

# Especially teenagers and young adults media essay



There are a lot of people, especially teenagers and young adults see plastic surgery as a light surgery or something that is simple, which will help them to look better. However, the core meaning of plastic surgery isn't that way. More and more people of the groups tend to want to change their appearance with plastic surgery without knowing much about it, thus, the research is conducted to further understand this problem. We used survey form of research on 200 samples which are people of age between 20 and 24.

Through the research, we confirmed that young adults know less about plastic surgery and some have already made up their mind to have one no matter the risk. This is getting serious as a proper education should be provided.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Research Background**

#### **Background of study**

In search of data in the internet, we came across to some article and blogs that is regarding plastic surgery. However, it shows a lot of negative news on it, such as negative perception against people who had plastic surgery, young teenagers wanted to have plastic surgery to look beautiful and so on. It arouses the interest of us to carry out a research to take a look further into this topic, regarding its core meaning and also the perception of people towards plastic surgery.

The Internet

Internet is the only new media which are widely used by any kind of people around the world. According to Webopedia (2011), there are over 2.2 billion of people worldwide who are using the internet, which is 32.7% of the total population in the world, up to 31st of December 2011.

The uses of internet are wide as well, people tend to search for data, information, take part in social networking or as a form of entertainment. It is also quite common for people to sound their mind on the internet where they don't do in real life. People like to reveal their thoughts, point of view and also their feelings towards something on the internet, usually in social networking websites such as facebook, blogs and twitter.

The trends of bringing up topics are emerging in the internet lately. Trends regarding celebrities, fashion and others are widely spread through internet and it also prove useful on achieving publicity or growth on a certain topic. One of the topic that most people know through this new media is plastic surgery. Plastic surgery also used to be a hot topic on the internet, including both negative and positive reports, news and also other's perception.

### Plastic surgery

Most people think that that plastic surgery is a process of modifying our body parts, to make ourselves looks better or simply a medical or surgical operation. However, the origin of plastic surgery comes with the function of repair and reconstruction of dysfunctional or defections. According to TeensHealth (2012), a plastic surgery doesn't mean to undergo a surgery and end up with a whole face of fake stuff. Instead, the word plastic comes from a Greek term 'plastikos' which means form or mold.

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The plastic surgery which is commonly known is actually only a single category of plastic surgery, which is the cosmetic surgery. According to TeensHealth (2012), a cosmetics surgery is defined as a process of altering a part of body which the person is not satisfy with, for example the most commonly seen are nose, eyes and breasts.

Furthermore, there are a lot of categories of plastic surgery. There are approximately 23 types of plastic surgery as a domain where only some of them are categorized under cosmetic surgery. It also evolves as time goes on and more types of plastic surgery are coming up, where latest technologies reveals more and more types of cosmetic surgery especially Korean. It can be said as already a trend for plastic surgery at some point, where people will follow blindly in the seek of beauty.

As there are a lot of examples of plastic surgery, from teenagers to celebrities, it is already a pretty common as knowledge among people around the world.

## **Research Problem**

Nowadays, more and more people undergone plastic surgery, from teenagers to celebrities and others. As TeensHealth (2012) mentioned, plastic surgery's origin is not to modify body part or to change just the outlook, instead, it is meant to repair or reconstruct the dysfunction or defected part of body such as a giant birthmark in the face, or some tragedy where half of the face is damaged due to flames. But, a lot people know only a portion of plastic surgery before they decide to take the operation. This means, the level of knowledge about plastic surgery is insufficient among

most of the people now. Thus, it creates a lot of new perception and attitude towards plastic surgery people where it is a new thing to explore into.

According to Lynn Ray (2012), there is a survey done by them that shows at least 15% of US kids, 88% of female and 73% of male teenagers are considering to make a change in some of their body part, where mostly includes the usage of plastic surgery. This problem is getting serious as it already changes so much compared to the core meaning of existence of plastic surgery. People nowadays merely take it as a surgery just to make themselves looks better or satisfying. This has brought the society or even the world to have a different point of view or mindset towards that particular of people who had undergone plastic surgery.

