

IMPACT OF SKIN COLOR ON WOMEN SELF-ESTEEM



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ABSTRACT

The topic selected for this research is “Impact of Skin Color on Women Self-esteem”. The discrimination based on skin color is so deeply rooted in Pakistani culture that we hardly recognize it at times. This prejudice is making women’s lives frustrating who have already been victims of inequalities. In this regard this research has been conducted to access the beliefs, understanding and attitudes towards colorism, how self-esteem of women is affected by the discrimination on the basis of skin-color, how this color perception of being light and dark has come about.

The following issues were investigated in the research; how beauty standards influenced the lives of women? how women’s Self-esteem is influenced by skin color? and also to examine the negative consequences of colorism on women’s psychological health. Semi structure interviews were used. Thirty female students from Quaid-e-Azam University, age group 18-26 of BS, MSc, and MPhil students through the help of the purposive sampling technique were selected. Complex due to beauty advertisements, role of culture in promoting fair skin, Side effects of skin-lightening products, Fair skin is given preferential treatment, low self-esteem of darker women’s and psychological consequences of discrimination are some of the issues that arose from this study. The present study revealed a link between colorism and self-esteem. According to contradictory results, Women with non-preferred skin tones had lower self-esteem. Beauty advertisements capitalize on women's insecurities by promoting the idea that a lighter complexion is more attractive than a darker complexion. This results in anxiety, low self-esteem and low self-confidence in women.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Discrimination is a complex, multidimensional, and long-standing issue that affects social and political structures. It could be the result of a variety of circumstances, including age, gender, ethnicity, and other social characteristics (Canache, Hayes, Mondak, & Seligson, 2014). Discrimination has an influence on health outcomes in African-Americans, even after controlling for socioeconomic position, and is a "stressor" that leads to a variety of poor physical and mental health outcomes (Monk Jr, 2015).

The effect of colorism on African Americans' lives in the United States, defining the bias phenomenon as "a psychological fixation about skin-color that induces Blacks to discriminate against one another" (Russell, Wilson, & Hall, 1993). African-American females with fair skin tone showed a high degree of confidence, which is associated with belief in more opportunities and better status for fair-skinned females, but respondents did not show a relationship between skin tone and self-esteem (Mathews & Johnson, 2015). A longitudinal study of African-American females found that lighter skin color was closely associated with higher self-esteem (Adams, Kurtz-Costes, Hoffman, Volpe, & Rowley, 2020).

This discrimination against individuals with darker skin tones is the most common form of Pakistan's internalized racism. So, what are the origins of colorism in the subcontinent? Contrary to popular belief, the preference for fair skin has been prevalent in South Asia before colonial times. The desire for light skin in the subcontinent is said to have originated with the introduction of the cast system. The upper caste (referred to as Brahmin) was usually lighter-skinned since they stayed indoors, but the lower castes (the Shudras) had to work outdoors and were therefore dark-skinned. The fair complexion was viewed as the domain of the higher ruling class, and dark complexion was connected with the lower class. It's also possible that the migration of Aryans, who are thought to have originated in the Middle East, played a role. They may have affected the desire of dark skinned population

for fair complexion because they were considerably fairer than the surrounding population. This association with classism, or discrimination based on class, was further reinforced when the fairer skinned British colonized the subcontinent (Shankar & Subish, 2007).

To establish power and prosper economically, European countries took over and colonized territories and populations. The colonies were mostly on the African continent, but Britain did colonize India as well. . The indigenous people are darker-skinned than the European invaders. The Indigenous people were continuously taught that fair people are superior than those with darker-people. This notion has been maintained to the point where Pakistani women with fair skin are now thought to be more attractive than those with darker skin. The situations are slightly different in that during Imperialism, white people took control land and freedom, but in this source, white people were "taking control" beauty standards (Speight, 2007).

Fair complexion is appreciated in South Asian societies such as Pakistan and India, where dark skin is associated with lower social status and fair skin is associated with higher social status (Magsi, 2011).

The benefits of having a fair complexion are also promoted in our media, ads, and films. By advertising white and fair skin products in South Asia, industries are accountable for instilling and maintaining colorism in our thoughts (Hsieh et al., 2021).

Colorism is a form of discrimination where light-skinned people are respected and cared for because they meet the standard of beauty that is to be fair. It is used as a weapon to make those with darker skin feel inferior to those with lighter skin, despite the fact that it is an "obsolete" type of prejudice. We have the authority to discriminate against others in our community. As a result, colorism encourages people to reject their own bodies, cultures, and races (Bray, 2002).

Colorism has a huge impact on both men and woman's self-perceptions. It appears that women are more affected than men. Dark-skinned woman for once thought to be at the bottom of hierarchy, least marriageable, with the fewest employment options and career progress and more self-aware than their male peers. In developing countries females face distinct difficulties in terms

of health outcomes, access to health care and even day-to-day activities. These differences associated with biological constitution, may be accountable for the disparity in the state of psychological health between males and females, females have poorer psychological health than males (Eshetu & Woldesenbet, 2011).

In our culture, dark skin color is associated with low-income people who work as field laborers while white skin is connected with superior class, which are in power (Goon & Craven, 2003). We basically grew up in an environment where everyone in the family was interested in learning new ways to lighten one's skin tone. A girl with a darker skin tone is seen unsuited for marriage, the world, and so forth. Colorism is a widespread issue in Pakistan, and it can be found in practically every part of the country.

Pakistan is well-known for its sensitivity to colorism and its attention to it. Because skin whitening treatments are so popular among Pakistanis, especially women, it is regarded as quite natural to use them. The media has a huge influence on how people see themselves and has led to a preference for lighter complexion over darker skin. Many people in Pakistan have been heavily influenced to achieve a fair complexion, which includes staying out of the sun as much as possible, due to constant advertisements for skin whitening creams such as golden pearl and Fair and Lovely and seeing Celebrity actors with light skin portrayed as good role models and dark-skinned portrayed as poor models (Saeed & Masum, 2021).

The psychological impact of colorism runs way deeper than we might realize. Colorism effectively conditioned darker skinned woman to hate themselves and it's this self-hatred that skin lightening industry takes advantage of. In fact, in 2017, the global skin- lightening industry was worth a whopping 17.9 billion, and its value is projected to increase dramatically in the next decade. In Pakistan, fairness creams, bleach and lightening injections are commonly used by women's. In fact they are so common that we might not even know that sunscreen or face wash contains a lightening agent. Moreover many salons and barber shops incorporate bleach in treatments without even informing customers (Alam, 2012)

Fair skin is associated with a variety of cultural values, including marriage, prosperity, and attractiveness, as well as socioeconomic standing. Fair skin is regarded as a sign of both "upper class lineage and class allegiance" in South Asia (Hundal, 2010).

The use of mercury (the 3rd most dangerous substance) in variety of cosmetics, particularly since the eighteenth century, it has been used for its skin whitening benefits (US NIH,1996), and such items are still widely available in open marketplaces and are most commonly used world around including many developing countries (Khwaja & Ali, 2017).

Although it's a global phenomenon what is problematic is that there is a lack of research and campaigns on this topic in Pakistan. Pakistani government doesn't give opportunities to people with their darker complexion to go into the advertisement industry or in the modeling industry. It's about two people who have the talent but one person gets it. He's also working hard but he never got the opportunity to work hard either. This thought is meant in Pakistani culture nowadays where fairness is seen to be related with flawlessness, ideals and chastity, be that as it may, this is problematic in a country where numerous individuals don't fit into the range of reasonable skin. This thought still proceeds nowadays within the attitude of Pakistan nowadays as females with reasonable complexions are seen as predominant to those who have a dark complexion.

The skin bleaching phenomena is frequently related to self-hate or low self-esteem. I've hypothesized that low self-esteem cause's skin bleaching. A person's overall positive or negative attitude towards himself or herself is referred to as Self-esteem. A person with high self-esteem believes that he or she is valuable on the other side low self-esteem donates scorn, rejection or unhappiness with oneself.

Dark-skinned women faced many political, educational, social and economic issues in daily life. This research will help to identify the mainstream factors of skin lightening.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Regardless of the fact that it is a global phenomenon, there is a lack of awareness about it in Pakistan. Beauty advertisements are having a negative impact on women's self-esteem and confidence. It is simply establishing a superficial beauty criterion that is primarily concerned with how you appear, particularly your skin color. Women with darker skin tones are considered old

potatoes with lots of acne, whereas women with fair complexions are considered beautiful despite the fact that they lack any kind of attributes and have the right to treat others as if they were their slaves.

Nowadays, Personality is more appreciated than abilities, and personality is reflected in complexion. In Pakistan, the stereotype is that a man works and a woman eats. People will judge men based on their bank accounts, whether they work, and whether or not they work for the government whereas stereotype about women's is that they have to sit at home and eat. So the only way to test them is to look at them from an aesthetic point of view. And there are other things if women can do housework or not. But the first thing that comes to mind is the quality of beauty. I conducted this study because I am subjected to this type of discrimination on a daily basis. This study examines how beauty standards influence the lives of women? How beauty advertisements creates complex in women's and affecting their self-esteem? How social factors affecting the perception regarding skin color? Why appearance is associated with skin color? What are the problems faced by dark-skinned women's and why is it difficult for dark-skinned girls to get married? What is the role of family, culture and media in constructing the concept of fair skin tone? Also, to understand the socio-economic and psychological aspects of being faired.

1.2 Research Objectives

The main objectives of the research are to;

- 1) Explore how the beauty standards influenced the lives of women.
- 2) Investigate how self-esteem is influenced by skin color for women's.
- 3) Examine the negative consequences of colorism on psychological health of women.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This research analyzes the impact of the color complex on female students in Quaid-I-Azam University. It also analyzes participants' perceptions of how experiences of colorism have affected their self-esteem. The present study would make a significant contribution to the understanding of color-based discrimination. The purpose of this research is to eliminate the discrimination from society by pointing out the negative impacts of skin-lightening products and by educating people to don't be ashamed of their skin color but rather acknowledge their identity

and sense of self. Respondents may also benefit from this study because it tries to fill a gap and modify the perception of women, particularly darker women's that they don't deserve to settle for less. It will be helpful for NGOs and government to make policies and organizations as in America who works to abolish color-based discrimination such as NACP, the black youth project, black lives matter but Pakistan has failed to acknowledge the concerns surrounding skin lightening practices despite its widespread use and demand for skin lightening products. As a result, it can be argued that Pakistan has either chosen not to acknowledge the concerns surrounding skin lightening practices or sees it as a normal aspect of its society rather than a problem. Major policy suggestions resulting from this study includes;

- 1) Organizing a nationwide campaign to raise awareness so that people can stop it from happening and begin to take action in their areas. The more people who are aware of colorism, the more effectively those people can spread the message of acceptance of darker women.
- 2) Launching national anti-colorism movements to encourage unity rather than marginalization and injustice.
- 3) Developing educational Programs addressing the issue of colorism during orientation and other important events.
- 4) The government should establish policies to protect darker women's political, educational, social, and economic rights.

Pakistan has a scarcity of research and evidence-based policymaking; therefore more research, investigations, and academic thought are required to combat the processes of stereotyping that are constantly active within the fabric of modern society. While this research gives unique insights into the lives of women in Quaid-I-Azam University Islamabad. It is far from a representative sample of all individuals living in Pakistan. Furthermore, nationally representative research on Pakistanis could help determine whether certain aspects such as culture, media, family, and other social institutions influenced perceptions about skin color. This would improve our understanding of colorism awareness and skin-lightening practices in Pakistan.

1.4 Limitations

The current study is highly significant and completed itself, and it covers a major gap in the literature by providing satisfied replies to the research questions and thus achieving the study's objectives; however, there are limits in this study, which are as follows:

- Perhaps the most evident was that the study was conducted at one higher education institution. The sample size is also a limitation when considering the entire number of female students at the research institute. Additionally, the sample is limited to females exclusively, not males.
- Second, the research had sample of only female University students whose age was between 19-25. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to broader female population of Pakistan.
- Third, other important factors that have a significant impact on women's self-esteem, such as hair texture, facial features, height, and body shape, were not included in the study.
- Fourth, respondents were uncomfortable to discuss their use of skin-whitening products for fear of knowledge leaking, as they portray themselves as naturally beautiful in society. To secure their trust, the researcher assured them that their names would not appear in her thesis or anywhere else.
- Furthermore, respondents did not have much time to discuss the effects of using skin-whitening creams in depth. To deal with this, the researcher exchanged phone numbers with respondents so that they might stay in touch and meet up in their free time.
- Next, the study's qualitative methodology posed a limitation.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This study's literature review is divided into few sections, a historical perspective on colorism, the concept of self-esteem, and main themes associated with the study including contribution of the family, culture, beauty advertisements, in the development of the concept of fair skin tone,

The first section will present a historical overview of colorism in the United States, including its origins and how it manifests itself in modern-day Pakistani society.

2.1 Conceptualization

Colorism is a form of internalized oppression in which people with darker complexions are discriminated against by others, especially members of their own race. This is a critical issue that has global implications. Colorism has a harmful impact on all races and ethnicities (Araujo Dawson & Quiros, 2014; Howard, 2011). This can be seen on social media, in severe skin bleaching, and in extreme self-hatred (Duke & Berry, 2011). Because lighter is perceived better and more beautiful, some people dislike their skin tone due to colorism. Colorism causes difficulties for both the individual and those around them (Fultz, 2014). Once colorism has become ingrained in the human psyche, it can cause a great deal of psychological, emotional, and physical damage. Low self-esteem, low self-confidence, self-hatred, as well as economic and political hardships, are all possible effects. (Duke & Berry, 2011; Howard, 2011). Colorism was introduced in 1982 by Alice Walker, a novelist and poet, to describe the "prejudiced or favorable treatment of same-race individuals entirely on the basis of their skin color" (Njeri, 1988) Several studies on colorism in adults, infants, youngsters, teenagers, and families have been conducted (Blake, Keith, Luo, Le, & Salter, 2017; Bryant, 2013; Howard, 2011). According to various studies, those with lighter skin tones are usually able to become wealthy and get advanced degrees than people with darker skin tones (M. Hunter, 2007). Colorism can be observed inside a particular race when members of the same group (for example, African Americans) hold undesirable views and prejudices about in-group members with darker skin tones, but it can also be seen between ethnic divisions (Howard, 2011; M. Hunter, 2007). For example any individual

may subconsciously choose lighter skin tones over darker skin tones, because he or she is not discriminating based on race (M. Hunter, 2007). Colorism is extremely prevalent in the African-American community, it began with the establishment of slavery in the United States and has persisted since then with the rise of racial discrimination (Bryant, 2013; M. Hunter, 2007).

2.2 Historical perspective of colorism

Thurman's work explores how African Americans' social relationships were shaped by their experiences in the white community during and after slavery. Slave Africans were separated into two kinds under slavery: home slaves and field slaves. House slaves' skin tones were often lighter than field slaves', who had a darker complexion. (Duke & Berry, 2011; M. Hunter, 2007). Field slaves were forced to work hard in the fields, while house slaves were assigned to household duties. As house slaves, they had a better chance than field slaves to get an education and learn to read. Individuals with lighter complexions have more benefits than those with darker complexions in today's world, as in the days of slavery, even if they are of the same ethnicity (Fultz, 2014). Aside from the classification of slaves, some field and house slaves were raped regularly by their Caucasian slave owners, resulting in kids with light skin tones. Due to their biological father's Eurocentric features, those children were sometimes treated better (e.g., teaching them to read and feeding them better quality food) than their mothers (Shepherd, 1988). This distinction of house slaves and field slaves led to a construction of a caste system in which persons with the lighter skin tones have more authority (Harvey, LaBeach, Pridgen, & Gocial, 2005) Discrimination towards African slaves manifested and persisted even after they became free men and women.

When slavery ended former African slaves were subjected to even more brutal rites by other African Americans, such as the "paper bag test" and the "comb test" (Thompson & Keith, 2001) These assessments were used, when a person wished to join a significant African American organization or African American institution, such as historically black colleges and universities.

If an individual's skin color was lighter than that of a paper bag, he or she was worthy of being admitted into the organization. Individuals who were darker than the brown paper bag, on the other hand, were not asked to join an elite organization unless they were well educated. Since most field slaves were not given educational advantages, unlike house slaves, the results of the paper bag test were a direct outcome of slavery. Another African-American-created test was the

"comb test," in which an individual's hair had to pass through a comb without being forced. People with Afrocentric features had a creepy hair texture and a (darker skin-tone) and it would only pass through a steady amount of force. On the other hand Lighter colored people with Eurocentric features had curly hair that could be easily combed (Bryant, 2013). According to Bryant individuals who were educated, or who had a lighter skin color, both were allowed exclusivity.

