**APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL REVIEW FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS**

*NOTE: THIS DOCUMENT IS AN ORIGINAL APPLICATION (WITH IDENTIFYING DETAILS OMITTED). ITS CONTENT HAS NOT BEEN AMENDED AND SO IT SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR GUIDANCE ON ITS SUBJECT MATTER OR AS A TEMPLATE FOR APPLICATIONS OR RESEARCH MATERIALS.*

**Project title:**

|  |
| --- |
| Motivations for and experiences of skin lightening among young men and women in emerging adulthood. |

**Provide a brief project description**

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| --- |
| The aim of this investigation is to explore the motivations and experiences for skin lightening in young men and women in emerging adulthood. For this study, 8-10 university students from [a specified university] will be needed (5 males and 5 females) and a semi-structured interview will take place at [that university]. Participants will be recruited via [a named student research credit system] or by word of mouth. Participants will be asked approximately 30 questions regarding their own experiences about skin lightening or their beliefs concerning the experiences of friends and family members who have lightened their skin (see Appendix D). The interviews will last approximately 60 minutes and the interviews will be recorded and transcribed in order for a thematic analysis to be conducted. For the analysis of the transcription, names of the participants will be removed to ensure anonymity and they will be asked to sign a consent form (Appendix B) and be given a debriefing form (Appendix E).  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Estimate duration of the project (months)** | 6 months  |

**Briefly describe the procedures to be used which involve human participants**

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| --- |
| There will be 8-10 semi-structured interviews conducted, comprising approximately 30 interview questions (see Appendix D). The interviews will last for 60 minutes. Participants will be asked questions regarding their own experiences of skin lightening and/or people that they know and their experiences of skin lightening. Also, a demographic form will be given to the participants to gather information on gender, age, and ethnicity (see Appendix C).  |

**Summarize the data sources to be used in the project**

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| --- |
| See above. For this study, digital hand-held recorders will be used to record the semi-structured interviews. These audio recordings will be downloaded onto a password protected computer and then transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis.  |

**Storage, access and disposal of data**

*Describe what research data will be stored, where, for what period of time, the measures that will be put in place to ensure security of the data, who will have access to the data, and the method and timing of disposal of the data.*

|  |
| --- |
| The data will firstly be recorded using hand-held digital recorders. These audio files will be downloaded onto a password-protected computer and the file on the digital recorder will be deleted. During the transcription, participants’ names will be changed, and a pseudonym will be given to each participant. In addition, any other names and any other identifying information that is included in the interviews will be removed or altered so that it should not be possible to identify the participants in the final report. Once the interviews have been conducted, they will be stored on password protected computers for a year and will be deleted by [specified date]. Transcripts will be kept for up to 10 years for research, publication or future teaching purposes.  |

**Risk Assessment Questionnaire: Does the proposed research involve any of the following?**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | YES | NO |
| 0. | The use of human biological material? |  | X |
| 1. | Children or young people under 18 years of age? |  | X |
| 1.a | If YES, have you complied with the requirements of the DBS? |  | X |
| 2. | People with an intellectual or mental impairment, temporary or permanent? |  | X |
| 3. | People highly dependent on medical care, e.g., emergency care, intensive care, neonatal intensive care, terminally ill, or unconscious?  |  | X |
| 4. | Prisoners, illegal immigrants or financially destitute? |  | X |
| 5. | Women who are known to be pregnant? |  | X |
| 6. | Will people from a specific ethnic, cultural or indigenous group be targeted in the proposed research, or is there potential that they may be targeted? |  | X |
| 7. | Assisted reproductive technology? |  | X |
| 8. | Human genetic research? |  | X |
| 9. | Epidemiology research? |  | X |
| 10. | Stem cell research? |  | X |
| 11. | Use of environmentally toxic chemicals? |  | X |
| 12. | Use of ionizing radiation? |  | X |
| 13. | Ingestion of potentially harmful or harmful dose of foods, fluids or drugs? |  | X |
| 14. | Contravention of social/cultural boundaries? |  | X |
| 15. | Involves use of data without prior consent? |  | X |
| 16. | Involves bodily contact? |  | X |
| 17. | Compromising professional boundaries between participants and researchers? |  | X |
| 18. | Deception of participants, concealment or covert observation? |  | X |
| 19. | Will this research significantly affect the health\* outcomes or health services of subjects or communities?  |  | X |
| 20. | Is there a significant risk of enduring physical and/or psychological harm/distress to participants? |  | X |
| 21. | Does your research raise any issues of personal safety for you or other researchers involved? (especially if taking place outside working hours or off KU premises) |  | X |
| 22. | Will the research be conducted without written informed consent being obtained from the participants except where tacit consent is given by completing a questionnaire? |  | X |
| 23. | Will financial/in kind payments (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants? (Indicate in the proposal how much and on what basis) |  | X |
| 24. | Is there a potential danger to participants in case of accidental unauthorized access to data? |  | X |

