

USAGE OF SKIN LIGHTENING PRODUCTS AND HEALTH PROBLEMS  
ENCOUNTERED BY COLLEGE STUDENTS AT KUSHINGA  
PHIKELELA POLYTECHNIC, ZIMBABWE

A Thesis

presented in the partial fulfillment

of the requirements of the Master of Science Degree in Clothing and Textiles

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In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree, Master of Science in Clothing and Textiles, this thesis entitled: **Usage of Skin Lightening Products and Health Problems Encountered by College Students at Kushinga Phikelela Polytechnic, Zimbabwe** has been approved by the Thesis Defence Committee as Satisfactory.

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**SOLUSI UNIVERSITY**

FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Graduate Studies

**ACCEPTANCE SHEET**

This thesis titled: **Usage of Skin Lightening Products and Health Problems Encountered by College Students at Kushinga Phikelela Polytechnic, Zimbabwe** is hereby accepted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Clothing and Textiles

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## **ABSTRACT**

The pursuit of appearance, and beauty became a dominant attribute of human society at the turn of the century. Skin lightening soaps and creams, high-heeled shoes and tight clothing, have become the central point of twenty-first-century fashion. The purpose of the study was to investigate the usage of lightening products by the college students, focusing on Kushinga Phikelela Polytechnic students. The research design used was the descriptive research with a population of six hundred students. The sample of the study was made up of three hundred students. A close ended questionnaire which consisted of forty-eight questions was used as the instrument in data collection. The questionnaire was given to the Solusi University experts for face validity. The pilot study was carried out on 50 students from Harare Polytechnic. The reliability of the questionnaire was determined using the Cronbach's Alpha reliability method and the coefficient was 0.793 which meant that the instrument was reliable and the researcher went on to the final study. The data for the final study, however, was collected from three hundred students from Kushinga Phikelela Polytechnic. This data was coded and analysed using the Software Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version twenty-one. The study revealed that the lightening creams were being moderately used by the college students, the health problems caused by using lightening products were being moderately faced, the students were mostly consulting their friends and keeping to themselves whenever they faced health problems from the use of lightening products and that the usage of lightening products was moderately beneficial to the respondents. Based on these findings, recommendations were made.

## **DEDICATION**

To my ever loving and caring parents Mr and Mrs Dhube, my siblings Chiedza Dhube, Isheanesu Dhube and Izwirashe Dhube for their support and prayers.

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The quest for appearance, and beauty became a governing characteristic of human society at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The terrible forces of globalization, upgrading and westernization have permeated through varied communities and cultures across the sphere, impacting on human performance traits and fashion trends(Batten, 2010). Skin lightening soaps and creams, high-heeled shoes and tight clothing, have become the vital point of twenty-firstcentury fashion trends, especially among young people. Batten(2010) defines body modifications as transformations of the hair, skin, nails, muscular system, teeth and breath to create a particular identity.

The crumbling of traditional ethnic boundaries in many areas of the world, (Glenn, 2016) has led to the widespread and usage of skin-lightening products to a larger extent indicating the need for colour change within people. Communal chains of command are now based on skin colour in and among national/cultural groups. Skin colour acts as an outline of an agent resource, one that is especially significant for ladies since there is union between complexion, prettiness and popularity. Besides appearing like an out-of-date practice or an act of the past leading, the practice of skin lightening is now more popular among young, city learned women in South Africa. Although the range is international, the complexion lightening buyers are mainly divided considering the country, way of life, race, and rank. Therefore, this research examines into the “craving for lightness” and the usage of skin lightening products

among Zimbabwean college students and the role of multinational clinical and make-up companies in fuelling the desire for a lighter complexion.

The inherent drive within the human personification is that of becoming, and appearing better, united with the wish to fit into the racial, gender and age groups (Handberg, Thorne, Midtgaard, Nielsen, & Lomborg, 2015). However, the worth from appearance management behaviour has often overtaken the risks that come with it, particularly posing serious intimidation to human health such as skin rash, lunacy as well as other complications (Verma, 2016).

In the past few years, there has been an increasing investigational focus on factors influencing women's perceptions of their outer shell with respect to their skin colour. According to a study by World Health Organisation, usage of complexion lightening products among Chinese ladies was found to cause a nephritic condition, which is indicated by huge levels of protein in waste (Estate & Gandhi, 2011). The study indicated that mercury levels in the blood and urine were found to have declined after a stop in the use of skin lightening products. Furthermore, the American Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR, 2013) found that skin lightening products contain carcinogens and mutagens contributing significantly to the high occurrence rate of skin cancer in the United States of America. Empirical studies show that skin lightening products are consumed by women and young girls in most parts of Africa and Asia. A study by the World Health Organization, (Estate & Gandhi, 2011) showed that in Africa, 77 % women in Nigeria and 25 % of ladies from South Africa utilize complexion lightening products respectively, whilst from Asia, 50 % of women in The Philippines and 37 % of women in Taiwan consume skin lightening products respectively.

Besides the banning of the bringing in of complexion lightening produce from other countries, the established usage of the lightening products at hand is creating a severe health problem in South Africa because the products are made up of mercury, corticosteroids, or high doses of hydroquinone (Glenn, 2016). Mercury, however, is extremely poisonous, and continued use can lead to neurological injury and kidney ailment. Hydroquinone (originally an industrial chemical) has been manipulated into skin lightening products because it minimises the manufacturing of the dark pigment (responsible for the dark complexion) within the skin, however, direct contact with the sun, which is almost impossible to stay away from in Africa—destroys the treated membrane. Furthermore, long-term usage of hydroquinone among chocolate coloured individuals can result in ochronosis, a circumstance involving black-white and dark blue tint on the membrane (Fiume et al., 2016).

Verma (2016) noted that contact eczema, bacterial and fungal infection, Cushing's syndrome and skin atrophy are a result of exposure to topical steroids. In addition, international biotechnology, ornamental, and clinical companies have joined through mergers and acquisitions to create and promote individual cosmetics that mark the joints connecting make-up and clinical (Fiume et al., 2016). However, a survey by Estate and Gandhi (2011) reveals that over 50 % of consumers are unconscious of the health repercussions of using skin lightening products

Apart from the international studies, there are some studies which were conducted in Africa. Chitando and Chitando (2004) conducted a study to find out the factors influencing utilisation of complexion lightening products among Zimbabwean ladies. The study, however, indicated that the consumption of complexion lightening products was determined by the love of light coloured skin and that skin lightening

was a fashion trend which both triggered and maintained physical attractiveness as a way to plead for and exploit opportunities for social exchange and interaction. The study shows that the need to maintain marital relationships, group identity as well as secure a job in the market place were the main reasons why women were using skin lightening products. This study was followed by Gwaravanda's (2011) study which was focusing on the knowledge of people on recognisable implications on skin bleaching among the Shona people. Gwaravanda's (2011) study found that the Shona women were not aware of the implications of the lightening products since it was a secretive act. People were not discussing the challenges they were facing and that they were not seeking medical attention. Although his study provides useful insights into the study of the consumption of skin lightening products among black Zimbabwean women, the study demonstrates several flaws. Firstly, the scholar's focus on Shona women alone robs the study of anthropological diversity. Secondly, the study does not provide a solid theoretical foundation on the origins of the desire to be white among Zimbabwean women. Thirdly, the study does not show how the use of skin lightening creams and soaps can be risky appearance management behaviour.

This study, therefore, intends to add onto Gwaravanda's (2011) work by exploring such research opportunities. In that light, the researcher is, therefore, inspired to assess the trends and dynamics of the use of skin lightening products among Zimbabwean college students.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To determine the extent of the usage of skin lightening products by the respondents.

2. To find out the awareness level of the respondents on the health challenges connected with the utilisation of complexion lightening products.
3. To identify people who the respondents refer to if they encounter health problems in the application of complexion lightening products.
4. To enumerate benefits from the usage of lightening products by the college students.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The consumption of skin lightening soaps and creams among Zimbabwean college students has become an on-going practice and resulted in people becoming light in complexion which is only temporary lasting within a period of the use of the creams and soaps. This practice, however, is resulting in health problems like skin rash, skin uneven tone (patching), skin freckles due to skin irritation, reduced levels of the skin's immunity against bacterial and fungal attacks and prolonged use is also resulting in kidney complications, skin cancer and premature breast development (Estate & Gandhi,2011). Therefore, the study aims to determine the usage of skin lightening products and health problems encountered by Zimbabwean college students.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The research aims to determine the usage of skin lightening products, health problems encountered by Zimbabwean college students, the people they consult when they experience health problems as well as establishing their benefits from the usage of the lightening products.

## **Research Questions**

The following questions guided the study:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the respondents?
2. What is the extent of the usage of skin lightening products among the Zimbabwean college students?
3. What is the level of awareness of the health problems associated with the utilisation of complexion lightening products?
4. To whom do the respondents refer to when they encounter health problems in the application of complexion lightening products?
5. What do respondents benefit from the utilisation of complexion lightening products?

