A Cross-Cultural Analysis - Effect That Advertising Has on Socialization Focusing on Skin Tone and the Perception of Women

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Abstract

Advertisements affect cultures' social norms significantly, but also have an effect on certain cultures' cultural values, and this can help to identify similarities and differences between separate cultures. Using the Schwartz Theory of Basic Values as a framework, this paper analyzes how hidden messages within advertisements reflect and portray values such as conformity, tradition, achievement, and self-direction, based on the messages hidden within skin lightening advertisements and portrayals of female models in advertisements. By performing a cross-cultural analysis with countries such as Japan, China, India, The Philippines, and The United States, the research emphasizes how skin lightening advertisements enforce colorism while associating lighter skin with success, beauty, and social mobility. Furthermore, this paper additionally studies the development of women's portrayal in advertisements over the years, focusing on sexualization, stereotyping, and the emergence of "femvertising". By comparing Western and Eastern advertising practices, the research finds that, while some beauty ideals are universal, cultural values have a significant role in shaping how women and skin tone are portrayed in advertisements. Altogether, this research highlights the role of advertisements as cultural agents, which both reflect and influence societal values, which contributes to the persistent beauty standards and gender norms across cultures.

Section 1: Background and Definitions

Socialization is the process by which individuals internalize social norms from the world around them. This means that, often, many of the unwritten rules society creates to dictate what behavior is considered acceptable are based on what is seen on social media. The media is filled with content and advertisements that businesses use to promote their products, and the average person is exposed to various advertisements a day. Advertisements and the way things are marketed are influenced by social norms, and these advertisements, in turn, shape the group's overall opinions, further ingraining these ideas in society.

The link between social norms and advertisements can be seen in many instances. For example, an increase in unhealthy food advertisements caused a spike in obesity, and an increase in tobacco and alcohol ads caused more underage drinking (Wilcox et al. 6). Furthermore, advertisements promote the qualities and functions of a product, and simultaneously convey "hidden messages" that diffuse cultural values and norms (Chen et al. 128). Advertisers use this feature to implant ideas in consumers' heads that can help increase sales. Ads for the skin-lightening industry often portray people with darker skin in negative ways, which further benefits the industry by fostering a desire among consumers for fairer skin.
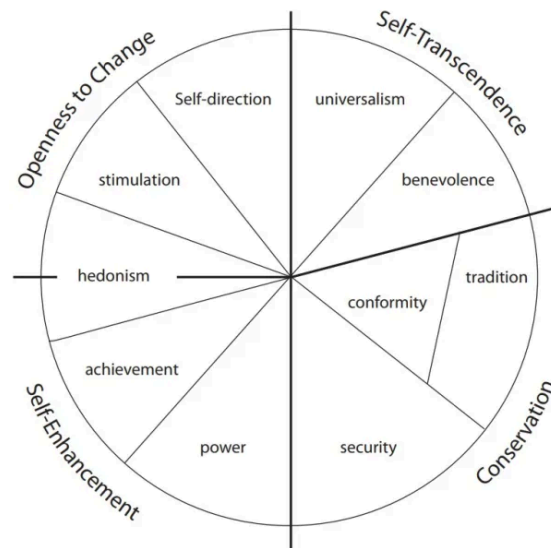
Schwartz Theory of Basic Values
(Schwartz)

Advertisements significantly affect cultures' social norms and can also shape certain cultures' values, helping identify similarities and differences between cultures. The Schwartz Theory of Basic Values outlines the ten universal values for all humans: self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence, and universalism (Schwartz, pp. 5-7). These values are relevant in each different country's culture, and can be found in the messages hidden in advertisements. They can do numerous things, including helping to identify the origins of specific social issues. However, in this research, they help us understand which cultural values the West and the East share, based on their opinions on Women and Darker skin, which can be conveyed through advertisements. A good example of this is that the Philippines, a culture greatly influenced by the West, has values focused on change and self-enhancement, while Taiwan, a culture greatly influenced by Confucian and Japanese culture, values conformity and self-transcendence (Chen et al. 134).

