

**Physical appearance self-worth contingency as moderator of skin-tone
surveillance consequences among university students in Polokwane**

By

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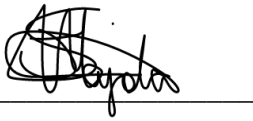
UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

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DECLARATION

I declare that **Physical appearance self-worth contingency as moderator of skin-tone surveillance consequences among university students in Polokwane.** (mini-dissertation) hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree **Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology** has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Majola', is written over a horizontal line.

Majola, M. J. (Ms)

26 August 2024

DEDICATION

This mini dissertation is dedicated to my beautiful daughter Tumelo, my dear parents (Mr Benge and Mrs Dikeledi Majola), my brother Neo, and in memory of my late brother Martin.

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I am thankful to God for always being an omnipresent Father.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Mashegoane for his guidance and knowledge, which has made this study possible.

To my parents, thank you for your support throughout the duration of this dissertation. I am abundantly blessed to have such understanding parents who have always been very supportive.

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The participants, who made the completion of this study possible.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

STSS = Skin-Tone Surveillance Scale

SRMBS = Skin-Related Modification Behaviour Scale

AHS = Authentic Happiness Scale

CSWS: Appearance = Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale Appearance Subscale

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Study Variables	29
Table 2: Demographic Information.....	36
Table 3: The Reliability levels of the scales.....	38
Table 4: Results of Moderating Analysis: CSWS: Appearance as moderator	41

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Model of the study	26
Figure 2: Moderating effect of CSWS: Appearance	40

ABSTRACT

Socially and culturally constructed skin tone-based notions of beauty reflect an extant Western gradation of physical beauty between peoples. The beliefs perpetuate biased attitudes and practices favouring fair skin. Consequently, skin-tone surveillance has become a norm among women in multicultural societies, each woman seeking to determine her station on the scale of beauty. Personal ways and means used by women who are pressured to constantly monitor their skin-tone are yet to be identified and clearly explained. This study investigated the moderator role of physical appearance contingent self-worth among female, black African university students in Limpopo, South Africa (N = 356). The students completed measures of skin-tone surveillance, physical appearance self-worth contingency, body modification behaviour and authentic happiness within a cross-sectional, correlational design. Correlation analysis found that authentic happiness was not related to any of the study variables. For that reason, it was excluded from the main analysis of the study. The results of moderation analysis show that the Appearance dimension of the Contingencies of Self-Worth do not act as moderator in the relationship between skin-tone surveillance and skin-related modification (bleaching) behaviour. The study results suggest that there is a need to further identify intervening factors that may ameliorate the burden of skin-tone monitoring.

Keywords: Authentic happiness, body modification behaviour, moderation, physical appearance self-worth contingency, skin tone monitoring, skin tone surveillance.

TABLE OF CONTENT

Table of Contents

DECLARATION	i
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF ACRONYMS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
ABSTRACT	vii
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Introduction	1
1.2. Problem Statement	2
1.3. Aim of the study	4
1.4. Objectives of the Study	4
1.5. Hypotheses	4
1.6. Significance of the Study	5
1.7. Summary	5
CHAPTER TWO	6
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.1. Introduction	6
2.2. Operational Definition of Core Concepts	6
2.3. Theoretical Framework	7
2.3.1. Objectification Theory	7
2.3.2. Positive Theory	9
2.4. LITERATURE REVIEW	10
2.4.1. Colourism	10
2.4.2. Skin tone surveillance and physical appearances	13
2.4.3. Skin tone surveillance and skin bleaching	17
2.4.4. Appearance contingency self-worth as a consequence of skin-tone	20
surveillance consequences	20
2.4.5. Authentic happiness	24
2.5. Model of the Study	25
2.6. SUMMARY	27
CHAPTER THREE	28

METHODOLOGY	28
3.1. Introduction	28
3.2. Research Design	28
3.3. Variables of the Study	28
3.4. Study Population and Sampling	30
3.5. Data Collection Procedure	30
3.6. Data Collection Instruments	31
3.6.1. Demographic Variables Questionnaire	31
3.6.2. Objectified Body Consciousness Scale: The Body Surveillance Subscale ..	31
3.6.3. Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale (CSWS)	32
3.6.4. Skin-related Modification Behaviour	32
3.6.5. Authentic Happiness	32
3.7. Summary	33
CHAPTER FOUR	34
RESULTS	34
4.1. Introduction	34
4.2. Data Analysis Plan	34
4.3. Preliminary analysis	35
4.3.1. Demographic Characteristics	35
4.4. Data Analysis	37
4.5. Results	37
4.5.1. Reliability testing	37
4.5.2. Main Analysis: A test of the proposed study model	39
4.6. Summary	42
CHAPTER FIVE	43
DISCUSSIONS	43
5.1. Introduction	43
5.2. Skin tone surveillance and skin-tone modification (bleaching) behaviours	43
5.3. Skin tone surveillance and authentic happiness	44
5.4. Appearance Contingent Self-Worth as a Moderator for skin-related modification behaviours.	45
5.5. Conclusion	47
5.6. Limitations to the study	48
5.7. Recommendations	48
5.8. Summary	48
REFERENCES	49

APPENDICES	64
Appendix 1: Ethical clearance	64
APPENDIX 2: The letter to request approval to conduct a study at the University of Limpopo	65
Appendix 3: Consent letter	67
Appendix 4: Consent form to be signed by the participant	68

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Skin tone is a multi-faceted phenomenon that has a great social meaning (Okazawa et al., 1987). Based on the colour of skin that one has, many doors have either been closed or opened, creating a social hierarchy whereby a better lifestyle is afforded to those with a lighter complexion and less likely to the darker-toned population of the same race (Howzell, 2019). It is, therefore, important to understand the values attached to different complexions that have been linked with the Americanised terminology “colourism” (Okazawa et al., 1987). Colourism is a form of biasness that values physical features that are commensurate with those of Whites, grounded on skin colour, facial features and hair (Evans & McConnel, 2003; Guan et al., 2012). Black women continue to utilise White ideal norms as a barometer for appropriate and desirable female traits, whether or not they meet them (Thompson & Keith, 2001).

The preference for a certain skin tone affects a number of risk factors for individuals of colour, including economic and health risks. For instance, people with darker skin may feel marginalised in communities where lighter skin is desired and may feel the need to bleach their skin, which could be harmful to their health (López et al., 2012). People's willingness to engage in skin-modifying techniques, particularly black people, appears to have been influenced by a number of motivating factors. For instance, it is possible to hypothesize that one of the motivating factors is the issue of the internalized white ideal brought about by colonization (Harper and Choma, 2018). Internalizing white standards of beauty may also encourage people to act promiscuously in order to be accepted or abuse drugs and alcohol as a result of frustration with society's expectations of beauty that are nearly impossible to satisfy (López et al., 2012). Therefore, it is crucial to address how black people perceive the skin tone within their own community (Elmore, 2009). According

to Wolf (2002), even affluent, educated, and free women in the modern world struggle with concerns related to their appearance, making it difficult for them to completely appreciate their freedom and wealth.

In this study, the researcher is investigating the consequences of the surveillance of black African women's skin tone. Skin tone surveillance is important since it frequently associated with body esteem in persons of colour (Buchanan et al., 2008). Skin-modifying behaviours include the application of lotions, soaps, and everyday items to the skin in an effort to achieve a lighter skin tone (Julien, 2014). In addition, Julien (2014) argues that skin lightening products have become more widely available and risky in South Africa because people who cannot afford to go to dermatologists and plastic surgeons mix their skin-lightening creams to make more affordable, hazardous, yet effective products. Skin tone modification behaviours driven by appearance concerns (such as fair skin) can make some women feel less confident about their bodies.

1.2. Problem Statement

According to research, the media has an impact on how women perceive their bodies (Klein, 2013; Mask & Blanchard, 2011). A socially specific type of objectification among Indian and Black American women was used to examine skin-colour surveillance's relationship with skin-colour dissatisfaction and skin modifying behaviour. It was found that lightness is the dominant measure of beauty, and not only did women evaluate their body size and shape, but they also evaluated their skin colour in anticipation of appraisal with others (Choma & Prusaczyk, 2018). Women use skin bleaching to achieve their internalized perfect lighter skin (Charles, 2011; Lewis et al., 2011). Similar to that, Hunter (2011) claimed that skin lightening allowed women to buy racial capital (that is, a greater standing in racial hierarchies allocated for people with a lighter complexion). In terms of feelings, it has been discovered that eating disorders are associated with social anxiety, and shame (Grabhorn et al., 2006), as well as between appearance anxiety and shame (Monro & Huong, 2005).

Intra-racial discrimination is still a complicated issue in South Africa because of the oppressive institutions that afflicted the nation in its recent past. These systems operated on two separate but connected levels: race and colour. In addition to encouraging a desire for white skin (or light skin) among many Black, Coloured, and Indian South Africans, colonial rule and racial segregation established a problematic relationship between skin colour and access to socio-economic opportunities. This gave rise to a lucrative local skin-lightening industry (Montle, 2020). Natural hairstyles and other aspects of African cultural identities have been marginalized since the arrival of colonialists in Africa. In addition to oppressing and subjecting Africans to hardships, the colonialists brought certain beliefs, practices, and schools of thought to the continent (Jere-Malanda, 2008; Thompson, 2009).

Despite vast research on women's self-objectification experiences, women of colour have been the subject of relatively little of this work. White women in their college or university years have been the subject of a lot of the area's research (Buchanan et al., 2008; Moradi & Huang, 2008). It is less clear in South Africa whether factors connected to appearance contingencies would predict students' participation in behaviours related to skin modification or attitudes toward skin satisfaction. This includes bleaching the skin and using skin-lightening treatments. The current study will use the theory of objectification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997), especially the self-objectification component (Roberts et al., 2018) to determine the association between skin-colour surveillance and skin modifying behaviour and authentic happiness. It will look at whether black students who are academically capable will use their sense of self-worth as a moderating factor amongst skin-tone surveillance, skin bleaching and authentic happiness. A demographic factor like socioeconomic status should also be considered.

