

EATING DISORDER PROBLEM AMONG YOUNG ADULT

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Eating disorder has been categorized as a mental health problem and there is a rise in the number of sufferers. It is a serious health conditions that can be both physically and emotionally destructive for females and males. As a result, this situation reflects on the quality future labor force world wide. The aim of this article is to identify the perception of university student towards the factors of eating disorder problem among young adults. Therefore, the reason of this article is to identify what are the relationships between low self-esteem, media influence and peer pressure with eating disorder problem among young adult. It is also to answer the objective whether there are relationships between these three factors with eating disorder. Besides that, the scope of this article covers young adult that is refer to the degree student in four degree courses in UiTM Kedah.

Keywords: *Eating Disorder, Young Adult, Low Self-Esteem, Media Influence, Peer Pressure*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Eating disorders are serious health conditions that can be both physically and emotionally destructive for females and males. It has been characterized by a range of abnormal and harmful eating behaviors which are accompanied and motivated by unhealthy belief, perceptions and expectations about eating, weight, and body shape (Engel, Reiss & Dombeck, 2007). Basically, eating disorder is developed by a person who started out just eating smaller or larger amounts of foods but at one point they will tend to urge to eat less or more without any control. People or individual with eating disorders tend to have difficulty in accepting and feeling good about themselves. They will be more concerned about how they look in order to meet the expectations of society standard that a person is judged based on their physical appearance.

As always, physical attractiveness in females is based on pretty features, nice hips, and a well proportioned body. Meanwhile for males, they will be more concern on the chest, shoulder and arm parts. However, well proportioned body is popularly interpreted as thin. As a result, it increase pressure among person or individual that are unhappy and dissatisfied with their own body looks. Therefore, in attempting to have the desired thin body shape and looks, a person or an individual tend to involve in non healthy way of activities such as dieting or bingeing as a way to cope with the pressure.

Even though, a person might think dieting or bingeing is the best solution to be thin and to be adored by everyone but they forgot about the negative impact of eating disorder that is life threatening diseases. According to National Institute of Mental Health (2011), the consequences of eating disorder can lead to several effects such as thinning of the bones, severe constipation, low blood pressure, slow breathing, brain damage and even can lead to the multi-organ failure. With helps, the effects of an eating disorder can be treated, however if an eating disorder is left untreated for years, some of the effects are irreversible and life threatening (Eating Problem Service, n.d).

Besides that, eating disorders also usually appear during the teen years or young adulthood (National Institute of Mental Health, 2011). During young adulthood, they are more vulnerable and who feel more anxious about their body and looks. Nevertheless, this situation will contribute to the process of developing their individual image and increasing risk of developing an eating disorder. In addition, an individual or young adult also may develop eating disorder due to the low self-esteem, peer pressure and even role of media that portrayed thin idealized idol and define it as a perfect body figure.

A healthy outlook may be achieved to distinguish the fact that weight and appearance are just one aspect of a person and all individuals have strengths and their own weaknesses. Thus, the aim of this study is to investigate on the perception of the university student towards eating disorder problem among young adults.

1.2 Problem Statement

In Malaysia, almost one in ten women suffering from eating disorder problem (Kasmiah Mustaffa, 2010). She also stated that, eating disorder has been categorized as a mental health problem and in the last 30 years, there is a rise in the number of sufferers. If citizens have such problem, the country will face the difficulty of having good quality labor force as to serve and to improve the national development. Moreover, lack of quality and productive labor force may lead to less commitment of nation to carry out the responsibility to make success of transforming Malaysia into high income, developed, resilient and competitive nation.

Besides that eating disorder also can affect males and females, as well as people of any race, ethnicity or age, but most commonly the victims of eating disorder are teens and young adult female (Herbalife Malaysian Independent Distributor, 2007). This statement also being supported by Soo Kah Leng (2008), indicated there is about 18.7 percent to 25.5 percent of the female young adult in Malaysia was identified as at risk of eating disorders. When young adult especially female are at higher risk of eating disorder it will caused them to suffer with psychological problem such as depression or mood swing that will indirectly affect their daily activities routine and even studies.

Hence, there is an urgent need to examine the perception of young adult regarding the issue of eating disorder that are in a growing number nowadays. Therefore, the aim of this study is to ascertain the factors of eating disorder among young adults.

1.3 Research Question

- 1.3.1 What is the relationship between low self-esteem with eating disorder problem among young adult?
- 1.3.2 How media influence can lead to eating disorder problem among young adult?
- 1.3.3 What make peer pressure contribute to eating disorder problem among young adult?
- 1.3.4 What are the most dominant factors among low self-esteem, media influence and peer pressure that can lead to eating disorder among young adult?
- 1.3.5 How can differentiation in gender lead to eating disorder problem among young adult

1.4 Research Objective

- 1.4.1 To identify whether there is relationship between low self-esteem with eating disorder problem in young adult.
- 1.4.2 To identify the relationship between media influence with eating disorder problem among young adult.
- 1.4.3 To find out whether peer pressure have the relationship with eating disorder problem among young adult.
- 1.4.4 To identify the most dominant factors among low self-esteem, media influence and peer pressure that contribute to eating disorder problem among young adult.
- 1.4.5 To investigate which gender are most likely involve in eating disorder problem among young adult.

