Chapter 1- Introduction

Historically, tight lacing and corsetry was practiced mostly for the purpose of fashion, patriarchal attempts to control and discipline women's bodies as well as reducing the size of a women's waist in order to achieve the ideal feminine figure. According to A. S Hornby (2005: 329) a corset is defined as, "A piece of women's underwear, fitting the body tightly, worn especially in the past to make a women's waist appear smaller." This was followed by great controversy due to the oppression placed by the patriarchal system whereby a growing dissatisfaction among women had emerged (DeFrancis, 2005; 165). A number of women's movements were established with the aim of fighting the "corset evil" as well as gaining personal, social, economic and political freedom. With the steady decline of the use of corsets in the early twentieth century, corset manufactures made efforts to revamp and revitalise these garments with the hope of; once again, increasing its popularity as the century progressed (Fields, 1999: 355). Today, the new term waist training has gained widespread popularity around the world where women are beginning to use this garment for a number or reasons including weight loss (www.womenshealthmagazine.com: 2014). Advocates of waist trainers and body shapers would most likely agree with the assumptions I assert below, but for those who do not use these garments as well as those who have a negative perception about the garment as a whole may read this passage with skepticism. And so for this reason I will attempt to provide insight on the latter as well as unpack the controversy around Corsetry (www.corsetreturn.com; 2014).

Field of specialisation:

Despite the Negative Perception around the Use of Corsets, Why are they Growing Increasingly Popular amongst Women in Modern Society?

Proposed journal:

I would love to publish my article on *Taylor & Francis Online.* More specifically the journal on *Social Studies.* This includes a section on *Gender Studies: Studies in Gender and Sexuality.* The reason for this is that this journal contains articles and

citations on *Women and Aging, Women, Politics and Policy, Gender and Sexuality* as well as studies on *Gender, Place and Culture* to name a few. Most of which include information on certain theories and ideals about women; Feminism, Sexuality, Aging and Beauty which are linked to the topic in question (www.tandfonline.com: 2015).

The Feminist Movement is a significant part of history where the role of women in politics, the household and the economy had shifted with the hope of gaining freedom amongst women. Another example for the use of this chosen journal is the ideals around female beauty which feeds directly into the rebirth of corsets in the past few decades (Naomi Wolf: 1991). These theories will be discussed in further detail below. I suspect the participants of this journal would be scholars such as; women, theorists, politicians and feminists to say the least. One thing they may have in common is a great interest in Women's Studies from past to present.

Research problem

According to an online article from the *(www.women'shealthmagazine.com: 2014)* the use of Corsets; or Waist Training, for the purpose of weight loss or shrinking ones waist has most recently become a growing trend and is said to be, "suspiciously iffy and makes no sense. According to (www.*vocabulary.com: 2015),* a trend can be described as*," Something that is hip and popular at that specific point in time and is mostly linked to fashion and entertainment. However long they may last it is believed that old trends will always be replaced by new trends."* This will be discussed further in the passage below with reference to Gender, The Beauty Myth, and Feminist Fashion. Although the statements above make some sense of why women wear waist trainers today**,** one should not read this statement as sound. In order to remain as objective as possible a lot more research needs to be done with regards to the topic. Also, none of these statement are backed up by academic sources so it is necessary to do further primary and seconadary reseach to come to a reliable conclusion.

Objectives

- To shed new light on the recent popularity around the use of corsets with the help of historical theories such as; Gender, the Beauty Myth, and Feminist Fashion.

- To understand reasons for the positive and negative perceptions on the use of corsets from the nineteenth century up to now, by presenting sound research and evidence that supports this claim.

Rationale:

Despite the Negative Perception around the Use of Corsets, Why are they Growing Increasingly Popular amongst Women in Modern Society?

According to an article in (*www.glamourboutique.com: 2014),* the waist training process is a gradual reduction of the waist through the use of a steel boned corset. Just like any other form of training or dietary product it takes time to see results, yes there may be products that work quicker than others but this trend seems to be growing in popularity as a new form weight loss (www.*glamourboutique.com: 2014).* The negative perception around this garment stemmed from a growing dissatisfaction on the patriarchal imposed 'Women Question' ideal all the way through to feminist movements that were against its use in society.

In order to understand claims surrounding the passage above it is important to look at the three key players that contribute to the evolution of the corset; Gender, the Beauty Myth and Feminist Fashion. All three themes will help provide insight with regards to the topic in question and will provide a full understanding of the oppression on women, women's movements as well as their actions and thoughts which may led to the perceived assumption regarding corsets today (Fields, 1999: 356). It is of interest to acknowledge that the use of this garment today is rooted in the idea that women have become more and more subconsciously self-conscious about their appearances. I believe this is relevant to how women in modern society have become self-burdened by society's expectations on their appearance and how these ideas have managed to change women's ways of thinking about themselves resulting in increased self-esteem issues (Naomi Wolf: 1991). I believe it is important for women to know what steps were taken by our female ancestors with the hopes of

achieving freedom but in the end resulting in an emphasis on beauty and how women are supposed to look. Through this one will begin to understand why women have begun to use corsets for more ways than one aimed at perfecting their bodies (www.corsetreturn.com: 2014).

Hypotheses or aims in respect of the research issues:

I will be using the qualitative as well as the quantitative research method, which will include one focus group with five female participants; all of which have not previously waist trained. In addition to this I will write up a questionnaire which I will distribute to 30 women: some of which have waist trained and can provide feedback. I hypothesize that by using these methods of research I will have enough information to include in this report that may be able to support the research toipic.

Delimitation/ demarcation of the field of study:

One factor that is closely related to this topic but will not be used in the report is Fitness. Through the study you will pick up that the fitness aspect is linked to the use of this garment in modern society. Although there are links between waist training and fitness and how fitness plays a crucial role with regards to the benefits and results of waist training, none are important enough to fully support this topic.

Chapter 2- Literature review:

In order to address the research question stated in the passage above it is essential to analyse a number of literatures that are most relevant to the topic. These literatures involve important concepts that form the foundation in understanding the research question as well as supporting themes explored below and strengthened throughout this paper. This portion of the research will include a briefly detailed synopsis on ideas such as; "Gender", "The Beauty Myth" and "Feminist Fashion". The idea here is to unpack, explain and define these concepts rather than to assume or state outright allowing for a greater understanding thereof.

> Gender

This section focuses on feminism within the realms of gendered roles amongst women. With the intention of understanding the perception around the use of corsets today one needs to tract back to the middle of the nineteenth century whereby a Women's Movement emerged as a result of an increasing dissatisfaction amongst white middle-class women who lacked fulfilment in their lives. Many theorist consort that the idea grew stronger as more women were exposed to readings and travels during the period of Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution (Clark, 2008: 335; Cruea, 2005: 187; DeFrancis, 2005: 165). Both Cruea (2005: 187) and DeFrancis (2005: 177) assert that the term feminism does not emerge until the 1910s where efforts towards women's suffrage were highlighted. In order to understand feminist movements theorist believe that pre-feminist activities ought to be unpacked (Clark, 2008: 335; Cruea, 2005: 187; DeFrancis, 2005: 165).

DeFrancis (2005: 167) begins his theory by looking into the 'Women Question' which is essentially a gendered question which facilitates ones understanding of woman with regards to her biology, sexology, and sociological differences from man and ultimately defined and limited women at the time. The most important thing to note in this period is that DeFrancis (2005: 183) believes these branches created a barrier for women who ventured into all spheres that were predominantly male, nonetheless women continued to resist these

pressures. Cruea (2005: 188) pays no attention to the Woman Question arguing that at this point in time women fell victim to social and economic discrimination which limited them down to two options; marriage and motherhood or spinsterhood, all of which resulted in domestic dependency. To illustrate, she identifies four new images of women which emerged in response to this dependency: True Womanhood, Real Womanhood, Public Womanhood and New Womanhood (Cruea, 2005: 188).

Both DeFrancis and Cruea's writings focus a great deal of energy describing and differentiating between these four images. Theorists such as Clark dabble into these images but it is at the phase of the 'New Woman' where her literature comes to light. The True Woman; a female role bound by the kitchen and childcare and exhibited characteristics such as piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity (DeFrancis, 2005: 167). The Real Woman; encouraged a healthier lifestyle whereby more exercise and physical activity was fortified, they had a minor degree of independence, as well as a growing need for economic autonomy (Cruea, 2005: 191). The Public Woman; had greater access to the public and managed to claim public roles for themselves as a result of their increased participation in the moral and cultural welfare of their communities, such as church and charitable events (Cruea, 2005: 193). It is at this stage that Clark begins to focus most of her energies. The New Woman; were daughters of the mothers who fought for public access in the previous phase. They aimed at gaining more access to education, employment, and economic and civil rights, as well as attempting to change certain expectations regarding women's personal behaviour (Clark, 2008: 341). These images are examined as overlapping parts of female social history whereby a change in cultural attitudes and a gradual shift of power away from its patriarchal pressures resulted in a gradual move for women towards twentieth century feminism (Cruea, 2005: 187).