Melissa Dittmann (2005) claimed that one of the cases which are getting serious is also the increasing in number of psychological patient which are regarding to plastic surgery matters. They considered having one but not determined yet, therefore they consulted the professionals. She also mentioned about where teenagers wanted to have plastic surgery are mainly focused on the outlook which are not satisfying enough to them.

Since the misconception of people towards plastic surgery is getting serious, this research is conducted at the core of the issue, which is the mind of the people. The research is meant to find out what people think about plastic surgery, their mindset towards it, how much they know about plastic surgery and also the possibility of young adults to have plastic surgery in the future.

## **Research Question**

As derived from the research problem, we revealed these three questions that we are interested to investigate about:

What is the perception of young adults towards plastic surgery?

How much do they know about plastic surgery?

How high is the rate of possibility for young adults to have plastic surgery in the future?

## **Significance of Study**

Through this research, we will learn more about the perception of young adults towards plastic surgery, the way they perceive it and also their mindset and attitude towards people who had plastic surgery before. This will enrich our knowledge and as a base on our research where attitude origins from a single perception or mindset.

As we carry on with the research, we can get know even deep into the topic, regarding their perception towards plastic surgery and the people. By breaking down the main point of perception, we will look into the reason, the level of knowledge they have towards plastic surgery and how much do they know about it. This might be a reason to form their perception. And from this point, we will bring to surface the value of plastic surgery to them, including the meaning that it carries and also the point of view of young adults against it.

This research is also conducted in a form where we investigate about the possibility of young adults to have plastic surgery in the future. It will help the country to identify this problem and to take a step further to investigate or to make changes respectively, either with a positive outcome or a negative one. Since most young adults are not fully exposed to the society yet, there is still a chance to change their view regarding plastic surgery if steps are taken soon enough. These changes may reduce the problems that bring us into this research.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

#### **Literature Review**

Throughout the recent survey and research studies, it found out that plastic surgery is increasing commonly at an enormous rate nowadays. Countless people have their desired outlook and majority of them are consulting with plastic surgery to alter their appearance. Of course there are many factors that motivate individual to go under the knife.

According to the research by Bliss magazine (2005), only 8 percent of youngsters were satisfied with their original outlook and 4 in 10 teenagers are considered to have plastic surgery. 8 percent of them were happy with their natural beauty look, they think that it was a wonderful gift from the god . But the other of respondents perceived that they can only restore their confident by undergo the plastic surgery. Those factors are included suffered from an eating disorder, and partly of them are pressures when they saw celebrities have perfect appearance and bodies. Nowadays the new

generation in society perceived that skinny and curvy body as a perfect ideal body and obesity is considered as unusually ugly. What they've have seen from celebrities through the media such as Internet, newspapers or magazines had changed young teenagers view.. So young adults feel tremendous pressure and been influenced, they were aware about their own weight and body size. In opposite men also desired to be fit and muscular as well. Especially they are undergone puberty, so young adults willing to take the risk and pursuit to their desired outlook. In year 2005, Mr Parkhouse emphasized in BBC News website that he did not encourage teenagers to have plastic surgery as it is risky and may bring unexpected side effect after the result.

Besides, the UCLA scientists report (2007) also reported among of 52, 000 young adults, they participated in an online survey and claimed that they will possible to go for plastic surgery if they could afford in their financial, which is include 71% of women and 40% of men. Young adults was too obsessed with having ideal body shape, while they are insecurities regarding their own outlook, they perceived that only plastic surgery could make them to look more confident.

Nowadays, young adults have different perception compare to the old generation. Media influenced them and they tend to believe that an individual's to look in certain ways only considered as beautiful. Young adults think that plastic surgery is acceptable, as long as they can change their outlook and make their life better. For an example, the TV program of "Extreme makeover" that able to change the people to a greater appearance.

Media always have strong influence to perceive a plastic surgery  
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Moreover, based on the previous research by American Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (2011.) highlighted that the number of plastic surgery was increasing. And the most surprising was the survey revealed that young adults between aged 18- 24 are more considering a plastic surgery.