There have even been allegations of fraternities throwing prank passport parties where members were expected to pay a color tax dependent on the skin tone of their date. The darker the date's skin color was, the more the fraternity member had to pay to access the party. Segregates within the Black community began to sharpen during the Reconstruction era (1863-1877), and skin color played an important part in identifying the numerous divisions (Parks and Woodson, 2002). Skin color was used to create myths and misconceptions about position, class, intelligence, and beauty (Woodson, 2002). There were several words used to identify the many different shades of skin color. Light skin tones were usually referred to as fair, bright, or yellow, whereas dark skin tones were referred to as jet black, ink stain, or shine. Tan, bronze, brown skinned, red, or olive skin were terms used to describe people in the middle of the spectrum. Darker tones were viewed as uglier, meaner, more aggressive, and lower-class.

As the United States entered the twentieth century, skin tone was a major factor in distinguishing the various social strata. (M. Hunter, 2004) found that dark skin was related with lower social rank, while light skin was connected with higher social status. Variables like socioeconomic class and gender have a significant impact on their feelings. In terms of economic advancement, both dark and light skinned males could progress to a higher socioeconomic status through education and hard labor. Lighter-skinned guys, on the other hand, had an easier time progressing. Because White culture considered lighter-skinned Black men to be more intelligent and superior to dark-skinned Black men, they were given preference in many profession positions over their dark-skinned counterparts Similarly dark-skinned lower-class black women were also considered at the bottom of the color hierarchy and were seen as the least attractive for marriage. The fact that there were few opportunities for darker-skinned African Americans to pursue any form of higher education or employment added to the perception that they were intellectually inferior to their lighter peers. (Parrish Jr, 1944)

During the Jim Crow era, the color divide was still present. The obsession with skin color and facial features manifested itself in the formation of social groups among black people. For example, membership in the Blue Vein Society of Nashville was based purely on the visibility of one's blood veins (Alford, 1997) In reality of course, however, membership to a blue vein society was based on skin color rather than family heritage. The spidery network of purplish veins at the wrist had to be apparent to a panel of professional judges, therefore an applicant had to be fair" (Russell et al., 1993)

The Black is beautiful movement, which began in the late 1960s and early 1970s, pushed African Americans to reject Eurocentric standards of beauty in favor of embracing their African beauty. Using the adjective "black" to describe someone was disapproved upon prior to this time regarded as insulting and humiliating. During this time, African Americans began to define their own norms and celebrate their ancestry. Within the African American community, darker skin began to be valued, regardless of how people of other ethnicities perceived it. Unsurprisingly, about ten years of admiring African beauty wouldn't be enough time to erase the centuries of deeply engrained beliefs and practices associated with Eurocentric standards of happiness and attractiveness (Neal & Wilson, 1989).

According to latest studies, African Americans with fair complexion are still thought to be more attractive than those with darker skin (Neal & Wilson, 1989; Russell et al., 1993) The lives of African Americans are still impacted by this prejudice. According to Hughes and Hertel (1990) variation of the main effects for skin color from 1950 to 1980, indicate that the influence of skin color have not significantly changed. Above and beyond sociodemographic characteristics like age, socioeconomic level, and parental history, skin color predicts educational attainment, occupation, and personal and family income (Keith & Herring, 1991). The variation of African Americans' skin tones is broad, and since enslavement, black people's skin tone has been associated with discrimination (Alford, 1997; Neal & Wilson, 1989; Russell et al., 1993).

Colorism has taken numerous forms throughout history, including inferiority ideas, assumptions about behavior and competence, preferential treatment in education and work, and beauty standards. The following section will provide a review of the literature on the impact of colorism on women's self-esteem, but first will take a closer look at the concept of self-esteem.

2.3 Self-Esteem as a concept

Self-esteem is defined as an individual's assessment of themselves or herself, which is based on the value they place on themselves eliciting a sensation of pleasure or displeasure, defines the subjects' self-perception. Self-esteem can be low, average, or high in some people (Rosenberg, 2015). High Self-esteem indicates the ability to take decisions, taking personal responsibility for their own acts, absolute command and control over their own life, including the adoption of healthy activities (Mruk, 2013). Individuals with low self-esteem are preoccupied with proving themselves to others. They have less confidence and frequently doubt their own worth and acceptability. Self-esteem fluctuates among people with a medium level of self-esteem, fluctuating between sentiments of self-approval and self-rejection (Mruk, 2013; Rosenberg, 2015)

In the United States, self-esteem is a critical component of mental health for women (Hatcher, 2007). Several empirical researches have demonstrated the pervasive impacts of low self-esteem on psychological health. Women in the modern United States, for example, suffer from eating disorders, distress, and chemical dependency as a result of strong deeply ingrained perception of beauty standards (Spurgas, 2005).

William James, a psychologist, is recognized with being the first to establish self-concept. James addressed his idea of self-esteem as a formula in his renowned book "Principles of Psychology" He claims that a person's self-esteem, or self-evaluation, is equal to his achievements divided by his ambitions. Self-esteem, according to James, is a feeling or emotion about oneself. Moreover, James viewed self-esteem to be a dynamic construct that might alter dramatically over time (Alford, 1997).

Morris Rosenberg (1965) in his famous book "Conceiving the Self" described self-esteem as "the assessment which the individual typically forms and maintains with regard to himself: it represents a behavior of approval and disapproval." Rosenberg redefined self-esteem as primarily cognitive, with the addition of the dimension of appraisal. These assessments are always based on a third-party benchmark which is adopted from cultural attitudes, norms, and principles. He further proposed that self-esteem is a combination of psychological and sociological processes, and that it is an internal evaluation based on externally imposed standards (Alford, 1997; Markus & Oyserman, 1989)

Self-esteem, according to current theories, is a stable construct that does not change significantly over time. The stability of self-esteem, on the other hand, is dependent on the type of self-esteem being measured. People have different levels of self-esteem for different aspects of their lives, which may or may not correlate with one another or with overall self-esteem, which is defined as positively or negatively attitudes toward oneself (Campbell, 1984). For example, a person may have high self-esteem based on her physical attractiveness or intelligence while also having poor self-esteem based on athletic talents, all while maintaining a high overall level of self-esteem.

Many studies believe that self-evaluation in relation to society and community, evaluations or perceptions is a crucial role in the development of a person's self-esteem. This is partly due to the idea that the self is made up of many different elements, including physical, social, and spiritual. According to (Thompson & Keith, 2001) if an individual's skin tone is perceived positively, the impact on one's self is also positive. By these studies, if society demeans specific physical characteristics, negative thoughts about oneself will likely to develop. For personal comparisons, the self-evaluation theory stresses the need of a consistent contextual background. For example, African women are more inclined to compare themselves to lighter-skinned counterparts. Comparing oneself to others is a major cause of a drop in self-esteem, as well as a shame reaction. Now we have evidence from black American women that colorism has a negative effect on self-esteem. As a result, this form of prejudice (colorism) has become a major topic of research for both social and health sciences

2.4 Inferiority Complex

The problem of female inferiority complex is getting increasingly frightening. Females are particularly vulnerable to feelings of inferiority (Kabir & Rashid, 2017). The inferiority complex is a type of psychological barrier that normally develops throughout puberty. Its causes are complex, and its effects are negative and detrimental (Jing, 2000). According to Adler, inferiority complex develops when a person's abilities and views are ridiculed or rejected by others (Adler, 1964). The inferiority complex is a magnified version of natural sentiments of inadequacy that occurs when efforts to overcome inferiority are significantly restricted. The inferiority complex is caused by anything in a person that is below average and causes unpleasant comments or a sense of impotency or ineptitude (Murray, 1938). According to studies adolescents who repeatedly fail or retake classes acquire an inferiority complex and a pessimistic attitude toward school and peers

(Esfandyari, Baharudin, & Nowzari, 2009). A high level of parental demands and expectations might lead to feelings of inferiority. Inadequacy complex is an extreme exaggeration of normal feelings of inferiority, and those with it have a propensity for oversensitivity and overreaction (Heidbreder, 1927). In young females, an inferiority complex or a lack of self-esteem because of their color complexion leads to negativity or risk-seeking behaviors (Moritz, Werner, & Collani, 2006). Low self-esteem has been linked to socially problematic outcomes or risk-taking behaviors such as substance misuse, aggressiveness, and poor school accomplishment in theoretical and correlational studies (Dawes, 1994) Frustration is an emotional reaction to low self-esteem (Kirk & Reid 2001). A sense of inferiority creates an aggressive frustration (Barney 1949). A loss of self-worth, doubt and confusion, and feelings of not measuring up to norms are all symptoms of an inferiority complex. It is hypothesized that it causes infected persons to overcompensate, resulting in either outstanding performance or abnormal social behavior. The phrase was coined to describe a lack of latent self-esteem. Many people develop it as a result of a combination of innate personality traits and personal experiences. Primary and secondary inferiority sentiments are distinguished in classical Adlerian psychology (Adler 1907). A young child's initial experience of weakness, helplessness, and dependency is considered to be the source of a basic inferiority feeling. Comparisons to siblings, love partners, and adults can further lead to more problems. A secondary inferiority emotion refers to an adult's inability to compensate for inferiority sentiments by achieving a subconscious, imaginary final objective of subjective security and achievement. The perceived distance from that goal would cause a negative/depressed feeling, which could again trigger the original inferiority feeling; this composite of inferiority feelings could be unbearable. The 'catch-22' of this predicament is the objective devised to alleviate the primary, primary sense of inferiority that really generates the secondary sense of inferiority. Neurotic lives are prone to this vicious loop (Adler 1907). Although it is common to associate feeling inferior with being inferior to another person, this is not always the case in the Adlerian perspective. When performing a task, such as a school test, one frequently feels incompetent (Adler 1907). When an individual's sentiments of inferiority are exacerbated by discouragement or failure, an inferiority complex develops. People who have low self-esteem or self-worth, are from an ethnic minority, have a low socioeconomic level, or have a history of depression symptoms are at risk for developing a complex. Children who were continuously punished or who did not meet their parents' standards may also develop this problem (Adler 1907). When an inferiority complex is fully operational, it can have a negative impact on an individual's performance as well as their self-esteem. Students' cognitive learning can be disrupted by unconscious

psychological and emotional processes, and negatively 'charged' feeling-toned memory associations can hinder the learning process. Most inferiority complexes will be dispelled by love for women, because mature love dissolves fear. Spiritual training encourages women to accept themselves and discover ways to compensate for their flaws in other aspects of life. Parental responsibilities include correction applied in a loving manner to avoid discouragement, as well as faith teaching through living examples (Krivonos, Byrne, & Friedrich 1976).

In the following section, Factors that promote the idea of fair skin will be examined which affects women's self-esteem which may lead to inferiority complex.

2.5 Media Portrayal of Fair skin

The subcontinent was influenced by American and British culture, which included film, television, and the entertainment sector, which perpetuated the view that whites had more possibilities and had a greater influence in the world. Fair complexion is frequently associated with power and dominance. The subcontinent's film industry reveals the significance of Fairness. The characters (both male and female) of films are usually Fair and attractive, while the opponents are dark (Harrison & Thomas, 2009)

Images of fair skin models who are seen to reflect the epitome of feminine beauty are prominent in current British women's magazines in order to promote products and represent the feminine ideal (Redmond, 2003). Surprisingly, this idea is also popular in Pakistani media, where fair-skinned actresses and popular celebrities appear on the covers of magazines, billboards, and advertisements. There were photographs of darker-skinned models in the magazine, but they apparently made it to the magazine covers, confirming "the assumption that 'whiteness' is the epitome of beauty" (Goon & Craven, 2003) and this is essentially what sells and what the general public is used to seeing.

In Western culture, the television and media are recognized with playing a significant impact in the concept of individual self-image, and Pakistan's media is no exception, promoting light skin as the ultimate of beauty. This is a problem that is not only limited to Pakistan but India also has an extensive media business that promotes fairness as the moral standard. Likewise Pakistan, India also has a fascination towards fair skin and the most of well-known actors and actresses chosen for films have fair complexions. However, the Bollywood industry allows it to promote an

ideology of fair skin as being a moral standard and a symbol of superiority on a far wider scale than Pakistan, which has a less established industry with a smaller audience. Because of Bollywood's enormous popularity and large viewership in Pakistan, the Pakistani public is attracted to portraits of fair-skinned actresses, models, singers, and other popular television personalities, and they recreate similar standards within their own industries (Beeman & Narayan, 2011).

The racial concept of darker-skinned being inferior does not end with movies and tv series, but encompasses other forms of media as well. *GORA RANG* (fair skin) is a popular phrase in Pakistani music videos; with pop songs proclaiming “*Goray rang ka zamana kabhi na hoga purana*” (The age of light skin never grows old). The pervasive messages sent by these discourses reinforce an already prevalent societal perception that a woman's value is defined by her beauty, which in this context is defined as having a fair complexion.

Women of Worth (WOW), a non-governmental organization in India, has questioned the representation of fair skin as the primary factor of beauty and self-worth by advocating the 'Dark is Beautiful' campaign to raise awareness, a movement that intends to celebrate the variety of skin color while also drawing attention to the harmful impacts of skin color discrimination in its society (Marway, 2018). Although there is still a long way to go until skin-color discrimination is totally eradicated, the campaign has gained widespread popularity and media attention, prompting individuals to examine their biases about skin color. Campaigns like this one are needed in Pakistan to try to overcome the prejudices that come with skin tone and the messages that the media conveys about it.

2.6 Culture's role in Promoting Fair skin

In a South Asian concept, the interpretation of skin color carries ideas of cultural expectations, behavioral attributes, moral standards, and ideal feminine (Philips, 2004). From pro-longed British point of view, the 'English bloom' is generally regarded as the ultimate of femininity and the white color is typically associated with pureness. This notion is represented in Pakistani culture today, where fairness is related with excellence, purity, and virginity; nevertheless, this is problematic in a country where many people do not fit into the social scale of fair skin. In primitive societies fairness of skin was regarded as a criterion of “purity and simplicity” (Shankar & Subish, 2007). This belief continues to exist in Pakistani society today, girls with fair

complexions regarded as superior to those with dark complexions. According to one source, "the overall social fabric of Pakistani society appears to be constructed around a woman's purity" and nothing proclaims purity more often than fairness (Mumtaz & Shaheed, 1987).

Different concepts develop in Pakistani culture regarding complexion, such as if a person belongs to the Pathan family, he must be regarded fair and attractive. If a person is from the Jutt or Rajput families, he must have a dark complexion. Individuals from the Kashmiri and Butt families have fair skin. Rich individuals are expected to be fair and attractive, while poor people are expected to have a dark complexion. In our society, fair-skinned people are more attractive than dark-skinned ones. Pakistani Women with fair skin have various advantages, such as having fewer difficulties in proposals and sexual relationship. Males are captivated to fair-skinned females. They also get advantages at work and receive preference from their supervisors. They are not subjected to mockery, rumors, or censure. While dark-skinned females may encounter numerous challenges in life, such as criticism at work, at home from siblings, life partners, or even from parents (Kerr, 2005).