Debates around the Woman Question as well as the first three images of women ended in 1915, but their pre-existence along with the New Women ideal served as a catalyst for major reforms and movements throughout the

twentieth century. For feminists, the theory "affirmed their belief in the uniqueness of women and offered reassurance that proposed changes in women's activities would benefit society" (DeFrancis, 2005: 166). Feminism is generally described as, "A number of movements and ideologies whereby both men and women should have equal rights and opportunities; specifically in the political, economic, cultural, personal and social spheres" (Gross, 2000: 10). Although Scanlon's (2009) passage talks to the term feminism she focuses most of her efforts on the shift and differences from 2nd wave feminism to 3rd wave feminism during the twentieth century. She asserts that 1st and 2nd wave feminists fought for suffrage and then the women's liberation, 3rd wave feminists considered themselves the leaders of the feminist movement, raising matters that remained unspoken or unthinkable in the aftermath of the second wave (Scanlon, 2009: 127). She goes on to commend Helen Gurley Brown's; feminist hero, form of feminism which journeyed its way through post-war culture, second wave culture, and now third wave culture, and has resulted in greater celebrations of single life and female sexuality for women (Scanlon, 2009: 148).

➤ The Beauty Myth

In her first book *The Beauty Myth* (Wolf, 1990), American feminist writer Naomi Wolf avowed that the second wave of feminism was not much of a success (Schoemaker, 2004: 97). Laura Bryannan, a theorist who included Wolf's *Beauty Myth* in her book, references the fact that although western women gained legal and reproductive rights, aimed at seeking higher education, entered the economic world of trades and professions, as well as crossing the threshold of traditional beliefs about their social roles, this was a generation on the question, do women feel free? To this end Wolf suggests otherwise. (Bryannan, 1991: 486). To illustrate, many theorists such as (Rubin, Nemeroff and Russo, 2004: Wolf: 1990, Bryannan: 1991) agree that while the rebirth of Feminism in the 1970s intended on emancipating women in predominantly male spheres, it unexpectedly crippled their internal sense of

self-freedom through the growing emphasis on physical appearance, bodies dissatisfaction, and clothing choices (Rubin, Nemeroff and Russo, 2004: 27).

Wolf's writings proclaimed that the myth suggests 'beauty' is seen as objective and universal but with further analysis this statement is contrasted whereby women were perceived as a golden standard that added value to a women's status hierarchically which was imposed by a physical standard set by men at the time. (Bryannan, 1991: 488). Both (Bryannan, 1991: 487 and Schoemaker, 2004: 97) agree with Wolf's premise that states women were poorly paid, and were not judged by the quality and skills they delivered in the workplace, but rather by their looks. Many well educated women in the work place suffered from eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia, and as a result were forced to leave their education or work environment. The handful of women that did not diet put almost all their money into cosmetic surgery (Schoemaker, 2004: 98). She goes onto declare that women told researchers they would rather lose ten to fifteen pounds than achieve any other goal. At this stage of the twentieth century women had more money, power and legal recognition than ever before; but with regards to the way they felt about themselves physically, she states that they might have been worse off than their unliberated grandmothers (Bryannan, 1991: 487).

Through her findings Wolf believes that, "Inside the majority of the West's controlled, attractive, successful working women, there is a secret 'underlife' poisoning our freedom; infused with the notion of beauty is a dark vein of self-hatred, physical obsession, and fear of aging" (Bryannan, 1991: 487). Tiggemann and Polivy (2010: 356) further investigate this claim in their research regarding the role that social comparison processing plays in women's responses to thin, flawless images of women in the media. They hypothesized that women who compared themselves on the basis of appearance generated more negative results than a comparison based on intelligence. Results proved that both comparisons led to a decrease in mood at the time but had no effect ensuing body dissatisfaction. However, in instances where both comparisons; appearance and intelligence, were conducted there was an increased sense of body dissatisfaction. They

concluded their study by acknowledging the importance of the dimensions of which these comparisons take place as well as how crucial it is to women's responses on media-portrayed thin images. Most positive reactions were achieved by on the basis of intelligence or education (Tiggemann & Polivy, 2010: 356)

➢ Feminist Fashion

Clark begins her investigation of this theme by looking into oppression amongst women and sexist stereotypes that plagued women's identities in the nineteenth century. She establishes three types of psychological oppression on women: stereotyping, cultural domination, and sexual objectification (Clark, 2008: 339). She suggests that women were stereotyped by the patriarchal system, even the state of their bodies were controlled and made to fit the stereotype of the 'real women' at the time. It was believed that the art of disciplining women's bodies and behaviours created passive or rather, civilised bodies. Many paintings of women during this time are similar and because of the passive nature portrayed in these paintings, a stereotyped beauty had emerged, which adapted to the values of fashion in each evolutionary period in history. This period included dresses with an underskirt frame which was worn with a corset, creating an upside-down flower or hour-glass clock appearance (Clark, 2008: 340). These dresses were tight at the waist, the skirts were long and dragged on the floor making it very difficult to move freely.

According to Steele (2003: 35) the corset played an ambivalent role in the nineteenth century whereby women would only be considered "decent" if they embraced these kinds of garments. Both Steele and Clark's work conform to the concept of female psychological oppression. Steele goes onto state that although the corset allowed women to combat sexual subjectivity in such a way that seemed socially acceptable, and supposedly making one look beautiful by hiding physical features that were not idealised in society, beauty slowly became every woman's duty, by means of artifice if not naturally (Steele, 2003: 36). Clark emphasises that women's bodies were, and still are,

pressured by fashion whereby limitations on female body conduct have generated a constrained spatiality within women, ultimately creating a sense that the body is placed within hypothetical spatial barriers; disguised as oppression (Clark, 2008: 341).

Controversy on the use of corsets began in the middle of the nineteenth century and by the early twentieth century these debates strengthened when corset styles had become more constricting and uncomfortable (Fields, 1999: 355). Thus, the early twentieth century brought about a new sense of fashion for new feminists; the New Woman, which contrasted with late Victorian style. Clark goes onto say that this new woman was considered more competitive, sporty, beautiful and emancipated and started a fashion that was popularized in both Britain and America. "She would wear fashionable skirts with embroidered blouses or a shirt collar worn with either a tie, floppy artist bow, or neck-tie cravat with a stick-pin bar brooch or crosscut ruffled jabot" (Clark, 2008: 341). This new image was declared the personification of the feminine ideal and became a defining element in the changes in fashion (Fields, 1999: 357).

According to Fields (1999: 363) even though the period between, 1900-1930, birthed a decline in the use of corsets amongst women, a number of people continued to defend the use and meaning behind these corsets. The most prominent supporter of corsetry in the early 1900s became the very organised and well-funded Corset Manufacturers Association, which was founded in 1907. Fields' study focuses on the decline of the corset at this time as well as the constant efforts that were made by manufacturers to refresh and refurbish a pro-corset mindset (Fields, 1999: 357). Fields makes an important statement in understanding reasons as to why 'fighting the corsetless evil' was deemed essential at the time. "To move beyond the previous corset controversies we thus need to ask not only how dressing practices function as structures of domination or as resources of resistance, but also how these functions are instituted and why these practices generate both contested and contradictory meanings" (Fields, 1999: 356). These questions addressed the

history of the corset which was seen as a persuasive and persistent article of clothing for women, as well as the history on how the meaning behind the use of corsets affected women's lives as they fought to reshape the traditional ideas of femininity and gender relations (Fields, 1999: 357).

Fields asserts that manufacturers began to panic as the effects of corsetlessness began to spread across the country. It was assumed that the reason for this was because of the effect it had on sales and profits; a statement that was not officially backed up but certain comments by manufacturers made this believable (Fields, 1999: 364). Fields work covers the journey undertaken by manufacturers who had developed a campaign against the "Corsetless Evil", recruiting corset saleswomen to assist in the movement. The aim here was to create a corset for women that was more comfortable consequently making women would want to wear these garments. Fields discovers that this was achieved when manufacturers took a new approach and aimed at personalising these garments to fit the new women. For example, they made a number of corsets that were specific to different women's needs and lifestyles, such as sports corsets which were lighter and more flexible, as well as corsets made for dancing; the tango, at events (Fields, 1999: 359).