1.3. Aim of the study

This research aims to investigate the association of skin-tone dissatisfaction, skin tone surveillance, perceived pressure of modification behaviour, and authentic happiness and the moderator effects of appearance (CSWS: Appearance) amongst female University of Limpopo students.

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- 1.4.1. There is a relationship between skin tone surveillance and skin-related modification (bleaching) behaviour.
- 1.4.2. Skin tone surveillance is associated with authentic happiness.
- 1.4.3. Appearance self-worth contingency serves as a moderator of the relationship, between skin tone surveillance and both skin-related modification (bleaching) behaviour and authentic happiness.

1.5. Hypotheses

The following were the hypotheses of the study:

- 1.5.1. Skin tone surveillance is positively related with skin-related modification (bleaching) behaviour.
- 1.5.2. Skin tone surveillance is negatively associated with authentic happiness.
- 1.5.3. Appearance self-worth contingencies will moderate the relationship between skin tone surveillance, and both skin-related modification (skin bleaching behaviour) and authentic happiness.

1.6. Significance of the Study

The body of knowledge in psychology will benefit from this study's further exploration of self-objectification as one of the factors contributing to the establishment of body dissatisfaction, which may lead some individuals to participate in particular skin-modification practices. The study will add to the corpus of knowledge on this topic because issues with body image might result in psychological and health-related issues. Additionally, it will assist in discovering protective factors against body dissatisfaction. It will add to the body of literature on authentic happiness in one's skin tone, especially among black female students.

1.7. Summary

This chapter provided the background of the study. The nature of the problem to be investigated was outlined. It presented the aim of the study, the hypotheses, and statement of significance of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The theoretical framework that gave the study's central ideas direction and significance is defined in this chapter along with the study's main concepts. A review of the literature on the association between skin-tone surveillance, skin bleaching, and authentic happiness in women is also included in this chapter. Skin-tone surveillance, skin bleaching, and authentic happiness are claimed to be influenced by self-worth physical appearance contingencies. This chapter will also provide the model study.

2.2. Operational Definition of Core Concepts

a) Skin tone surveillance

Skin-tone surveillance is explained as the process of routinely examining one's skin tone as well as evaluating their attractiveness (Buchanan et al., 2008).

b) Skin bleaching

Skin bleaching is described as the technique of employing chemicals or any other agent with depigmenting possibility in an attempt to whiten skin tone or improve the complexion; These goals are accomplished by lowering the amount of melanin in the body (Nordin et al., 2021).

c) Colourism

Colourism is the practice of discriminating against or favouring members of the same race based only on the colour of their skin. It is the tendency to assess or treat people of the same race according to the shade of their skin tone (Hunter, 2002).

d) Self-Objectification

Self-Objectification refers to treating one's body as an object, adopting the viewpoint of others, and emphasizing appearance above functionality (Breines, Crocker, & Garcia, 2008).

e) Appearance contingent Self-worth

Contingencies of self-worth (CSW) are referred to as personal ideals of who or what one should become in order to feel valuable (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). Accordingly, the degree to which a person values and bases their worth on their look is known as appearance contingent self-worth (Sanchez & Crocker, 2005).

f) Authentic Happiness

Authentic happiness is defined by cognitive evaluations that show a person is on the correct track in life, the continual pursuit of meaning and purpose, and the frequency of experiencing happy emotions over negative ones (Seligman, 2011).

2.3. Theoretical Framework

The study will adopt objectification theory as a framework. This viewpoint will implement a strategy pertinent to the goal of this study, with the majority enabling some understanding of the significance of body objectification impact and how people view themselves. The study will further employ the second supporting theory of Positive theory namely authentic happiness and appearance contingent self-worth.

2.3.1. Objectification Theory

Theory of objectification, according to Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) is an integrated framework that is utilized to understand how sexual objectification and feminine socialization translate into mental health concerns that are more prevalent in females than males. Women are starting to make efforts to alter their physical appearance through nutrition, exercise, beauty goods, cosmetic items, surgery, and bad eating habits as a result of the rise in body objectification for women, and in some cases, males (Neagu, 2015). Body surveillance is defined as the act of keeping an eye on oneself while observing one's own body

from the outside. Self-objectification and body surveillance have a strong link that leads to appearance anxiety (Feltman & Szymanski, 2018).

Self-objectification describes the process through which women absorb social expectations regarding their bodies. Self-objectification is when a woman views herself, particularly her body, as an object to be valued for exterior attributes rather than internal ones (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). The development of the Objectification Theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) provided a conceptual framework for analysing the effects of sexual objectification on women's health consequences. The theory specifically claims that over time, exposure to sexually objectifying encounters on a regular basis may teach women to engage in a process known as self-objectification, which is defined as experiencing oneself through the eyes of an objectifying observer. According to the notion, women are more likely to hear from their parents, peers, men, and the media that their looks are crucial to their value as people and are frequently analysed by others. It is obvious how this attention to beauty could influence women to favour an extremely thin physique for themselves, especially in light of the thin ideal for women that is promoted in society.

Wagner et al. (2009) posits that valuing one's body more for appearance than performance is linked to a number of detrimental psychological effects. Self-objectification has detrimental effects on one's wellbeing, which include appearance anxiety, risk of disordered eating, body shame, and dissatisfaction with one's physical appearance (i.e., body surveillance; Breines et al., 2008; Fredrickson, Roberts, Noll, Quinn, & Twenge, 1998). Integrating skin tone surveillance into the context of objectification theory clearly speaks to Fredrickson and Roberts' contention that self-objectification may emerge in a different way depending on females' race and ethnicity (Buchanan et al., 2008; Choma & Prusaczyk, 2018). In light of this, skin tone surveillance may be an effective indicator of self-objectification for women of colour, providing direct means of evaluating the claims made by objectification theory among women of colour. According to the objectification theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997), people may place a lot of importance on their physical appearance as a crucial component of their self-worth if they are constantly exposed to sexual

objectification in social environments like the media and interpersonal encounters.

Enrolling in university is crucial to the development of young people. Many students believe that the transition to university life is a vital moment for the development of their body image and a time when self-objectification could make them too critical of their bodies (Gillen & Lefkowitz, 2012). Students at universities are more frequently exposed to the viewpoints and perceptions of the other sex, peers, friends, and the media. A common justification stated by females for wanting to reduce weight is that they believe young men prefer slim ladies (Szabo & Allwood, 2006).

Objectification theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) affords a fundamental theoretical framework that can be employed to this study to enable the understanding of the relationship between skin-tone surveillance, skin bleaching, and authentic happiness. In addition, the concept of appearance contingency self-worth is also included in the model of the study. According to empirical research using the notion of self-worth contingency, identification with one's self-worth founded on their appearance seems to moderate the association between anxiety and disordered eating as well as the association between anxiety and dietary restriction (Bardone-Cone et al. 2013). Appearances also moderated the relationship between exposure to Facebook and assessments of face, hair, and skin differences (Fardouly et al., 2015).

2.3.2. Positive Theory

The study also employs concepts from positive theory, namely, authentic happiness and appearance contingency self-worth. The theory is added to the study and will give a comprehensive understanding of the processes that have an influence on the experiences of body image in women.

According to Seligman (2000), positive psychology is the study of thoughts, feelings, institutions, and good deeds with the ultimate goal of promoting human pleasure. The goals of positive psychology are to identify and comprehend human characteristics and qualities as well as to foster environments that enable

people to live better, more fulfilling lives. From this angle, happiness is seen as a reasonably long-lasting emotion felt through time rather than something ephemeral and changeable. Positive psychology attempts to emphasize the good things that have happened, which are represented by good feelings like happiness, hope, and joy as well as good qualities like character, strength, courage, and virtue in people and good institutions (Park & Peterson, 2007; Peterson & Seligman, 2003; Seligman, 2002).

2.4. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.4.1. Colourism

In the past, race has been employed in the United States as a social construct to establish levels of superiority and subordination between white people and people of colour (Bonilla-Silva, 2002). South Africa has a similar history throughout the colonial era right through the recent period of *Apartheid* rule. When used to describe someone's skin, colour "gets a mark of oppression, a neurotic fixation, and an indication of judgment" that becomes ingrained in who they are (Juliano, 2020). Due to this orientation, skin tone has also developed into a significant psychological factor that affects African American development and conduct. Since the era of American slavery, colourism has caused controversy within the African American community. Black slaves and their Caucasian owners were discriminated against because of their skin colour throughout the period of slavery (Hall, 1995; Wade & Bielitz, 2005). According to the definition of colourism given by Burke (2008), it is the allocation of privilege and disadvantage according to the lightness or darkness of one's complexion and favours people with lighter skin over those with darker skin both within and across racial and ethnic groupings (Hunter, 2005). Colourism has also been referred to as "colour consciousness" and "skin tone bias" (Hill, 2002; Okazawa-Rey, Robinson, & Ward, 1987).

When comparing Blacks to Whites, colourism has a greater impact on African American individual and family life cycle results than race itself (Wade & Bielitz, 2005). Thus, although African Americans may reside in the same society, their

experiences may vary based on the complexion of their skin. It's vital to remember that colourism can also apply to things like hair texture, eye colour, and facial traits like lip and nose shape. According to researchers, racism's latent effects were brought about by slavery of minorities, segregation, and colonization. As a result, dark-skinned persons of colour experienced discrimination more frequently than their lighter counterparts (Keith and Herring, 1991). According to Russell, Wilson, and Hall (1992), colourism has its historical roots in the sex interactions between slaves and their masters. Although this form of prejudice was initially practiced by the colonizers, it was eventually internalized by the black slaves.

