

2016

The Effect of Objectified Images in the Media on the Development of Body Dissatisfaction and Depressive Symptoms in Filipino American Women

Nicole J. Dionisio
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Walden University

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2016

Abstract

The Effect of Objectified Images in the Media on the Development of Body
Dissatisfaction and Depressive Symptoms in Filipino American Women

by

Nicole J. Dionisio

MA, Liberty University, 2005

BA, Biola University, 2001

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Clinical Psychology

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October 2016

Abstract

Although Filipinos are becoming one of the largest Asian groups in the U.S there is limited research regarding mental health challenges Filipino women experience specifically regarding body satisfaction and self-image. The goal of this explorative qualitative study was to explore the relationship between objectified images of women in the media and the reported levels of body dissatisfaction in a sample of 8 American-born Filipino women and 8 Philippine-born Filipino women. Objectification theory was used to guide this research and levels of sociocultural influences, body satisfaction, and body consciousness were explored through a qualitative research design using statements from the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire-3, the Body-Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults, and the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale. Participants were interviewed individually and the data were coded in order to determine patterns and themes. Results revealed that the Philippine-born participants relied more on images in the media than the American-born participants of the study in relation to what is attractive and fashionable. However as a whole, the data found that the majority of the participating women felt comfortable with their bodies and physical appearance. The results of this study could help create greater awareness of the issues that Filipino American women deal with in relation to their bodies and self-image through the development of initiatives to treat Filipino American women who may be suffering from mental health issues due to objectification as culturally Filipinos typically do not seek psychological intervention. If programs could be designed specifically for Filipinos targeting issues with body satisfaction, fewer Filipinos may be affected by poor body-image.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this to all of the people, family and friends, who have been supportive and understanding of what I went through during this doctoral process. I would like to thank them for their moral support and for listening to me as I was challenged, stressed, frustrated, and grew as a person over the years. There have been multiple times I wanted to give up and walk away and you all helped me to stay focused and level headed. I would also like to thank Katherine, in Australia, who would chat with me during the early morning hours. She helped keep me awake while I did school work, we finally did it!

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Chapter I: Introduction to the Study

Sexualization of women in the media is not a new concept. Traditionally, women have been portrayed in pornographic films as objectified sexual objects that exist to fulfill sexual desires of men (McKee, 2000). According to this male-dominated view of sexuality, women are to be sexy or sex objects (Monder, 2007). Fredrickson, Noll, Quinn, Roberts, and Twenge (1998) stated that girls and women in U.S. culture view themselves “through a veil of sexism, measuring their self-worth by evaluating their physical appearance against our culture's sexually objectifying and unrealistic standards of beauty” (p. 270). Western culture has often been criticized for focusing on the slim ideal, meaning that women are to be thin in order to be found attractive (Farralles & Chapman, 1999; Lake, Glowinski, & Staiger, 2000). This phenomenon has been linked to an increase in body modification procedures and eating disorders in Western women due to women having lowered levels of body satisfaction or higher levels of body dissatisfaction (Mautner, Furnham, & Owen, 2000).

Standards of beauty differ from culture to culture as well as from time period to time period (Swami, Eion, Furnham, & Jones, 2009). Sociocultural constructs about what the standard of physical attractiveness for women has changed from prehistoric times to the present day and varies from culture to culture (Swami et al., 2009). For example, people in less affluent countries where resources may be limited often feel that being overweight is more positive than negative as it is a sign of prosperity and wealth (Swami et al., 2009). However, in Western cultures, overweight individuals are often seen as lazy, incompetent, unattractive, and less intelligent than their thinner counterparts (Degner & Wentura, 2009). Generally, the societal ideal of attractiveness and beauty may

prompt women to control their diets, exercise, undergo cosmetic surgery procedures, and/or use tanning products or skin lightening products in order to achieve the cultural image of the ideal beauty.

Viewing media images of tall, tanned, and thin women can exacerbate presenting symptoms of poor self-esteem, low self-worth, and body dissatisfaction in women and lead to inappropriate eating habits (Farralles & Chapman, 1999; Vartanian, 2009). Women have reported more negative feelings and poor body satisfaction and body image after viewing media images of thin models (Joshi, Herman, & Polivy, 2004). Individuals who are more susceptible to internalizing societal constructs of attractiveness are at higher risks for developing eating disorders (Vartanian, 2009), experiencing psychological stress and trauma (Park & Maner, 2009; Sanchez & Broccoli, 2008), and engaging in maladaptive exercising and grooming behaviors in order to try to achieve the societal ideal of beauty portrayed in the media (Cox et al., 2009).

Historically it was thought that only Western women were affected by Western beauty ideals. However, North American and/or Western cultural beauty and fashion trends have been increasingly introduced to foreign markets through the globalization of mass media (Chen, Benet-Martinez, & Bond, 2008; Kayano et al., 2008; Nelson & Paek, 2007). As a result, numerous cultural groups have been influenced by mainstream U.S. media (Forbes & Jung, 2008; Mautner, Furnham, & Owen, 2000). This phenomenon has the possibility of leading to lower levels of body satisfaction and increased risk for developing eating disorders in women across the globe (Kayano et al., 2008; Smeesters & Mandel, 2006). Much of the literature regarding body dissatisfaction in the United States focuses on African American women (Fitzsimmons-Craft & Bardone-Cone, 2012;

Gordon 2008; Mitchell & Mazzeo, 2009; Rogers Wood & Petrie, 2010), European American women (Fitzsimmons-Craft & Bardone-Cone, 2012; Mitchell & Mazzeo, 2009; Snooks & Hall, 2002), and Hispanic/Latina American women (Grabe & Hyde, 2006; Snooks & Hall, 2002; Warren, Castillo, & Gleaves, 2010). Although there are several studies on East Asian women (George & Franko, 2010; Jung & Forbes, 2007; Wardle, Haase, & Steptoe, 2006), there seems to be minimal research regarding mental health challenges Filipino women experience even though this group is the second largest and fastest growing Asian group in the United States (Farralles & Chapman, 1999; Tuason, Harris, Martin, Rollings, & Taylor, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

There is limited research regarding how the Filipino culture views body image and body satisfaction. However, Farreles and Chapman (1999) found that, although the Filipino immigrant respondents in their study voiced a desire to be thin like their Canadian counterparts, there was an underlying statement of a value that being overweight was synonymous with being healthy. The contrast of values originating in the host country contrasted with values from the country of origin; this can affect the level of body satisfaction, body image, and self-esteem of immigrants and could lead to unhealthy eating habits (Lake, Glowinski, & Staiger, 2000). There is research regarding acculturation issues with Filipino Americans (Enrile & Agbayani, 2007); although there are gaps in terms of how acculturation relates to body image or body satisfaction issues in Filipino Americans. The purpose of this study was to provide more information regarding

body satisfaction and body image in this culture in order to help develop programs to help Filipino American women gain a better appreciation of their bodies and image.

Theoretical Orientation

Internalization of sexualized or ideal images of beauty can have significant psychological ramifications. Fredrickson et al. (1998) described self-objectification as the result of having internalized what is known to a woman and what that woman either imagined or deduced about how others view how that woman looks. This type of internalization ultimately influences how a woman feels about herself and can guide how a woman presents herself to others as well as influence that woman's grooming behavior (Fredrickson et al., 1998). Objectification theorists posit that gender socialization and sexual objectification is related to mental health problems such as depression (Moradi & Huang, 2008). When women internalize externally presented ideals of beauty and become more aware of body surveillance, they are at greater risk for experiencing depression. Some women base their life experiences and body satisfaction on the ideal of the thin figure (Muehlenkamp & Saris-Baglama, 2002). An increase in monitoring any and all changes in the body can also increase body shame as a woman compares herself to a cultural standard and feels as if she has failed to measure up (Moradi & Huang, 2008).

The development of the sense of self in terms of beauty can be influenced by a variety of external factors. According to sociocultural theory, social constructs about female attractiveness conveyed through media and family and peer groups can impact individuals who do not feel as if they fit into the definitions for attractiveness that they

see around them (Dittmar 2005; Forbes & Jung, 2008; Heinberg, 2001; Morrison, Kailin, & Morrison, 2004; Tsiantas & King, 2001). An inability to live up to these often unattainable cultural standards can lead to psychological stress and trauma (Park & Maner, 2009; Sanchez & Broccoli, 2008). When individuals measure their sense of worth and self-esteem in terms of approval of others, they can present with a variety of negative outcomes (Boden & Horwood, 2006) such as lowered self-esteem, self-doubt, feelings of rejection (Park & Maner, 2009), depression, lowered academic achievement, shame, anxiety, eating disorders, and sexual dysfunction (Sanchez & Broccoli, 2008).

According to objectification theory, women's dissatisfaction with their bodies can be one of the explanations as to why women are more likely to experience depression than men in Western cultures (Mercurio & Landry, 2008; Moradi & Huang, 2008). Although scholars have looked into the correlation between depressive symptoms and poor self-esteem due to sexualized cultural attitudes (Boden & Horwood, 2006; Park & Maner, 2009; Sanchez & Broccoli, 2008), there is limited research regarding the impact of sexualized or objectified images on the relationship between depressive symptoms and body dissatisfaction in Filipino American women. Several studies were found that focused specifically on cultural attitudes in Filipino women towards being thin, having high levels of body dissatisfaction, and engaging in restrictive eating practices (Edman & Yates, 2005; Kayano et al., 2008). Edman and Yates (2005) focused on Filipino-American adolescents living in Hawaii and used the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale to measure if Filipino women had a different depression construct than European Americans. Edman and Yates found that Filipinos do not differentiate a depressed affect from symptoms of somatic-retardation. Kayano et al (2008) focused on

Filipinos in the Philippines rather than in the United States. In this study, I focused on Filipino American women in order to raise awareness and provide more information regarding this group.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative explorative study was to explore whether sexualized images and sociocultural factors influence body satisfaction and self-esteem development in Filipino American women. There is existing research about Western culture and European American women (DeBraganza & Hausenblas, 2010); however, there has been limited research that has involved the Filipino American population.

Filipino Americans are the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States (Kim, Atkinson, Hong, Wolfe, & Yang, 2001; Sanchez & Gaw, 2007; Willgerodt & Thompson, 2006). Some believe that all Asian cultures are the same (Salvador, Kim, & Omizo, 1997; Sanchez & Gaw, 2007; Tuason et al., 2007); however, research has demonstrated that the Filipino culture is different from other cultures in important ways that should be considered by mental health professionals. This makes it particularly important to understand the issues involving this group of women.

Nature of the Study

An explorative qualitative research design approach was employed using one-to-one individual interviews. Participants were asked to provide demographic information prior to beginning the interviews. Both American-born Filipino and Philippine-born women were sampled in order to determine attitudes towards body satisfaction based on sociocultural attitudes towards ideal beauty.

Definitions of Terms

Acculturation: Acculturation can be defined as the process of the natural and host cultures interacting with each other and the adoption of the behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs of the host country (Suinn, 2010).

Body dissatisfaction: Body dissatisfaction can encompass dissatisfaction with various specific body parts. It can lead to mild to severe psychological distress and also to extreme measures being used to modify the body parts in question (Wertheim, Blaney, & Paxton, 2009).

Body image: Body image was defined as how an individual perceives his or her physical appearance (Ramachandran & Rogers-Ramachandran, 2007).

Ideal beauty: Ideal beauty, for the purpose of this paper, was defined as typical culturally based ideals of beauty in the United States (Engeln-Maddox & Miller, 2008).

Ideal images: For the purpose of this study, this was defined as images in the media of tall, thin, and beautiful women (Tiggemann & Polivy, 2010).

Mass media: Methods of communication including print, television, and film (DeBraganza & Hausenblas, 2008).

Objectified images: Images in the media of a woman's body that focus on specific body parts instead of the whole body. Often these images are sexualized, thereby exacerbating the idea that women are solely sexual objects (Murnen, Good, Mills, & Smolak, 2003) created for the pleasure of others (McKee, 2000).