Fields believes an important breakthrough was made at this stage. Eventually, according to Vogue, a compromise was reached between fashionable women and couturiers whereby waists would be taken in, but not as much as the previous garments. Although, this strategy seemed to work in their favour it was not enough to keep the use of corsets afloat, manufacturers flooded the public with literatures and advice which educated consumers on its health benefits, risks, proper use, etc. Also, they renamed the corsets to the new term "girdle" in order to break away from the previous controversies surrounding the garment (Fields, 1999: 364).

A critical thing to note in Fields' work is that manufacturers aimed at targeting young girls as they were considered the "future mothers of our race" and so made efforts to ensure that their first experience in the corset shop would be valuable and successful with the hopes of making her a lifelong corset

customer (Fields, 1999: 369). In addition, their marketing strategy was to create commercial classifications of figure types which highlighted the "problem figure" and pointed out "figure faults" amongst women. Accordingly, an emphasis on female imperfections in society had emerged, where corsets were valued on their ability to solve "figure faults. This strategy played a persuasive role in women's lives whereby it was asserted that the use of corsets could resolve women's flaws and insecurities. (Fields, 1999: 373). Steele backups this premise by demonstrating how the well-established and lasting iconic power of the corset conveyed a strong sense of social meaning (Steele, 2003: 36). Fields' work marked an important part in the evolution of the corset with its success in targeting younger women and daughters. And so, by targeting the 'young girl figure' and convincing them that this figure required a corset, manufacturers where able to convince most women concerned with fashionability that corsets remained a necessity which continued throughout the twentieth century (Fields, 1999: 375).

Theorists such as Scanlon emphasised the efforts made by Helen Gurley an extremely influential feminist in the 1960s onwards; she published the feminist book *Sex and the Single Girl,* in 1962, and transformed the Cosmopolitan magazine from 1965; and is the current international editor. Scanlon goes on to state that as founder of the second wave of feminism as well as a key player of the third wave, Brown carried a philosophy of feminism that is still prevalent in women today. For example, women were enjoying and exploring their sexual freedom and pleasures, confidently wearing revealing clothes and acknowledging the pleasures capitalism affords as well as the problems it inflicts in society (Scanlon, 2009: 129). Brown promoted the issue of fashion and feminist fashion in her book where she expresses the idea that fashion was/is indeed an important economic enterprise but also, a space that provided women with a sense of self-affirmation as well as being able to have fun with it. Scanlon adds that the meaning behind dressing well for women directly resulted in 'pleasure in the self'. "I think you do it more for yourself than for your audience and it has nothing to do with your brain power or your executive ability." Women embraced fashion choices such as cosmetics, feminine clothing, mini-skirts, corsets, and high-heels and even adopted some

male fashion choices such as jeans, t-shirts and sneakers (Scanlon, 2009: 130).

According to author Vanna B (2014: 1) the corset has made an outstanding comeback, once considered a fashion essential in achieving the 'perfect' female form the corset has gained widespread popularity amongst women partly due to increased celebrity interested; celebrities such as Kim Kardashian, Beyonce, Jessica Alba, Jennifer Garner and many more frequent these garments. Her book provides great insight on how women are once again lacing up daily with the goal loosing inches around their waists as well as reshaping their bodies to achieve the desired female form. This practice, known as waist training or corset training, is aimed at achieving the sought-after hourglass figure, exuding sex appeal as well as a sense beauty. Waist training can be defined as, "The wearing of a corset with the intention of semi-permanently slimming and reducing the waist circumference. The regular wear of an appropriate steel-boned corset can reshape the lower ribs and abdominal fat, in turn, gradually decreasing the waistline" (Vanna B, 2014: 2). And so fashion, both a system signification and a set of regulatory practices, is thus an arena of social struggle over meaning (Fields, 1991: 357).

Conceptual Framework

Every study discipline is based on certain theories and models, this study conceptualises the literature with the use of the Systemic Thinking Approach. The Father of systemic thinking Mr Jay Forrester; MIT professor, founded the concept in the field of system dynamics, in 1956 (Aronson, 1990: 1). He had identified that there was a need to find a better way of testing new ideas and theories about social systems. According to Bartlett (2001, 2) systemic thinking can be defined as, "A simple thinking technique used to gain systemic insights into multifaceted situations and problems". In essence, this approach focuses on how the object being studied interrelates with the other components within the system (Aronson, 1990: 1). And so everything in the system works together with (impacts and is impacted by) everything that

surrounds it. In context, this model seemed to best fit the literature above making it easier for me to identify and define the common themes, issues and perceptions around the use of corsets. Through this I believe I have been able to provide an effective framework model that may equip our society to think systemically in a way that is conscious and deliberate rather in an uncurious and casual manner (Bartlett, 2001: 6).

The systemic loop diagram presented below includes the most important themes I identified in the literature above; coercion, satisfaction, influence and pro-corset, and how their supporting factors; freedom, beauty, the beauty myth, younger generations, education, meaning, influenced and were influenced by, everything in the system; the evolution of the corset. The diagram shows how coercion, as a prominent theme, decreases satisfaction in women. This is evident by the fact that most theorist in the study such as, (Clark, 2008: 335; Cruea, 2005: 187; DeFrancis, 2005: 165) and many more others, agree on the fact that women were oppressed by patriarchy; socially, economically and politically, which resulted in a decreased in satisfaction amongst women. Their growing dissatisfaction lead to an increase in their perceived satisfaction; freedom, more and more women wanted to free themselves from the patriarchal strong-arm and had developed a perception of how they ought to be living.
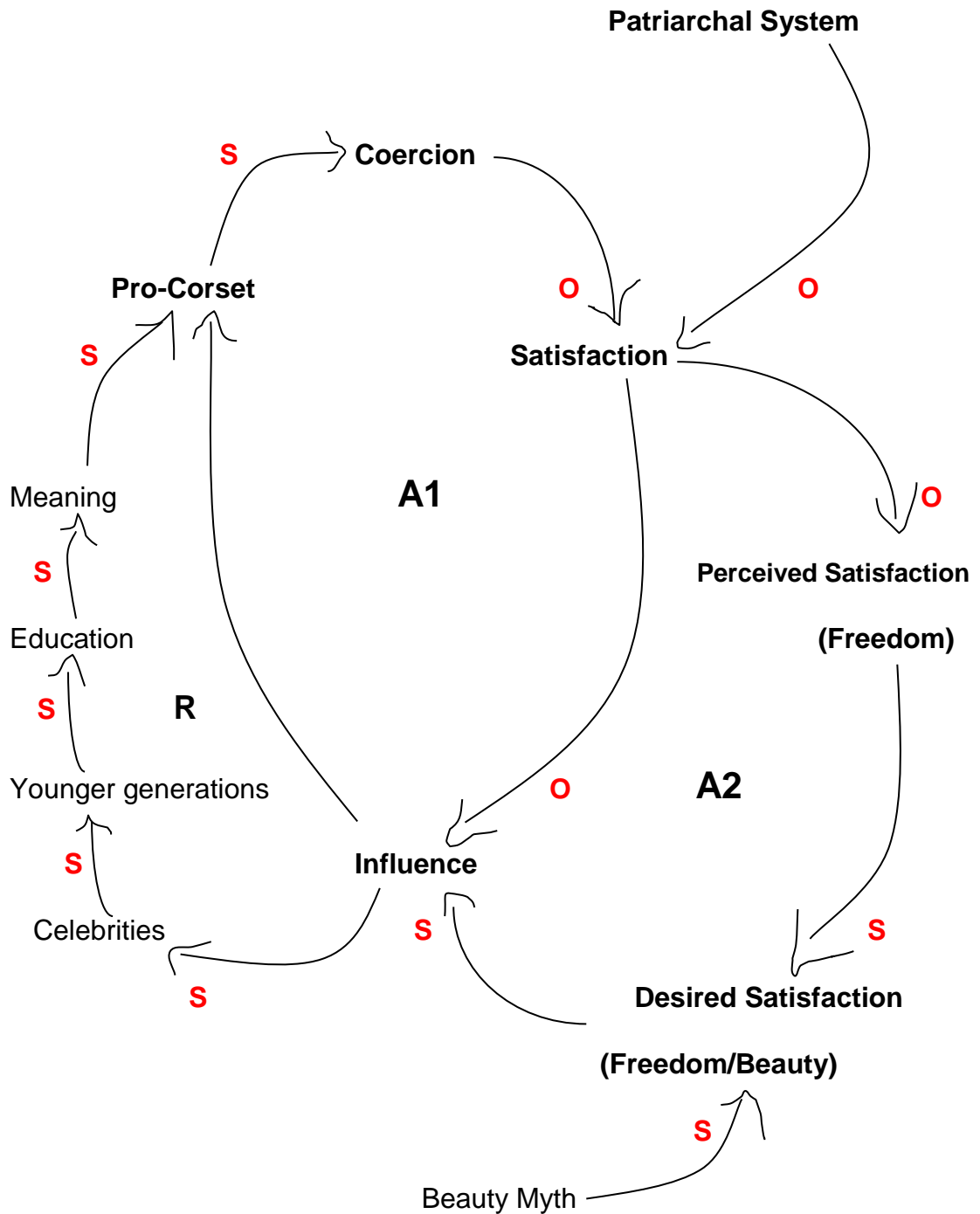
The actions taken by women at this point stemmed from the period of the 'new women' whereby women's movements were growing and sparked the beginning of the feminist movements that continued throughout the twentieth century (DeFrancis, 2005: 166). As more women stood together fighting for the same cause there was a shift from their perceived satisfaction to their desired satisfaction. At this point the beauty myth had changed their initial idea of what they believed their freedom should be. What was once freedom at its core had become a sense of freedom whereby feeling beautiful or good about the self was an essential idea to achieve. To illustrate, women's sense of freedom had become more about how they looked rather than being independent. Regardless the beauty myth increased desired satisfaction

