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# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LEVEL OF BEAUTY STANDARD WHICH DEVELOP PEOPLE'S PERCEPTION

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#### **ABSTRACT**

This study is to identify the relationship between the levels of beauty standards which develop people's perception in Malaysia. The research aims to determine the effects of appearance, intellectuality, and fashion sense on Malaysia's perception. The study used the survey to collect the data from 100 respondents during the preliminary research in Kuala Lumpur. The data was analysed descriptively and inferential. The results indicated a significant relationship with the levels of beauty standards that develop people's perception in Malaysia. This research determines the causes that are adequate the levels of beauty standards that could affect people's perception in Malaysia. The finding is a significant contribution to the research literature. Besides, industry players in the related fields could harness the research finding for their future marketing strategy and new service.

#### **ARTICLE INFO**

Keywords:

Beauty Standards, Appearance, Intellectuality, Fashion Sense.

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Being categorised under the label of 'beauty standards' might be beneficial for an individual. It creates perceptions and impressions towards the people that see. Based on Stepanova and Strobe (2017) research, this is because facial attractiveness affects people's lives in a wide range of social domains. Perceptions of attractiveness might not be driven by racial categories, but by multiple facial characteristics. Individuals attend to different features when making explicit racial typicality versus attractiveness judgments (Stepanova & Strobe, 2017). Another research also stated that Beauty-is-Good stereotype refers to the assumption that eye-catching people retain sociably desirable personalities and higher moral standards (Tsukiura & Cabeza, 2011).

In this research, a few characteristics will be focused on defining 'beauty standards,' and they are; appearance, intellectual and fashion sense. Sekayi (2003) mentioned beauty standards' basics to include absolute qualities such as having thin lips, narrow hips, pale skin, and straight hair. However, this is not generally describing the beauty level of women in Africa. Apart from that, as much as how the media has been affecting people's choice of beauty standard, most of the commercial messages often dispute that beauty should be focusing on body type, skin tone, hair texture whereby it seems that the body type and skin colour is the least easily reformed (Sekayi, 2003). Thus, creating the confidence of certain women to fall apart.

The concept of beauty standards puts people under pressure. It adds stature and apparent strength, which creates sex appeal where formerly none existed, suggesting mystery and intrigue in the dullest of lives (Foxe & Damian, 2003). It is as if, when a person does not try hard enough to be labelled under the beauty standards, he will not be considered as a part of society. Nevertheless, when a person is obsessing to be qualified according to the beauty standards, others will have the perception that a person is not displaying gratitude to themselves.

The primary concern of this concept is that it affects people's emotion. Based on Kim and Lee (2018) study, people are suffering from social anxiety, prejudice and inequality based on their appearance, and how people see them. Thus, resulting to the importance of perception. In psychological terms, perception is defined as our recognition and interpretation of sensory information and how we respond to the information (Seland, 2016). Beauty standards existed because of perception; people tend to describe other people based on appearance, intellectuality and fashion sense.

According to McLeod (2018), a prominent theoretical issue on which psychologists are divided is the extent to which discernment relies directly on the information that exists in the environment. Some argue that perceptual processes depend on the perceiver's expectations and previous knowledge. Therefore, it shows that people want to see what they expected to see. In this research, the researcher would like to determine what expectation a person conveys beauty standards through an individual's appearances, intellectuality, and fashion sense. Poran (2002), mentioned, people who are perceived as attractive are also perceived as having positive personality traits such as intelligence, sociability and kindness.

The research aims to determine the effects of appearance, intellectuality, and fashion sense on Malaysia's perception. Besides that, some of the previous authors mentioned the level of beauty standards as highlighted before on the above. This study found out that the level of beauty standards brings effects that develop people's perception in Malaysia.

#### **Research Questions**

In furtherance of finding the answer for a specific objective, the following research questions are as followed:

RQ1: What is the relationship between the appearances of one person which develop people perception in Malaysia?

RQ2: What is the relationship between the fashion senses in oneself which develop people perception in Malaysia

RQ3: What is the relationship between the attitude and intelligence of one person who develops people's perception in Malaysia?

