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“Light skin is the Right Skin? and Long Hair Don’t Care?”: An Investigation of Colorism and Texturism Amongst Black and Latina Women

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Running Head: AN INVESTIGATION OF COLORISM AND TEXTURISM

“Light skin is the Right Skin? and Long Hair Don’t Care?”: An Investigation of Colorism and Texturism Amongst Black and Latina Women

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Science, Mathematics, and Computing
Of Bard College

by
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Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

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Abstract

Conversations related to slavery and colonization can be difficult, yet they are necessary in order to address the negative impacts they still have on people of color today. Racial phenotypicality bias is one lasting racist practice that originated during slavery and colonization periods in Latin America and the United States. This form of bias operates by favoring and praising eurocentric phenotypes (such as light skin and straight hair) compared to afro-centric phenotypes (such as dark skin and afro-textured hair). Colorism and texturism (C&T) are two primary forms of phenotype biases that are specifically related to skin and hair. These two phenotypes are deemed as primary because they are highly salient and often used as markers of one's racial identity. There is a scarce amount of empirical research that examines how skin tone and hair texture affects Black/Latina people's psychological health, general health, and social experiences. The current study aims to evaluate Black and Latina women's narratives associated with colorism and texturism. A survey was developed that includes key questions about personal feelings, experiences, and perspectives related to skin and hair. The goal of it was to elicit responses that illustrate how C&T is internalized and socialized in society. Responses from each of the participants showed that these biases currently exist and how they affect some Black and Latina women. The data suggests that C&T can impact women either similarly or differently depending on the phenotypes they possess. Current findings are beneficial because they create opportunities for researchers and activists to address the problems associated with the biases.

“Light skin is the Right Skin? and Long Hair Don’t Care?”: An Investigation of Colorism and Texturism Amongst Black and Latina Women

The Black and Latina community are two phenotypically diverse ethnic groups. Both communities consist of individuals with many different variations in facial and body structures, skin tones, and hair textures. Noting the phenotypic diversity reflected within both communities is crucial because there have been links between phenotypes and factors such as: social status, perception, mental health, and access to resources (Maddox, 2004; Williams, 2018). A wide body of research show that Black and Latina people with phenotypes such as light skin and eye color, thin lips, and narrow noses are more advantaged and preferable than those with darker skin and eye color, full lips, wider noses, and other afrocentric phenotypes (Hunter, 2013; Mathews & Johnson, 2015; Espino and Franz, 2002). Negative prejudice or discriminatory acts against an individual based on their phenotypes can be defined as racial phenotypicality bias. Williams (2018) explores social psychological theories associated with the bias, as well as its history and functionality. When examining the scope of the phenomenon, they explained the biases disproportionate effects Black and Latina people. Another key detail was that the bias is exhibited by out-group members and among people of the same racial or ethnic group.

Origins of Racial Phenotypicality Bias

Many argue that phenotype biases occur within Black and Latina communities as a result of enforced and perpetuated ideas of Eurocentric beauty standards (Positgo, 2016; Awad et al., 2015). Slavery is the primary event that many researchers note as the origin of phenotype biases for both Black and Latina communities (Hunter, 2007; Chavez-Dueñas et al., 2014). From approximately 1502 to 1866, millions of Indigenous and African people were stolen from their

homes and used for slavery purposes in North America, Latin America, and the Caribbean. No matter where African and Black people were brought, they were often deemed non-human, intellectually inferior, and uncivilized. In addition, black people were frequently considered “savages”, “apes”, and “gorillas” because of their dark skin, wide noses, and full lips (Muhammad, 2003; Discovering Bristols, 2020; Akbar, 1996). Bellinger (2007) notes that 19th century naturalist Peter A. Browne classified black people as a different *species* because of their hair textures which he classifies as “wool” within his piece titled “*The classification of mankind, by the hair and wool of their heads: With an answer to Dr. Prichard's assertion, that "the covering of the head of the Negro is hair, properly so termed, and not wool"*” (Browne, 1850).

Many prejudices and stereotypes, such as the ones stated, were socially prominent and oftentimes used as reasons to justify enslavement and racist practices. These racist concepts were held by many people in society during the slave period. Some were even adopted by American leaders such as Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Johnson, Thomas Jefferson, and Theodore Roosevelt (Laura, 1998). These specific figures are crucial to mention because many argue that racism and phenotype biases were created and perpetuated by White supremacy, colonialism, and dominance (Laura, 1998; Akbar, 1996).

Slavery is a common history shared by Black and Latina people. This factor is responsible for creating similar experiences of phenotype bias and racial discrimination between each of the groups. During periods of slavery in America and Latin America, the amount of social privilege and access to resources (such as property, jobs, and education) anyone had largely depended on their ancestry and phenotypes.

The 18th Century Latin American Social Caste System (LASCP) is one piece of evidence which reflects how people in Spanish Colonies were classified and separated (Chavez-Dueñas,

2014). This system placed White Spaniard people at the highest levels of the social hierarchy. Next, were individuals who were mixed with White and Indigenous or African ancestry. During this time, the level of privilege and access to resources someone had was determined by their skin color and phenotypes. Those with lighter skin and less afrocentric phenotypes received more social status and privilege compared to their dark skin counterparts. Within the bottom of the caste system were indigenous people and enslaved African people. These individuals had the least amount of privilege and access to resources. One of the primary reasons this caste system existed is because White Spaniards had political, social, and economic power. Control in this way caused Indigenous people to assimilate to social norms and expectations set by the Spaniards who were in control (Chavez-Dueñas, 2014). Martínez (2010) is one essay that comments on the caste system in Latin America during Spanish rule. This article comments on the ways in which Spaniards used their identity and “pure” Spanish (European) blood as a way to maintain political, economic, and social privilege. This concept was referred to as “social order” because race, nationality, and appearance determined who could hold office, bear arms, attend schools, and wear certain clothing (Martínez, 2010).

The social stratification system that existed in North America post-slavery operated very similarly to the LASCP adopted by Spanish colonizers. Those who were fully white received the most amount of privileges and access to resources. Second on the social pyramid were mixed individuals (typically people with both white and black ancestry). Their levels of social status and privilege was determined based upon their skin color, hair texture, and ability to pass as white. Therefore, many mixed or “white passing” individuals used practices such as shaving or straightening their hair in order to mask their Black identity (Bellinger 2007). Lastly, those within the lowest levels of the social caste system were Native Americans and enslaved Africans.

Enslaved people were socialized and brainwashed to believe that they were inferior to the White race and that their life purpose was to carry out laborious tasks. Enslaved people had little to no economic opportunities or social privilege (typically unless they had white ancestry). This means that enslaved people had no access to buying land, receiving education, or any other avenues associated with upward mobility.

Although enslaved people lived under the control of their owners, research shows that hierarchies based upon phenotypes existed between enslaved people. Miscegnation and rape (by slave owners) are two factors that lead to the creation of color hierarchies (Bellinger, 2007). Reason being is that oftentimes the offspring of White slave owners and Black enslaved people had salient White phenotypes (such as light skin and straight hair). Mixed enslaved people with White phenotypes were deemed more favorable by slave owners because they weren't fully Black and had European ancestry (Reece, 2018). Compared to their dark skin counterparts, light skinned enslaved people were frequently given better living conditions, education, freedom, and other social privileges (Hunter, 2007; Reece, 2018). In addition, sometimes light skin enslaved people were delegated less strenuous tasks and authority over dark skinned enslaved people. It is argued that this dynamic contributed to the division between enslaved groups and perpetuated European ideas of beauty and superiority (Akbar, 1996).

Bellinger (2007) is an article which aims to explain why some Black women aim to obtain "good hair" which refers to a long, straight, and has a silky appearance. The article examines the history of Black hair during slavery. It explains how slave owners told their families to refer to black hair as "wool" and conditioned Black enslaved people to have hatred towards their hair. A key feature of this article is the fact that Black enslaved women were forced to straighten or cover their hair in order to look more "presentable" or white (Bellinger, 2007).