1.5 Scope of Study

The scopes of the study are as follows:

1.5.1 Level

This study will covers young adult that is refer to the Degree student in four degree courses in UiTM Kedah which are Bachelor in Administrative Science and Policy Studies (AM228), Bachelor in Information Management (IM224), Bachelor in Islamic Banking (BM229) and also Bachelor in Marketing (BM220).

1.5.2 Time

The collection of data starts from 13th until 19th of May 2012. The period of data collection take about one week.

1.5.3 Territory

This study only focuses on four degree student from UiTM Kedah Campus.

1.6 Significance of the Study

1.6.1 This study will provide additional research output on this issue due to the lack of research undertaken.

1.6.2 This study is aimed to help the researcher to know the perception of young adult regarding the factor that contributes to eating disorder problem.

1.7 Definition of Terms/ Concept

1.7.1 Eating disorder

Eating disorder is an illness that causes serious disturbance to your everyday diet, such as eating extremely small's amount of food or severely overeating (National Institute of Mental Health, 2011). Therefore, this concept is suitable to be used in this study because it describe on the situation of someone who are involve in eating disorder problem.

1.7.2 Young adult

Geirger and Castellino (2011) describe young adult as at between the ages of 15 and 40 years old. For that reason, this concept is fit to be used to describe the university student that is used as respondent in this study as they are in the range of young adult age.

1.7.3 Low self-esteem

Groot (2000) describes low self-esteem as those with low self-esteem may be more inclined to believe negative responses to themselves, while invalidating the positive feedback. Meanwhile, Steinhausen (1993) stated that a profile of self concept component that are characteristic of low self-esteem are insecurity, negative mood and depression, poor body image, feelings of inadequacy, social and personal withdrawal, poor adaptation skills and unrealistically high aspiration. Therefore, the concept of low self-esteem that is used by Groot (2000) and Steinhausen (2993) are suitable to describe the concept of low self-esteem that can contribute to eating disorder problem.

1.7.4 Media influence

Strahan, Spencer and Zanna (2007) indicated that media has create a cultural standard for thinness and beauty which is leads to dissatisfaction of their body and involve in the eating disorders. Similar to Cohen (2006), an exposure to certain stimuli through the media can lead to body dissatisfaction, disordered eating and thin-idealization in certain individuals. In addition, according to National Eating Disorder Association (2005) media images help to create cultural definitions of beauty and attractiveness which often acknowledge as being among the factors contributing to the rise of eating disorder. Therefore, the concept used by Strahan et al (2007), Cohen (2006) and National Eating Disorder Association (2205) are suitable to be used in explaining the relationship between the media influence with eating disorder problem.

1.7.5 Peer pressure

Peer pressure occurs when the individual experiences implicit or explicit persuasion, sometimes amounting to coercion, to adopt a similar values, beliefs, and goals or even to participate in the same activities as those in the peer group (Bourne, 2001). Therefore this definition is suitable to be used as it does reflect the influence of peer pressure that leads to eating disorder problems.

1.8 Conclusion

People that are involved in eating disorder usually experience an extreme disturbance in their eating behavior. It is also characterize by overwhelming drive to be thin, fear of gaining weight and even losing control over eating. Moreover, it is also often develop during young adulthood. Therefore, it is important for person who involve in eating disorder to seek advice and treatment as early as possible because it can have serious physical and psychological consequences.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss on the literature review for this research regarding the evidence from other research that discuss about the factors that is responsible in the development of the eating disorder problem among young adult. This discussion will emphasizing on three factors that lead to eating disorder namely, low self-esteem, media influence and peer pressure.

2.1.2 Background of UiTM

The purpose of this study is to investigate on the perception of University student (young adult) regarding the issues of eating disorder problem. UiTM Kedah is set up with the prime objective of providing greater opportunities for tertiary education for the Bumiputeras in the Northern region, mainly in Kedah, Pulau Pinang, Perlis, and Northern Perak. Its existence also aims to help the Bumiputeras to boost their education and economy. UiTM Kedah is located in the Bujang Valley, about 14 kilometers from the heart of Sungai Petani town and the campus was built on a 350-acre land plus, also has the capacity of 7000 students (Universiti Teknologi Mara Kedah, 2012).

Besides that, Kedah has been entrusted to disseminate quality education to the community. It also function as the catalyst to the development of the rural community

through a wide range of its community service program carried out consistently to share and extend professional and industrial knowledge and skills with the local communities.