Research Question

This study was guided by the following research question based on the existing literature regarding depression, self-esteem, and body satisfaction in Filipino women: What is the relationship between ideal images in the media on the body-satisfaction development of Filipino American women?

Research Design

Participants in this study were Filipino women over the age of 18 who were born in the United States as well as women who were immigrants to the United States and came from the Philippines. In order to target this age group, flyers were handed out to members of the Filipino American Club on campus at a local university as well as posted at Filipino restaurants and supermarkets. The flyers included the purpose of the study and my contact information. A demographic questionnaire was used to obtain the participants' age, place of birth, and primary language in order to organize the respondents' answers into appropriate categories (Appendix J).

Before beginning the interviews, participants were given information regarding the nature of the study and were told that no monetary compensation would be given for participating. After reviewing the informed consent form (Appendix B), participants verbally stated yes in order to begin the interview. In addition, I used statements from the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire-3 (Heinberg, Thompson, & Stormer, 1995), Body-Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults (Mendelson, Mendelson, & White, 2001), and the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (McKinley & Hyde, 1996) to test the research question. Prior to beginning the interview, participants were

shown five ideal images of tall, thin, European American woman in swimwear from popular fashion magazines (Appendix K). Images of European American women were used in the study to reflect the typical Western culture beauty ideal of tall, blonde, thin women (Calogero & Thompson, 2009; DeBraganza & Hausenblas, 2010).

Data Analysis

The one-to-one interviews were recorded, and verbatim field notes were taken simultaneously. The data were reviewed and then hand coded to examine consistent and organic themes and patterns in the respondents' reflections. These themes and patterns were then used to determine if the study's findings supported or opposed existing theories and research.

Assumptions and Limitations

It was assumed that the participants would respond accurately and truthfully. Another assumption was that the statements obtained from the scales used in this study were appropriate for measuring the designated variables with this population. It was also assumed that the participants would understand the questions being asked in the study. In addition, it was assumed that the participants would have experienced objectification and exposure to ideal images in the media. Another assumption was that the qualitative research design would elicit responses from the participants (Creswell, 2003).

One possible limitation was related to the participant pool. Because no incentives were offered, participants may have chosen not to participate unless they felt responsible for offering their input on the subject (Van Lange, Balliet, & Schippers, 2011). According to Decker, Hemmerling, and Lankoande (2010), participating in research

requires a commitment of time on the behalf of the participants who may have prior commitments and demands on their time. In anticipation of this possibility, the population group was opened to women over the age of 18 years, and the interviews were scheduled in accordance to the participants' schedules in order to ensure that the final results would be significant and meaningful.

Individuals who would volunteer for a psychological study may possess different traits than individuals who would not choose to volunteer (Creswell, 2003). Typically, women are more inclined to report what they feel is the more socially desirable response than men (Dalton & Ortegren, 2011), and as I focused on women, the results could be skewed if the participants underreported how they really felt in order to appear in a more favorable light.

Significance of the Study and Implications for Social Change

The purpose of this study was to provide research findings that could help the understanding of how Filipino women feel about their bodies and lead to the development of programs to help young Filipino American women in the United States so that they can gain a better appreciation about their bodies and self-image. A positive social change implication from this investigation could include an increased knowledge on how the media affects Filipino women that may be useful for mental health professionals, educators, and other professionals in the fields of medicine and the media.

Summary

There is an ample amount of research on the relationship between objectified images of women in the media and decreased self-esteem and body satisfaction and an

increase in depression (Aubrey, 2006; Champion & Furnham, 1999; Hargreaves & Tiggemann, 2003; Joshi, Herman, & Polivy, 2004). Researchers have also suggested a relationship between sociocultural factors and body satisfaction, self-esteem, and depression (DeBraganza & Hausenblas, 2008; Ricciardeli & McCabe, 2001; Rodgers, Chabrol, & Paxton, 2010; van den Berg et al., 2007). Frederick et al. (1998) posited that when women internalize socialized ideals of beauty they become at risk for experiencing mental health issues such as depression.

Although there is a significant amount of literature on European American and African American women, there is not enough literature on Filipino American women. In this study, I focused on Filipino American women in order to provide more information regarding this group in relation to body satisfaction and body-image. In Chapter 2, I review the existing literature regarding objectification theory (Fredrickson et al., 1998) and how body image, body satisfaction, and sociocultural factors relate to objectification in the mass media. Also, literature on how the Filipino culture constructs the identity of the self is analyzed in order to establish why it is important to gain more of an understanding of how objectification impacts Filipino American women.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this review of the literature, I present information on Filipino American women and body dissatisfaction and depressive symptoms. Few scholars have examined causal factors for body image disturbances with Filipino women (Edman & Yates, 2005; Kayano et al., 2008; Watkins & Gerong, 1997). The connection between Filipino American women, sociocultural influences, objectified images, depression, and body satisfaction has not been researched fully. The majority of research regarding Filipino women and body satisfaction has been on body satisfaction and eating attitudes of Filipino women (Edman & Yates, 2005; Kayano et al., 2008; Watkins & Gerong, 1997) and not towards a correlation with beauty ideals, objectified images, and body satisfaction.

In the following sections, I review the current research that helped to form the basis of this present study. A brief overview of the Asian American population focusing specifically on the Filipino American population in the United States is followed by a review of its history and cultural values to aid in the understanding of the importance of studying this specific group. Next, sociocultural influences on body image and body dissatisfaction are explored in relation to objectification theory (Fredrickson et al., 1998) and media influences.

Search Strategies

The following electronic databases were used to collect literature for this study: Academic Search Complete, Eric, Mental Measurements Yearbook, SocIndex, ProQuest Health & Medical Complete, PsycARTICLES, Psychiatry Online, PsycINFO, and

PsycTESTS. Literature searches included the following combination of keywords: *acculturation, Asian Americans, the Assessment of Depression Inventory, the Body-Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults, body ideal, body image, body satisfaction, culture, depression, eating attitudes, Filipino American women, Filipino culture, Filipino women, Filipinos, ideal beauty, media, media images, objectification theory, the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale, objectified images, Philippines, Republic of the Philippines, self-esteem, self-objectification theory, the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire, and sociocultural factors.*

Filipino Americans

The Asian American population is one of the fastest growing groups in the United States (Dao, Nguyen, & Teten, 2010; Kim et al., 2001; Lau, Chronister, Forrest, & Lum, 2006; Sanchez & Gaw, 2007; Willgerodt & Thompson, 2006). In light of the increase of immigrants to the United States, the field of psychology has studied different ethnic groups in order to better understand the issues that impact immigrants and hinder or contribute to their success in their host country (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Kim et al., 2001).

Research regarding Asians has historically been on the group as a whole (Nadal, 2004; Tuason, Harris, Martin, Rollings, & Taylor, 2007) without taking into account the differences in each of the 25 subgroups that make up the Asian population (Chun & Akutsu, 2003; Kim et al., 2001). However, each subgroup is faced with issues that are specific to its particular group (Kim et al., 2001; Willgerodt & Thompson, 2006). These issues include culture, belief systems, and values (Enrile & Agbayani, 2007) that mental

health professionals need to be aware of in order to offer the most effective treatment options (Sanchez & Gaw, 2007).

Filipinos are the second largest subgroup in the Asian American classification (Chun & Akutsu, 2003; Enrile & Agbayani, 2007; Mossakowski 2007; Sanchez & Gaw, 2007; Willgerodt & Thompson, 2006); they were one of the first immigrant groups in the United States as the first records date back to 1587 when they arrived as slaves on Spanish ships to California (David & Nadal, 2013). In the 1990 U.S. Census, 1,406,770 individuals identified themselves as being full Filipino (as cited in Napholz & Mo, 2010). In the 2000 census, 1,908,125 respondents identified themselves as Filipino, and in 2010, 2,649,973 respondents identified themselves as Filipino which was a 38.9% increase from 2000 (Hoeffel, Kim, Rastogi, & Shahid, 2012). A significant aspect of the influx of immigration of Filipinos is that there is not enough information about mental health issues for a large percentage of the Asian population living in the United States (David, 2010; Salvador, Kim, & Omizo, 1997).

Ethnic Identity

The ethnic identity of the Filipino population is composed of a myriad of factors. Filipino culture is a compilation of Chinese, Malaysian, Spanish, American, and Indonesian cultural differences due to the rich history of immigration and colonization of the Philippine Islands (Salvador et al., 1997). Filipinos are often identified as being Hispanics due to their Spanish last names or as Chinese due to their facial features, and for these reasons, they are often considered as being the “invisible ethnic group” (Sanchez & Gaw, 2007, p. 812). Due to the U.S. colonization of the Philippines, Filipinos

may be more acculturated to U.S. culture than other Asians prior to actually immigrating to the United States, which sets them apart from other Asian subgroups (Enrile & Agbayani, 2007; Nadal, 2004). Also, unlike other Asian countries, the Philippines has adopted Catholicism as its primary religion instead of Buddhism or Confucianism after the 400-year Spanish colonization (Nadal, 2004; Tuason et al., 2007).

Filipino cultural values differ from Western values in a variety of ways that is important for mental health professionals to consider (Salvado et al., 1997; Sanchez & Gaw, 2007; Tuason et al., 2007). In Western cultures, independence and individuality are highly valued as the self is identified as a separate entity from the family (Lo, Chen, Cheng, Helwig, & Ohashi, 2011; Yaman, Bakermans-Kranenburg, Linting, Mesman, & van IJzendoorn, 2010). However, in the Filipino culture, the self is identified collectively with the entire family, town, and/or region (Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002; Salvador et al., 1997). From birth, children are taught to show loyalty and honor to their families and ensure that the needs of their families, both immediate and extended, are met before their own needs (Agbayani-Siewert, 1994; Salvador et al., 1997). In the Filipino culture, the self is defined and identified by the family or community where a person lives (Salvador et al., 1997; Watkins & Gerong, 1997). Filipinos will also anticipate the needs or wants of others by being in tune with their nonverbal and subverbal cues (Agbayani-Siewert, 1994). This ensures that the cohesion of the family unit is maintained, even if it means the interests of the self are sacrificed (Agbayani-Siewert, 1994).

Filipinos are sensitive and are easily insulted and humiliated (Watkins & Gerong, 1997). As a result, they are less likely to question others or criticize in order to avoid conflict and protect the self (Agbayani-Siewert, 1994; Watkins & Gerong, 1997).

Ultimately, their behavior is driven by how others will react (Salvador et al., 1997). In order to understand the issues that Filipino American women may have due to media influences, it is important to understand how Filipino women identify themselves. The integration of these sociocultural factors influences the development of positive or negative attitudes towards the self (Salvadoret al., 1997).

Objectification

Beauty ideals are conveyed and internalized at a young age. According to Erikson's (1968) theory of the stages of development, during adolescence, ages 12 to 18 years, individuals are developing their sense of self and that the sense of self is concerned with two essential questions: Who am I? Who do others think I am? Adolescents are eager to belong and gain approval from their peers, so they will strive to conform to what is socially esteemed, as the theory postulates that social approval is pivotal for their full development (Stephens & Few, 2007). Social and cultural ideals and expectations of beauty are often taught through family and peer responses (Frederick, Forbes, Griogorian, & Jarcho, 2007; Hansen & Wänke, 2009; Stephens & Few, 2007; Vartanian, 2009). The message being taught to children in Western culture is that the outward appearance is more valued than inner beauty and that conformity to the cultural norm must be achieved at all costs (Cox et al., 2009). Individuals will construct their identity and perceptions about themselves around the positive responses of others (Blanton & Christie, 2003), even if that means engaging in risky behavior (See, 2009), such as restrictive eating practices, over exercising, or having plastic surgery procedures performed.