Additionally, another survey that conducted by More Magazine found out that among 1000 youngster that been participated in the survey, 72% of them decided to go for plastic surgery when they are in young age.

However the present day, plastic surgery has also become a trend and hot topic among young teenagers. In the past, people might feel ashamed or embarrassed if they had plastic surgery to change the part of their body.

They will try to cover up as much as possible to. But now the growing popularity of plastic surgery had increased. Young adults feel proud as they are able to follow the new ideas of trend and don't even mind to share their experience during the surgical process through interviews or social media.

They are too fascinated to follow the Korean trend and find out ways to lead them to a greater beauty. They tend to imitate what they've seen from the Korean celebrities in social media and in the other hand parents

responsibility was to blame too. Parents never try to stop their child by giving them advises or knowledge about the side effect of plastic surgery.

Young adults changed their perception towards the plastic surgery as cultural and societal influences. The image of ideal body shape that shows through the media coverage had shaped most of the young teenagers mind set. In such they have the wrong perception and unrealistic expectation against themselves, they feel low self esteem when they did not look as

pretty as the images or the others. A plastic surgery might affect an  
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individual's psychologically, so in advice individuals should obtain professional and reliable consultation of plastic surgery before deciding to undergo a plastic surgery. They should be always aware with the certain side effects, fail outcome or potential risk as they need to understand plastic surgery has limitation too. Plastic surgery doesn't 100% guarantee a successful perfect outcome as it depends on individual different.

Young teenagers aim to undergo plastic surgery is to change their appearance which they were not satisfied, to enhance other aspect of their life and to repair an imperfection of their bodies. Based on the previous research studies, nose and eyelid surgery is the most popular surgical that requested by young teenagers. They might think that a new outlook will let them increase their popularity and in fact those unrealistic imaginations may lead them to disappointment. Furthermore, current social only pay more attention at great appearances individuals and so on young teenagers started to perceive the important of plastic surgery and they accept the idea of having a surgical process. They too much rely on plastic surgery which is the only way to enhance the value of their self image and achieve their goal

But somehow teenagers don't have such knowledge in this plastic surgery field. Some of them don't understand that certain part of body mature in different ages, means they can only under the knife after finish developing in certain age. For an example ear pinning is appropriate for youngster as the ears were finished developing. But young teenagers often lack of this knowledge.

For the conclusion, plastics surgery is not only popular among adolescence but also among young teenagers in current. They valued themselves regardless of their appearance and external beauty. Majority of them wanted to stand out from the others and to fit in the fashion trend, so they willing to take the risk and undergo for the plastic surgery just to enhance their personal characteristic and to be more confident. Usually the more common plastic surgery among teenagers is eyelid surgery, rhionoplasty, otoplasty, nose reshaping or breast asymmetry and etc. According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (2010.), the results showed that around figure of 219, 000 of plastic surgery were done by teenagers who aged between 13-19. This had concluded that nowadays the perception of young teenagers towards plastic surgery had been changed. They can accept and see plastic surgery as a common thing in their life; it is a way for them to enhance their appearance and outlook to achieve their desired goal.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

#### **Subjects**

The research subject we have chosen is young adults aged at 20 to 24. This is mainly due to the exposure of most of them towards the society isn't long yet. Long exposure to society might have own mindset and a more mature thinking on everything especially decision making. This is what we trying to prevent as young adults are mostly college students or some just started working. This is when they start to step into the society and mix around with more people.

As the society haven't influence them much, the perception of them still can be changed through some implementations such as campaign, talks and consultation. Thus, the perception and knowledge level of this group of subject is to be tested in this research so that we can know to what extend they understand about plastic surgery, the perception of them towards it and also the possibility of them to have plastic surgery in the future.

If the result of the research is positive, which people understand clearly what plastic surgery is meant for, we won't need to take any steps. However, if most of them don't understand much about plastic surgery, but they wanted to have one, that will be serious and immediate action could have better chance on educating them and bring them back on track.