[**Note** \*health is defined as not just the physical well-being of the individual but also the social, emotional and cultural well-being of the whole community].

**RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

*Provide a description of the proposed research plan and procedures, using the following headings. Show clearly that the research protocol gives adequate consideration to participants’ welfare, rights, beliefs, perceptions and customs and that cultural heritage – both individual and collective – will be respected in the course of your research.*

**Research plan and protocols**

*What is the rationale for the research?*

Skin lightening (also known as skin bleaching or skin whitening) refers to the use of chemicals or other methods to alter one’s natural skin colour and it is increasingly popular in different cultures. Research has shown that it is prevalent among many diverse countries such as, Jamaica, Tanzania and Bangkok and is practised for a number of different reasons. In Jamaica, Charles and McLean (2017) found a positive relationship between skin lightening and a dissatisfaction in the way people view their body, whereas Cuny and Opaswongkarn (2017) found that people in Bangkok lighten their skin for better quality of life.

In addition to these motivations, skin lightening has been theoretically linked to the theory of self-objectification. This theory suggests that girls and women typically use an ‘observer’s’ perspective as the primary view of their physical self (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Self-objectification has been associated with an increase of depression (Jones & Griffiths, 2015) and particularly links to individuals’ views and motivations to lighten their skin. Lewis et al. (2011) found that some women’s motivations for lightening their skin focused on wanting to satisfy their husbands, whereas those without partners were found to lighten their skin due to the importance of finding a mate. This shows that people lighten their skin to conform to the views and standards in a cultural context.

The studies above have shown that skin lightening is prevalent across different cultures and ages but Kamagaju et al. (2015) found that in Kigali, Rwanda, it is practised primarily among 25–34 year olds. In this study, this age group comprised of people who were financially able to afford these products but this did not mean that younger individuals did not participate in the harmful process. In addition, a further study showed a high prevalence of skin lightening product use in undergraduate female students (Ahmed & Hamid, 2016), while another study also showed that the most represented age group to lighten their skin were aged between 21 and 25 years (Koutou et al., 2017).

In addition, studies have shown that skin lightening is also practised in the United Kingdom. A survey investigating skin lightening in the UK found that 27 out of 97 respondents lightened their skin, three of them being men (Sidhu et al., 2011). This can link to further investigations made about the perception of physical appearance ideals. Bakhshi and Baker (2011) investigated British Indian men and women’s perceptions of Indian physical appearance ideals and found that their participants believed those with fair skin have a better chance of finding a suitable partner for marriage.

Skin lightening is used in different countries, including the UK. However, there is hardly any literature investigating the motivations and experiences of skin lightening among men. As well as this, there is very little qualitative research which investigates the experiences and motivations for young people in the UK to lighten their skin. Therefore this present qualitative study aims to explore the experiences and motivations of young men and women in the UK, who are in the life-stage of emerging adulthood, to lighten their skin.

*What is the research design/method?*

A qualitative approach will be used. Data will be generated through individual, semi-structured interviews. This subject is particularly suitable for qualitative enquiry because there is no published qualitative data on skin lightening in the UK to date, and very little is known about people’s beliefs and motivations concerning lightening the skin. The interviews will be transcribed and then analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

*Where will the project be conducted?*

The project will be conducted in a bookable space in [specified university] or a suitable public space which is conducive to a private interview, where the interviewee can feel relaxed and comfortable to discuss their views on skin lightening.