## **Significance of the Study**

This study is expected to benefit the following stakeholders:

1. The College Students: that they may be aware of the side effects of the skin lightening products and can relate the health problems which come because of the usage of the lightening products.
2. The Parents: that they may provide guidance to their children as they prepare themselves for adolescent life which is the most challenging period of human life to be aware of their skin and other parts of their body.
3. The Health Practitioners: that they can organise awareness programmes for the nation at large.
4. The Zimbabwean government: that they can realise the damage being caused by the lightening products to the Zimbabwean population and help to control or restrict the usage of these products.

5. Future Researchers: that the results of the study would help future researchers on variables to consider and the designs to be used to further the research related to the study to be incorporated in the body of knowledge.

### **Basic Assumptions of the Study**

For this study, it is assumed that:

1. The utilisation of complexion lightening products is an on-going exercise amid the college students.
2. The application of complexion lightening products is believed to improve beauty among college students.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

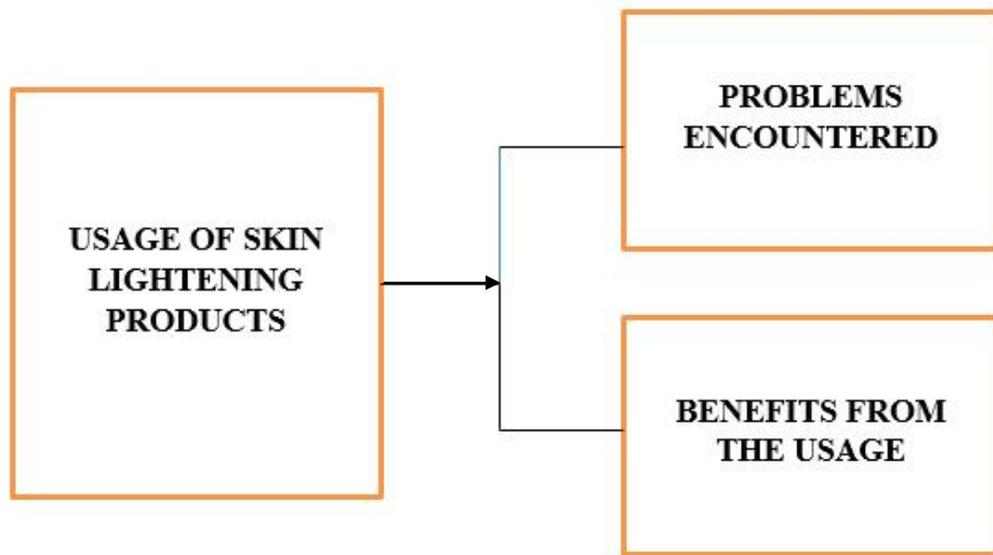
The study focused on the risky appearance management behaviours whilst placing emphasis on the exploitation of complexion lightening products in the Zimbabwean context. This study limited its catchment to transformations of the skin.

Areas to be explored by the study included college students at Kushinga Phikhelela, in Marondera.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The major limitation of the research was unwillingness by the respondents to give full information since usage of skin lightening products is an illegal act. Also, some of the college students had not used the products long enough to experience their side effects.

### Research Paradigm



*Figure 1.* Conceptual framework

The diagram above indicates that the usage of skin lightening products is resulting in people encountering health problems and there are also benefits being experienced by the students. The health problems in this paradigm refer to side effects like skin rash, skin uneven tone, cancer, kidney complications, just to mention a few. The benefits, in this case, refer to attraction of the opposite sex, improvements of appearance in terms of age (look younger), give a better family resemblance, increase acceptability to the group of peers one wishes to join, just to mention a few.

### Definition of Terms

The terms used in the study were operationally defined as they were used in the study for better understanding and clarification.

**Skin lightening products-** these are products which change the colour of the skin when used from a dark colour to a light colour and they include creams, soaps, pills and injections. The change of colour is temporary, not permanent.

**Health problems** –these are generally the side effects of the products such as skin rash, uneven skin tone.

### **Summary**

In conclusion, this chapter was just highlighting on the guidelines of this project, that is, what is going to be the focus of the study, what the study really wants to find out, what is going to be the scope of the study, the limitations of the research not forgetting the benefits of the research to the students, community and the government at large.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This chapter will address the following sub-headings: the concept of risky appearance management behaviours; psychological perspectives; anthropological perspectives; sociological perspectives; the health side effects from risky appearance management behaviours. The theories relevant to this study are explored as well as the empirical literature from related studies in different parts of Africa, Asia and other parts of the world.

#### **Risky Appearance Management Behaviour**

Lewis, Robkin, Gaska, and Njoki (2011) define appearance management as the gross reflection created by the human body including modifications, flourishes, hangings, paintings, coverings of the body that are visually professed; a visual context that includes clothing as well as the body. The selection of colour, accessories, make-up, grooming procedure, clothing, change of body figure, sizes and change of the skin feeling take part in the management of appearance. This might be due to motivations like, to get rid of pimples, rashes, skin infections; to have soft skin; to be light, 'beautiful,' and more European associated, to attract people of the opposite sex and also to satisfy the one they have, if any (Lewis et al., 2011).

They went on to explain that appearance management behaviour may take on the form of dieting, weight managing and exercising, make-up use to maintain or improve skin colour as well as the selection of clothing to enhance one's appearance.

Appearance management behaviours have been viewed to be important to the users and engaging in them can either cause no harm to one's health or may be risky when considering the negative health effects from long-run consumption. Body dissatisfaction is a powerful risk factor for skin bleaching creams' use and is thought to be especially challenging in the presence of high levels of perfectionism(Wade & Tiggemann, 2013). Cosmetic complexion lightening products are commonly applied in Africa where skin bleaching is highly practiced. Most of the skin-bleaching agents used contain hydroquinone, corticosteroids, and/or mercury. These agents are being used without any clinical advice are accessed without medical supervision and used for long-lasting periods of time on large body surface areas. These factors, compounded by the hot, humid conditions in Africa, have led to serious complications. These complications include local, striate, exogenous ochronosis and systemic suppression of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis effects. With the increase in international travel, immigration and multiculturalism, patients with these complications are presented to physicians world-wide making it easier for data to be gathered up (Mistry, Shapero, Kundu, & Shapero, 2011)

The key question therefore is, why do people engage in risky appearance management behaviour, and what are the actual health threats thereof? Psychological, anthropological as well as sociological perspectives have been brought forward to explain risky appearance management behaviour. Empirical studies have also been conducted to ascertain the actual health effects of risky appearance management, to which this study shall focus on the health effects of the consumption of skin lightening products.

## **Factors on Psychological Perspectives**

Psychological perspectives of human appearance are founded on the ideas of self-concept. A person's self-concept is a set of perceptions of one-self which sum up to become the 'body image' (Ju & Johnson, 2010). They went on to explain the theory of social comparison and posited that humans have a make to evaluate their opinions and abilities by comparing themselves with others when an objective foundation for comparison is unavailable. The motive underlying such comparison was self-evaluation. They also noted that social comparison frequently occurred with others who were similar because a similar person provides relevant information.

People engage in both upward and downward comparisons (Ju & Johnson, 2010). Upward comparisons occur when people compare themselves to others they recognise as being attractive and better than they are in one or more dimensions. When people engage in upward comparisons, they tend to not only augment themselves by making efforts to improve but also experience negative moods because of gaps between the target person they use for comparison and themselves. This may be the case when women make visual comparisons between themselves and fashion models. Downward comparisons occur when people compare themselves to others that they perceive as less desirable or less fortunate than themselves on one or more dimensions. Persons tend to experience optimistic moods after such comparisons. Evaluations about one's body by other people are likely to become part of one's own body perceptions, and thus one's attitude towards the body and feelings of adequacy as well as inadequacy are linked to one's physical features such as the body weight, height and skin complexion that are visible to others. A person's body reflection has a

direct influence on his or her expressive state, thoughts and behaviour especially as patterns of inner sensations triggered in response to the feedback from others.

Body image is multi-dimensional, consisting of a cognitive and an affecting dimension (Seock & Merritt, 2013). Cognitive body representation consists of a person's philosophy of and self-statements about one's body. Emotional body image is made up of experiences of look, whether the experiences are secure or insecure and whether there is contentment or discontentment with the body. Therefore, as Seock and Merritt (2013) observed, once the person's body becomes the innermost component of his or her whole being, his or her individuality and performance traits become determined by the summed up evaluations of the cognitive and emotional body images.

