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ABSTRACT

The main objectives of this study are to examine the level of skin tone satisfaction among Malaysian young adults, and to explore the associations between social media addiction, social comparison (upwards and downwards comparison), and skin tone satisfaction. Two models are built: Model 1 proposed that social media addiction and social comparison can significantly influence skin tone satisfaction, and social media addiction can significantly moderate the relationship between social comparison and skin tone satisfaction. Model 2 proposed that social media addiction and social comparison can significantly influence skin tone satisfaction, and social comparison can significantly mediate the relationship between social media addiction and skin tone satisfaction. A total of 414 university students have participated and answered a demographic questionnaire, along with Skin Colour Satisfaction Scale (SCSS), Upwards/Downwards Physical Appearance Comparison Scale (UPACS/DACS) and Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS). Data was analysed using SPSS and AMOS. Descriptive analysis shows that the level of skin tone satisfaction among respondents is moderate. Multivariate analysis shows that only upwards comparison has significant influence on skin tone satisfaction ($\beta = -.448$, $p < .001$). Social media addiction also shows significant moderating effect only on the relationship between upwards comparison and skin tone satisfaction. On the other hand, social media addiction is found to have significant influence on both upwards ($\beta = .474$, $p < .001$) and downwards ($\beta = .311$, $p < .001$) comparison. Upwards comparison is also a significant mediator to the relationship between social media addiction and skin tone satisfaction ($\beta = -.748$, $p = .007$). Downwards comparison do not have the same mediating effect. The implication of this study proves that being addicted to social media can significantly lead to body dissatisfaction issues and thus, expanded the Tripartite Influence Theory in the context of media's role.

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PENGARUH KETAGIHAN MEDIA SOSIAL DAN PERBANDINGAN SOSIAL TERHADAP KEPUASAN WARNA KULIT: PERBANDINGAN MODEL PENYEDERHANAAN DAN PENGANTARAAN

ABSTRAK

Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji tahap kepuasan warna kulit di kalangan belia Malaysia, dan untuk meneroka perkaitan antara ketagihan media sosial, perbandingan sosial (perbandingan ke atas dan ke bawah), dan kepuasan warna kulit. Dua model dibina: Model 1 mencadangkan bahawa ketagihan media sosial dan perbandingan sosial boleh mempengaruhi kepuasan warna kulit dengan signifikan, dan ketagihan media sosial boleh menyederhanakan hubungan antara perbandingan sosial dan kepuasan warna kulit dengan signifikan. Model 2 mencadangkan bahawa ketagihan media sosial dan perbandingan sosial boleh mempengaruhi kepuasan warna kulit dengan signifikan, dan perbandingan sosial boleh menjadi pengantara signifikan dalam hubungan antara ketagihan media sosial dan kepuasan warna kulit. Seramai 414 pelajar universiti telah mengambil bahagian dan menjawab soal selidik demografi, bersama-sama Skala Kepuasan Warna Kulit (SCSS), Skala Perbandingan Penampilan Fizikal Ke Atas/Ke Bawah (UPACS/DACS) dan Skala Ketagihan Media Sosial Bergen (BSMAS). Data dianalisis menggunakan SPSS dan AMOS. Analisis deskriptif menunjukkan tahap kepuasan warna kulit dalam kalangan responden adalah sederhana. Analisis multivariat menunjukkan bahawa hanya perbandingan ke atas mempunyai pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap kepuasan warna kulit (β = -.448, *p* <.001). Ketagihan media sosial juga menunjukkan kesan penyederhanaan yang signifikan hanya pada hubungan antara perbandingan ke atas dan kepuasan warna kulit. Sebaliknya, ketagihan media sosial didapati mempunyai pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap kedua-dua perbandingan ke atas (β = .474, *p* <.001) dan ke bawah (β = .311, *p* <.001). Perbandingan ke atas juga merupakan pengantara yang signifikan kepada hubungan antara ketagihan media sosial dan kepuasan warna kulit (β = -.748, *p* = .007). Perbandingan ke bawah tidak mempunyai kesan pengantara yang sama. Implikasi kajian ini membuktikan bahawa ketagihan kepada media sosial boleh membawa kepada isu ketidakpuasan badan yang signifikan dan dengan itu, memperluaskan Teori *Tripartite Influence* dalam konteks peranan media.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMOS	Analysis of a Moment Structures
BSMAS	Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale
DACS	Downwards Physical Appearance Comparison Scale
DC	Downwards comparison
SCSS	Skin Colour Satisfaction Scale
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SMA	Social media addiction
SPSS	Statistical Packages for Social Sciences
STS	Skin tone satisfaction
UC	Upwards comparison
UPACS	Upwards Physical Appearance Comparison Scale
UPSI	Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of this study. The overview includes the research background, problem statement, research questions, aims and objectives, and variables of the research. This chapter also presents the conceptual frameworks, hypotheses, theoretical framework of this study, scopes, and also significance of the study.