2.2 Overview on the Eating Disorder among Young Adult

All people mostly young adult are concerned about how they look. They always want to be attractive and have an ideal body looks, but meeting society standards for a desired body looks is not that easy especially for girls. As always, society standard will look at physical attractiveness instead of inner beauty or good heart. Besides that, today culture that describing the well-proportioned body is popularly interpreted as thin. As a result, many young adult are not pleased with their looks and increase pressure among them to have a perfect body look that will directly or indirectly contribute to the eating disorder problem.

According to British Journal of Nursing (2010) eating disorder is defined as multifactor and it is suggested that a combination of risk factors in addition to body dissatisfaction and dieting is responsible for female's young adult being particularly vulnerable to developed eating disorder problem. Besides, eating disorders are complex illnesses that impact on both the physical and socio-emotional health of young people, and contribute to significant morbidity (Michele Yeo & Hughes, 2011). Other than that, Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (2007), defined eating disorder as a psychological condition characterized by a persistent, severe disturbance in a person's eating attitudes and behavior.

Eating disorder problem comes in four types which are Anorexia, Bulimia, Binge Eating and Compulsive Overeating. This is supported by Peebles (2003) where there are four types of eating disorder which are Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa, Binge Eating disorder, and Compulsive Overeating. However, according to Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (2007), there are two main types of eating disorder which are Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa after being diagnosed by following the guidelines of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-MD) or International Classification of Diseases (ICD). According to these guidelines, Anorexia Nervosa have the features such as a body weight at least 15 percent below that considered normal for a person's age and height, and refusal to maintain weight at a normal level, an intense fear of gaining weight or becoming fat, and a distorted perception of one's body weight and shape.

Besides, there are also lay down of the usual features of Bulimia Nervosa which are recurrent episodes of binge eating, in which the person eats an unusually large amount of food, whilst experiencing a sense of lack of control over eating, and recurrent inappropriate compensatory behavior, such as self-induced vomiting, misuse of medication, fasting or excessive exercise. This is also being supported by National Institute of Mental Health (2007) which stated that there are two main types of eating disorders by their experience of diagnosed the person who having eating disorder problem as well as the survey that they held toward that individual.

In between male and female young adult, the gender that is highly involving or engaging themselves in the eating disorder problem is female young adult. According to Jennifer,

Derenne, Eugene, and Beresin (2006), the rate of some eating disorders in women such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa rising, and increasing numbers of men are seeking treatment as well. Patients are being referred at progressively younger ages. In a survey made by Nuemark Sztainer, Eisenberg, Fulkerson, Story, and Larson (2008), found that the prevalence of extreme weight control behaviors such as self-induced vomiting and use laxatives, diet pills, or diuretics, increased from 14.5 percent to 23.9 percent among female participants during a five year period as they progressed from middle to late adolescence and becoming serious at the early adult. This shows that, the female especially the young adult represent the larger number of eating disorder problem.

Similarly, Woodside, Garfinkel, Lin, Goering, Kaplan, Goldbloom, and Kennedy (2006), in their research found that the rate for full syndrome eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa in men was 0.3 percent compared with 2.1 percent for women. The subject of this study was drawn from a community epidemiologic survey where the researchers were conducted the face to face interview by trained interviewers for 1 to 2 hours. This shows that women have the higher involvement towards eating disorder compared to men.

Meanwhile, according Hoek and Van Hoeken (2003) when reviewed the literature on incidence and prevalence of eating disorders and concluded that the average prevalence of anorexia nervosa in young females was 0.3 percent, while for bulimia nervosa was one percent and one percent for binge eating disorder. Besides, they went on to conclude that the incidence rate of anorexia nervosa, particularly in young females aged 15-24 years definitely increased over the past few years until now. This shows that,

those female young adult are basically more vulnerable to involve in the eating disorder problem.

In addition, this must be due to the female young adult that are very concern about the appearance overview and making it one of the pressure for them to become thin and to have the ideal body look as what had been portrayed by the media compared to men. Female young adult also are more influenced by the media compared to men. This is because, in magazines articles, television shows, and advertisements had created a social context that may contribute to the body dissatisfaction and disorder eating in girls and women. Despite the increased media coverage, medical attention and public recognition, the cluster of factors contributing to the development and maintenance of eating disorders remains inadequately specified.

Nevertheless, developmental of psychological, socio cultural and behavioral factors also contribute to the complex development and persistence of anorexia and bulimia nervosa (Rosen & Neumark-Stztainer, 1998). Besides that, the researchers also stated that the socio cultural etiological model acknowledged that the societal factors usually send powerful messages to girls and female's young adult that certain physical attributes such as being fat are unacceptable in today's society. In this case, it will affect the young adult's psychological development when they tend to believe and influence by society.