Tiggemann and Williams (2012) expanded the concept of body image by introducing the idea of self-objectification theory. According to this theory, females experience objectification from an early age beginning at puberty, where their bodies become public domain. Tiggemann and Williams further explained that young girls do not like the changes of puberty in which they become aware of their gender differences and are exposed to objectification. At such an early stage, females are initiated into the culture of sexual objectification, internalising the feelings, and beginning their life-long struggle with self-objectification

The key proposition of self-objectification theory is that women are communally forced into an emotional outlook of objectifying their own bodies for optimistic evaluation that is, society forces women to continually look at their bodies as objects, and such becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy where females then perceive their bodies as objects (Tiggemann & Williams, 2012). Consequently, women,

therefore, create an internal awareness of the expectation that they turn themselves into objects for others.

There is a strongly held belief among women that skin-bleaching creams soften the skin and make skin more supple and attractive (Lewis et al., 2011). Women bleach their skin to make their skin soft and maintain beauty. This type of assertion was most common among participants who used the creams with high frequency. Their belief was that the more often you use skin-bleaching creams, the softer and smoother it makes the skin. To have skin that was soft to the touch and even more importantly soft to the eye, participants reported using these creams with high frequency so that other people would perceive their physical attributes as most attractive and highly desirable. Women have a belief that “men love women who have soft skin”.

Although many women who use skin bleach acknowledge the need to internalise Black beauty, as emphasised by Lewis et al (2012), national and international pressures to look “White” have strongly outweighed this desire. In turn, many Africans have embraced more Euro-centric beauty ideals. The internationally shared belief that “White” is the absolute form of beauty is perpetuated through Western media images including television, radio, advertisements, cinema, and theatre all globally accessible through satellite and other forms of communication. Once the ‘object’ perception becomes internalised; the psychological consequences of objectification are shame, anxiety, peak motivational states, and awareness of internal bodily states.

In response to this overwhelming feeling of shame, women often engage in risky health actions in an attempt to correct the appearance of their body (Lewis et al.,

2012). Appearance anxiety is the direct result of shame which is manifested by concerns for checking, adjusting and monitoring one's appearance, and women often engage in activities such as constantly changing the food they choose to eat, the clothes they choose to put on, and the skin products they choose to use all in an effort not to lose contact with their own physical appearances(Wade & Tiggemann, 2013).

Although women provide a concise psychological explanation of human appearance behaviour, Barron and Apple,( 2014) argue that not all women handle the self-objectification as Lewis et al.(2012) asserted. Rather, some women may internalise feelings of objectification while others may not, and that is due to the differing cultural contexts, a concept captured by the anthropological perspectives of human appearance management behaviour.

Sims and Hirudayaraj (2016) found that skin lightening has both empowering and disempowering functions for women. Colourism is a preference for light skin tones and devaluing of dark skin. It is a genderised observable fact, mostly affecting women, that creates social and workplace inequities and negatively affects women of colour. In India, colourism is a customary practice perpetuated by cultural beliefs and values, social institutions, and the media. A lighter skin implies success in controlling the body and thereby achieving an ideal body image (Sims & Hirudayaraj, 2016). Secondly, skin increases one's social status both in the private and public spheres such as the home and the workplace respectively. Thirdly, skin lightening is both a source and sign of success, prestige and luxury among Asian celebrities. Therefore, Sims & Hirudayaraj, (2016) managed to bring to the fore the impact of both psychological and sociological factors on the skin lightening products consumption trends

## **Factors on Anthropological Perspectives**

Anthropology is a social science discipline which focuses on the study of culture that is, the shared patterns of thoughts, beliefs, behaviours and habits in both material and symbolic realms of human society (Laan & Velthuis, 2016).

Anthropological perspectives of human appearance first took a toll in the philosophical age of exploration and enlightenment (Laan & Velthuis, 2016). It is during this period that questions, analyses and investigations of diversity of appearance in terms of body size and shape, skin, colour and body ornamentation began to grab greater attention among anthropological scholars.

Insofar as clothing selection is a matter of reflexivity, it is primarily directed at conformity to meet social and situational requirements. People use clothing to construct coherent and authentic identities: their dress should express who they think they are. Finally, the key to this era was the emergent study of the interlinking relationships between culture and human appearance revolving around two key themes which are; what does the concept of human appearance and body images explain about culture and what are the effects of culture on human appearance and body image.

Socio-cultural approach asserts that human beings think and behave in ways that they have been consistently taught early in life by agents of interaction and influence (Schwartz et al., 2011). Thus, body dissatisfaction arises from a culture's continuous exposure to, and solidification of external information from mass media instruments such as television advertisement, magazine print outs and other communication and channels. The media enforces certain standards of beauty, which include the attractiveness and unattractiveness of outward qualities, and ladies who

fail to comply to this criteria are no longer seen as ideal within the community (Ju & Johnson, 2010). Once the beauty criteria penetrates the cultural context, a social construction is created, and further maintained through interactions of, and emphasis as well as displays by societal institutions.

The modern appearance malaise within Africa's socio-cultural context has its roots in the phases of which the continent has gone through. The first phase is traced back further in the 1870s when the emergence of the colonisation of the African continent began to take centre stage. Colonisation came along with its own construct, specifically with the aim of distorting and changing the language, value and social systems existing in African society to create an enabling environment where total control of wealth and resources could be assumed (Handberg et al., 2015). The process culminated in westernisation, where native Africans were obliged to go by European names, to speak a European language; to dress, marry, eat and live the European way (Lewis et al., 2011). Infact, the natives were exposed to immense psychological, moral, religious and social distortions which impacted heavily on their entire way of life.

In part, the era of colonisation brought to Africa what is called de-personalisation, which can be described in three-moment stages. The first phrase is that of a moment of rupture from the historical roots of the African personality; the second stage is that of a moment of isolation and abandonment of the African way of life, which brings on a third, the complex of insecurity, and the growth of dependence on the European way of life. Overall, de-personalisation created a loss of aesthetic, emotional, social, religious and metaphysical enrichment of the African way of life. In the process, the colonialists sought to exploit every available

opportunity to internalise their own way of life as a way to create leverage for the native African to adjust first and foremost the ways he thinks, perceives and makes decisions, and ultimately become acquainted and attached to European behaviour traits (Lewis et al., 2011).

The second phase is traced back to the period between 1960 and 1990, a time when the concept of modernisation began to take concrete form (Handberg et al., 2015). As many African states became increasingly independent and liberated from colonial control, development economics discourse asserted that African nations were economically and socially backward, thus modernisation was the key development priority for them. Infact, the only readily available panacea was to engage in the whole process of ‘catching’ up with the developed West. This idea was driven by Rostov’s stages of the growth model, which amounted to consenting to define African individuality and identity in terms of the experiences and history of other people (Harnisch, 2010).

The ruling elements of the African elite chose the elements of Rostov’s stages of the growth model, and the key reason to this acceptance has been identified with the psycho-social effects of the colonial education system. Through colonial education, the native African was socialised into accepting Caucasian values, ideas and needs, and further developed an almost incurable inferiority complex and an intense dislike of anything African. The African thus became a product of an absurd urge for anything Western as signalled in the craving to purchase and possess articles made in London, Paris and New York (Johnson, Kim, Lee, & Kim, 2014). Modernisation made Africans to believe that everything made in the West was superior both in quality and design. The notion did not, however, remain within that

context, but it further trickled down onto the physical make-up, specifically the desire and attempt by Africans to be white, thus the upsurge in the demand for skin lightening soaps and creams (Kpanake, Teresa, Sastre, & Mullet, 2010).

The third phase is the recent upward trajectory of globalisation, characterised by high interconnectivity of the trade and industry of different countries, nations and continents. As put by Kpanake et al.(2010), the association of self-reliance and inter-reliance results in a tightly brought together trade and industry organ, of utilisation and exponential income, of economic giants and dwarfs, indeed, of masters and servants, as well as of massive monetary losses and gains.

In a study to find out black female identities of young women with dreadlocks, Chitando and Chitando (2004) found that the impact of colonialism on Zimbabwe's cultural heritage had adverse effects on the loss of identity among black Zimbabwean women. Chitando and Chitando (2004) asserted that the concept of black inferiority was an integral part of colonisation which sought to denounce the humanity of Africans through the trivialisation of African bodies, value systems, languages as well as the socio-cultural set up. Such drives were intended to undermine as well as distort the colonial subjects' confidence in being black and African.

In their quest to 'civilise' and 'Christianise' Africa, missionaries played an influential role in creating socio-cultural cleavages among Africans through associating evil with blackness and righteousness with whiteness (Chitando & Chitando, 2004). Consequently, being black increasingly became to be associated with not only being primitive but also evil (Chitando & Chitando, 2004). The internalization of such ideas convinced many black people that Euro-centric morality and its associative Christian values, combined with whiteness was a complete package

for being human. In fact, Chitando and Chitando (2004), found that skin lightening among black Zimbabwean women was an expression of the desire to become white. Although their study shows the factors influencing the consumption of skin lightening products, the scholars show a bias toward cultural aspects of anthropological perspectives. Secondly, the scope of their study is limited to young black African women with a particular hair style that is, dreadlocks.