## **Research Design**

The methodology that will be used in this research is quantitative research, survey. Survey is used as data are clearer to be in written form and we can know who are the people answering the survey form. This will prevent any error like online survey would have as the person who filling the survey form isn't clear. The sampling method will be stratified sampling under probability sample where samples are fixed at 20 to 24 years old. The sample size is fixed at 200 which is around 1: 10 000 to Malaysian population who aged between 20 and 24 which is around 2 000 000 in total. We will take this as a sample to represent the population of all young adults aged between 20 and 24 throughout the whole Malaysia.

## **Research Procedure**

The age of subjects is included on top of the questionnaire so that the age of subjects is identified. This will reconfirm the age of the subject to be in the scope of our research target. We will be asking the sample's age before handing them the survey questionnaire. This is to make sure that they are within the age of our target sample and thus provides actual result as the research designed for.

The research will mainly be carried out near Jalan Kelawai and gurney plaza as there is a plastic surgery clinic near that area, which is the 'Geh Plastic and Cosmetic Surgery'. This may confirm the knowing of plastic surgery among the people among that area because of the existence of that clinic. There might also be some people who know a lot about plastic surgery which will help in our research.

There are also some potential challenges we might face when carry out the research. We will be suffering from the hard of gathering samples for our research. People might tend to ignore survey researchers or show that they are busy to avoid getting involved in the research. Also, we need to confirm the age of subject before asking them to help us in the research, which might result in hard to gathering the subjects as well.

However, 4 days are provided and we believe that the time is enough for us to finish the survey in time. We plan to separate into 4 parts of conducting the survey as in 50 per day up to 4 days, so that the amount won't be too heavy for each day.

The results of the research are to be kept under private and confidential and for education purpose only.

## Chapter 4

### Research Findings and Results

According to the pie chart above, all 200 of the subjects, which is also 100% of them have heard of plastic surgery before.

According to the data shown, the highest chosen way of knowing plastic surgery is through celebrities who had done plastic surgery before, which is at 106, followed by friends and family at 87 and Internet at 75 counts.

Choices with lowest counts are books and magazine at 65 and advertisements at 53. There are also 6 of the subjects chosen others and all of them stated that they know plastic surgery through movies.

According to the chart above, 112 out of 200 subjects, which is 56% of them say that plastic surgery is acceptable. There are 14 out of 200, 7% of them cannot accept plastic surgery and others, 74 out of 200 which is also 32% of them show neutral towards plastic surgery.

The chart above shows that most of the subject, which is 123 out of 200, 61.5% chosen neutral towards people who had plastic surgery. The second most of them had chosen to respect the peoples, which is 55 of the subject out of 200, similar to 27.5% of the subjects. 15 out of 200, 7.5% had chosen to try to befriend them whereas 3.5% which is 7 of them state that it is unacceptable.

According to the data shown, 190 of the subjects, which is 85% stated yes, they will mix around with people who had plastic surgery before. 10%, which is 20 out of 200 of the subject who stated yes gave the reason that after plastic surgery, they are still normal human being. There are also 5 of them who stated that this is their freedom to have plastic surgery.

On the other hand, only 10 of the subjects, which is also 5% of them say no. the reason they gave is that people who had gone through plastic surgery is fake and materialistic.

The pie chart above shows that most of the subjects, which is 47. 5% or 95 out of 200 of them, will do nothing when their friend is going for a plastic surgery. There are 40 out of 200 of the subject, which is also 20% of them admire his or her friend who wants to have plastic surgery. 25 of them don't know what will they do and 22 of them tend to encourage their friends. Lastly, 13 out of 200 subjects would discourage their friends and 5 out of 200 of the subjects would just look down on their friend who wants to have plastic surgery.

According to the chart above, most people stated that plastic surgery is just a medical or surgical treatment, which is 127 out of 200 or 63. 5% of them. 39% of the subjects stated that plastic surgery is a way to repair damaged body parts. There are 73 people who think that plastic surgery is a trend, which is 36. 5%. 41 out of 200 think that plastic surgery is just a medical or surgical treatment.