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1.2 Research Background

People and attractiveness can never be separated. For hundreds of years, people have been found to implement many beautifying routines for instance wearing make-up, using skincare regimes, working out, and incorporating specific diets to improve or enhance their appearance. The notions that good-looking people will receive better communal treatment, give higher social status, and have better prospects in finding potential mates have been established in many cultural and societal norms, making that people will always be inclined to do something to improve their appearances (Hamermesh, 2011; Hosoda et al., 2003; Rhode, 2010).

The need to appear attractive has led to the emergence of beauty standards that vary over cultures, and one of the most common beauty standards that still exists today is fair skin tone. In South Asian countries, the emergence of these beauty standards can be associated with the colonial legacy that occurred many years ago, where it was believed that white is powerful and beautiful because white people is the ruler and darker skin toned natives were the ruled ones (Rusmadi et al., 2015; Shankar & Subish, 2007). Even to this day, this beauty standard is still being upheld by South Asians as symbolized by the skin-lightening trend that is persistently happening.

There are high demands of skin bleaching products in Southeast Asia, and because of these demands, the companies keep on producing and delivering the beauty product to the consumers just for the sake of profits (Karmali, 2017; Kihara, 2018; Marketwatch.com, 2018; Sagoe et al., 2019). The high demand for skin-lightening products insinuates that many people are buying and are actively using these products (Mohd Jamilul & Redzuan, 2021). This shows that people are likely not

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satisfied with their natural skin tone hence adopting skin bleaching behavior to change it. Figure 1.1 shows samples of advertisement materials used to promote these extreme products.

Figure 1.1. Examples Of Promotional Materials For Skin-Lightening Products. Source From Lynnbeautyherbs.Com (2019) And Shopee.Com (2021)

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Past research has shown that one of the many factors to any dissatisfaction that a person could feel about themselves is social comparison (Mills et al., 2017; Mingoia et al., 2017). When people begin to compare themselves to other people, the result will highlight any differences or sameness that they may have with the other person. Specifically, social comparison happened in the form of comparing ourselves with somebody else who fits our customized “perfect” standards, which could lead us to feel good, neutral, or bad about ourselves (Vogel et al., 2014). As a consequence, those who are unsatisfied with their natural skin tone are more likely to try to take some measures to be alike with the people they are comparing themselves to.

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Nowadays, people in close vicinity are not the only source that we could use to compare ourselves with. Social media platforms could provide vast opportunities for social comparison to occur because their users tend to compare themselves with other people on dimensions that are relevant to self-worth, for example, attractiveness or social connectedness (Appel et al., 2020). Due to social media distinctive features where it encompasses elements of interactivity and connectedness that enable users to communicate with peers and/or public figures virtually, excessive social media users are prone to perceive, compare and internalize cultural beauty ideals as shown on their screen (Appel et al., 2020; Mills et al., 2017; Mingoia et al., 2017).