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#### Research Objectives

The main objective of the present research is to find out:

RO1: To determine the relationship between the appearances of one person which develop people perception in Malaysia.

RO2: To determine the relationship between the fashion senses in one elf which develop people perception in Malaysia.

RO3: To determine the relationship between the attitude and intellectual of one person which develop people perception in Malaysia.

The purpose of the study to explore Malaysian youth of standard beauty level. Besides that, utilising standard procedures in order to understand how people defined the beauty standard among them. As specific opinions from people, they defined beauty standard through someone's appearance, from the fashion sense and from their intellectual aspect. Furthermore, every one of these classifications seemed to have both positive and negative ramifications for an appearance evaluation running from hesitance to certainty. Moreover, it will be beneficial for this study to further move in its research to know more about how people think and address their standard beauty level. It is beneficial for the researcher to know why people tend to have a different perception of beauty standards by themselves with students. So, it helps people to develop knowledge of an existing practice.

The focused-on crowd for this examination is to concentrate on a particular part of the general public, namaely the millennials for example youth in Malaysia. This is because youngsters in Malaysia have their own perspective of excellence norms simply like some other country.

#### **Appearance**

According to Zebrowitz and Montepare (2008), the appearance matters since some facial characteristics help guide adaptive behaviour that even a hint of those characteristics can make an impression. The distributed human neural system for face perception (distributed face model) is the most contemporary neuroanatomical model encompassing what is known of face processing to date (Haxby, Gobbini, Furey, Ishai, Schouten & Pietrini, 2000).

#### **Intellectual**

Someone intelligent that uses reason and critical thinking is the intellectual person. Thus, people who smart to handle certain things and rational than emotional. Muller (2017) states that in reality most of the attitudes, behaviour and adjustments are determined by their perceptions. While according to another opinion "perception exists, it is the interpretation of an object, event or relations obtained by concluding information and interpret messages "(Grace, 2007).

# **Fashion Sense**

Fashion sense is an image that must be attractive to the people. On the other hand, the image's beauty standard must be compelling enough to attract and hold attention. According to Brodrick (2015), "aesthetic feeling appears almost pure" is a fine arts domain; however, people also perceive beauty standards in their houses, friends and even clothes. Fashion may include any sort of significant worth items such as a good, a service, an occasion or an idea. For an example of this situation is attire. Truth be told, the term "fashion" is regularly utilised synonymously with the clothing.

# 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Beauty standards are just another form of 'judging a book by its cover' as people often misinterpret their perception. However, the astounding ability to perceive other people are plagued by a basic contradiction (Freeman, Johnson, Adams & Ambady, 2012). As readily and rapidly as a person may oust their judgments of others, each decision requires an astonishing mental processing complexity (Freeman et. al, 2012). A research made to examine how cues conveyed by a person through their facial appearance, voice intonation, and body interaction to form the integrated representations that guide a person's

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perception of and responses to other people. It shows how these information sources are often thrown into interaction through bottom-up forces, such as phenotypic cues, along with top-down forces, for instance, stereotypes (Freeman et. al, 2012).

In 2017, an experiment made by Stepanova and Strobe confirmed that faces with medium levels of skin tone and facial features are perceived as more attractive than faces with extreme levels of mixed-race. As mentioned earlier, throughout the experiment, they found that the Black phenotypes; the combination of dark skin tone with Afrocentric facial features, were rated as more attractive rather than the White phenotypes; the combination of light skin tone and Eurocentric facial features. Whereas, the ambiguous faces; the combination of Afrocentric and Eurocentric physiognomy with medium levels of skin tone, were rated as the most attractive. This experiment proves the level of beauty standards that people have decided on in terms of facial appearance the skin colour; there are dark skin tone, light skin tone, and the medium level of skin tone.