The family is the most important social institution that transmits and passes down beliefs, behaviors, and perspectives from one generation to another (Kluck, 2010). According to the behavioral perspective, a child's growth is the result of ongoing interactions between the child and the experiences offered by his or her family and social surroundings (Davies, 2011). According to several researches, the family institution is the most significant group in the development of beauty perception (Haworth - Hoepfner, 2000; Kluck, 2010; Spurgas, 2005). Family values have been shown to play a larger role in how adolescents adopt beauty ideals as much as the media influences. Through the use of their parents' behaviors, attitudes, and opinions, children learn how to examine and make sense of their surroundings. A family's general focus on appearance and attractiveness is linked to higher rates of anxiety and disordered eating in daughters. Several researches indicated that mother-daughter relationship seems to be another important aspect in the internalization of female beauty norms. Mothers are seen as heads of households in American culture, and they are supposed to maintain the family system. Daughters desire for their relationship with their moms as they get older, while also getting pressured by society to live up to specific beauty norms. According to Haworth-Hoepfner (2000), the family acts as a cultural mediator and collaborates with other variables. In one study, 16 Black women participated in a

focus group discussion, six significant themes emerged from the data, with shapely and curvy ideal beauty standards among the Black community being one of the most frequent. The therapeutic applications underline the importance of recognizing culturally distinct ideal standards of beauty, as well as the impact of external variables on Black women's self-evaluations, such as men, family, peers, and the media (Kelch-Oliver & Ancis, 2011)

Pakistan is no exception when it comes to beauty standards, Families in Pakistani society urged darker women to look fairer also seek life partners for their children who are more beautiful, smart, intelligent, attractive, and wealthy. Especially for men's family their first requirement when looking for a Rishta is that girl should be fairer and gorgeous. Females with darker skin may encounter rejection during marriage proposals, as well as rejection from life partners and in-laws after marriage. They are said to be more likely to experience stress and problems than males. In our culture, everyone is concerned about the bride's complexion, and if the bride's complexion is fair, the in-laws are proud. A fair skin makes you more appealing to the other sex (Schumacher & Leonard, 2005)

Fair complexion is regarded as a requirement in the marriage market, and "women are frequently told across Asia that if they are darker, no man will choose to marry them" This message is constantly reinforced in the media and casual conversation in daily situations that those with a fair complexion are advised to seek 'curative treatment.' In addition, matrimonial advertisements in Indian media suggest a preference for fair-skinned ladies (Almeida, 2005) and Pakistan is no different as those individuals who do not have preferred skin color are thought to be at a disadvantage in the marriage market. In a society where "marriage is a central component of social functioning" (Vaid, 2009). For young girls who believe their skin color will limit their chances of marriage, the negative attitudes about dark complexions become a source of great stress. A young Pakistani woman reported to a tv host, "a woman's matrimonial chances are not really good enough if she isn't fair," "and that is why I seek lightening procedures at salons" (BBC, 2014). Personal experiences accounts like this illustrate how profound beliefs about skin tone can be, lead to individuals taking necessary steps to meet the high standards of a society that considers fairness to be the epitome of both beauty and wealth.

Rabia Hadi, a campaigner, summarizes how "within Pakistan women are socialized to feel that if they are lighter, they will become more acceptable in society" However, this is a realistic scenario

for many other country's women, who are socialized from an early age to believe that fair complexion provides many benefits as compared to those with darker skin. According to a study conducted on a South Asian matrimonial website, females with 'very fair' and 'fair' complexion found partners readily, however dark-skinned women "fell through the marital gaps," and interestingly, "there was not one example of a dark-skinned guy marrying a 'very dark'- skinned woman." (Jha & Adelman, 2009) Double standards when it comes to gender and skin tone which represent Pakistani attitudes of skin color in everyday situations. Even though males may also believe it is necessary to have a fairer complexion but women's bear the burden of the social pressure. The development of women in professional settings has shifted the focus of skin fairness from being a need for marriage proposals to now being associated with academic performance. As a result, a light complexion becomes "a key requirement for personal and professional success." (Shankar & Subish, 2007) The media and advertising industries appear to be constantly modifying and promoting cultural perspectives.

Cultural values associated with fair skin are not only limited to marriage, prosperity and attractiveness as well as socioeconomic standings. In Pakistan it is regarded as a sign of both "aristocratic ancestry and Sense of loyalty". Those from the lower castes are affiliated with doing physical labor and field work in extreme heat, and consequently have a darker complexion than those from the upper castes, who are said to live a life of luxury and happiness. According to Gazdar, caste-based marginalization is widespread in Pakistan, but society chooses to quiet any discussion or debate about it. Regardless of the fact that many Pakistanis have changed their minds about the significance of caste, there are still others who hold outdated beliefs about caste systems, allowing caste-based discrimination to persist among many Pakistanis. These caste-based perspectives are intertwined with skin-color discrimination, resulting in a strong sense of bias based on both beauty and caste.

2.7 Skin-lightening and the advertisement Industry in Pakistan

Pakistan's media has seen substantial growth in its advertising industry over the last decade, which is likely to continue at a high pace in the coming years (Alam, 2012). However, lightening creams promoted during advert breaks on television, practically every in fashion and beauty magazine, and on major billboards all have a significant impact on their target population. The marketed products promised success in the form of self-confidence, career opportunities, public

acceptance, and suitable partners, and thus "the Pakistani commercial is a mirror of hopes, wants, and fantasies." (Paracha, Qamar, Mirza, Hassan, & Waqas, 2012). Moreover, skin-lightening creams and lotions are marketed as a necessity, based on cultural assumptions, and promoted through sophisticated advertising strategies. "The concept that fair is beautiful continues to exert a harmful impact on the self-esteem of females who have been continually told that if they are not the former, they cannot be the latter" (Vaid, 2009) and the Pakistani advertisement sector promotes this idea even further. Advertisements for skin whitening products offer an ideal as well as a product. The ideal is that having Fair skin gives you a sense of success, and this is ultimately what sells, as companies simply reflect the assumptions and mindsets of Pakistani culture.

Mirza (2012) argues "To watch an advertisement in Pakistan is to see a mini-movie with innovative tales, beautiful costumes and settings, excellent production standards, and, eventually, a roster of film stars and singers.", This glorifying form of marketing is both seductive and effective with a narrative that comes with every product available on the market. Most of these skin-whitening advertisements adopt a similar theme of depressed young women who acquire confidence and inner happiness after using fairness creams. The commercial for Zubaida Aapa lightening Soap (2014), which uses the tagline "*ab Gora hoga Pakistan*," (now Pakistani will be white) is an example of this. The story starts with a number of depressed young girls looking disbelievingly into mirrors, with the entire setting in a depressing state. It is then that famous Pakistani chef Zubaida Tariq, a well-known household name, enters gently stroking one of the girls' faces and proclaiming "*bachay tou khush hi achay lagtain hain*" (children only look better when they become happy) and presenting her lightening soap to the confused witnesses. The advertisement ended with the same females looking happier and fairer clapping on Zubaida Aapa while she passes signing signatures and the group exclamation "*ab Gora hoga Pakistan*." The advertisements end with a sense of accomplishment, illustrating how, in today's society, a fair complexion is the major objective of women, which is now achievable with a soap that ensures lighter skin.

One more advertisement for a skin lightening skin lotion (2015) perpetuates "stereotypical gender roles in society" (Gupta, 2005) by depicting a woman who gains her husband's acceptance after using a whitening product, thus trying to fulfill simplistic gender stereotypes about women as

merely objects of desire for male, with a fair complexion illustrated as the ultimate form of preference in this framework (Shankar, Giri, & Palaian, 2006).

In Addition, a 2011 advertisement for a skin-lightening goat milk soap promises to erase darkness and brings forth fairness, indicating that all of us are white from the inside, and concludes with the idea that this product will enhance your inner beauty, which in this context is a lighter complexion. It is indicated that inner beauty can only be shown through light skin, and that dark skin tones are 'unclean' and must be washed away. These beliefs were widespread during the British Raj, when the lighter-skinned colonizer was seen as both pious and educated in comparison to the indigenous. Rudyard Kipling's late-nineteenth-century poetry reinforces this belief, claiming that "an for all 'is soiled 'ide 'e was white, clear white, inside" while portraying an Indian water carrier. Such understandings might be prevalent during colonialization, and even adequate in writings in 1892, but the fact that these ideas are still being propagated in modern-day Pakistan suggests that they are part of the country's psyche and are the result of previous perceptions rather than the aftermaths of colonialism (O'Gorman, 2004).

Advertisements are terrible because they perpetuate racism, the general population is unaware of this because the ideal of fair skin is beautiful has become so popular in Pakistani society that using fairness creams on a regular basis is considered a standard. On the other hand the advertisements just repeat ideas that already exist in Pakistani society, because culture plays an important role in the messages conveyed by skin lightening commercials(Saeed & Masum, 2021). Many people believe that companies and advertisers have taken advantage of the basic need for light skin by portraying their products as being a "fundamental factor for success." (Shankar et al., 2006)

2.8 The chemistry of Skin-lightening products

To understand the health problems associated with skin whitening procedures, we must first comprehend the substances employed in such products. However, knowing the specific items is not always possible because skin-lightening product certification is not always precise, as Dr. Ayan Panja (2013) pointed out during a news program about skin-lightening in Asia.

Nonetheless, thoroughly analyzing this, some of the chemicals known to be used in skin whitening creams are known to cause long-term skin problems as well as other health risks.

Hydroquinone, an organic substance which is used in skin lightening creams, has been banned in Europe, the United States, and Japan after it was discovered to cause irritation (Milton, 2004)

Many scientists believe "the chemical is a carcinogen or cancer factor" since it lightens the skin by "compromising the body's formation of melanin" (Hall, 2010). Despite its dangerous consequences, this chemical continues to circulate in South Asian products because no effort has been taken to prohibit its licensing in many nations. Additionally, According to WHO (2011) skin lightening creams usually contain mercury, a hazardous chemical that is easily absorbed through the skin and frequently results in mercury poisoning. Mercury particles which are used in skin lightening products suppress the development of melanin, resulting in a lighter skin tone (WHO, 2011). However, because mercury is a confirmed dangerous chemical element, its usage in skin lightening creams has been linked to kidney problems, skin damage, and hyperpigmentation, among other medical issues (Anekwe, 2015). Skin lightening treatments encourage repeated usage, usually on a daily basis; nevertheless, it has been discovered that continued use of mercury-containing products affects muscle tissue by strengthening collagen fibers, leading to changes in skin color (Shome, 2012). The World Health Organization has stopped the distribution of mercury-containing soaps and creams in the European Union and several African countries due to their harmful effects, yet it is still widely used in many parts of South Asia (Beeman & Narayan, 2011).

Skin-lightening products are available in a variety of forms, including creams, lotions, injections, and tablets. Most cosmetic operations in Pakistan offer glutathione skin lightening injections, which promise fairer skin and the eradication of flaws (Sonthalia, Daulatabad, & Sarkar, 2016). In order to promote their treatments, cosmetic surgeries that advertise these treatments apply persuasive rhetoric. One approach says that their operations make "dreams come true" and that clients will no longer be ashamed by their dark complexion after receiving treatment. These negative messages create idea that dark complexions should be ashamed of and that they must be overcome in order to achieve a condition of desirable beauty (Viladrich & Baron-Faust, 2014)

Due to the frequent unfavorable portrayal of darker skin, the desire for fairer skin overcomes the risks associated with certain therapies. Skin-lightening products can't be effective unless they contain skin bleaching agents like mercury ions, steroids, and hydroquinone, as well as other possibly dangerous chemicals (Karnani, 2007). Patients may have swelling, infections, scars, and

bleeding as a result of glutathione treatments, as well as other health implications. Moreover, no evidence was found to support the effectiveness of these injections, and little is known about their overall impact (Keyes, 2019).

Furthermore, despite the vast amount of products and techniques available, the sector fails to deliver on its promise of fairness. It's crucial to remember that glutathione "injections only block melatonin secretion" and if treatments were stopped "the skin will gradually return to its previous tone". Thus, they do not produce the long-term benefits that marketing and producers claim. In addition, many over-the-counter products are being sold at cheap prices, implying that they are of poor quality and unproductive. In one study many participants reported that moisturizers, lotions, and soaps did not perform as advertised. Therefore, lightening products do not always live up to their producers' promises, and customers are frequently dissatisfied as a result of inaccurate advertising and ineffective products. So, the continued use of skin whitening creams means that the industry benefits in either case from the concerns and low self-esteem of women who aspire to a fair skin standard (Kamran, 2010).

Many Pakistanis use harmful chemicals without worrying about it because they want to have fair skin. According to health specialists from the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences, women have suffered from burns as a result of toxic acid peels, as well as several life-threatening adverse effects from the usage of steroidal creams, due to the overwhelming demand for fair skin. Irrespective of their harmful effects on health, the popularity of these skin lightening treatments is on the rise, the desire for fairer skin has thus exceeded the health risks that may develop as a result of utilizing chemicals that include harmful elements (Linares, Zakaria, & Nizran, 2015)

2.9 Conclusion

Many researches have investigated the impact of colorism on African American women's self-esteem, but this study reveals that light skin tones are also desired in Asian countries where white skin is considered as a sign of attractiveness. Women may be rejected because of their skin tone, which can have a negative impact on their psychological well-being and self-esteem (Nagar, 2018). However, there is a gap in the literature on the effect of skin tone and color discrimination on Pakistani women's self-esteem. As a result, the purpose of this study was to find out how colorism affects Pakistani women's self-esteem.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHADODOLOGY

Research methodology is the process through which the correct data or information is collected which provides reasoning, logic and explain data to understand the research problems. Research methodology is the process through which it is to be clear that how the research is being carried out and the understanding of something in a proper way. The main purpose of research methodology is to seek out the answers of the questions in researcher's mind and to dig out valid information about certain phenomena in the world.

As an academic endeavor, social research is a systemic plan that tries to find significant details about a given topic. A social research can be administered using a variety of applications and techniques. As a result, a proper strategy is required for a logical understanding of a study problem. In the context of research, it is critical to select data collection tools and methodologies with care. (Kothari, 2004)

Researchers construct a work plan that outlines, clarifies, and predicts how knowledge is acquired. The term "research methodology" refers to a variety of tools, procedures, and schemes used to collect data. To perform this study, a variety of qualitative research approaches were used.

This chapter discusses the procedures for selecting a sample and collecting data, as well as the technologies for recording data that have aided the use of research methodologies. The following is a brief description of the tools and techniques that were used.

3.1 TECHNIQUES OF DATA COLLECTION

The research technique is a systematic approach to dealing with the research phenomenon and how to conduct a study. Different Anthropological methods like Rapport Building, Participant observation and Key informant were the main techniques used in data collection for the research in Fieldwork. Here are some details of few techniques which were used during fieldwork for data collection.

3.1.1 Rapport Building

Rapport Building is foremost important to conduct anthropological research because it is the key to enter in the field, conduct interviews and understand emic point of view of the respondents.

Qualitative research involves a great deal of cooperation between respondents and researchers in order to collect data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). A sense of reciprocal responsiveness can be developed through rapport building; otherwise individuals in the community will remain distrustful of the research goal and researcher's identity. As a result, both the researcher and the respondents will have a continuous interaction that provides extensive and useful data that will improve the study findings in the near future.

After selecting a sample, the first and most crucial phase in my fieldwork was to build a comfortable communicational relationship with my Research respondents. It was difficult to establish a communicative link with the respondents, due to the following factors,

- They didn't have much time to discuss with the researcher.
- They were afraid to reveal their experiences because they did not want to admit that they used skin-lightening products instead they pretended to have natural beauty.

I spent over two weeks establishing rapport. This period of time proved to be sufficient for gaining the trust of my respondents and eliciting their perspectives. The majority of my respondents were female pupils. The majority of these students spend a significant amount of time on campus or in the surrounding locations. They questioned me about the usefulness of my research to them.

They also questioned about the purpose of my research and its implications. I gradually persuaded them of my point of view, and with the support of my key informants, I was able to establish rapport. As a result, I was able to gain access to their information. I managed to earn their trust by answering their questions about my topic. They accepted to give me interviews. This willingness was in part due to their interest in the topic, and partly due to their interest in giving their opinion on such matters of critical importance. After establishing rapport, I have gained the confidence of respondents and exchanged telephone numbers with my respondents to easily approach them in their free time.

The procedure wasn't without difficulties, but I saw that several students were still hesitant after spending so much time on it. Because of the nature of the topic, they were suspicious and concerned. The guarantees I gave them concerning the confidentiality of their name in the final research to be submitted put them at ease.

3.1.2 Participant Observation

“Participant observation is both a humanistic method and a scientific one. It produces the kind of experiential knowledge that lets you talk convincingly, from the gut, about what it feels like to plant a garden in the high Andes or dance all night in a street rave in Seattle” (Bernard, 2006)

Participant observation is a combination of a number of research methodologies and techniques, including informal interviews, observation, and participation in the daily lives of the respondents under study. It is a fundamental study approach in anthropological research that is usually carried out over a long period of time in order to obtain sufficient data.(Headlam & MacDonald, 2006). It aids the research in developing patience and actively focusing and participating in the research setting during fieldwork.

It is also considered as the foundation of the anthropology. It involves getting close to the people and making them comfortable enough with your presence so that you can observe and record information about their thoughts.

This approach allowed me to obtain qualitative data that was descriptive in nature. I did not even just communicate with them, but I also spent long hours with them observing their Perceptions, beliefs, activities, and interactions with other people. I saw their expressions when they talked about the discrimination they encounter on a regular basis, as well as the side effects of using skin-lightening products.

3.1.3 Key Informant

The key informant technique, which originated in ethnographic research, is now widely employed in social researches. Key informants are a great resource for gathering information. They represent people who have knowledge about the community and are eager to communicate with the researcher about the research issues (Marshall, 1996). Key informants obtain the preferred quality of data in a short amount of time.