1.3 Problem Statement

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Many cases have been reported in national media about the harmful effects of using excessive skin lightening products, which include skin cancer, thinning of the skin, cataracts, damage on the liver and kidneys, osteoporosis, nerve damage, and not to be excluded psychological disruption (Lisut et al., 2017; Mohd. Said, 2016; Olumide, 2010; Yaacob, 2019). In addition to that, the Ministry of Health (MOH) always keep track of locally branded companies that produced and sell extreme whitening products and when pharmaceutical tests were conducted on these products, ever so frequently these products were proven to contain harmful ingredients (Bernama, 2021; Irwan, 2021; MyHealth.com, 2016; Nik Salleh, 2016; National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency, 2019).

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Despite this, these harmful products still can be seen being marketed and sold in public places (Abd Malik et al., 2018; Bernama, 2021; Karmali, 2017) and online (Mohd Jamilul & Redzuan, 2021; Norlida, 2021; Muhd Syalmizi, 2021; Raja, 2021). Based on the high number of demands on skin lightening products in Malaysia, it shows that people are willing to risk their health in exchange to lighten up their natural skin tone (Harian Metro, 2018; Karmali, 2017; Kihara, 2018; Lisut et al., 2017; Marketwatch.com, 2018; Norlida, 2021; Raja, 2021). Moreover, past research also showed that young adult individuals whose age ranges from 20 to 30 years old are more prone to use skin bleaching products (Amodu et al., 2018; Charles & McLean, 2017; Lewis et al., 2011; Sagoe et al., 2018). These facts raise the question of how unsatisfied are Malaysians with their natural skin tone, to which they are inclined to use extreme products to become whiter?

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On the other hand, multiple studies have shown that Malaysians have a very high usage of social media platforms (Ahmad et al., 2018; Yahya et al., 2018, Kemp, 2020). A survey conducted by We Are Social revealed that as of January 2020, out of 32.16 million Malaysians in total population, 26 million (81%) of them were active social media users since April 2019 (Kemp, 2020). By “active social media users”, it means that the social media users in Malaysia have 100% visited and used social media platforms in the past month. Every Malaysian were also found to spend an average of 2 hours and 45 minutes on social media daily, with the most used social media platforms are YouTube (93%), What’s App (91%), Facebook (87%), Instagram (72%), and FB Messenger (63%) (Kemp, 2020). Besides, it was also found those who spent more time on social media tend to compare themselves more with other people especially in terms of appearance comparison (Ahmad et al., 2018; Chua & Change, 2016; Fox & Vendemia, 2016). This implies the possibility that those who use social

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media more are also more likely to feel more dissatisfied about themselves, inclusive of their skin tone.

More substantial scientific research is needed to understand and explain the persistent use of harmful skin-lightening products in our society. However, a large knowledge gap about these issues can be seen by the very limited studies that have investigated the level of skin tone satisfaction in the Malaysian setting (Rusmadi et al., 2015). As of 2018, previous studies in Malaysia only measure the skin lightening tendency but not the level of skin tone satisfaction that Malaysians perceived (Rusmadi et al., 2015). In addition, very limited studies in Malaysia have investigated the factors that may contribute to skin tone dissatisfaction experienced by Malaysian society, as resembled by their tendency to change their skin tone (Rusmadi et al., 2015). In the worldwide context, although many studies have studied relationships between social comparison and skin tone satisfaction, very limited studies have specifically studied the effect of two types of social comparison (upwards and downwards) on skin tone satisfaction, in which more focus has been put on the former rather than the latter (Mills et al., 2017; Mingoia et al., 2017). In addition, there are limited studies that have tested the role of social media addiction as one of the possible predictors of skin tone satisfaction (Appel et al., 2020). These are the gaps that the researcher intended to fill through this study.

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1.4 Research Questions

The followings are the questions that the researcher aimed to find the answers to throughout this study:

Q1: What is the level of skin tone satisfaction among Malaysian young adults?

Q2: Is there any significant influence of social media addiction on skin tone satisfaction?

Q3: Is there any significant influence of social comparison on skin tone satisfaction?