In the Cambridge Dictionary, beauty means it the quality of being pleasing, especially to look at. The keyword of beauty is 'visible to the eye'. In interacting life, physical appearance is very important. This is because looking attractive is looking honest and honest but can put people with themselves. While according to Kwok (2014), something is approaching to principles in mental taste. His statement's meaning is that different people are more likely to respond in the same way to a beautiful object that provides bodily pleasure. Thus, this makes it seem as if beauty is a quality. Nowadays, women are compelled to satisfy numerous expectations of society. One of the expectations is about how they have to satisfy certain standards to be marked as beautiful. Plus, that being stated, beauty standards are set by society itself. A theory is an all-around established proclamation or set of ideas that clarifies observed the facts or the phenomena. Plus, some theories helped the researchers in conducting this study to explain essential ideas in relating to the research. Moreover, this study anchored on the terms of the facial appearance, fashion sense and also intellectuality to define beauty standard level.

Based on the characteristic of standard beauty level, which is the appearance of that particular person, people tend to judge women's beauty standards from their physical appearance. For example, beauty is defined by the lean physical body and fair skin colour in Indonesia. In a manner, the skinny woman and has a bright skin colour can be categorised as beautiful. This study may help people to know more in-depth about what others think and their opinion.

Mitchell (2015), stated that people might feel that being beautiful helps them achieve other objectives, such as getting noticed and feeling belonging. On the other hand, constant worries about beauty cause psychological distress and anxiety beyond cosmetics' cost.

The conceptual framework will be examined by a selected theory which is the theory of perception. This research developed a model based on the proposed framework from the study that examine the common characteristics that define the level of beauty standards that set people's perception. Thus, findings from the previous research that contributed to the research construct of this research. For the independent variable that already selected for this study are the facial appearance, the fashion sense and also the intellectuality of the particular person. Plus, the dependent variable for this research is people's perception of each other. The conceptual framework is presented in figure 1.

Therefore, to meet the study research aims, the study hypothesized that;

- H1: People with good looking image will develop a good perception from other people.
- H2: People with an outstanding intellectuality will develop a good perception from other people.
- H3: People with a great fashion sense will develop a good perception from other people.

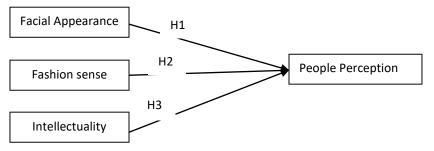


Figure 1: Conceptual Research Framework

#### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study used an online survey to collect respondent feedback via a questionnaire in Google form. The study used an online approach to allow the respondent easy access. They only need to click at the link provided. The link was shared via WhatsApp, Twitter and Instagram. The approach is an effort to increase respondent participation.

The study used the adopt and adapt the technique to develop the research instrument. The questionnaires were adapted from Stojcic, Dong, and Ren (2020). The questionnaire consists of 20 items and divided into two major parts: the demographic and the variables. The study used the 5-points Likert Scale to record the respondents' feedback starting from 1 - strongly disagree to 5 - strongly agree.

The sample was selected based on quota sampling technique. Quota sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which researchers create a sample involving individuals representing a population (Brick, 2014). Researchers choose these individuals according to specific traits or qualities as they decide and make quotas. The market research samples can be useful in collecting data whereby these samples can be generalised to the entire population. While for the research unit of analysis, the study targeted young adults between 20 to 25 years old as a respondent who lives in Kuala Lumpur because at this age many of the respondents become serious of getting into a relationship as they care of their bodies and appearance more than their health (University of Missouri-Columbia, 2012). For young adults, appearance had effects on works and partner control perhaps due to the former domains that are more noticeable in young adulthood when people are in the early stages of careers and relationships (Andreoletti, Zebrowitz & Lachman, 2001), which is why, for young adults, their perceptions among each other are the matter at most.

Before the actual data collection, the study conducted validity and reliability test during the preliminary study. Validity can be defined as the extent to which the scores from measure represent the variable they intend to measure (Price, Jhangiani & Chiang, 2013; Ibrahim, 2018). The study conducted content validity by sending the proposed questionnaire to the content expert. As mentioned earlier, it was to ensure the items are suitable to measure the selected variable.