A topic worth discussing is the difference between cultural values, social/cultural norms, and, subsequently, cultural practices. Cultural values are mainly the "inner person," or the ideas a person follows. At the same time, social norms are the "outer person," or the person one conforms to based on what is considered acceptable (Frese 1328). The leading cause could be that cultural values tend to be abstract ideas, such as those outlined in The Schwartz Theory of Basic Values. Social norms are "rules" that society creates and can compel people to participate in cultural practices. Cultural practices are actions people engage in to conform to social norms (Frese 1328). An example of this is when children are told to brush their teeth twice a day, something told to them by others and, hence, a social norm. They comply, and eventually they get to a point where they even feel uncomfortable when they cannot brush twice, developing a routine, which is an effect of cultural practices (Frese 1328).

Another difference between norms and values is that values focus more on what actions are morally good or bad. Norms are unwritten rules made by society, which the average person follows in their daily life, while values are intangible or abstract ideas that people base or almost "judge" their lives on (Frese 1328). Furthermore, values are distinct from behavior, unlike norms (Frese 1328). A person may have a short-term goal, such as getting a promotion, which is an

example of social norms. Contrastingly, values are goals that continue throughout a person's life, for example, vegetarianism, to fulfill the traditions of their religion. Based on this, the importance of cultural values in the context of this research can be expressed, and we can understand that it is important to consider both cultural norms and values when researching, given the different aspects of each in relation to society.

Section 2: Overview

The effect of advertisements on the desire for fairer skin

Whether during the Meiji era of Japan where lead-based foundation was used to make skin appear white (Li et al. 445), or in ancient India where a paste made of various roots and seeds was mixed and dried between two cakes of buffalo dung to "make the skin a shade or two lighter" (Patkar 135), there have always been ways to fulfill the desire for fairer skin. The question is: why is the concept of skin lightening so prominent in Asian countries today?

There could be a few reasons for this stigma, but this paper focuses specifically on how advertisements have contributed to it. One of the main reasons that there is such a controversy on skin tone could be because of how frequently Caucasian models are used in advertisements in Asia. Oftentimes, the models in advertisements for Asian beauty or skincare products are caucasian or have caucasian features, which can distort the idea of "beauty" for the audiences of these advertisements. In South Korea and Japan, the amount of caucasian models used in global advertisements hovers between 40-50% (Li et al. 447), and in Singapore, the amount of caucasian models used in advertisements is 73.3% (Frith et al. 57), which further establishes the influence that Western culture has on the East.

Additionally, there has always been a negative connotation to having dark skin in countries all over the world, not just Asia. In Indian culture, and many other cultures, black is associated with being "underprivileged" and "dirty", while white is associated with positive messages (Li et al. 445), and these ideas are spread and promoted through the use of advertisements. An advertisement for Pears soap depicted an African American child being "cleaned" by Pears soap and turning into a white child, which expresses the link between darker skin and a perception of dirtiness. Furthermore, an ad by Emma Watson for Lancôme in 2013, which promoted a skin-lightening product called "Blanc Expert," demonstrates the globalization of Western beauty standards to an Asian audience specifically. This is because the target market for this ad was Asian people, and even though the product was meant to be used to get rid of "dark spots," it promotes the idea that anything dark is bad. Products like this were used not only to get rid of dark spots but also to lighten the skin overall.

There is also the idea that having pale, or whiter, skin is associated with success, a status people with darker skin would otherwise not have. An advertisement done by Seoul Secret in 2016 for the Seoul Secret Snowz Pill, a skin lightening pill, had actress Cris Horwang warn her audience that if she had stopped taking care of herself "the whiteness [she] had invested in may be lost." Then, her skin began to darken into black, and a younger, fair-skinned counterpart appeared beside her. The ad ended with the slogan, "You just need to be white to win." This advertisement not only promotes the idea that you need fairer skin to be successful, but also suggests that fairer skin is more desirable and makes a person look more youthful.

Many other advertisements promote ideas similar to this, such as the Watsons (2017) ad that expressed the idea that lighter skin was necessary to gain a man's affection. This Malaysian ad was a 15-minute-long video called "Lagenda Cun Raya," based on the legend of Dayang

Senandong, a princess with a beautiful singing voice who was cursed to have dark skin. In the advertisement, an aristocrat is looking for a potential consort and is enchanted by Dayang's beautiful singing voice, but is appalled to learn that she has dark skin. Dayang then washes her face with a Watson product, and her skin turns fairer, prompting the aristocrat to sigh in relief and agree to marry her (MalayMail). In the original folklore, there is greater emphasis on the concepts of "true love" and "inner beauty," where the king falls in love with her for her beautiful singing voice and personality (MalayMail). The curse that darkens her skin is only lifted after Dayang gives birth to the king's child, sealing their love. This advertisement fosters the idea that women with darker skin are less likely to win the affection of a man, further solidifying the societal preference for fairer skin, and associates darker skin with ugliness.

