

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

The main objective of this study is to investigate the stereotypes inherent in advertisements in order to derive images of the ideal Malaysian beauty created by the media. In order to do so, this study will examine the collocates of the lexical items present in facial and slimming advertisements.

This chapter is made up of the outline of the research design under the following headings:

#### **3.1 Data Gathering**

##### **3.1.1 Stage I : Lexical Items**

##### **3.1.2 Participants**

##### **3.1.3 Stages II and III : Survey**

##### **3.1.4 Final Stage**

#### **3.3 Data Analysis**

#### **3.4 Data Presentation**

### **3.1 Data Gathering**

There are four stages in this research. Stage I involved the extraction of the lexical items from the twenty advertisements. In stage II, a survey was conducted to determine the connotations of the lexical items extracted in Stage I. In Stage III, a second survey was conducted to determine the collocates of the lexical items. Finally, in the last stage, the frequency of lexical items occurring were calculated.

#### **3.1.1 Stage 1 : Lexical Items**

The lexical items were taken from advertisements that appeared in Her World and Female magazines from January to December 2000. The reason for the stretch of 12 months is that there are very few advertisements of slimming centres and products advertised in these magazines. Very often, the same advertisement will be repeated in the consecutive months. So to get a good range of 10 advertisements, time is needed. However, in some cases, though the product is the same, the copy will be different, that is the write-up will be different and it will feature different models.

In the case of the facial products / services advertisements, the advertisements are not of the same brands. Also they cover a range of products like whitening cream, anti-ageing creams, cleansers and soap.

The magazines were chosen because their editors had claimed that their magazines were the most popular women's magazines. Their claim finds support in the response of the women who did the survey. 53% of the women have indicated that they were readers of both "Her World" and "Female", while 32% of them indicated that they read "Her World". 15% of them indicated that they read only "Female"

A total number of 10 advertisements for each product or service was chosen. The lexical items were extracted from the advertisements and listed down. As the study focuses on the lexical stereotypes that exist in the advertisements and not on the language of advertisements, only the lexical items were extracted. Thus, grammatical items like articles, determiners, conjunctions and auxiliary verbs were not taken into account. Similarly, brand names and product composition were not be included.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the lexical items have been categorised neutral, positive and negative collocations for easier data collection. Also, the lexical items have been categorised as nouns, adjectives and verbs. These are referred to as "corpus of data".

The corpus of data are categorised as nouns, verbs, single adjectives and cluster adjectives.

After the extraction, the corpus of data was grouped into words that are synonymous or similar in meaning. Words that differed in their form were also grouped together. This was done to reduce the number of items to be included in the questionnaire. After this was done, the questionnaire was constructed (see Appendix A - 1).

### **3.1.2 Participants**

To ensure that the responses are reflective, 100 women were selected to participate in the surveys in Stages I and II. To achieve this, the researcher had enlisted the help of her three contemporaries who lived and worked either in Kuala Lumpur, Petaling Jaya or Malacca. On her part, the researcher conducted the survey amongst women in Johor Bahru.

The women were either peers, subordinates, students or neighbours of the researcher and friends. The women had participated in the survey out of goodwill. This ensured that their responses were honest.

Out of the 100 respondents, 35% were Chinese, 35% were Malays, 25% Indians and 5% of other ethnic groups. This reflects a balanced composition of racial groups in the population.

To ensure that the views reflected women from all walks of life, 25% were housewives, 30% were working, 25% were self-employed and 20% students. All the women were readers of either both magazines or one of them.

Among the women, 21 % were between the ages of 20-25, 30% were between 30-35, 34% were between 36-40 and 15% were between 41-45.

The women were also required to assess their complexion and 45% of the women admitted to having a fair complexion, 34% dark and 21% were unsure of the kind of complexion they had.

### **3.1.3 Stages II and III**

The survey was carried out in two stages. In stage II, participants were required to indicate whether the lexical items had neutral, positive or negative connotations. Once they had responded to the survey, the lexical items were categorised into the respective groups.

In stage III, participants were required to indicate whether the lexical items were collocates of “fair”, “slim”, “dark” or “fat” “youth” or “others”

#### **3.1.4 Final Stage**

In this stage, the lexical items from the two kinds of advertisements were categorised according to the results of the two surveys, that is, the lexical items were categorised as neutral, positive and negative connotative words. They were also categorised as collocates of “fair”, “youth”, “old”, “dark” “slim”, “fat” and “others”.

### **3.2 Data Analysis**

Data analysis consisted of calculating percentages for the two sets of data, namely the data collected from the respondents of the two surveys and the lexical items from the advertisements.

If more than half of the participants (51%) had similar responses, then it was considered as a substantial number. For example, if 51% of the participants have indicated “whitening” as a positive connotation, then it was taken as a positive connotation.

Though adjectives have been classified as single and cluster adjectives, they will be calculated as one. Also, cluster adjectives will be calculated as a unit, though there may be more than one word in that cluster.

The raw data was calculated and based on the number of occurrences. It is expressed in frequencies and percentages.

### **3.3 Data Presentation**

The results of the first survey were categorised and tabulated according to the connotation they have. That is, they were tabulated as neutral, positive or negative. The results of the second survey were also categorised and tabulated as collocates of “fair”, “youth”, “dark”, “old”, “slim”, “fat” and “others”.

The results from the final stage were also tabulated as connotations and collocates. They are followed by the list of connotations and collocates extracted from the survey conducted in Stages I and II.

The corpus is tabulated under the following headings :

#### **1 Connotative Words in Facial and Slimming Advertisements**

- 1 (a) List of Neutral Connotative Words**
- 1 (b) List of Positive Connotative Words**
- 1 (c) List of Negative Connotative Words**
- 2 Word forms with positive connotations in facial product and slimming advertisements.**
- 3 Word forms with negative connotations in facial product and slimming advertisements.**
- 4 Word forms with both positive and negative connotation in facial product and slimming advertisements.**
- 5 Positive collocates in facial product advertisements.**
- 5 (a) List of collocates of “youth”**
- 5 (b) List of collocates of “fair”**
- 5 (c) List of other positive collocates**
- 6 Negative collocates in facial product advertisements.**
- 6 (a) List of the collocates of “old”.**
- 6 (b) List of other negative collocates**



- 7                    Positive collocates in slimming advertisements**
- 7    (a)            List of the collocates of “slim”**
- 7    (b)            List of other positive collocates.**
- 8                    Negative collocates in slimming advertisements**
- 8    (a)            List of the collocates of “fat”**
- 9                    Types of all collocates in facial product advertisements**
- 10                  Types of all collocates in slimming advertisements.**