Dr. Akbar is one well known clinical psychologist who has conducted much research and work associated with the lasting impact slavery has on the African American community. Within his book “Breaking the Chains of Psychological Slavery” he examines the experiences of black people during slavery and explains the psychological impact it has left today. Dr. Akbar states that trauma and negative experiences endured by enslaved people have been internalized and passed down generationally. One part of the text in which he expresses his beliefs associated with his terms “psychological slavery” reads:

“The slavery that captures the mind and imprisons the motivation, perception, aspiration, and identity in a web of anti-self images, generating a personal and collective self-destruction, is more cruel than the shackles on the wrists and ankle. The slavery that feeds on the mind, invading the soul of man, destroying his loyalties to himself and establishing allegiance to forces which destroy him, is an even worse form of capture. The influences that permit an illusion of freedom, liberation, and self-determination, while tenaciously holding one’s mind in subjugation, is the folly of only the sadistic (pg vi)”

Phenotype bias and color discrimination are two factors which contribute to the “anti-self images” and “personal and collective self-destruction” Dr. Akbar explains in this particular section. This idea is supported where he states “Certainly one major strategy for enslaving the mind was the degradation of the Black/African self. The story of natural Black inferiority and ugliness were constant stories told to destroy the worth of the Black mind. (pg 37)”

Many scholars refer back to colonialism, slavery, and white superiority as the causes of phenotype bias. Knowing this history allows us to understand the origins of the bias and how it currently affects people today.

Racial Phenotypicality Bias Post-Slavery

After Black and Latina people were freed, racial and phenotype discrimination was still frequently practiced by society and within groups they were imposed on. Many note that unequal life outcomes existed post-emanicipation because of the skills, education, and privileges that enslaved light skin people had during slavery (Reece, 2018). These tools created more access to opportunities and their phenotypic features allowed them to face less levels of discrimination compared dark skin people. In addition, as a result of the mixed peoples European phenotypes and their White ancestry they were deemed as more suitable, capable, and intelligent than their darker skinned counterparts. And therefore, a variety of sources show that lighter skin and mixed people of color had more access to education, jobs, property, and social privileges compared to darker skin people (Reece, 2018).

Many researchers shed light on the way racial stereotypes operated post-slavery. Information as such is relevant to racial phenotype biases because many of the negative stereotypes emphasized the devaluation of Black features. Stereotypic figures like “Jim Crow”, “Little Black Sambo”, “Mammy”, “Aunt Jemimah”, and “Jezebelle” were created by white individuals to mock the physical appearance and character traits of Black people (Green, 1998). Each character possessed exaggerated stereotypical features such as the huge lips, “wool”-like hair, and extremely black skin. These characters' personalities and stories were developed to embody existing negative stereotypes of black people. These stereotypic figures also represented a degree of poverty, mental inferiority, or lack of education, ultimately undermining the worth of Black people's lives. These humiliating stories and characters developed were often used for entertainment and laughter in live-performances, cinema, and advertisements. One can strongly argue that the development of each character supports ideas of Eurocentric beauty and

superiority. Other forms of discrimination like segregation, Jim Crow Laws, and were also used to socially hinder black people (Chafe et al., 2011). The development of these factors allowed for Black people to be legally discriminated against and treated unequally.

Research shows that Latina people had different social experiences than African American and Black people post-slavery. During this period Spaniards still controlled Indigenous groups through political and economic means. "Mestizaje" is one idea that was intentionally adopted and enforced by Spanish colonizers (Chavez-Dueñas, 2014). "Mestizaje" revolves around the idea that everyone in Latin America was mixed with Indigenous, African, and European heritage. Some argue that Spaniards had two primary purposes of promoting "Mestizaje". The first aim was to dilute Indigenous and African features. The second was to create the belief that everyone is equal and undermine privileges obtained by people with white characteristics. Chavez-Dueñas (2014) states that many use this unifying idea of "Mestizaje" as a way of arguing that racism (and extensions of racism like colorism) was non-existent. However, these arguments have been challenged and refuted by the prevalent unequal life outcomes shown between dark skin and light skin Latina individuals (Telles, 2014).

Within-group Phenotype Bias

Within-group phenotype bias occurs when members of ethnic groups impose negative evaluations, discriminatory practices, or prejudice onto themselves and or other members of their ethnic group. This particular sort of phenotype bias is a common practice within Black and Latina ethnic communities today. Williams (2018) states that internalized racism is one primary influence of within-group phenotype bias. Internalized racism revolves around the idea that negative societal beliefs and stereotypes about one's self or culture can be personally accepted or endorsed.

Colorism and texturism (C&T) are two prominent examples of within-group phenotype bias that can be argued as forms of internalized racism in Black and Latina communities. Colorism is defined as the practice of discrimination in which those with lighter skin are treated more favorably than those with darker skin. Texturism is a practice of discrimination in which loose and straight hair textures are deemed more favorably than coily and more afro-centric textures of hair. The study of both topics is important because they can negatively impact perceptions of afro-phenotypes (Dixon, 2018; Haywood, 2017). There is also motivation to study these two topics because C&T have been linked to emotional and psychological trauma in Black and Latina communities (Abrams, 2020; Kiang 2020).

Racial Phenotypicality Bias in the Black and Latina Community Today

_____Black and Latina families (especially those with African or Indigenous ancestry) are phenotypically diverse. Members of the same family can have skin colors and hair textures that drastically vary from one another. For example, it is genetically possible for a light skinned person to have parents, grandparents, and other extended family that have darker skin tones. This paper argues that african ancestry, miscegenation, and genetic evolution are potential reasons for these existing phenotypic differences between family members. Mentioning the phenotypic diversity within both communities is important because many people learn (typically as children) the socializations and prejudices associated with their phenotypes directly from family members and other close social groups (Wilder & Cane, 2011). Abrams et al. (2020) interviewed 30 African-American young girls from ages 12-16 and examined their beliefs and personal experiences with skin tone and colorism. Their responses were consistent with common colorist practices. The majority of participants expressed how girls (such as their classmates, friends, and other social figures) with lighter skin were deemed more attractive, higher class, and overall

more socially favorable. Findings as such are important because they highlight the fact that phenotype bias currently exists in 2020.

There is a lack of empirical sources that specifically explain how colorism and texturism impacts the Latina community. As a result, one can turn to primary sources in which people describe their personal experiences. “*Why Understanding Colorism Within the Latino Community Is So important*” is an article written by Giselle Castro, within this piece she talks about her Peruvian and Columbian identity and experiences with colorism and texturism. One part of the text which describes her negative experiences is where it reads

“Growing up in a Peruvian and Colombian household, I was used to being around family members who had indigenous features like myself. With tan skin, thick black hair and dark features, I never felt a need to look differently, and have always been comfortable in my own skin. It wasn’t until I was exposed to other Latinos in everyday life that I learned that some had complexes about their skin color. I remember having a friend, who was a fair skinned or “white-presenting” Latina who would make remarks about my tan complexion from time to time. Normally I’d shrug off her comments because they didn’t have any effect on me. However, I remember one summer we were at a party taking photos, and upon looking at them she half jokingly and insultingly said, “Look at you in this pic, looking like an Aztec Indian.” I was insulted by her ignorant statement, but I couldn’t understand why it was a big deal that I was naturally tan. In retrospect, I realized she was projecting her own complexes onto me in order to make herself feel superior”

Giselle Castro's personal account and the findings of Abrams et al. (2020) are just two of primary examples of within-group phenotype bias. Through unpacking these experiences one can

understand the “universal” socialization that those with more eurocentric features are favorable than afro-centric phenotypes.

Explaining how colorism and texturism affect some women of color foreshadows how phenotypic bias causes discriminatory acts and negative evaluations to occur in occupational, school and healthcare settings as well. Researchers have identified that there are linkages between phenotypes and personal experience in these settings (Donahoo & Smith, 2019; Haywood 2017; Williams D. R. 2018). Their findings show that those with afro-centric features (such as dark skin and thick hair) receive more discrimination from others and less opportunities.

Current Study and Future Research

Both colorism and texturism have great effects on the psychological states and personal experiences of Black and Latina people. Although these issues have shown to be practiced since slavery, research and experiments centering both topics have only become more popularized over the last couple of decades. There is a need for more psychological research to unpack and address C&T’s current impact on Black and Latina communities. Reason being is that this specific research area is fairly new and has a lot of unanswered questions. Empirical research related to texturism is limited and this study aims to add to the existing body of knowledge. In addition, the majority of the existing C&T research focuses on Black people. This study intentionally incorporates the Latina community to generate more information and findings related to their experiences.

The current study will examine how skin and hair affects Black and Latina women by developing a survey that asks a series of questions aimed to promote thought around colorism and texturism. This survey will include key questions about personal feelings, experiences, and perspectives related to C&T. The primary aim of this research is to understand the extent to

which these phenomena currently affect the lives of Black and Latina people. Responses elicited from the survey will be also used to determine similarities and differences experienced by these Black and Latina women.