Q4: Is social media addiction a significant moderator for the association between social comparison and skin tone satisfaction?

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1.5 Research Aims And Objectives

This study aims to examine the level of skin tone satisfaction and to study whether two psychosocial factors – i.e., social comparison and social media addiction – could significantly contribute to skin tone satisfaction perceived by Malaysian young adults. Based on findings from the literature (which will be discussed in Chapter 2), these two variables are found to significantly contribute to skin tone satisfaction, hence, this study intends to test and confirm this model. As such, the objectives of this study are as follow:

O1: To evaluate the level of skin tone satisfaction among Malaysian young adults

O2: To examine the influence of social media addiction on skin tone satisfaction

O3: To examine the influence of social comparison on skin tone satisfaction

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O4: To investigate the moderating role of social media addiction on the relationship between social comparison and skin tone satisfaction

1.6 Model Building: Conceptual Framework And Hypotheses Of Current Study

Based on findings in the literature reviews, a proposed model (Model 1) on the relationships of social media addiction, social comparison, and skin tone satisfaction is built. The model will be tested on the data sample to confirm the findings from past studies. Since this study examines a behavioral phenomenon, another proposed model (Model 2) is also built and will serve as a competing model against Model 1. At the end of this study, the researcher will select which model is the best fit to explain this phenomenon based on the current sample. The proposed model 1 and model 2 are presented below.

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1.6.1 Proposed Model 1 And Hypotheses

The researcher proposed that model 1 would be able to convey the influence of social media addiction and social comparison on skin tone satisfaction, based on findings reported by Bagautdinova (2018), Mills et al. (2017), Mingoia et al. (2017), and Tiggeman et al. (2018). Social media addiction is also hypothesized to be able to moderate the relationship between social comparison and skin tone satisfaction based on findings reported by Betz et al. (2019), Prichard et al. (2020), Brown and Tiggeman (2020), and Tiggeman and Zinoviev (2019). The conceptual framework of this Model 1 is displayed in Figure 1.2.

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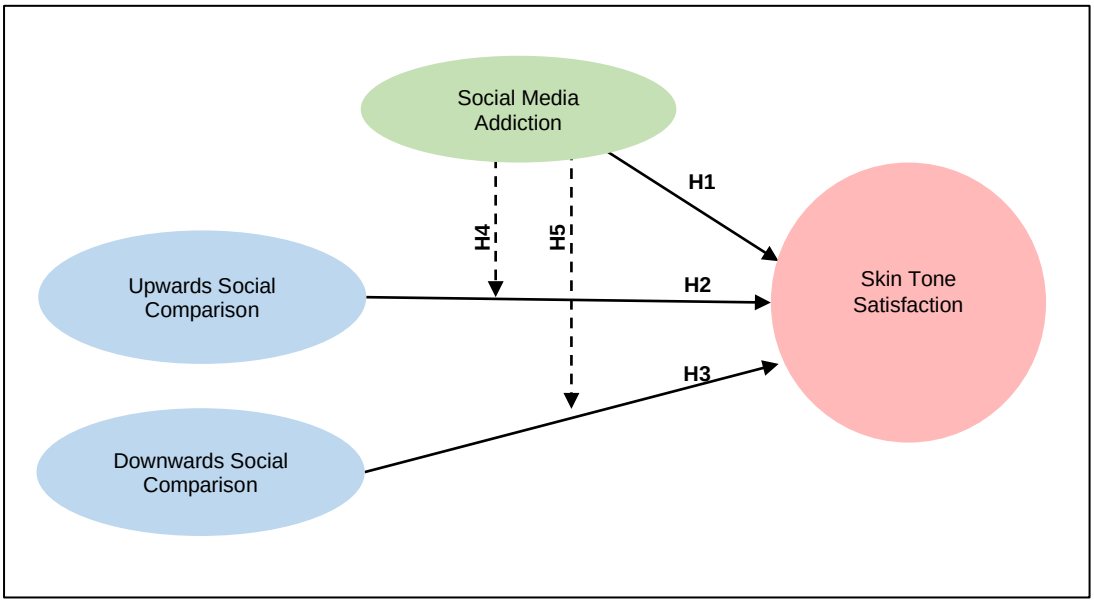