H. Russel Bernard says “Don’t choose your key informant too quickly. Allow you to go away in data for a while and play the field. When you have several prospects, check on the roles and statuses in the community” (Tongco, 2007)

A key informant is someone who knows the area well. A key informant is an important source of data collection. It is an essential component of anthropological study. Key informants provide a basic source of information about their culture. The researcher enters the field through important informants, who operate as gateways or primary portals.

They must be carefully chosen as they must be from the community being studied and must have a large amount of knowledge about the community in order to grasp the perspectives of the locals.

A key informant is a person who can guide the researcher in a variety of ways, including entering the field, establishing rapport, learning the basics about the research location, and gathering other data for the study. Good informants are people with whom you can effectively communicate and who are familiar with the data sought in the research area. The key informant is an expert in his or her field or culture and knows more than anybody else. This technique is used by ethnographic researcher in data collection in the field of cultural anthropology and also by sociologists and other scientists.

Keeping in view the topic, it was critical to identify a key informant who could assist in gaining access to the target population without trouble, understand the culture, and provide appropriate guidance and data. While choosing the key informant for the following research it was important to look for a key informant that could readily schedule interviews with the respondents, had access to the general public, and had a solid reputation in the area. The criterion for key informant selection is that he or she should have an extensive knowledge about that environment of the field. He/she should be well known so that he/she can find you more and more subjects for interviews to collect quality data. Key informant also help researcher to introduce him in that community, because he/she holds good reputation among the people.

The researcher can easily find the respondents with the help of key informants.

For this study, Researcher had selected two key informants. They were both Quaid-I-Azam University students. It was challenging for the researcher to choose a key informant while on the

field. The researcher discussed about her research with her friend Maryam, a local inhabitant of Islamabad. She informed the researcher about a close friend who had lived in a university hostel for 5 years and knew about several female students from the social sciences department who were unhappy with their skin color and used skin-lightening products to lighten it. As a result, Nelum Ayyub was the study's first and most important key informant, introducing the researcher to the relevant female students. With the help of first key informant researcher was able to find another key informant, whose name was Saba and was a resident of Barakahu and also a student of Quaid-I-Azam University. She was 25 years old and completing her MPhil in Economics. She was familiar with certain females who had received negative comments from their class mates and had also experienced adverse effects with whitening products.

During the fieldwork, both of them cooperated with the researcher. They both were aware of the student's behaviors and thoughts. They have also assisted the researcher how to deal with respondents to get them comfortable.

Therefore, the researcher comfortably collected apposite information.

3.2 TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

Different Anthropological methods like Interview Guide, In-depth interviews, Case Studies, and Focus group discussion along with some other methods were the main tools used in data collection for the research in Fieldwork. Here are some details of few tools which were used during fieldwork for data collection.

3.2.1 Interview Guide

It is critical for a researcher to create a list of pertinent questions before conducting formal interviews. I've created an interview guide that focuses on research goals and includes simple, relevant, and appropriate questions. The interview guide was based on explanatory model. However, besides the explanatory model the interview guide was extended to further questions to explore the objectives of the study. The respondents were chosen from different ethnic backgrounds which includes Punjabi, Sindhi, Balochi, Pashtoon and Gilgiti, because Quaid-I-Azam University is a melting pot of cultures, with people from all over the world coming to represent their language and culture. All the collected data through semi-structured interview guide was written in Urdu and then it was translated into English.

3.2.2 Interview

This is the important anthropological method for collecting data both formally and informal interviews. Interview is a face to face conversation between two or more persons to discuss some things with some specific objectives.

During field work, structured, semi structure and unstructured interviews were used to collect data. I had selected 30 respondents through purposive sampling and these respondents were interviewed by using a semi-structured interview guide. It was an effective technique for gathering information from a variety of female students who had been affected by the usage of skin-lightening cosmetics and had faced prejudice on a daily basis. I used a questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions, formal and informal interviews (unstructured and structured interviews), and pleasant talk with respondents and key informants for this research.

3.2.3 In depth Interviews

Informal interviews, which are commonly regarded as an element of participant observation, entail a full and open discourse between the researcher and research respondents (Boyce & Neale, 2006). It is followed by a normal conversation with the fundamental subject of acquiring answers of questions not clearly provided by respondents during formal interviews.

This sort of interview is characterized by a complete absence of control over the interviewee. In the field, the researcher tries to keep track of talks over the course of the day. Throughout the fieldwork, the researcher used this strategy to establish a stronger rapport and convert new subjects of interest that had previously been neglected. At various huts of the university and departments, informal interviews were done as the researcher engaged in discussions.

I used this technique, because the main goal of this study was to learn more about the factors that promote the idea of fair skin, such as family, media, and peers who deeply ingrained beauty standards in their minds, as well as other aspects relevant to this research, and to learn more about respondent's point of view, experiences, feelings, and perspectives. This procedure allowed me to learn about their experiences with darker and lighter skin tones, which was really helpful. However, many of the respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with this by giving their viewpoints.

Table No 1: Levels of skin of the respondents

Sr. NO	Levels of skin	Number Of respondents	Percentage
1.	Hyper Pigmentation	2	16
2.	Dark skin	8	25
3.	Acne	7	20
4.	Uneven skin tone	6	20
5.	Freckles	4	10
6.	Fair skin	3	9
	Total	30	100

The researcher also conducted case studies of students who used cosmetic products and their experiences in order to acquire a better understanding and validate data. To collect case studies, the researcher employed an unstructured open-ended interview technique, which allowed the researcher to get a lot of information from the respondents.

3.2.4 Case study Method

A case study is an in-depth assessment of an individual and a reasonable research strategy used in social sciences in general and anthropology in particular to obtain in-depth subjective results by researching a phenomena or situation over a long period of time (Singh, 2006). It gives the researcher a comprehensive approach to understanding the entire scenario.

The case study approach is commonly used in anthropological research and is a useful tool for learning more about students' perspectives on a certain issue. A case study is a method of comprehending and reconstructing a person's prior life experiences and it can provide a holistic portrayal as well as extensive information about the true causes and difficulties. The current study will be discussed in terms of various themes. In addition, a case study will be used to explain each theme. I conducted few case studies on how the beauty standard affects women's life, how skin color affects women's self-esteem, and the harmful effects of colorism on women's psychological health. During the thesis writing process, case studies produced detail information in which irrelevant data was removed.

3.2.5 Focus Group discussion

Focus group discussions are an effective technique to gather people who share a common interest in a topic in order to acquire local knowledge. It is a type of participatory research in which a mentor or moderator guides the participants (O. Nyumba, Wilson, Derrick, & Mukherjee, 2018). It generates a natural discussion among people that facilitates information about belief system, experiences and insight about particular phenomenon or community.

A focus group with thirty female students between the ages of 18 to 26 from social sciences departments who were enrolled at Quaid-I-Azam University was conducted for this study. The researcher formed three groups, containing of 10 respondents in each group. Each of these group discussions held at different days in different departments. To formulate these groups, members of these groups were selected by using purposive sampling technique. No member of these groups was either forced or pressurized to take part in the discussion.

For making my respondents comfortable, I introduced myself at the start of the discussion. Following my introduction, I continued the interviewing process by asking general questions about them, their interests, and their lives.

The discussion helped me in identifying the social problems they are facing. Likewise, the mental health problems were also revealed as well as perception about beauty standards in terms of fairness and darkness was also divulged. During the discussion though difficult, I have endeavored to make respondents respond comprehensively and avoid giving brief answers of yes or no. The focus group discussion was recorded by audio recorder after informing research respondents.

3.2.6 Audio Recording

The audio recording tool, as a valuable means of data recording, assists the researcher in recording the necessary information while on the field. During data analysis, audio recording method brings reliability and validity of the recorded data as information can be listen frequently in case of any uncertainty (Al-Yateem, 2012)

I have used this method after informing my research respondents. Informal interviews and focus group discussion was recorded by using audio recording device. It benefitted me to concentrate on

non-verbal data during interviews as well. Some of the respondents did not feel comfortable when their voices were recorded and they felt hesitancy which has minimized the use of audio recorder in research. Some respondents started behaving artificially when audio recorder was used. The recorded data was contemporaneously transcribed for analysis and thesis writing purposes.

3.2.7 Photography

To record visual data, photography is a collaborative tool and a creative attempt in academic social research (Winton, 2016). I have used this tool and captured a few photographs of different events and activities to depict the real picture of the camp life. The researcher also took the pictures of places having social importance.

3.2.8 Field Notes

Making field notes is a basic method of recording data that is still used in social sciences which comprises of writing down relevant piece of information using paper and pen. It is a crucial source of preserving data and themes from field during fieldwork (Tessier, 2012). It is one of the considerable techniques used in present research to record research data. Field notes provide an opportunity to record student's experiences, discussion and gossiping. It was not undemanding to convince respondents to record interviews as females were not comfortable when their voices were recorded. On contrary, it was impossible for me to record whole informal discussions on daily basis. Therefore, I develop field notes and wrote details gathered through discussions, non-verbal data, case studies and various relevant themes. The relevant data written was record details of how their perception about beauty standards affected through family, media and peer pressure, non-verbal data gathered through participant observation and interpretive summaries of interviews. The relevant data written in daily dairy was eventually analyzed.

3.2.9 Ethical Considerations and Informed Consent

The study is based on various research ethics. The purpose of this study is well understood by all of the research respondents. Likewise, the identity of the researcher was not kept hidden from them. As the respondents of the research were female students, so the personal information including their names and data which they consider confidential was kept secret. Instead of using the names of the respondents, the term respondent has been used throughout the thesis. No question was asked which may hurt or hit somebody's values and culture. The researcher

carefully interviewed of all the respondents considering their religious and cultural values. All the interviews and discussion were conducted with informed consent and willingness of the respondents. Interviews and focus group discussion was recorded by taking permission from respondents. All of the respondents were given as much time as possible to explain their perception about beauty standards, how they had influenced their lives, how their mental health had been affected, and their own experiences with skin-lightening products. While conducting interviews, the researcher used interview procedures to ensure that no respondent was stopped while speaking and that no respondent was forced to answer a question to which she did not want to respond. At the end of every interview, the researcher appreciated the respondent for taking part in the study and for their time and opinions.

3.3 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Sampling is the process of selecting a small group of individuals from a larger group or entire community in order to generalize the prevalence of research and information findings to a large group. A group selected from a large population is sample on which research is conducted to induce the research findings (Kumar, Kumar, & PRABHU, 2020)

Sampling is an important method in field research since it defines the data's validity and reliability. A non-representative sample might lead to a wrong direction and worthless study.

A Sample was taken because it was impossible to manage and obtain information from so many university students. The researcher must study the village or community alone for academic research, and it is quite difficult to monitor and interview all of the individuals in a short period of time. On the contrary it is argued that sampling provides a better option since its addresses the survey population in a short period of time and produces comparable and equally valid results.

Especially in the context of an anthropological studies sampling is very necessarily for both individual attribute data as well as for cultural data. To document the cultural facts it is very essential to use sample because cultural facts regarding any particular context are very subjective one and also time taking, so the use of the sample make it possible to do it in time. The use of a sample frame is a very basic step in selecting a sample for your research. Telephone directories and censuses can both be used for sample frames, although censuses are the most reliable.

Although there are numerous sample stages, I chose non-probability strategy such as purposive sampling because this technique is best fits the topic's purpose.

3.3.1 Sampling unit and sampling size

Thirty female participants between the ages of 18 and 26 were chosen from Quaid-I-Azam University's social sciences department as the primary sample population for this study. According to the data provided by the university, females make up 50% of the total population. The current study investigates Society's diversity. Ethnicity, territory, age bracket, and economic condition have all been observed.

3.3.2 Purposive Sampling

In purposive sampling, you decide the purpose you want informants (or communities) to serve, and you go out to find some. This is somewhat like quota sampling, except that there is no overall sampling design that tells you how many of each type of informant you need for a study. You take what you can get (Tongco, 2007)

Purposive sampling is a type of judgmental sampling. I have used purposive sampling because the respondent is known and I approached the specific female students who were willing to share their experiences and had knowledge about the topic, or those who were suggested by key informants, which were useful for this purpose, so by using this technique I had easily selected my research respondents.

CHAPTER 4

AREA PROFILE

This chapter provides a brief overview of the research area. It contains all of the necessary information on the study site, as well as the research objectives and questions. The following is a brief summary of the physical and social characteristics of the research region.

4.1 Locale

The study has been conducted in Quaid-I-Azam University Islamabad. The University is Pakistan's number one University, in ranking conducted by higher education commission of Pakistan. It is among top five hundred universities in global ranking and its position is among top 150 Universities of Asia. The researcher chose to conduct study at a university because university female students confront prejudice on a regular basis. The following are the reasons why the researcher chose this university:

- The first reason was because female student demographics are diverse. The university admits students on Quota reserved for each provincial units and administrative division of Pakistan.
- The location's geographic accessibility was the second reason for choosing it, as researcher was Quaid-I-Azam University student, therefore it was easy for her to evaluate students because she was living in a hostel and could engage with them at any time. In other universities, interviewing a student might be challenging, for example, she might only be able to do so during the day or between university hours (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.), therefore she chose Quaid-a-Azam University as the location of this study in order to conduct in-depth interviews.

4.2 Islamabad

Islamabad is the capital of Pakistan. Administratively, it is known as Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). The foundation stone of the nation's new capital was laid in 1960 under the rule of military dictator President Ayyub Khan. He wanted to build a national capital keeping in view defense, environment, and sustainable development. An enormous piece of land was chosen by a

commission of experts near the city of Rawalpindi. This vast territory was demarcated on the Pothohar plateau & in the lap of Margallas hills. Islamabad was built to replace Karachi as the national capital. During the construction of the new capital, Rawalpindi was made capital temporarily. The master plan of Islamabad divides the city into different sectors, which are residential, commercial, and government buildings.

Islamabad is the only planned urban settlement in Pakistan so far which has been a great success too in terms of green urbanization. Islamabad is excessively green, clean, and less crowded. According to the figures of the last census which was conducted in 2017, Islamabad has over one million population. It attracts thousands of domestic tourists around the year. Thousands of people wish to live, invest, and visit Islamabad due to its cosmopolitan lifestyle, economic prosperity, and tourist attractions.

At the time of its construction, Islamabad city was 15 kilometers away from Rawalpindi downtown, however, due to the high influx of migration & population outburst these two cities have merged into one single metropolis. The suburbs of BaraKahu, Taxila, Wah Cantt, and Rawat have even made this an enormous conurbation. The Rawalpindi-Islamabad metro bus system was constructed in 2015 to overcome the public transportation crisis between these two big cities. This rapid transit bus service runs from Rawalpindi Saddar (which is a famous commercial district) to Pakistan Secretariat Islamabad.

Administratively, Islamabad is administered by the federal government of Pakistan. It is divided into 4 zones, each zone administrated by an Assistant Commissioner who subordinates Deputy Commissioner of Islamabad, who's then subordinated by the Commissioner of Islamabad. Islamabad has its own police department which is called Islamabad Capital Territory Police (ICT Police). The hierarchy of Islamabad's judiciary follows the office of lower courts, District session court, and the Islamabad High court. According to different surveys and official data, Islamabad has been considered the safest city in Pakistan. However, in recent times the city has seen many robberies, car theft, rape, and homicide cases.

Moreover, Socially, Islamabad has always been seen as a “City of elite class” due to its relatively expensive living standards. The majority of middle-income people strive really hard to live in the city center. Urban planning, green sustainable development, cosmopolitan lifestyle, and other

factors have given this city a label of “elitist city” because the majority of Pakistanis are deprived of or unable to afford such cosmopolitan, urban amenities. Such inequity and lack of low-income housing and sky-high rental property have led to many ghettos and slums around the city.

The city holds the position of being capital city of the country and also the hub of popular sites, institutes infrastructure and other specialties.

Islamabad has its own culture which is an amalgamation of the resident’s migration from different parts of the country. Therefore a unique diversity in religion and culture can be seen in the city. For example the civilization of Indus valley the prints of Aryan and cultural variation of sonian can be found here. Besides this the city is honored to base culture structures, the shrines of mystics sufies make the region become rich in the culture heritage of pre-Islamic times.

Figure 1: Map of Islamabad



(Source: Google Map)

4.2.1 Climate and Geography

The climate of Islamabad is marked as humid subtropical, where the spring season comes with dry and warm waves and summers accompanying the monsoon are humid. Winters do not stay long, but leave cold impression. Rawal, simli and khanpur dam are the famous for their provision

of artificial regulation of regions micro-climate. The city of famous Margilla hills, Islamabad is located 33.43N 73.04 E from pothohar plateau. Attraction of country people and the outsiders increase because of the unique and attractive geography of the region. For example to the northeast start the series of Murree hill station and the Haripur district to north. While the southwest covers Rawalpindi and the overall region of Islamabad is expended to 906 square kilometers.