Results

Goal

The main goal of this experiment was to identify ways in which Colorism and Texturism impact Black and Latina women. As stated before, the primary researcher was most interested in understanding the ways in which these biases are socialized within society and internalized by women. Socialization questions were associated with the way in which these biases are perpetuated by people and media. Internalization questions were developed to understand how the participants self perception and self esteem were impacted by C&T.

Demographics

There were a total of 21 people (as shown in Appendix B) who responded to the survey. Three of the respondents were excluded because they were men. As shown in Appendix C, of the eligible 19 respondents 52.4% identified as brown skin, 42.9% identified as light skin, and 4.2% identified as dark skin. Individuals who identified as brown skin and dark skin were categorized as “brownskin” throughout this study. Reason being is that they often experience similar forms of colorism because of their darker skin tones. 66% of respondents labelled themselves as Black, 23.8% of respondents labelled themselves as Latina and Hispanic, and 9.5% of respondents labelled themselves as Multiracial or Biracial (as shown in Appendix D). It is common for some people of Latina descent to identify as Black; therefore, this may or may not account for the “Black” racial category being the most included racial category. As a whole, participants

indicated a wide variety of hair textures ranging from straight 1a to coily 3b (shown in Appendix E).

Skin and hair categories

Each of the following sections within the results will explore the two major skin and hair categories that exist within Black and Latina communities. The skin section will be analyzed as “light skin” vs “brown skin” and the hair section will be analyzed as “straight/curly” and “kinky/coily”. Reason being is that, (as discussed before) the literature centering colorism and texturism shows that Black and Latina women's experiences associated with the biases operate differently depending on which variation of skin or hair they possess. Therefore, all participants' answers (in response to the questions shown in Appendix A) were coded in an attempt to understand which factors were most associated with their experiences of C&T.

The primary researcher was most interested in understanding the ways in which these biases are socialized within society and internalized by women. There were a total of twelve questions asked throughout the survey related to these two subjects. The subsequent sections will show which factors were most mentioned by participants within each of the four sections (“Lightskin”, “Brownskin”, “Straight/Curly” and “Kinky/Coily”). In addition, these sections will elaborate on the most common experiences indicated by the participants within each of the categories.

Lightskin Participants Experiences with Colorism

Factors Associated With Lightskin Participants Colorist Experiences

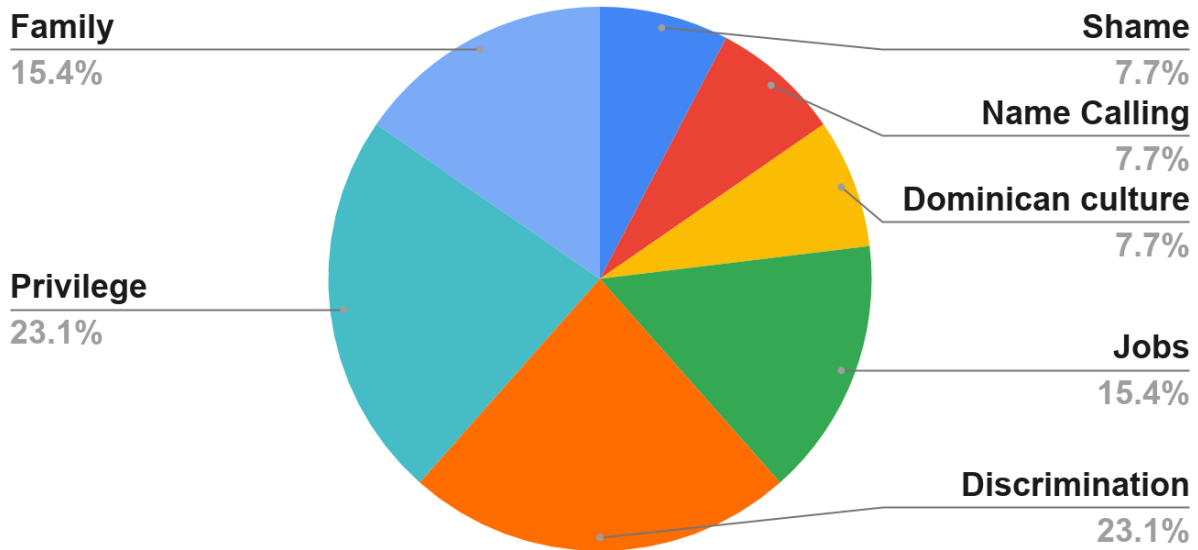


Figure 1 - This pie chart is a representation of the main factors that impacted lightskin participants' experiences with colorism.

Of the participants who identified as light skin: privilege, discrimination, family, culture, jobs, name calling and shame were the main factors associated with thier experiences of colorism (as shown in figure 1). The term “privilege” is an ambiguous term, but in the context of this study, it is related to lightskin participants noticing that their skin color afforded them more favorable outcomes compared to their darkerskin counterparts. The three responses in which participants recognized their privilege were to the two socialization questions:

- (1) Can you elaborate on a time when a woman of color was shamed because of their skin color or texture? and
- (2) Are there any moments where your acceptance into a job or social group depended on your appearance? What about your hair and skin?

In response to these questions participants stated that they've witnessed darker skin women being discriminated against in social settings such as bars clubs. In addition, one participant stated that she felt her lighter complexion along with her hair type made employers more comfortable with hiring her. They were able to make this specific assumption by comparing herself to her friend of hers who babysit who had "darker complexions or tighter curls."

Discrimination was coded in this particular section because some light skin respondents had experiences in which they faced and witnessed unjust treatment due to skin color. One respondent stated that there were times in which she felt alone and isolated because people in her school would bully and exclude her because of her skin tone.

One light skin participant was able to offer a vivid experience in which a darker skin person was discriminated against because of her color. This was in response to the question "Are there any moments where your acceptance into a job or social group depended on your appearance? What about your hair and skin?": it reads

"I was once a part of dance group with some friends and the captains of the teams had to choose dancers. The captain who chose me said "light skin and slim." The other girl who did not get chosen because she was darker in complexion : she happened to be my friend she was heavyset and of a darker complexion, her emotions were explosive when the captain said those words and in that moment she began to cry and so did I."

Family is the third most common factor that lighterskin participants associated with their prior experiences within colorism. One respondent stated that her family didn't necessarily bully her, but they often made remarks that had the ability to hurt her feelings; however, she didn't allow these comments to impact her self image. One black participant who identified as light

skin mentioned family in response to the question “Can you elaborate on a time where you felt judged based on your skin or hair?”: by stating that,

“Early in life, while my Grandmother and I were getting our hair done other hairdressers did not know that my beautiful Grandmother; was my Grandmother, because my skin was lighter than hers and my hair was curly and her complexion was darker than my complexion and her hair was curly, however our curl pattern was not the same; hairdressers with the assumption that I was of Hispanic descent because of my complexion and hair texture which is not the case.”

Although there were no explicit and mean comments made within this particular scenario, this response foreshadows how phenotypic differences within families can be a sensitive factor for women of color.

Another example of how people are separated and classified by the color of their skin was also indicated by a Dominican participant who identified as light skin. When asked “What are some of your earliest memories of witnessing or experiencing any hair or skin related bias?” She stated that sometimes she was called a “Gringa.” This term is often used to refer to Dominican people who have more white features. It showed to have a negative connotation being that it was used in response to this question and it was evident that it hurt the participants feelings and undermined her identity. This is evident in her response where it reads:

“Because I’m really light, I’m a “gringa” when I’m just as proud of my Dominican roots, speak just as much Spanish, eat the same food, raised with the same morals and everything but being discredited because of me being as light as I am.

This response once again shows how women are often made aware and conscious of the phenotypes they possess because of outside judgement. The integration of these responses

foreshadow that women of both light skin Black and Latina experiences are similar. They also indicate that lighter skin women can be in positions where they are put on higher pedestals: or contrarily, their culture/identity is undermined because they differ from others.