Figure 1.2. Conceptual Framework Of Model 1

They are five hypotheses that will be tested in Model 1, which are constructed based on findings in previous studies. They are as follows:

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H1: Social media addiction has a significant influence on skin tone satisfaction

H2: Upwards social comparison has a significant influence on skin tone satisfaction

H3: Downwards social comparison has a significant influence on skin tone satisfaction

H4: Social media addiction significantly moderate the relationship between upwards comparison and skin tone satisfaction

H5: Social media addiction significantly moderate the relationship between downwards comparison and skin tone satisfaction

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1.6.2 Proposed Model 2 And Hypotheses

In Model 2, the researcher also proposed that there is a significant influence of social media addiction and social comparison on skin tone satisfaction based on findings reported by Bagautdinova (2018), Mills et al. (2017), Mingoia et al. (2017), and Tiggeman et al. (2018). However, this model proposed that the association of social media addiction with skin tone satisfaction is mediated by social comparison based on findings from Fardouly and Vartanian (2016). In addition, social media addiction is also hypothesized to have a significant impact on a social comparison based on Appel et al. (2019). The conceptual framework of this model is displayed in Figure 1.3.

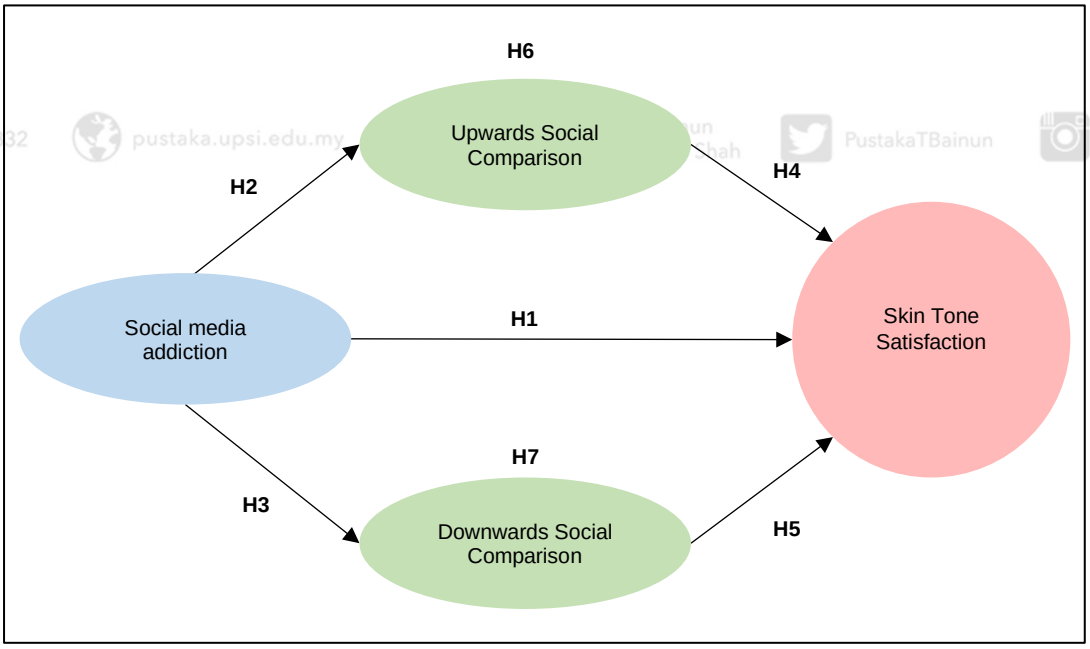

Figure 1.3. Conceptual Framework Of Model 2

Model 2 comprises of seven hypotheses. All hypotheses were constructed based on findings from past studies. They are as follows:

H1: Social media addiction has a significant influence on skin tone satisfaction

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H2: Social media addiction has a significant influence on upwards comparison