Whereas the study conducted reliability test to ensure the items consistency to measure the selected variable. For the reliability test, the study has collected 109 responses. According to Conroy (2016), more than thirty responses is required to measure the item consistency during the pre-test. The items consistency is determined based on the Cronbach Alpha value. The acceptable value for the reliability test is more than 0.7 (Taber, 2017; Ibrahim, 2018). The questionnaire is considered reliable because the reliability test value was between 0.882 and 0.957.

The study performed a simple statistical analysis descriptively. The result was presented in frequencies. Also, the study conducted the inferential analysis to test the research hypothesis using a correlation test.

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# 4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Respondent demographic

Measurement	Items	Percentage
Gender	Male	41%
	Female	59%
Age	20-22	28%
	23-25	72%
Education level	Diploma	21%
	Degree	73%
	Masters	3%
	Others	3%
Ethnicity	Malay	90%
	Chinese	6%
	Indian	3%
	Others	1%
Marital Status	Single	94%
	Married	6%

Table 1 indicated the respondents' demographic analysis. The previous finding from this research showed that 41% of males participated in this research. In comparison, the percentage of female was 59% which is higher than the male. The percentage of the age range from 20-22 years old was 28% and the percentage of range of the age from 23-25 years old was 72% which shows that this age range complied the target respondents for this research. As for the educational level, 21% of the respondents have a diploma, 73% of the respondents have a degree, 3% had masters, and 3% in others. Meanwhile, as for the ethnicity, Malay is the highest race of the respondents with 90%, followed by Chinese with 6%, Indian with 3% and the other 1% was from others. The marital status from the respondents showed that most of the respondents were single with 94%. In comparison, the married group from the respondents were only 6%.

Based on Table 2, the descriptive analysis of beauty standards' levels indicated the majority of the respondent reckoned by feeling that to be qualified as beauty standards gives much pressure by the surrounding. (BS1: M=3.52, S.D=1.143). The respondents also agreed that it is important to be classified under the terms 'beauty standards' to become a success in life. (BS2: M=2.94, S.D=1.234).

As shown in table 3, the descriptive analysis of appearance shows the majority in appearance by seeing that people who take care of their appearance are more confident (AP3: M=4.24, S.D=0.860) while the respondents also agreed that they tend to approach better-looking people in terms of appearance (AP1: M=2.84, S.D=1.056).

Table 4 shows the majority of the respondents agree that a person looks attractive when they take care of their intellectuality (IN5: M=4.26, S.D=0.832). The respondents also voted to try to break the ice for people to recognise them (IN4: M=3.03, S.D=1.058).

While table 5 indicated the descriptive analysis of fashion sense. The majority of the respondents agree with their clothing suit their identity (FS5: M=3.80, S.D=1.078). Meanwhile, the respondents also agreed that they tend to judge people dressed weirdly or oddly than the normal (FS2: M=2.52, S.D=1.127). The study also performed a correlation analysis to test the

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relationship between the related variables. The relationship between the variables was determined using Guilford Rule of Thumb (refer table 6).

**Table 2: Descriptive Analysis of the Level of Beauty Standards** 

	N	Mean	Std.
			Deviation
I feel that to be qualified as beauty standards give much pressure by the surrounding. (BS1)	109	3.52	1.143
For me, it is important to be classified under the terms 'beauty standards' to become a success in life. (BS2)	109	2.94	1.234
I personally think that beauty standards differ according to one's race and culture. (BS3)	109	3.39	1.290
I feel that if I do not qualify as beauty standards, people are looking at me horribly. (BS4)	109	3.15	1.185

**Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of Appearance** 

	N	Mean	Std.
			Deviation
I tend to approach better-looking people. (AP1)	109	2.84	1.056
I think that good looks help people to become successful. (AP2)	109	3.46	1.143
I can see that people who take care of their appearance are more confident. (AP3)	109	4.24	.860
I believe that a person does works better if they take care of their appearance. (AP4)	109	3.37	1.060
I think that people with medium skin tone are attractive. (AP5)	109	3.68	1.096