*What is the participant group(s) and why has it been selected?*

The participant age group will be between 18 and 25 years old. The prevalence of skin lightening use has been shown to highest among 21–25 year olds, but those as young as 16 have been shown to participate in the practice. Studies have also shown that university students commonly participate in the practice. The motivations and experiences also differ between different age groups (Lewis et al., 2011). This present study will be investigating the experiences and motivations of young men and women in emerging adulthood to lighten their skin, since these young adults are likely to be particularly interested in the appearance of their skin and may well have personal experience or indirect experience of skin lightening products through observing friends, peers or siblings.

*How many participants will be recruited and what is the rationale for that number?*

8–10 participants (ideally 5 women and 5 men) will be recruited as this provides a sample which is suitable for the thematic analysis and manageable within the time constraints imposed by the module.

*How, by whom, and where will potential participants be selected and approached to receive the invitation to participate? (Attach a copy of letters, advertisements, posters or other recruitment material to be used.)*

Potential participants will be selected through an advertisement on [specified research credit system for undergraduate students] where they will be awarded 60 credits for partaking in this study, from advertising through word of mouth and by asking any friends that may be interested in partaking in the interviews. Flyers detailing the study will be created and displayed around [specified university] to promote our investigation.

*How much time will potential participants have to consider the invitation to participate?*

Participants who consider participation in the study will have four weeks to accept the invitation.

*What is required of participants? (Attach a copy of any interview schedules, consent forms, etc., to be used.)*

Participants will be asked to engage in a semi-structured interview, where they will answer up to 30 questions regarding their own experiences of skin lightening, or reflect on the experiences of people that they know who have experienced skin lightening (see Appendix D). The participants will be asked for their permission to be recorded and for the discussion to be transcribed for thematic analysis. In addition, the participants will be asked to fill out a demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C) and read the debrief of the study (see Appendix E). Participants will also be asked to give their permission for the data collected to be used in this research study.

*Data storage and access to data*

The data will be stored on digital recorders and copies of the files will be downloaded onto a password protected computer. Once they have been downloaded, the original files on the digital recorder will be deleted. The copies will be stored for a year until the dissertation has been completed and marked. During the transcription of the interviews, participants’ names will be removed, as well as other names that are included in the interviews and replaced with pseudonyms. The transcripts will be kept for up to 10 years.

*Explain how the information you receive will be analysed/interpreted and reported. What specific approaches or techniques will be employed?*

The data collected will be analysed using Braun and Clarke’s (2006) method of thematic analysis.

*Dissemination*

The data will only be used for the purpose of this study, online publishing purposes, conferences and/or for teaching.

**Ethical Considerations**

*How will voluntary participation be ensured?*

Participants will be given a consent form that they will be able to sign (Appendix B). As well as this, participants will be given the opportunity to ask any questions about the study when they meet the researchers, and have their questions answered before signing the consent form.

*How will participants’ privacy be protected during the recruitment process?*

The study will take place in a quiet room where participants can speak without being overheard. A description of the study will be uploaded to [specified research credit system for undergraduate students] to allow participants the choice of whether they want to take part or not. During the transcription process, participants will be given pseudonyms and any identifiable information will be altered. Also, the recordings will be kept on a secure password protected laptop and will be disposed of in [specified date].

*What are the benefits and risks to participants and how will risks be minimized?*

The benefits to participants would be that they would receive 60 credits (if applicable) and it will allow participants who enjoy talking about skin lightening to express their opinions about it. Some participants may enjoy the opportunity to engage in a discussion about skin lightening and be listened to properly. Risks could be that during the interview process they might recall a really upsetting event or discuss an issue which they hadn’t anticipated recalling or discussing – for example a hurtful comment or bad experience concerning skin lightening. This could potentially lead to the participant being upset or distressed during the interview. The risks will be minimized by giving them a copy of the questions ahead of time and, following good practice, if a participant were to be become upset, by offering a break or allowing time to compose themselves or stop the interview and providing details of support in the debrief.

*How will confidentiality/anonymity of information received be ensured?*

Pseudonyms will be given during transcription of the interviews. Also, any identifiable details concerning the participants or other people who may be mentioned in the interviews will also be altered or removed.