Interestingly, advertisements for the Seoul Secret Snowz Pill and the ad "Lagenda Kun Raya" both convey the values of achievement, and go against universalism. The Seoul Secret Snows Pill ad depicts fairer skin as a way for people to move up in society, and "Lagenda Kun Raya" shows that having fairer skin can help someone attain a better love life. Because of this it can be seen that both ads go against the value of universalism since they are indirectly portraying having darker skin as a disadvantage and giving privilege to some people, while demeaning others.

The cultural values present in all of the skin lightning advertisements aforementioned are mainly conformity and tradition. The advertisements are stressing that skin lightning is a necessary evil to be able to maintain the beauty standard that society has traditionally believed to be beautiful for centuries, condemning women who have darker skin and ensuring that there is a very negative association towards people with darker skin. This creates a harmful power dynamic between people with fairer and darker skin, and can cause people with darker skin to be looked down upon by society, restricting their opportunities.

Moreover, due to the prevalence of skin lightening in East Asian countries, there are whole companies that base their brand on the notion that having fairer skin is "superior". One company like this is Glow & Lovely, which, until its 2020 rebrand, was known as Fair & Lovely. This company owns 70% of the market share in India's Skin-Lightening industry and has been known to use harmful stereotypes in its product promotions (Gajanan). Glow & Lovely used rebranding tactics to maintain its relevance and combat colorism by changing its name, but it still sells "intense whitening" face wash and uses fairer models in its advertisements (The Seattle Medium). Unilever, the parent company of Glow & Lovely, even decided to remove the word "fair" from all of their products, but despite this, the harmful ideas promoted by their products continue to spread, and colorism persists (Gajanan)

Furthermore, the rebranding of many companies mainly applies to the West, not to Asian countries. Besides Unilever, companies such as L'Oréal and Nivea have used similar rebranding tactics to Glow & Lovely, either distancing themselves from the words "whitening" and "fair" or removing those terms from their products (The Seattle Medium). However, these claims only seem to apply in the West, specifically in the US and Europe. In Asian countries such as China, India, and Japan, L'Oréal uses many terms that even intentionally associate white with beauty, such as the term "Bihaku", a term used in Japan that is used to describe "beautifully white" skin care (The Seattle Medium). Additionally, Nivea's websites that were regional to Asia all contained extensive FAQs that recognized the connection to Asian beauty and skin lightening, and said that the company did not promote skin lightening at all, despite the numerous products that were marketed in India as "whitening" and the entire skin lightening section in the Malaysia website that used fairer models (The Seattle Medium). All of these promotions of skin lightening

are not even remotely prevalent in western society, which further explains the differences in beauty preferences between the east and the west, and also says something about the beauty norms in the West. Advertisements are less focused on skin tone and many companies do not promote skin lightening as avidly in the West compared to the East, confirming that western beauty standards have a lesser focus on skin tone.

Cross-cultural analysis

Despite the general appeal for fairer skin in Asian cultures, many cultures have different reasons for lightening skin. For example, the use of lightening cosmetics in Japan is influenced by Western society but not used in the same way as in the West, where the goal is to enhance beauty (Li et al. 445). Instead, lightning products are used in ways that help people fit in with society's beauty norms (Li et al. 445). More than 90% of middle-class Japanese women whiten their skin to fit the standard, and even if they tan their bodies, they avoid their faces and continue to use the standard shade of foundation, which shows that skin lightening has become part of Japanese racial identity (Li et al. 445). From this, it can be seen that some of Japan's central cultural values are conformity and tradition, as most people lighten their skin to align with Japan's cultural traditions and identities. This view is similar to that of China and subsequently Taiwan. In China, lighter skin is seen as a sign of luxury, success, and prestige, and also as a sign of bodily control (Chen et al. 134). The desire for lighter skin has been prevalent in China for centuries, and these ideas have been passed down from generation to generation and expressed in advertisements, which help identify China's cultural values of tradition, conformity, and achievement (Chen et al. 134). Subsequently, the cultural values of Taiwan, a society influenced mainly by Confucianism, are similar to those of China (Chen et al., pp. 133-135). Contrastingly, the Philippines has quite different cultural values from those of China, Taiwan, and Japan, even though skin lightening remains an essential aspect of societal standards of beauty (Chen et al. 134). The difference in the cultural values of the Philippines (Achievement and Hedonism) and those of Taiwan, Japan, and China (Tradition and Conformity) may be because the Philippines is influenced much more by Western society than the latter countries (Chen et al. 134).