among women consequently increasing influence which marks an important part of the evolution of the corset (Schoemaker, 2004: 98).

At this stage there was a decline in the use of corsets and so there was an emphasis on identifying elements; in the journey of the corset, that would positively influence the pro-corset movement. To illustrate, major manufacturers had developed a pro-corset campaign which targeted the younger generation; daughters of feminist mother, young girls etc, who were easier to persuade and more likely to carry on the trend (Fields, 1999: 375). Furthermore, celebrities played a major role in influencing the use of corsets today, because fans are so loyal nowadays they are inspired to do the same things in their lives what their idols do in their own lives (Vanna B, 2014: 1). Also, education played an influential role where corset advertising provided women with more information on the garment which had a positive effect on the pro-corset journey (Fields: 1999: 370). Finally, and most importantly, meaning was critical in the evolution of the corset where women were made to believe they needed to use these garments in order to achieve their ideal feminine figure.

Consequently, these four factors increased the pro-corset movement which has continued till today. The "R" in this extended loop indicates that it is a recurring pattern and so, if these four elements can be maintained they should have a positive effect on the pro-corset ideal. In the end the diagram indicates that the pro-corset movement had decreased coercion, because women felt more liberated, could work in any field and were able to do and wear what they wanted a sense of freedom was achieved (Scanlon, 2009: 130).

Systemic Loop Diagram

Patriarchal System

Coercion

S

Pro-Corset

S

O

O

Meaning

S

A1

Satisfaction

O

Education

Perceived Satisfaction

(Freedom)

S

R

Younger generations

A2

S

O

Celebrities

Influence

S

S

S

S

Desired Satisfaction

(Freedom/Beauty)

S

Beauty Myth

Objectives of the study:

➢ To shed new light on the recent popularity around the use of corsets with the help of historical ideals such as; Gender, the Beauty Myth, and Feminist Fashion.

➢ To understand reasons for the positive and negative perceptions on the use of corsets from the nineteenth century up to now, by presenting sound research and evidence that supports this claim.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

Introduction

The research above displays the evolution of the corset throughout the ages. According to Oxford English Dictionary (AS, Hornby: 2005, 1242) the word research is described as, "A careful study of a subject, especially in order to discover new facts and information about it." It took a vast amount of information about corsets and how they transformed female behaviour to strengthen the topic in question. At this point the research has only touched the surface as to why/if corsets have gained popularity today.

Research Design and Methods

This chapter will provide greater insight through the use of a mixed-method research approach which will be defined below. "Sometimes, circumstances or the problem under investigation demand that both approaches ought to be used in the same study in order to confirm or elaborate each other. For example, a mixture of questionnaires (quantitative) and observations (qualitative)" (Bless *et al*, 2013: 16). Quantitative Research can be defined as, "An understanding of the facts of a research investigation from an outsider's perspective. And so, it is important for researchers to remain detached and have an objective view of the facts as that will keep the research process, hypothetically, free from bias" (Welman *et al*, 2005: 9). To illustrate, this method somewhat follows a process used by natural scientists; collecting data (including measurements or frequencies) according to a specific set of steps, and by doing so attempts to remain as objective as possible (Bless *et al*, 2013: 16).

Qualitative Research is defined as, "An aim to achieve an insider's view by talking to subjects or observing their behaviour in a subjective way. It is a belief that first-hand experience of the object under investigation produces the best data" (Welman *et al*, 2005: 9). The design used in this portion was the ethnographic approach in conducting the research. "Ethnography is an approach to quantitative analysis whereby a set of research methods are chosen in order to investigate respondents' cultural lives" (Bless *et al*, 2013; 391). This section will include structured interviews; the use of a standard interview program by an interviewer in order for all

interviewees to be given exactly the same questions. Interviewers ought to read out questions; to each interviewee, in exactly the same way in the same sequence, in order for them to be aggregated (Welman, 2006). This report has done just that, I made use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Due to the fact that there is not much information and valid sources on the current trend, I felt the need to use both methods to gain greater insight and perceptions from a variety of women. Through this I managed to gain insight about what women think about corsets and waist trainers; both positive and negative, what their perceptions are on the concept of ideal beauty and how this affects their personal well-being.

Population

"This section refers to a number of units such as people, nations, cities, regions, etc, from which the sample will be collected" (Welman, 2006). Furthermore, by involving a collection of all the necessary units of analysis the population provided a framework which adds value in categorising women; interviewees, in a set group which was useful in analysing the findings. My population includes a target market within LSM 7-10; middle to upper class female market between ages 20-50. A total of 20 women were selected for this population; four women for qualitative and 15 women for quantitative. This involved women from all races, living and working in different locations in South Africa and are representative of different body shapes and sizes. The desired target market is typically women who are health and fitness conscious, but still included women who were less concern about their looks. I believe this choice of population provided valuable insight on the female perceptions regarding corsets and waist trainers, as well as their idea and feelings of beauty. The population demographics in this research remained consistent for both mixed-methods; qualitative and quantitative methods, throughout the research process.

Sampling

This portion is described as, "A group of elements taken from the population which is considered to be representative of the population and is studied in order to acquire some knowledge about the entire population" (Bless, 2013: 395). As mentioned above the selected population includes a target market within LSM 7-10; middle to

upper class female market between ages 20-50. The selection of women range from fitness junkies, to chubby women and even small framed women; living in South Africa.

This research displays the use of a probability sample approach which can be defined as, "Determining the probability that any member of the population can be selected for the sample role" (Welman, 2005: 56). Indeed with regards to the quantitative research method I approached 15 random women, people I did not know with the aim of acquiring fair and sound results. In addition, this form of probability sampling runs less of risk for error. A sampling error is defined as, "A margin of error in which the sample is representative of the population due to inadequate sampling" (Bless *et al*, 2013; 395). To illustrate, because I selected a random group of women with different demographic features, their knowledge and personal experience added greater value to the research as opposed to gathering information from a group of women that I selected. This would then produce bias results defeating the purpose of the entire investigation. Again, the sample demographics in this research remained consistent for both mixed-methods; qualitative and quantitative methods, throughout the research process.

Furthermore, the purposive sampling method was used to gain more insight. "Purposive Sampling is defined as, "The factors that are most intricate and rich in information adding value to the research" (Bless *et al*, 2013; 177). The process was achieved through a field study whereby I set up structured interviews with four females in a group. To illustrate, I had selected four individuals whom I thought were a great representation of the population in their age group. Also, I found that because waist training is a new trend steadily gaining exposure with not much academic information to support it, it felt fitting to select women who had some knowledge on the topic and then some. In this way I believe I managed to gain insight on corsets and waist trainers and picked up valuable information on the underpinning essence of beauty.