**Table 5: Descriptive Analysis of Fashion Sense** 

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I tend to dress according to people's expectation. (FS1)	109	2.70	1.076
I tend to judge people who dressed weirdly or oddly than the normal. (FS2)	109	2.52	1.127
I believe that my fashion sense reflects my personal taste and the environment I live in. (FS3)	109	3.70	.898
I am only comfortable to wear the clothing that suits the current fashion line. (FS4)	109	2.89	1.197
My clothing suits my identity. (FS5)	109	3.80	1.078

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Table 6: Guildford Rule of Thumb table

Value, r	Strength	
< 0.2	Negligible Relationship	
0.2 to 0.4	Low Relationship	
0.4 to 0.7	Moderate Relationship	
0.7 to 0.9	High Relationship	
>0.9	Very High Relationship	

Table 7: Result of correlation test for the level of beauty standards with appearance

			r	P < .05	Result
Appearance	$\rightarrow$	Level of Beauty Standards	.689	0.00	Sig

The correlation test finding between appearance towards the level of beauty standards is indicated in table 7. The analysis shows that H1 is supported. The variable appearance and level of beauty standards are correlated and show a moderate relationship. The direction of the relationship is also positive. The possible explanation for this particular relationship is simply because the respondents are mainly university students and perceived that good looking is somewhat important to become acceptable to society.

Table 8: Result of correlation test for the level of beauty standards with intellectual

			r	P < .05	Result
Intellectual	$\rightarrow$	Level of Beauty Standards	.744	0.00	Sig

The finding for the correlation test between intellectuality towards beauty standards is indicated in table 8. The analysis shows that H2 is also very much supposed as they correlated and shows a high relationship. The direction of the relationship is also positive thus, H2 is acceptable. The probable reason is simply because the respondents are mainly young adults in universities. They tend to have great acknowledgements towards intelligent individuals. Hence, proves that intellectuality of a person develops people's perception positively towards themselves.

Table 9: Result of correlation test for the level of beauty standards with fashion sense

			r	P < .05	Result
Fashion Sense	$\rightarrow$	Level of Beauty Standards	.692	0.00	Sig

The finding indicated that H3 is supported by showing a moderate relationship between the variables. The direction of the relationship is also positive. The most logical justification for this specific situation is the respondents' current surrounding whereby people are more concerned at how they dressed up to portray themselves suitably and fit into society.

# 5.0 CONCLUSION

After discussing the main result obtained, the research concludes with the following points. This study indicates incipient evidence between the levels of beauty standards that develops people's perception. The results indicate that other researchers believed that beauty standards existed because of perception. People tend to describe other people based on appearance, intellectual and fashion sense. The discussion related to the objectives is to determine the relationship between the

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appearances, intellectual, and fashion sense, which develops people's perception. This research aims to measure people's perception towards a person way of thought and behaviour and its relationship to the level of beauty standards.

The method used in this research to collect data information is the survey method where the questionnaire was created through Google Form. The quantitative type of research has been used to analyse the questionnaire given to the respondents, which will be based on the numerical data itself. The data collection being processed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) application to get the accurate results that can be logical to be transform to the table format and numerical data analysis, which is to strengthen the relationship of this research easily store and also track.

Researchers need to expand the demographic profile further to facilitate researchers to collect data from respondents. This is because, if it is too narrow down, then the respondent will be limited. Besides that, researchers need to focus on feedback from respondents to provide cooperation in answering the questionnaire. This is because every answer from the respondents is very valuable. On the other hand, analysis tools are also one of the limitations that researchers have faced. This is because researchers use Google Form as a method to distribute questionnaires. This is because sometimes respondents do not contribute to answering the questions that have been given. Thus, reach audience has been achieved but not much help researchers in data collection.

More searches are needed through websites and other resources to examine various aspects related to the title of the study. Suppose it is proven that the researcher has a lot of supporting material. In that case, it will help the researcher decide on what topic to choose. Also, statements of facts, theories, opinions, evaluations and research reports related to the selected topic should be based on the original source. Researchers should also avoid referring to opinions in the form of opinions without reference.

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