Apart from that, through the cross-sectional study conduct by Khor, Zalilah, Phan, Ang, Maznah, and Norimah (2009), stated that young adult more involved with eating

disorder problem because the phenomena of concern about their body image had started from adolescent and becoming worst at the young adult age it is because during adolescent they have capability to evaluate one's body and make comparisons with the ideal look. As adolescents experience significant physical changes in their bodies during puberty, they become increasingly concerned with their body shape and parts. Plus, when they reached at the age of young adult, they frequently expose to media and been influence by the media. Thus, the problem of eating disorders will become worst.

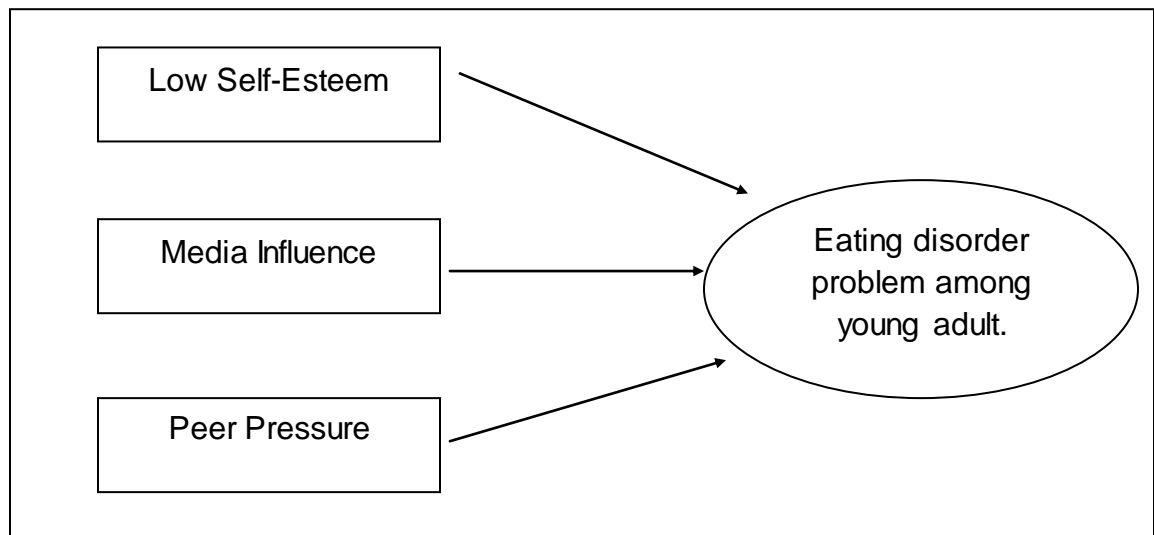
An individuals or the young adult might have the sign or the symptom of eating disorder problem when they are having a dramatic loss in the weight. Some may have the refuses in eating certain types of foods such as carbohydrates or even caloric foods. They might as well keep complaining about their body weight or keep commented of feelings 'fats' or overweight despites of the weight loss. These kinds of people who are might having a sign of eating disorder problem usually engages in the sporadic fasting or repetitive dieting and deny the feelings of hungry (Neda Toolkits For Parents, 1997). Eating disorders can be serious and they have an impact on both physical and mental health. If it is left untreated they can be fatal.

Other than that, people develop eating disorders as a way of dealing with the conflicts, pressures and stresses of life. Research done by Turney (2007), stated that the eating disorder involve a complex web of factors, with heredity and emotional conflict playing important roles in both anorexia and bulimia. Furthermore, research made by Turney (2007) also has focused on brain chemistry and the role of neurotransmitters in the regulation of both appetite and self-image. Besides, pervasive cultural influences can

be so strong, especially in the media, and its narrow-profile definition of beauty. For any reasons, people with eating disorders often feel powerless. They tend to be over achievers who deal with life's uncertainties and difficulties by focusing on one thing that they think they can control which is their weight. This statement also being supported by The RenFrew Centre Foundation (n.d) that eating disorder may be used as a way to express control when the rest of life seems chaotic.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.3: Conceptual framework for Eating Disorders Problem among Young Adult



2.4 Factor That Contribute to Eating disorder

Eating disorder can be caused by many reasons. Ata, Ludden, and Lally (2007) identify that eating disorder may be caused by the low self-esteem, peer pressure, and media influence. Thus, this section will discuss on the relationship between the factors that causing eating disorders, namely low self-esteem, peer pressure, and media influence.

2.4.1 Low Self-Esteem

Self-esteem has recently been defined by Silverstone (1992) as "the sense of contentment and self-acceptance that stems from a person's appraisal of their own worth, significance, attractiveness, competence and ability to satisfy their aspirations"

Self-esteem is the degree to which a person values and respects themselves, and is proud of their accomplishments. Self-esteem begins to develop in childhood, but it solidifies and gains momentum during the chaotic and trying years of adolescence. Many recent studies have provided evidence that disruptions in the formation and stability of one's self-esteem can lead to various psychological problems, such as eating disorders. According to Polivy and Herman (2002) self-esteem reflects how others reacts to the individuals thus perceived rejection that may cause lower self-esteem and maladaptive behaviors including eating disorders. Besides that, Groot (1992) describe that those with low

self-esteem may be more inclined to believed negative responses to themselves, while invalidating positive feedback.