**Risk/benefit analysis**

*Clearly justify any potential risks to participants (however minimal) in respect to the potential benefits of the research.*

The benefits of the study are the originality of this research, since there is very little qualitative data on skin lightening in the UK. The majority of the research focuses on participants from Africa, India or America, whose views and experiences may be very different from participants in the UK. A potential risk that the participants may experience is discomfort or distress from recalling an upsetting event or experience – for example, recalling an upsetting conversation concerning the appearance or colour of their skin. This could potentially lead to the participant becoming upset or distressed during the interview. All of the researchers will receive some training in interviewing and will discuss protocols for sensitive research so they are well able to manage if this situation were to occur. A role-playing exercise will take place beforehand so that they are aware of what to do in this situation. Furthermore, participants will be sent the interview questions ahead of the interview and will be given explicit reminders that they can pause the interview or choose not to answer any question or take a break if necessary. Every precaution will be taken to consider the well-being of participants. They will be given instructions on the format of the study along with a consent form and debriefing sheet at the end of the interview. They will also be allocated to any resources within the community to seek out support such as helplines and the university’s counselling support, as shown on the debrief sheet.

*Is there a risk that illegal activities or protection issues may be uncovered during the course of the research? If so, how will issues of disclosure be dealt with?*

There are no immediate risks to the participants from the study. However, some of the participants could disclose using under-the-counter skin lightening products or treatments.

*Direct benefit to participants*

The direct benefits that the participants have are that they will be rewarded 60 credits through the [specified research credit system for undergraduate students] for their participation, they will be able to expand their knowledge and engage in open discussions/experiences regarding the topic.

*How will risks and benefits identified here be communicated to the participants?*

The risks and benefits identified here will be communicated to participants through a participant information sheet (see Appendix A), a consent form (see Appendix B) and a debrief sheet (see Appendix E).

**References**

Ahmed, A. E., & Hamid, M. E. (2016). Use of skin-whitening products by Sudanese undergraduate females: A survey. *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*, *4*(2), 149–155.

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Kouotou, E. A., Nansseu, J. R. N., Adegbidi, H., Mebara, T. C. J. Z., & Ndam, E. C. N. (2017). Skin whitening among Cameroonian female university students: Knowledge, attitudes, practices and motivations. *BMC Women’s Health*, *17*(33), https://doi.org/10.1186/s12905-017-0385-z

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Sidhu, S. K., Pau, N., Sidhu, J. S., & Oakeshott, P. (2011). Use of skin lightening creams: Survey in a UK general practice. *British Medical Journal*, https://www.bmj.com/content/342/bmj.d1326.full

**Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet**

**Motivations for and Experiences of Skin Lightening among Young Men and Women in Emerging Adulthood**

Our names are [names of applicants]. We are Masters students studying [courses specified] at [specified university]. For our degree, we are required to do a research project. In our research, we have decided to look at the motivations and experiences of young men and women in emerging adulthood to lighten their skin.

We are interested in this topic because, as Psychology students, we would like to examine and understand the thought processes and underlying factors that may initiate someone to lighten their skin. The existing research tends to only focus on women and therefore we want to incorporate the perspectives and experiences of men as well. In addition, there is limited research pertaining to people that reside in the UK. Finally, there is little qualitative research literature that examines the thoughts and feelings of participants who may have lightened their skin or those who know anyone close to them who has lightened their skin. Therefore, we would like to find out more about young men’s and women’s views, opinions and experiences concerning skin lightening.

We are interested in recruiting undergraduate students from [specified university] who are able to provide personal experiences on this topic. Before you decide whether you want to take part in the study, it is important that you understand what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully.

**What will be involved?**

The study will involve one to one semi-structured interviews with you. We will run 8–10 interviews at [specified university] or in a public space. We will ask questions during the interview that will invite you to reflect on your personal experiences or motivations for skin lightening or those of someone close to you. The discussion will run for approximately 60 minutes. All undergraduate Psychology students who take part will earn 60 research credits.

The interviews will be audio-recorded using dictaphones and we will then transcribe them. In other words, we will listen carefully to the recordings and transcribe what is said in the interviews as accurately as possible. The reason for this is that it is important to have a full and accurate record of all the outlooks and experiences that people share with us. We will then study these transcripts carefully and look for common outlooks and experiences across all of the interviewees. We will write up our MSc research for our dissertation based on what we find.

Everything that you say will be treated as confidential. If you name any people or places during the interview, these names will be replaced with pseudonyms in the transcripts and in our dissertations, if we cite anything from your interview.