Brownskin Participants Experiences with Colorism

Factors Associated With Brownskin Participants Colorist Experiences

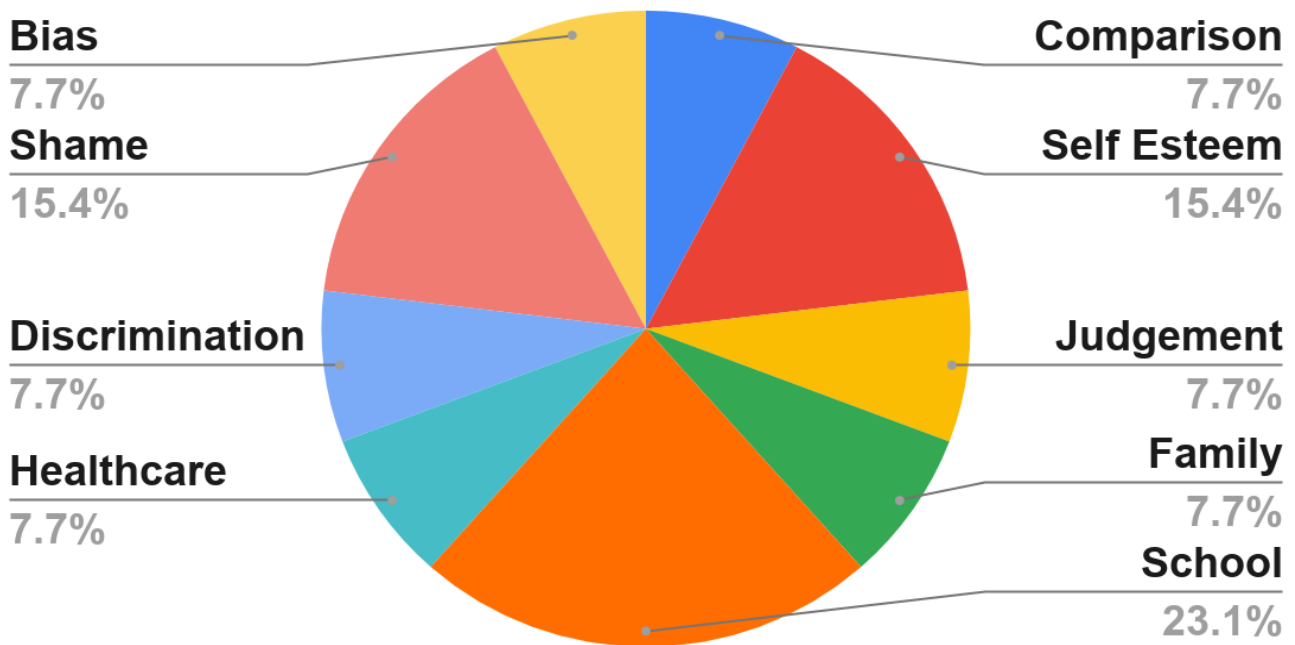


Figure 2 - This pie chart is a representation of the main factors that impacted Brownskin participants' experiences with colorism.

Brownskin participants were also questioned about their experiences regarding the socialization and internalization of colorism. Within the brownskin sub category, it was evident that shame and school were the two factors in which participants attributed their colorist experiences to. As shown in figure 2, there were also many other factors that people mentioned such as: bias, discrimination, healthcare, comparison, hair texture judgement, and family. One

can notice that brown skin participants had more colorist experiences compared to light skin participants.

Shame within the context of this study refers to experiences in which darker skin women were treated differently or humiliated because of their skin tone. These sorts of responses came about for the questions that asked:

- (1) Can you elaborate on a time when a woman of color was shamed because of their skin color or texture? And (2) What are some of your earliest memories of witnessing or experiencing any hair or skin related bias?

For question one, a participant stated that “Dark skin women are always shamed unless they have certain Eurocentric features.” Although this statement was vague, the use of the word “always” indicates that this participant has frequently noticed darker skin women with non Eurocentric features experience negative colorist bias. One participant who responded to question two was able to elaborate on specific experiences associated with the context of phenotype bias, this response read:

“Africans being called booty scratchers, people with big lips being called ducks, people with big butts being ridiculed, all to grow up and see it be the new standard of beauty”

Although these experiences aren't all directly related to skin color, they demonstrate how a variety of black phenotypes (including skin) are degraded and made fun of. In addition, this particular response shows how these same phenotypes sometimes become desirable features in which people wish to attain and/or modify their bodies to achieve.

The survey was also able to elicit some of the participants' first earliest memories of colorism and texturism. Two of the questions that were able to bring about these responses from brownskin participants who experienced colorism were:

- (1) “Can you elaborate on a time where you felt judged based on your skin or hair?”
- (2) As a child were you ever bullied because of your hair or skin? Were these bullies ever family? How did this make you feel? Have these experiences impacted your self-esteem?”

For both of these questions, three participants talked about how school had an impact on their self esteem and self image. One brownskin respondent stated that “I remember always being insecure about my skin color growing up because I was a lot darker than others at my school.” Another responded stated that attending a predominantly white school made her hyper aware of her skin color. In addition to this response, she said that one of the hardest experiences in life was not having a date for her high school prom. Knowing her skin color was the reason made her sad and more aware that her tone had the ability to affect how people viewed her.

In addition, one brownskin respondent stated that school also impacted her self image because many people would bully her because of her skin color. She characterized her school as horrible; also, she stated that being bullied for her hair and skin made her more aware of other physical characteristics such as her height and weight. In her words “Yes I was bullied for hair and skin, but no it wasn’t my family. I just went to a horrible school honestly and I was short and skinny, so it just seemed like every part of me was ugly.” This response not only shows that school is an environment in which many people are bullied; it also yet another example of how

other phenotypes outside of hair and skin have the ability to affect people's self image and self esteem.

Out of the other factors that showed to impact the brownskin women's experience of colorism there were two that stood out which were associated with family and healthcare. The one associated with family read:

“Yes I have been bullied about my skin color and hair by people inside and outside of my family. And when I was younger it really impacted my self esteem in a negative way. But now I feel comfortable in my own skin and I love my hair and complexion.”

One can argue that colorism and texturism can begin either outside or within family settings. This response shows that phenotype biases can occur within multiple social groups, ultimately impact women's self esteem in a negative manner.

Another standout response was related to a brown skin identifying participants being denied healthcare because of the color of her skin. This response read:

“I wasn’t able to see a doctor in NC because he “wasn’t comfortable seeing me”. Imagine being denied healthcare off the basis of your skin 😞”

Factors impacting straight and curly hair participants experiences with texturism

Factors Associated With Straight/Curly Hair Participants Experiences With Texturism

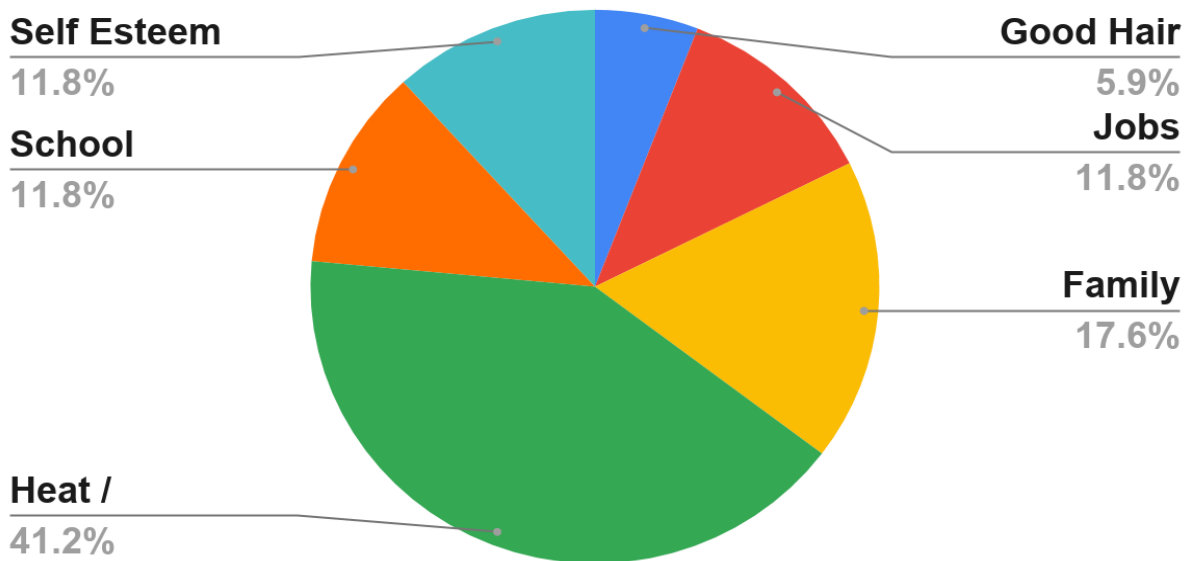


Figure 3 - This pie chart is a representation of the main factors that impacted straight/curly participants' experiences with texturism

A lot of literature centering texturism shows that suggests that Black and Latina women with straight and curly textures of hair are more favored and praised because they aren't kinky or coily (Maddox, 2004; Williams, 2018). This study wasn't focused on how commonly praised textures (straight and curly) benefit in comparison to those with less favorable hair textures (kinky and coily). In fact, its goal was to gain a deeper understanding of how people with straight and curly hair also experience texturism. Each of the respondents who indicated to have straight and curly responses related to texturism were coded (independent of skin color). The main factors that showed to be associated with their experiences were heat/modification and family (as

shown in figure 3). In addition, respondents associated their experiences with their self-esteem, education, and the workplace.

