the general public on media influence, ethnicity and body image dissatisfaction (Schooler et al, 2004

Fourthly, another factor that could limit the research is the fact that results were analyzed based on the assumption that participants responded honestly and accurately to the research questionnaires. The participants may have given the answers they think is appropriate and not reflecting their true feelings - demand characteristics, which may have result to bias in their answers and this may have had an effect on the result findings. Perhaps future research could include a social desirability scale. In addition, the types of questionnaire used may have also served as a limitation to this research. This research used Rosenberg self-esteem, trait self-objectification and media influence scales. Although these questionnaires are widely used in body image research (e.g., Knauss, Paxton & Alsaker, 2008), they could limit the question asked and the scope of research found. Forthcoming research could use wider range of questionnaire such as objectified body consciousness scale (McKinley & Hyde, 1996), or other body image questionnaires, in addition to including for example, a satisfaction of life questionnaire, and further ethnic identity questions to explore more on this topic as previous research has found a relationship between appearance concern and life satisfaction (e.g., Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011) and a relationship between appearance concern and ethnicity (e.g., Perez & Joiner, 2003).

Another obvious limitation of this research is its correlational design, which means causal inferences or assumptions cannot be made regarding the relationship between media internalization, body image concerns and ethnicity. Perhaps a controlled experiment can further investigate this as previous research found a relationship between body image concerns and psychological consequences using experimental methods (e.g. Fredrickson, Roberts, Noll, Quinn, & Twenge, 1998).

It may be that as non-western origin assimilates and exposure to dominant culture, it leads women to be more aware and internalize these obvious norms; as a result they are attracted to the media representations that confirm these norms; on the other hand, women may reject these norms altogether as a result of oppression, discrimination, ethnic identity (Miller & Halberstadt, 2005). Overall in this present research, the Nigerian women stated that they were living in Ireland between 2-17 years, on average they have lived in Ireland for 10.3 years. This also could have affected the result. Only experimental and longitudinal studies can answer questions of causality. However, future research should perhaps investigate how these factors specific to ethnic minorities interact with awareness, internalisation, and body image concerns to protect or to put one at risk.

Furthermore, issues surrounding Black women's body image may be different and overlooked. For example, the fact that Black men generally prefer larger women, is enough reason for most Black women who are naturally thin to suffer body image dissatisfaction and oppression in the hands of Black men and trying to attain larger body may lead to further dissatisfaction even obesity. Whereas, White women may restrict their eating severely to attain the ideal standards of beauty promoted by the media and preferred by White men, Black women may engage in an unhealthy eating to attain a larger look (Grabe & Hyde, 2006). So ethnicity and body image is a complex issue that needs an in-depth exploration. The confirmation of a small but statistical significant ethnicity differences between Black and White women does not close the door on the issue of Black-White differences in body image concerns.

Despite these limitations, however, the result of this present study raise a number of important issues that future research should address, including how ethnic identity shapes media impact on body image, sources of resiliency among Black women, as well as how mainstream influence does affect Black women's body concerns. This present study suggests there is ethnic difference in levels of media internalization and body image concerns. Black women (Nigerians) seem to be more confident and less influenced by the media but also have some issues regarding appearance. Previous research suggest increased internalization of thin ideals as well as a propensity to compare one's body with that of television and movie stars increased body image concerns (Wood & Petrie, 2010). This comparison is linked to increased body concerns for only White women (Greenwood & Dal Cin, 2012). These issues need further exploration to allow an in-depth understanding both the positive interaction experienced by Black women and potential impacts media might have or might be having on Black women's appearance.

4.6 Conclusion

The pervasiveness of media and its ideals appears to be dominating and spreading to all cultural milieus. The media has been found to be the most powerful and pervasive conveyor of sociocultural values regarding ideal body, size and shape (McCabe et al, 2007). Social mediums are used to create the current perception of the ideal body perfect. The mass media (e.g., TV) are generally agreed to be an influential source of these images and messages about idealized body that women should strive for (Dittmar, 2009). The media present images that promise social acceptance for thin women make this body type become highly desirable. Majority of women internalized and endorsed this ideal both in the dominant culture and some in other cultures. As culture changes, change in appearance-

related values and ideals may happen on either individual level, such as when one migrates from non-Western cultural origin to a Western culture consequently acculturation. As dissemination of these messages increased, the protective aspects of non-Western cultures could be lost or it could prevent them from adopting their distinctive values this will put these people at risk of developing body image concerns and other related problems.