The desire to adhere to cultural norms exists in both Eastern and Western cultures with a slightly higher desire said to be present in Eastern cultures (Blanton & Christie, 2003). According to Blanton and Christie (2003), individuals will create or mold their identities based on what they feel would be socially lucrative and promote them to a state of status and approval that would then provide them with a positive sense of self-worth. Kayano et al. (2008) sought to compare attitudes towards body shape, weight, and a desire to be thin across various cultures. European Americans reported the highest rate of desire to be thin over all, while Indian and Filipino adolescent females with higher BMI ratings scored the highest in distorted eating attitudes (Kayano et al., 2008). However, historically non-Western cultures have displayed less negative attitudes towards fatness than Western cultures.

There is much value placed upon someone's physical beauty in Western cultures as this is considered to be indicative of the intelligence, competence, and mental stability of the person (Grabe, Hyde, & Lindberg, 2007). The pressure this imposes is evident by the increase in eating disorder and body dysmorphic disorder diagnoses in the United States (Park, Calogero, Diraddo, & Young, 2010). An excessive amount of money has been spent in Western cultures on expensive clothing, make up, and hair and body enhancements through plastic surgery as the media projects that this is how women are found attractive (Park et al., 2010).

Women in Western cultures experience high levels of pressure to obtain the ideal beauty (Cheng & Mallinckrodt, 2009; Grabe et al., 2007; Harper & Tiggemann, 2008; Monro & Huon, 2005). Various sociocultural factors have been implicated to influence the development of the ideal image. Mass media has been found to perpetuate cultural

norms of beauty; however, this often promotes unattainable ideals (Aubrey, 2006; DeBraganza & Hausenblas, 2010; Dijkstra & Barelds, 2011; Engeln-Maddox & Miller, 2008; Gurari, Hetts, & Strube, 2006; Harper & Tiggemann, 2008; Lau et al., 2006; Monro & Huon, 2006; Moradi & Huang, 2008; Sanchez & Broccoli, 2008). For example, weight ideals for women in Western culture have become thinner even though the actual average weight for women has become heavier (Brown & Dittmar, 2005; Webster & Tiggemann, 2003). Having tanned skin in Western culture is often viewed as ideal whereas in other cultures it is a sign of poverty and is not valued (Swami, Furnham, & Joshi, 2008).

Both men and women experience pressure to obtain the beauty ideal. Although males can be impacted by the pressure to adhere to the social ideal for physical form, there is a disproportionate level of females expressing dissatisfaction with their appearance and presenting with mental health issues because of not fitting the ideal (Frederick et al., 2007; Mercurio & Landry, 2008). This could be due to the idea that “for women, positive self-concept hinges on perceived physical *attractiveness* whereas for men, it hinges on perceived physical *effectiveness*” (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997, p. 179).

The level of body dissatisfaction has been found to depend upon the cultural and ethnic factors (Wertheim et al., 2009). For example, African American women reported emphasizing larger ideal sizes than their European American counterparts (Wertheim et al., 2009). Cultures that have been exposed or colonized by Britain have reported placing a higher value on having fair skin than cultures or countries that have not been colonized by European countries (Sahay & Piran, 1997). Various theories have been developed in

order to better understand how sociocultural factors such as exposure to sexism and objectification can impact body satisfaction, self-esteem, and other mental health issues in women (Harper & Tiggemann, 2008; Mercurio & Landry, 2008).

According to Frederickson and Roberts' (1997) objectification theory, women and girls are culturally taught to internalize the views of others, specifically men, as their own. The objectification theory has been used as a foundation to study a variety of cultural groups other than European Americans such as African American women, lesbian women, deaf women (Moradi, 2010), South Korean women (Kim, Baek, & Seo, 2014), Muslim women in the United States (Tolaymat & Moradi, 2011), men (Frederick et al., 2007; Moradi, 2010), Hispanic women, and general Asian groups (Frederick et al., 2007). Objectification is the sociocultural experience where the body is evaluated, inspected, and treated as an object to be used by others (Grabe et al., 2007; Gruenfeld, Galinsky, Inesi, & Magee, 2008; Gurung & Chrouser, 2007; Harper & Tiggemann, 2008). This can lead to habitual self-monitoring and body surveillance where women can begin to take on the third person perspective toward their own bodies instead of the first person perspective (Calogero & Thompson, 2009; Mercurio & Landry, 2008).

Women can view themselves as an object or as specific parts instead of as a whole being that exists to provide sexual gratification to men (Gurung & Chrouser, 2007; Mercurio & Landry, 2008; Tiggemann & Boundy, 2008). This type of objectification can lead to sexual objectification; this occurs when women are viewed as bodies/vessels that solely exist to bring pleasure (Augustus-Horvath & Tylka, 2009; Frederickson & Roberts 1997; Harper & Tiggemann, 2008). In this situation, the woman is stripped of a personal

identity and is regarded strictly on her physical appearance (Augustus-Horvath & Tylka, 2009). The constant monitoring has been termed self-objectification, and it can negatively impact a woman's mental and physical health (Calogero & Thompson, 2009; Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Gurari et al., 2006). As a result, women are presumed to be at a higher risk of developing eating disorders, anxiety, depression, shame, lowered self-worth, and sexual dysfunction (Calogero & Thompson, 2009; Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Gurari et al., 2006; Harper & Tiggemann, 2008; Mercurio & Landry, 2008; Peterson, Grippo, & Tantleff-Dunn, 2008; Roberts & Good, 2010; Tiggemann & Boundy, 2008).

Harper and Tiggemann (2008) conducted a study of 90 female undergraduate students in South Australia with both a thin ideal woman and the ideal woman pictured with a male in order to determine the impact of media images on self-objectification, appearance anxiety, negative mood, and body dissatisfaction of the participants. Their study was modeled after another study also conducted in Australia by Tiggemann and McGill (2004), which demonstrated that participants reported lowered levels of body satisfaction when shown a part of the body of a thin model than did participants that viewed images of a fully clothed model.

Primarily in Western cultures, women and girls are bombarded by images in the media depicting the ideal beauty (Calogero & Thompson, 2009; Dijkstra & Barelds, 2011; Engeln-Maddox & Miller, 2008; Gurari et al., 2006; Harper & Tiggemann, 2008; Lin & Yeh, 2009). This ideal beauty is typically European American, blonde, tall, and thin despite the fact that this does not represent the only ethnic group or predominate group of women in Western cultures (Calogero & Thompson, 2009; DeBraganza & Hausenblas,

2010; Engeln-Maddox & Miller, 2008; Gurari et al., 2006; Lau et al, 2006; Thompson, Heinberg, Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999). As a result, Western women have reported higher levels of body dissatisfaction than women in other cultures (Engeln-Maddox & Miller, 2008).

Young girls are also experiencing stress related to objectification as the media is saturated with sexualized images (Gurari et al., 2006; Wertheim, Paxton, & Blaney, 2009). In a study done with U. S. adolescent girls and boys, approximately 44% of the girls and 23% of the boys reported feeling unattractive and ugly (Gurari et al., 2006). In a study, 75% of elementary school aged girls reported that they have experienced sexual harassment due to objectification (Calogero & Thompson, 2009).

Body Image and Satisfaction

Body image and body satisfaction may be contingent on meeting sociocultural ideas for beauty in the United States (Champion & Furnham, 1999; Clark & Tiggemann, 2006; Clay Dittmar, & Vignoles, 2005; Dohnt & Tiggemann, 2006; Forbes, Adams-Curtis, Card, & Doroszewicz, 2004; Forbes & Jung, 2008; Furman & Thompson, 2002; Thompson & Heinberg, 1999; Thompson et al., 1999; Willgerodt & Thompson, 2006; Wood & Petrie, 2010). Although mass media plays an integral part in the cultivation and dissemination of the beauty ideal (Hendricks, 2002; Murnen et al., 2003), the beauty ideal is also conveyed through family and other social networks (Cheng & Mallinckrodt, 2009; Heinberg, 2001; Tsiantas & King, 2001).

Historically, it was thought that only Western cultures suffered body image discontent as the then available literature focused mainly on Western and/or European

American and African American cultures (James, Phelps, & Bross, 2001; Lawrence & Thelen, 1995; Molloy & Herzberger, 1998; Russell, Crockett, Shen, & Lee, 2008). Asian Americans have been considered to be the model minority exempt from the stresses or issues of other ethnic groups, which is one reason this group has been studied less than other minority groups in the United States (Gupta et al., 2011; Lau et al., 2006; Taylor & Stern, 1997; Willgerodt & Thompson, 2006). Asian adolescents are not immune to body dissatisfaction issues and can experience high levels of depression and low self-esteem (Bae & Brekke, 2003; Lau et al., 2006; Russell et al., 2008). In 2001, one million cosmetic surgery procedures were completed, which was double the amount of procedures completed in 1996 (Tam, Cheung, Kim, Ng, & Yeung, 2012). Also, Tam et al. (2012) found that eight of 10 women over the age of 18 thought they needed cosmetic surgery and that one out of two women had already had at least one cosmetic procedure. Researchers have found an increase of dissatisfaction about their body shape and facial features amongst Asian women (Latner, Illingworth, & Knight, 2011). For example, according to Sabik, Cole, and Ward (2010), Asian American women reported higher levels of dissatisfaction related to their features and stated that they wanted eyelid surgery possibly as a way to eliminate negative associations related to being Asian. The dearth of literature regarding Asian Americans and body image (Kennedy, Gandhi, Gorzalka, & Templeton, 2004; Kim et al., 2001), especially regarding Filipino women (Tuason et al., 2007), creates an information gap that needs to be filled in order to better understand and effectively treat this population.

Decisions individuals make when they feel dissatisfied with their appearance can lead to extreme measures to alter the areas they feel are not satisfactory (Ashikali, Ayers, & Dittmar, 2014; Markey & Markey, 2012; Nabi, 2009). According to Lu, Damhorst, and Kozar (2013) comparing the self with cultural and social beauty ideals in the media can evoke negative feelings towards appearance. Research conducted in order to determine motivations of women who seek out elective surgery has found that a large amount of women seek surgery to alleviate psychological anxiety regarding their bodies (Gilmartin, 2011). In 2004, 12 million cosmetic surgery procedures were completed which was a 51% increase in nonsurgical, a 17% in surgical procedures completed in 2005 (Nabi, 2009), and in 2007 approximately 115,000 women between the ages of 18-29 elected to undergo breast augmentation (Moser & Aiken, 2011).

However not all women who feel dissatisfied with their physical appearance seek elective surgery and suffer from prolonged feelings of depression, anxiety, poor self-esteem (Joshi, Herman, & Polivy, 2004; Park & Maner, 2009; Sanchez & Broccoli, 2008), and may engage in inappropriate eating habits that may be life threatening (Farralles & Chapman, 1999; Vartanian, 2009). Some women may develop excessive exercising and grooming behaviors in order to try to meet the beauty ideal portrayed in the media (Cox et al., 2009). The rapid increase of media outlets depicting the Western beauty ideal available to women (Chen, Benet-Martinez, & Bond, 2008; Kayano et al., 2008; Nelson & Paek, 2007), poses a significant threat to women's psychological health (Nabi, 2009; Wasilenko, Kulik, & Wanic, 2007), as more cultural groups are being

exposed to the Western beauty ideal (Forbes & Jung, 2008; Mautner, Furnham, & Owen, 2000).

Filipino Women and Body Image

As mentioned previously, Filipinos gain their sense of self from their families. The conceptualization about their body image and self-esteem are constructed by the familial structure (Salvador et al, 1997; Watkins & Gerong, 1997). As long as an individual is showing respect to the elders and other family members the individual has the potential of experiencing optimal levels of self-esteem (Napholz & Mo, 2010). Willgerodt and Thompson (2006) reported that first generation Americans or newly immigrated individuals have a stronger bond with their native ideals and traditions. However, research has found that some Filipinos who had immigrated to the U.S. reported having lowered levels of body image and self-esteem (Farrales & Chapman, 1999). Some have concluded that this may be because the more an individual attempts to acculturate to the host culture, the more stress they may feel as they try to reconcile their traditional values and the host country's values (Capielo, Delgado-Romero, & Stewart, 2015; Lau et al., 2006). Research has found that when the traditional beliefs become threatened, there is a greater risk of individuals, especially women, experiencing lowered levels of body image and/or body dissatisfaction (Lau et al., 2006).