Although it's socially acceptable to use colours to identify one's race, it becomes problematic when employing terminology that are linked with blackness negatively affects people with darker skin tones. For instance, numerous studies have demonstrated that African Americans with darker skin tones are more likely to exhibit conventional characteristics like criminality, poverty, and meanness (Russell, Wilson & Hall; Maddox & Gray, 2002). When looked at from an intersectional perspective, colourism has a disproportionately negative effect on Black women and girls, who are more likely to experience skin tone bias than Black males (Abrams, Belgrave, Williams, & Maxwell, 2020; Hill, 2002; Hunter, 2002; Thompson & Keith, 2001). For Black females, the influence of skin tone on evaluated attractiveness is "dose-dependent," meaning that as skin colour deepens, rates of attractiveness fall monotonically. This is in contrast to Black men, for whom skin tone has little to no effect on judgments of attractiveness (Hill, 2002).

Colourism is a taught characteristic that children and adolescents acquire through interactions with family members and members of their local communities, but largely through their contacts with their parents throughout the early years (Bryant, 2013; Phoenix, 2014). Colourism is the practice of treating people differently based on the colour of their skin, with fair skin being favoured. This veneration of fair skin has benefited those with lighter complexions (Nyoni-Kachambwa et. al., 2021). Colourism is seen among members of the same racial group having unfavourable attitudes and preconceptions about ingroup members

with darker skin tones, it also happens among members of various ethnic groups (Howard, 2011; Hunter 2007).

Bryant (2013) claims that African American women are more impacted by American beauty standards than Caucasian women. Due to colourism, having lighter complexion, curly or straight hair, and other Eurocentric characteristics are considered beautiful (Bryant, 2013; Phoenix, 2014; Fultz, 2013). This concept of colourism first emerged after the institution of slavery in the United States and persisted with the rise of racial prejudice into the modern era (Bryant, 2013; Hunter, 2007). Once colourism is internalized and becomes a part of the human mind, it can seriously harm a person's mental, emotional, and physical health. Low self-esteem, lack of confidence, self-hatred, excessive skin bleaching, economic and educational disadvantages, family problems, worse health outcomes, and political disadvantages are all results of colourism (Bryant, 2013; Dawson & Quiros, 2013; Howard, 2011; Hunter, 2007). Perceived skin tone is a significant factor that contributes to differential exposure to discrimination (Adams et al., 2016; Klonoff & Landrine, 2000). In addition, there is a significant correlation between skin tone and allostatic load, with the darkest skinned Black people having the highest and the lightest skinned Black people having the lowest allostatic load (Cobb et al., 2016)

In today's society, pale skin tones are strongly preferred, as evidenced by the global media. The people portrayed in advertisements and on social media are the ideal of beauty right now. Numerous studies (Thomas et al., 2011; Wallace, Townsend, Glasgow, & Ojie, 2011) have been conducted to examine societal beauty standards and their effects in various nations and societies (Japan, United States, India, several Middle Eastern countries, Jamaica, and several African countries). Fultz (2013) discovered that people who fit the aforementioned categories appeared in advertising more frequently than people with darker complexion tones and kinkier hair textures. Because they are not making racial distinctions, an individual may unconsciously prefer lighter skin tones over darker ones without even being aware of it (Hunter, 2007). People all around the world have been impacted by colourism due to the rise in skin bleaching and self-hatred among different ethnic groups (Dawson & Quiros,

2013; Howard, 2011). Numerous studies show that those with lighter complexions tend to be wealthier and more likely to graduate from college than people with darker skin tones (Hunter, 2007). In conclusion, women of colour are urged to accept stereotypes that lighter-skinned women are more superior and sexually attractive. This socialization process and growth of self-objectification in accordance with the White beauty standard happens for many women of colour inside a larger system that favours White people and, consequently, their bodies (Choma & Prusaczyk 2018).

2.4.2. Skin tone surveillance and physical appearances

Black women's conceptions of their bodies are heavily influenced by their skin tone. The first to investigate how skin tone affects how people create their body images was Bond and Cash (1992), who discovered that unhappiness with one's skin tone is linked to negative opinions of one's attractiveness. According to other studies, skin colour satisfaction explains a sizable portion of the variation in how people rate their appearance (Falconer & Neville, 2016). The main aspect of a person's physique that is influenced by racial phenotypical prejudice is their skin tone. When this occurs, traits that are thought to be typical of a marginalized racial group are closely examined and, as a result, have a significant impact on how that person views themselves (Maddox, 2004). Black women's perceptions of themselves and how they are perceived by others are both influenced by their skin tone (Falconer & Neville, 2016; Mucherah & Frazier, 2013). In fact, Black women over-monitor this part of their body image because they believe that their skin tone will be evaluated together with their body form and size (Awad et al., 2015; Buchanan, Fischer, Tokar, & Yoder, 2008; Schaefer et al., 2018). Body image is a representation of an individual's inner thoughts about their outward look, which includes both physical and perceptual aspects (Shahyad et al., 2015). According to Shahyad et al. (2015), the three main components of body image are appraisal (body dissatisfaction), investment (the value placed on one's looks), and emotions. The first thing people notice about someone in social situations and a significant component of their identity is their appearance (Shahyad et al., 2015). One such obvious physical trait is someone's complexion.

Harper and Choma (2019) indicated that standards of beauty around the world are extremely radicalized with features shared to those of white individuals such as light skin being an ideal skin tone. The media representations of light skin as a measure of beauty have led women into developing skin tone anxiety or dissatisfaction. The majority of dark-skinned women face socio-economic disadvantages as a result of preferences for light skin within a racial or ethnic group (Perry et al., 2013). Light-skinned individuals are perceived to have a high income, occupational prestige and education as compared to dark-skinned individuals. Overstreet and Quinn (2012) further indicated that body surveillance has an association with body shame and appearance dissatisfaction for females coming from various racial backgrounds. A lighter skin tone is often regarded as an indication of physical appeal and desire for women around the world (Allen, 1982; Bond & Cash, 1992; Dansby, 1980; Neal, 1998; Peltzer et al., 2016).

African American women are evaluated on the basis of their physical features (such as their lips, hips, and buttocks) and what these features can do for patriarchal society through beauty and sexually objectifying-based gendered racial microaggressions (Lewis et al., 2016; Tolman et al., 2006). Due to the conflicting messages, they are given about their physical appearance, African American women have a particularly difficult body image dilemma (i.e., conform to both Eurocentric and Black cultural body ideals). Dual messages African American women are consistently pressured to meet unrealistic and even impossible appearance standards (Patton, 2006), which may have an impact on a woman's self-worth and how they react to instances of gendered racial microaggression (Gordon, 2008). The experiences of gendered racial microaggressions among African American women acknowledge the Eurocentric and/or Black body ideals that some of these women cannot achieve, which challenges their sense of self-worth and may ultimately have an effect on body appreciation. Women's value and self-worth may depend on their physical appearance given the significance of appearance in Western culture (Warren, 2008).

According to Overstreet and Quinn (2012), Black and White women who invest in appearance-dependent self-worth have lower body esteem and higher levels

of body surveillance. African Americans internalize cultural expectations of skin tone, with lighter skin tones deemed more attractive than darker skin tones, according to studies conducted in the United States (Altabe, 1998; Bond & Cash, 1992). The usage of light skin as a point of reference for attractiveness ideals might damage self-esteem and self-identity, despite the fact that ethnic minority individuals do occasionally seek to minimize the gap between their own look and Eurocentric norms (Sekayi, 2003). (Okazawa-Rey, Robinson, & Ward, 1987). Thus, even after adjusting for factors like income, marital status, and education (Thompson & Keith, 2001), there is some evidence to suggest that lighter skin tones among African Americans are connected with greater self-esteem (Robinson & Ward, 1995).

African American men and women were asked to rank the beauty of fellow African Americans by Hill (2002). He discovered that African American women's skin tone consistently and persuasively influenced assessments of their beauty (i.e., as skin colour gets lighter, the attractiveness ratings get higher). His findings also imply that African Americans view light skin as a feminine trait because skin tone had no effect on how handsome African American men were perceived. Skin colour prejudices go beyond only physical appearance. They have also been shown to affect how people view other characteristics.

Internalization of the White beauty standard among Indian women residing in India is predicted to lead to increased skin tone surveillance, which is in line with objectification theory (Harper & Choma, 2018). In addition, Buchanan et al. (2008) found that higher skin tone surveillance was associated with greater skin colour dissatisfaction and body shame in a sample of African American women attending a university in the U.S. This finding is consistent with studies done with White women, which also found that body surveillance is linked to both body dissatisfaction and body shame. Extending this work, Choma and Prusaczyk (2018) showed that higher skin tone surveillance was also associated with greater skin colour dissatisfaction and skin bleaching behaviour in community samples of African American women in the U.S. and Indian women in India (of note, skin tone surveillance was a considerably stronger correlate of skin colour dissatisfaction and skin bleaching behaviour than body surveillance). Women of

colour are raised to believe that how they look, especially the colour of their skin, says a lot about how valuable they are to the world. As a result, women of colour who pay attention to their skin tone may also feel less satisfied with their lives. In particular for women, beauty and attractiveness are frequently associated with self-worth and self-esteem (Falconer & Neville, 2000). Additionally, a person appears to be more socially desirable the more gorgeous or stunning they are perceived to be (Dion, Berscheid, & Walster, 1972). As a result, upholding an ideal of beauty may be essential to one's sense of value and general quality of life (Weitz, 2001). Minorities who experience frequent racial discrimination, such as African Americans, may benefit even more from upholding a beauty standard (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000).

The American ideal of beauty is frequently depicted as slender, Caucasian, fair-skinned, and having long, straight hair (Weitz, 2001). Pursuing the majority's ideal of beauty may be costly, challenging, unsuccessful, and/or upsetting for African American women with coarse, short hair and darker skin (Neal & Wilson, 1989). Additionally, it could cause them to dislike their skin tone and appearance. However, for African Americans with light complexion, part of this suffering might be less severe or even gone. For light-skinned African Americans with phenotypes comparable to Caucasians, it might be even less upsetting (Bond & Cash, 1992; Weitz, 2001).