Procedure

This section involved self-completion questionnaires; 15 copies, targeted at a variety of women between the ages of 20-50, which included closed-ended questions with a few open ended questions to gain further insight. The closed-ended questions (yes, no or chose from suggested answers) helped remodel the results and convert them into measurable statistics through graph, tables, and pie charts, etc. Later, I took all my questionnaires and digitally recorded each questionnaire on to my laptop. I then created an excel spreadsheet whereby I grouped all responses to each question in table form. Once this was complete I had converted all some of my tables into graphs and tables. When presenting my findings I found that this was a great way for the reader to view a summarised version of questionnaire; it is more interesting and easier to read and in most cases it is easier to understand. As well this method provided insight on what a wider scope of women think about the research problem which is essential for providing societies opinion on the topic and added value to my findings. (See Appendix 2)

Qualitative approach involved four participants between ages 23-28; with whom I conducted a structured interview on the 6 June 2015. I provided a very relaxed setting; my home in my living area, with which some of the interviewees were familiar. This casual environment made respondents more relaxed and at ease when answering my questions. I recorded the interview on my Samsung tablet and began with a brief introduction of my topic to the respondents before starting the interview. The interview was about 35 minutes long and once this part was complete I immediately recorded the data. I opened a word document and typed out each response from each respondent and grouped each individual response to each question. Not much transformation of the data was done here, although I did ensure that I elaborated on each response where necessary. The interview schedule was very similar to the questionnaire format in the quantitative section but allowed for much for flexibility when answering the questions. As well the questions were both closed-ended and open-ended but, in this case allowed for a much great response when it came to the open-ended questions.

Data Analysis

Once the data collection was completed I then had to analyse the data. The word data analysis can be defined as, "A process of analysing and interpreting the information received through ones data collection" (Welman *et al*, 2013; 210). At this point in time is was easy to pick up that the research methods used in this study were able to answering the research question; to some degree. Although valuable insight was generated; as a research, I had to consider how reliable, valid and trustworthy the data was, this will be discussed in the section below. Due to the fact that I used both the quantitative and qualitative methods my data analysis section became two-fold.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The easiest way to describe the quantitative data analysis process is that the data collected is measured through the use of statistical techniques; graphs, pie charts, etc. These techniques are represented as numbers and make it easier to calculate, record, read and most importantly understand the data (Welman; 2005; 211). This was the easy part of the data collection. Most of the questions in the questionnaire where closed-ended questions which allowed me a clear visual of what a random sample of women thought about corsets, beauty and body image. The information collected from this data strengthened my premise; in the literature review, that the idea of achieving ones idealised beauty was highlighted. (See Appendix 1)

The sample population in ths section uses a total of 15 women and so all the data was measured within this sample size. I took the total number of women and divided that by x (variable) and multiplied that by 100; in order to get a percentage. Some of the data analysis is recorded as follows:

Q 1: 46% aesthetic beauty

Defintion of Beauty	Aesthetic Beauty	Natural Beauty	Inner Beauty	Other
	7	4	4	0

Beauty Standards

(bar chart: Aesthetic Beauty ≈7, Natural Beauty ≈4, Inner Beauty ≈4, Other ≈0)

Series1 ■ Series2
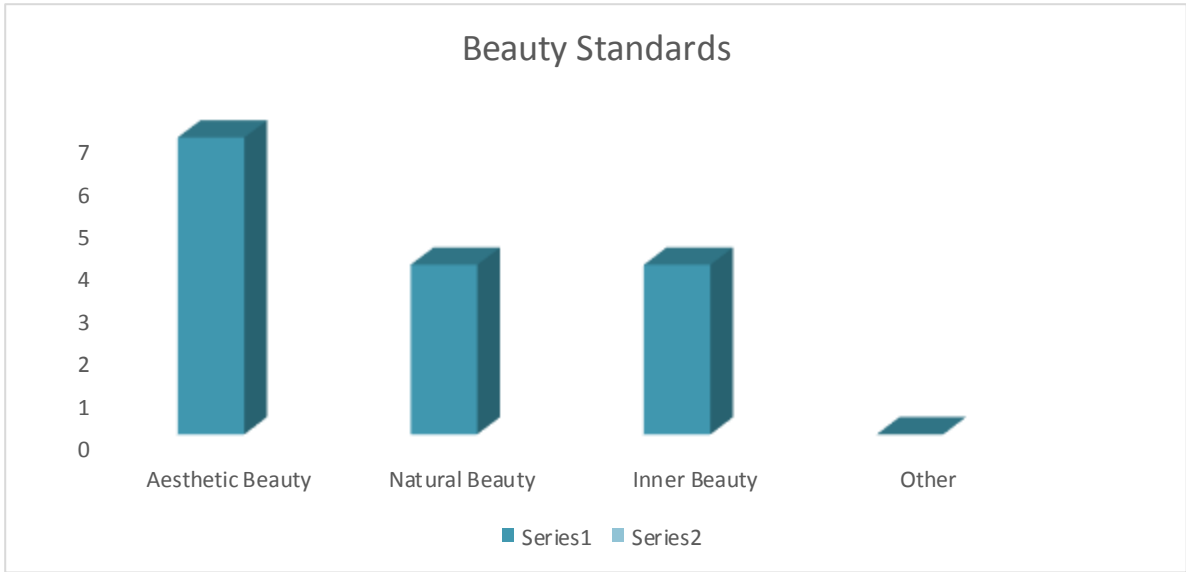
Q 2: 93.3% said yes

Wear make-up	Yes	14
	No	1
Wear heels	Yes	14
	No	1

Beauty Measures

(bar chart)

Wear make-up		Wear heels	
Yes 14	No 1	Yes 14	No 1
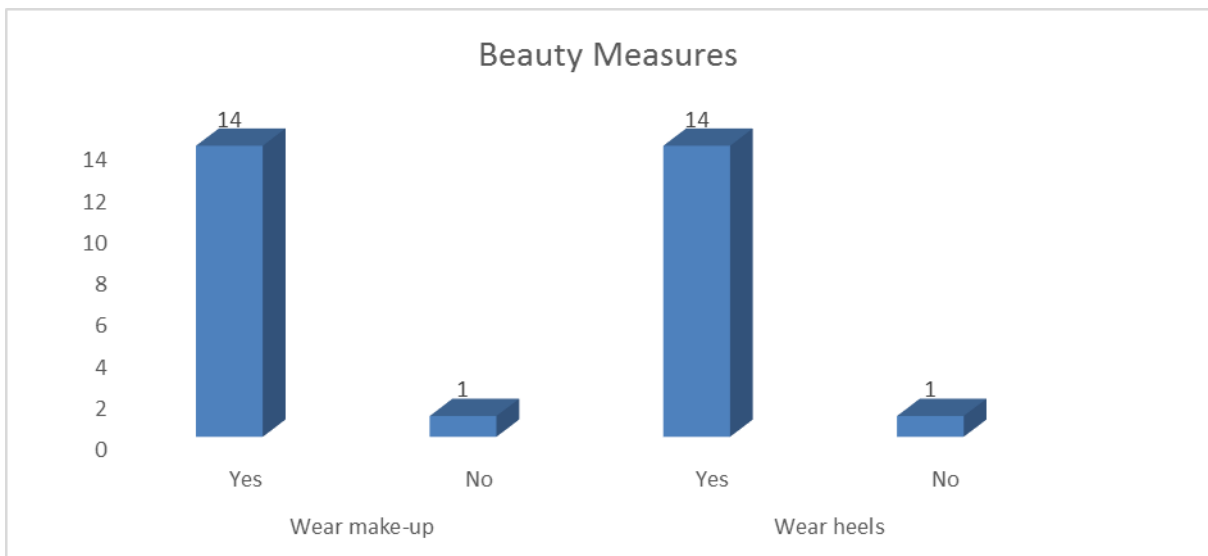
Q 3: 100% societal pressure