Something that separates India from Western society is the prevalence of Bollywood (Li et al. 447). It was previously mentioned that models are often Caucasian in countries such as South Korea and China, but this is not the case in India, where popular Bollywood actors and actresses usually model for advertisements. Because of this, Indian beauty standards are less influenced by Western standards or Confucian standards like those in the countries mentioned above. Despite this, the cultural values of India are quite similar to those of China and Japan, since similar ideas are expressed in Indian skin lightening advertisements as compared to Chinese or Japanese skin lightening advertisements, but, one thing to note is that, unlike Japanese and Chinese people, Indian people do not lighten their skin to conform to a cultural identity, they lighten their skin for the opposite reason, to stand out. This is because it's generally less common for people of Indian origin to have fairer skin. From century to century, the desire for fairer skin increased and it became an idea that was passed down from generation to generation. Additionally, the want to stand out and be different from the norm shows that Indian people value novelty, which motivates them to move forward. This specifically shows an underlying value of self-direction which comes with this value. Based on this, it can be determined that India's cultural values are similar to Confucian ideals but are a blend of Western

and Eastern ideals. The central cultural values of India are tradition, achievement, and stimulation.

The Effect of Advertisements on the Perception of Women

When the average person thinks of a stereotypical woman, they imagine a submissive, obedient housewife whose focus is to become a good mother and tend to her family. This perception is both widely incorrect and misguided. The reason for this traditionalist view, which many people still hold, is the media people were and are still exposed to. Advertisements significantly shape gender roles while also showing both the reality of the current moment and a glorified picture of the world (Sharma 236). The way that women are portrayed in advertisements directly influences the average person's perception of women and their roles in society. Because of this, studying advertisements from different time periods can help us understand how opinions about women in society change over time. For example, it would be much more common to see an advertisement portraying a woman as a housewife, say, in the 50s, than in the present day.

Development of Women in Advertisements
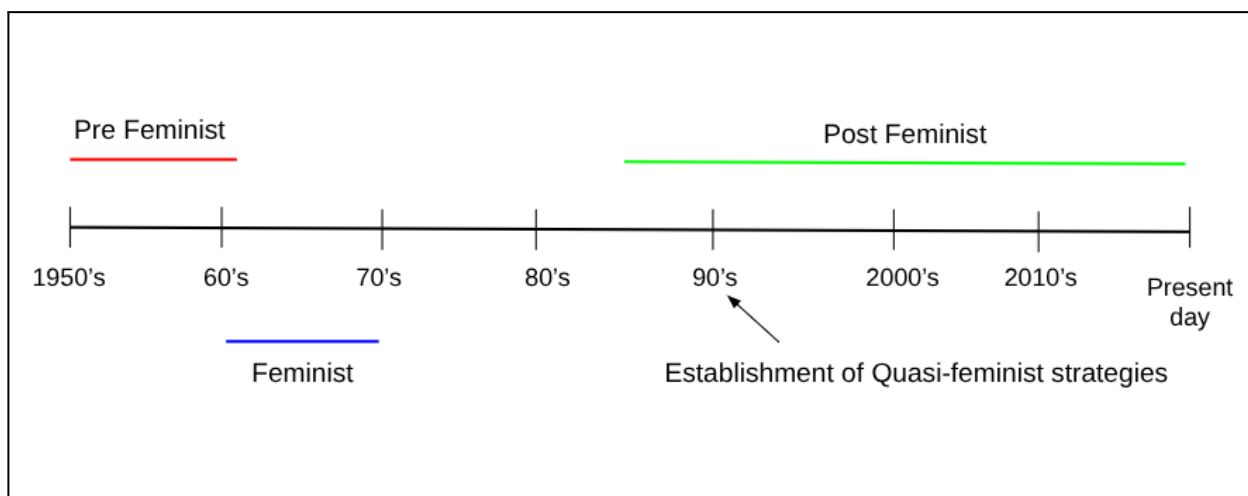
A timeline of different eras of women's portrayal in advertisements

Historically, women in advertisements have been stereotyped for almost two centuries (Sharma 237). Back in the 1980s, women were still portrayed as stereotypical homemakers (Soni 20). Further back, in the 1950s, women were portrayed similarly, but also as very weak and of lesser intelligence. A good example of this is the 1953 Alcoa Aluminum ad that promoted their Hytop bottle cap. The advertisement portrayed a woman holding a ketchup bottle, gently unscrewing its cap with her finger and wearing a surprised, delighted look. The advertisement's slogan was "You mean a woman can open it?" The ad did this to show how easy it was to unscrew the bottle cap by joking that even a woman could open it, which it was.