H3: Social media addiction has a significant influence on downwards comparison

H4: Upwards comparison has a significant influence on skin tone satisfaction

H5: Downwards comparison has a significant influence on skin tone satisfaction

H6: Upwards comparison significantly mediate the relationship between social media addiction and skin tone satisfaction

H7: Downwards comparison significantly mediate the relationship between social media addiction and skin tone satisfaction

1.7 Operational Definition Of Variables

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In this section, the variables will be described in terms of conceptual and operational definitions applicable to this study. There are three variables in this study, namely social media addiction, social comparison, and skin tone satisfaction.

1.7.1 Social Media Addiction

Social media or social network services addiction is defined as being overly concerned about social media, being driven by a strong motivation to log on to or use social media, and devoting so much time and effort to social media that it impairs other social activities, studies or job, interpersonal relationships, and/or psychological health and

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well-being (Andreassen & Pallesen, 2014). In this study, social media addiction is the independent variable in Model 1 and Model 2, and the moderating variable in Model 1.

The operational definition of social media addiction is the total score of the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS) (Andreassen, Torsheim, Brunborg & Pallesen, 2012). The score ranges from 6 to 30. Higher score indicates higher addiction to social media. The developer also stated that score of 19 and higher indicates an addiction to social media.

1.7.2 Social Comparison

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Social comparison is a social assessment that individuals made where they compare themselves with other people to favor themselves (Festinger, 1954; Reategui & Palmer, 2017). Comparisons allow an individual to assess themselves with another person on a personally relevant criterion, and this behavior is evolutionarily adaptive and thus deeply ingrained in human psychology (Buunk & Gibbons, 2007).

There are three types of social comparisons: upwards, lateral, and downwards comparisons. Upward comparison is when we compare ourselves with someone who fares off better than us, lateral comparisons are when we compare ourselves with someone in the same level of achievement as us, and downward comparisons is when we compare ourselves with someone who is lacking compared to us (Buunk & Gibbons, 2007).

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In this study, upwards and downwards social comparison are the independent variables in Model 1 and Model 2, the dependent variables in Model 2, and also the mediating variables in Model 2. The operational definition of upwards comparison is the average score of Upward Physical Appearance Comparison Scale (UPACS) (O'Brien, Caputi, Minto, Peoples, Hooper, Kell, & Sawley, 2009). The average score of UPACS ranges from 1 to 5, and higher mean score indicates higher tendency to commit upwards comparison. Meanwhile, downward social comparison is operationally defined as the average score of Downward Physical Appearance Comparison Scales (DACS) (O'Brien, Caputi, Minto, Peoples, Hooper, Kell, & Sawley, 2009). The mean score of DACS ranges from 1 to 5, and higher mean score indicates higher tendency to commit downwards comparison.

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1.7.3 Skin Tone Satisfaction

Skin tone satisfaction is defined as the satisfaction that an individual may perceive in regards to their skin tone compared to other people's skin tone (Hutchinson, Pritchard, Ettridge, & Wilson, 2015; Swami, Henry, Peacock, Roberts-Dunn, & Porter, 2013). A person's low satisfaction towards their skin tone might be characterized by the intentional usage of products or methods to make the original skin tone appear lighter or darker, where the products or behavior are capable of changing the tone of their skin over time for example using lightening cream or tanning under direct sunlight (Choma & Prusaczyk, 2018; Hutchinson, Pritchard, Ettridge, & Wilson, 2015).

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In this study, skin tone satisfaction is the dependent variable and is operationally defined as the mean score of the Skin Color Satisfaction Scale (SCSS) (Falconer & Neville, 2000). The mean score of SCSS ranges from 1 to 9, and higher mean score indicates higher satisfaction with their natural skin tone (less score means greater skin tone dissatisfaction).

1.8 Theoretical Framework

Two theories were used as the theoretical framework to support the current study, which is the Tripartite Influence Model and Social Comparison Theory.