Of the respondents who had straight and curly hair, the most common factor related to experiences in which they encountered texturism was heat and modification. Heat and modification means that women either applied heat to their hair or changed it in order to be straight or “managable.” Many women over the world with afrocentric hair textures often apply heat for certain styles, looks, and/or because they feel as though it looks better. One of the common negative impacts of heat and modification is that the hair loses strength and it is no longer considered completely natural because of the heat.

The question that gained the most responses related to heat and modification was, “Do you feel more or less beautiful when your hair is in its natural state? (without heat, extensions, etc).” For this particular question, a respondent stated that she used to apply heat to her hair all the time. The reason stated was that “when it’s frizzy, I do tend to find it to be less beautiful. I always use heat on my bangs.” This same participant also expressed that she is now on her journey to bringing her hair back to her natural state because her hair is currently damaged because of all of the heat that has applied to it over the years. Another respondent talked about how she has applied extensive heat to her hair for over 10 years and is currently experiencing heat damage. She stated that she is now on her journey to having natural hair and although she doesn’t feel beautiful now she is hopeful that when her hair is completely natural she will be more confident in her appearance.

This study was also interested in investigating if one's hair had the ability to affect their acceptance into a job or social group. Therefore, participants were asked, “Are there any moments where your acceptance into a job or social group depended on your appearance? What

about your hair and skin.” There was one response question that stood out from the straight/curly textured hair participants, it read:

“Yes. During interviews & auditions, I always have to apply heat to my hair if not it is “unprofessional” or “uncared for”. I worked in a hospital for years and it was very suppressing of Latina voices, hair, appearances, etc”

Within this response, it was explicitly stated that participants used heat as a way to not be characterized as “unprofessional” or “uncared for.” This signifies that it is possible for women of color to be negatively judged and excluded from opportunities for wearing their natural hair.

Another response that is directly related to conformity, job acceptance, and heat/modification was from the question that asked “Have you ever felt that you needed to wear your hair a certain way to be more attractive or presentable? (How did that make you feel)” The response was from a Latina participant who said:

“I have not felt the need to wear my hair a certain way to be more attractive, but I am aware that curly hair of all textures, in certain settings is seen as “unprofessional.” My older sister worked at a upscale steakhouse and she always straightened her hair. There were to explicit statements from her management that she could not wear her hair natural, but all of the other hostesses wore their hair straight, and she overheard her manager talking about potential employees with curly hair and stating he would not hire them. In settings such as restaurants and corporate jobs, it saddens me to know that people cannot wear the hair that they were born with. In addition it makes me feel how “professionalism” is tied to white supremacy and politics of respectability.”

Family was the second most frequent factor associated with straight and curly hair participants experiences with texturism. Responses related to family came about from questions on the survey that asked participants if they were either bullied by family members or judged by anyone because of their hair or skin. From these particular responses two Latina women who identified with Dominican culture said “Yea Dominican family shit. I shaved my hair tho and I’m going natural now” and “I come from a Dominican family who hates when I curl my hair. They call it having a “pajon”, which is a slang for bad hair day.” These responses demonstrate that Dominican families have played a role in perpetuating phenotype biases. The casual statement “Yea Dominican family shit” signifies that occurrences as such happen frequently and are somewhat embedded within the culture. Here one can also see yet again why heat and modification has been such a major practice for many women.

Factors impacting kinky and coily hair participants experiences with texturism

Factors Associated With Kinky/Coily Hair Participants Experiences With Texturism

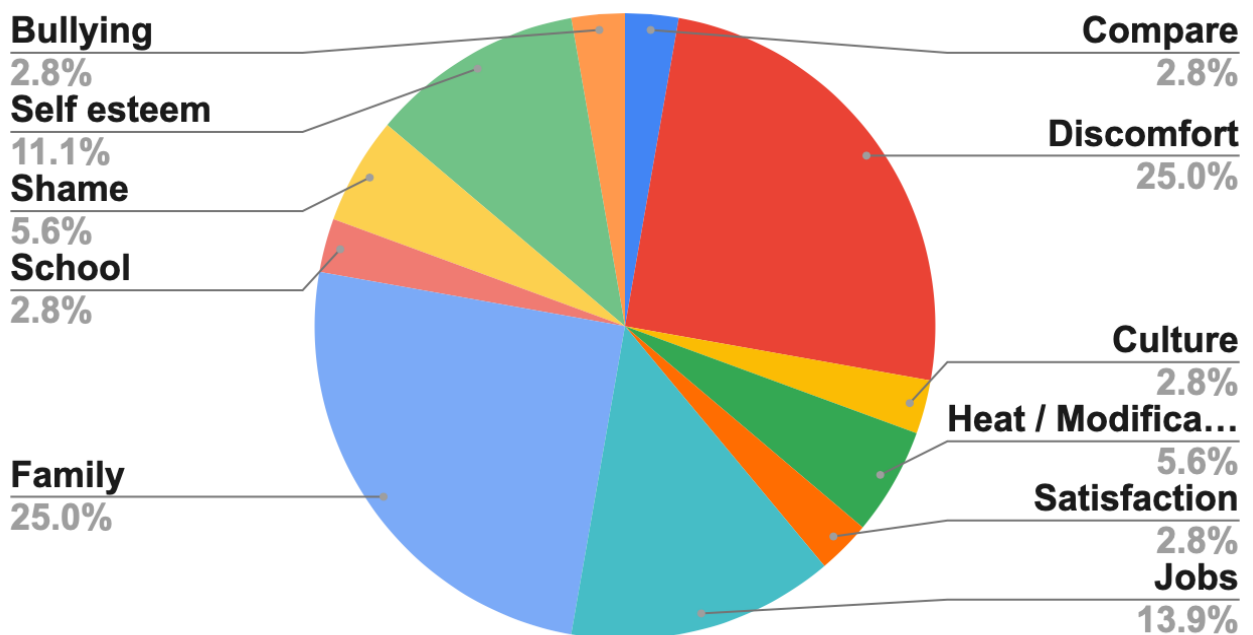


Figure 4 - This pie chart is a representation of the main factors that impacted kinky/coily participants' experiences with texturism

There were a total of eleven factors that showed to have a major impact on kinky and coily participants' experiences with texturism (as shown in figure 4). The three most common themes within this particular category were associated with family and discomfort.

There were a total of nine respondents who reported being bullied or judged by their families because of the textures of their hair. Out of these responses, there were five, shown in Appendix F, that possessed a lot of emotion and conveyed how family can be the cause of internalized feelings associated with texturism. These particular responses express how family members can play a major role in how people perceive and process negative biases associated with their hair textures and self image. Most of those who responded in figure 4 identified as Black. This sentiment of within group family judgement operates very similarly to the way some Dominican (straight/curly) participants attributed many of their negative hair experiences to their family members as well.

Discomfort within the context of this study refers to those with kinky and coily hair not feeling beautiful or completely satisfied with their hair textures. Appendix G is a representation of some significant responses that indicated some participants discomfort with their hair textures.

Within question one, the participant expressed that she wished her hair was a "lighter" texture. What also stands out about this response is the way she ended it off where it reads "But I have a light skin complexion so I have never wish for my skin to be different." This response may cause one to wonder why she feels as though her lighter skin serves as a trade off for having a hair texture that she doesn't enjoy.