4.2.2 Demography

The population of Islamabad according to 2011 statistics is estimated as 1.7 million. Despite construction completed in the 1960s, Islamabad has experienced consistent population growth over time. Its high proportion of young citizens, as well as its temperature, beauty, and jobs in fields such as information and communications technology, make it a place that should continue to expand in the future. According to projections, the population of the city will be over 1.7 million in 2020, and 2.2 million in 2030.

The majority of the city's population is between the ages of 15 and 64, accounting for more than 59 percent of the total. Over 37% of the population is under the age of 15, with only 2.73 percent of the population being over the age of 65.

4.2.3 Religion

Islam is the most widely practiced religion in the city, with over 95 percent of the population being Muslims. Christianity is the second most common religion, with just over 4% of the people following it.

4.2.4 Languages

The languages spoken include Punjabi, Pashto, pothohari and Urdu language. English is commonly understood and small percentage of the popular speaks language coming from Azad Kashmir and Baluchistan, Gilgit Baltistan and federally administrated tribal areas. As a result of its people' migration from other regions of the country, Islamabad has developed its own culture. Thus, the city's religious and cultural population is diverse.

Punjabis make up 65 percent of the population, followed by Urdu-speaking Muhajirs (14%), Pashtuns (10.51%), and others (including Sindhi, Balochi, and Kashmiris) who make up the remaining 7%.

4.2.5 Education Sector

Islamabad has highest literary rate in Pakistan at over 80%. It's also has highly sophisticated and advanced institutions. The education is delivered by private and public institutions. Many chartered universities are also offering a range of programs. Government works to expand the literacy rate in Islamabad and make efforts to remove the gap between male female literacy rates.

Different religious institutions working in Islamabad to promote Islamic education for example Noor-ul-Huda, Idara-e-Ghfran by Mufti Rizwan, Jamia Fareedia run by Maulana Abdul Aziz (All masjid) Jamia Islamic, Jamia Farooqia and Jamia Ayesha the women religious institution working to promote religious education.

4.3 University Overview

Quaid-I-Azam University (QAU) was established as University of Islamabad under an act of national Assembly passed in July, 1967. Initially QAU offered MPhil and PhD degree programs. Later on, it was decided to start MSc degree program for a graduate from all regions of the country, based on regional quota. From 2010 University has also introduced BS (Bachelor of Science) Program in natural sciences and social sciences.

Figure 2: Map of Quaid-i-Azam University



(Source: Google Map)

In the beginning, the university was housed in satellite town, Rawalpindi and moved to its permanent campus in October 1971. University was renamed as “Quaid-I-Azam University”. QAU is recognized in Pakistan and abroad as an institution of higher academic standard and its graduates receive acceptance in universities and research institution the world over. QAU has also established research collaboration with selected Universities/ research organization in United States, Europe and South Asia. The highest education commission (HEC) of Pakistan. QAU is heading towards the internalization by increasing the level of factuality, curriculum and research and determined to find a respectable place in international University. QAU has qualified team of teachers and researchers, more than 75% of the teachers hold doctoral degrees with experience of working in renowned universities of the world.

Figure 3: Babul Quaid



The university has the discussion of having a large number of distinguished scientists and educationalists as its faculty member, holding national award and international recognition. For growing educational and technical needs of the country, the University impacts quality education and training on lower strata of life. In all, the university's academic programs have a more than 5,500 enrolled students, four faculties, nine other teaching staff, research institutes, center and schools, that include faculty of biological sciences, Faculty of natural sciences, Faculty of social sciences, Faculty of Medicine (Affiliated), Area study center for Africa, North and south America, center of Excellence in Gender studies', National institute of Pakistan studies, National institute of psychology, National institute of historical and cultural Research, National institute of Asian civilization and the computer center, Quaid-I-Azam University(Once Islamabad University), Name after Muhammad Ali Jinnah (Quaid-I-Azam University) Ranked as a top University of Pakistan.

Figure 4: Central Librerary



Photo by: Researcher

Making its place in international Academics and Research field Quaid-I-Azam University has signed much Collaboration with Well-reputed Institutes and has earned many applause and award including International peace award from Brussels.

Having 10 male and female hostels, 19 Academic buildings, and 14 study suites of visiting factuality residence, guest house, gymnasium, sports grounds, indoor and outdoor sports, Health center, Shops, Green House, Herbarium, Botanical Garden, Mosques, Cafeteria and canteens, Tea

shops, Tuck shops, Banks, Post office and utility store etc. The boundary of the Quaid-I-Azam covers 1700 Acres of lush green land in between of Margilla Hills in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan. (Source: by QAU admin)

Being a public sector Federal Institution Quaid-I-Azam University provides admission to the student of all region of the country as per approved Quota and also welcomes foreign students. In this way a pool of talent gets attracted to the institute from all over the Pakistan and its truest scene QAU can be declare as MINI Pakistan. This MINI Pakistan with natural environment where cows and goats can be seen walking around huts, tuck shops, hostels and central library was the research site.

The university gives admission to academically sound students on the basis of academic performance determined by educational record, scoring and performance in departmental entry test.

Students with potential are welcomed at the Quaid-I-Azam University. Students who actively participate in studying, obtain an overall education experience, and effectively realize their goals at the university are also welcomed at the university. In a culturally diverse educational environment, students are free to pursue their study and extracurricular interests. The students are of various ages and come from various regions and backgrounds, as well as many nations around the world. Quaid-I-Azam University has been broadening its horizons, opening new worlds, enhancing lives, training leaders, and sending graduates out into the world to conquer their chosen corners.

4.3.1 Academic Programs

On the basis of past qualifications, the University admits students to several programs. The University's most basic degree program is the BS, which can be completed in any of the various subjects provided. The University provides two-year master's programs in a range of subjects for people who have completed a two-year bachelor's degree. M.Phil. is available to individuals who have earned their bachelor's or master's degrees, while PHD is available to those who have completed their MPhil or have demonstrated exceptional research abilities. Admission to the University's programs is available in the following four faculties:

1. Natural Sciences

2. Social sciences
3. Biological sciences
4. Medical (Affiliated)

4.3.2 Faculty of Social Sciences

The research has been conducted from social sciences department of Quaid-I-Azam University, Islamabad. As Quaid-I-Azam University has famous for its diversity that's why I tried to collect diversified data from social sciences department.

Table No.2 Faculty of Social Sciences

	School/ Departments/ institutes/ centers	Academic Programs			
1	Department of Anthropology	-	MSc	MPhil	PhD
2	Area Study Center (ASC)	-	-	MPhil	PhD
3	Department of Sociology	-	MSc	MPhil	PhD
4	Department of History	-	MSc	MPhil	PhD
5	Department of linguistics	-	MSc	-	-
6	Department of Defense & Strategic Studies	-	MSc	MPhil	PhD
7	School of Law	BA/LL B	-	-	-
8	School of Economics (SOE)	BS	-	MPhil	PhD

9	Center of Excellence in Gender Studies	-	MSc	MPhil	PhD
10	National institute of Pakistan Studies (NIPS)	-	MSc	MPhil	PhD
11	National Institute of Psychology (NIP)	-	MSc	MPhil	PhD
12	Taxila institute of Asian Civilization (TIAC)	-	MSc	MPhil	PhD
13	School of Politics and International Relations (SPIR)	BS	MSc	MPhil	PhD
14	Quaid-I-Azam School of Management (QASMS)	BSBA	BBS/MPA	MBA	PhD

(Source: QAU Admin)

DRSML

CHAPTER 5

BEAUTY STANDARD

As the world shrinks into a vast global community, we are exposed to a plethora of beauty standards that differ from culture to culture and from time to time. Internalization of racialized beauty standards has the potential to create a lifelong, inter-generational culture of self-hatred (M. L. Hunter, 1998).

Beauty, as a concept, is pervasive throughout time and space. Many cultures continue to place a high value on beauty. Beauty standards are like social status standards, which can be achieved partially or completely through the use of various methods and techniques. Being beautiful is a status on a scale that includes both ascribed and achieved status. Some people are born beautiful, while others develop their beauty. In both cases, beauty judgments are based on cultural standards and norms. Beauty is frequently affiliated with femininity. Cosmetic products can help to enhance female beauty. Female beauty is a socially constructed and ever-changing phenomenon. Even when we achieve a somewhat Standardized basic framework for certain beauty attributes, there is a great deal of variation within these attributes. There isn't a single society that hasn't established normative standards for female beauty. The patriarchal system plays a significant role in the development of an ideal feminine beauty. In several societies, there is a strong link between "practicing beauty" and "doing femininity." Women's socialization to traditional beauty standards is not only "accepted," but also "expected." The standards established are both definitive and normative. This model of beauty influences women's self-identity, self-conception, and self-esteem. As a result, her physical self becomes the basic foundation of her self-esteem. Women perceive beauty standards and strive to be their best one-self (Lazar, 2011).

The beauty standards are imposed on people who are not white. Women become fixated with conceptions of beauty, making it difficult for them to see other ways to gain social capital, such as education, citizenship and social networking, prevalent charitable work, and participation in leadership. In this chapter the impact of beauty standards in the lives of women will be discussed in greater detail. The use of various forms of media to convey implicit and explicit messages containing colorism elements will be examined. Pakistani media plays a significant role in

portraying images of beauty and desirability in Pakistani society. It depicts images and videos of people with lighter skin tones as being more attractive, desirable, and successful.

5.1 Beauty standards in Pakistani cultural context

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder; however, when we consider the diversity of opinion about what makes a person "beautiful" around the world, this old adage takes on a more literal meaning. Color complexion is emphasized and cared for differently in different cultures, and people particularly women face different pressures to meet the beauty standards and very often different regulations on self-representation depending on where they are in the world. Pakistan's beauty standards are heavily influenced by its history. Beauty standards that have endured are largely rooted in the country's colonial past, when feminine beauty was identified as having fair skin. Standards in Pakistan and America clearly differ; America has a more diverse population, which means the concept of beauty is more diverse. Because there isn't a lot of ethnic diversity in Pakistan, the yardstick for what is 'beautiful' is fairly homogeneous. Marriage is also a significant pressure in Pakistani society, which means that women have to be fair skinned in order to be considered suitable for marriage. Here many women are obsessed with fairness; lightening and bleaching is a huge multinational industry. The lighter your skin, the better you are treated then the more respected you are as a member of the community. Pakistani mothers encourage their daughters to protect their skin from the sun with hats and umbrellas, fearing that their skin will get darker. This behavior is depressing for brown-skinned women because they have a more difficult time finding prospective marriage partners. Brown-skinned women have it more difficult than men, and they are expected to use fairness creams to appear "prettier." When it comes to the beauty standards of Pakistani women, they have a huge fairness supremacy complex.

My research has focused on a female's conceptualization of various skin tones in Pakistani culture. It is critical to provide a thorough understanding of social and local stances regarding white skin coloring as well as dark skin tone. "White complexion remains an important component in contemporary postcolonial Asian understandings of beauty and has become a marketable product." Skin lightening products are popular in Asian societies as well as other non-white societies (Del Giudice & Yves, 2002). In Pakistan, beauty is frequently associated with a white complexion; white has a natural attraction to it, and its observer has an automatic special fondness for it.

I have interviewed 30 females with the age group of (18 to 26) who belongs to different ethnic backgrounds. In the response I have perceived that there are different stereotypes of beauty standards. Complexion includes the concepts of racism and colorism, but I have found colorism mindset in our society. Colorism is the concept in which people discriminate and prejudice based on dark skin tone. Color complexion has a history of impacting race and I observe that skin complexion matters at least for the first looks and for external beauty factors but skin complexion does not matter towards everyone. For example, you would never tell your father, mother, or anyone else you care about that they are ugly simply because of their skin color, but our society mocks people with dark skin. One of my respondent, who was a student of MPhil in Quaid-I-Azam University, said,

“Kisi kay skin color ki wajah say uska mazak urana buhat normal si baat hai. Or yay kartay hoey humay ehsas bhi nahi hota hai. Islam mai bhi is say mana kia gaya hai. Lkin hum ab bhi kalay rang kay logon sat ajeeb tarah ki batain kartay hain, jesa kay goray rang kou upper class kay sath link karna or kalay rang ko lower class kay sath link karna” (age, 26)

(It's very normal to make fun of someone based on their skin colour; we don't even realize we're doing it, and it's definitely prohibited in Islam, but we still say weird things to dark-skinned people, such as associating white complexion with the upper class, while darker skin with the lower class.)

The first impression of your skin color is all that matters, but it won't endure long. External beauty can be obtained in seconds, but internal beauty takes years of positivity and will never fade away because when you fall in love with internal beauty, you will also fall in love with his scars, wrinkles, and complexion. According to one of my respondents,

"This is the golden age of fair skin, and it will never be forgotten." She continues by saying that "There is a fair and lovely commercial that conveys the concept that if you get fair, you can accomplish anything. i.e, house, work, and proposal. (age, 25)

The white complexion is the emblem of beauty in Pakistan, and this notion was invented by western people because they have a white complexion, as well as by various cosmetic industries to gain business from Asian people. They know that Asian people have dull skin colours, and by generating the white complexion, they may gain attractive business from Asian countries.

One respondent stated that, "Beauty standards in our country are a significant deal for me because I went through a lot of personal struggle because of it. Being darker and female, it's a big deal for me because it took a long time for me to establish my sense of self in this white-male-dominated world. And how beauty standards have become so distorted because, as my father usually says, "white is right." The whiter you are, the better you are, and if you seem white, you've got your ticket and can have whatever you want."

As a result, even if a woman has good clothing sense, communication skills, and decent height, she will not be considered beautiful in our society if she has dark complexion. The major sign of beauty is white skin, which is deteriorating over time.

According to one respondent, "Because of a lack of education and awareness, girls from underdeveloped areas are easily encouraged by social media ads to use various skin creams in order to achieve a white complexion. Another respondent stated that "Media heavily promotes fairness, for example, each cream is a fairness cream, and it is conveyed in each advertisement to make your tone better"

The relevance of improving skin appearance is seen in the cultural setting. Although the message appears to be mandatory, some people do and others do not obey it. However, the message of fairness in appearance continues to win and is backed by well-known figures.

As a consequence of data analysis, three key themes arose from my first objective.

- a) Increasing negativity in society
- b) Matrimonial considerations
- c) Exaggerated claims

5.1.1 Increasing negativity in society

According to the respondents skin lightening advertisements incorporate fair skin obsession in Pakistani culture. Beauty advertisements negatively influence females as they are exposed to advertisements, and are playing a role in enhancing materialism in the society. These perceptions ended up causing respondents to suffer various forms of significant harm.

Respondents reported that advertisements for skin lightening creams portray fair complexion as a primary beauty standard, intelligence, and source of accomplishments in a Pakistani culture. They believe that these advertisements are worsening an already existing negative craze in society, i.e. the obsession with fair skin. Some participants stated that their parents and siblings frequently advise them to use various types of fairness creams to improve their complexion, which is a deeply ingrained cultural problem. Moreover, respondents stated that sellers of fairness creams worsen this negativity by reminding people about the superiority of fair skin color in Pakistan on a regular basis. They confirmed that fairness creams reinforced their perception of the unacceptability of dark skin, which caused them anxiety. A number of respondents believe that society does not accept them in their natural complexion, and advertisements for skin lightening creams reinforce our culture's preference for fair complexion. They reported that after seeing advertisements for fairness creams, they became self-conscious about their appearance, which gave them a sense of inferiority. The following statement from an interview explains the existing issues.

“Meri ammi nay mujhay mashwara dia kay main apni skin ko gora karon. Unki is baat ki wajah say mujhy ehsas hoa kay main apni asli rangat main acceptable kyun nahi hoon. Tv per anay walay ads buhat galat hain. Mera matlab hai kay woh sirf gori larkiyoun kay sath positivity dikhaty hain. Kya yay possible nahi hai kay kali rangat wali larkiyan bhi intelligent houn? woh hamesha yay zahir kartay hain kay sirf gori larkiyan hi zindagi mai kamiyabi hasil kariski hain. Yay

chezain dikha kar Tv ads hamari society kou destroy karhay hain”
(Sumaira, undergraduate student, 19)

(My mother advises me to whiten my skin. It made me realize that why I am not acceptable in my original color. Ads on television are completely wrong. I mean, they show a lot of positivity with fair-skinned girls. Isn't it possible that a girl with a darker complexion is intelligent? They always show that only girls with fair skin can achieve success in life. By showing these things, Tv advertisements are destroying our society)

Today educated females are also engaged in professional activities. However, typical female roles are always portrayed in fair complexion in tv advertisements, which is actively discouraging. Respondents believed that roles depicted in fairness cream TV advertisements have the potential to reinforce and raise bad values such as materialism, white face supremacy, and harmful effects on youth thinking.