The 1950's to the early 1960's was considered the pre-feminist era of advertising, a time when most advertisements expressed the idea that women were meant to stay at home, they were not meant to make important decisions or do important things, were dependent on men,

and even that men only saw women as sex objects and nothing more (Mager and Helgson 239). Concerns on these ideas by feminists led America into the Feminist Period of advertising, a time that lasted from the 1960's-70's (Mager and Helgson 239). This period in time challenged the notion of their being "masculine" careers, and advocated for more sexual freedom, paving the way for the postfeminist period. The postfeminist period has been ongoing ever since 1985, and has reflected some of the notions of the feminist period. While the advertising industry had come a long way since the pre-feminist era, stereotypes persisted in the media, and corporations were beginning to develop new strategies to appeal to both feminists and traditionalists (Mager and Helgson 240).

The strategy developed was a quasi-feminist strategy called "Femvertising," which has been developed and prominently used in industries targeted towards women, such as makeup products and menstrual products, to maintain relevance and appeal to customers. "Femvertising," or "female empowerment advertising," is an advertising strategy that portrays women in empowering positions to increase appeal to women (Sharma 237). This strategy is beneficial for reducing stereotypical portrayals of women, since the whole point is to empower women, but oftentimes "femvertising" is used by companies as a front to appeal to customers and is not fueled by actual support for women.

Sexualization of women

It is common for women to be sexualized in advertisements despite the nonsexual nature of the product being sold (Soni 20). A good example of this happening in real life is the recent campaign that American Eagle Jean's had in collaboration with Sydney Sweeney. The campaign was based on the 1980 Calvin Klein Jeans ad which featured Brooke Shields putting on a pair of jeans while talking to the camera. In the Sydney Sweeney version she is less exposed, but still doing the same, sexualised action. In the ad Sweeney is talking about genetics and says, "Genes are passed down from parents to offspring, often determining traits like hair color, personality and even eye color. My jeans are blue." The advertisement then ended with the slogan "Sydney Sweeney has great jeans". The controversy from this ad comes not only from the sexualised nature, but also because of the content of the ad. The ad that this was based on, with Brooke Shields, talks about breeding out "undesirable" genes, and uses Shields as a benchmark for what is desirable (Restrepo et al.). Because of this, many people thought that this ad was not only sexualizing women, but also saying that the desirable woman was caucasian, had blue eyes, and blonde hair.

The appearance of women changes whether or not they will be featured in an advertisement. Most of the time women chosen for advertisements will fit or be impossibly above the beauty standard (Soni pp. 20-21). Often, portrayals of women in advertisements will be so outlandish that they can distort women's ideas about body image. A woman's age has a very large influence on whether she will be featured in an advertisement. It is common for the women featured in advertisements to be from the ages 18-35 (Soni 26). It is very rare that you'll see a woman around the age of 60 in an advertisement, but it is more common to see a man of that age in an advertisement (Soni 21). This shows that women in advertisements are inaccurate to the average woman, and the models are focused more on appealing to the male gaze, than promoting the product ethically and efficiently.

In advertising, there have been around eight categories created to distinguish the portrayals of women in advertisements and the associations each advertisement seeks to make with the product. For this "mood" to be portrayed, advertisers take advantage of women's

appearance and in what ways they are attractive (Solomon et al. 23). For example, when a person is described as "cute," their beauty is very different from someone who is described as "sexy". In a study done by Solomon, Michael R, Ashmore, Richard D, and Longo, Laura C, where magazine editors sorted different advertisements into different categories of beauty, the categories identified were Classic Beauty, Cute, Sex-Kitten, Sensual, Girl-Next-door, exotic, Feminine, and trendy (Solomon et al. pp. 27-28). There are some similarities between these categories, for example, the "Sex-Kitten" category and "Sensual" category both have the same sexual appeal, but "Sex-Kitten" refers to a less mature look. Likewise, the "Cute" and "Girl-Next-Door" categories share a similar atmosphere, making the models look more plain and focusing more on their emotions. The "Feminine" category is similar to the "Classic Beauty" category, which focuses on a "perfect" look. It is the opposite of the "trendy" category, which allows imperfections to resonate with the audience.