Due to the adoption of Eurocentricity as the standard for beauty in African civilizations, the definition of beauty is one of the most perplexing aspects of life in the post-colonial era of Africa. A stereotype that associates white people in the West with beauty and black people in Africa with ugliness was spread by the colonizer. African women with short hair have historically been portrayed as the embodiment of African identity through natural hair. The long-standing African custom of growing short hair is seen by Africans as archaic and barbaric, but colonial involvement has undermined this perception of beauty by imposing Eurocentric hairstyles. Converting African women to think that all things Western-oriented are attractive is a common tactic (Montle, 2020).

2.4.3. Skin tone surveillance and skin bleaching

Conceptually, skin tone surveillance is similar to body surveillance. Body monitoring has long been seen as a form of self-objectification (Augustus-Horvath & Tylka, 2009; Lindner et al., 2012; McKinley & Hyde, 1996; Moradi, 2010). So, for women of colour, self-objectification may also take the form of skin tone surveillance or monitoring. Skin-tone monitoring is the practice of routinely examining one's skin tone and evaluating one's beauty (Buchanan et al., 2008). Research has shown that black women's conceptions of their bodies are heavily influenced by their skin tone (Hill, 2002). Another important factor causing varied exposure to discrimination is perceived skin tone (Adams, Kurtz-Costes, & Hoffman, 2016; Klonoff & Landrine, 2000). Lower self-esteem was connected to perceived darker skin tone (Thompson & Keith, 2001). One of the first researchers to look into how skin tone affects body image was Bond and Cash (1992), who discovered that unhappiness with one's skin tone is linked to negative opinions of one's appearance. Women of colour who pay attention to their skin tone could also feel less satisfied with their lives. Skin colour satisfaction explains a significant portion of the variation in how people rate their appearance (Falconer & Neville, 2016). Black women expect to be judged not just by their size but also their skin tone which results in enormous surveillance of this component of their body image (Awad et al., 2015; Buchanan, Fischer, Tokar, & Yoder, 2008; Schaefer et al., 2018).

From a cultural construction point of view on beauty ideals, women with dark complexions are possibly to be considered unattractive in India (Arif, 2004; Parameswaran, 2015). Beal (2008) stated that women of colour suffer from "double jeopardy" even though darker skin is seen as detrimental for both males and females. This indicates that where the colour of the skin is of concern women are probably more disadvantaged than men. Darker skinned women often have greater rejection than equally dark-skinned men, in the context of work (Berdahl & Moore, 2006; Harrison & Thomas, 2009). Grewal (2008) found that in the West, immigrants who are non-White encounter feelings of discernment following their skin colour and as a result succumbing to skin bleaching behaviour. Skin colour contentment among Black women is significantly influenced by how much white beauty ideals are internalized; the more strongly one internalizes white-centric

beauty ideals, the lower one's skin colour satisfaction (Falconer & Neville, 2016; Harper & Choma, 2019; Maxwell, Brevard, Abrams, & Belgrave, 2015). Thus, internalization of social beauty norms in Black women results in body dissatisfaction as well as skin colour dissatisfaction, indicating that white-centric beauty norms have an impact on both specific, racially conspicuous aspects of body satisfaction as well as overall body image. According to (Choma & Prusaczyk, 2018; Harper & Choma, 2019) women who internalized the belief that lighter skin is more attractive were more likely to use skin bleaching products, which can have negative effects on health like acne, facial hair development, kidney issues, and skin cancer.

Skin bleaching provides a means for women of colour to work toward an internalized beauty ideal of lighter skin, just as women may restrict their caloric intake in order to achieve an internalized thin ideal (Charles, 2011; Lewis et al., 2011). According to Charles (2011), skin bleaching is a direct result of colourism and self-hatred for a person's skin tone. Most scholars, according to Charles (2011), believe that this expanding phenomenon is caused by self-hatred, which is defined as an identity crisis among Blacks that is manifested in the colorized beauty contests based on White norms. This act is prevalent across the world in areas such as North and Latin America, Middle East Asia, and Africa. There may be a link between the usage of skin-lightening lotions and long-term issues with one's physical and mental health (Dlova et al., 2014). Hyperpigmentation in the skin is known to be "treated" by skin-lightening products, producing a lighter complexion. According to Dlova et al. (2012), non-White women in South Africa particularly desire these items because they find skin pigmentation unattractive.

Business in India is huge in the fairness cream industry (Sylvia, 2014). Lightening cream in Indian advertisements commences with the depiction of the numerous problems of a dark-skinned individual, with a major part of skin-lightening beauty products targeting women (Sylvia, 2014). Until someone advises using a lightening lotion, a dark-skinned woman is likely to be characterized as unconfident and unable to achieve success in life (Sylvia, 2014). In Asian cultures, having a white complexion is a significant aspect of female beauty (Baumann, 2008; Krishen et al., 2014; Li et al., 2008). Glenn (2008) reports that skin modifying

cosmetics are widespread in vast Asian societies. Along with the establishment of normalcy and vernacular reflecting skin lightening as part of daily life, it is widely established that the belief that having white or radiant pale skin is related to social privileges such as marriage and employment possibilities (Apuke, 2018; Lewis et al., 2012; Davids et al., 2016; Kirumba, 2019).

The history of skin lightening efforts is extensive, and it still has value in today's civilizations all over the world for example India, China, Japan, Pakistan, South Korea, Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Benin, Cameroon, Mali, Senegal, Rwanda, Ghana, South Africa, and Nigeria (Asante, 2016; Apuke, 2018; Davids et al., 2016; Lewis et al., 2012; Kirumba, 2019). The urge to lighten one's skin tone is said to result from low self-esteem, and skin-lightening procedures may be used as a result of someone's overall emotional and cognitive assessment of their self-worth (Asante, 2016). Regardless of their skin tone, evidence demonstrates that women worldwide engage in the practice of skin whitening (Peltzer et al., 2016). Other studies revealed that skin-bleaching products are popular in Asia (Li et al., 2008), the Middle East (Alghamdi, 2010), Africa (Adebajo, 2002; Ly et al., 2007; Wone et al., 2000), and the Middle East, indicating that the preference for a lighter skin tone is not specific to women of African descent but rather is a common global phenomenon.

Women of Colour are anticipated to experience pressure to change their appearance in order to live up to these expectations, such as by using cosmetics to bleach or lighten their skin and straighten or relax their hair. This is because Women of Colour are subject to and internalize a different set of expectations regarding their appearance. In fact, it has been discovered that Women of Colour support the desire to lighten their skin tone in order to conform to these White ideals (Wallace et al. 2011), and they admit to using such products in an effort to seem "Whiter" (Charles and MacLean 2017). However, The Black Consciousness Movement successfully pushed the South African government to regulate the production and distribution of skin-lightening products in the nation, raising public awareness of the risks associated with skin-lightening techniques. Colourism and skin-lightening practices have encountered strong opposition. Global discussions on racism and other injustices experienced by Black people and other

communities of colour have been triggered more recently by the Black Lives Matter movement (Anjari, 2022).

2.4.4. Appearance contingency self-worth as a consequence of skin-tone surveillance consequences

Brady et al. (2017) discovered that Asian American women's body image portrayal contextualized a variety of oppressive systems, inclusive of racism, sexism, constrictive gender expectations, and cultural conceptions of beauty. Women talked about having a hard time negotiating cultural differences in terms of defining attraction, racial taunting, sexual objectification, familial body criticism, comparisons of appearances, and identity management (Brady et al., 2017). Brady et al further denotes that these experiences altered women's perceptions of their bodies, faces, and skin tone, which in turn influenced outcomes connected to appearance, such as body dissatisfaction or body surveillance. People who internalise values of the society about an ideal body become preoccupied with their bodies and engage in a belief system of self-objectification (Roberts & Waters, 2019). The individual experience personal and emotional consequences such as appearance anxiety, body dissatisfaction and skin-related modification behaviours when the internalised ideal is not met (Choma & Prusaczyk, 2018). The individual might, for instance, engage in excessive and sometimes harmful skin bleaching. Internalization combined with societal comparisons will cause an individual to have concerns with their skin colour (Capodilupo, 2015).

In Western culture, the feminine body has been viewed as a socially manufactured thing to be adored, which frequently causes women and girls to judge their value largely by examining their physical appearance (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). According to theory, socially constructed standards of attractiveness emerge as a result of external influences (such as the media), and as a result, women accept these standards as normative and apply them to their regular social interactions (Birch & Fisher, 1998; Levine, Smolak, & Hayden, 1994). Women then frequently directly associate with these social values, which they utilize to create their own self-concepts (Costanzo, 1992). That is to say, women and girls who are constantly exposed to societal

standards of beauty (for example, magazine advertisements featuring incredibly attractive women) may become preoccupied with their appearance, and their perception of their attractiveness may end up being the main factor in determining how they feel about themselves. The social and economic position of women is significantly influenced by their physical appearance, which may offer at least a partial explanation for why so many women place such a high value on their looks. Stressing physical beauty comes with a number of drawbacks. Women who depend on pleasing others' perceptions of their physical attractiveness are said to have appearance contingent self-worth (i.e., feelings of self-worth based on appearance), which frequently causes them to adopt an outsider's perspective of their own body, also known as objectified body consciousness (Breines et al., 2008; McKinley, 1999; McKinley & Hyde, 1996).

A person's assessment of their own value is often directly correlated with success or failure in particular areas, which is known as contingent self-worth (Crocker & Knight, 2005; Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper, & Bouvrette, 2003; Crocker & Park, 2004). Crocker et al (2003) reported that self-worth that is dependent on looks is a contingency in which one judges oneself based on appearance (Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper, & Bouvrette, 2003). Self-worth contingencies can have an impact on a person's motivation, behaviour, cognition, and emotions (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). Self-worth that is to some part dependant on one's appearance is referred to as appearance contingent self-worth. Low self-esteem, body dissatisfaction, and eating disorder symptoms are all correlated with external self-worth conditions, such as appearance-contingent self-worth (Bailey & Ricciardelli, 2010; Sanchez & Crocker, 2005). In addition, women with low self-esteem and high appearance-contingent self-worth experience self-objectification more negatively than do women with high self-esteem and low appearance-contingent self-worth.