5.1.2 Matrimonial Consideration

According to the respondents' men and their parents, want a fair-skinned bride, while women's education, character, and other abilities are frequently ignored in matrimonial considerations. They believe that advertisements for fairness creams are promoting such negativity that even a tanned and darker-skinned man expects a fair-skinned bride, which is unfair to women. Females with darker skin have a lot of trouble finding a suitable partner who matches their educational and social status. The respondents believed that the roles depicted in skin lightening advertisements are increasing the demand for fair complexions in matrimonial considerations. They frequently expressed that, in addition to other cultural factors, advertisements for fairness creams are promoting such trends in society, making women more powerless. The participants have a negative perception of the fairness cream advertisements because they are a source of increasing societal demand for fair skin brides, which has caused some respondents to feel powerless and harmed as a result.

“Buhat say log mera rishta daikhny aye hain lkin sab hi meri rangat ki wajh say mujhay reject karkay chaly jatay hain. Zati tour per mera manna hai kay society ki is soch kou badalnay ki zarorat hai. Media or

fairness creams kay ads society main is negativity kou mazeed bhara rahy hain” (Sana, 24)

(A lot of people have come to see me for matrimonial concerns, but everyone rejects me because of my skin color. Personally, I believe that society's thinking needs to be changed. However media and fairness creams advertisements further promote this negative thinking in the society)

TV advertisements promote white skin supremacy as a criterion for determining female beauty, which has a severe impact on marriage ethical issue.

“larkay kay walydin waly hamesha apnay baity kay liye gori larki kie talash main rehty hain” (BS student, 19)

(The parents of a boy are always looking for a fair-skinned female for their son).

Respondents stated that these advertisements have a detrimental impact on females and their thinking and attitudes regarding life. Some believe that as females become more concerned about their appearance, they begin to use fairness creams. Many respondents stated that their younger sisters and cousins either ask fairness cream or demand money to purchase it and some buy it themselves.

“Meri choti behan jis kie umar sirf 12 saal hai usnay apni pocket money golden pearl cream kharedny main laga di kyunky woh apni rangat kay baray main buhat fikar mand thie” (MSc student, 22)

(My younger sister, who is only 12 years old. She used her pocket money to buy golden pearl whitening cream because she was so much concerned about her skin color).

A few respondents also mentioned that their younger sisters use their fairness creams without their consent, which can lead to a quarrel. Respondents argued that advertisements for skin fairness creams encourage adolescent girls to buy their products. Some respondents claimed that they did not provide their teenager younger sisters whitening creams. They believed that teenage females should not be concerned about their skin color until they are older. However, several of our participants suffered social consequences as a result of such requests being denied, as seen by strained relationships with their younger sisters. Some respondents reported giving fairness cream

to their younger sisters to avoid strained relationships. The problem is explained in the following interview extract.

“Wo sirf 13 saal ki hai lkin wo mujhsy musalsal fairness creams mangti hai. Meray khayal main yay istemal karnay kay lye wo abhi buhat choti hai. Usay is umer main khailna or enjoy karna chaye. Usay apni rangat ki wajah say fikarmand nahi hona chahye. Jab wo mujhsay cream mangti hai toh main usay mana ker deti hoon kyunky abhi wo buhat choti hai. Lkin phir main usay cream day deti houn kyunky wo meri qareebi doston jesi hai or main usay pareshan nahi karna chahti” (Saira, 25)

(She's only 13 years old, but she's continuously asking me for fairness cream. I believe she is too young to use it. At her age, she should be playing and having fun. She shouldn't be concerned about her appearance. When she asks for cream, I tell her no since she's too young. But then I give her cream because she is one of my closest friends, and I don't want to bother her.)

Respondents also believed that TV advertisements are a source of increasing materialism in society. They perceived that advertisements depicting luxury items such as expensive cars, dresses, dowry items, and marriage sites are raising the expectations of various people in marital considerations. Respondents mentioned that widespread illiteracy prevents people from thinking logically and that they begin to expect what they see in advertisements. Some respondents believe that as women are exposed to fantasized advertising for fairness creams, they begin to expect luxury items from their future or actual husbands, which have a negative impact on their relationship. Some stated that if a female is darker in color, some greedy people may demand more dowry. They perceived that materialism in a society is a negative thing which needs to be changed. Some respondents expressed a sense of helplessness and wished that fairness creams TV commercials could increase positivity in society. One of the respondent describes her powerlessness as follows:

“Koi bhi mujh say shadi nahie krna chahta kyunky main kali hoon. Chand logon nay meray walydain say jahaiz ka mutalba kia jou wo afford nahi karskty thay. Media or television kay ishtaharat

materialism aur jahaiz kay culture ko promote kartay hain. Fairness creams kou sale karnay walay aesi chezon ki nomaish kartay hain”
(Momina, 26)

(Nobody wants to marry me because I’m dark. A few people demanded dowry from my parents, which they couldn't afford. Advertisements in the media and on television promote materialism and dowry culture. Some sellers of fairness cream display such items)

A number of respondents stated that social status is an important factor in matrimonial decisions, but skin fairness cream advertisements portray a very rich boy marrying a very poor girl just because her complexion was changed from dark to fair. Some respondents believe that the false and misleading expectations, roles, and achievements depicted in fairness cream ads cause them anxiety and stress. They claim that fairness creams are worsening women's skin-color discrimination. They believe that watching deceptive television advertisements has made them anxious and feel that they are inferior because of their darker skin color. Respondents frequently expressed their anxiety about the highly exaggerated roles depicted in television commercials. The following interview quote explains how the roles depicted in fairness cream advertisements cause anxiety and, as a result, vulnerability in female participants.

“Mujhay yaqeen nahi ata kay Pakistan mai buhat ameer log kisi ghareeb larki say shadi kar layty hain is wajh say nahi kay wo ghareeb hai sirf is wajh say kay uski rangat gori hai. Fairness creams kay ads apni creams kou buhat dilkash-tour par dekhaty hain. Yeh ads dekh kar kabhi kabhi mujhay apnay future ki fikar hoti hai” (zarmina, 22)

I don't believe very rich people would marry a poor girl in Pakistan, not because she is poor but because she is fair-skinned. Advertisements for fairness creams make their creams looks very attractive. Seeing these advertisements sometimes makes me worry about my future.

The descriptions given above indicate that "fair and beautiful" brides are in high demand. A woman's skin must be light in order for her to be accepted and desirable in the marriage market. Its significance can be identified with the position of the adjective fair because it comes before a woman's educational qualifications or personality traits.

5.2.3 Exaggerated claims

Just like many other everyday products, skin-lightening products are heavily marketed and advertised in Pakistan. Advertising for such products is critical to their sales and demand. Advertising fairness products is not a minor or peculiar economic activity in India; rather more, it is "a major growth market for giant multinational companies with complex means of creating and controlling and manipulating needs." (Abbott, 2010)

According to the respondents, Fairness creams messages tend to make exaggerated claims about their products. They claimed that skin lightening creams were ineffective and caused them skin problems. The participants also stated that the sellers of fairness creams portray unrealistic roles and achievements in their advertisements, which are nearly impossible for consumers to achieve in the Pakistani cultural setting. They had a negative perception of the performance of fairness creams as advertised in television commercials. They believe that fairness creams deceive them by using beautiful white model girls to entice them to purchase and consume fairness creams. They confirmed that the claims made by fairness cream sellers were false because using fairness creams did not improve their complexion. Several participants stated that using cream on a regular basis only gives their skin a slight glow. The participants reported psychological harm (i.e. anxiety) after using fairness creams because the actual performance of the fairness creams fell far short of the consumers' expectations. A participant shared her experience on how using skin fairness creams caused her dissatisfaction and financial harm.

“Mera khayal tha kay fairness cream istimal karnay say main gori hojaogii. Lkin yay Tv kay ads logon ko dhoka dayty hain. Mainay har trah kay brands try kiye lkin meri rangat mai koi farq nahi aya. Fairness creams kharednay mai mainy apnay paisay zaya kardiye” (Fatima, 25)

(I was under the perception that using cream would turn me white, but these TV commercials deceive people. I tried several brands, but there was no difference in the color of my skin. I wasted a lot of money on skin lightening creams.)

A number of respondents reported skin problems after using skin fairness creams on a regular basis. According to the respondents, fairness creams take advantage of consumers' limited

knowledge, making it easier for them to sell their products in the Pakistani market. Respondents also reported spending a significant amount of money each month on such creams. Some participants reported that using fairness creams caused them to develop pimples after use, as well as inflammatory reactions, stiffness, skin irritation, and hypersensitivity reaction. They personally believe that their lack of awareness about fairness creams led them to buy the product, which caused them, physical and financial harm i.e. skin problem. A number of respondents went to doctors to treat their skin problems, which cost them a lot of money. The respondents frequently stated that sellers of fairness creams do not share information about the adverse effects of their respective products. The following interview quote explains one of our respondents' powerlessness after experiencing skin problems after using a fairness cream.

“Main har raat vitamin E fairness cream lagati thie. Main sochti thi kay iskay istemal say main buhat jald gori hojaogi Phir ahista ahista mainy mehsoos kia kay mujhy skin par kharish hoti hai. Meri skin phir pehlay jesi fresh nahi rahi musalsal kharish honay ki wajah say bilkul ajebsi hogyii thie. Phir doctor nay mujhay iskao istemal na karnay ka mashwara dia kyunky yay mujhy nuqsan day skti thi...” (Zubaria, 20)

(I used to apply Vitamin E fairness cream every night. I thought it would turn me white very soon. Then slowly I noticed that I have itchy skin. My skin wasn't as fresh as it used to be, it was weird because of the constant itching. Then the doctor advised me not to use it as it could harm me.)

The respondents expressed their disappointment regarding unrealistic roles and achievements shown in the TV commercials of fairness creams. They widely perceived that advertisements for fairness creams create expectations that are difficult to attain in Pakistan for a variety of socio-cultural factors. Participants in the study criticized fairness cream advertisements for ignoring Pakistani culture in their efforts to market their respective products.

5.2.3.1 Case Study

Zara, an anthropology department student, is the subject of this case study. She is 26 years old. She attends Quaid-I-Azam University as a hostelite. She has dark brown skin and is Punjabi. When I asked Zara about her experiences growing up as a darker-skinned girl in Pakistan, so she

said, I come from a traditional family where a woman's primary role in life is to worship her family and husband. I'm 26 years old and I've been turned down numerous times because of my skin color. I don't meet Pakistan's beauty standard of "fair skin." My entire immediate and extended family teased me and my mother since I was a child, saying I didn't look like her daughter because she was super fair and I was dark. My relatives made fun of my mother by saying she'd have a hard time finding me a partner. It didn't bother me as a child, but as I grew older, it became more disturbing. I'd go home after any family event and cry that God for making me the ugliest girl has ever. . I was mocked not only because of my skin color, but also because of the colors I wore. People always told me to avoid dark colors because they made my skin appear darker than it was. I was not permitted to dress in bright colors. My classmates all were referred to me as "blackie" or "black cat." Some people would avoid looking at me first thing in the morning because it was "unlucky" and would ruin their day. I was never involved in discussions about movies, guys, or crushes in college because I was always told that no guy would like me because I'm dark. I avoided family gatherings as I grew older because it was embarrassing to be the center of attention because of my skin color. If I ever went to an event, I would put on a brave face and pretend that nothing affected me, but on the inside, I would be torn apart and would manage to hide every single tear that wanted to fall on my cheek. I began using fairness creams at a young age. When I went shopping, the shopkeeper would take my mother and me aside and recommend fairness products, assuring us that they would certainly make a difference. I've used over 20 different types of fairness products, including bleaching and fair skin products purchased from salons. These products did not make me lighter, but they did make my skin less smooth than it used to be. I am still plagued by this curse to this day. I've had a number of guys and their families come to my house and reject me right in front of my face. No one bothers to look at my abilities and talents. The only thing that matters is the skin tone. Even if I excelled at other things like school or housework, I was never enough. I was always a shambles to the family. I stopped talking to my father 3 years ago after we had a huge argument about a guy who came to see me. My father advised me to marry whoever I met. He told me that I had no right to fantasize about or desire a dream guy because I am dark and if I get married I should consider myself lucky. Despite the fact that I sew clothing, paint, and have a number of clients for whom I sew, they still have the audacity to pity me, saying, "poor girl isn't married because she's a blackie. Hearing such remarks breaks my heart.

5.2.3.2 Case Study

It is the Case Study of Maryam, a 23-year-old female student who is completing her economics degree from Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad. She is a saraiki with dark brown skin. She talked about her experiences with using fairness creams.

When I was in my first year, my brain was not so mature. Around me, the beauty standard was to look fair. Aunties in my family who are less educated would probably say that I'm darker. So I was started applying whitening creams because I had no idea. I was just wanted to be fair. I used Faiza beauty cream on my face almost every day, which caused a lot of acne on my face. Then I did some research on internet and found that it contains a lot of mercury, which is why I have acne on my face. In the beginning, there were few but gradually they became more. After that, I used Betnovate and Dermovate to get rid of the acne, which made my skin even worse. Then I started taking medications, and my skin took two months to heal. And since then I have been saying that you should be comfortable in the color of your skin. If I gave a rate to my self-esteem so it would be 8.5 and 1.5 less because I don't follow the beauty standards of my society.

Table No 3: Type of skin issues of Respondents

Sr. NO	Skin issues	Number Of respondents	Percentage
1.	Dark circles	3	9
2.	Hyper pigmentation	2	16
3.	Dark skin	8	25
4.	Acne	7	20
5.	Uneven Skin tone	6	20
6.	Freckles	4	10
	Total	30	100

Majority of the respondents (25%) have reported that they have dark skin due to which they are using skin-lightening creams. Dark circle is another skin issue reported by the respondents (9%). (20%) of the respondents had acne and uneven skin tone which was most irritating situation for them; therefore they decided to get beauty treatments. 10 % of the respondents had freckles which

they wanted to change by using beauty products in order to look prettier. Whereas 16% of the respondents had hyper pigmentation

Table No 4: Economic Background of Respondents

S. No	Monthly Income	Number Of respondents	Percentage
1.	40,000-50,000	4	12
2.	50,000-90,000	5	18
3.	90,000-100,000	11	34
4.	100,000-400,000	10	36
	Total	30	100

It was observed during fieldwork that high income families are more interested in using skin-lightening products and treatments as table 4 shows that with the increase in income size, percentage of respondents increases.

Table No 5: Respondents spend monthly To Enhance their Beauty

Sr. No	Spend monthly on beauty Products / treatments	Number Of respondents	Percentage
1.	Rs. 5000-10,000	13	45
2.	Rs.10,000-15000	9	27
3.	Rs. 15000-20,000	6	18
4.	More than Rs. 20,000	2	6
	Total	30	100

Table 5 shows the analysis of expenses of beauty products or treatment. Present study shows that majority of the people 45 % spend 5 to 10 thousands per month to enhance their skin color which might include skin- lightening products, salon visits or aesthetic treatment sessions.

CHAPTER 6

SELF-ESTEEM

This chapter deals with how Self-esteem of Pakistani women's is influenced by their skin color. The thematic analysis method was applied which, made it easier for the researcher to spot, investigate, and report on reoccurring patterns in the data. Self-esteem is an important element in influencing psychological well-being, yet it is the factor that has received the least attention in developing nations (Owen, 2017). Individuals with high levels self-esteem have favorable self-perceptions. In comparison to people with poor and low self-esteem, they are more capable and feel mentally healthy. The self-evaluation of an individual is based on their own impressions of themselves, as well as the opinions of others. It was discovered that people perceive their accomplishments and failures in their own unique ways. In comparison to persons with low self-esteem, people with high self-esteem see things more positively and rationalize their actions. Interpersonal relational issues, poor impulse control, loneliness, suicidal thoughts, stress, sadness, anxiety, and violent behaviors are all symptoms of low self-esteem.

6.1 Self-Esteem of Pakistani women

Individuals characterized self-esteem and self-confidence as a feeling of trust in one's abilities, traits, and judgments, with the former indicating how confident they were about those attributes. Pakistani women, in comparison to their male counterparts, had low self-esteem. They also have a unique and distinct manner of assessing their self-esteem and confidence. Many variables influence Pakistani women's self-esteem, including school, friends, the media, and internal issues; nevertheless, the role of the family in creating self-esteem appears to be crucial. The family is one of the most important factors in creating a person's personality. In this sense, the role of the family has an impact on women's physical, social, and emotional health. In reality, what happens within a family and how it functions can be a crucial element in improving confidence and lowering the present and future risks connected with stress.