Striving for an unattainable ideal of thinness may compound someone's feelings of inadequacy. In addition, Groot (1992) stated that if a pattern of avoidance of other goals develops, then areas in which self-esteem might grow are extinguished. Besides, female young adult with eating disorders may avoid dating, friendships, school activities or developing personal interests. It is because receiving approval from others is important to maintain and enhance self-esteem throughout life. Yet based on early life experiences and their social roles, female often seek approval more than male. Young adult with eating disorders may have so much difficulty accepting themselves when approval from other becomes extremely important

Low self-esteem is one of the risk factors most frequently reported to be associated with an increased of developing eating disorders. Self-esteem is so intrinsically linked to belief about one's body that physical appearance has consistently been found to be the number one predictor of self-esteem at many ages (Harter, 1999). The female especially young adult will have higher self-esteem when they have ideal body look. Several epidemiological studies have shown associations between low self-esteem and eating disorder (Cervera, Lahortiga, Angle, Gonzalez, Gual, Estevez & Alonso, 2002). In these studies identified that about 119 incidents among the university student of Navarre in Spain significantly with lower self-esteem was found among those girls who

subsequently developed an eating disorder and was being sent to psychiatric. Moreover, Cervera et al (2002) also stated that, by responses to questionnaires also it still turns out to display the same result in which the student developed eating disorder problem due to lower self-esteem and need to seek for psychiatric advice.

Poor body image, on the other hand, is associated with feelings of depression, lower self-esteem, negative affect and, ultimately, eating disorders (McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2003). In this research through the Contour Drawing Rating Scale (CDRS), it revealed that female young adult and those with low self-esteem were more likely to report a greater difference between their ideal and actual body figures, where they indicating that their actual body or body figure was larger than their ideal body or figure. This shows that, they always feel dissatisfied with their body image or figure and feel that they need to lose more weight which will leads them to eating disorder problem. With the use of various questionnaires and inventories, researchers such as Schupak-Neuberg, Rosen and Button (1993), have found that low self-esteem occurs very commonly in patients with eating disorders. It is because low self-esteem makes individuals at risk to develop psychiatric conditions. These psychiatric conditions include depressive disorders, substance use disorders and also eating disorders.

In some cases, evidence for this relationship is so strong that it is even thought by some researchers that chronic low self-esteem is a necessary prerequisite for disordered eating (Silverstone 1992). As stated by Steinhausen (1993) a profile of self-concept components that are characteristic of low self-esteem are insecurity, negative mood and depression, poor body image, feelings of inadequacy, social and personal withdrawal, poor adaptation skills, and unrealistically high aspirations. It is because of the formation of a concrete sense of self is one of the milestones of adolescence which will continue on how they will bring themselves in the future among society. However, the teenagers and young adult's life are full of changes that can have a harmful effect on female's sense of identity and therefore their self-esteem. As a result, without a positive and strong sense of identity, many young adults suffer from low self-esteem

In addition, the process of identity formation is typically harder for females than for males, since females faced greater identity instability, higher self-consciousness, greater concerns about popularity, and lower self-esteem (Fairburn, 1993). Moreover, studies reported by Fairburn (1993), indicate that when female young adult are insecure, they become more self-conscious. Self-consciousness leads to increased self-criticism and leaving the adolescent extremely vulnerable to disordered eating. Rosen (1993) found that this phenomenon is due to a desire to decrease self-consciousness by improving the physical appearance, especially through dieting. Therefore, without a strong sense of identity and low self-esteem, female young adult begin to feel poorly about

themselves, and the manifestation of this self-consciousness is often a measure such as dieting and unrealistic expectations for their physical appearance.

2.4.2 Media Influence

Female young adult in particular seek out magazines, internalize the messages presented, and use the media as a source of information about how to improve their physical appearance (Littleton & Ollendick, 2003). In early adulthood, female who look to magazines and advertising as important modes of defining and attaining the ideal body are more likely to experience body dissatisfaction due to the obvious discrepancy between their actual body size and the ideal portrayed in the media (Levine & Smolak, 2002).

According to a survey of female young adult, found that 69 percent reported that images of females displayed in magazines influence their perceptions of the ideal body figure, and 47 percent reported that the images evoked in them a desire to diet and lose weight (Ata, Ludden, & Lally, 2007). In addition, simply watching television has been associated with an increased desire among female young adult to have a thin body when they mature, and also with increased disordered eating over time.