Once a socially constructed ideal beauty concept has been identified, it becomes firstly 'naturalised' and secondly 'normalised' by society, a yardstick for comparison emerges. Infact, members of society begin to compare their current state of beauty against the standard, thus finding ways to reconstruct their bodies to match the ideal display. Reconstructions of the body are generally made under conditions of emotional arousal from self-ridicule triggered when one notices a beauty mismatch in comparison with what society has accepted as the norm. Infact, people will, therefore, begin to make use of adornments ranging from clothing, make-up, jewellery, and anything that makes a person feel better, attractive and closer to the ideal world of beauty even without consideration of the risks and hazards of such appearance management behaviour (Ju & Johnson, 2010).

Overall, the anthropological perspectives of human appearance management behaviour generally propose that the expansion of Western ideals of beauty influences diverse cultures to change their beauty ideals over time. Infact, feelings of body image dissatisfaction through idealisation of the new set of foreign beauty themes emerge, which would then lead to body reconstruction in pursuit of the western ideal. Beauty is defined in today's Western societies are stressing on a women ideal of slimness, determination and light skinned (Lewis et al., 2011).

The key weakness of the anthropological perspectives of appearance management behaviour is their stress on the national measurement to attractiveness norms and attractiveness effort (Batten, 2010). Although the Western ideal of beauty is “Light”, anthropological perspectives show the enormous bias of how dark-skinned individuals yearn for lightness through the overwhelming bombardment of images in advertisements, television shows and key fashion facets of Western disposition. There is no possibility, as the anthropologist show, of a multi-dimensional movement of cultural infiltration where white coloured individuals may also desire to look black through media observations (Batten, 2010). Infact, sociological explanations take on a better position of explaining how societal interactions could influence appearance management behaviour.

### **Factors on Sociological Perspectives**

Sociological perspectives of human appearance are hugely credited to the works of Harnisch (2010) who explains Mead’s Theory of Symbolic Interactionism. This theory brings out that people arrange their ways of behaving in order to identify challenges, which will result in them pronouncing those demanding conditions, stating clearly individuals in the conditions, individuals who are likely to be in these conditions as well as the nature of the conditions themselves (Harnisch, 2010). To label these conditions, people often use existing and most significant cues, drawing on prior experiences they may have gone through before. Among the most important cues which are often preferable are those which mirror the relationship between reputation and structural arrangement created from societal interaction (Harnisch, 2010).

Overall, Symbolic Interactionism emphasises that human performance is influenced by definitions and meanings that are fashioned and maintained through symbolic interaction with others (Ramakrishnan, 2012). The theory thus attempts to account for the genesis and expansion of human mind by locating it firstly, within the process of growth, and secondly, within the human world. From the process of evolution, Mead's theory asserts that human beings developed what he calls individual representation achieved through undisclosed thoughts. The social representation is developed through an uncompleted process of social interaction as human beings correspond and work together with others (Handberg et al., 2015).

This theory pointed to a person's capacity to see himself or herself from another person's point of analysis which is to say that, the way human beings learn to perform and interconnect with people comes from the people surrounding them. Similar to the psychosomatic concept of body image, the symbolic integrationist thinking asserts that the picture that one has concerning self is copied from his or her immediate circle of communication (Handberg et al., 2015). According to this school of thinking, people with optimistic images of self are products of positive background, whilst those with a pessimistic image of self are victims of a negative background, and may therefore; lead to low self-worth a driver of appearance management behaviour.

According to the sociological perspective, human performance is driven by the need to attain bodily attractiveness as a way to utilise opportunities for social exchange and communication (Batten, 2010). Human beings, in that sense, have the capability to respond inactively to themselves, and extracting meaning from the responses of the people involved in the on-going social process that make up the

society. This assertion was proved in standard studies on social Interactionism where it was found that a person's outward attractiveness triggers greater peer reception, and that attractiveness creates higher degrees of interpersonal authority, and attract a greater likelihood of opinion agreement than unappealing individuals, particularly with opposite sex peers (Batten, 2010).

With Symbolic Interactionism, individual's appearance management behaviour is influenced by those with whom they cooperate with, and the expressiveness comes from the intrinsic pressure to fit in, which shows that the public is a product of interaction, and shapes identity, but self also shapes relations, playing back on society (Handberg et al., 2015). Therefore, risky appearance management behaviour is often a way to induce others of their ownership of certain attributes in order to create a personality. Adolescents habitually try out different body forms, dress and mannerisms of various social types and diligently take care of perceptions to find a picture that is favourable, and such performance is called 'self-symbolising'.

Social Interactionism is often discredited for its overlook of cultural structure which, in broad standpoint may influence individuals not to become self-determining causal agents in the construction of own actions(Handberg et al., 2015). The beginning of symbolic Interactionism that humans derive from their surroundings is not always the case but the reading of symbols and the meanings extracted from the surroundings are often vulnerable to one's personal facts.

Additionally, as observed by Laan and Velthuis (2016), globalisation has brought to Africa the once far Hollywood dream of fashion models and beauty celebrities, a tendency which has to a greater extent deformed and re-shaped the perception of beauty in the African background into a new and somewhat 'globalised'

model, thin, tall and light skin. Thus, women in African and Asian societies have found themselves in hunt of such a model of beauty as a way to enhance on what has been viewed as the perfect appearance. The impact of globalisation has opened space for women to deconstruct and rebuild their notions of beauty, especially unsettling the original attraction of self through the exportation and penetration of aesthetic values which have gradually become to be regarded as the gauge of beauty.

In a study of four Asian cultures, Handberg et al. (2015) revealed the effect of marketing on skin lightening and beauty trends. Skin care advertisements emphasised that good skin should be clear and light, while bad skin was referred to as dull and dark. Tiggemann and Williams (2012) socio-cultural approach asserts that body displeasure arises from a culture's continuous publicity to, and solidification of outside information from mass media instruments such as television advertisement. Tiggemann and Williams' (2012) study demonstrates that the exterior environment has a huge weight on the use trends of skin lightening products in India, Hong Kong, Japan and Korea, particularly triggering body discontent among women.

### **Health Effects of Appearance Management Behaviours**

As indicated in the study by Estate and Gandhi (2011), mercury being a well-known constitute of the lightening products, is found in almost all complexion lightening products. Also, Mistry et al.(2011) found that controlling functions are hidden within complexion lightening for women. Firstly, a lighter skin means success in managing the body, as well as the people around and thereby achieving the body picture one wants. Secondly, skin increased one's social status both in the private and public spheres such as the home and the workplace respectively. Thirdly, skin

lightening is both a source and sign of success, prestige and luxury among Asian celebrities.

The World Health Organisation study asserts that mercury salts inhibit the formation of melanin, and this will result in a light complexion. Kidney damage is the main negative effect of mercury which is found in lightening products (Peregrino, Moreno, Miranda, Rubio, & Leal, 2011). Besides the stated effects, mercury in complexion lightening produces results in skin rash, skin bruising and tinting, as well as a poor skin immune against bacterial and fungal conditions, early breast maturity and in some cases, cancer (Estate & Gandhi, 2011).

In the Republic of China, an investigation of skin lightening products found that 27% of them contain mercury. In the same country, 47% of skin lightening product consumers had reported cases of kidney malfunction over a period of one year, and all the kidney complications were confirmed to have arisen from mercury exposure (Yoo & Kim, 2014). Medical personnel conducted scenario tests on these patients to assess the results when the same women were asked to desist from using skin lightening products. The medical assessment found that the kidney's function gradually returned to normal (Yoo & Kim, 2014).

Further studies on mercury also found that toxic mercury substances damage the nervous system. An investigation conducted on consumers of mercury-containing soaps in Kenya found that users showed symptoms of nervous system breakdown such as loss of memory, vertigo, tremor, lassitude, as well as aches and pains, all classic signs of inorganic mercury poisoning (Al-Saleh, Elkhatib, Al-Rouqi, Al-Enazi, & Shinwari, 2012). Also, a study of complexion lightening products consumers was conducted in Germany and focused on women who had used the products for over

twenty years. Health issues such as shortness of breath, headaches and abdominal cramps were detected (Al-Saleh et al., 2012).

In the United States, the ingesting of cosmetic and personal care products amounts to over USD 7 billion per year, and with expenditures on skin lightening products and procedures accounting for close to 45% of the total (Estate & Gandhi, 2011). However, the American government has often been criticised for the lack of regulatory foresight beginning from a 2002 investigation which noted that harmful phthalates was found nearly 75% of 72 off-the-shelf cosmetics products (Lewis et al., 2012).