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1.8.1 Tripartite Influence Model

The Tripartite Influence Model is an established theory that was developed by Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, and Tantleff-Dunn (1999) to explain the cause of body image dissatisfaction and eating disorders. This model theorized that there are three sources or factors that can contribute to a person's body image namely family, friends, and media (Thompson et. al, 1999). These three factors affected body image through two mechanisms; they lead the individual to internalize cultural beauty ideals and later encourage appearance-based social comparison with other people in their society.

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The concurrent of these two mechanisms will lead the person to develop body image dissatisfaction, in which obsessive internalization of cultural body ideals and excessive appearance comparison will lead to greater body image dissatisfaction (Craddock, Dlova & Diedrichs, 2018; Keery, van den Berg, & Thompson, 2004; Thompson et al., 1999). Body image dissatisfaction will then incur unhealthy behaviors to cope with their dissatisfaction, such as depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and harmful skin bleaching (Abd Malik, Shamsuddin, & Msar, 2018; Bucchianeri & Neumark-Sztainer, 2014; Harian Metro, 2018; Lisut, Mohd Noor & Aziz, 2017). Given that skin tone is a major constituent of cultural beauty ideals, specifically in the Asian region, this model might usefully explain the role of sociocultural pressures for lighter skin tone that can lead to body image dissatisfaction (Craddock, Dlova & Diedrichs, 2018; Roberts-Dunn & Porter, 2013; Swami, Henry, Peacock & Hunter, 2013).

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In the context of skin tone satisfaction, the Tripartite Influence Model is applicable where exposure to beauty ideals – in this case, possessing light skin tone – through social media platforms and sociocultural pressures can lead to internalization of beauty ideals and therefore leads to skin tone dissatisfaction. In Malaysian society, being thin and having light skin can be considered as beauty ideals based on numerous products that were marketed targeting these criteria (Karmali, 2017; Kihara, 2018; Makertwatch.com, 2018). Beauty ideals in Malaysia also can be seen based on the physical attributes of most celebrities and most followed social media influencers in Malaysia, where majorities are slim-bodied and fair skin.

Some celebrities in Malaysia did come up with their brand of skin lightening products, if not endorsing for other brands. The impact that they have over their fans and entertainment industry directly correlates with the internalization effect of

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Malaysian's beauty ideals over common citizens. Numerous irresponsible companies also took the opportunity to produced and marketed fake products with questionable to sell at a very low price to attract people to purchase. The penetrations of other countries' entertainment contents, cultural trends, and beauty products into the Malaysian market (for instance, Korean idols and actors with their fair and flawless skin) also indirectly influence the internalization of cultural beauty ideals of Malaysians.

Hence, provided that this research intends to seek the relationship between social media addiction and skin tone satisfaction, this model can be useful in explaining the claim that using social media excessively can lead to the internalization of beauty ideals and engagement in appearance comparison, therefore contribute to skin tone dissatisfaction.

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1.8.2 Social Comparison

This theory was first developed by Festinger (1954) who proposed that humans are believed to have the tendency or innate drive to compare themselves with other people. This comparison serves many purposes, including self-evaluation, deriving a decision based on the social environment, and configuring one's thoughts to enhance one's self-esteem (Camerer & Lovallo, 1999; Corcoran, Crucius & Mussweiler, 2011; Reategui & Palmer, 2017; Taylor & Brown, 1988). Most of the time humans compare themselves to favor themselves which by comparing themselves with people who are underperformed than they are, they will be defined as better by contrast (Reategui & Palmer, 2017).

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According to Social Comparison Theory, there are two directions in which social comparison can be distinguished: the upwards, lateral, and downwards comparison. The upwards comparison occurs when the individual that we are comparing with are in better circumstances than we currently are, for example, they have a bigger fortune or better physical appearance than we do. Lateral comparison is when we compare ourselves with other people who shared the same attributes, capabilities, weaknesses, and strengths as we do. Downward comparison occurs when we compare ourselves with people who are in lesser condition than we currently are, for example, they have lesser fortune than we do. Presumably, upwards comparison is supposed to help us enhance ourselves to become a better person while downwards comparison is to help us to positively self-evaluate ourselves.

