

Colorism has been there since time immemorial, and it is affecting individuals in different ways. Most are losing confidence, while some are experiencing low self-esteem and self-hatred. Others are suffering from excessive skin bleaching and experiencing poorer physical and mental health outcomes. Colorism is defined as discrimination against individuals with a darker skin tone, typically among people of the same ethnic or racial group. It has led to constant struggles, especially among women. Specifically, women with darker skin tones in the beauty and marketing industry. They have been marginalized as those with lighter skin tones are preferred.

In the beauty industry, for instance, products used are often seen as life changing. They are used to enhance the physical attractiveness of a person. They are used to cover blotches and dark spots and stop ageing effects (Frisby, 2019). The same products, however, were promoted as “blemish creams” in the 1940s. They were seen as products that could help smooth and nourish sensitive and easily irritated skin. Now, those who use them and get good results are preferred over dark-skinned women, which has led to wide-spread controversies around the world. Women with darker skin tones find it hard to find shades of makeup that resemble their skin. The ones that are available vaguely resembles their own. This has promoted colorism, which in real sense, will continue to be an issue for years to come.

In the marketing industry, things are still the same. Dark-skinned women are struggling to find marketing and advertising jobs which indicates that they are looked down upon. They are cast aside, leaving women with lighter skin tones to dominate the industry. According to research, big brands like Nivea, Heineken and Dove have faced criticism for propagating the assumption that being of a lighter skin tone is superior (Mallick, 2021). Generally, those with fair skin have had more privileges compared to those with darker skin tones.

I believe colorism will always be an issue. No matter how much we try to fight it, it will always be there. The reason being, there are those who will want to be light skin, no matter the circumstance. What is encouraging, however, is the fact that some brands are promoting general beauty. It does not matter if you are light skin, dark skin or white, the brands are taking everyone into consideration. A good example is Guinness. Their marketing strategy is “Black is Beautiful.” It means they are valuing everyone for who they are. There are those with dark skin preference. They prefer the way they look over changing because of societal pressure. I like these people because they know who they are. There is no point of changing our appearance because people are doing it. We are beautiful the way we are and there is no guarantee that we will look better after we change. So, let us just accept our situation and live life naturally.

The issue of colorism is rampant in the current world specifically in the acting and modelling industry. Most directors and producers frequently utilize actors and models with light-skin tones. However, reading Khanna has opened my eyes. The more I read it, the more I notice how I have encountered colorism in real life. I have come across it in the workplace, while doing promotional jobs and even in social events. Hopefully, we will find a way to counter the issue as time goes by.

References

- Frisby, C. M. (2019). Black and beautiful: A content analysis and study of colorism and strides toward inclusivity in the cosmetic industry. *Advances in Journalism and Communication*, 7(02), 35.
- Mallick, M. (2021, May 20). *Marketing still has a colorism problem*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2021/05/marketing-still-has-a-colorism-problem>