Phthalates are chemicals commonly used in manufacturing cosmetic, perfume, nail polish, and skin lotion products. Dibutyl phthalate (DBP) and diethyl phthalate (DEHP) are substances found in phthalates, and are included in the production of skin lightening products to enhance the radiance, texture and lightness of the skin (Lewis et al., 2012). However, scientific studies in the United States indicate that phthalates are hormone disruptors often activating complications of the reproductive system such as reduced genital distance (the distance between the anus and the scrotum), low sperm counts and damaged sperm among male consumers (Mistry et al., 2011). Additionally, further investigations in Puerto Rico findings have also concluded that exposure to phthalates has been found to cause hasty breast development among female consumers.

Over the years, there has been a demanding drive in the use of nanotechnology in the cosmetics industry. Nanotechnology involves the manipulation of particles on the scale of molecules and atoms. Skin lightening products also contain nanoparticles due to their properties of having the ability to create new elements of skin colour and

transparency (Yoo & Kim, 2014). Although preliminary studies on the health hazards of exposures to nanotechnology have so far been conducted on animals, medical research highlights potential risks of long-run lung and brain.

### **Summary of Literature Review**

The review of literature, therefore, exposes the opportunities for further research into the subject of risky appearance management behaviour. The theoretical foundations laid in this study shall be providing guidance into exploring the dynamics of appearance management behaviour in Zimbabwe. The empirical literature review is the key in revealing the spaces this study may occupy in appearance management discourse. Overall, the study's intention to investigate the factors affecting risky human appearance management behaviour and the negative health effects thereof is a necessary endeavour.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter explores the methodology to be used in this study. It is a detailed analysis of the following research methodology components: research design, the target population, sample size and sampling procedure, the research instruments and data collection methods; as well as, the data analysis techniques. This chapter is concerned with the methodology utilised to achieve the aims of the study.

#### **Research Design**

The study used descriptive research design. This is descriptive because it provides information through survey of the problems and benefits of the usage of skin lightening products. According to Williams (2007), the descriptive research approach is a basic research method that examines the situation, as it exists in its current state. Descriptive research involves identification of attributes of a phenomenon based on an observational basis.

#### **Population of the Study**

The population of this study consisted of 400 students from Kushinga Phikhelela Polytechnic in Marondera. Kushinga Phikhelela Polytechnic was chosen amongst the Zimbabwean Polytechnic colleges because of its convenient location to the researcher.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The sample was made up of 150 questionnaires distributed to students of Kushinga Phikhelela from 10 departments and fifteen students were selected using purposive sampling whereby the researcher was to select the individuals with the preferred characteristics to give the desired information and this includes the light in complexion. Purposive sampling, as indicated by Williams, (2007) involves the researcher selecting subjects based on their perception of the characteristics of those subjects.

### **Instrumentation**

To gather the information from the students, the researcher designed a closed-ended questionnaire and distributed to the students to enable as much information as possible to be gathered. The instrument had five sections: Demographic profile of the respondents; the level of the usage of skin whitening product; health problems encountered; the person they consult when they encounter health problems; and lastly the benefits in the usage of skin lightening products.

### **Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument**

The research instrument's validity was conducted through content and face examination by the Solusi experts. For the reliability of the instruments, the researcher conducted a pilot study investigation to assess the applicability of the research instrument the study intended to use. The pilot study was conducted using 50 students, five from each of the ten departments at Harare Polytechnic and these were chosen purposively. The instrument went through the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient testing to test its reliability.

Table 1. *Internal Reliability of the Questionnaire*

Cronbach's Alpha	No of items
0.793	30

The Cronbach's Alpha of the whole instrument was .793, which meant that the instrument is reliable enough to gather the data being looked for by the research.

Table 2. *Interpretation of Usage of the Skin Lightening Products*

Scale	Response	Mean Range	Verbal Interpretation
5	Always	4.51-5.00	Highly Used
4	Often	3.51-4.50	Used
3	Sometimes	2.51-3.50	Moderately Used
2	Rarely	1.51-2.50	Rarely Used
1	Never	1.00-1.50	Never Use

Table 3. *Interpretation of Health Problems*

Scale	Response	Mean Range	Verbal Interpretation
5	Always	4.51-5.00	Highly Experienced
4	Often	3.51-4.50	Experienced
3	Sometimes	2.51-3.50	Moderately Experienced
2	Rarely	1.51-2.50	Rarely Experienced
1	Never	1.00-1.50	Never Experienced

Table 4. *Interpretation of Benefits of Lightning Products*

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Mean Range</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
5	Always	4.51-5.00	Highly Beneficial
4	Often	3.51-4.50	Beneficial
3	Sometimes	2.51-3.50	Moderately Beneficial
2	Rarely	1.51-2.50	Rarely Beneficial
1	Never	1.00-1.50	Not Beneficial

### **Pilot Study Analysis**

The wording of questions, identification of ambiguous questions and testing of the techniques to be used was done by the pilot study. The Cronbach's Alpha was 0.793 which indicated that the instrument was reliable. However, there were some adjustments of the questions after the Cronbach's Alpha had been performed according to sections which resulted in the instrument being reliable.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Before collecting the data, the researcher collected the introductory letter from the Chairperson of the Family Consumer Science Department. To collect the information from the students, the researcher sought the permission from the Principal of Kushinga Phikhelela Polytechnic as well from the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education before making an appointment with the respondents. Finally, the researcher administered the questionnaires to the identified respondents. After the students responded to the questionnaire, the researcher collected the questionnaires, encoded and submitted for the statistical treatment of data from the University.

### **Statistical Analysis of Data**

The researcher used, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 21) for analysing the data from the University Statistician.

**Frequencies and Percentages** were used to compute the Demographic profile of the respondents.

**Means and standard Deviations** were used to compute for the level of the usage of the skin lightening products, problems encountered and the benefits of using the products.

### **Summary**

In conclusion, this chapter was revealing how the researcher gathered the data, the instruments which was used to gather the data, the population, the sampling method which was used, the method which was used to measure the validity and reliability of the instruments and the analysis procedure of the data. This marked a very important stage in the study because it is only through the collection of data that conclusions can be made about the study and wrong conclusions can be made if wrong instruments, population, reliability, collection procedure and analysis of data are done wrongly.

## CHAPTER IV

### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter presents the results of the study as answers to the research problems regarding the use of lightening products. The results were presented in tabular form for a better understanding.

#### **Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

**Research Question 1.** *What are the demographic characteristics of the respondents?*

Table 5 presents the demographic profile of the respondents in the use of lightening products. More of the respondents were ages between 17-20 with the frequency of 47 and percentage of 31.8. More of their income came from their parents with a frequency of 51 and 34.5%. This meant that the lightening products were mostly being used by students in the first year who were being affected by peer pressure and their source of income was from parents because they had not yet gone for attachment. The data revealed that most of the students were falling in the “cannot afford” range, this was because their income was from parents and this also explained why their budget for the lightening products ranged between \$1-1.50. Their year level was mostly from First to Second years with a frequency of 44 and 42 respectively and 29.7% and 28.4%. Their economic potential to buy whitening products was “average” and “cannot afford”, had frequencies of 50 and 52, with percentages of 33.8 and 35.1 respectively and those who could only afford to spend \$1 - \$50 for the whitening products with a frequency of 71 and percentage of 48.00

Table 5. *Demographic Characteristics of Respondents*

<b>Variable</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Age	17-20	47	29.1
	21-24	43	29.1
	25-28	43	31.8
	29 and above	15	10.1
Source of income	Parents	51	34.5
	Guardian	35	23.6
	Self-sponsored	30	20.3
	Other	32	21.6
Year Level	1 <sup>st</sup>	42	28.4
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	44	29.7
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	38	25.7
	4 <sup>th</sup>	24	16.2
Economic potential	Can afford	46	31.1
	Average	50	33.8
	Cannot afford	52	35.1
Amount spent	\$1-50	71	48.0
	\$51-100	46	31.1
	\$101-150	20	13.5
	Over \$150	11	7.4

### **Extent of the Use of Lightening Products**

**Research Question 2.** *What is the extent of the usage of skin lightening products among the Zimbabwean college students?*

Table 6 presents the usage of the lightening products by the respondents which is moderate with an overall mean of 2.8911 and Standard deviation of 0.34812. Their highest usage is the ponds with a mean of 3.2095 and an SD of 1.27377 and interpreted moderately used with Lemonvate with a mean of 3.0743 and Standard deviation of 1.13144. All other products were moderately used by the respondents as presented by the means on the table.