According to the data shown, 121 out of 200, which is 60. 5% of the subject think that plastic surgery is meant to improve a part of people's body. 45 out  
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of 200, which is 22.5% of them think that plastic surgery is meant to repair a part of people's body. Lastly, 34 out of 200, which is 17% of the subjects state that plastic surgery is meant to change a part of your body.

According to the chart above, 77 out of 200, which is 38.5% of the subjects think that the information of plastic surgery in the internet is trustworthy. 3 of the subjects gave the reason where information in the internet is trustworthy as they usually report real things. 5 of the subjects stated that they trust the content of plastic surgery in the internet because internet often shows real things.

However, 123 of them stated that the information in the internet is not trustworthy. 20 of the subjects gave the reason where there are a lot of liars on the internet, 17 of them given the reason that most of the content in the internet is fake and 4 of them stated that there are a lot of cheaters in the internet nowadays.

According to the graph above 76 out of 200 people think that there are over 26 types of plastic surgery. 42 out of 200 think that there are 15 to 20 types of plastic surgery. 36 people think that there are 21 to 25 types of plastic surgery and 32 of them think that there are only 11 to 15 types of plastic surgery. Only 14 people out of 200 think that there are only below 10 types of plastic surgery available.

According to the data shown, there are 44% of people who think that arm lift operation costs around RM5000 to RM9999. There are 23% of people who think that the operation costs around RM10000 to RM14999. 17% of the subjects state that the operation of arm lift costs around RM15000 to RM

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20000. And the least is 16% of them think that the arm lift operation costs only at RM1000 to RM4999.

According to the chart above, 106 subjects has chosen face lift, 104 of them picked surgical of ear, 84 subjects had chosen the answer clean-cut procedure, which is also known as wrinkle treatment. Surgery of ear and facial scar revision has the same amount of result which is 68.

According to the data shown above, there are 71% of the subjects stated that changes made in appearance made plastic surgery interesting. 12% of the subjects have picked changes made to life. There are 9% of them says that changes made in people's mind made plastic surgery interesting. 6% of the subject picked the process of plastic surgery. Lastly, 2% of the subjects had chosen others and stated that there is nothing special about plastic surgery.

According to the chart above, 50% of the subject which is also 100 over 200 of them picked the reason risky outcome. 27.5%, which is also 55 out of 200 of the subject have chosen that financial problem is the greatest challenge. 12.5% stated that family or friends disagree with them to have a plastic surgery. Lastly, 10% of the subjects have chosen the reason afraid of pain.

According to the graph above, 43% of the subject chose not to have plastic surgery even if they have the chance. 32% of them will have plastic surgery if have the chance and 25% of them maybe.

According to the data shown above, 54 out of 114 of the subject said maybe they will accept a plastic surgery with risk. 47 out of 114 won't accept the challenge and 13 out of 114 will accept the challenge.

17. Rate 1-5 for the part that you would consider for plastic surgery. (1 for prior and 5 for least prior)

1

2

3

4

5

Face

40

30

14

12

16

Eyes

24

36

18

28

6

Breasts

28

22

34

10

18

Scar

14

6

20

38

34

Reduce fats

14

12

24

16

46

Table above shows that face is the most prior part for most subjects which have 40 out of 114 that wrote 1 for face. 46 out of 114 people wrote 5, which is least prior for them to consider reducing fats. Eyes has an overall rating mostly with number 2, which is the second prior for most people to consider changing. Breasts are rated most with 3 with 34 out of 114 people. And lastly, scar removal is rated most with 4, which is 38 out of 114 subjects.

The chart above shows 24.5% of yes and 75.5% of no among all 200 of the subjects. 24.5% of them will consider for a plastic surgery if someone they like or celebrities had done it before. However, 75.5% of the people won't do it.

According to the data shown above, 135 out of 200 subjects will act neutral towards themselves if they had plastic surgery. 43 out of 200 will be proud of themselves with the surgery while 22 of them will feel ashamed of themselves.