Furthermore, studies have indicated that the focus on being thin and having traditional European features in Western cultures has brought about a feeling of normative discontent amongst women who cannot meet these ideals (Clark & Tiggemann, 2006; Davison & McCabe, 2005; Dohnt & Tiggemann, 2006; Glauert,

Byrne, Fink, & Grammer, 2009; Monteath & McCabe, 1997). This unattainable body and/or image of an ideal that has been fabricated to appear perfect can place stress on the individual and can induce psychological harm (Cheng & Mallinckrodt, 2009; Forbes & Jung, 2008; Lin & Kulik, 2002; Murnen et al., 2003; Willinge, Touyz, & Charles, 2006). Children as young as 6 years old have been found to carry this burden of not conforming to the beauty ideal and experience “normative discontent” (Dohnt & Tiggemann, 2006, p. 929).

Conversely, Filipino culture places value in not being ultra-thin; being too thin raises concerns that an individual is undernourished and more prone to sickness (Farrales & Chapman, 1999). Many Asian cultures value plumpness over thinness as it has also been viewed as a status symbol signifying wealth and affluence (Hall, 1995). A Canadian study measuring the attitudes towards body weight and image of Canadians and first generation Filipino women found that, although the Filipino respondents answered similarly to their Canadian counterparts in regards to wanting to be thinner, they also responded that they ultimately did not feel that they were dissatisfied with their figures based on the Filipino value in favor of plumpness (Farrales & Chapman, 1999).

There has been a large movement for Asians to undergo plastic surgery procedures to create more of a traditional European symmetry of the face (Hall, 1995). Whitening creams are also heavily utilized amongst Filipinos in order to obtain fair skin and Filipinos that are naturally fair are also known to utilize whitening creams in order to maintain and lighten their skin to be fairer than their natural color (Karnani, 2005). Various lightening creams are marketed across Asia and target individuals in their late

teens and early thirties (Karnani, 2005). Many advertising campaigns focus on sociocultural beliefs that fairer skin and more Caucasian attributes will increase both employment and dating opportunities (Karnani, 2005). Although research regarding the psychological impact of sociocultural ideals is available (Harper & Tiggemann, 2008; Mercurio & Landry, 2008; Peterson et al., 2008; Roberts & Good, 2010), more research regarding Filipino women needs to be conducted as this population continues to grow within the U.S.

There have been several measures created by researchers in order to better understand the impact of objectified images and sociocultural ideals on those ethnic groups that physically fall short of the Western beauty ideal based upon physiognomic factors that are not easily changeable. The ones that have been chosen for this study are be discussed in the sections that follow.

The Sociocultural Attitudes towards Appearance Questionnaire 3 (SATAQ-3)

The idea that the media plays an impactful role in relaying beauty ideals has been studied extensively (Aubrey, 2006; Dijkstra & Barelds, 2011; Engeln-Maddox & Miller, 2008; Gurari, Hetts, & Strube, 2006; Lau, Chronister, Forrest, & Lum, 2006; Moradi & Huang, 2008; Sanchez & Broccoli, 2008). However, because there were limited means for measuring the level of sociocultural influences on the development of body dissatisfaction at that time, Heinberg, Thompson, and Stormer (1995) created the first version of the SATAQ in part to better assist professionals working with individuals suffering from body image issues and eating disorders. This questionnaire was used to measure the amount of internalization of societal norms and how much an individual was

willing to do in terms of physical modification to emulate those norms (Thompson, van den Berg, Roehrig, Guarda, & Heinberg, 2004). The SATAQ was first administered to 150 undergraduate students at the University of South Florida who were between the ages of 17 and 36 (Heinberg, Thompson, & Stormer, 1995). The measure consists of two subscales: a 6-item Awareness Scale and an 8-item Internalization Scale (Forbes & Jung, 2008; Jung & Forbes, 2007). The Awareness Scale measures the knowledge and importance of standards of cultural ideals related to appearance and the Internalization Scale measures the incorporation of these ideals into how an individual views and judges the self and others (Forbes & Jung, 2008; Jung & Forbes, 2007). The authors found a .34 correlation between the two subscales (Heinberg, Thompson, & Stormer, 1995). The measure was revised (SATAQ-R) by Cusumano and Thompson (1997) to specifically focus on females, Thompson et al. (2004) revised the measure again to include items related to internalization of athleticism; this is the version currently in use (SATAQ-3).

The SATAQ-3 is a 30-item scale that purports to measure the impact of sociocultural influences on body satisfaction development using four dimensions consisting of information, internalization-general, internalization-athlete, and pressure (Swarmi, Taylor, & Carvalho, 2011). The authors devised this questionnaire in order to determine the level of sociocultural influence that exists in the development and maintenance of the thoughts that contributed to the practice of restrictive eating (Heinberg, Thompson, & Stormer, 1995). The measure was psychometrically evaluated and validated in Spanish in 2013 (Llorente, Warren, de Eulate, & Gleaves, 2013). The SATAQ-3 has been found to have good convergent validity in regards to body image and

eating disturbance (Thompson et al, 2004). When compared to the Eating Disorder Inventory-Body Dissatisfaction scale (EDI-BD) the overall effect to be significant $R^2 = .29$ with an 11 percent variance with the Pressures subscale (Wilksch & Wade, 2012). There was also a unique variance of $R^2 = .05$ between the EDI-BD and the composite Internationalization score of the General and Internationalization—Athlete score (Wilksch & Wade, 2012). The measure has also demonstrated internal reliability with Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeding 0.80; with 0.87 for information, 0.84 for pressure, 0.90 for internalization-general, and 0.93 for internalization-athlete (Swami, Carvalho, & Taylor, 2001). The SATAQ-3 is a 30 item scale that uses a Likert scale from 1 being definitely disagree to 5 being definitely agree. The 30 items relate to 5 specific categories: Internalization-General: *I do not care if my body looks like the body of people who are on TV*, Internalization-Athlete: *I compare my body to that of people who are athletic*, Pressure Items: *I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to have a perfect body*, Information Items: *Magazine advertisements are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive"*, and Reverse-Keyed Items: *I do not try to look like the people on TV* (Thompson et al., 2004). See Appendix G for a copy of the scale.

Body-Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults (BESAA)

The BESAA was modeled after the Body-Esteem Scale for Children created by Mendelson and White (Jónsdóttir, Arnarson, & Smári, 2008; Mendelson, Mendelson, & White, 2001). The children oriented scale is a 23 item self-report scale measuring a child's affective or emotional evaluation of his or her appearance (Mendelson, Mendelson, & White, 2001). The BESAA consists of 23 items and utilizes a Likert scale

response system (Jónsdóttir, Arnarson, & Smári, 2008; Mendelson, Mendelson, & White, 2001). When the BESAA was readministered 3 months after the initial testing, the two administrations yielded very high test-re-test correlations: $r(95) = .89$, $p < .001$ for BE-Appearance; $r(95) = .92$, $p < .001$ for BE-Weight; and $r(95) = .83$, $p < .001$ for BE-Attribution (Mendelson, Mendelson, & White, 2001). These scores demonstrated support for the reliability of all three subtests (Mendelson, Mendelson, & White, 2001). Sample items from the BESAA Appearance Scale include: *My looks upset me* and *There are lots of things I'd change about my looks if I could*. Sample items from the BESAA Weight Scale include: *Weighing myself depresses me* and *I feel I weigh the right amount for my height*. Sample items from the BESAA Attribution Scale include: *My looks help me to get dates* and *I think my appearance would help me get a job* (Jónsdóttir, Arnarson, & Smári, 2008). In all its scales, higher scores are indicative of increased body satisfaction of the participant (Forbes & Jung, 2008). See Appendix H for a copy of the scale.

The Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBCS)

McKinley and Hyde (1996) developed the OBCS in order to measure the level of internalization of sociocultural beauty standards and the level of shame that one felt towards his or her body; the available related scales typically assessed weight-related factors and feelings towards specific body parts. The OBCS was constructed in order to specifically measure the attitudes and behavior that leads to negative body experiences (McKinley & Hyde, 1996).

The OBCS is comprised of three subscales: The Surveillance Scale which measures the level of monitoring of an individual's physical appearance from the

perspective of another person related to self-objectification; the Body Shame Scale which measures the level of shame an individual may feel when that person fails to meet the cultural beauty ideal; and the Control Beliefs Scale which measures the level of belief a woman has in how much control she has in changing her body shape if she is dedicated and persistent (McKinley & Hyde, 1996). This last scale focuses on the belief that all of the cultural beauty ideals are in fact attainable (Chen & Russo, 2010; Forbes & Jung, 2008).

The OBCS consists of 24 test items that are scored using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree with an option for N/A in the event that the test item is not applicable for the participant (Lindberg, Shibley Hyde, & McKinley, 2006; McKinley & Hyde, 1996). The OBCS has demonstrated strong correlations between the three scales during construction as well as demonstrated moderate to high internal consistencies with responses in three scales (McKinley & Hyde, 1996). Cronbach's alpha consisted of: .89 for Surveillance Scale, .75 for Body Shame Scale, and .72 for the Control Belief Scale (McKinley & Hyde, 1996). Sample test items include: *During the day, I think about how I look many times* (example from the Surveillance Scale); *When I can't control my weight, I feel like something must be wrong with me* (example from the Body Shame Scale); *I can weigh what I'm supposed to when I try hard enough* (example from the Control Belief Scale) (Chen & Russo, 2010). According to McKinley and Hyde (1996), women who have low scores in body surveillance have an increased risk for experiencing negative evaluations from peers and have low scores in

the Control Belief Scale; they are possibly also less liked by their peers. See Appendix I for a copy of the scale.

Summary

Filipinos are becoming one of the largest Asian populations in the U.S. and have unique cultural attributes and values that distinguish them from other Asian groups (Chun & Akutsu, 2003). Filipino women have been targeted as the study's target population since their culture is unique from other Asian populations and they have been under represented in the research that has been conducted so far, particularly in relation to body image and satisfaction.

An ample amount of literature speaks of the relationship between objectified images in the media and the sociocultural beauty ideals that can adversely impact the self-esteem and body satisfaction in women in general (Engeln-Maddox & Miller, 2008; Gurari, Hetts, & Strube, 2006; Harper & Tiggemann, 2008; Lau, Chronister, Forrest, & Lum, 2006; Monro & Huon, 2006). Increased levels of self-objectification and belief of a control over beauty ideals can lead to shame and lowered self-esteem should one not be able to obtain the body ideal (McKinley & Hyde, 1996). Filipino women living in the U.S. who are bombarded with beauty ideals such as tall, extremely thin, women with European features (Calogero & Thompson, 2009; DeBraganza & Hausenblas, 2010), could be at risk for developing negative views of themselves. Filipino women can develop a feeling of perpetual discontent with their bodies that could lead to an increase in mental health issues.

The BESAA (Forbes & Jung, 2008) and the OBCS (McKinley & Hyde, 1996) have been tested and found reliable and valid for measuring the level of internalization an individual can experience and sociocultural factors and feelings of control can influence the development of shame and lowered self-esteem. The SATAQ-3 (Heinberg, Thompson, & Stormer, 1995) is a helpful tool in measuring the level of socio-cultural influence and how an individual views her appearance. All of these instruments will be used in the present study along with a demographic survey questionnaire.