Table 6. *Usage of the Skin Lightening Products by the Respondents*

<b>Products</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
Epiderm	2.8784	1.31917	Moderately used
Ponds	3.2095	1.27377	Moderately used
Fair and lovely	2.7230	1.35938	Moderately used
Betasol	2.9392	1.30006	Moderately used
Bio-Clair	2.7905	1.17949	Moderately used
Diprosone	2.7973	1.24518	Moderately used
Lemonvate	3.0743	1.13144	Moderately used
Movate	2.5969	1.11061	Moderately used
Gand D	2.8911	1.08752	Moderately used
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>2.8911</b>	<b>0.34812</b>	<b>Moderately used</b>

The results showed that college students were moderate users of the lightening products as identified in the table. This was because the students wanted to be part of the current fashion trend. The results are supported by Laan and Velthuis (2016), who said that globalisation has brought to Africa the once far Hollywood dream of fashion models and beauty celebrities, a trend which has to a greater extent distorted and reshaped the concept of beauty in the African context into a new and somewhat ‘globalised’ proto-type; thin, tall and light skin. Thus, women in African and Asian societies have found themselves in pursuit of such a model of beauty as way of boosting on what has been viewed as the ideal appearance. The impact of globalisation has opened space for women to deconstruct and reconstruct their notions of beauty, especially disrupting the original fascination of self through the exportation and infiltration of aesthetic values which have gradually become regarded as the yardstick of beauty.

## Health Problems Encountered

**Research Question 3.** *What is the level of awareness of the health problems associated with the use of skin lightening products?*

Table 7 presents the health problems encountered by using the lightening products which is moderate with an overall mean of 2.8442 and Standard deviation of 0.36020.

Table 7. *Health Problems Encountered Using Lightening Products*

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Verbal interpretation</b>
Skin rash	3.4122	1.18912	Moderately experienced
Skin uneven tone	2.8243	1.23837	Moderately experienced
Itchiness of the skin	2.8378	1.18410	Moderately experienced
Development of freckles	2.7568	1.18161	Moderately experienced
Development of ageing lines	2.8041	1.16443	Moderately experienced
Thin and fragile skin	2.6554	1.22731	Moderately experienced
Leathery skin feeling	2.7432	1.14951	Moderately experienced
Burning sensation	3.5932	1.07853	Highly experienced
Dryness	3.0608	1.23567	Moderately experienced
Strange stretch marks	2.7095	1.27910	Moderately experienced
Folliticus, inflamed hair follicles	2.4054	1.15374	Lowly experienced
Raised bumps on the skin	2.8851	1.15189	Moderately experienced
Fungal or bacterial infections	2.9527	1.07750	Moderately experienced
Skin atrophy	2.9797	1.11556	Moderately experienced
Dilation of superficial blood vessels	2.7365	1.09645	Moderately experienced
Acne from eruptions	2.8041	1.24899	Moderately experienced
Maceration of the skin	2.6622	1.19269	Moderately experienced
Kidney complications	2.4730	1.12755	Less experienced
<b>Overall mean</b>	<b>2.8442</b>	<b>0.36020</b>	<b>Moderately experienced</b>

Their highest experience is the burning sensation with a mean of 3.5932 and Standard deviation of 1.07853 and is interpreted moderately. Their lowest experience health problem is the kidney complication with the mean of 2.4730 and a Standard deviation of 1.12755 and is interpreted as lowly experienced. All other health

problems were moderately experienced by the respondents as presented by the means on the table.

The result showed that the respondents encountered mild problems in the use of lightening products. This meant that some of the health problems were less experienced because the period was not long enough for some of the problems to be manifesting. These results are supported by Glenn (2016) who indicated that continuous use of the skin lightening creams has side effects which include the burning sensation, itching, irritation, dryness, folliculitis, acne form eruptions, hypo-pigmentation, maceration of the skin, secondary infection, skin atrophy just to mention a few. Prolonged continuous treatment may cause atrophic skin changes leading to: thinning, loss of elasticity, dilatation of superficial blood vessels, Telangiectasiae and Ecchymoses. Systematic absorption of corticosteroid can cause hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis suppression, manifestation of Cushing's syndrome, hyperglycaemia and glycosuria damage as well as skin cell changes which may lead to cancer (Glenn, 2016).

However, Glenn (2016), goes on to indicate that incessant use of the Epiderm cream has side effects which include the burning sensation, itching, irritation, dryness, folliculitis, acne form eruptions, hypo-pigmentation, maceration of the skin, secondary infection, skin atrophy just to mention a few

#### **Consultant on Health Problem Related to Skin Care**

**Question 4.** *To whom do the respondents refer when they encounter health problems in the use of skin lightening product?*

Table 8 presents the person the respondents talked to when they had health problems in the use of lightening products which is moderate with an overall mean of 3.0338 and SD of 0.48900.

Table 8. *Consultants on Problems with Skin Lighteners*

<b>Person</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>	<b>Verbal interpretation</b>
Medical doctor	2.8446	1.39831	Moderately consulted
Parents	2.6824	1.14308	Moderately consulted
Friends	3.1081	1.24614	Moderately consulted
Peers	3.3041	1.17026	Moderately consulted
Keep to yourself	3.2297	1.32529	Moderately consulted
<b>Overall mean</b>	<b>3.0338</b>	<b>0.48900</b>	<b>Moderately consulted</b>

Their highest consultants were the peers with a mean of 3.3041 and Standard deviation of 1.17026 and were interpreted as moderately consulted. All other consultants were moderately consulted as presented by the means on the table.

The result showed that the respondents sometimes consulted significant person when they encounter problem/s in the use of the lightening product/s but usually they consulted their peers and kept it to themselves. The result is supported by Communication (2009) who clarified that, given that the sale of steroid creams for the purposes of skin bleaching is illegal, black market skin lightening products will not list steroids under their ingredients list anywhere on their packaging. Therefore, most dangerous black market bleaching creams go undetected. Thus, the discovery and removal of these harmful steroid-containing skin lightening creams usually only occur after it is too late. Therefore, the respondents choose to keep to themselves or tell peers because they know using lightening products is an illegal act which might lead to them being charged.

### Benefits of Using Skin Lightening Products

Table 9 presents the benefits of the respondents from the use of skin lightening products which is “moderately beneficial” with an overall mean of 3.2383 and Standard deviation of 0.41006.

**Table 9: Benefits of using skin lightening products**

Benefit	Mean	Standard deviation	Verbal interpretation
1. Boosts my confidence about my appearance.	3.4730	1.16319	Moderately beneficial
2. Lessen my inferiority complex about my appearance.	2.9595	1.16571	Moderately beneficial
3. Can use make-up better.	3.1351	1.10440	Moderately beneficial
4. Look better for my age.	3.3581	1.24546	Moderately beneficial
5. Fit into the group of peers I wish to join.	3.1486	1.25825	Moderately beneficial
6. Gives me a better family resemblance	2.8446	1.21618	Moderately beneficial
7. Improve my relations with people of the opposite sex.	3.6486	1.09957	Highly beneficial
8. Feel and appear younger	3.5541	1.12657	Highly beneficial
9. Help solve my personal problems	3.1419	1.16648	Moderately beneficial
10. Avoid teasing from people.	3.2605	1.21360	Moderately beneficial
11. Allow me to use different hairstyles.	3.0676	1.15271	Moderately beneficial
<b>Overall mean</b>	<b>3.2383</b>	<b>0.41006</b>	<b>Moderately beneficial</b>

Their highest benefit was in improving their relations with people especially of the opposite sex with a mean of 3.6486 and Standard deviation of 1.09957 and is interpreted as highly beneficial. This was going along with the benefit of wanting to feel and appear younger with a mean of 3.5541 and Standard deviation of 1.12657 and is interpreted as highly beneficial. All other benefits were moderately beneficial as presented by the means on the table.

The result showed that the respondents had moderate benefits in the use of lightening products but they benefited more in improving their relationship with people especially the opposite sex. The result is being supported by Tiggemann and Williams (2012) in considering the Self-Objectification Theory which says that females experience objectification from an early age beginning at puberty, where their bodies become public domain. The key proposition of Self-Objectification Theory is that women are socially forced into a psychological disposition of objectifying their own bodies for positive evaluation (Tiggemann & Williams, 2012). Similarly, there is a strongly held belief among women that skin-bleaching creams would soften the skin and make skin more supple and attractive in Lewis et al.'s (2011) study. Women have a belief that “men love women who have soft skin”.

In addition, the sociological perspective indicates that human behaviour is driven by the need to attain physical attractiveness as a way to exploit opportunities for social exchange and interaction (Batten, 2010) says that humans have the capacity to respond reflexively to themselves, and extracting meaning from the responses of the people engaged in the ongoing social process that constitutes society. This assertion was proved in classic studies on social Interactionism where it was found that a person's physical attractiveness triggers greater peer acceptance, and that attractiveness creates higher degrees of interpersonal influence, and attract a greater probability of opinion agreement than unattractive individuals, particularly with opposite sex peers (Batten, 2010).

Appearance anxiety is the direct result of shame which is manifested by concerns for checking, adjusting and monitoring one's appearance, and women often engage in activities such as constantly changing the food they choose to eat, the

clothes they choose to put on, and the skin products they choose to use all in an effort not to lose contact with their own physical appearances (Wade & Tiggemann, 2013).

