

MEDIA, ETHNICITY AND BODY IMAGE DISSATISFACTION.

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❖ ABSTRACT

The aim of this academic research project is to investigate 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 result revealed that there is ethnic difference in the levels of media internalization and related appearance concern and that Black women could also be affected by sociocultural messages regarding appearance.

❖ INTRODUCTION

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. 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 in other cultures leading to body image discontent. This has led to a flourishing of research on body image.



❖ METHOD

A non-experimental correlational design was used for this research. 100 Irish females student and 100 Nigerian female student completed the questionnaire. The material used to measure media influence and body image dissatisfaction were Rosenberg self esteem, trait self-objectification questionnaire and media influence scale. SPSS software was used for analysing the data gathered from the study. Ethical issues were considered seriously to ensure a valid result.

❖ RESULTS

Result showed there is ethnic difference in the levels of media internalization and related appearance concern. Additionally, this present research 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.

❖ DISCUSSION

This research investigated ethnic group differences in levels of body image concern between Nigerian women (Black) and Irish women (White). Contrary to the previous research and the prevailing views that Black women are more satisfied with their appearance, Nigerian women scored significant higher on appearance concern than the Irish women. The finding was very interesting because it showed that Black women are not immune to body image related problems. The difference in the levels of appearance concern between Black and White women on appearance concern appears to be narrowing.

❖ REFERENCES

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