According to Overstreet and Quinn (2012), relying on appearance as a source of self-worth is associated with increased body surveillance and decreased appearance satisfaction, and people who have high contingent self-worth in a number of domains, including appearance, show elevated levels of anxiety

(Bos, Huijding, Muris, Vogel, & Biesheuvel, 2010). In agreement Sanchez and Kwang (2007) state that relationship contingent self-worth, or basing one's self-worth on having a romantic partner, encourages body concern, a greater tendency toward body surveillance, and body shame, leading to an increase in bulimic symptoms, and predicts greater emotional distress, including feelings of anxiety, following a romantic breakup (Park, Sanchez, & Brynildsen, 2011). Therefore, highly perfectionists are more likely to judge themselves harshly when they fall short of their own standards in areas that are important to their sense of self-worth and to hold themselves to unreasonably high standards or thresholds for success in areas that are contingent on their sense of self-worth (Bardone-Cone, Lin & Butle, 2017). Both long-term and short-term goals are influenced by conditions of self-worth. People have self-validation objectives in domains of contingent self-worth, which is to say that they want to demonstrate that they are successful rather than unsuccessful because that would suggest they are deserving and worthwhile (Crocker & Park, 2004).

Research has already studied the influence of individual differences on the relationship between media images and body dissatisfaction. For instance, E. Henderson-King and Henderson-King (1997) discovered that after watching "ideal" images of women in the media, women with lower self-perceptions of beauty (SPA) showed higher drops in body satisfaction. Furthermore, Henderson-King, Henderson-King, and Hoffman (2001) showed how women's value for physical appearance affects how comparisons with media images affect them. According to the theory of contingent self-worth/self-esteem (Crocker & Park, 2004; Crocker & Wolfe, 2001), research has revealed that people frequently base their sense of worth on things like academic ability, body weight, physical appearance, and so forth (Ching et al., 2021a, b; Clabaugh et al., 2008; Crocker et al., 2003; Ward et al., 2021). Numerous research has shown that among young adult women, appearance-dependent self-worth is inversely connected with appearance esteem and positively correlated with body shame and body surveillance (Manago et al., 2014; Noser & Zeigler-Hill, 2014; Overstreet & Quinn, 2012). People whose self-worth is dependent on looks typically base that appraisal on whether they meet cultural norms for physical attractiveness. Because they are continuously observing their bodies,

they are more prone to be worried with how they appear (Modica, 2019; Moya-Garofano & Moya, 2019). However, because meeting high standards of beauty is dependent on others' expectations rather than their own, appearance-contingent people frequently lack a sense of control and are vulnerable to appearance-based rejection sensitivity, appearance anxiety, and body shame when they don't live up to their standards of attractiveness (Deng et al., 2019). (Moya-Garofano & Moya, 2019). They are generally less prone to value their body (Homan & Tylka, 2015). Appearance-based self-worth is also associated to general signs of poor mental health, such as unstable self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and reduced psychological well-being (Ching et al., 2021a; Clabaugh et al., 2008; Breines et al., 2008).

People who regard appearance highly may act in ways they believe are effective in providing a sense of safety and control as well as maybe improving their appearance in response to anxious sensations. Evidence demonstrates that those who place a high value on beauty engage in health-harming behavior (Bailey & Ricchiardelli, 2010; Bardone-Cone et al., 2013; Stapleton et al., 2017; Zeigler-hill & Noser, 2015). When considered collectively, the correlational evidence implies that placing value on one's physical attractiveness is related to both their general physical and psychological well-being as well as how content they are with their bodies. There has been one experimental study that specifically addressed this problem in the literature on appearance contingent self-worth (O'Driscoll & Jarry, 2015). The study found that the effects of interpersonal rejection on self-esteem and body satisfaction were moderated by body weight contingent self-worth. Particularly, across all experimental settings, persons with higher body weight contingent self-worth showed lower appearance self-esteem and body satisfaction than those with lower body weight contingent self-worth. There is evidence that in young adult women, appearance contingent self-worth moderates the association between anxiety and disordered eating as well as the relationship between anxiety and dietary constraint (Bardone-Cone, Brownstone, Higgins, Fitzsimmons-Craft, & Harney, 2013). According to Bardone-Cone, Lin, and Butler (2017) the association between perfectionism and disordered eating in young adult women was moderated by appearance contingent self-worth. According to their findings, the

association between perfectionism and disordered eating was much stronger when appearance-contingent self-worth was high than when it was low. Additionally, According to Fardouly et al. (2015), the inclination to compare appearances moderated the relationship between Facebook exposure and judgments of face, hair, and skin discrepancies.

Talking about this relationship is a crucial part of treatment since many women associate their physical appearance with their sense of value. Specifically for African American women, skin colour issues may be the fundamental cause of other problems like low self-esteem, peer pressure, and familial connection difficulties (Neal & Wilson, 1989). Appearance contingencies can have an adverse effect on one's perception of self-worth thus leading to poor mental health outcomes. The contingency is mostly associated with developed low esteem, depression and disordered eating (Clabaugh et al., 2008).

2.4.5. Authentic happiness

Positive psychology holds that happiness may be broken down into three components: positive feeling, engagement, and meaning. Positive emotions include, among other things, feelings of joy, enthusiasm, ecstasy, and comfort. There is strong evidence that these three orientations are associated with favourable psychological functioning indicators across a range of life areas. Authentic happiness is predicated on the idea that Positive Psychology and happiness are related in three ways: through positive emotion, involvement, and significance.

A method that measures life satisfaction could be used to measure happiness as well. Seligman (2011) defined happiness as an indicator of cognitive evaluations, suggesting that a person is on the correct track in the life game, the continuous pursuit of meaning and purpose, and the experiences of happy emotions more frequently than negative ones. Being authentic entails being truthful, realistic, and sincere in one's expression (Peterson, Park, & Seligman, 2006). To put it another way, authenticity is the way people present themselves as real and honest to both themselves and others (Turan, 2013). The more stable emotional state that is based on a person's internalized values and

meanings about life is what is meant when it is said that someone is authentically happy (Headey et al., 2010). Authentic happiness separates hedonistic fleeting pleasures from healthy good feelings and presumes a moral lifestyle (Martin, 2007).

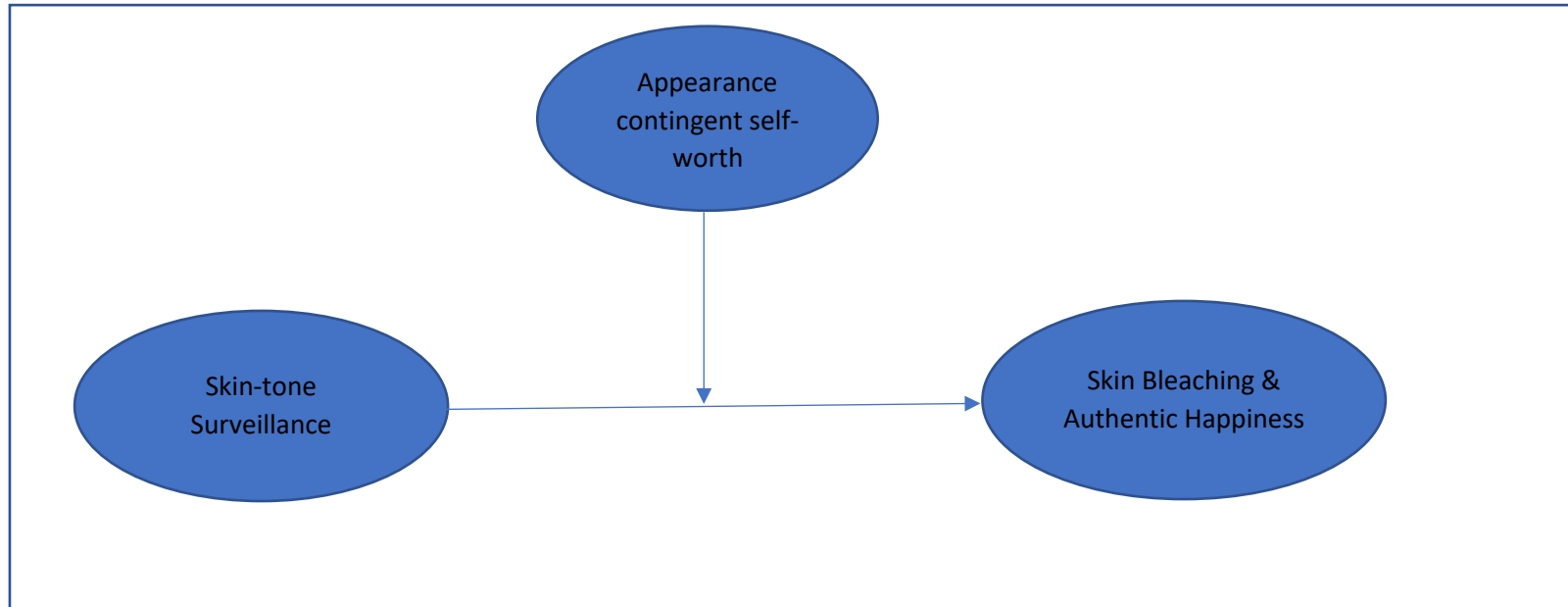
Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) state that the study on well-being has revealed a correlation between happiness and traits and resources regarded highly by society. Happiness is the frequent occurrence of pleasant emotions like pride, joy, and interest and the absence of negative feelings like melancholy, worry, and rage (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). Sanli et al. (2019) further indicated that studies that have been conducted on happiness have led to aspects of happiness questioning whether they correlate with a genuinely healthy emotional state. Psychological research has mainly focused on negative emotions with less inclusion or focus on positive emotions.