### **Summary**

In conclusion, the data revealed that people who are mostly using lightening products were the first-year students and that most of the students fell under the “cannot afford” group because most of their income was coming from the parents. It also revealed that the usage of lightening products was moderately being practiced with ponds and Lemonvate was the most used because they could afford since their budget ranged between \$1-1.50.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendation based on the results of the study according to the research questions. The demographic profile of the respondents, were college female students with ages between 17-20 with frequencies of 43 and percentage of 29.1 respectively; their source of income came from their parents with a frequency of 51 and percentage of 34.5; they were generally first year and second students with a frequency of 42 and 44 with percentage of 28.4 and 29.7; their economic potential was between average and cannot afford with a frequency of 50 and 52 with percentage of 33.8 and 35.1 and could afford only to spend \$1-\$50.

The usage of the lightening products by the respondents was moderate with an overall mean of 2.8911 and a Standard deviation of 0.34812. Their highest usage is the ponds with a mean of 3.2095 and a Standard deviation of 1.27377 and interpreted moderately used, while Lemonvate had a mean of 3.0743 and Standard deviation of 1.13144. All other products were moderately used by the respondents.

The health problems encountered using the lightening products were moderate with an overall mean of 2.8442 and a Standard deviation of .36020. The highest health problem was the burning sensation with a mean of 3.5932 and Standard deviation of 1.07853 and lowest health problem encountered is the kidney

complication with the mean of 2.4730 and Standard deviation of 1.12755 and was interpreted as less experienced.

The consultations by the respondents when they faced medical problems due to the use of lightening products were moderately rated with an overall mean of 3.0338 and Standard deviation of .48900. They usually referred to their peers with a mean of 3.3041 and Standard deviation of 1.17026 and they usually kept it to themselves.

The benefits the respondents got from using skin lightening products were moderately rated with an overall mean of 3.2383 and a Standard deviation of .41006. The highest benefit was improving their relations with people especially of the opposite sex with a mean of 3.6486 and Standard deviation of 1.09957, going along with the benefit of wanting to feel and appear younger with a mean of 3.5541 and Standard deviation of 1.12657

### **Conclusion**

The pursuit for appearance and beauty became a dominant attribute of human society at the turn of the century. Skin lightening soaps and creams, high-heeled shoes and tight clothing, have become the central point of twenty-first century fashion trends especially among adolescents. The appearance management body modifications as transformations of the hair, skin, nails, muscular system, teeth and breath to establish a particular identity.

The desire for lighter skin amongst the Zimbabwean college students is being fuelled by the transnational pharmaceutical and cosmetic corporations, yet when problems arise due to use of skin lightening products, they usually go to their peers

and ask for some advice or they keep it to themselves and rarely do they approach doctors which is dangerous and results in health threatening situations.

It is therefore, the responsibility of the society, especially parents and health practitioners to be involved in providing right education, to the youth in the society who have high tendency of being concerned about their outside beauty. Besides, they should guide them on how to use the skin lightening products and provide them with knowledge on the signs and symptoms of the ailments that come with using skin lightening products to protect the users on health hazards.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the results of the study the following recommendations are in place for the following persons and entity to make actions.

#### **Students**

The study recommends the students to be aware of the effects of the use of skin lightening products and use it properly to enhance themselves and not to bring harm to themselves. Further, recommends the students to get proper advice before using the products by consulting their doctors, or parents to give right direction in the use of it.

#### **Parents**

To be able to know how to guide their children when they are using cosmetics and even when they are buying cosmetics for their children they need to have some background on the cosmetics they will be buying, as well as the side effects they carry.

**Health Practitioner**

The study will help them to recognise the need of health campaigns on the use and implications of skin lightening products. They need to alert people of the signs and symptoms of health problems caused by skin lightening products as well as the best person to approach, rather than keeping to themselves.

**Government Health Department**

The study is recommending the government of Zimbabwe to improve on its security on the imports of cosmetics. The dermatology department's security should be improved so that they do not recommend harmful products as safe for use. In the case of the black-market sales of these lightening products, the government should improve on the security and penalty to be charged.

**Future Researchers**

To the future researchers, the study recommends that this study can be further developed and can be used to create variations which will guide them for future research. The study will also help them in identifying other linked researchers through the references.

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**APPENDIX A:**  
**CORRESPONDENCE**



**SOLUSI UNIVERSITY**

A CHARTERED SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST  
INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING

P.O. SOLUSI  
BULAWAYO  
ZIMBABWE

Telephone:  
Within Zimbabwe 09-885457/63345  
Outside Zimbabwe (263)-9-885457/885484  
Telegrams: "SOLUSI"

Fax Numbers:  
Within Zimbabwe 09-885982  
Outside Zimbabwe  
(24 hour delay)

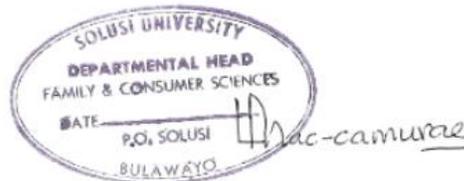
Sunday, October 09, 2016

To whom it may concern

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Abigirl Dhube is a Master of Science student in Clothing and Textiles at Solusi University. She is currently carrying out a study on the usage of skin lightening products by female college students. Family and Consumer Sciences Department at Solusi University would greatly appreciate your permission and assistance to enable her to successfully conduct this study.

Sincerely Yours



Lloyd Makamure  
Head of Department – Family and Consumer Sciences

Email: [makamurel@solusi.ac.zw](mailto:makamurel@solusi.ac.zw)

Cell Numbers:

**+263712616475**

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## APPENDIX B

### INSTRUMENT RELIABILITY RESULTS

**Scale: ALL VARIABLES**

**Case Processing Summary**

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.793	43

**APPENDIX C:  
THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

**USAGE OF LIGHTENING PRODUCTS AND HEALTH PROBLEMS  
ENCOUNTERED AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS OF  
KUSHINGA PHIKELELA POLYTECHNIC**

**DEAR RESPONDENTS:**

My name is **Abigirl Dhube** and a student with **Solusi University** and studying **MSC Clothing and Textiles**. One of the requirements of the course is to carry a supervised research study of a topic of choice. In this regard, I am conducting a study on the **USAGE OF LIGHTENING PRODUCTS AND HEALTH PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS OF KUSHINGA PHIKELELA POLYTECHNIC, Marondera**. I would greatly appreciate if you could answer the questions below. One best answer is needed and when more than one answer is required may you please give your most favorable responses. All answers given shall be treated in strictest confidence. You are free to make a follow-up to this project. The information shared is for academic purposes only. Please, may you make sure that you have responded to all questions. Do not write any name or address. Put your tick where your answer is. Thank you.

---

**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS**

**Instruction:** Please indicate your responses by ticking the appropriate box based on your personal information.

**Age:** ( ) 17-20                      ( ) 21-24                      ( ) 25-28                      ( ) 29 and  
above

**Source of Income:** ( ) parent                      ( ) guardian                      ( ) self-  
sponsored

**Year level:** ( ) 1<sup>st</sup> year                      ( ) 2<sup>nd</sup> year                      ( ) 3<sup>rd</sup> year  
( ) 4<sup>th</sup> year

**Economic condition:** ( ) can afford                      ( ) average                      ( ) cannot  
afford

**Amount spent for lightening**



Dryness					
Strange stretch marks					
Folliculitis, inflamed hair follicles					
Raised bumps on the skin					
Fungal or bacterial skin infections					
Skin atrophy					
Dilation of superficial blood vessels					
Acne form eruptions					
Maceration of the skin					
Kidney complications					

**SECTION D. THE PERSON YOU TALK TO WHEN YOU HAVE HEALTH**

**PROBLEM IN THE USE OF LIGHTENING PRODUCTS**

*Instruction: Please identify the person whom you talk to when you encountered health problems in using lightening products and how often you consult them using the following criteria.*

**5- Always   4- Often   3- Sometimes   2- Rarely   1- Never**

<b>Person Referred To</b>	<b>Always 5</b>	<b>Often 4</b>	<b>Sometimes 3</b>	<b>Rarely 2</b>	<b>Never 1</b>
Medical Doctor					
Parents					
Friends					
Peers					
Keep it yourself					

**SECTION E: BENEFITS OF USING SKIN LIGHTENING PRODUCTS**

*Instruction: Please check the benefits you received by using the lightening products. Rate it by using the following criteria:*

5- Always 4- Often 3- Sometimes 2- Rarely 1- Never

<b>Benefits of using skin lightening products</b>	<b>Always 5</b>	<b>Often 4</b>	<b>Sometimes 3</b>	<b>Rarely 2</b>	<b>Never 1</b>
It boosts my confidence about my appearance					
It kills my inferiority complex about my appearance					
I can use make-up better					
To look better for my age					
To fit into the group of peers I wish to join					
It gives me a better family resemblance					
To improve my relations with people of opposite sex					
I want to feel and appear younger					
To help solve personal problems I have					
People will not tease me and pass bad comments about my looks					
So I can use different hairstyles					
To improve function					
I get the respect that I want					

..