This is also supported by Berberick (2010) through her cognitive theory which indicates that, the representation of women in the media has always been exploitative. It has been, throughout the years, reduced women to being nothing

more than objects to be won, prizes to be shown off, and playthings to be abused. It has also created a definition of beauty that women tend to compare themselves with media image. As well as men compare the women in their lives to what they see on television screens, in magazines, and on billboards. Berberick (2010) also stated that both self and society has suffered because of the objectification, sexism, exploitation and assessment due to the image portrayed by the media had become one of the frames of references made by them. Beside, the survey also shown that because of the harmful ideal put forward by the western media and accepted in large by American society there are drastic increase and overwhelming occurrence of eating disorders especially young adult.

Furthermore, a study aimed to examine and provide evidence for the immediate impact of media portrayals of slender found that the body satisfaction scores lower following exposure to slender media images; compared to larger media images and that disordered eating symptomatology more prominent following exposure to slender media images. In order to achieve this, first year students were recruited by offering Experiment Participation Requirement (EPR) points. These points need to be accumulated by students in order to gain their degrees and therefore the students recruited by this methods were unlikely to know the objectives of the study before hand since in first place they are just starting their degree and they enrolled mainly because they needed the EPR points.

In addition, students were randomly assigned to the first condition of the experiment and all of them completed both phases. The measuring instruments were previously validated, and as it was a laboratory based study the experimenter ensured that the subjects were exposed to exactly the same experimental situations. This study shows that the female degree students which is young adult more likely influenced by media exposure that leads to the eating disorders problem.

A naturalistic experiment conducted among Fijian female young adult provides strong evidence that the media has a significant role in the development of body dissatisfaction and eating disorder symptomatology (Becker, Burwell, Herzog, Hamburg, & Gilman, 2002). Before there are western mass media influence in Fiji, there is a lower percentages of people engaging with eating disorder which about 2 percent of the population of young adult. However, the eating attitudes and behaviors of Fijian female young adult were measured prior to the introduction of regional television and following prolonged exposure. The results indicate that following the television exposure, the young adults exhibited a significant increase in disordered eating attitudes and behaviors.

Other than that, the meta-analytic review by Groesz, Levine, and Murnen (2002), indicated that females who have already internalized the thin beauty ideal and who already have high levels of body dissatisfaction are most vulnerable and having higher probability to involve in eating disorder problem. While, a meta-analytic review by Stice (2002) further indicated that young adult girls with initial

deficits in social support and elevations in perceived pressure to be thin are also more vulnerable to the effects of the media messages. This may be due to the message conveyed by the media such as fashion magazine, that perceived ideal body image of the model that pressure them to have a desire body look. It is also supported through surveys made by Levine and Smolak (1996), in which they propose that 83 percent of adolescent girls read fashion magazines for an average of 4.3 hours per week. It appears that beauty and fashion magazines significantly impact the process of identity development in female young adult, especially with regards to gender-role learning, identity formation, and the development of values and beliefs which directly will pressure them to be thin which they believe is the ideal body image.

2.4.3 Peer Pressure

Peer pressure also can caused or influenced the young adult to involve in eating disorder. This is because when there is teasing made from the peer and family it increases pressure of young adult to change their body image (Dunkley, Wertheim, & Paxton, 2001). There are three variables were used to examine peer influences which include perceived peer desire for thinness, peer discussions, and imitation, and also perceived peer desire for thinness (Dohnt & Tiggemann, 2006).

Female young adult's perception of their peers' desire for thinness was measured using the Female Figure Rating Scale (Tiggemann & Wilson-Barrett,

1998). They were asked to identify the figure they thought their best friend looked like and the figure they thought their best friend would like to have. These questions were repeated for “other girls” in the class. Discrepancies were then calculated and averaged to produce an overall measure of perceived peer desire for thinness. From this study, the researchers found that there is about 58.8 percent of the respondents have a perception that their peer having desired to be thin as themselves (Dohnt & Tiggemann, 2006). Girls who perceived that their peers desired a thinner ideal body were also more likely to desire a thinner ideal body themselves. Thus, they will involve in eating disorder problem in order for them to lose weight.

Next is about peer discussion. In this study, appearance related discussions between friends were also assessed using a pictorial format. The girls were shown a picture of a group of girls and informed, “These girls talk about lots of different things together”. Then they were asked, “Do you and your friends ever talk about the way pop star look; the way other girls in your class look, and about clothes?” Responses were scored as no, sometimes, or a lot. Thus, the result of this section was about 16 students which represented more than half of the female young adult in the class shows that the peer discussions influence more in eating disorder problem among them (Dohnt & Tiggemann, 2006).

Other than that, appearance-related teasing and criticism by friends increase young adults’ feelings of body dissatisfaction by reinforcing the societal value of appearance and emphasizing desirable physical attributes (Ata, Ludden

& Lally, 2006). Hence, teasing and criticism that is made by friends will directly reduce the level of confidence and increase dissatisfaction of young adult that which can lead to the problem of eating disorder among them. Meanwhile, according to Lieberman, Gauvin, Bukowski, and White (2001) suggest that, it is not teasing that influences body image. However, it is the frequency and emotional impact of the teasing that pressure them to be thin and related to young adults' feeling about their body. Teasing about their weight, body shape, and appearance tend to exhibit poorer body image and more likely to diet. In addition, in a retrospective study of college women, approximately three-quarters of the women reported they were teased repeatedly and criticized about their appearance during young adult and they found this teasing upsetting and many thought that it had a negative impact on their body image development (Rieves and Cash, 1996).