Q 4: 73% personal pressure

Societal Pressure	Yes	15
	No	0
Personal Pressure	Yes	11
	No	4

External/Internal Pressure

A bar chart titled "External/Internal Pressure" showing Societal Pressure (Yes ≈ 15, No ≈ 1) and Personal Pressure (Yes ≈ 11, No ≈ 4).
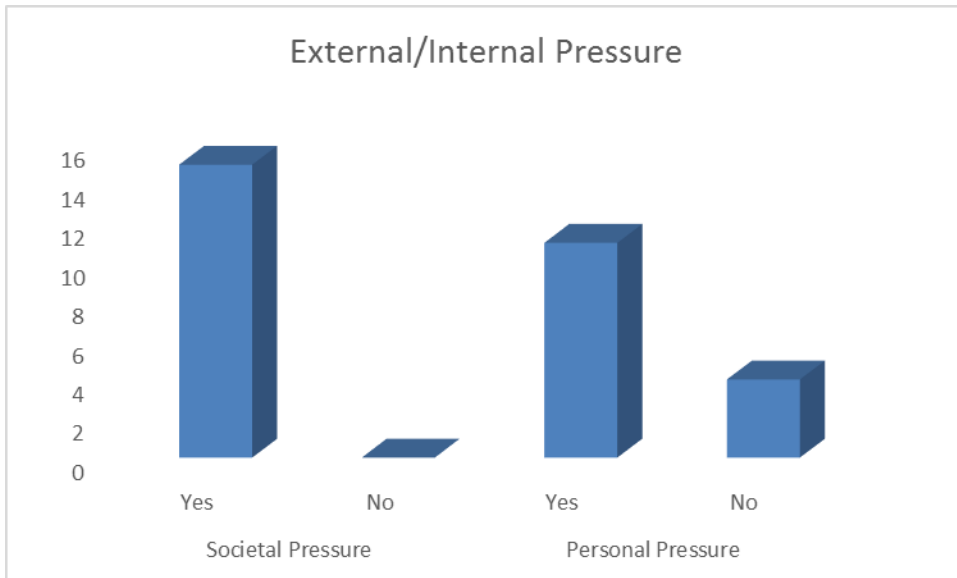
Q 5 &6: both 93.3% said yes

Q 6.1: 100% said yes

Q 7: 73.3% said yes

Heels damage feet	Yes	15
	No	0
Squeezed into clothes	Yes	11
	No	4

Body Mutilation

A bar chart titled "Body Mutilation" showing Heels damage feet (Yes = 15, No = 0) and Squeezed into clothes (Yes = 11, No = 4).
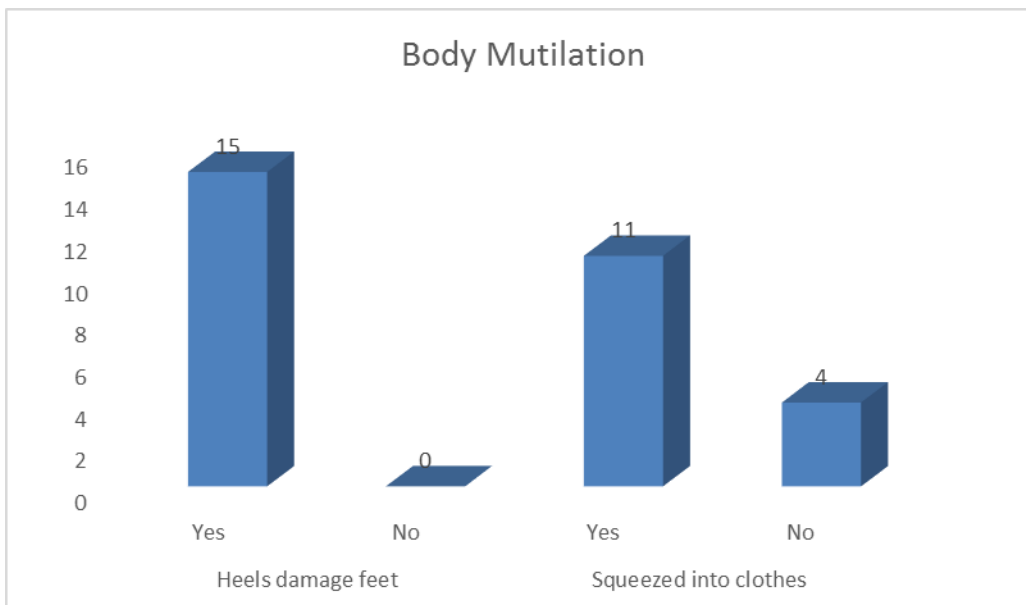
Q 8: 60% said no

Q 10: 53.3% said yes

Extreme Dieting

	Yoyo Dieting	Overdoing diets	Misusing diet pills
	8 / 7	11 / 4	11 / 4

Q 14: 100% knowledge

Q 15: 60% are for it

Q 16: 20% worn it

Q 17: 100% knowledge

Q 20: 66.6% said yes

Q 21: 80% said yes

Wear corsets?	Yes	3
	No	12
Waist trainers?	Yes	15
	No	0

Corsets or Waist Trainers?

Wear corsets?		Waist trainers?	
Yes	No	Yes	No
3	12	15	0
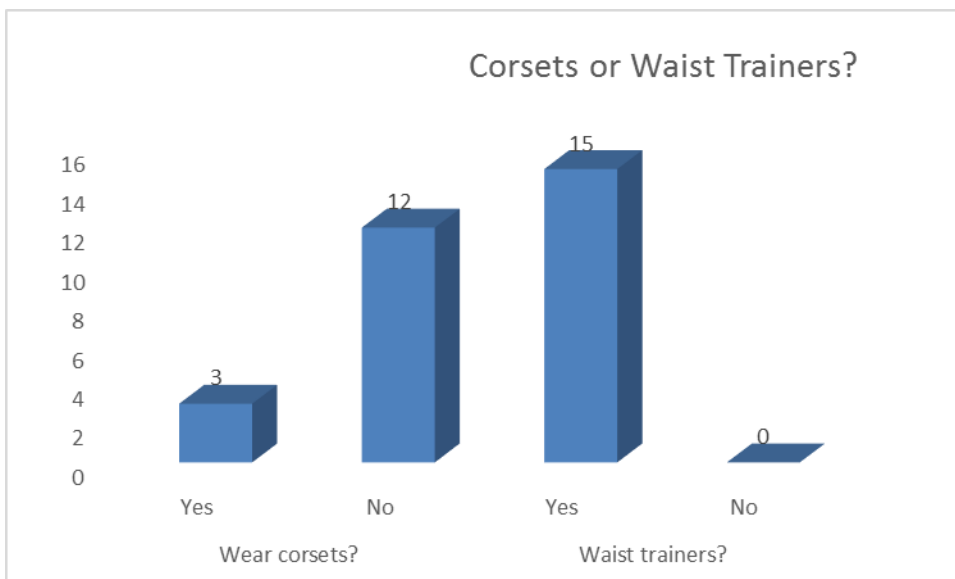
(See Appendix 4 for further tables)

Both validity and reliability are essential in analysing an instrument; in context, questionnaires and structured interviews, but are completely different concepts (Bless *et al*, 2013; 229). "Validity is described as the degree to which a research investigation manages to measure what it intended to measure" (Bless *et al*, 2013; 395). To illustrate, an investigation is only valid if it measures or demonstrates what the researcher thinks or claims it does (Welman, 2005; 142). Validity in a study is concerned with questions such as, 'what does this instrument actually measure?' also, 'what do the results actually mean?' With regards to this study I believe validity was achieved in that I managed find a variety of women, with different body types, looks and different social backgrounds. All the respondents seemed to be very comfortable sharing this type of personal information with me; they appeared to be very reliable sources.

Reliability can be described as, "A concern with regards to the findings of the research and relates to the findings of the research" (Welman *et al*, 2005; 145). When evaluating the reliability of a study one must consider one important question: will the evidence and conclusions withstand inspection and scrutiny in the case of a sceptic? Furthermore, the necessity of generalisation relates to the reliability of the scores obtained whereby the consistency of these scores; assigned to certain individuals. I believe that the data collected can be considered as fairly reliable. To illustrate, all participants seemed to be reliable sources; as mentioned above, but one needs to consider the fact that there may not have been enough participants when conduction this approach to come to a final conclusion that is representative of the female population in South Africa. My questionnaires only reached 15 women. By having more participants in this study, reliability would have increased.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis involves an interest in the lives and personal experiences on individuals, groups or communities (Bless *et al*, 2013; 338). This approach is captured and analysed through text, rather numbers; much like the quantitative approach (Welman *et al*, 2005; 211). Qualitative researches contend that analysing data solely through numerical scores will not be able to fully capture the essence of

human experience (Bless *et al*, 2005; 339). Qualitative researches are fascinated by the stories people tell themselves about themselves. Whether the story is 'true' or not is less than important compared whether it captures a person's experience of their life and the world they live in. In this case, truth is always understood in relative or personal terms. Each person has their own unique perspective of the world which ought to be explored (Bless *et al*, 2013: 339). The structured interview conducted supports the explanation above, the idea was to try and get into the minds of women in order to gain greater insight. With the use of both open-ended and closed-ended questions I managed to obtain a valuable amount of information.