This study focused on investigating the relationship between objectified images, self-objectification, sociocultural attitudes towards the beauty ideal and the body satisfaction and depressive symptoms in Filipino women over the age of 18. As of now, there appears to be limited or no research involving these specific factors and Filipino women living in the U.S. the following chapter, Chapter 3, provides a more detailed account regarding the research design, sample populations, as well as how the data was collected and analyzed for this specific study.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a relationship between ideal images in the media and the possible psychological stress experienced by Filipino American women. The research methods used for this study are described in this chapter. This chapter will also include the rationale for choosing this particular research design, information about the sample and the instrumentation used, as well as how the data were collected and analyzed. The limitations and the ethical considerations related to this research are also explained.

Sampling

The aim of a qualitative study is not to yield statistically significant data to be generalized (Hodges, 2011). In a general exploratory qualitative study, a minimum of 15 participants is acceptable (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). For this reason, a sample size of 16 participants of Filipino women over the age of 18 who were born in the United States or the Philippines was chosen for this investigation.

Flyers were distributed to members of the Filipino American clubs on college campuses and within the communities of Las Vegas, Nevada and Honolulu, Hawaii as well as posted in Filipino restaurants and supermarkets in the Las Vegas, Nevada area (Appendix A). The flyers included the purpose of the study and my contact information. A demographic questionnaire was used to obtain the participants' age, place of birth, primary language, and so on, in order to organize the respondents' answers into appropriate categories. Prior to beginning the one-to-one interviews, participants reviewed the information consent form and the nature of study and were instructed that

they will receive no monetary compensation for participating in the study were explained. Participants verbally stated yes to signify that they understood any potential risks of participating in the study, the benefits of the study, and that they were agreeing to participate voluntarily (Appendix B). Participants were not asked to provide personal identifying information in order to maintain anonymity and confidentiality; however, information such as age, marital status, and educational level was obtained from the participants prior to beginning the interviews.

Research Question

Based on the focus and purpose of this study, the research question guiding this investigation was the following: What is the relationship between ideal images in the media on the body-satisfaction development of Filipino American women?

Instrumentation

In this study, I used five statements of the following scales in this order: *I rarely compare how I look with how other people* from the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBCC; McKinley & Hyde, 1996), *There are lots of things I'd change about my looks if I could* and *Other people consider me good looking* from the Body-Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults (BESAA; Mendelson et al., 2001), *Pictures in magazines are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive"* and *Famous people are an important source of information about "being attractive"* from the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire-3 (SATAQ-3; Heinberg et al., 1995). Consents and the instruments were obtained prior to their implementation (Appendices C, D, and E).

Research Design

In this study, I used an exploratory qualitative research design where one-to-one interviews were completed. This type of design was chosen for this study as it could allow for more meaningful information to be elicited from the individual participants (Creswell, 2003). In this way, the information can be used to gather data to support the research question and build the foundation for further research (Creswell, 2003).

Data Collection

In order to answer the research question listed above, participants were asked to provide demographic information prior to beginning the surveys. The questionnaire asked the participants' ages, their place of birth, the length of time the participants have been living in the United States, their primary language, and the level of education they have completed (see Appendix J). Participants whose answers differed from the targeted population were thanked and excused from participation of the interviews upon completion of the demographics questionnaire. It was expected that participants would be able to complete the interview between 20-30 minutes. The participants were also informed that the interviews would be recorded in order to aid me during data analysis.

In a manner similar to previous studies (Harper & Tiggeman, 2008; Tiggemann & McGill, 2004), participants in this study were shown five images of tall, thin, European American women wearing swimwear (see Appendix K) prior to beginning the interviews. The images were taken from an Internet search of models in swimwear and depict blonde models wearing a two-piece bikini in full length body shots in order to

maintain consistency and to contrast with the typical shorter body build of a Filipino woman.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the verbatim field notes were reviewed for clarity several times in order to ensure accuracy of what provided by the participating women during the one to one interviews. The data were then analyzed by hand to determine commonalities and differences between the responses in order to identify themes in the data through an open coding process. Open coding is the process dissecting data line-by-line so that themes can be identified (Corbin & Strauss, 2007). Once the data were broken down into similarities and differences, a summary was written of the themes, and significant direct quotations from the data were identified.

Assumptions and Limitations

The main assumption of this study was that the participants would be able to understand the questions and answer truthfully. Another assumption was that the statements chosen from the surveys chosen for use in this study were appropriate for testing the research question and this population. It was also assumed that the participants would have been exposed to Western media and experienced levels of objectification. It was assumed that the results can be generalized to all Filipino women living in the U.S.

One limitation was the measurements used in the study. Many of the measures used to determine overall levels of body satisfaction have been created for and with European Americans and may not be accurately capturing the true feelings of Asian respondents (Lau et al., 2006; Russell et al., 2008).

According to the gender socialization theory (Dalton & Ortegren, 2011), female participants are more apt to provide responses that they feel are more socially acceptable and desired than their male counterparts. Using only female participants could have been a limitation as participants could have underreported their current levels of dissatisfaction and symptoms in order to appear more adjusted than they were actually feeling and to provide answers they felt that I wanted (Dalton & Ortega, 2011). Also, it was possible that individuals who volunteer to participate in a psychological study willingly may have different traits than those who choose not to volunteer (Creswell, 2003); this was also considered a limitation in this investigation.

Ethical Considerations

Because I used human participants, certain issues were addressed in order to ensure the privacy and security of the participants. In order to ensure that the research was conducted ethically, I completed the National Institute of Health's Protecting Human Research Participants course (Appendix I). An informed consent form was created for participants to read through and agree to prior to beginning the study (Appendix B). The participants were also informed that they could exit from the study at any time (American Psychological Association, 2010).

Participants were informed that they would likely have minimal to no risks or discomforts by participating in the study. In the event that participants did experience emotional distress by participating in the study, participants were provided with the contact information to counseling centers at their local universities on the informed consent page of the survey (Counseling and Student Development Center at University of

Hawaii Manoa and the Student Counseling and Psychological Services at University of Nevada Las Vegas). In order to maintain anonymity, no identifying information, such as e-mail addresses, names, date of birth, or location were obtained from the participants of the study. The flyers for the study provided my contact information for the participant to initiate contact.

The data obtained from the study are kept in an external hard drive storage and will be kept for a minimum of 5 years after the completion of the study and erased entirely from the storage device at the completion of the 5-year period (American Psychological Association, 2010). The external hard drive is kept in a locked box in my home office where only I have access to the key and to the box.

In accordance with the guidelines of Walden University regarding the protection of human participants, a request was submitted and approved by to the University Research Review to interview 16 participants for this study.

Summary

This purpose of this study was to determine if there is a relationship between sexualized and idealized images in the media and sociocultural attitudes and the body satisfaction of Filipino women. I used a qualitative research design using one-to-one interviews and included five statements from the SATAQ-3, the BESAA, and the OBCS. Participants were provided with an informed consent form prior to beginning the interviews that described the nature, purpose, and possible risks of the study, as well as the fact that no monetary compensation will be provided for participating, and that they will be voluntarily participating in the study. Participants were solicited through Filipino

clubs in Las Vegas, Nevada and in Honolulu, Hawaii, as well as through posted flyers at Filipino restaurants and stores in the Las Vegas, Nevada area. Lastly, the ethical considerations of the participants were also discussed in this chapter. Chapter 4 will discuss the themes that emerged from the data of the study.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to identify attitudes, thoughts, and beliefs of Filipino women regarding their descriptions of self-esteem, body satisfaction, and Western sociocultural standards of beauty as depicted in the media. A qualitative study was performed in order to gain a richer understanding of what participating Filipino women thought about sociocultural constructs of beauty, as well as any dissatisfaction they felt about their bodies in relation to ideal images. This chapter provides a description and demographics of participants, the data collection process, and the analysis of the data.

Demographics

The one-on-one interviews took place in person as well as over the telephone with eight women who were born in the United States and eight women who were born in the Philippines. Most of the American-born women were between the ages of 30-40 years of age, whereas four of the Philippine-born women were between the ages of 55-71. The table below illustrates the demographic information obtained during using the demographic questionnaire completed prior to the interviews.

Table 1

Demographic Data: Level of Education, Place of Birth, and Marital Status of Participants

	AMERICAN- BORN PARTICIPANTS	PHILIPPINE- BORN PARTICIPANTS
H.S. DIPLOMA	2	
SOME COLLEGE	1	1
PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE	2	
BACHELOR'S DEGREE	2	6
GRADUATE DEGREE	1	1
U.S. BORN	8	
PI BORN		8
SINGLE	2	3
MARRIED	3	4
DIVORCED	1	1
MULTIPLE MARRIAGES	1	
LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP	1	

The majority of the Philippine-born women were college educated as opposed to their U.S.-born counterparts as six Philippine-born women had college degrees, whereas two U.S.-born women had college degrees. Four Philippine-born participants were currently married, while three of the U.S.-born participants were married.

Table 2

Demographic Data: Participants' Ages

	AMERICAN- BORN PARTICIPANTS	PHILIPPINE- BORN PARTICIPANTS
18-22		2
23-27		
28-32	2	
33-37	2	
38-42	1	2
43-47		2
48-52		
53-57	2	2
58-62		2
63-67		2
68-72		2

The participants' ages varied in ages as the youngest participant was 18-years-old and the oldest was 71-years-old. The average age of the participants was between the ages of 28 and 45 years of age.

Data Collection

Data collection involved one-to-one interviews where participants were shown five images of tall, blonde, models in swimsuits (see Appendix M). After a brief review

of the images, five statements were asked from the OBSC, the BESAA, and the SATAQ-3:

1. I rarely compare how I look with how other people look (OBSC)
2. There are lots of things I'd change about my looks if I could (BESAA)
3. Other people consider me good looking (BESAA)
4. Pictures in magazines are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive" (SATAQ-3)
5. Famous people are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive" (SATAQ-3).

Participants were asked to rate themselves on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 meaning *never* to 5 meaning *always*. After they provided their rating, they were asked to expound on their answers using probes, such as "What do you mean by....?", "You mentioned that... Can you tell me more about that?", and "Can you give me an example of...." The interview sessions lasted between 15 to 30 minutes, and the sessions were audiotaped and field notes were transcribed simultaneously while the participants responded to the statements.

Data Analysis

Each individual response was used to identify attitudes of sociocultural ideals of beauty and body satisfaction. After the interviews were concluded, the handwritten notes that I took were transcribed into an electronic text in order to gain clarity of the statements provided. The interviews were recorded; however, handwritten notes were the main source of information. The electronic text for each participant was then analyzed manually by me to identify codes. Through the coding process, themes emerged in

relation to the study's main focus, and the guiding research question was responded through the identified themes. Once this was completed, the responses were noted, and the analysis process commenced. Detailed information of the data analysis process was provided in Chapter 3.

Results

There was one research question guiding this study:

1. What is the relationship between ideal images in the media on the body-satisfaction development of Filipino American women?

According to the findings from the one-to-one interviews, there were differences in how participating Philippine-born women and U.S.-born women viewed the importance of magazines and famous people as sources of fashion and what is attractive. According to the results, there were few differences and similarities regarding self-image and the importance of sociocultural ideals and trends regarding attractiveness among participants, and these ones included the following main themes: sociocultural trends in relation to fashion and attractiveness and self-mage.

Theme 1: Sociocultural Trends in Relation to Fashion and Attractiveness

Participants were asked if magazines were an important source of information regarding what was in fashion and what was attractive. While most participants thought that magazines were a good way to know fashion trends and were influential in determining what products are out there from a consumer standpoint, three participants felt that celebrities provided an unrealistic ideal that could not be attained by an average woman. One participant stated that "there is no way any real person could live like that

because it's not real life or realistic." Three participants also felt that the images of ideal beauty provided by magazines were pervasive. These three participants also commented about how young girls could be sheltered from these ideals at a young age and of the campaigns that are focusing on empowering girls to accept and love their bodies. One participant stated that

Although everyone knows the images are altered, it is hard not to feel like that is the ideal body type that women are supposed to look like even though it is unattainable. I try to avoid looking at magazines for that reason. The fact elementary school children have to be taught to love their bodies is a sad testament of the state of social ideals.