Additionally, it has been evident that studies on skin-tone surveillance also place their focus on skin-tone dissatisfaction rather than the possibilities of existing genuine happiness. Little literature linking the relationship between skin-tone surveillance and authentic happiness exists. The current study fills that void, since it can be assumed that skin-tone surveillance may be linked to positive emotions such as happiness, especially when the surveillance culminates in a negative valuation of the body, or the “self” itself.

2.5. Model of the Study

In this study, skin tone surveillance is important since it frequently results from body dissatisfaction in persons of colour (Buchanan et al., 2008). Skin-modifying behaviours include the application of lotions, soaps, and everyday items to the skin in an effort to achieve a lighter skin tone (Julien, 2014). Skin tone surveillance will directly lead to body modification behaviours such as skin bleaching or appearance satisfaction and indirectly to engagement in skin-related modification behaviours or development of genuine happiness through appearance Contingency. The relationship between the studied variables is shown in the following model.

Figure 1: Model of the study.



2.6. SUMMARY

Given that lighter skin tones are associated with the sexual objectification of women of colour, whiteness may be a relevant standard of beauty for these women. According to Bond and Cash (1992), women of colour expect to be judged according to their skin tone and are prepared to lighten it if they have to (Wallace et al., 2011). Some women of colour may, as a consequence, internalize the White beauty ideal and adopt it as their own standard (Bond & Cash, 1992; Hunter, 2011). Skin tone has since become a particularly important physical characteristic for women of colour, leading to them taking an outsider's perspective when it comes to its (skin tone) evaluation and monitoring (Buchanan et al., 2008; see Choma & Prusaczyk, 2018; Harper & Choma, 2018). The monitoring is somewhat unique to women of colour, who have since internalized the lighter skin ideal. The women may engage in extreme skin altering behaviours such as the use skin bleaching products, in spite of their negative health aftermaths, such as acne, facial hair development, kidney issues, and skin cancer (Choma & Prusaczyk, 2018; Harper & Choma, 2019; Hunter, 2011).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The present chapter focuses on the research methodology. The chapter emphasise the research design which was employed, study population, techniques followed and how data was collected and analysed, ethical consideration, and instruments used to collect data.

3.2. Research Design

A cross-sectional research design was used for the investigation. The study used a quantitative analytical framework and a correlational approach. A correlational design measures the variables at one time point only.

3.3. Variables of the Study

The variables of the study are listed in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Study Variables

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• IV	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DV
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skin-tone surveillance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appearance (CSWS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• body modification (bleaching)• Authentic happiness

3.4. Study Population and Sampling

Convenience sampling was employed in this study. Convenience sampling is a form of non-probability sampling where individuals of the focus population that satisfies certain requirements, such as easy obtainability, geographic proximity, availability at a specified time, or desire to engage, are involved (Etikan et al., 2016). In this research, 356 female participants were sampled, and the minimum sample size was determined using the Maximum Likelihood and accurately reflects the population under study. The study population consisted of the University of Limpopo students drawn from different study levels and different faculties. The sample size was deemed acceptable for this investigation since it allowed the use of more potent statistical techniques like structural equation modelling (SEM) and is a true representation of the study population.

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

The researcher received approval from the University of Limpopo ethical committee before starting data gathering. The participant's anonymity and confidentiality were assured by the researcher. Participants were given the assurance that the information acquired would only be used for the study's objectives. Participants were denoted by numbers rather than by their real names, and any information that could be used to identify them was kept a secret. Data was collected by means of online questionnaires created using Google forms as a measure of observing Covid-19 protocols. The questionnaire was accessible to participants through "Keyaka" emails (University of Limpopo student email platform). All participants were required to complete an online informed consent form before completing the questionnaire. The consent form was preceded by an online information letter, explaining the purpose and nature of the study in general terms. The researcher encouraged participant autonomy by clearly outlining all pertinent material and the participants' roles in the study. Participants were advised of the locations of organizations, health experts, and student counselling to be referred to should they be affected by the study's potential for distress.

3.6. Data Collection Instruments

Data was gathered using the following questionnaires:

3.6.1. Demographic Variables Questionnaire

The questionnaire for the demographic variable was created by the researcher. Participants were requested to provide demographic information, such as their age, gender, ethnicity, level of education, and socioeconomic status of their families.

3.6.2. Objectified Body Consciousness Scale: The Body Surveillance Subscale

A modified version of McKinley and Hyde's (1996) Objectified Body Consciousness Scale: The Body Surveillance Subscale was used to evaluate skin-tone surveillance. Buchanan et al. (2008) adjusted eight questions from the Body Surveillance Subscale to place more focus on monitoring skin tone than body image. Participants in the current study responded to the modified items (e.g., "I often think about how much lighter or darker my skin is than other people's") on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Higher scores denotes more skin-tone surveillance. In a study by Choma and Prusaczyk (2018), the Body Surveillance subscale has demonstrated good test-retest reliability of $\alpha = .79$ (McKinley & Hyde, 1996). When using the adjusted items for skin-tone surveillance, Buchanan et al. (2008) reported a high level of consistency, Cronbach's α of = .92. A similarly adjusted subscale in the study by Choma and Prusaczyk (2018) likewise displayed great internal consistency (α s of .85 and .93 in two study, consecutively).

3.6.3. Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale (CSWS)

The Appearance subscale of the Contingencies of Self-Worth scale was utilised to measure appearance-based self-worth (Crocker et al., 2012). Participants rated their responses with 5 modified statements (e.g., “When I think my skin tone looks attractive, I feel good about myself”, “I feel good about myself”; “My self-esteem is unrelated to how I feel about the way my skin tone looks”) on a scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

3.6.4. Skin-related Modification Behaviour

Skin-related modification behaviour was measured with a four-item scale developed by Choma and Prusaczyk (2018). The items on the scale refer to the use of skin bleaching products by participants (e.g., “I have used skin bleaching products”, “I have purchased skin bleaching products”, “I currently use skin bleaching products”). The participants responded on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). A high score on the scale indicates the high use of skin-bleaching products (Harper & Choma, 2019).

3.6.5. Authentic Happiness

The study adopted the 16-item two-factor Authentic Happiness scale to measure authentic happiness. The subscale that measures authentic happiness was used to measure participants’ authentic happiness regarding their skin tone. The participants responded on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) to modified items such as (“everyday new day means new hope for me; when I am sad”, and “I feel comforted by thinking of what I have”). In a study by Sanli et al. (2019), the scale proved to be reliable with the high internal consistencies of $\alpha = .87$ for (study 1) and $\alpha = .84$ for (study 2).

3.7. Summary

The research design, study variables, study population, and sampling strategy were all described in this chapter. The chapter also includes descriptions of the data collection process, the ethical standards upheld during the planned study's implementation, and an explanation of each data collection tool.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the data analysis process. The first action in the analysis process was to provide a description of the sample, using frequencies and percentages.

4.2. Data Analysis Plan

Three hundred and fifty-six questionnaires were completed and included in the data analysis. Preliminary analysis of the data was performed using the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (IBM SPSS) program. First, demographic variables underwent a descriptive analysis. Frequency tables were constructed to summarize the sample's characteristics, such as age, gender, family socio-economic situation, academic level, and ethnicity. A correlation matrix was generated, correlating the major variables of the study. The matrix was inspected to see if the variables correlated with each other. The main analysis of the study was the moderation analysis and was done using AMOS (Analysis of a MOment Structures), an added SPSS module for conducting structural equation modeling. In conducting moderation analysis, the following steps were followed: the Skin-tone surveillance scale (independent variable) and the Skin-related modification behaviours (skin bleaching) scale (moderator variable) scores were subjected to mean centering. The mean-centered variables were multiplied to create the interaction term. Following the creation of the new variables (that is, the mean-centred skin-tone surveillance and the skin-related modification variables, and the interaction of the two, moderation analysis was conducted. Scale metrics, such as the average scores of the sample on each of the study scales and the internal consistency of the scales, were also determined using IBM SPSS. Inferential statistics were employed to draw conclusions and inferences about the population that went beyond the immediate data alone. SEM was used for the primary analysis to assess the study's hypotheses.

4.3. Preliminary analysis

4.3.1. Demographic Characteristics

There were 356 questionnaires included in the data analysis. Four categories were used to classify the ages. According to Table 2, the participants' ages ranged from 18 to 40, with a mean age of 21. About 65.7% of students had Grade12 as their highest level of education. The majority of the participants (52.8%) identified as Pedi. Family socioeconomic position for the majority of participants fell into the middle-class (45.2%) and lower-class (36.8%) categories.

Table 2: Demographic Information

Characteristic	Category	N (%)	Mean	SD
		356 (100%)		
Age	18-21 yrs.	184 (51.69%)	21.82	3.337
	22-25 yrs.	137 (38.48%)		
	26-29 yrs.	24 (6.74%)		
	≥30 yrs.	11 (3.09%)		
Ethnic group	Pedi	188 (52.8%)		
	Venda	40 (11.2%)		
	Tsonga	61 (17.1%)		
	Swati	21 (5.9%)		
	Zulu	12 (3.4%)		
	Ndebele	7 (2.0%)		
	Tswana	7 (2.0%)		
	Sotho	7 (2.0%)		
	Xhosa	6 (1.7%)		
	Other	7 (2.0%)		
Gender	Female	356 (100%)		
Highest education	Postgraduate	44 (12.4%)		
	Degree	69 (19.4%)		
	Diploma	4 (1.1%)		
	Higher Certificate	5 (1.4%)		
	Grade 12	234 (65.7%)		
Socio-economic status	Lower class	131 (36.81%)		
	Working class	61 (17.13%)		
	Middle class	161 (45.22%)		
	Upper class	3 (0.84%)		

4.4. Data Analysis

A SEM analysis was conducted to test the proposed structural model. Outliers were searched for using the multivariate analysis approach. All four main variables of the study (measured with the scales: Skin-Tone Surveillance Scale; Skin-Related Modification Behaviour Scale; Authentic Happiness Scale, and the Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale Appearance Subscale) were included in the regression analysis as independent variables, and a new variable was generated from SPSS using the random numbers approach. The Mahalanobis distance values were generated, together with p -values. The p -values were inspected to identify values that are $\leq .001$. Eleven subjects were deemed to be outliers. The first analysis did not remove the cases from the data analysis because their values were realistic. Moreover, the second analysis conducted showed that there were no remarkable differences between the results obtained with the two sets of data. Therefore, the original results are presented.