Using these categories, we can investigate how women are portrayed across cultures and what this reveals about each country's cultural values. Additionally, the ways Western women are viewed in Eastern cultures and vice versa can be examined based on the categories in which these women appear most often in advertisements.

In a study done by Katherine Toland Frith, Hong Cheng, and Ping Shaw, it was found that, when studying magazine advertisements of women from the most popular magazines in China, Singapore, and the U.S. that, while both Western and Asian cultures had around a 50% margin of advertisements in the "Classic Beauty" category, Asian cultures had a higher majority of ads that fit under the "Cute/Girl-Next-Door" category, while western cultures had a greater majority of "Sensual/Sexy" advertisements (Frith et al. pp. 57-58)

Interestingly, models in both Western and Asian cultures were found to be more often dressed in demure clothes, compared to erotic clothes; however, Asian models were posed more frequently in demure garments (84.5% margin) than western models (76.8% margin). In comparison, western models were posed more frequently in erotic clothes (23.7% margin) compared to Asian models (15.5% margin) (Frith et al. pp. 57-58).

Additionally, the study investigated whether the representation of the models in these advertisements was related to the product types being advertised. It was found that Western models appeared more frequently in clothing advertisements, while Asian models appeared more often in beauty product advertisements (skin and hair care). This could be because Western beauty standards are more focused on the body, and Asian beauty standards have more of a focus on facial features and skin tone, which explains why the data was skewed this way.

Something to consider with this study is that the categories "Western" and "Asian" do not necessarily mean that the advertisements in the "Asian" category all come from Asian magazines, and similarly for the "Western" category. The categories separate advertisements featuring Western and Asian models, allowing this study to analyze perceptions of Western women in Asian countries and vice versa.

Analysis

It was found in the study that both Western and Asian models were portrayed often in the "classic beauty" category, which shows that there are universal types of beauty that advertisers use between both Western and Asian cultures (Frith et al. 58). However, it is more often that Western models will be more sexualized compared to Asian models. When advertisers are promoting products that have sexual connotations, they will use Western models instead of

Asian models, and western models will especially be used more often when the advertisement is targeted towards an Asian audience (Frith et al. 58).

Furthermore, the study found that Western models were more often featured in clothing advertisements, while Asian models were more often featured in hair and skin care advertisements (Frith et al. 59). This could explain the difference in beauty standards between Asian and Western cultures. Western beauty standards are more focused on the body, while Asian beauty standards are more focused on facial features and skin tone, which falls in line with the fact that Western models are more sexualized.

Most advertisements featuring women are designed to appeal to the male gaze (Mager and Helgeson 240), so the fact that a large portion of models in advertisements from Eastern countries are portrayed in a more simplistic, "cute" style says something about how women are perceived in Eastern cultures. In the East, women are expected to be more conservative and less bold (Frith et al. 58). They are not generally expected to be in positions of high power in the workplace, and are almost diminished in their intelligence levels because of this "Girl-next-door" act. This explains why they are not generally put in erotic ads, when instead it is more common for Western models to be used in ads where the models are put in a sexual context, even if the advertisement is from an Asian country. This could be because in the East, it seems more acceptable for Western women to be sexualized, while Asian women generally are not, which shows restrictions in Asian women's sexual freedom (Frith et al. 58).

Comparatively, it is more common for advertisements to depict female models in sexual contexts in the West, an idea that can be inferred from the high proportion of advertisements that fell under the "Sensual/Sexy" category. While it is obvious that the values that would be conveyed from a high percentage of inappropriate depictions of women in advertisements, compared to the East, would be tradition and conformity, one thing that contrasts Western and Eastern cultures is that, while both try to diminish the standing of women by portraying them in a demeaning light, Western cultures choose to sexualize their models. In contrast, Eastern cultures choose to infantilize their models. This sexualization, despite how degrading it is, shows an openness for women to be more bold and expressive, and gives women more sexual freedom, something frowned upon in the East. Moreover, the margin of advertisements where Western women are portrayed in a sexual context is far less than half. Instead, it is more common for women across both cultures to be dressed in more demure clothes, which shows that Western advertisers do have a habit of sexualizing women, but still often gravitate to portraying them respectfully (Frith et al. 58). Because of this, the Western values that can be conveyed are achievement and self-direction.