Concerning the current study, in this digital age where anything can be shared with anyone with just a few taps of a finger, people have been foregoing interpersonal communication with digital interactions through social network services. With the freedom to post anything on one's profile, social media platforms allow people to become selective with the content they post, thus presenting themselves in an ideal light. This innocuously leads people to compare their own real offline life to the idealized, edited online version of what they see on social media platforms. The idolization of celebrities, cultural beauty ideals, and appearance-based comparison are sprouted through social media usage.

As this research investigates the relationship between social media addiction on the relationship between social comparison and skin tone satisfaction, Social Comparison Theory will be used as the theoretical framework to study the phenomenon where people are comparing themselves with other users through social

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network services. By looking at pictures of peers and celebrities, advertisements, and current trends that were posted online, people are unconsciously comparing themselves and subsequently evoking certain emotional reactions in themselves, which can lead to feeling negative about themselves. Their self-comparisons with these types of content that they were being exposed to every day are not healthy and could affect their well-being and self-esteem, and subsequently lead to skin tone and body image dissatisfaction.

1.9 Scope Of Study

The scope of this study is based on sample population context. As this study intends to investigate the nature of skin lightening behaviors represented by Malaysians' persistence in using harmful skin lightening products, this study is focusing on Malaysians only. This study also focuses on the young adult population as this age group was found to use skin-lightening products the most and uses social media platforms the most. For this research, Malaysian young adults are sampled from Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) students. As UPSI enrolled students from various countries in various age groups, the researcher has emphasized the two inclusion criteria: 1) respondents of this study must be of Malaysian nationalities, and 2) respondents' age range must be from 18 to 35 years old.

1.10 Significance Of Study

The main significance of this research is that the finding from this research can be used to educate our fellow Malaysians about this phenomenon and its prevalence,

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along with the factors that may contribute to this phenomenon existing in our society. The finding can also contribute to the bank of knowledge especially about research about this issue, considering that not much research has been carried out before in regards to skin tone dissatisfaction in Southeast Asia generally and in Malaysia specifically.

The result can also be used to test out the claim that due to the expansive use of social media throughout our daily lives, the exposure of skin bleaching products in the forms of online advertisements and promotions, and also flawless fair skin tone selfies posted by social media celebrities might influence or even condition the society to internalized light skin ideals, therefore could lead to skin tone dissatisfaction for those who did not fit the ideals. Should the result of this research support this claim, social media then cannot be excluded from being one of the factors that might influence skin tone dissatisfaction. Thus, the governments and authorities can take suitable measures to increase the awareness among Malaysians about the harm of using skin bleaching products. Also, more measures can be taken, and more campaigns can be created to encourage body positivity, body acceptance, and social media literacy especially in regards to natural skin tone.

Aside from that, it was hoped that the result from this study can give some insight and enlightenment to the public in terms of the underlying factors that could contribute to them feeling unsatisfied with their natural skin tone. Hopefully, the findings can dampen their persistent usage of harmful and fast-turnover lightening products and make them think more before purchasing a hefty amount of skin lightening products. Using skin lightening products in extreme amounts not only could endanger their health but also consuming in terms of time, cost and effort. Less money spent on

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questionable, risky products could lessen the risk of them getting physiological damages, and subsequently, lessen the possibility to spend more money and resources on recovery or any treatment necessary later.

Regardless of all, the researcher is hopeful that future researchers can use this study as a reference to help with their research, and skin tone satisfaction and body image concerns among the Malaysian population can be explored more extensively after this.

1.11 Summary

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This chapter has described the fundamental aspects of this study, namely background of the study, problem statements, objective, hypotheses, and conceptual framework to illustrate this study better. This chapter has also covered the definitions of variables, the significance of the study, and the theoretical framework to help support the hypotheses constructed previously. It was hoped that by now the readers have gained some idea about this study.

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