In regards to the pervasiveness of images in the media, another participant asked, "how do you begin to hide that from the younger generation until they're older because it's (media images—author) and they want to look at it?"

However, some of the Philippine-born Filipino women responded differently than the U.S.-born Filipino women regarding the following statement: Pictures in magazines are an important source of information about fashion and being attractive. One Philippine-born Filipino woman stated, "It is definitely a tool to let us see what's the fashion....it does impact how we dress and put ourselves together. Another commented that "Filipinos always stood out because they didn't follow or know the fashions." Another participant stated, "It does affect me now with all of the media available because when I was growing up [in the Philippines] there was no such thing." The Philippine-born participants commented that when they were growing up in the Philippines, the media was not always available unless one was in a big city. As a result,

when they immigrated to the United States, they used magazines to know what was in fashion and trendy in order to blend in with everyone.

Another common theme that emerged with the Philippine-born participants was that there was no comparison growing up as everyone looked the same. In other words, participants indicated that, because most of their peers looked similar to them, there was no pressure to look differently or compare themselves to others. Three participants commented that there was also no pressure from magazines or the media to look a certain way, especially if the person lived outside of the city, because there was a limited access to the media in the Philippines. It was when these women moved to the United States that the media, especially magazines, became influential in knowing what was in fashion and how they could look. A participant stated, “When I grew up there was no TV and nothing to pressure [us] how to look and everyone back home looked the same so there wasn’t any peer pressure.” Based on the responses of the Philippine-born women, many of the participants did not feel there was peer pressure to look a certain way or to compare themselves negatively growing up as they felt they looked similarly to their peers. Also, because there was limited access to media images, they were not exposed to beauty ideals expressed in the media and did not feel the pressure to look a certain way.

Two women who grew up in the Philippines commented that growing up having blonde hair and blue eyes was the ideal, and one of them said that she wanted so to look like that, and it took years to accept that she would never have those physical attributes. In addition, two of the participating women spoke about how the Western thin ideal was introduced to them through media and that in the Philippines being curvaceous was more of the ideal. One of them stated, “You can be pretty even if you’re very skinny.”

Although many of the responses were the same between the participants, the U.S.-born Filipino women responded differently when asked if magazines were a good source of information regarding attractiveness and fashion. One participant reflected, “I know that I’m never going to look like the models, but I can see what products look good on the models that match my skin tone and body size and try to copy that.” Three participants commented that they use magazines to look at clothes and makeup that could look good on them based on the size, shape, and skin tone of the models to determine if the clothes or makeup would also be compatible with their size, shape, and skin tones.

In relation to the media depicting what is considered attractive, a participant explained, “I like looking at the images sometimes. I don’t base it on everyday how I look but I don’t compare myself and dress or look like them.” Another participant stated, “I always think they’re not real people, that’s Hollywood’s idea of what is attractive, not mine.” Many of the participants stated that they felt that magazines were geared for consumers to make money and that the models in them are not what they considered attractive as one participant commented that magazines are “good for fashion but for being attractive no...I think sometimes models look ‘weird’ and too skinny sometimes but for some people they feel that is attractive and want to look like them.” Another participant reflected on the images seen in the media and said “I guess if you want to keep up with the Jones’, but for me, no....I looked at magazines and thought I like that or that’s pretty but when I look at the price of things, I’m like dang that’s not worth it.” This participant stated that if things were priced more economically, she would be more inclined to put more stock into magazines as a source of fashion and being attractive. Another participant stated, “when I was younger I did view them as an aspiration

however now is focused more on family and career...now I am looking at more the product not the person in the pictures.”

A common comment amongst the Philippine-born Filipino women was that the media was influential whereas with the U.S.-born Filipino women stated that this was not considered an important source of information regarding attractiveness and fashion. One Philippine-born participant reflected that “They’re influential because they’re supposed to be representative of what is attractive. We’re supposed to follow them.” Another participant commented that “I can’t stop watching reality shows [Kardashians]. They are in main stream media and we see them every day and everywhere.” One participant agreed that famous people do influence what is considered attractive, however, only if a person lived in the city. This participant stated that when a person lives in a small town, there is limited access to magazines with famous people; however, “even in the Philippines they want to ‘look pretty’ and go with what’s in fashion...when Twiggy came out, it changed me and I thought ‘hey I look pretty’.”

Theme 2: Self-Image

Participants were given the following statements: (a) There are lots of things I’d change about my looks if I could, (b) I rarely compare how I look with how other people look, and (c) Other people consider me good looking. The majority of participants from both groups stated that they would change their height and be taller; however, most participants stated that they were happy with their bodies and how they looked. One participant asked, “why am I not taller?” as she is 5 feet tall. Another stated that if she could change something about her looks she would change her height as she says: “I

could be a little taller.” One participant reflected that she likes: “being mixed and looking like I do. I’m always told I’m exotic so I’ve always liked my looks.” However, she too stated she “wouldn’t mind being taller.”

Eleven of the women interviewed stated that they were comfortable with how they looked and that they considered themselves to be good looking or attractive. Two women also openly admitted to comparing themselves with others whether it be for professional reasons as a way to mimic other professionals or as a way to know if they were up to par socially with other women. One participant reflected that “As a professional and in a professional environment you do compare yourself especially if everyone around you is educated.” Another participant commented that “In the corporate world you mirror and mirror your boss. People tend to compare unconsciously to be like them not necessarily to look like them but align with them.... Sometimes the way you dress can be a reflection of your work quality.” In this way the comparisons in a professional environment are not done out of jealousy or to compare for beauty standards, but to ensure they are meeting a professional standard.

Other participating women stated that they rarely compared themselves to other women because they were comfortable with how they looked and that they were taught to accept their looks from an early age. One participant reflected that she always had “good role models who never pitted us against each other” when she was growing up so there was desire to compare herself with others. Another participant commented that when she was growing up in the Philippines she was taught that: “We’re all precious in God’s eyes and because of that have a better self-image because in God’s eyes we’re all the same.”

Regarding striving to look a certain way or being found attractive, four participants stated that their priorities shifted after having children or reaching a certain age and that they were not focused on being fashionable or look a certain way. One participant reflected that when she was younger she aspired to looking like the models and celebrities she saw in magazines, however, now became more focused on her family and career. This participant stated: “at about age 40 everything changed as priorities shifted and you learn to accept how you look....I am a work in progress”. Another participant commented that: “Before the birth of my daughter I did compare myself to others and tried to change and dress to match how my fashionable friends dressed. However, I wasn’t happy because I felt like I was sacrificing who I was”. Some of the women easily stated that others found them physically attractive even though they felt they were average while others focused more on internal attributes that made them attractive. One of the participants who was 71 years old said: “I think you exude beauty when you’re nice”. Another participant commented: “I get compliments about having a beautiful soul and a good heart. It is more important to focus on the soul and what is inside”. A participant reflected that: “When I feel good I know I emit good energy” and another stated “When you are healthy you tend to feel better, which in turn causes you to look better”.

The majority of the participants expressed that there were very few things they would change about their looks. A few of the women commented that they felt differently growing up because they were Filipino and looked differently than the majority ethnicity which is Japanese in Hawaii as they were darker in skin color and taller than their Japanese peers. One of the participating women stated she has never identified with being

Filipino and therefore did not feel as if she were very different from those she grew up with. One participant reflected: “Overall I like how I look and I’ve learned to become comfortable and accept my body because it’s the only one I’ve got”. Another participant said: “Self-acceptance and level of commitment—what are you willing to do. ‘I’m a work in progress’”. A participant also commented that: “It is a battle between what you want and what you will do anyway”. Another participant said: “I am trying to be body aware and love my body”. And one participant reflected: “If you feel confident and you own who you are then your confidence will radiate”.

When participants were asked if they compared themselves to others, one participant stated: “Everybody is different so why would I want to do that? I would be setting myself up for a down fall”. Another participant expressed that she is: “Not always aware of it but will be brought to my attention when I see a group of pretty thin women and sometimes I’ll feel badly and like I need to fit in”. While another participant commented: “I do it all the time. Sometimes it’s thinking that if she can wear that and we’re about the same size, then maybe I can wear it. Sometimes it is because I think she’s thinner or prettier than I am or she looks good in that. Sometimes it makes me feel badly and other times it doesn’t bother me.” One participant reflected: “I also look at other people to blend in and be in the same boat and not be too different”. “Another said: “We all compare ourselves to see if we’re meeting the standard of what is attractive”. One of the participants stated: “I do it more now than when I did when I was growing up. Growing up in the Philippines no one cared like here. We’re exposed to so much more than before. Society has so many expectations of beauty”.

Although most of the participants expressed being comfortable with their physical appearance, several did admit to comparing themselves with others either to align with other professionals in the workplace or to ensure that they were following fashion trends and blending in with others. Many of the participants also commented that they found themselves attractive and one said: “My mom made good looking babies”. Many of the women also expressed there were not many things, if any, that they would change about their physical appearance and felt others found them attractive. There was also a sentiment that after having children reaching a certain age that the participants began worrying less about how they looked as their priorities shifted.

Summary

According to this study’s findings’, the 16 participants felt that the media does have an influence on what is considered attractive and fashionable. Philippine-born women tended to have a different view towards fashion magazines and considered them important tools for learning trends than their American-born counterparts. Four participants also stated that after they had children or became a certain age that their priorities shifted and that being found attractive or fashionable was not important to them.

Also according to the findings, it seems that the majority of the participants were comfortable with their physical appearance and several noted that they were more focused on having a positive energy, being confident, and having internal qualities were more important than being found physically attractive. However, two of the participants did state feeling badly when they were exposed to the Western ideal of thin and pretty women due to images in the media.

Some of the participants denied comparing themselves to others while others were candid in their comparing themselves to those around them, although the motivations for the comparisons varied. Chapter 5 will include a discussion of the results, social change implications, and recommendations for future studies.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Social Change, Recommendations, and Conclusions

In this study, I investigated the possible relationship between media images and its effect on the self-esteem and body satisfaction development to Filipino American women. Prior to this study, limited research existed regarding Asian American women and body satisfaction in relation to the media, and the pre-existing literature regarding Filipinos was on body satisfaction related to eating disorders (Edman & Yates, 2005; Kayano et al., 2008; Watkins & Gerong, 1997). This study contributed to the limited literature on Filipino women. In this chapter, I summarize the findings of the investigation, discuss main findings in relation to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, and provide recommendations for future research. Conclusions from this study are presented at the end of this chapter.

Discussion

This explorative qualitative study was guided by the following research question: What is the relationship between ideal images in the media on the body-satisfaction development of Filipino American women? Sixteen Filipino women between the ages of 18 and 71 were interviewed, and field notes were taken in order to analyze common themes among participants. Using the content analysis process described by Elo and Kyngäs (2008), the interview data were analyzed inductively.

Two major themes emerged amongst participants' perceptions and opinions that allowed them to respond to the guiding research question: (a) sociocultural trends in relation to fashion and (b) attractiveness and self-image. Although I focused on Filipino women in the United States, there appeared to be a difference in the perception of the

importance of magazines on fashion and attractiveness between U.S.-born Filipino and their Philippine-born counterparts. While the U.S.-born women stated that magazines did not influence their fashion choices of self-image, Philippine-born women stated that magazines were a good tool for learning what was trendy and what would fit their figures. These statements were consistent with previous research stating that the media has an influence on self-image and what is considered ideal beauty (Knobloch-Westerwick & Romero, 2011; Markey & Markey, 2012; Nabi, 2009; Wasilenko et al., 2007).

There are several theories regarding the media's influence on self-image and body satisfaction. According to the self-objectification theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Vandenberg & Eggermont, 2012), women and girls will learn sociocultural beauty ideals through media images, and this will cause them to internalize standards and begin surveilling their appearances in order to fall in line with these ideals. In this study, participants' responses regarding media influences of fashion and attractiveness fell in line with what self-objectification theorists have suggested (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Tiggemann & Boundy, 2008). The participating women stated that although the ideal beauty images in the media may not be realistic to obtain, media images were pervasive and were important to learning what is the expected beauty or ideal.