However, other researchers found that the pressure from friends to be conformed to the stereotypical ideal look can also direct or indirect factors that leads to the eating disorders problem among young adult (Stice, Maxfield, & Wells, 2003). The results from the study made by Stice et al (2003) suggest that pressure exerting messages about the importance of being thin may have more adverse effects on young adult body satisfaction than weight-related teasing. Besides, the effects of pressures to be thin from parents and peers on eating behaviors are important even after accounting for young adult self-esteem (Stice, Presnell, & Spangler, 2002).

Pressures from peers to be thin or muscular are particularly powerful during young adult as females and males are likely to talk to their friends about dieting or muscle-building (Jones & Crawford, 2006). Not surprisingly, young adult who make social comparisons and whose relationships and conversations tend to be based on dieting and appearance are more likely to exhibit body dissatisfaction and in the serious cases will leads them to involve in eating disorder. (Carlson Jones, 2004). Research suggests that perceived pressure from peers to be thin is more associated with increases in young adults' body dissatisfaction over time than pressures to be thin from family or the media (Presnell, Bearman, & Stice, 2004).

2.5 Hypothesis

Based on the discussion above, the research hypothesis are as below:

Ho1 There is a relationship between low self-esteem and eating disorder problem among young adult.

Ho2 There is a relationship between media influence and eating disorder problem among young adult.

Ho3 There is a relationship between peer pressure and eating disorder problem among young adult.

2.6 Conclusion

There are many factors that contribute to eating disorder problem among young adult such as low self-esteem, media influence and also peer pressure. Low self-esteem is the psychological factor that leads to the eating disorder. Self-esteem is about how they feel about themselves. If this process goes wrong the teen and young adult is likely to have negative feelings about themselves, leading to a low sense of self-esteem. One of the reason that make them to have low sense of self-esteem is when they feels dissatisfied with their body which will leads to make them engage with eating disorder problem. Other than that, exposure to media will also influence the young adult to involve in eating disorder problem. The exposure to the media, especially magazines and television are related to internalization of the thin ideal, appearance comparison, weight dissatisfaction, and drive for thinness which will lead to the eating disorder problem among adolescent girls.

Lastly, the young adult will likely engaging with eating disorder problem is because the pressure from their peers or friends. The idealized perception of slim body proportions can be reinforced by peers who praise the slim body and the self-control as well as discipline to achieve it. Besides, pressure from friends can also provide encouragement for dieting and soon will get them involve in the serious eating disorder problem. Therefore, it might be other ways to reduce the effect that can influence the young adult and make they think rationally what to believe and what is not.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Method

In this study, it is explaining about the methodology that is used by the researcher in order to conduct their research is vital. Basically, this chapter contains explanation on the research design, unit of analysis, sample size, sampling technique, measurement or instrumentation that is used and also data analysis that are related to the research conduct. This chapter is important in order to gather all the necessary data for the analysis to answer the research objectives.

3.2 Research Design

For the purpose of this study, the researchers choose cross-sectional study that was collected from four degree student in UiTM Kedah. Cross-sectional study has been choosing because the data are gathered just once which is within one week in order for the respondent to answer the research questions. This research demands for information regarding the perception of young adult in university about the factors that can contribute to eating disorder problem.

3.3 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis that was chosen is individuals; consist of young adult in four degree student of UiTM Kedah.

3.4 Sample Size

The sample size will present the actual numbers of sample that was choosing to represent the population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009). Therefore, the sample size for this study will be 231 students among four degree courses in UiTM Kedah from part 1 until part 6 for each courses. Thus, there will be an average of 20 percent of the respondent from each part in the four degree courses.

3.5 Sampling Technique

In sampling technique, four degree course in UiTM Kedah will be selected for close analysis of perception towards the factors that can contribute to eating disorder problem among young adult. The researcher chooses stratified random sampling in this study. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2009), in stratified random sampling the population is first divided into meaningful segments. Thereafter subjects are drawn in proportion to their original numbers in the population. In order to use stratified random sampling in this study, the researcher choose four among nine degree course. It is because these four degree course represent the most high number of the students compared to the other five degree course that are not been selected. Then, in order for the respondents to have equal chances to be selected, the researchers chose 20 percent from each part of four degree course. Therefore, there are 83 respondents from AM228, 48 respondents from

IM224, 74 respondents from BM229, and 26 respondents from BM220 that have been chosen.