The woman who responded to question two showed discomfort associated with her hair style specifically because they were locs. Styles as such are commonly ridiculed and harshly judged because of their wild and growing nature. Lastly, the participant who answered question

three expressed discomfort with having her natural hair out at school because of the people she was surrounded by. It was stated that her white classmates would make her feel uncomfortable, touch her hair, or stare at her in awkward ways. As shown in figure 4, there were a variety of other factors that have impacted women of color as well and they will be further investigated within the discussion.

Discussion

Each of the 19 responses obtained from the participants were detailed and insightful. As shown in the results, the analyses of the skin and hair sections were separated by the main phenotypic categories of colorism and texturism that people are often judged and classified by. This was an important step to take because it allowed for the primary researcher to understand the individual experiences of those who belong to the same categories. It was expected that those within the same phenotypic categories would have similar experiences given that they had the same phenotype variation. In addition, it was also expected that there would be distinct differences between the phenotypic categories.

Before conducting an analysis of the data it was hypothesized that (1) if participants identify as Black and/or Latina they would all have experiences in which they have personally experienced some sort of judgement from society based upon their skin color, regardless of the skin color they possess. This result would mean that both light and dark skin participants would have reported occurrences of stress, judgement, and negative stories associated with their skin color. It was also hypothesized that (2) if the participants identify as Black and/or Latina and had straight/curly textured hair then they would have less negative experiences of being judged by their hair as opposed to those with kinky/coily hair. This would mean that participants with

straight/curly textures of hair would display more positive responses associated with their hair textures and/or have less experiences of judgement and biases compared to participants with kinky/coily hair textures. The following sections will unpack the responses on a deeper level and whether or not they affirm or refute the a priori hypotheses.

Skin

Literature associated with colorism often only highlights dark skin individuals' experiences of being negatively impacted by colorist judgement. However, the primary researcher has personally met some light skin women within both the Black and Latina community who have expressed being judged by the color of their skin. These factors were the main motivation for the hypothesis associated with light and dark skin participants' experiences of colorism.

The data in fact did provide some evidence towards the hypothesis associated with colorism. Reason being is that both light skin and dark skinned participants indicated experiences in which they were judged by the color of their skin (as shown in figures 1 and 2). Although this is true, it is important to distinguish the similarities and differences of the responses indicated by each of the groups.

Shame and discrimination showed to be the most common type of responses shared by both light and dark skin participants of the study. Responses that were coded as shame refers to participants who have had experiences in which they were judged by others because of their skin color. Participant responses were also coded under this category if they didn't feel comfortable with their skin tone. Discrimination was also a common experience shared by both light and dark skin participants. Participants whose responses were coded under this section all felt as though there have been times in which they've been excluded from an opportunity or social group

because of their skin color. The similar experiences reflected in both the shame and discrimination categories highlight the fact that people can have colorist experiences no matter what skin color they possess. Dark skinned individuals often show to be more disadvantaged than in terms of income, opportunities, education, etc; however, the shame and discrimination responses suggest that colorism is an issue that can affect one's mental health and emotions regardless of their shade.

From this information one can conclude that colorism is an issue that must be addressed for all women of color (WOC). These biases have the ability to create mental/emotional issues and ill feelings towards one's own skin color. Experiences of discrimination and shame related to ones color can also perpetuate ill feelings towards oneself or towards those with differing phenotypes. One emotional response from the study which highlights the necessity to have conversations about colorism with women of color of all shades was from a black participant who identified as light skin which read:

“I was once a part of (a) dance group with some friends and the captains of the teams had to choose dancers. The captain who chose me said “light skin and slim.” The other girl who did not get chosen because she was darker in complexion : she happened to be my friend she was heavysset and of a darker complexion, her emotions were explosive when the captain said those words and in that moment she began to cry and so did I.”

Within this context, there are so many possible stories which may describe the past and present experiences about both the dance group leaders and girls who were excluded from the group. For instance, it is possible that the group leaders were taught that their skin was better than dark skin women or that they've personally been excluded in similar settings by other darkskin women. On the other hand, the dark skin women who were excluded from this group may have dealt with insecurities for a long time after this situation or she may have begun to shame or discriminate against other light skin women because of the colorism she experienced. These possible

scenarios highlight the fact that more conversations and spaces need to be created that show all women that they are all beautiful and capable no matter what their skin tone is. Doing so may hinder perpetuated biases and limit the amount of emotional damage one may be experiencing because of the color of their skin.

Another common factor shared by both light and dark skin participants related to their colorist experiences was family. Many women talked about how their family members were the initial or main members who have judged them based upon the color of their skin. These responses support the fact that within-group biases currently exist. Family are often people we are the most surrounded by and usually we trust their opinions. Therefore, the colorist experiences participants attributed to family members gives insight as to why colorism has the ability to negatively alter women's self image. One can imagine it to be hard for some to reject negative notions related to identity, especially, if they come from individuals who are close to home and deemed as trustworthy.

Phenotypic differences between family members also contributed to some participants' experiences of colorism. Within the results section, it was mentioned that a black participant (who identified as light skin) went to the hairdresser with her grandmother and many people assumed that they weren't biologically related. It is evident that this sort of judgement undermined the participants' blackness and her identity. This is yet another example of how light skin and darker skin people are often compared against each other and separated just off the basis of their skin color.

Within the data related to colorism, there were also many notable differences between the responses by light and dark skin participants. For instance, unlike dark skin participants many light skin participants recognized the privileges that they possessed associated with their skin

color. Of these participants who had lighter skin, they were able to explain occurrences in which their tone has offered them more acceptance into spaces such as jobs and social spaces (Maddox, 2004; Williams, 2018). These participants were also able to talk about many of the hardships their dark skin friends had to experience that they've personally never had to go through. Responses as such show that sometimes lighter skin women sometimes possess privilege. This finding was not surprising and given that a lot of the literature indicates that lighter skin individuals have many social, economic, and educational advantages (Maddox, 2004; Williams, 2018). Light skin participants indicating their privileges also suggest that darker skin women have to deal with more colorist related issues compared to dark skin women. The differences in the type of responses received from both light and dark skin participants serve as evidence for this claim.

Of the responses that were coded (excluding discrimination, shame, and family) colorism privilege, job privilege, and name calling were the main factors mentioned associated with light skin women's experiences with colorism. On the contrary with the same exclusion factors, dark skin women correlated their experiences to bias, beauty comparison, self esteem, judgement and school bullying. These responses signify that darker skin women may have to deal with more issues associated with their skin color because of their darker skin tone.

Overall, the similarities between the results of light and dark skin participants serves as evidence that women of color (regardless of their skin tone) are susceptible to colorist experiences. Some of the main perpetrators who hold, express, and perpetuate these colorist ideas show to be social groups and family members. The differences between the experiences indicated by the participants foreshadow some of the many problems that darker skin women face in society.

Hair

Texturism operates very closely to colorism because it is also a cultural bias that favors one variation of a phenotype over another, primarily within communities of color. This topic is less explored in primary literature, even less frequently than colorism; therefore, it was very important to gain responses specifically related to this bias from participants. Although hair is judged similarly like skin color, it was expected that texturism operated differently in terms of how the bias operated compared to colorism. Before conducting research, the primary researcher noticed that in society women with kinky and coily hair textures received a lot of judgement and shame for their hair textures. On the contrary, the primary researcher noticed that those with straight and curly hair textures are privileged and usually never battle emotional and serious identity issues related to their hair. These ideas were the main motivation of the hypothesis that if the participants identify as Black and/or Latina and have straight/curly textured hair then they would have less negative experiences of being judged by their hair as opposed to those with kinky/coily hair.

There showed to be some validity associated with this hypothesis. The response differences between participants with straight/curly and kinky/coily hair textures served as evidence. Of the participants who identified as having straight and curly hair the main problems weren't associated with mental and identity issues. The most recurring problem that those with straight and curly hair expressed was directly related to heat and hair modification. Women this particular phenotype variation mentioned that they had to constantly add heat to their hair to constantly maintain its straight texture. Modifying hair in this way is one of the ways which one has to conform to societal and family beauty standards. Not only does this add pressure for women to look a certain way but it also damages their hair. Majority of the women that talked

about this particular issue said that their hair was damaged after years and years of heat.

Although they do notice how unhealthy it is for their hair, many deem it necessary because they're scared that wearing their natural hairstyles wouldn't allow them to be hired in certain spaces.