However, not meeting this ideal can increase the risk of developing feelings of body dissatisfaction (Markey & Markey, 2012; Nabi, 2009; Wasilenko et al., 2007). The second theme that emerged during this investigation involved the following: attractiveness and self-image. Although 11 out of the 16 participants commented that they were comfortable with their appearance and that they were considered attractive,

several women did admit to comparing themselves with others for a variety of reasons, such as to align themselves with other professionals in the workplace and to make sure they were following fashion trends. According to Festinger's (1954) social comparison theory, people's need to maintain accurate appraisals of themselves causes them to compare themselves in order to evaluate and fine tune their personal point of reference. This could be the reason why more participating women in this study readily admitted that they compared themselves to those around them as opposed to what Lin and Kulik (2002) explained as the unattainable images presented in the media.

In terms of comparing themselves to others, objectification theorists (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Lev-Ari et al., 2014) state that because women are regularly objectified in the media, they then internalize these media standards and base their self-worth on the opinions of others. This comparison or appraisal becomes so internalized that women are not even consciously aware that they are comparing themselves with their peers (Lev-Ari et al., 2014). Research findings from this study support this theory as none of the participants articulated being directly affected by images in the media at this time. However, a few commented that when they were younger, they did use the images as an aspiration. In light of objectification theory's stance that the comparisons may occur on a subconscious level, the participants may be more affected by media images than they are aware.

Two of the Philippine-born participants reflected that growing up having blonde hair and blue eyes was the ideal beauty; this mirrored the responses of adolescent girls in a study conducted by Nichter and Nichter (1991) who found that adolescent girls described the ideal image of a girl as 5 foot 7, 100 pounds, and a size 5, with long blond

hair and blue eyes. As mass media continues to endorse this ideal through advertisements using the social comparison standard, participants of the Nichter and Nitcher study described as the ideal even though they were aware that, based on genetics, only a few females could adhere to this ideal.

According to the findings of this study, there was a difference between U.S.-born Filipino women and Philippine-born Filipino women's attitudes towards the importance of media on fashion trends and social comparisons. Per the interview data, this could be a result of limited access to the media in more rural areas of the Philippines as well as most of the participating women's peers being of similar physical appearance. In contrast, the U.S.-born participating women reflected that if they did compare themselves to the media images, it was when they were younger and they are no longer affected by the images. According to objectification theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997), social comparisons do not occur at a conscious level and, over time, the individual is not aware that comparisons are being made. A woman will come to feel that her desire to change her appearance or engage in self-evaluation is natural and her decision as opposed to it being a result of consistent exposure to the socially constructed beauty ideal. Although there is no data to prove this, the U.S.-born participants who felt that they no longer compared themselves to others are still comparing themselves to others on a subconscious level. Women who have experienced objectification in some way at one point in their lives learn to chronically evaluate themselves (Quinn, Cathey, & Kallen, 2006).

Limitations to the Study

There were several limitations to the study. One of the assumptions of the investigation was that participants would be able to understand the questions and answer truthfully; however, it is unknown if the participating U.S.-born women answered truthfully as the majority of them indicated they were not influenced or affected by magazine images even though they admitted to looking through magazines. This could have been due to courtesy bias, which states that during interviews, participants have the tendency to provide answers that they feel the researcher is looking for instead of how they may really feel about the question (León, Huapaya, Jennings, Lundgren, & Sinai, 2007). In this way, participants may have underreported how affected they were about an issue if they felt it was a more socially acceptable answer, thus limiting the accuracy of the data. In future studies, it could be beneficial to do online or anonymous reporting type studies in order to minimize this limitation. Participants may be more inclined to disclose how they are actually feeling if they do not have to speak face-to-face with the interviewer. Another way to minimize this limitation would be to not disclose the focus of the study to the participants prior to beginning the study. In this way, participants will not have an idea as to what the researcher is attempting to study before being asked to disclose how they feel about their physical appearance and what is considered to be socially attractive.

Another limitation was in relation to the selection of statements from the OBCS, the BESAA, and the SATAQ-3. A projected limitation at the beginning of the investigation was that the measures may not be able to encapsulate the feelings of Filipino Americans as they were created with European Americans in mind. However, as

the full measures were not administered, I may not have been able to capture all feelings and attitudes of participants as only five collective statements were used in the investigation.

Social Change

This study will add to the limited research involving Filipino women in relation to body satisfaction, eating disorders, and media. I sought to analyze the relationship between images in the media on the self-image and body satisfaction in Filipino women as few researchers have examined these variables without the aspect of disordered eating. This study could also bridge the existing gap in literature regarding media, body satisfaction, and self-image relating to Filipino women as at this time there is no research relating to these variables without the addition of disordered eating.

This study could aid in the movement towards social change by bringing more awareness to Filipinos, as well as shedding light on the psychological issues experienced by this group. This group is quickly becoming one of the largest Asians groups in the United States, and there is a social concern that there has not been enough research regarding their mental health issues.

Recommendations

Additional research is needed to better understand how the media affects self-image and body satisfaction in Filipino youth under the age of 18. Several of the participating women in the study commented that young girls are also affected by media images. Although there is ongoing research regarding the effects of media exposure and self-esteem, self-image, and body satisfaction in young girls (Andrew, Clark, &

Tiggemann, 2016; Anschutz & Engels, 2010; Ashikali, Ayers, & Dittmar, 2014; Bucchianeri et al., 2016; Bell & Dittmar, 2011), it would be beneficial to know how the media affects young Filipino girls as the existing studies do not focus on this population.

Further research with adult Filipino Americans is also needed to delve deeper in the issue of self-esteem, body dissatisfaction, and body image. A larger quantitative and qualitative study would be beneficial as more probing questions could be asked in order to gain a richer understanding into the relationship between objectified images in the media and body dissatisfaction to include levels of depression felt by Filipino women due to body image.

Summary

The purpose of this investigation was to examine a possible relationship between objectified images in the media and the body satisfaction of Filipino American women. I aimed to answer the research question: What is the relationship between ideal images in the media on the body-satisfaction development of Filipino American women?

Objectification theorists (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) suggest that images in the media do affect the development of body satisfaction and body image in women. Philippine-born Filipinos in the United States reported decreased feelings of body image and self-esteem (Farrales & Chapman, 1999), which could be attributed to the stress of trying to acculturate to the host culture (Capielo et al., 2015; Lau et al., 2006). Although the participating women did not state having lowered body satisfaction as a result of media image, several of the Philippine-born participants commented that magazines are an

important tool for learning how to dress when they came to the United States, as well as to keep up with trends.

I found slight differences in the attitudes between U.S.-born and Philippine-born participants regarding the media and self-image. U.S.-born Filipino women did not rely on magazines for trends of beauty and fashion; however, they did admit to looking at magazines for various reasons. Most of the participating women commented that they were comfortable with their appearance, while a few of the Philippine-born participants stated they would have liked to be taller than their current height. Philippine-born participating women stated that growing up in the Philippines with limited access to the media and looking like most of their peers focused more on internal qualities of beauty than external qualities in comparison to the American-born participants.

More investigations are needed into how women who are not of European, African, or a general inclusion of Asian descent are affected by ideal mages in the media in order to meet the psychological needs of Filipino American women. Filipino Americans are becoming one of the largest Asian groups in the United States, and they continue to be overlooked by research (David, 2010; Javier et al., 2014; Tuason, Ancheta, & Battie, 2014). It is important to examine this group because immigrant Filipino Americans have reported higher levels of decreased body image and self-esteem when they are trying to assimilate to the host culture. Asian Americans underuse mental health services and have untreated mental health challenges (David, 2010). Filipinos are even less likely than other Asian groups to seek out mental health services, increasing their risk of prolonged psychological distress (David, 2010; Tuason et al., 2014). Filipinos are

different than other Asian groups, and it is time that they receive attention about the specific mental health challenges they face in terms of media and body satisfaction.

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Appendix A: Flyer Given to Participants

HOW DOES THE MEDIA IMPACT FILIPINO-AMERICAN WOMEN?

A STUDY OF FILIPINO-AMERICAN WOMEN

The Media is everywhere and so many things that are seen every day can influence how we see ourselves as women.

Purpose of the Study:

- Filipinos are becoming one of the largest Asian groups in the United States. Despite this, there is little information about Filipinos. This research will hopefully help mental health professionals understand possible issues Filipino women may have about how they look and how they can help Filipino women feel better about themselves.

Who will be studied?:

- Women who are over the age of 18 who identify with being Filipino regardless of being mixed with another ethnicity who were born in the United States, immigrated at a young age, and Filipino women who have immigrated to the United States within the last 3 years.

What will be Done?:

- This study consists of a 1 to 1 discussion with the researcher and will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. The researcher will ask 5-6 questions relating to the media, self-esteem, and body satisfaction.

Benefits of this Study:

- YOU will be contributing to the knowledge about Filipino women in the United States. This will help researchers develop a better understanding of Filipino women and potentially create programs to help treat Filipinos.

What can you do?:

Participants are greatly needed! This research is really important for Filipino women. Please take the opportunity to help add to the body of research. If you wish to participate in this study, please contact the researcher at:

nicole.dionisio@waldenu.edu

This study is being conducted by Nicole Dionisio who is a doctoral student from Walden University as a requirement for completing a doctoral degree in clinical psychology and has been approved by the Institutional Review Board (05-19-15-0120416). If you have questions regarding the study, please email: nicole.dionisio@waldenu.edu.

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

The Reason for the Study:

Filipinos are becoming one of the largest Asian groups in the United States but there is very little information about Filipinos in psychology. The reason for this research or study is to see if there is a connection between images of thin, tall, “beautiful” women in the media and self-esteem and not feeling satisfied with your body. This will hopefully help mental health professionals understand Filipino women better and possible issues Filipino women may have about how they look so that they can help Filipino women feel better about themselves.

This study is being conducted by Nicole Dionisio who is a doctoral student from Walden University as a requirement for completing a doctoral degree in clinical psychology.

What will be Done:

This study consists of a 1 to 1 discussion with the researcher and will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. The researcher will ask 5-6 questions relating to the media, self-esteem, and body satisfaction and how pictures of “beautiful” women in the media (TV and magazines) affect how you feel about how you look. You will also be asked for some information like your age, primary language, and where you were born before starting the surveys. The interview may be recorded in order to allow the researcher to go back after the interview has been concluded in order to ensure all of the responses have been accurately recorded. In the study you will be asked things like: I rarely compare how I look with other people; Pictures in magazines are an important source of information about fashion and being attractive; and Famous people are an important source of information about fashion and being attractive.

Payment:

You will not receive money or items for completing this study.

Risks or Discomforts:

You should not feel embarrassed or uncomfortable when complete the surveys. If you feel uncomfortable with a question, you can skip that question or exit the study altogether. If you decide to quit at any time before you have finished, your answers will not be used in the study.

If you do feel upset or uncomfortable by participating in this study, please contact a local university counseling center. The centers are open to non-university students for little cost:

Counseling & Student Development Center at University of Hawaii Manoa: Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services, Room 312. Phone number: 808.956.7927; Neighbor Islands: 1800.753.6879.

Counseling and Psychological Services University of Nevada Las Vegas: Student Recreation and Wellness Center. Phone number: 702.895.3627.

Confidentiality:

Your responses will be kept completely confidential and not be shared. You will not be asked to give your name or your contact information. Your responses will be kept in a protected in a locked box and deleted after 5 years.

Decision to Quit at Any Time:

Your participation is voluntary which means you can stop at any time. If you do not want to continue, you can let the researcher know at any time. You will be asked to give a verbal consent by stating "I consent" to begin the study which will indicate to the researcher that you are agreeing that you have read this information in the consent form and agree to participate in this research, with the knowledge that you are free to quit at any time.