The success of the qualitative data analysis is measured through trustworthiness whereby one ought to consider how much trust can be given to the research and findings. At this point, I discovered that credibility was indeed achieved due to the fact that each participant's repsponses did not seem to be influenced by our individuals in the interview.

Chapter 4- Research Findings and Analysis

This part of the data analysis process includes research findings that were derived from both primary (lterarture) and secondary (questionnaires and interviews) research. With regards to the questionnaire the findings were are follows:

Research Finding 1

"Pressure to achieve idealised beauty"

46% of women in this study agreed that their definition of beauty was strongly linked to aesthetic beauty. Furthermore, external and internal pressure was highlighted in that it played a big role in achieving; what they believed to be, idealised beauty. Here, 100% of women felt that there is great pressure from society to look 'good' and 73% of women believe this pressure affects them on a personal level. The analysis shows how aesthetic beauty and internal and external pressure work hand in hand in that, most women believe beauty is judged by looks which in this study was are of pressure inflected on them.

This secondary research supports the primary research whereby the beauty myth; developed in the 20th century, also had an effect on the working women in the workplace (See literature review).

(See Appendix)

Qualitative perspectives- Finding 1

[Supporting and in-depth findings]

What is your definition of beauty?

- Believe it is a different rage of things. Genuine aesthetic beauty. Beauty that comes from a glow in confidence.

- Natural beauty and not wearing too much make up.

- Visually appealing.

- Aesthetically pleasing.

Do you feel women are pressured by society to look good?

- I don't think women are necessarily pressured by society, I think its self-inflicted pressure because I think there is a bunch of definitions of beauty. As women, we feel

like we need to look a certain way, it's not necessarily by society.

- Rhetoric is now equal. People for make-up and people for the natural look. Its equal now and so people are free to choose how they want to look.

- I think they are. There is the influence of Instagram and people have more access to social media who look perfect on these platforms. Making women feel they need to look like that in order to look beautiful.

Does this affect you personally?

- No not really. I'm about natural beauty. I don't let what society says define what I see as beautiful. I am beautiful the way I am.

- I suppose so. Eyebrow thing, great hair, I want to be tanned.

- It's my own standards of how I want to look. People glorify big asses and I want none of that.

- From myself. I do what I think looks good. People think big flowy weave and big lashes look good and at times I feel that way as well. But other times I don't and I go with what I think

Research Finding 2

"Pressure resulting in measures of weight loss"

Again this finding speaks directly to the beauty myth. As a result of the analysis above 60% women that were dissatisfied with their bodies would go on diets in order to lose weight. They believe that losing weight is the key to increasing personal satisfaction. The primary research supports this claim whereby working women began to take measures in achieving the idealised beauty at the time. This pressure inflicted on women led to eating disorders, plastic surgery, etc. The secondary research shows that today, 73.3% of women tend to take their weight loss lifestyles too far and have misused diets in the past in order to speed up the process and achieve their goal weight. This finding proves that extreme dieting trends have continued; even today, and that women put too much pressure on themselves to look good.

Qualitative perspectives- Finding 2

Are you satisfied with your body?

- Yes

- Yes kind of but it could improve. Get a firm bum through fitness.

- No I would love to lose weight I'd feel better.

- No I want to have toned thighs, bums, and a flat stomach

Research Finding 3

"Corsets in the form of waist trainers are gaining interest and popularity"

100% of the respondents have knowledge on both corsets and waist trainers. Respondents provided some open-ended answers to this finding (See Appendix). Firstly, 60% of women are pro-corset due to the celebrity influence, the aesthetic of the garment when worn and its perceived elegance. On the one hand, something interesting to note here is that although the majority of my population sample are pro-corset only 20% of which would wear them. This means that with regards to traditional corsets women like the idea but is not strong enough to make they go out and buy the garment. On the other hand, 66.6% of women believe these garments are much safer than the traditional corsets as well, 80% of women would wear a waist trainer. Furthermore, they mentioned that they would certainly wear waist trainers if it really worked in helping them lose weight.

According to my primary research corsets have been revamped and changed to create an additional product deemed as waist trainers also, waist trainers are marketed with the idea of weight loss. I found that this was a sense of history repeating itself. My primary research highlighted that when anti-corset campaigns gained popularity; in the early 1900s, manufacturers had to develop new marketing strategies that created meaning behind wearing corsets. Also, they changed its name from corset to girdle in order to detach the negatives perceptions around corsets. The research proves that by changing the name of the garment as well as creating meaning behind its use, women are more likely to gain interest and test it out.

Qualitative perspectives- Finding 2

Why do you think women have started wearing waist trainers?

- There have been different eras, different erogenous zones. At some point people were obsessed with big boobs, showing chest, the back. The erogenous hourglass at this point is very popular and that's the way to get it.

- To get body back after you've had a baby or get an hourglass figure. Trends change and there must have been a time when I skinny or fit body was in desired and now there is an emphasis on a small waist and big bum
- easy way out, instead of having to go to the gym you can just wear it or still go to gym and it speeds up the process. Some women struggle with their figures and this maybe helps them achieve that.
- Hourglass silhouette is back in fashion and people want to go with the trend.

Chapter 5- Conclusion and Recommendations

With regards to the topic stated, the above research findings prove that corsets in the form of waist trainers have gained popularity today. To illustrate; on the one hand, the success of the traditional corset has not gained much momentum; in terms of its use by women, from the last few decades of the 20th century until now. On the other hand, the waist trainer trend has gained popularity; amongst women, in most recent years. This gives thanks to the revamping and revitalising of this garment whereby the phrase has been changed from corset/girdle to waist trainer, meaning has been created through weight loss marketing as well as the influence of celebrities such as Kim Kardashian.

Although the research conducted has answered the research topic one must consider the fact that research was only conducted with a total of 20 women. Their answers and comments did indeed provide valuable information and insight on the topic but I believe a bigger sample population would further strengthen the validity, reliability, trustworthiness credulity of the research findings.

Furthermore, there was other factors that contribution to the arrival of this conclusion such as gender, the beauty myth and, feminist fashion. During the research process I picked up that the idea of achieving ones perceived idealised beauty became a prominent feature in the study. Not only did traditional corsets become a catalyst of oppression on women but it was also perceived as a form of beautification and status among women at the time. As decades passed society had developed more forms of beautification elements which added value in achieving ones

ideal figure/beauty; make-up, heels, lingerie, diet methods, and other products designed to enhance perceived beauty.

Although, fitness has been delimited in this study I would recommend looking into why the wellness industry has grown; from the 1900s until now. This could add value and insight to the study because a number of women in my study go on diets and take weight loss products and even find interest in wearing waist trainers to lose weight and feel good about themselves. It would be interesting to confirm whether women exercise to lose weight and to look and feel good as opposed to achieving beauty prescribed by their own or society's unrealistic ideals.

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Appendices

Appendix 1- Quantitative and Quantitative format- Questionnaire

Age:
Place of work
Place of Residence:
Occupation:

1. What is your definition of beauty?
2. Do you practice your own beauty methods on a daily basis? Explain.
3. Do you feel women are pressured by society to look good?
4. Does this affect you personally?
5. Do you where make-up? Why?
6. Do you wear heels? Why?
6.1. Do you think heels damage you feed? Why?
7. Have you ever squeezed yourself into clothes that don't fit just to look smaller (tight clothes, jeans, bras, etc)?
8. Are you satisfied with your body?
9. Have you ever struggled with your weight? What was the problem (lose weight, gain weight, maintain)?
10. Have you ever worn any kind of body shaper?
11. Have you struggled with yoyo dieting in the past?
12. Have you ever taken your diets too far (starving yourself, overeating, taking)?
13. Have you ever taken any unsafe diet pills or weight-loss products?
14. Do you know what a corset is?
15. What are your personal views on corsets? Why?
16. Would you ever worn a corset?
17. Do you know the new term waist training?
18. What have you heard about waist training?
19. Why do you think women have started wearing waist trainers?
20. Do you think waist training is a safer option or any different from the corsets you know? Why?
21. Would you wear a corset if you knew that it was safe and effective? Why?