It is also important to emphasize that the research looks at a topic that may be upsetting. Please think carefully before you decide to participate. In this interview, you will be asked personal questions regarding your experiences and motivations and this may at times cause you to recall upsetting events that are associated with skin lightening. It is important to protect your own well-being, so if you would like to volunteer but are unsure about whether this could be upsetting for you, speak to one of the researchers beforehand and we can help you decide whether it would be appropriate for you to take part.

If you volunteer to take part but you feel upset at any point during the interview, please let us know. You can take a break at any time, choose not to answer a question, and you will be able to withdraw from the study at any time.

If you take part in the interviews but decide later that you do not want us to make use of the information you have provided, all you have to do is email and let us know before [specified date]. You do not have to explain your change of decision: we will simply not utilize the transcript of your interview in our research.

This study has received a favourable ethical opinion from [specified Research Ethics Committee]. If you wish to complain about any aspect of how you have been treated during and in this research, please contact [named person and contact details, usually the Chair of the Research Ethics Committee that granted a favourable ethical opinion on the study or another designated university staff member with research ethics responsibility].

**Contact information**

If you would like to take part in this study, you can volunteer by emailing us at at [email addresses and names of the researchers]. Also, you should contact one of us if you have any questions about the research.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

[Contact details of researchers and their supervisor.]

**Appendix B: Consent form**

**Motivations for and Experiences of Skin Lightening among Young Men and Women in Emerging Adulthood**

Please read each of the statements below and, if you agree with a statement, indicate this by ticking the box beside it.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for this study and the meaning of taking part in this study. |   |
| I have been informed of the purpose, risks and benefits of taking part. |  |
| I understand what my involvement will entail and any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.  |   |
| I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary, and that I can withdraw before [specified date] without prejudice and without giving a reason.  |   |
| I agree that the information that I give to the researchers can be used in this and subsequent research projects undertaken by members of the research team and for teaching purposes on the understanding that my confidentiality is preserved. |   |
| I understand that all personal data relating to volunteers are held and processed in confidence, and in accordance with the UK Data Protection Act (2018). |   |
| Contact information has been provided should I (a) wish to seek further information from the investigator at any time for purposes of clarification or (b) wish to make a complaint.  |  |
| I confirm that I have read and understood the above and freely consent to participating in this study. I have been given adequate time to consider my participation and agree to comply with the instructions and restrictions of the study. |   |

Name of volunteer (BLOCK CAPITALS)

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Signed

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Date **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Name of researcher taking consent (BLOCK CAPITALS)

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Signed **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Date

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Appendix C: Demographic and background information questionnaire**

**Motivations for and Experiences of Skin Lightening among Young Men and Women in Emerging Adulthood**

**What gender do you identify as? (circle the appropriate answer)**

* Male.
* Female.
* Prefer to describe my gender in another way (please specify: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)

**How old are you?**

[ ] years

**What is your ethnic group? (circle the appropriate answer)**

**White**

* English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
* Irish
* Gypsy or Irish Traveller
* Any other White background, please specify.

**Asian or Asian British:**

* Indian.
* Pakistani.
* Bangladeshi.
* Chinese.
* Any other Asian background.

**Mixed or multiple ethnic groups:**

* White and Black Caribbean.
* White and Black African.
* White and Asian.
* Any other dual/multiple ethnic background.

**Black/African/Caribbean backgrounds:**

* African.
* Caribbean.
* Any other Black/African Caribbean background, please specify.

**Any other ethnic group, please specify:**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Do you have any religious affiliation and if so what? (circle the appropriate answer)**

* Muslim.
* Hindu.
* Buddhist.
* Atheist.
* Agnostic
* Christian (this includes Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and other Christian denominations).
* Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**General Questions regarding the study:**

**Have you ever lightened your skin? Please circle the appropriate answer**

* Yes
* No
* Prefer not to say

**If yes, how often do you lighten your skin?**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Could you tell us any products you have used? (Home or commercial)**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Do you know anyone who has lightened their skin? Please circle the appropriate answer**

* Yes
* No
* Prefer not to say

**Appendix D: Interview schedule**

**Research Question:**

What are the motivations for and experiences of skin lightening among young men and women in emerging adulthood?

* What is your idea of perfect skin?
* Does it matter how clear your complexion is? If so, why/why not?

If yes – Why does it matter how clear your complexion is?