On top of the pressure to straighten hair because of jobs, many people stated that they straighten their hair because of family. Two of the respondents with straight and curly hair who indicated external pressure from their families identified as Dominican. These responses read:

- (1) "I come from a Dominican family who hates when I curl my hair. They call it having a "pajon", which is a slang for bad hair day" and (2) "Yea Dominican family shit. I shaved my hair tho and I'm going natural now"

These stories foreshadow that within-group texturism currently exists and is embedded into one's culture in some cases. They also highlight the fact that issues related to texturism need to be addressed by families as a whole and not just the women who are affected by them. Reason being is that it is possible that the whole family is responsible for continuing these biased ideas about beauty. Furthermore, they further contribute to the problems that women have to face society in places such as work and educational settings.

The responses from women who indicated having kinky and coily textures textured differed from those who had straight and curly hair textures. The major difference is that those with kinky and coily textures expressed having more problems associated with their emotions and identity. Some of the factors indicated by the participants included bullying, self esteem, shame, beauty comparison, and identity discomfort (as shown in figure 4). These responses suggest that women with kinky and coily hair textures may experience higher rates of texturism within real world settings.

Impacts and Future Directions

The current study was very important to conduct because colorism and texturism are two issues that many women of color often experience. Although these biases occur frequently, oftentimes, problems associated with them are swept under the rug and further perpetuated. Responses from each of the participants serve as evidence that these two biases currently have negative impacts on Black and Latina women. Understanding how C&T is socially constructed and mentally processed by some participants is useful information that adds to the limited existing literature associated with C&T. The data is also beneficial because it provides researchers and activists with an understanding of how to target and fix these biases. Overall, the data suggests that racial phenotype bias needs to be addressed within society as a whole and also within small social groups (like schools and families). Creating change and awareness has the ability to reverse negative stereotypes and diminish phenotype based inequality. Most importantly, educating people about these biases can ultimately make more women feel more comfortable with their natural identity and beauty.

The findings highlight a lot of great details and experiences; however, this information isn't work enough. Researchers must further investigate colorism and texturism in an effort to find out the causes, impacts, and remedies for all people of color. Going forward it will be important to have more similar studies that include a larger number of people from more racial backgrounds with different variations in skin color and hair texture. It would also be beneficial to understand how these biases operate in relation to men. Although phenotype biases impact women at disproportionate rates, understanding men's perspectives and experiences will be useful because they experience and in some cases perpetuate these problems. Lastly, these responses indicate the need for more research related to colorism and texturism and how it

operates in families and school settings. Reason being is that these two factors showed to be the most responsible for creating identity related stress for the participants.

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Appendices

Socialization Questions Incorporated within the Survey

1. Can you elaborate on a time where you felt judged based on your skin or hair?
2. Can you elaborate on a time when a woman of color was shamed because of their skin color or texture?
3. Are there any moments where your acceptance into a job or social group depended on your appearance? What about your hair and skin?
4. What are some of your earliest memories of witnessing or experiencing any hair or skin related bias?
5. Do you feel like darkskin and natural hair textures are properly represented within the media? Why or why not?
6. Why do you feel like the stigma that black women are “mean” and “aggressive” exists in some places?

Internalization Questions Incorporated within the Survey

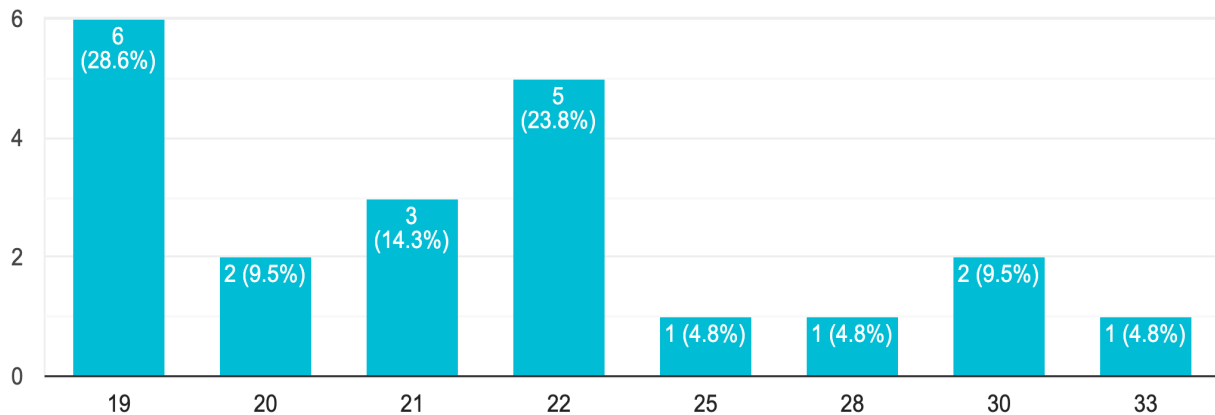
1. Do you feel more or less beautiful when your hair is in its natural state? (without heat, extensions, etc)
2. Has there ever been a time you’ve experienced negative emotions that arose after thinking about your hair or skin?
3. Have you ever felt that you needed to wear your hair a certain way to be more attractive or presentable? (How did that make you feel)
4. Has the media influenced you to change your hairstyle? Would you say this you’ve done so to feel more secure within yourself or because you liked the style?
5. As a child were you ever bullied because of your hair or skin? Were these bullies ever family? How did this make you feel? Have these experiences impacted your self-image?
6. Have you ever wished you were able to change your skin color to a lighter complexion or your natural hair to a different texture?

Appendix A - Socialization and internalization questions

Demographic Results From Participants

Age

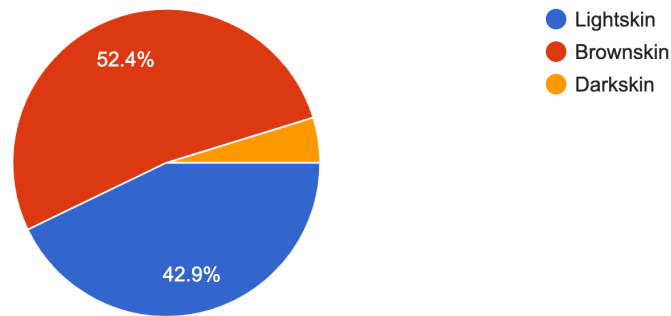
21 responses



Appendix B - Overall, there were a total of 19 participants who identified as Black or Latina. Two respondents of this survey were 30 years old; however, their data and responses were not incorporated within the data analysis because they identified as males. The ages of respondents ranged from 19 years old to 33 years old. The average of the participants was 21.73 years old. The three most common ages of the respondents were 19 years old (6 respondents) and 22 years old (5 respondents). This result is most likely because the primary investigator is currently a college senior and the survey was shared to a lot of college students and many people within that age range.

Skin tone of participants

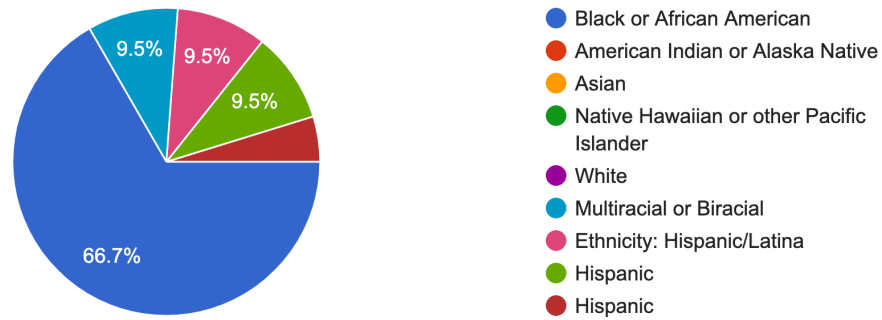
Skin Color
21 responses



Appendix C - Three of the most common ways to characterize skin color within the Black and Latina skin color are by using the labels “lightskin”, “brownskin”, and “darkskin”. There showed to be a proportional number of darker skin tones (57.2%) compared to lighter skin tones (42.9%). Although there was a low number of darkskin respondents this may be due to the ambiguity of the terms. These skin tones are up for interpretation and are used differently depending on whoever is rating themselves. Meaning it is possible that a “darkskin” person may have labelled themselves “brownskin” because that is what they feel they are.