As this present study has found that Nigerian women (Black) were more concerned about their appearance than the Irish women; this is contrary to previous research that Black women are more satisfied with their bodies, less likely to express desire to be thin, and are less likely to suffer body image related concerns compared to White women (Perez & Joiner, 2003), however, this does show that they are not completely protected from societal messages regarding body appearance. This present research also found some levels of ethnic difference between Black and White but it's unsure if this difference will be eroded in the new future especially among those living in the Western culture.

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APPENDIX: 1

This appendix contained three different questionnaires.

Women's Feeling of Self Worth

This study is concerned about how women think about their bodies.

Please answer each section as honestly as you can, do not spend too long thinking about each question as there are no right or wrong answers.

Any information that you give will remain strictly confidential, you are not required to write your name anywhere on this survey. I hope you find this interesting, and I would like to thank you in advance for your time and co-operation.

Please complete the following demographic information.

Ethnicity: _____

Age: _____

How long have you been living in Ireland? _____ years

INSTRUCTIONS: Please read the following statements and indicate how much you agree with them by circling the appropriate number to the right of the statement as follows:

1 = strongly agree

2 = agree

3 = disagree

4 = strongly disagree

1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.....1 2 3 4

2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.....1 2 3 4

3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.....1 2 3 4

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.....1 2 3 4

5. I feel that I do not have much to be proud of.....1 2 3 4

6. I take a positive attitude towards myself.....1 2 3 4

7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.....1 2 3 4

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.....1 2 3 4

9. I certainly feel useless at times.....1 2 3 4

10. At times I think I am no good at all.....1 2 3 4

INSTRUCTIONS: I'm interested in how people think about their bodies. The questions below list 10 different body parts or personal qualities. Please look at these body parts or personal qualities listed. It doesn't matter how you see yourself according to each body part or personal quality. For example, physical fitness level could be important to you whether you see yourself as being fit or not, or anywhere in between.

All of these body parts or personal qualities may be important, but could you tell me whether each body part or personal quality is extremely not important, not important, you're not sure, very important, or extremely important to you.

Please read each question and circle the number that best describes how important this is to your body.

If this is extremely not important, circle1 2 3 4 5

If this is not important, circle1 2 3 4 5

If you not sure, circle.....1 2 3 4 5

If this is very important, circle1 2 3 4 5

If this is extremely important, circle1 2 3 4 5

1. How important is physical co-ordination?.....1 2 3 4 5

2. How important is health?1 2 3 4 5

3. How important is weight?1 2 3 4 5

4. How important is strength?1 2 3 4 5

5. How important is it to be attractive to the opposite sex?1 2 3 4 5

6. How important is physical attractiveness?1 2 3 4 5

7. How important is energy level?1 2 3 4 5

8. How important are firm/sculpted muscles? 1 2 3 4 5

9. How important is physical fitness level?1 2 3 4 5

10. How important are measurements (e.g. chest, waist, hips)?.....1 2 3 4 5

INSTRUCTIONS: Please read each question and circle the appropriate number on your answer sheet.
Please answer all questions.

1 = strongly agree

2 = agree

3 = neither agree nor disagree

4 = disagree

5 = strongly disagree

1. I like to read fashion magazines that feature thin models.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I like to watch fashion shows on T.V. that feature thin models.

1 2 3 4 5

3. When I see a picture of a female model or actress, I pay attention to her body shape.

1 2 3 4 5

4. I like to watch entertainment shows featuring thin celebrities.

1 2 3 4 5

5. I like to browse in malls and pay attention to the latest fashions.

1 2 3 4 5

6. If I could afford it, I would like to go to New York fashion shows.

1 2 3 4 5

7. I like to watch award shows on T.V. and admire the clothes worn by famous female stars.

1 2 3 4 5

8. I like to watch exercise/fitness videos and shows on T.V. featuring well toned women.

1 2 3 4 5

9. I like to watch movies with famous actresses.

1 2 3 4 5

10. I like to watch videos on MTV with popular music stars.

1 2 3 4 5

If you are concerned with or affected by any of the issues raised please do not hesitate to contact the following organisations.

BIO BALANCE CENTRE

Optimum Nutrition

50 Grafton Street,

Dublin 2.

Email: info@biobalance.ie

Tel: 1800288288

BODY WHYS

The eating disorder association of Ireland

Helpline: 1890200444

Email: info@bodywhys.ie/alex@bodywhys.ie

I would once again like to thank you for taking part in this study and would remind you that all information given here will remain strictly confidential. If you would like to know more about this study, please do not hesitate in contacting me at the address below.

Theresa Okodogbe (researcher; email tokodogbe@yahoo.ie) and Dr Bernadette Quinn (research co-ordinator; email bernadette.quinn@dbs.ie)