According to the study findings, one of my respondents stated that,

“meri jithani ka rang mujhsay gora hai. Meri saas har waqt uski

tareefain karti rehti hai kyunki goray rang ki wajah say who har ak dress main buhat khobsurat lagtie hai. Main usay jealous nahi hoti. Lekin apni saas ki baton ki wajah say main kamtar mehsoos karti houn jiski wajah say mujhay khud par atamad nahi raha. Halaky mairay husband meri tareef kartay hain kay tum buhat piyari hou lekin mujhay aesa lagta hai kay who mera dil rakhnay kay liye kehtay hain”

(My in-law sister is fairer than I am. My mother-in-law often compliments him on how wonderful she appears in every dress due to her lighter skin tone. I'm not envious of her. However, my mother-in-law's statements make me feel inadequate, which is why I lack self-confidence. My hubby still compliments me on how attractive I am. However, I believe he says this to make me happy)

As a consequence of data analysis, five core themes and two sub-themes developed from my second and third objectives.

- 1) Insult against darker complexion
- 2) Fair skin tone gets preferential treatment
- 3) Colorism's Emotional Impact
- 4) Hurt feelings
- 5) Sadness
- 6) Hurting self-esteem
- 7) Inferiority Complex

6.1.1 Insult against darker complexions

All participants were asked to recall their own experiences with colorism, and they all shared numerous stories of being taunted, verbally abused, eroticized, and started calling numerous different derogatory words based on their skin color throughout their childhood adolescence and adolescent adulthood. Participants recalled being verbally assaulted by parents, peers, and siblings because of their darker skin. They shared their experiences, regardless of the fact that they were

painful to recall, as evidenced by many tearful accounts. These statements were based on ignorance and self-hatred. It is, however necessary to document and illustrate the extent to which these participants were negatively affected.

One respondent narrated that, *“main apnay ammi abbu ki akloti beti hoon. Unka rang mujh say gora hai. Bachpan main meray school kay dost mujhy *KALI* keh kar buhat tang karty thay. Meray parents mujhy nahi samjhty thay or na hi main apni feelings kisi say share kar skti thi. Mera school Janay ka dil nahi karta tha lkin mujhy jana parta tha. Meray class mates comparison karty thay kay class mai sabsay zada kala kon hai aur is kay ilawa log kehtay thay kay chai mat piyo tum kali hojao gii. Is sab ki wajh say mujh main confidence nahi raha. Meray aas pass kay takreeban sab hi log goray hain. Meray cousins or yahn tak kay meray parents bhi meri feelings ko nahi smajhty hain kyunky wo is phase say kabhi nahi guzray. Meri ammi mujhy kehtien hain kay chehraay par basin or haldi lagya karo. Main ammi ko mana karti hon kay ammi mujhy nahi lagana tou wo mujhy kehti hain kay phir un kay lye buhat mushkil hojayegi meray lye larka dhondhny mai”*

(I'm the only daughter of my parent's and they are pretty fairer than me. During my childhood time, my school friends used to tease me by calling me black. My parents didn't understand me nor do I could share my feelings with anyone else. I didn't feel like going to school but I had to go. My school mates used to compare that who is the darkest in the class and moreover people used to say don't drink tea you become darker. Because of all this, I have lost confidence. Almost everyone around me is fair. My cousins and even my parents don't understand me because they never went through that phase. My mother advises me to apply some turmeric and gram flour on my face, but I refuse and she tells me that, if I don't then it would very difficult for them to find a purposal for me).

6.1.1.1 Case Study

It is the case study of Miss Asma, age 25, who was given divorced because of her darker complexion. Her husband and family were unsatisfied with her dark complexion. While discussing her experiences with colorism, Asma explained how her in-laws treated her negatively.

She narrated “Yes, I have been many times by my ex-husband. He is very fair and I am having a wheatish complexion. He was always making fun of me because I wasn't up to his standards. Whenever I used to go out with him, I was really conscious about my looks. I used to put makeup on my skin so that our pair would appear beautiful in front of society. Once my ex mother in law told me that “we wanted to choose a fairer girl for my fairy white son because she will obey us and she will not have an ego and attitude of her beauty and she will listen to us”. We spent a year in the United States. When we returned, we attended a wedding with his family. When we met his relatives, one aunty came towards me and told me, “I thought you would have turned into fair skin lady by going to the USA” So that I have concluded, people think that when we travel to the USA, they change their skin color to white. When I used to take pictures with my ex, he would taunt me that no matter how much makeup I put on my face, I would be darker and only he would shine in our photos. My neighbors used to tell me, "You are so lucky to have such a good husband. How did you get him? In our village, no man will marry a girl who is not fair to him”. So people still think that women should be fair in color to their partners or family members. They judge you and decide the value based on skin color and looks. They feel that fair skin means more valuable whereas dark skin has less value for appearance. They will think that if you don't have fair skin then you must have some unique qualities like maybe champion in sports or best at studies or submissive personality which will not reply you back, whatever the way you will behave with her. I am not saying everyone thinks this way, but the majority of families and people are still colorist. I would like to say to all those brown girls. You are beautiful in your own way, don't rely on this society's standards definitions of being beautiful. Now, Since I have been separated from my husband. I feel so relaxed and don't have the stress to do extra makeup on myself. Now, I don't try to impress anyone. I have accepted myself the way I am and I am very comfortable with my skin tone.

When asked if they should repeat the insults they had heard. Some participants said "I tend not to dwell on those things”. However, it was clear that they had suffered as well. The following themes investigate the consequences of these statements and other prejudicial acts.

6.1.2 Fair skin tone gets preferential treatment

The central theme, Lighter Skin Tone Gets Preferential Treatment, emerged from interviews with 50% of the respondents. The values associated with various skin tones in the Pakistani community

are depicted in this central theme. As respondents began to recall and share their experiences with colorism, many of them mentioned seeing a power relationship unfold in front of them, in which light-skinned Pakistani women were given preferential treatment in some way. This frequently occurred in the family, at school, at work, or in social settings. One of my respondents mentioned that she and her mother had darker skin than her sister, who had light skin. She describes an unspoken but definitely felt power relation within her family regarding skin tone and the preferential treatment she felt her sister received in terms of love.

“Hum dou behnain hain. Meri behn ka rang gora hai meray abu ki tarah or mera rang sanwla hai ammi ki tarah. Mujhay hamesha aesa mehsoos hota hai kay meri ammi mujhay alg tarah say treat karti hain kyunki main sanwali hoon. Jab ap khudsay nafrat kartay hain tou us shakhs say bhi nafrat karny lagtay hain jou apkay jesa nazar ata hai. Or meri ammi ka rawaya meray sath khuch aesa hi tha, halankay mai unki saghi beti hoon. Mujhay aesa mehsoos hota hai kay meri behn ko mujhsay zada piyar dia jaraha hai kyunki wo goray rang ki hai. Or har ak chez mai usko zada preference di jati hai” (tasneem, 19)

(We are two sisters. My sister is fair like my father and I’m darker like my mother. I always feel that my mom treated me differently because my complexion is dark. When you hate yourself then you hate that person who looks like you. This is how my mother treated me even though I’m her real daughter. I feel like my sister is being loved more than me because she is fair. And in everything she is given more priority.)

Tasneem's colorism experiences were pervasive, and she was still able to recognize that her skin tone distinguished her from others in her family. She was also aware that her sister's skin tone received love and kindness. When asked how she knew her sister was more loved than her, Tasneem says,

“Usko mujhsay zada favour di jati hai. Mujhay yaqeen nahi hai kyun lkin shayed is wajah say kay woh baray honay kay sath sath gori bhi hai. Meray parents kay mutabiq woh ak acha bacha hai or main ak bura bacha hoon. Mujhay hamesha aesa mehsoos hota hai kay jesy

mera pora khandan, cousins, parents or khala usko preference daitay hain. Or jab kabhi rsihta bhi ata hai tou hamesha usko hi pasand kia jata hai. Tab mainay mehsoos kia kay uski gori rangat ki wajah say har koi usko accept kerta hai”

(She was more favored than I was. I'm not sure why, but she had an advantage simply because she was older and fairer. According to my parents, she was the good child and I was the bad one. I always felt like my entire family, including cousins, parents, and aunts, preferred her. And whenever a marriage proposal has come she was always liked. Then I realized that everyone chooses her because of her fair complexion).

What is clear is that tasneem's mother and sister's relationships were strained as a result of her family's preference for lighter skin tones and favoritism.

Other situations of lighter skin tones receiving preferential treatment arose during respondents' school experiences or in social situations. For example Yumna, talked about one of her early childhood friendship.

"I remember my best friend at the time was very fair-skinned and received a lot of attention because of her lighter skin at school”

Many women spoke about experiencing and constantly learning at a young age that their skin tone was valued worse than other lighter skin tones, and that they were actually considered unattractive. Furthermore, colorism offences were frequently committed by women's, indicating that lighter skin tones given preferential treatment. However, in the Pakistani community, women with lighter skin tones are given advantage preferential treatment in a variety of settings, including school, family, adults and peers.

6.1.3 Colorism's Emotional Impact

The main theme colorism's emotional impact refers to how respondents felt after witnessing an act of colorism. All of the females interviewed expressed some form of negative emotional impact as a result of being prejudiced against, unrecognized, ignored, or rejected due to the color of their skin. The subthemes Hurt Feelings, Sadness and Hurting Self-esteem that comprised this core theme are described below.

6.1.3.1 Hurt feelings

Respondents discussed how skin tone bias affected their psychological well-being as they shared their experiences with colorism. Hurt Feelings, a sub-theme that emerged in half of the respondent's responses, is a descriptive term of pain, shame, and frustration as a consequence of colorism. Throughout the interview, one respondent expressed her hurt feelings.

"I have no problem in admitting that there were days when I cried because of my skin tone. This isn't about me, it's about those individuals who make judgments about people's skin tones. Those who pointed their fingers at me whenever I went somewhere with relatives of my age in my childhood, and said, "Oh God! She's so dark." It hurt me terribly. And I cried." (Hadiqa, 21)

Although Hadiqa admits that the statements they made were rude and disrespectful and untrue, the damage was done. She was teased solely because of her skin color at the time. She expresses it as "extremely painful."

Other participants expressed their hurt feelings as a result of the behavior they depicted after being subjected to colorism. Many respondents talked about coming home from school in tears.

One respondent stated that " mujhay yaad parta hai kay aesa bhi waqt tha jab main ghar gayi tou rou rahi thie. Or mainay apni ammi say baat ki rotay hoye mainy kaha kay "woh meray baray main aesi batain kyun kartay hain?"

(I remember there were times when I would go home crying. And I talked to my mom crying, I said "Why do they say such things about me?)

She was not only hurt, but she also expressed her feelings to her mother and sought comfort and peace. According to some respondents, her hurt feelings were frequently accompanied by shame.

One respondent said that "I was in tenth grade when the girl said to me, 'you are so dark,' and I was deeply hurt."

6.1.3.1.1 Case Study

One of my respondents shared her experiences with me. She narrated

“I am a 23-year-old woman with dark skin. People have caused me a great deal of pain simply because I am dark. Girls dislike me because I’m dark. My mother never left any skin lightening cream for me to use on my face. She instructed me to cover my face whenever I left the house. My grandmother advised me to apply a paste of turmeric and water before taking a bath. People complimented me on my flawless skin but they also said “If you had been a little fairer, no one would have been able to compete with you in terms of beauty”. During wedding ceremonies my fairer cousins were forced to dance in the first row, because of their white skin, while despite being a good dancer, I was always confined to the last corner. Every year, my school held a World Peace Prayer with seven speakers from seven different continents. I was always chosen to represent any one continent because I am a good speaker, but I don't know why it was always Africa. One day, I complained to my family that my friends were making fun of me because I was speaking on behalf of Africa, but they also mocked me and my skin color. Despite the fact that I was a serious student at the time, I completely destroyed my self-esteem. I noticed that I was also losing my ability to speak one day. I started stammering whenever I met a stranger. I was afflicted with anthropophobia (Apprehension when meeting new people). When I posted pictures on Facebook and Instagram, I was always looking for attention. I was depressed when I saw my white pretty friend getting 250 likes and 30 new friend requests every day. After that, I installed beauty apps. I installed B612, photogrid, and other programs to enhance my complexion and appearance. I wanted the boys to be attracted to me as well, and I was 17 at the time. But then my friends began making fun of me in a completely new way; whenever they click my pictures, they sarcastically leave a comment “In order to take pictures of Zainab, one must first install B612”. They refer to me as a black ant, while my other fair friend is referred to as a white ant, clearly to bully me. When I got home that evening, I told my family about the comment about me, and this time they didn't mock me; instead, they made me realize my worth. My father proudly said that "Your color is a symbol that you are my beautiful daughter and bear a striking resemblance to me”. My mother, who used to test every fairness cream on my face, forced me to read about KAVITHA EMMANUEL and her "Dark Is Beautiful" campaign. That day, she accepted me as I was and told me not to try any other cream tests. My grandmother wiped my tears away and said

“My doll is no less than any heroine”. Facebook and Instagram are no longer a part of my life. For me, things have shifted. Despite being mocked by my own family, teased by my friends, and humiliated in school cultural programs, I learned to appreciate beauty not only as a fair physical appearance but also as a much fairer soul on the inside. I began to learn how to be a kind, confident, honest, and joyful person. I thank God that no one will be able to see my dark circles. I now adore myself. I overcame my stammer and won awards at university for my fluent speaking abilities. To be honest, I haven't given up using beauty apps entirely, but I now consider taking self-portraits to be a complete waste of time. Instead of attracting boys for myself, I want to be an inspiration to others”

The subtheme of sadness is explored further in the following section.

6.1.3.2 Sadness

Sadness is a sub-theme that describes another emotional impact of colorism that emerged from the experiences of half of the respondents. Many participants were deeply saddened when asked how they felt after experiencing or witnessing colorism in their community, family, or group of peers. In contrast to hurt feelings, participants in this sub-theme expressed sadness or discussed a depressed state. One of the respondents expressed sadness after experiencing hardships with colorism.

“Mujhay buhat dukh hoa kyunky fairness cream use karnay kay bad bhi meri rangat main fark nahi aya. Main janti hoon main ab bhi pehlay ki tarah kali hoon”

(I was very sad because even after using fairness cream, my complexion didn't change. I know I'm still as dark as ever).

One respondent mentioned her sadness throughout the interview. It happened several times, usually after she remembered something. *“I believe I was deeply depressed”* She stated later that she wished to be seen as beautiful as her best friend. Afterward, she explained that she was depressed rather than angry about being called names or going unnoticed. *“It didn't make me angry, but it did make me very sad.”* Another respondent stated that she felt depressed after her first encounters with colorism. She also talked about how she didn't understand why it made her

sad. *"I didn't know why, but it made me sad."* Colorism was not only depressing for her, but also confusing and disturbing.

Several respondents also expressed sadness, not just for themselves, but for all darker women.

"What I understand and pick up on about people's perceptions still makes me sad for both myself and for us as a people to know we've gone through discrimination and yet we're still in some aspects in the same place."

Colorism's emotional impact extended beyond the individual self, as some participants lamented the collective lack of self-love.

6.1.3.3 Hurting Self-esteem

Respondents believe that skin fairness cream TV commercials are a major source of hurting their self-esteem in various aspects of their lives. They expressed feelings of inferiority and discrimination after watching the fairness advertisement. The respondents also believed that advertisements for fairness creams made them believe that their natural complexion was socially unacceptable. Some respondents stated that their family and friends' jokes about their skin color are sometimes directed at them, and that they are advised to use fairness creams to improve their skin color, which has a negative impact on their confidence and self-esteem. A number of respondents reported receiving sarcastic comments about their skin color from classmates, cousins, co-workers, and siblings. They believe that advertisements for fairness creams are a significant source of guiding our society about the consumption of skin fairness products for enhancing complexion. Unfortunately, such negative comments from social network members, as well as the suggestion to use Skin-lightening products, had a negative impact on participants' self-esteem. The following interview statement describes how one of our respondents felt anxious and socially harmed after a friend made sarcastic comments about her skin tone.