Racial Identity

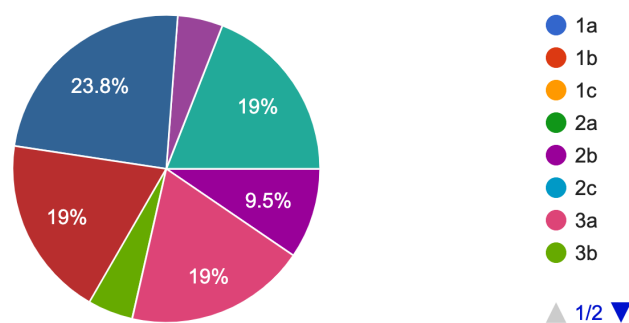
Race/Ethnicity
21 responses



Appendix D - This graph represents the racial identities indicated by the participants

Hair Textures

Hair Texture
21 responses



Appendix E - The respondents of this survey had a wide range of hair textures. For the purpose of this study it would be useful to separate them into two main categories “straight/curly” and “kinky/coily”. There was almost an equal representation the different types, straight/curly

representing 52% and kinky/coily representing 48%. In terms of the way texturism operates “straight/curly” textures are deemed as more favorable than “kinky/coily” textures. This study will examine responses using these two categories to analyze the experiences of people within both separate categories.

Select responses related to family judgement

1.	<p>“My friends were supportive of my natural hair journey and looked to me for help when they all went natural too. When I first went natural, my self image was definitely impacted a bit especially when I would go home to be with family. But it took a lot of conversations of convincing them and myself that this was the right thing to do. I had to try to teach others while doing a lot of unlearning myself. “</p>
2.	<p>“I can't think of a good example for this, but I remember feeling shamed in my family when I first went natural and cut off my hair. Being (that it) wasn't as common as it is now, and I remember lots of comments from my family at the Thanksgiving Dinner table. "Like what happened to my beautiful niece?" "You remind me of Topsy from Uncle Tom's Cabin" “</p>
3.	<p>“Yes, I think hair discrimination is a real thing and I remember sometimes a family member would always say like fix your hair or you look like a ragamuffin, which is a racist bias in it's self, and it made me feel sad to not go outside feeling normal, I always had to perform and look my best, even though some white children literally roll out of bed and don't even fix their hair.”</p>

4.	“My mother who has wavy hair would ask me when she did my hair and I was younger (ages 7-14) why I came out with “bad hair” like my dad instead of “good hair” like hers.”
5.	“My mom would make me feel like I wasn’t ready to step out if my hair wasn’t “done””

Appendix F - This figure represents five responses from participants who classified their hair textures as either kinky or coily. These responses were to questions that asked if participants have ever been judged by family members or others because of the texture of their hair.

Responses related to hair texture judgement

<p>1. Have you ever wished you were able to change your skin color to a lighter complexion or your natural hair to a different texture?</p>
<p>“My natural hair to a different lighter hair texture, yes! But I have a light skin complexion so I have never wish for my skin to be different”</p>
<p>2. Can you elaborate on a time when a woman of color was shamed because of their skin color or texture?</p>
<p>“Since I have locs my hair texture/style is not easily embraced by everyone”</p>
<p>3. Do you feel more or less beautiful when your hair is in its natural state? (without heat, extensions, etc)</p>

“To me it’s all the same. I will say when I was younger I hadn’t (been) wearing my hair natural without braids because of the time it took to style and also how the white kids at my school would stare at me as if I was a mystical animal in a zoo. AND, they would touch it”

Appendix G - This figure represents responses from participants with kinky and coily hair. These particular ones were chosen because participants expressed some form of discomfort with their hair textures.

Appendix H - IRB Proposal

What is the title of your project?: An Investigation of Colorism and Texturism Within Black and Latinx Communities

Describe your research project: The purpose of this research project is to examine the ways in which colorism and texturism affects Black And Latinx women. In order to elicit this specific information, the principal investigator developed a detailed survey. Questions within this survey were divided into two main categories, social and personal. Social Questions were developed to understand the ways in which colorism and texturism operates within society. Personal questions were developed to understand how the participants internalize skin and hair related biases. Responses elicited from the survey will help researchers understand the ways in which phenotypes biases are perpetuated. These responses were also taken because Griffin (2021) wanted to investigate if colorism and texturism affected Black and Latinx women similarly.

Describe the population(s) you plan to recruit and how you plan to recruit participants. Please submit all recruitment material, emails and scripts to IRB@bard.edu *: It has been shown that women are affected by racial phenotype bias at higher rates than men. Therefore, the participants of this study will be Black and Latina women. All participants were recruited based on their willingness to volunteer in this pilot study and ability to elaborate on their experiences. Social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook will be used for recruitment purposes. These advertisements aim to motivate people to participate in the study and stress the necessity to hear their anonymous experiences.

After participants are prompted with the studies main goals they will have access to the survey. Gender, ethnicity, skin color, hair texture, and age are all characteristics that will be collected. The demographic data will be collected because it is important to investigate the relationship between the occurrences and feelings participants had with their specific phenotypes. Names and other identifying information weren't included to help ensure that all participants were anonymous.

Describe the procedures you will be using to conduct your research. Include descriptions of what tasks your participants will be asked to do, and about how much time will be expected of each individual. NOTE: If you have supporting materials (printed surveys, questionnaires, interview questions, etc.), email these documents separately as attachments to IRB@bard.edu. Name your attachments with your last name and a brief description (e.g., "WatsonSurvey.doc"). *:Participants will send a survey and they will be asked to answer each of the questions (supporting materials will be sent to IRB@bard.edu). Since it will be an online link, there will be no specific amount of time that participants will have to complete the survey.

Describe any risks and/or benefits your research may have for your participants. *: One of the major risks of the current study is that the survey questions can prompt participants to think about emotional or tough times in their lives. Although negative feelings may arise, unpacking these experiences may give participants a new understanding as to why they have been negatively impacted phenotype basis.

Describe how you plan to mitigate (if possible) any risks the participants may encounter. *: At the end of the survey Rakim Griffin's email will be provided. Participants will be able to contact the author of the study to ask any questions related to their experience taking the survey and information related to colorism and texturism. Within the consent form, contact information was also provided for participants in case they need help finding access to mental health resources.

What procedures will you use to ensure that the information your participants provide will remain confidential and safeguarded against improper access or dissemination?: In order to ensure that participants' confidentiality is upheld there will be no names recorded. Participants are prompted not to include names or any other identifying information to ensure that they remain anonymous. The survey will be created through a faculty member's Bard account to ensure that the information is safeguarded improper access or dissemination. Specific findings and information will be shared; however, participants' identity will never be known and their responses will be analyzed only by the primary investigator and research advisor.

Appendix I - Consent Form

Title: An Investigation of Colorism and Texturism Within Black and Latina Communities

Purpose of the study - The purpose of this research project is to study colorism and texturism within Black And Latinx communities. The following survey will contain questions that will ask about your personal experiences and beliefs associated with hair and skin. Truthful and elaborative responses will be greatly appreciated. The principal investigator will use this information to examine how these biases are socialized in society and internalized on a personal level. It is encouraged to include relevant details that may be specific to your gender, culture, background, and ethnic identity. Key details as such will be used to investigate the cultural similarities and differences between the respondents. However, please refrain from using information (such as names) that may be able to expose your identity.

Participation/Protection - Your participation is completely voluntary; however, all participants will be entered in a lottery to win \$25 gift cards. All responses will be kept anonymous. Only the principal investigator and his senior project advisor will have access to your responses. Please be aware that you may skip any questions you do not wish to answer and you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty. Completing the survey should take no longer than 10-15 minutes.

Risks and Benefits - There are little to no risks in participating in this study. One issue that may arise is that some questions may trigger one to think about times in which they've been negatively impacted by hair and skin bias. If in fact this does occur, it is important to know that recognizing an issue is one of the first key steps at bettering it. Therefore, if these questions prompt emotional thoughts it is encouraged to continue researching and pondering about why you feel that way. Along your journey of educating yourself we hope that you learn that your phenotypes are beautiful despite what some of society may have conditioned you to think. Please contact a mental health provider if you feel like your mental health has been significantly affected by hair and skin related biases.

If you have any further questions about mental health resources, the survey questions, or the current research please contact the primary investigator Rakim Griffin, undergraduate student, at rg9037@bard.edu, or the primary investigator's senior project advisor, professor Richard Lopez, at rlopez@bard.edu. You may also contact the Bard College's IRB committee if you have any additional questions or concerns (irb@bard.edu).

By checking the following box you are indicating that you are 18 years of age or older and willing to participate in current study.