## APPENDIX D

### STATISTICAL ANALYSIS RESULTS

<b>Frequencies</b>						
<b>Notes</b>						
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Comments						
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	N of Rows in Working Data File	148				
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing.				
	Cases Used	Statistics are based on all cases with valid data.				

Syntax		FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=age income year affordability budget  /ORDER=ANALYSIS.  				
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00.02				
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.02				
<b>Statistics</b>						
		age	source of income	year level	economic potential to buy skin lightening products	amount spent on lightning products per term
N	Valid	148	148	148	148	148
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Frequency Table</b>						
<b>Age</b>						
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	17-20	43	29.1	29.1	29.1	

	21-24	43	29.1	29.1	58.1	
	25-28	47	31.8	31.8	89.9	
	29 and above	15	10.1	10.1	100.0	
	Total	148	100.0	100.0		
<b>source of income</b>						
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	parents	51	34.5	34.5	34.5	
	guardian	35	23.6	23.6	58.1	
	self-sponsored	30	20.3	20.3	78.4	
	other	32	21.6	21.6	100.0	
	Total	148	100.0	100.0		
<b>year level</b>						
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	1st year	42	28.4	28.4	28.4	
	2nd year	44	29.7	29.7	58.1	
	3rd year	38	25.7	25.7	83.8	
	4th year	24	16.2	16.2	100.0	
	Total	148	100.0	100.0		
<b>economic potential to buy skin lightening products</b>						
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	can afford	46	31.1	31.1	31.1	

	Average	50	33.8	33.8	64.9	
	cannot afford	52	35.1	35.1	100.0	
	Total	148	100.0	100.0		
<b>amount spent on lightening products per term</b>						
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	\$1-50	71	48.0	48.0	48.0	
	\$51-100	46	31.1	31.1	79.1	
	\$100-150	20	13.5	13.5	92.6	
	over \$150	11	7.4	7.4	100.0	
	Total	148	100.0	100.0		
<b>Notes</b>						
Output Created		23-NOV-2016 15:04:12				
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	Split File	<none>				

	N of Rows in Working Data File	148				
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User defined missing values are treated as missing.				
	Cases Used	All non-missing data are used.				
Syntax		DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 Q5 Q6 Q7 Q8 Q9  /STATISTICS=MEAN STDDEV.				
Resources	Process or Time	00:00:00.00				
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.00				
<b>Descriptives</b>						
<b>Notes</b>						
Output Created		23-NOV-2016 15:07:04				
Comments						

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Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User defined missing values are treated as missing.				
	Cases Used	All non-missing data are used.				
Syntax		DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4 Q5 Q6 Q7 Q8 Q9 SkinAverage  /STATISTICS=MEAN STDDEV.				

Resources	Process or Time	00:00:00.00				
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.00				
<b>Descriptive Statistics</b>						
	N	Mean	Std . Deviation			
1 epiderm	148	2.8784	1.31917			
2 ponds	148	3.2095	1.27377			
3 fair and lovely	148	2.7230	1.35938			
4 betasol	148	2.9392	1.30006			
5 bio-clair	148	2.7905	1.17949			
6 diprosone	148	2.7973	1.24518			
7 lemonvate	148	3.0743	1.13144			
8 movate	148	2.6959	1.11061			

9 G and D	148	2.9122	1.08752			
SkinAverage	148	2.8911	.34812			
Valid N (listwise)	148					
<b>Descriptives</b>						
<b>Notes</b>						
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Comments						
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	N of Rows in Working Data File	148				
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User defined missing values are treated as missing.				
	Cases Used	All non-missing data are used.				

Syntax		DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=Q10 Q11 Q12 Q13 Q14 Q15 Q16 Q17 Q18 Q19 Q20 Q21 Q22 Q23 Q24 Q25 Q26 Q27 Healthproblems /STATISTICS=ME AN STDDEV.					
Resources	Process or Time	00:00:00.00					
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.00					
<b>Descriptive Statistics</b>							
	N	Mean	Std . De via tio n				
10 skin rash	148	3.4122	1.1 89 12				
11 skin uneven tone	148	2.8243	1.2 38 37				
12 itchiness of the skin	148	2.8378	1.1 84 10				
13 development of freckles	148	2.7568	1.1 81 61				

14 development of ageing lines	148	2.8041	1.1 64 43			
15 thin and fregile skin	148	2.6554	1.2 27 31			
16 leathery skin feeling	148	2.7432	1.1 49 51			
17 burning sansation	148	3.4932	1.0 78 53			
18 dryness	148	3.0608	1.2 35 67			
19 strange stretch marks	148	2.7095	1.2 79 10			
20 folliculitis, inflamed hair follicles	148	2.4054	1.1 53 74			
21 raised bumps on the skin	148	2.8851	1.1 51 89			
22 fungal or bacterial skin infections	148	2.9527	1.0 77 50			
23 skin atrophy	148	2.9797	1.1 15 56			
24 dilation of superficial blood vessels	148	2.7365	1.0 96 45			
25 acne from eruptions	148	2.8041	1.2 48 99			

26 maceration of the skin	148	2.6622	1.19269			
27 kidney complications	148	2.4730	1.12755			
Healthproblems	148	2.8442	.36020			
Valid N (listwise)	148					
<b>Descriptives</b>						
<b>Notes</b>						
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	N of Rows in Working Data File	148				

Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User defined missing values are treated as missing.				
	Cases Used	All non-missing data are used.				
Syntax		DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=Q28 Q29 Q30 Q31 Q32 Consultants  /STATISTICS=MEAN STDDEV.				
Resources	Process or Time	00:00:00.02				
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.02				
<b>Descriptive Statistics</b>						
	N	Mean	Std . Deviation			
28 medical doctor	148	2.8446	1.39831			
29 parents	148	2.6824	1.14308			
30 friends	148	3.1081	1.24614			

31 peers	148	3.3041	1.1 70 26			
32 keep to yourself	148	3.2297	1.3 25 29			
Consultants	148	3.0338	.48 90 0			
Valid N (listwise)	148					
<b>Descriptives</b>						
<b>Notes</b>						
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Comments						
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	Weight	<none>				
	Split File	<none>				
	N of Rows in Working Data File	148				

Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User defined missing values are treated as missing.				
	Cases Used	All non-missing data are used.				
Syntax		DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=Q33 Q34 Q35 Q36 Q37 Q38 Q39 Q40 Q41 Q42 Q43 Benefits  /STATISTICS=MEAN STDDEV.				
Resources	Process or Time	00:00:00.02				
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.05				
<b>Descriptive Statistics</b>						
	N	Mean	Std · De via tio n			
33 it boosts my confidence about my appearance	148	3.4730	1.16319			
34 it kills my inferiority complex about my appearance	148	2.9595	1.16571			
35 I can use make-up better	148	3.1351	1.10440			
36 to look better for my age	148	3.3581	1.24546			

37 to fit into the group of peers I wish to join	148	3.1486	1.25825			
38 it gives me a better family resemblance	148	2.8446	1.21618			
39 to improve my relations with people of the opposite sex	148	3.6486	1.09957			
40 want to feel and appear younger	148	3.5541	1.12657			
41 to help solve personal problems	148	3.1419	1.16648			
42 people will not tease me and pass bad comments about my looks	148	3.2905	1.21360			
43 so I can use different hairstyles	148	3.0676	1.15271			
Benefits	148	3.2383	.41006			
Valid N (list wise)	148					

**APPENDIX E**  
**CURRICULUM VITAE**

**Objective**

A highly focused, organised, self-motivated and hardworking young woman with good inter personal skills. I am also willing to perform all assigned duties to my best ability, with the overall objective of adding value to the ministry and the nation.

**Personal details**

Name:	Abigirl Edinnah
Surname:	Dhube
Sex	Female
Date of birth	07-August-1988
Nationality	Zimbabwean
ID No	77-068387 K 83
Marital status	Married
Languages	Shona, English and Ndebele
Religion	Christian
Contact No	+263773198795 or +263716 493 584

**Educational qualifications**

- ) MSc - CLOTHING AND TEXTILES WITH SOLUSI UNIVERSITY (2017)
- ) BT (Hons) - CLOTHING FASHION DESIGN - **FIRST CLASS WITH** CHINHOYI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (2012)
- ) PGDE - ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY (2015)

**Computer skills**

- ) Microsoft Word
- ) Excel
- ) PowerPoint
- ) Outlook
- ) SPSS
- ) Mendeley
- ) One Note

**Awards**

- ) Vice chancellors award (2012)
- ) Indaba designing award (2012)
- ) The most stematised lecturer's award (2016)

**Employment Experience**

- ) Teaching at Chitimbe High School (3 years) in Murehwa
- ) Currently a lecturer at Kushinga Phikhelela Polytechnic

### **Hobbies**

- ) Going to church
- ) Exercising

### **References**

- 1. The Chairperson**  
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- 2. The Principal**  
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