"Meray kareebi dost aksar mujhay KALO keh kar bulatay hain, badlay main unsay khuch nahi kehti lekin jab who dosron kay samnay mujhay KALO kehtay hain tou mujhay sharmindgi mehsoos hoti hai. Mujhay kabhi kabhi aesa lagta hai kay kala hona jurm hai. Wo sab mujhay

*fairness creams kay baray main batatay rehtay hain kay inko istemal
karnay say shayed meri rangat main koi farq ajaye”*

(My close friends often call me black, but in return I don't say anything. But I'm embarrassed when they call me black in front of others. I sometimes feel that being black is a crime. They keep telling me about whitening creams, that using them might make a difference in my complexion)

Some respondents also reported that their younger brothers constantly make sarcastic remarks about their skin color, which causes them anxiety and makes them feel completely helpless. They believed that constant exposure to advertisements for fairness creams informed them about fair skin preferences in Pakistani culture, which motivated them to make comments about other people's complexions. One of the respondents expresses her thoughts in the following manner.

“Mera chota bhai aksar meray skin color par taunt karta hai. Isnay taunt kartay hoye mujhay fairness cream use karnay ka mashwara dia. Mujhay lagta hai kay woh yay sab tv kay ads say sekhta hai. Main janti hoon kay woh mazak karta hai lekin kabhi kabhi main apnay complexion ki wajah say fikarmand hou jatie hoon. Kabhi main usko ignore kardeti hon, kabhi usper chekhti hon or kabhi kabhar ronay lag jatie hoon or abbu say is kay buray rawaye ki shakayat karti hon”

(My younger brother frequently makes fun of my skin tone. In a sarcastic tone, he advises me to use a fairness cream. I believe he learned everything from television commercials. I know he's joking, but sometimes I get worried about my tanned skin. I sometimes ignore him, yell at him, cry, or complain to my father about his misbehavior)

Many participants believed that skin-lightening advertisements plays a significant role in hurting their self-esteem and as a result they had low self-confidence and self-esteem. They stated that such advertisements have a negative impact on society's attitude toward women because people ignore their education and other personality traits in various life domains and focus solely on their complexion. Many participants expressed their dissatisfaction when others in society advised them to use a fairness cream to improve their skin color. One of the study's participants describes the aforementioned problem as follows:

“Hamari society main kali larkiyoun kay sath dushmano jesa salook kia jata hai. Unko fairness creams use karnay ka mashwara dia jata hai. Kia yeh educated females kay liye sharmindgi ka baees nahi hai? Main jab in sab chezon ka samna karti houn tou mujhay buhat bura feel hota hai. Main Allhamdulillah buhat piyari hoon jis trah Allah nay mujhay paida kia hai” (Rabia, 25)

(In our society darker girls are treated like enemies. They are advised to use fairness creams. Isn't this a source of embarrassment for educated women? I feel bad when I face all these things. I'm very dear to Allah the way Allah has created me).

To summarize, participants perceive skin fairness cream marketing activities negatively, and those perceptions are linked to their experience of insecurity, i.e. financial, psychological, social, and physiological harm.

6.1.3.3.1 Case Study

It is the case study of Abida, whose self-esteem suffered as a result of her darker skin tone. She told about her experiences. She stated,

“I was never happy with the color of my skin until now. Because I was dark, I was constantly scrutinized. . I'm also susceptible to getting a tan because of the nature of my skin. However, I was told as a child not to spend too much time in the sun because I would become darker, and not to wear certain colors because they would make me appear darker. Undoubtedly, as a child, I did what I was told. But it turned me in on myself, making me dislike my complexion and believe that to be beautiful; I needed to be fair-skinned. I remember being photographed on vacation days during evening ; I was the darkest of everyone, and my face wasn't as clear as everyone else's; I mocked myself for being so dark that you couldn't see my face. To feel accepted, I automatically created a safety action by making a joke about myself. I was inexperienced, insecure, and vulnerable. Being told by the older generation that I needed to scrub the MAIL (dirt in Punjabi) off my face every day to make me lighter seemed like a massive chore, and it made me feel very self-conscious. I used to wonder to myself, "Why?" But I'm always doing it. I even once used a skin lightening cream that a friend had given me, a pearlescent white cream with a rosy floral scent. When it was finished, I was worried that I wouldn't be able to get another because it was

too expensive for me. It's only now, in my twenties, that I'm fully accepting who I am; my skin is a beautiful glowy creamy color. We live in a world that makes you despise yourself. Without a doubt, my experiences caused me to have low self-esteem for a long time, as well as lack of confidence in myself, constantly comparing myself to others and wondering 'why me?' It's no surprise that there is plastic surgery, bleaching, hate crimes, and racism. It baffles me that other girls, women, and even men criticize each other for their beauty. We live in a harsh world where both sexes value sexuality and youth above all else. So even though being yourself, embracing your natural self, is still critiqued in the same manner that people who wear makeup on a regular basis.

6.1.4 Inferiority complex

Inferiority complex is defined as a lack of self-esteem or confidence. In terms of skin color, it is mostly common in women. In this male consumer society system women's skin color has become the measuring standard for their personalities. According to Greene (1992), psychologists claim that a woman's skin tone is a sign of her personality, and she must take great care of her appearance. Women strive to apply superficial treatments or perhaps cosmetic surgery to consume a lighter skin tone to keep themselves away from complex and anxiousness (Ja, 2004).

Inferiority complex is another factor reported by respondents. This usually happens when people compare themselves with the beauty of someone else and degraded themselves such as observation of beautiful pictures on social media or even in real life.

One of the respondent exclaimed that *“Apnay sanwlay rang ki wajah say mainy apnay doston or rishtay-daron kay sath tasweerein laina chor dien or yahn tak kay mainy shadiyoun weghaira mai bhi jaana kam kr diya hay kyunki log mera mazak uraty hain”*

(Because of my darker complexion I stopped taking pictures with my friends and relatives and I've even reduced my Participation to weddings because people make fun of me”

Another respondent reported that,

“Ager meray lye possible hota tou apnay sanwlay rang ko goray rang mai tabdeel kar laiti. Main kafi salon say fairness creams ka istimal

karahi hoon. Har trah ki cream use ki hai mainay. Or ajkal main BIOCOS night cream use karahi houn jiskay baray main mujhay meri cousin nay batya tha. Fairness creams kafi had tak kam karti tou hain lkin mujhay jesi khwahish hai wesi rangat nahi mili. Waqti tour par thori gori tou hojati houn main lkin pata chalta hai kay yeh mera asali rang nahi hai. Fairness creams rozana lagany say meri skin ki freshness bhi khatam hogayi hai. Kash ager main gori hoti tou mairay ammi abbu ko mairay lye rishta dhondhnay mai mushqil na hoti or na mujhay dost bnanay main. Or mera khud par aytamad bhi buht zada hota, log mairay sath nice or respectful hotay. Buhat saray logon nay mujhay ignore kia or mujhay kamtar mehsoos karwaya. Jiski wajah say mera khudsay aitamad uth gaya” (Saima, 23)

(If it were possible for me, I would change my darker skin to fair skin. I have been using fairness creams for many years I have used all kinds of fairness creams. And nowadays I’m using BIOCOS night cream about which my cousin told me. Fairness creams worked to a certain extent but never gave me the desired skin color. I get a little whiter at times but it turns out that this is not my real skin color. Applying fairness creams daily also removes the freshness of my skin. I wish I was fair so that my parents would not have a hard time finding a proposal for me nor do would it be difficult for making friends and my self-esteem would be a lot higher. I also believe that more people would be nicer and more respectful to me. Lot of people ignore me and treat me with disregard simply because of my skin tone. This has made me feel inferior and has harmed my self-esteem)

This demonstrates that psychological factors are the most important factors that influence a person decision to use skin-lightening creams.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The current study aimed at explaining Impact of Skin color or Colorism on women Self-esteem by exploring how beauty standards influenced the lives of women? how women's Self-esteem is influenced by skin color? and also the negative consequences of colorism on women's psychological health. To conduct this research thirty females of age group 18-26 from Quaid-I-Azam University were selected and qualitative research methods were employed.

According to the thesis' findings, Women from South Asian nations such as Pakistan endure discrimination throughout their lives, leading to greater rates of psychological distress, anxiety, and stress. This study shows that self-reported skin tone and colorism are predictors of low self-esteem and sadness among Pakistani women, as described by previous research (Louie, 2020). As a result, this research can be used as a guideline for future anti-colorism efforts. Furthermore, the research could help researchers better grasp the significance of skin tone in the relationship between colorism and self-esteem.

The researcher used thematic analysis, which allowed the researcher to find, analyze, and describe repeating themes in the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) provided a step-by-step method for conducting theme analysis, which the researcher used in data analysis. As a consequence of data analysis, three key themes arose from first objective. The first theme illustrates how women believe that fairness creams shown on television contribute to society's negativity. In Pakistan, fair-skinned women are received preferential treatment, while darker-skinned women may encounter prejudice, which can have a detrimental impact. As a result, it is unethical for sellers of skin lightening creams to cater to such unfavorable societal expectations. The commercialization of beauty products has a negative impact on women's and their beauty perceptions in society. Consumers of fairness creams believe that the roles shown in advertisements promote materialism in society. Fairness cream users felt helpless as a result of these perceptions. The advertisements for fairness creams caused them psychological suffering

(e.g., worry, uneasiness, and a sense of inferiority) as well as social harm (e.g., strained relationships with younger sisters while they used the creams).

The second theme's conclusion is that associating fair skin with career, marriage, and social acceptance opportunities in Pakistani society is unethical, causing psychological harm in the form of anxiety and tension. Advertisements for fairness creams promote a sense of inferiority in tan or darker women.

Exaggerated claims about the product's adequacy were the third theme that explained why fairness cream advertisements were thought to be misleading. Fairness creams also caused skin problems in participants, and fairness creams advertisers' roles and achievements are viewed as unrealistic by customers. Many companies have a habit of exaggerating product performance promises in order to market their products (Rauf, Kamran, & Ullah, 2019). Consumers may be harmed financially, socially, psychologically, or physically as a result of such marketing methods (Smith & Cooper-Martin, 1997). Consumers suffer financial and psychological harm (i.e., anxiety) as a result of the ineffectiveness of fairness creams. Skin fairness creams have the potential to cause actual harm to its users, as they may get skin problems as a result of using them. Their visits to the doctors were also costly, which may be deemed financial hardship. So, according to the findings, advertising for fairness creams portray unrealistic roles and achievements in order to market their existing product line.

In addition, the next section was made up of five primary themes and two sub-themes that arose in relation to issues of self-esteem. These themes are Insult against darker complexion, Fairer skin gets preferential treatment, Colorism's Emotional Impact, hurt feelings, Sadness, Hurting Self-esteem and inferiority Complex. Each of these themes exemplifies how colorism has impacted women's lives.

According to the findings of the study, women were subjected to colorism at a young age, either through the society, school, or from within their own family. The reinforcement of colorist standards of beauty through media representations or the lack of positive dark complexion Pakistani women in visible media roles contributed significantly to their experiences of colorism. In their quest for a beautiful mirror of their own complexion, these individuals were often met with hostility on a daily basis. On an emotional level, these individuals recalled emotional pain,

and confusion. Colorism has a far-reaching emotional impact, as several participants revealed that they are still struggling with their sense of value and self-esteem as individuals.

The overall conclusion of the research is that in Pakistan, beliefs about dark skin being inferior are pervasive, and they promote a form of discrimination (colorism) that is distinct from that which is commonly observed, because this colorism is directed at one another. In the context of Pakistan, colorism intertwines aesthetic and racial conceptions, using both to generate prejudice. However, prejudice based on skin tone is interconnected with issues of identity, and continuous negative depictions of dark skin lead to low self-esteem and self-worth in women who do not achieve this ideal. As a result, colorism in this setting works by trying to undermine women's identities based on their skin tone, to the point where the victims begin to believe these ideas themselves, resulting in a color-based identity crisis in which one feels uncomfortable in their own skin and sees their complexion as restricting them from several benefits. It's difficult to determine when or how these racist ideas of fair skin being superior began, but they've persisted for decades, resulting in discriminatory views that are largely accepted by the culture in which they're spread. Many researchers believe that these ideas are the result of colonial control and white supremacy, yet blaming completely on this would be unrealistic, for while Pakistan's colonial impact cannot be denied, it also cannot bear sole responsibility for the nation's current ideologies.

7.1 Suggestions

To summarize, colorism appears to be ingrained in Pakistani culture to some extent. It is essential that more research, studies, and academic thought be put into this domain in order to counteract the processes of colorism that are always active inside the fabric of this society. Policies and regulations governing the distribution of commonly used and carried out skin whitening products and treatments, as well as public education about the risks associated with them, should be established. The media should debate rather than spread these long-held prejudiced beliefs, and most importantly, one's complexion should not be a source of fear or low self-esteem. People's attitudes should shift so that their skin colour is no longer seen as something to be ashamed of or changed, but rather as a part of their identity and sense of self that should be cherished and appreciated. Only by taking all of this into account will Pakistan be able to overcome its fascination with fair skin and eliminate the prejudice it causes.

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ANEXTURE

Interview Guide

Biographical information questions:

Name:

Age:

Gender:

Education:

Ethnicity:

Economic background:

Language:

Questions

1. Q: Are you satisfied with your life?
2. Q: How do you feel about your skin tone?
3. Q: Why do lighter skin women think they're superior?

4. Q: Are you recognizable with the term colorism?
5. Q: Have you ever been experienced self-hate because of your darker skin?
6. Q: Why especially women value skin color so much?
7. Q: Have you ever wanted to change your skin tone because of societal reasons?
8. Q: If given the option would you change your skin tone?
9. Q: Do you think that your skin tone is not attractive?
10. Q: What is the most attractive skin tone in your opinion?
11. Q: How is your skin tone perceived in your culture?
12. Q: Do you think colorism has an effect on your life?
13. Q: Have you experienced skin color bias?
14. Q: Have you ever felt rejected by your very own race because of your skin coloration?
15. Q: Have you ever considered using a skin lighting cream?
16. Q: Does BB cream or bleach lighten the skin?
17. Q: What is your main reason for using a skin bleaching product?
18. Q: How did you first hear about these products?
19. Q: Where did you buy the product?
20. Q: Have you ever suffered from any side effects from using a skin bleaching product?
21. Q: Were you aware of any possible side effects, before using the skin lightening cream?
22. Q: What side effects did you suffer from?
23. Q: If you suffered from the side effect, did you stop using the product completely?
24. Q: Have you ever been judged because of your skin color?
25. Q: How long have you been using skin lightening creams on an everyday basis?
26. Q: Have you ever used these products when you were pregnant?

27. Q: Are you happy with the results of using skin-lightening products?
28. Q: Who's your preferred actor?
29. Q: Is there a link between skin color and self-esteem?
30. Q: Do you feel comfortable with the color of your skin?
31. Q: How much would you rate yourself from 1/10 in terms of Self-Esteem (1 being the lowest)?
32. Q: Does your self-Esteem influence your mood?
33. Q: Have you ever felt pressured to fit into culturally ideal color (lighter skin color for women)?
34. Q: How much time do you spend on social media every day?
35. Q: How do social media impact women's self-esteem and body image?
36. Q: Do you think your life would be different with a different skin shade?
37. Q: Do you worry about how others perceive your skin color?
38. Q: Have you ever wanted to change your skin shade for beauty or aesthetic reasons?
39. Q: Do skin color really matters in marriage?
40. Q: Why do people choose fair skin color compared to other personality traits of their partner to be for marriage?
41. Q: Have you ever been rejected from a proposal because of your darker skin color?
42. Q: Why does boys and their family reject dark complexion girl?
43. Q: How much does a guy's skin color matter to girls?
44. Q: Being a fair-skinned girl, will you marry a guy with a dusky-skin tone?
45. Q: Does skin color really matter in job achievement?
46. Q: Is skin-tone more important than educational background?

47. Q: Why there is a job achievement gap between black and white?
48. Q: Why fair-skinned girls more preferred over dark-skinned girls for jobs?
49. Q: What do you feel that your darker skin tone could be an obstacle to your success?
50. Q: Have you ever received negative comments from your peers concerning your skin tone?
51. Q: How do you respond when someone comments about your darker complexion?
52. Q: Have you stood up for someone who was getting negative comments about their skin color?

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GLOSSARY

Rangat	Complexion
Kali Rangat	Darker Complexion
Gori Rangat	Fairer Complexion
SWC	Skin whitening creams
Fikarmand	Concerned
Ehsas-e-Kamtari	Inferiority Complex
Tareef	Praise
Nuqsan	Impairment
KALI	Black
Nafrat	Hate
Sharmindgi	Feeling shame or guilt
Tanz	To taunt
Ravaiya	Behavior

Mazak urana	One who derides, or laughs at, another in contempt
Dil totna	heartbreak or overwhelming distress
Ishtaharat	Advertisements

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