According to the chart above, there are 42.5% of people think that having plastic surgery maybe will change one's life. 41.5% of them chose yes. Only 6% of them think that plastic surgery won't change one's life.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Research Reports**

#### **Summary of results**

We have collect data from 200 subjects which are aged from 20 to 24. The results are fairly close to what we read at chapter 2, including the misunderstanding of meaning of plastic surgery and also what can plastic surgery do. There are also some who don't even know the core value of plastic surgery in term of cost, area of plastic surgery and so on. The results show in the research shows a later generation where people mostly take plastic surgery as something to improve their look and nothing more than that. Also, the perception of young adults towards plastic surgery is very limited, they know only surface of the plastic surgery but they are considering or might go for a plastic surgery.

#### **Discussion**

Based on our findings and applying on the main objectives, we found out that most young adults see plastic surgery as normal things. Most of them have no stereotypes of people that have undergone plastic surgery and also remain neutral towards either people who had plastic surgery or the operation itself. Even though their knowledge about plastic surgery isn't deep enough, they can still know the basic of what plastic surgery is, such as several common types of plastic surgery. Besides, most of them will remain

neutral towards plastic surgery or their friends who are going to have plastic surgery. Quite an amount of them will even admire those who want to have plastic surgery.

Young teenagers nowadays tend to ignore the reason of existence of plastic surgery. Because of that, we are trying to get the level of knowledge of them towards plastic surgery. This is to know how much or to what extend do they understand about plastic surgery. Based on our findings, we discovered that most people don't know the cost of plastic surgery. They tend to take it as cheaper than it really is. As an example, the arm lift operation at Malaysia costs around RM10000 where most young adults chosen RM5000 to RM9000 range. There is still a fair amount of people who get the prices right but it might be a blind guess. As the knowledge towards plastic surgery are not in a deep enough level, their decision to take plastic surgery will be dangerous or simply materialistic or just to make themselves look better. Most of the young adults takes plastic surgery as a process to make your physical appearance looks better. A moderate amount of them would take it as a way to repair body parts which is the actual purpose of plastic surgery.

Also, not even half of them know that plastic surgery has so many kinds that they can't even count with fingers on both hands. Less than half actually took everything listed on the survey as a plastic surgery process, which means, most of them don't know the categories of plastic surgery. They merely take plastic surgery as something that changes only your face. As their misunderstanding towards plastic surgery is measured, their decision whether to take the plastic surgery operations or not will be an answer to the previous statements.

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There are more than half of the young adults is considering to take the plastic surgery operations. Most of them aren't sure yet but judging by the parts of body in prior, most of them would seek for beauty first through plastic surgery. They take plastic surgery as a tool to enhance outer beauty is a fact now. However, there are some who don't insist to have plastic surgery if they come across a plastic surgery with risk. Only a minority of them will still gamble on the surgery if there is risk.

A surprising result is, in Malaysian context, there are almost 25% of young adults that will consider for a plastic surgery because of someone they like or celebrities. This situation is bringing the trend of plastic surgery into the country where a lot of people are actually wanted to have plastic surgery but they don't know what it actually means. They simply want to change their outlook for fun, or to look as they like.

Lastly, most people agree that plastic surgery will change one's life and gave the reason where it will create more confident individually. This is regarding outer look as well as plastic surgery can't change your inner self anyhow.

## **Conclusion**

As a conclusion, the research was a success as it reflects the attitude and knowledge of most young adults towards plastic surgery nowadays, which is also perpendicular with what other researchers done in foreign countries. We found out that locally, the percentage are not as high as the other countries yet but it might grow in the future if proper education are not applied on later generations. The core meaning of plastic surgery as a tool to repair damaged body parts are still exist but in a fairly low amount. This is a

negative outcome that will gradually lose the core meaning on plastic surgery in the future. Thus, steps must be taken, a proper education regarding these issues should be implemented and also, the perception of young adults should be change towards plastic surgery.