How the Findings Will Be Used:

The results of the study will hopefully be used to help mental health professionals who work with Filipino women. The results from the study will possibly be published in a professional journal in the field of psychology.

Copy of Informed Consent and Results of the Study:

Before starting the study you can request a copy of this consent form for your records. If you would like to know the results of the study, you can email Nicole.Dionisio@waldenu.edu.

Researcher Information:

If you have any questions about this study, you can contact the school's representative: irb@waldenu.edu or you can call 612.312.1210. You can also email the researcher at Nicole.Dinoisio@waldenu.edu.

Appendix C: Permission to use The Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance
Questionnaire-3

From: Kevin Thompson <thompsonjk2003@yahoo.com>;
To: Nicole Dionisio <nicolejoyd@yahoo.com>;
Subject: Re: The Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Scale-3
Sent: Thu, Oct 31, 2013 3:15:41 PM

Sure. No problem

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 30, 2013, at 8:25 PM, Nicole Dionisio <nicolejoyd@yahoo.com> wrote:

Good evening Dr. Thompson,
I wanted to follow up regarding the use of your study in my dissertation. Would it be possible to use your study?
Thank you,
Nicole Dionisio

On Monday, October 14, 2013 11:31 PM, Nicole Dionisio <nicolejoyd@yahoo.com> wrote:

Good evening Dr. Thompson,

I am a doctoral student from Walden University writing my dissertation tentatively titled The Impact of Objectified Images in the Media on the Body Satisfaction Development of Filipino American Women under the direction of my dissertation committee chaired by Dr. Hannah Lerman. I will be studying if American born Filipino women report lower levels of body satisfaction than their Philippine born counterparts. At this time, I am writing you as I would like your permission to reproduce to use the SATAQ-3 in my research study.

Would this be acceptable?

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nicole Dionisio, MA

Appendix D: Permission to use the Body-Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults

On Tuesday, October 15, 2013 9:03 PM, "Morton J. Mendelson, Dr"
<morton.mendelson@mcgill.ca> wrote:
Hello,

You have our permission to use the BES scale as described here. We will send you further information as soon as we can.

Cheers,

MJM

Morton J. Mendelson

From: Nicole Dionisio [mailto:nicolejoyd@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2013 03:14 AM
To: Morton J. Mendelson, Dr
Cc: nicole.dionisio@waldenu.edu <nicole.dionisio@waldenu.edu>
Subject: The Body-Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults

Good evening Dr. Mendelson,

I am a doctoral student from Walden University writing my dissertation tentatively titled The Impact of Objectified Images in the Media on the Body Satisfaction Development of Filipino American Women under the direction of my dissertation committee chaired by Dr. Hannah Lerman. I will be studying if American born Filipino women report lower levels of body satisfaction than their Philippine born counterparts. At this time, I am writing you as I would like your permission to reproduce to use the BESAA in my research study.

Would this be acceptable?

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nicole Dionisio, MA

Appendix E: Permission to use the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale

From: Nita McKinley <nmmckin@u.washington.edu>;
 To: Nicole Dionisio <nicolejoyd@yahoo.com>;
 Subject: Re: The Objectified Body Consciousness Scale
 Sent: Thu, Oct 31, 2013 1:56:49 PM

Hi Nicole,

I don't believe so.

Nita Mary McKinley, PhD
 Associate Professor, Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences
 University of Washington Tacoma
 Campus Box 358436
 1900 Commerce Street
 Tacoma, WA 98402
 Phone: 253-692-4543
 FAX: 253-692-5718
 Email: nmmckin@u.washington.edu
<https://sites.google.com/a/uw.edu/nitamckinleyphd/>

On Wed, 30 Oct 2013, Nicole Dionisio wrote:

Hello Dr. McKinley,

I just wanted to follow up regarding permissions to use your study. Is there anyone else (publishers) that I need to obtain permissions from prior to using your study.

Thank you,
 Nicole

On Tuesday, October 15, 2013 2:45 PM, Nicole Dionisio <nicolejoyd@yahoo.com> wrote:

Hi Nita,

Thank you so much! There isn't a lot of research on Filipinos so I thought this could be an interesting way to fill the gap a bit, sort of speak.

Thank you again!

Nicole

On Tuesday, October 15, 2013 8:26 AM, Nita McKinley <nmmckin@u.washington.edu> wrote:

Hi Nicole,

I've attached a handout with permission for non-profit use. Your study sounds very interesting! I hope that it goes well for you.

Nita

Nita Mary McKinley, PhD
Associate Professor, Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences
University of Washington Tacoma
Campus Box 358436
1900 Commerce Street
Tacoma, WA 98402
Phone: 253-692-4543
FAX: 253-692-5718
Email: nmmckin@u.washington.edu
<https://sites.google.com/a/uw.edu/nitamckinleyphd/>

On Tue, 15 Oct 2013, Nicole Dionisio wrote:

Good evening Dr. McKinley,

I am a doctoral student from Walden University writing my dissertation tentatively titled The Impact of Objectified Images in the Media on the Body Satisfaction Development of Filipino American Women under the direction of my dissertation committee chaired by Dr. Hannah Lerman. I will be studying if American born Filipino women report lower levels of body satisfaction than their Philippine born counterparts. At this time, I am writing you as I would like your permission to reproduce to use the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale in my research study.

Would this be acceptable?

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nicole Dionisio, MA

Appendix F: Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire-3

Please read each of the following items carefully and indicate the number that best reflects your agreement with the statement.

Definitely Disagree = 1 Mostly Disagree = 2 Neither Agree Nor Disagree = 3
Mostly Agree = 4 Definitely Agree = 5

1. TV programs are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."
2. I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to lose weight.
3. I do not care if my body looks like the body of people who are on TV.
4. I compare my body to the bodies of people who are on TV.
5. TV commercials are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."
6. I do not feel pressure from TV or magazines to look pretty.
7. I would like my body to look like the models who appear in magazines.
8. I compare my appearance to the appearance of TV and movie stars.
9. Music videos on TV are not an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."
10. I've felt pressure from TV and magazines to be thin.
11. I would like my body to look like the people who are in movies.
12. I do not compare my body to the bodies of people who appear in magazines.
13. Magazine articles are not an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

14. I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to have a perfect body.

15. I wish I looked like the models in music videos.

16. I compare my appearance to the appearance of people in magazines.

17. Magazine advertisements are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

18. I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to diet.

19. I do not wish to look as athletic as the people in magazines.

20. I compare my body to that of people in "good shape."

21. Pictures in magazines are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

22. I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to exercise.

23. I wish I looked as athletic as sports stars.

24. I compare my body to that of people who are athletic.

25. Movies are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

26. I've felt pressure from TV or magazines to change my appearance.

27. I do not try to look like the people on TV.

28. Movie stars are not an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

29. Famous people are an important source of information about fashion and "being attractive."

30. I try to look like sports athletes.

Appendix G: Body-Esteem Scale for Adolescents and Adults

Indicate how often you agree with the following statements ranging from "never" (0) to "always"

(4). Circle the appropriate number beside each statement.

	Never	Seldom	Some- times	Often	Always
1. I like what I look like in pictures.	0	1	2	3	4
2. Other people consider me good looking.	0	1	2	3	4
3. I'm proud of my body.	0	1	2	3	4
4. I am preoccupied with trying to change my body weight.	0	1	2	3	4
5. I think my appearance would help me get a job.	0	1	2	3	4
6. I like what I see when I look in the mirror.	0	1	2	3	4
7. There are lots of things I'd change about my looks if I could.	0	1	2	3	4
8. I am satisfied with my weight.	0	1	2	3	4
9. I wish I looked better.	0	1	2	3	4
10. I really like what I weigh.	0	1	2	3	4
11. I wish I looked like someone else.	0	1	2	3	4
12. People my own age like my looks.	0	1	2	3	4
13. My looks upset me.	0	1	2	3	4
14. I'm as nice looking as most people.	0	1	2	3	4
15. I'm pretty happy about the way I look.	0	1	2	3	4
16. I feel I weigh the right amount for my height.	0	1	2	3	4
17. I feel ashamed of how I look.	0	1	2	3	4
18. Weighing myself depresses me.	0	1	2	3	4
19. My weight makes me unhappy	0	1	2	3	4
20. My looks help me to get dates.	0	1	2	3	4
21. I worry about the way I look.	0	1	2	3	4
22. I think I have a good body.	0	1	2	3	4
23. I'm looking as nice as I'd like to.	0	1	2	3	4

Appendix H: Objectified Body Consciousness Scale

INSTRUCTIONS:

Circle the number that corresponds to how much you agree with each of the statements on the following pages.

Circle NA only if the statement does not apply to you. Do not circle NA if you don't agree with a statement.

For example, if the statement says "When I am happy, I feel like singing" and you don't feel like singing when you are happy, then you would circle one of the disagree choices. You would only circle NA if you were never happy.

Strongly Disagree
Neither agree
nor disagree
Strongly Agree
Does not apply

1. I rarely think about how I look.
-2. When I can't control my weight, I feel like something must be wrong with me.
-3. I think it is more important that my clothes are comfortable than whether they look good on me.
-4. I think a person is pretty much stuck with the looksthey are born with
-5. I feel ashamed of myself when I haven't made theeffort to look my best
-6. A large part of being in shape is having that kind of body in the first place.
-7. I think more about how my body feels than how mybody looks
-8. I feel like I must be a bad person when I don't lookas good as I could
-9. I rarely compare how I look with how other peoplelook.

-10. I think a person can look pretty much how they
.....want to if they are willing to work at it
11. I would be ashamed for people to know what I
really weigh
12. I really don't think I have much control over how
my body looks
13. Even when I can't control my weight, I think I'm
an okay person
14. During the day, I think about how I look many
times
15. I never worry that something is wrong with me when I
am not exercising as much as I should
16. I often worry about whether the clothes I am wearing
make me look good
17. When I'm not exercising enough, I question whether
I am a good enough person
18. I rarely worry about how I look to other people
19. I think a person's weight is mostly determined by
the genes they are born with
20. I am more concerned with what my body can do than
how it looks
21. It doesn't matter how hard I try to change my weight,
it's probably always going to be about the same
22. When I'm not the size I think I should be, I feel
ashamed
23. I can weigh what I'm supposed to when I try hard
enough
24. The shape you are in depends mostly on your
genes

Appendix I: National Institutes of Health Certificate of Completion

2/16/2015

Protecting Human Subject Research Participants



Appendix J: Demographics Questionnaire

What category below includes your age?

1. 18 and under
2. 18 and over

In which country were you born?

1. Philippines
2. United States
3. Other

How long have you been living in the United States?

1. All of my life
2. Less than 3 years
3. More than 5 years

What is your primary language?

1. English
2. Tagalog
3. Another Filipino dialect

I understand written English well.

1. Yes
2. No

I am currently pregnant:

1. Yes
2. No

I have been diagnosed with an acute illness and/or have experienced a recent natural disaster:

1. Yes
2. No

I have been diagnosed with a mental and/or emotional disability:

1. Yes
2. No

Appendix K: Photographs of models in swimwear

Image 1:



Image 2:



Image 3:



Image 4:



Image 5



Image 1: <http://www.mirror.co.uk/3am/us-gossip/victorias-secrets-model-candice-swanepoel-815675>

Image 2: <http://www.hawtcelebs.com/maryna-linchuk-in-bikini-at-photoshoot-on-the-beach-in-st-barts/#jp-carousel-63067>

Image 3: <http://www.tonyskansascity.com/2013/09/candice-swanepoel-bikini-walks-on-water.html>

Image 4:

http://www.zimbio.com/pictures/SLSMScOjfFt/Candice+Swanepoel+Shows+Off+Bikini+Body/W_uJdljzZ7

Image 5: <http://www.hawtcelebs.com/erin-heatherton-in-bikinis-on-a-victorias-secret-photoshoot-in-st-barts/#jp-carousel-107289>