Appendix 2- Quantitative table

Age	20-30	30-40	40-50	
	9	5	1	
Areas	**Work**	Sandton Rosebank Auckland Park Rustenburg Housewife Braamfontein Fourways	**Live**	Illovo Parkwood Melville Morningside Randburg Harare Rustenburg Bryanston Fourways Northcliff Rosebank
Occupation	Herbalife Distributer Personal Trainer Student Personal Assistant Singer/Song Writer Teacher Accountant Entrepreneur Adverting Assistant Stay at home mpm Fashion Operations Assistant Fashion Buying Assistant			

Defintion of Beauty	Aesthetic Beauty	Natural Beauty	Inner Beauty	Other
	7	4	4	0

Practice Beauty Methods	No	2		
	Reasons	Like to stay natural I don't like make-up		
	Yes	13		
	Reasons	Make-up Face masks tanning/skin lighteners skin products		9 2 3 4

Pressure from Society	Yes	15
	No	0

Affect personally	Yes	11
	No	4

Wear make-up	Yes	14
	No	1

Wear heels	Yes	14
	No	1

Heels damage feet	Yes	15
	No	0

Squeezed into clothes	Yes	11
	No	4

Satisfied with your body	Yes	6
	No	9

Struggled with weight	Yes	12
	No	3

Body shapers	Yes	8
	No	7

Yoyo Dieting	Yes	8
	No	7

Overdoing diets	Yes	11
	No	4

Misusing diet pills	Yes	11
	No	4

Corset?	Yes	15
	No	0

Views on corsets	Fore it	13
	Reasons	Celebrity influence- Kim Kardashian Loves the look Likes the hourglass look Looks elegant
	Against it	2
	Reasons	Damages organs Some women take it too far

Wear corsets?	Yes	3
	No	12

Waist trainers?	Yes	15
	No	0

Why wearing waist trainers?	Yes	15
	Reasons	Celebrity influcer Looks good Great bodies It looks like it works
	No	0
	Reasons	

Waist trainers safer?	Yes	11
	No	4

Would you wear it?	Yes	13
	Reasons	Want to buy one Want to see if it works Have kids and want to get rid of baby bump To maintain
	No	2
	Reasons	Prefer not to

Appendix 3- Qualitative data analysis

1. Gally- Believe it is a different rage of things. Genuine aesthetic beauty. Beauty that comes from a glow in confidence.

   Alisha- Natural beauty and not wearing too much make up.
   Michel- Visually appealing.
   Tumi- Aesthetically pleasing.

2. Tumi- I wear make-up every day and I on put different kinds of lashes in every day. I feel naked if I don't have eye make up on. I believe in name brand face care. I use Clinique and mac only.

   Gally- I wash my face and put on cream that is great for my skin. I put on make-up every day.
   Michel- I prefer the natural look. I prefer to leave my afro out. Being beautiful as God made me.
   Alisha- I only use real brands like mac for foundation and eyebrow fibre extender lashes.

3. Gally- I don't think women are necessarily pressured by society, I think its self-inflicted pressure because I think there is a bunch of definitions of beauty. As women we feel like we need to look a certain way, it's not necessarily by society.

   Tumi- Rhetoric is now equal. People for make-up and people for the natural look. Its equal now and so people are free to choose how they want to look.
   Alisha- I think they are. There is the influence of Instagram and people have more access to social media who look perfect on these platforms. Making women feel they need to look like that in order to look beautiful.
   Michel- They covered everything.

4. Michel- No not really. I'm about natural beauty. I don't let what society says define what I see as beautiful. I am beautiful the way I am.

Alisha- I suppose so. Eyebrow thing, great hair, I want to be tanned.

Tumi- It's my own standards of how I want to look. People glorify big asses and I want none of that.

Gally- From myself. I do what I think looks good. People think big flowy weave and big lashes look good and at times I feel that way as well. But other times I don't and I go with what I think.

5. Tumi- I feel like I look better.

   Gally- I wear makeup to create a natural look. Like a more perfect natural.

   Alisha- I don't look like a ghost coz I've got a very pale face. And to look good so my man doesn't leave me.

   Michel- No

6. Michel- I don't where heels I wear sandals. Don't feel comfortable. I'm all about being comfortable.

   Alisha- I try not to wear heels coz they are painful. But I do wear them out to the club or dinners etc.

   Gally- I do wear them. I wear them often because I have one pair of heels I think are cute. There is pressure to wear them especially in the club.

   Tumi- I wear them quite a bit. I like how they look. I have a different confidence when I'm wearing heels, I think they look great.

   6.1.   Tumi- Yes it's been scientifically proven and it isn't natural that for the tenant between your ankle and heel to be so close. And damages your knees and you wear out your joints, rubs off the ball of your foot.

        Gally- Not good for you because it hurts.

        Alisha- They hurt and I know people that's feet are damaged.

        Michel- No

7. Tumi- No

   Gally- Yes, when you want something really badly and it's the only size.

   Alisha- Yes I want my clothes to be tight but the sizes for me don't fit nicely.

Michel-No I always buy the right size.

8. Tumi- Yes

   Michel- Yes kind of but it could improve. Get a firm bum through fitness.
   Gally- No I would love to lose weight I'd feel better.
   Alisha- No I want to have toned thighs, bums, and a flat stomach.

9. Tumi- I don't know if it's a struggle but I work very hard on my body. I have different goals at different times (lose weight, gain muscle). I'm focused on fitness.

   Alisha- Not really a struggle but fluctuating weight.
   Michel- Yes weight is hard to watch sometimes. As women you can't always eat what you want depending on your body.
   Gally- Yes fluctuating weight and trying things that are distractive.

10. Tumi- No

    Alisha- No
    Michel- No
    Gally- Yes spanks

11. Tumi- No

    Gally- Yes it is hard to have a balanced lifestyle if you are new to it and desperation it makes you try destructive things.
    Alisha- No
    Michel- Yes difficult to try a new diet and change your lifestyle and eat healthy.

12. Tumi- Yes undereating and over exercising

    Alisha- No
    Gally- No
    Michel- No

13. Tumi- Yes but it's too scary, I tried heat once for one day and stopped it made me feel terrible.

    Alisha- No
    Michel- No
    Gally- No but if I found I would. Just to try, there have been points where I would.

14. Tumi- Yes

    Alisha- Yes
    Michel- Yes
    Gally- Yes

15. Tumi- At first I was indifferent, I thought the aesthetic was interesting. Then I tried one a waist trainer, I saw how it changed to shape of my body but looking into it I saw I was not a safe thing. Well not for me I am anaemic. Make your waist small, moves placement of your organs, it burns water weight.

    Alisha- I think they are quite great. I like them, show off a women's body but hard to get hold of.
    Gally- They are a great concept but I feel as opposed to exercising and dieting I feel they are a reflection of vanity or superficial. I think they are a reflection of pressure among women, they don't improve your health in anyway it's just all about the shape of a women's body. What is a women's body? But if you like that you can.
    Michel- Do feel that good about them. I think if you wear them too long they deform your body

16. Tumi- Yes

    Alisha- No
    Gally- No
    Michel- No

17. Tumi- Yes

    Alisha- Yes
    Gally- Yes on the internet
    Michel- Yes

18. Tumi-Yes

    Gally- They have great benefits, good for your back and posture and hourglass.
    Alisha- Help sit up straight and your posture, they shift your organs but they seem pretty good especially if you have a child I would invest in something like that.
    Michel- No much seen people on TV speaking about it but haven't paid too much attention.

19. Tumi- There have been different eras, different erogenous zones. At some point people were obsessed with big boobs, showing chest, the back. The erogenous hourglass at this point is very popular and that's the way to get it.

    Gally- To get body back after you've had a baby or get an hourglass figure. Trends change and there must have been a time when I skinny or fit body was in desired and now there is an emphasis on a small waist and big bum
    Alisha- easy way out, instead of having to go to the gym you can just wear it or still go to gym and it speeds up the process. Some women struggle with their figures and this maybe helps them achieve that.
    Michel- Hourglass silhouette is back in fashion and people want to go with the trend.

20. Tumi- Don't think it's safer, same thing, quick fix. People should use it if they cannot if they are sick.

    Gally- In our times it will be investigated a little more and long term effects may be considered so I am sure there have been a few developments with it from the past corsets.

Alisha- Yes and no back in the day they would tighten it as much as possible and now you can choose that. If you are a normal person who wants to lose a normal amount of weight you'll use it properly, if not you will misuse

Michel- I think it is the same thing.

21. Tumi- No I don't like the hourglass body shape.

    Gally- Yes posture and weight loss.

    Alisha- Posture I have a problem with slouching.

    Michel- If it's safe and helps with posture I could try it but I'm still a bit sceptical.

22. Tumi- I don't think it's as black and white as that, there are many different opinions and aspects that inform women's views on their bodies and how they would like to change it. I wouldn't say inferiority complex is the main way to describe it.