Something worth noting is that sociologist Irving Goffman described different gazes in which many models often directed either towards or away from the camera (Frith et al. 54). For example, there is "licensed withdrawal", where the model's gaze drifts away from the camera, and the "engaging gaze", where the model looks at the camera with a sexually seductive gaze (Frith et al. 54). Interestingly, Samovar, Porter, & Jain, 2001 found that in Asian cultures, gazing towards the camera was seen as unfeminine and aggressive.

Based on these results, the cultural values of the West and the East can be determined. The wariness of the East to portray women in positions of power or in a sexual context highlights the East's conservative and traditional values. The habit of advertisers to portray Asian models as "cute" and "the girl-next-door" shows that Eastern cultures value conformity and tradition, as seen in the more modest atmosphere in which these models are portrayed in advertisements in these categories.

Conversely, the habit of advertisers in the West to portray their models in a bold, explicit manner highlights the West's openness to expression and to breaking boundaries. Opposite to conformity and tradition, the West values self-direction and achievement, which can be conveyed from the way that Western models are more often depicted in a way that gives them more autonomy over their sexuality and how much they are allowed to express it, despite the fact that western advertisements sexualize women as a way to almost objectify them.

Section 3: Research limitations & Future research ideas

An important topic to discuss is the limitations of the research. These limitations can skew the results of the research, but they can also present relevant ideas to study regarding this topic.

There is, for one, a lack of much research on the reason for the preference of tanner skin in western cultures, but instead more often comparisons of Western beauty standards to that of Asian cultures as a way to figure out the influence that western culture has on Asian societies (Li et al. pp. 444-449; Chen et al. pp. 127-158). Additionally, while there is much research on women's perceptions of advertisements (Soni pp. 20-29; Frith et al. pp. 53-61), there is little that analyzes the development of women's roles in advertisements over time, and even less that extends to the present day. This can be especially detrimental to the data, since we now live in a time where social media has now become a whole new marketing strategy, which can make the conclusions of this research a bit out of date.

Something that had such a large effect on the results of this research is the globalization of Western beauty standards. As Western ideologies have started to spread around the world, many traditional beauty practices from Eastern cultures have been forgotten so as to adopt beauty standards from western cultures (Chen et al. 128). As said earlier, countries influenced by the West will have cultural values similar to those of the West; for example, the Philippines has cultural values of achievement and self-direction. The same can be said about the values of countries influenced by Confucianist ideals (Chen et al. 134). Because of this, to provide in-depth conclusions about the differences between the cultural values of the West and the East, the extent of Western or Confucian influence in a given country should be taken into account.

Something that came up often when researching women in advertising was women almost being coddled into accepting women's stereotypical portrayal in ads. This could be the result of these ideas being cemented into their head from a young age (Wilcox et al. 5). Advertisers have started to aim their advertisements towards audiences of children, since they are the consumers most prone to advertisements (Wilcox et al. 5). They usually begin at ages 7 or 8. However, some even start at ages 4 or 5, since that is when a child first distinguishes an advertisement from other forms of media (Wilcox et al., pp. 5-6). This is important to consider when evaluating women's perceptions across different age groups. For example, people who grew up in the feminist era might have a less traditional view of women and their roles in society. However, someone who grew up in the pre-feminist era could have a more conservative and stereotypical standpoint on where women fit in society.

Section 4: Conclusion

Based on the conclusions of this research, we can discern the impact of advertisements on the values of specific cultures, learn about differences between Western and Eastern cultures, and deduce the importance of advertisements in shaping desires for fairer skin and

perceptions of women. The stark contrast between the values of achievement, self-direction, and hedonism in the West, compared to the values of conformity, security, and tradition in the East, can help us put reasoning behind the differences in the social norms of these two cultures. Additionally, by studying advertisements and learning about the strategies of advertisers from different cultures, we can see how people from one culture view people from another. The importance of this research is that it can help identify ways to reduce the spread of the harmful stereotypes explored in this paper. From very young ages, people in Asian countries have been taught negative ideas about having fairer skin, and young girls from all around the world have been taught harmful stereotypes about women's roles and where women fit in society. Based on the conclusions of this research, we can now understand how social norms are transmitted through advertisements, so advertisers can design their ads to help dispel negative social norms, which could specifically help reduce negative connotations of darker skin and stereotypical portrayals of women.

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