4.5. Results

4.5.1. Reliability testing

Composite scale reliability was calculated using McDonald's alpha (ω). Cronbach alpha (α) was also calculated for comparison. The results are presented in Table 4. The McDonald's ω for the STSS is 0.88. In spite of the high composite reliability estimate, item 3 performed poor; it had the lowest mean when compared to the rest of the items, and its communality was very low. Cronbach α was also calculated. The item's coefficient was the lowest when the corrected item to total correlation was computed. Both the McDonald's ω and Cronbach α improved considerably (to .91) when the item was removed from analyses. Similarly, item 1 of the CSWS: Appearance performed poorly when compared to the rest of the items. Removal of the item from analysis improved the scale's reliability. The SRMBS has a McDonald's ω of .90. The AHS has a McDonald's ω of .78.

Table 3: The Reliability levels of the scales

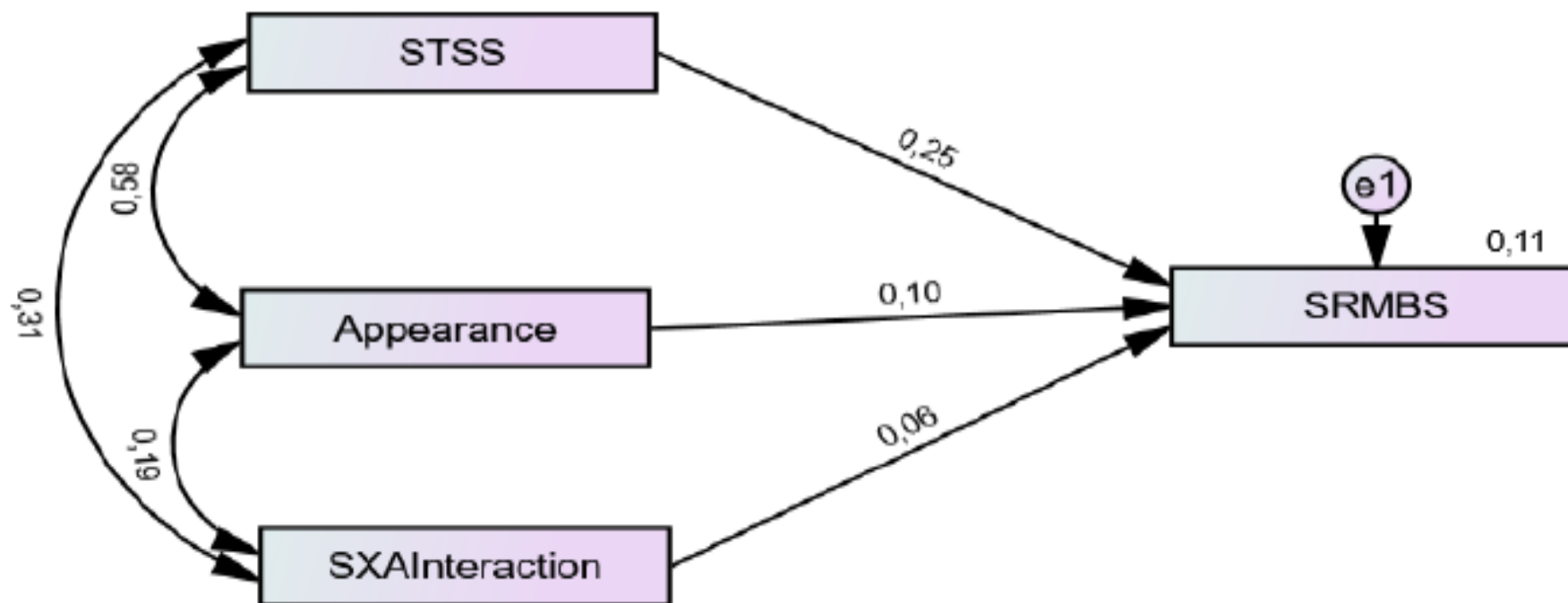
	Total items	McDonald's omega	Cronbach alpha	Item	Problem item deleted	
					McDonald's omega	Cronbach alpha
STSS	8	.88	.83	3	.91	.91
SRMBS	4	.90	.89			
AHS	7	.78	.78			
CSWS: Appearance	5	.72	.69	1	.76	.75

Note: STSS = Skin-Tone Surveillance Scale; SRMBS = Skin-Related Modification Behaviour Scale; AHS = Authentic Happiness Scale; CSWS: Appearance = Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale Appearance Subscale

4.5.2. Main Analysis: A test of the proposed study model

A test of the moderation effect of the Appearance contingent self-worth was tested (Figure 1) The interaction term method was used because the moderator is a continuous variable. The results of the analysis are contained in Table 4 below. The interaction effect did not reach statistical significance ($b = .028$, $t = 1.179$, $p > .05$), meaning that the Appearance contingent self-worth variable did not moderate the association between the Skin-tone surveillance scale and the Skin-related modification behaviours scale scores.

Figure 2: Moderating effect of CSWS: Appearance



Note: Appearance = CSWS: Appearance; SRMBS = Skin-related modification behaviours scale; STSS = Skin-Tone Surveillance Scale; SXAInteraction = STSS and CSWS: Appearance interaction term

Table 4: Results of Moderating Analysis: CSWS: Appearance as moderator

			Beta	S.E.	Std b	C.R.	<i>p</i> -value
STSS	→	SRMBS	.155	.040	.246	3.895	.001
CSWS: Appearance	→	SRMBS	.078	.050	.097	1.579	.114
SXA Interaction term	→	SRMBS	.028	.024	.062	1.179	.238

Note: CSWS: Appearance = Appearance subscale of the Contingencies of self-worth scale; SXA Interaction term = Product of SRMBS and CSWS: Appearance; SRMBS = Skin-related modification behaviours scale; STSS = Skin-tone surveillance scale

4.6. Summary

The chapter included the data analysis process used in the study, incorporating the plan for data analysis, a description of the participants demographics, and a report of the findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS

5.1. Introduction

In the present chapter, the results of the study are discussed in connection to the body of existing literature. It explores the relation of skin tone surveillance and skin modification behaviour, and the lack of association between skin modification behaviour and authentic happiness. It further discusses the failure of appearance contingency of self-worth to act as a moderator between skin tone surveillance and both authentic happiness and skin modification-related behaviours.

5.2. Skin tone surveillance and skin-tone modification (bleaching) behaviours

The current study assessed how self-objectification, conceptualised as skin tone surveillance, is related to women students' engagement in skin modification behaviours. The objectification theory, which contends that Westernized societies train girls and women to regard themselves as aesthetic objects to be looked upon and assessed on the basis of their looks, offers one reason for why women are more likely to experience body dissatisfaction. Girls and women learn that their appearance matters through continual exposure to other people's opinions, particularly those of men, which leads to an increased preoccupation with their own physical attractiveness (Fredrickson et al., 1998).

The current study hypothesized that skin-tone surveillance will be positively associated with skin modification behaviour. There was a statistically significant relationship between skin tone surveillance and skin modification behaviour. The findings concur with those of Buchanan et al. (2008) and Choma and Prusaczyk (2018) who found that women who internalize the white ideal are most likely to monitor their skin tone, leading to dissatisfaction and engagement in skin related modification behaviours. Skin bleaching products have negative effects on health, such as acne, facial hair growth, kidney problems, and skin cancer (e.g., Hunter, 2011), in the same way that people may limit their caloric intake to achieve their

desired body ideal (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Self-objectification, however, also involves a fixation on skin tone or skin colour among women of colour (Buchanan et al., 2008; Townsend et al., 2010; Watson et al., 2012).

Eurocentric conceptions of African beauty were reinterpreted and reshaped by colonial activity in the continent. According to Tate (2007), there is a correlation between "Black women perceived as strong and radiating animal sensuality" and "white European images of beauty, described as delicate, fine, with light features, seen as the ideal discourses of beauty in western society." In Africa, beauty is viewed in terms of manners and not just outwards appearance (Montle, 2020). Likewise, According to Matiza (2013), being gorgeous is not enough in an African environment. Beauty is social in nature; it is communal in nature as opposed to individualistic. An African conception of beauty must have a goal that it accomplishes. Beauty must convey principles, standards, morality, and goals (Matiza, 2013).

5.3. Skin tone surveillance and authentic happiness

The current study hypothesized that skin tone surveillance is negatively associated to authentic happiness. The findings refute the assertion since there is no significant correlation between skin tone surveillance and authentic happiness. Furthermore, authentic happiness is the only variable of the study that was not associated with any of the other variables. The literature on how skin tone surveillance affects authentic happiness is somewhat scant. The current study suggests that skin tone surveillance is most likely related to psychological issues and may not be caused by a lack of authentic happiness but rather by conforming to beauty standards. A lighter skin tone is frequently regarded as a marker of a woman's physical appeal and desire for males all over the world (Allen, 1982; Bond & Cash, 1992; Dansby, 1980; Neal, 1998; Peltzer et al., 2016). Swami (2015) has outlined a number of sociocultural theories that place the phenomenon of body dissatisfaction in the context of macro-level, cultural elements within a specific society that form beauty ideals, which are then passed forward through a variety of sociocultural agents. Media, peer interactions, social pressures, and parental influences rank among these sociocultural forces in importance (Gelles,

2010). Skin tone surveillance among Asian Indian women increased along with the participants' acceptance of cultural norms of attractiveness (Telzer & Vazquez-Garcia, 2009).