3.6 Data Collection

Data collection that the researchers use for this research is primary data. Primary data refer to information obtained first-hand by the researcher on the variables of interest for the specific purpose of the study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009). In this research, the researchers used questionnaire to collect data from the respondent. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2009), questionnaire is a pre-formulated written set of question to which respondent record their answer. The reason of choosing questionnaire in this research it is because questionnaire can involve many respondents in a limited time and also convenient than other method.

The researchers use the personally administered questionnaires and distribute the questionnaire to all 200 respondents who are among four degree students that was selected in UiTM Kedah.

3.6.1 Measurement / Instrumentation

The questionnaire was consisted of five sections. Section A explains about demographic questions in which it concern about the background of the respondents. Such as age, gender, degree courses, marital status, types of allowance received. In order to measure this section, therefore, the researcher use nominal scale for the measurement.

This is because nominal scale allows the researcher to assign subject to certain categories or group (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009).

Besides, in order to know the general knowledge of the respondent about the eating disorder, the researchers come out with Section B questions. The questions that been asked to know whether the respondent understand about what eating disorder problem is “I am aware that eating disorder is the problem that will affect the individual behavior on eating”.

In addition, Section C is explaining about the perception of the respondents towards perception of low self-esteem that contribute to the eating disorder problem. In order to know whether there is the relationship between the low self-esteem with the eating disorder, the researcher asked the question such as “I discover that people with low self-esteem tend to involve in eating disorder problem”.

Next, the researcher asked about the perception of the media influence towards the eating disorder problem in Section D. The example of the questions that have been asked is “I believe that media always become frame of references for an ideal body look”.

Lastly, Section E is explaining about the perception of the respondent on peer pressure that contributes to eating disorder problem. In order to know the perception of the respondent on peer pressure, the researcher asked question such as “I find that teasing and criticism make by friends the feeling of body dissatisfaction”. Therefore, in order to measure Section B, Section C, Section D, and Section E, the researchers use the interval scale for the measurement. Interval scale allows the researchers to perform certain

arithmetical operations on the data collected from the respondents (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009). For this research, the researcher used Likert Scale in order to measure the element in variable. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2009), likert scale will examine how strongly respondent agree or disagree with a statement. Therefore, in this research the researchers use 5 point scale with the following anchors:

Figure 3.6.1: shows the 5 point of scale that is used by the researcher.

Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neither Disagree 3	Agree Nor 4	Strongly Agree 5
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3.7 Data Analysis

The data for this research will be analyzed by using statistical software tool which is Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 18.0. The researchers chose to do use SPSS because it is the most appropriate software to analyze the data collection of quantitative research.

3.7.1 Reliability

In order to test for reliability of the data, Cronbach's Alpha is used. Cronbach's Alpha is a reliability coefficient that indicates how well the items in the set are positively correlated to one another (Sekaran & Bougie 2009). Cronbach's Alpha also is computed in terms of the average intercorrelations

among the items measuring the concept. The closer the Cronbach's Alpha is to 1, the higher the consistency reliability. Thus, Cronbach's Alpha is used in order to test the reliability of the question in the set to be positively correlated to one another.

3.7.2 Descriptive Statistic

Descriptive statistic is used to describe the data that had been collected. Commonly, the descriptive statistic such as maximum, minimum, means, standard deviations and variance were obtained from the items (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009). Therefore, the researchers used the descriptive statistic in order to discuss about the demographics of the respondent which consist of age, gender, marital status and types of allowance received.

3.7.3 Relationship between Variables

In order to test for the relationship between the variables, Pearson Correlation Matrix is used. In the Pearson Correlation Matrix, it will indicate the direction, strength, and significance of the bivariate relationships among all the variables that were measured at an interval level or ratio level (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009). Besides that, the correlation is derived by assessing the variations in one variable as another variable also varies. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2009), a significance of $p=0.05$ is the generally accepted conventional level in social science research. This indicates that, 95 times out of 100, it can be sure that there

is a true or significance correlation between two variables, and there are only 5 percent of chances that the relationship does not truly exist. Therefore, in this research the Pearson correlation matrix is used to measure the relationship between the variables that using the interval measurement.

3.7.4 One-Way ANOVA

In order to test the last research objective about which gender between male and female is more influential to get involve in eating disorder problem; a one-way analysis of variance or one-way ANOVA has been used. One-way ANOVA is useful to determine whether there are any significant differences between the means of two or more independent group or variables. (One-way ANOVA using SPSS, 2012). According to Archambault (2000), the significant value is less than 0.05 and it shows that there is a significant difference between the two groups of variables. If the test shows significant value is more than 0.05, this means that there is less significant differences between the variables. Thus, this one-way ANOVA has been used to test the differences between gender involvements in eating disorder.

3.8 Conclusion

Basically, this chapter is discuss about the research design, unit of analysis, sample size, sampling technique, measurement/instrumentation, data collection and data analysis that is used by the researchers in this study. All of these are the methodologies that are used by the researcher in order to find the information regarding the perception of the university student on factors that can contribute to the eating disorder problem.

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