If no – Why does it not matter how clear your complexion is?

* What kind of beauty standards concerning the skin did you notice in your household growing up?

For example, was skin ever discussed? In what context?

Was any reference made to colour or appearance of skin?

 How did those beauty standards make you feel?

* Did you notice if anyone in your household adhered more to these beauty standards?

If yes – why do you think that might be?

* How do you think skin colour is presented in the media/videos/film?

 How about depictions of skin colour for men?

How about depictions of skin colour for women?

 Any comparisons between men and women?

*Skin Lightening*

The next few questions will focus on your views concerning skin lightening.

* Why do you think some people choose to lighten their skin?
* What do you think about skin lightening?

Is it something that you think is helpful for some people?

Are there any cultural groups who you are aware of who use it?

Is there anything you don’t like about it?

*The significance of lighter skin*

* Why is it considered important to have fairer skin?

What impact does fairer skin have for people, do you think?

* With reference to skin colour, how do you think society portrays beauty?
* Have you ever been discriminated against because of your skin colour?

*Personal experience of skin lightening*

The next series of questions is for people who have any experience of using a product to lighten their skin, either a shop-bought or homemade product.

* If you don’t mind me asking, have you or anyone you know such as friends or family participated in lightening their skin?
* How did you/they start using skin lightening products? (if applicable)
* Why did you/they choose to do this?
* How often do you/they use skin lightening products?
* Do you notice any changes in yourself before the process (your mood, behaviour or overall demeanor)?
* How did you see or think of yourself after doing the process?
* Do you notice any changes in yourself after the process (your mood, behaviour or overall demeanor)?
* Have you ever experienced any concerns or distress in regards to your skin colour?

*Knowledge of skin lightening*

* What do you already know about skin lightening?
* What kinds of products do people use?
* Are you aware of any risks to lightening the skin?

*Skin lightening in the lifespan*

* Do you think there are particular reasons why young people lighten their skin?
* Are these reasons any different from those of older people?
* Are there particular issues for skin lightening that affect young people?

*Closing question*

* Is there anything else you would like to tell me that we haven’t mentioned yet?

**Appendix E: Debrief sheet**

**Motivations for and Experiences of Skin Lightening among Young Men and Women in Emerging Adulthood**

We appreciate your cooperation and involvement in this research project. This study involves us exploring motivations for and experiences of skin lightening among young men and women in emerging adulthood.

Although this study is part of our degree requirements, we hope that it will make a contribution and provide different insights to current literature that exists around the topic. In addition, we hope that it will help future researchers understand individuals’ motivations for trying to lighten their skin.

If you take part in the interviews but decide later that you do not want us to make use of the information you have provided, all you have to do is email and let us know before [specified date]. You do not have to explain your decision: we will simply remove your interview transcript from our data set and will not use it in our analysis.

If you would like to discuss any issues about skin lightening that were raised in this interview or if you feel that you need further support in relation to any mental health issues that may have arisen during this interview, please contact one of the organizations below:

**Mind**

<http://www.mind.org.uk>

Mind is a charity that provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. Mind campaigns to improve mental health services, raise public awareness and promote understanding of mental health issues.

If you would like to contact this charity, their details are below:

Mind:

15-19 Broadway, Stratford, London, E15 4BQ

Contact number: 02085192122

Email: supporterrelations@mind.org.uk

**The Mental Health Foundation**

<http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk>

The Mental health Foundation is a charity that is committed to reducing the suffering caused by mental ill health and helping everyone to lead mentally healthier lives.

If you would like to contact this charity, their contact details are below:

London Office (Headquarters)

Colechurch House, 1 London Bridge Walk, London, SE1 2SX

Contact Number: +44 (0)2078031100

**Samaritans**

<https://www.samaritans.org/>

Samaritans is a charity that provides free 24 hour confidential listening services to anyone that is under distress. They also work to raise awareness of issues related to mind disorders such as suicide and depression.

If you would like to contact this charity, their details are below:

Contact number: 116 123 – Any time, day or night

Email: jo@samaritans.org – Response time 24 hours

**Contact information**

If you would like to discuss the study further with us, please get in touch with us using the details below. Thank you once again for taking the time to take part in our research.

[Contact details of the researchers and their supervisor: names, email addresses, and the postal address of the university.]