Researchers have attempted to analyse the relationship between skin colour and appearance more precisely within the context of investigations of psychological effects. According to the majority of studies, a negative relationship between skin tone and (global or racial) self-esteem was a sign of heightened appearance anxiety (Telzer and Vazquez-Garcia, 2009). In a few earlier studies of young people of colour, it was found that those with darker skin had lower levels of self-esteem, feelings of attractiveness, ethnic pride, and problems with their self-image, as well as more depressive affect and somatic and interpersonal symptomatology than those with lighter skin. Lopez et al. (2012). According to Wilder (2011), black women typically use positive words to describe those with lighter skin, whereas they use negative terms to characterize people with dark skin. Although other studies found the association between skin tone surveillance and self-esteem and authentic happiness, the current study did not.

Black women's use of beautification techniques including weaves, extensions, and straightened hair "de-Africanizes" them, according to Henry (1995). This threatens Africanity because black women conforming to Eurocentric standards of beauty breeds hatred and stigma against African identity. Ashe (1995) adds that "black women use hair straightening as a means, albeit subconsciously, to conform to White society's standards of beauty."

5.4. Appearance Contingent Self-Worth as a Moderator for skin-related modification behaviours.

It was anticipated that appearance contingent self-worth will moderate the association between skin tone surveillance and both body skin modification behaviour among female students. No moderating effect was found in the current study between appearance contingent self-worth between skin tone surveillance and skin-related modification behaviours. Moya-Garofano and Moya (2019) asserts that because meeting high standards of beauty is dependent on others'

expectations rather than their own, appearance-contingent people frequently feel powerless and are vulnerable to appearance-based rejection sensitivity, appearance anxiety, and body shame when they don't meet their standards of attractiveness. They are less inclined to value their body in general (Homan & Tylka, 2015).

Only one experimental study has looked at how appearance contingent self-worth may affect people's responses to feedback that threatens the self (O'Driscoll & Jarry, 2015), despite correlational research showing an association between appearance contingent self-worth and indicators of poor physical and mental health (Adams et al., 2017; Breines et al., 2008; Ching et al., 2021; Clabaugh et al., 2008; Deng et al., 2019; Modica, 2019). This impact supports earlier research demonstrating that high body weight contingent self-worth is linked to higher levels of body image anxiety and increased levels of subjective weight evaluation (Clabaugh et al., 2008). Crocker and Park (2004) stress that although these correlations may appear contradictory, the categories on which people build their sense of self-worth are not always those in which they believe they are successful. Instead, one could think of contingent domains as the spheres of existence where people are under more pressure to achieve. This pressure may create high standards for attractiveness, making women who have higher body-weight contingent self-worth more critical of their real appearance.

Wu et al., (2021) showed that appearance-dependent self-worth acted as a moderator for the effects of compliments on appearance. Wu et al., (2021) discovered that persons with greater levels of appearance contingent self-worth were susceptible to positive feedback that did not threaten the self, and it contributed to poorer cognitive performance, which is inconsistent with the findings of the current study. Positive feedback may have improved the mood of persons who judge themselves by their outward looks, but this should not be mistaken for an instant boost in self-worth. It's because these people frequently suffer an immediate decline in mood and self-esteem in response to negative feedback (Crocker & Park, 2004), which may eventually cause self-esteem to become unstable and contribute to depression (Ching et al., 2021a). According to a study by Ching and Wu (2022), total Facebook use did not significantly correlate with or relate to body esteem or body surveillance, which is inconsistent with earlier

studies on adolescent girls and young women (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014; Trekels et al., 2018). Collection of correlational data demonstrates that placing value on one's physical attractiveness is related to their general physical and psychological well-being, as well as how content people are with their bodies. Additionally, there are gaps in the research on the relationship between authentic happiness and appearance-based self-worth. According to research based on the contingent self-worth/self-esteem theory (Crocker & Park, 2004; Crocker & Wolfe, 2001), people frequently stake their self-worth on things like academic ability, body weight, and physical appearance (Ching et al., 2021a, b; Clabaugh et al., 2008; Crocker et al., 2003; Ward et al., 2020, 2021). While the majority of these studies focused on body weight or disordered eating, more recent research has started to look at people's plans for cosmetic surgery (e.g., Ching & Xu, 2019; Li & Xiao, 2021; Wang et al., 2021).

5.5. Conclusion

In conclusion, empirical literature on self-objectification in women is expanding, and this study contributes to it. It goes beyond the previously researched effects of self-objectification. The students' skin tone surveillance and authentic happiness were not shown to be statistically related. The association between skin tone surveillance and both authentic happiness and behaviour related to skin modification was also not found to be moderated by appearance contingent self-worth. Despite these limitations, the correlational findings of this study are consistent with the body of literature on female body image and skin tone surveillance. However, women who place a high value on their beauty and who have strong self-esteem feel better about themselves when they self-objectify, in part because they believe they are more attractive than other women.

5.6. Limitations to the study

It is important to take into account the study's limitations when interpreting the data. First, the study's homogeneity in terms of age range, race, and gender (females exclusively) constrained sample variability and hampered the study's capacity to generalize its findings to other populations. Second, the sample's socioeconomic diversity was lacking. The majority of participants came from the working class and lower class which made comparisons to other socioeconomic classes difficult. Third, because participants provided the information voluntarily, they might have underreported or just chosen to paint a more favourable picture of themselves. Fourth, the study did not capture satisfaction's of participants with regard to their skin tone.

5.7. Recommendations

Considering the results of this study, it is recommended that future research should ideally be undertaken in many settings with varying cultures, age groups, genders, residences, educational levels, and socioeconomic statuses. Qualitative research in future studies is recommended to explore on their view related to body satisfaction and authentic happiness. Future research should examine additional variables that might mediate the association between skin tone surveillance, skin modification behavior, and authentic happiness as well as with appearance-contingent self-worth among students. Future studies should look into any potential measurement invariance because the meaning of skin bleaching may differ among cultures.

5.8. Summary

The study's results were explored in relation to earlier works of literature in the chapter. The chapter also discusses the study's shortcomings and offers suggestions in light of the findings.

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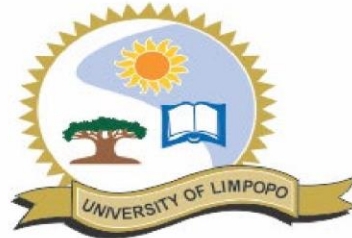
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Ethical clearance



University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 2401, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: trec@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH COMMITTEE
ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 09 January 2023

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/07/2023: PG

PROJECT:

Title: Physical appearance self-worth contingency as moderator of skin-tone surveillance consequences among university students in Polokwane.
Researcher: MJ Maiola
Supervisor: Prof S Mashegoane
Co-Supervisor/s: N/A
School: Social Sciences
Degree: Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology

PROF D MAPOSA 
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: **REC-0310111-031**

Note:

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

Finding solutions for Africa

APPENDIX 2: The letter to request approval to conduct a study at the University of Limpopo.

Department of Psychology
University of Limpopo
Private Bag X 1106
Sovenga
0727

The Director: Research Development & Administration
University of Limpopo
Private Bag X 1106
Sovenga
0727

Dear, Sir/Madam

Re: Application to conduct a study at the University of Limpopo

I hereby am applying for approval to carry out a study at the University of Limpopo. I am a student at the University of Limpopo's Department of psychology at Masters level. The title of my study is "Physical appearance, self-worth contingency as moderator of skin-tone surveillance consequences among university students in Polokwane". The focus of the study is to explore whether dissatisfaction with one's appearance will predict students to engage in skin related modification behaviours such as applying skin lightening products and skin bleaching as a result of skin-tone surveillance. Protection of participants from psychological harm will be given priority during the process. Participants are allowed to sign an informed consent form before they can participate in the study. Furthermore, they will be allowed to withdraw from the study if they feel uncomfortable during the process of gathering information. In the event that someone indicates concerns with the questionnaire, measures will be put

in place. Respondents who are distressed by the questionnaire will be given the addresses of organizations and health professionals and referred to student counselling.

Please find the following documents enclosed:

1. A copy of the proposal.
2. The Questionnaire that will be used for data collection.
3. The approval letter to conduct a study from the University of Limpopo ethics committee.

Upon completion of this study, a copy of the report will be made available to the University. Yours

Faithfully

M.J Majola

Prof S. Mashegoane

Appendix 3: Consent letter

Department of Psychology
University of Limpopo
Private Bag X1106
Sovenga
0727

Dear Participant,

We appreciate your interest in this research, which investigates Physical appearance, self-worth contingency as moderator of skin-tone surveillance consequences among university students in Polokwane.

Your answers to this form will be kept completely private. Your name or the fact that you took part in the study will not be disclosed to the researcher, nor will the answers to the questionnaire be used to identify you. Please be aware that you are totally free to decline to participate in this study at any time.

Please be as honest as you can when responding to all the questions. It's crucial that you take part in this study. I appreciate your cooperation and time.

Yours Truly

.....

Majola MJ (Masters' Student)

.....

Prof S Mashegoane (Supervisor)

Appendix 4: Consent form to be signed by the participant.

I _____ hereby consent to take part in a Master's research study that explore the moderator role of physical appearance, self-worth contingency as moderator of skin-tone surveillance consequences among university students in Polokwane

My understanding of the study's goal is complete. I also understand that I'm participating voluntarily and without any form of pressure. I also understand that I have the option to stop participating in this study at any moment, and that doing so won't have any negative impact on me.

I am aware that this is a research project and that it may not have any direct implications for me. I am aware that the information I provide on this consent form won't be used in conjunction with the interview schedule, and that any replies I provide will be kept private.

Signature: _____

Date: _____