

Why is fair skin considered to be a definition of beauty in some countries ?

1

Why is fair skin considered to be a definition of beauty in some countries ?

A research paper presented to:
In particular fulfillment of the course
Trend Forecasting and Social lMedia
BUF 3100

By Rhonda Duncan
May 15th, 2023.

In some countries and cultures fair skin is associated with purity, innocence, and youthfulness. In many societies such as ancient Egypt, China, and India, fair skin has been associated with wealth and high social class. The association between fair skin and privilege persisted overtime leading to the idea that fair skin represents beauty and attractiveness. Generally, over time being influenced through the media, fashion, and entertainment industries. Media such as advertisements, films, television shows, and magazines often play a significant role in shaping beauty standards and promoting certain physical attributes which reinforce the idea that fair skin is more desirable and beautiful.

Historically, the fashion industry has been predominantly white, leading to the lack of representation for people of color in different roles such as models, designers, photographers and executives. This underrepresentation continues to stereotype and limit opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds. In some cases, people of color are included in fashion campaigns as tokens, giving the appearance of diversity without genuine inclusivity. This can create a false perception of inclusion without addressing underlying problems or encouraging significant change. There has been a growing awareness of the need for more diversity in the fashion industry in recent years. Actors, models, and industry insiders have spoken out against discrimination and called for more inclusive practices, diverse representation, and equal opportunities.

Unfortunately, people of color have been overlooked and poorly treated in the fashion industry. Racism and discrimination against people of color are seen frequently in the industry, with examples including few modeling opportunities, unequal pay and lack of diversity in leadership positions. For example, in the modeling industry, people of color have often been overlooked for jobs in favor of white models, with many designers and brands preferring a "Eurocentric" or westernized beauty standard. When people of color are hired for modeling jobs, they may be subject to racist comments or stereotypes on set or in the media. Beauty standards are complex and vast. It is crucial to promote inclusivity and diversity in beauty ideals, appreciating and celebrating a wide range of skin tones, features, and cultural representations.

The issue of fair skin preference or colorism in the fashion industry is a complex and a sensitive topic that varies across different countries and cultures. However it is difficult to provide a deeper understanding of the problem worldwide. Cultural beauty standards can vary significantly across cultures and societies. In some countries, fair skin has historically been associated with wealth, privilege, and social status, leading to a preference for lighter skin tones. This preference can be deeply ingrained and reinforced by societal norms, media representation, and marketing campaigns. The global influence of Western standards, which is often prioritized for lighter skin tones, have been more persuasive to influencers on a global fashion industry. As a result these advertisements, fashion shows, and the promotion of specific beauty deals. This impact has contributed to the marginalization of individuals with darker skin tones in the industry, creating a lack of representation and opportunities for diverse models.

The fashion industry has been criticized for its limited representation of models with darker skin tones. Runways, advertisements, and editorial features have often underrepresented or excluded individuals with diverse skin tones, reinforcing narrow beauty standards. This lack of representation can have negative effects on the self-esteem and aspirations of individuals from

underrepresented communities. In recent years, there has been growing awareness and advocacy for inclusivity and diversity within the fashion industry. Many brands, designers, and organizations are actively working to challenge traditional beauty standards, promote diverse representation, and celebrate all skin tones. There has been an increased demand for inclusivity in fashion, leading to positive changes, albeit gradual, in terms of representation. An important fact is that fair skin preference or colorism can differ significantly from country to country. Some regions have more biases and limited representation of darker-skinned individuals, while others may have made progress in challenging these norms. It is essential to foster greater diversity, and representation in the fashion industry, celebrating beauty in all its forms and challenging narrow beauty standards. This requires continued efforts from fashion brands, media outlets, and consumers to promote diversity, representation, and inclusivity in the industry.

Treating people fairly and equally is an important principle of justice and human rights. Discrimination based on race or ethnicity is morally wrong and goes against the principles of equality and inclusivity. The fashion industry has a significant influence on shaping societal norms and beauty standards. When people of color are not properly represented in the industry, it reinforces a narrow and limited understanding of beauty. By ensuring that people of color receive equal treatment and opportunities, the industry becomes more diverse, inclusive, and reflective of the multiracial society in which we live. People of color contribute significantly to the fashion industry as consumers and trendsetters. By excluding or mistreating them, the industry misses out on the valuable perspectives, talents, and buying power of diverse communities. Ensuring fair treatment promotes a more inclusive industry that can tap into broader markets and thrive economically. When people of color see themselves reflected positively in the fashion industry, it can inspire confidence, self-esteem, and aspirations among individuals from those communities. Fair treatment in the industry can break down stereotypes, challenge biases, and empower people of color to pursue careers in fashion or related fields. The fashion industry has the ability to influence social attitudes and drive social change. By treating people of color fairly, the industry can play a significant role in breaking down systemic racism, promoting inclusivity, and developing greater understanding and acceptance across society. The fashion industry has the power to influence social attitudes and drive social change.

The effects of fair skin preference and colorism in the fashion industry can be observed among various groups of individuals. Models with darker skin tones may face limited opportunities for representation in the fashion industry. The underrepresentation of diverse skin tones can provide a narrow beauty standard and create a lack of visibility and recognition for individuals who do not fit those standards. The fashion industry's emphasis on fair skin can contribute to a lack of inclusivity, making individuals with darker skin tones feel excluded or overlooked. This can lead to feelings of alienation, low self-esteem, and a sense of not belonging within the industry. In some cases, individuals with darker skin tones may face economic disparities within the fashion industry. Limited representation can translate into fewer opportunities for lucrative modeling contracts, endorsements, and brand collaborations.

Promoting diversity and addressing colorism in the fashion industry requires a diverse representation. Fashion brands, agencies, and media outlets should actively seek out and promote diverse models with different skin tones. This includes featuring models with darker skin tones in fashion shows, campaigns, and editorials, and ensuring they are represented proportionally to the population demographics establishing clear casting guidelines and policies that emphasize diversity can help combat colorisms can include requirements for a diverse range of models in terms of skin color, body size, age, and other factors, ensuring that a variety of beauty standards

are represented. Brands can collaborate with influencers, designers, and organizations that actively promote and designers that are people of color. This can help amplify their message and reach a broader audience. Empowering underrepresented voices, Provide platforms and opportunities for designers, stylists, photographers, and other industry professionals from diverse backgrounds. Supporting and promoting their work can contribute to a more inclusive and representative fashion industry.

Possible solutions for fair skin in the fashion industry should actively seek out models with diverse skin tones and ensure their inclusion in runway shows, campaigns, and editorial features. This can help break the cycle of exclusion and promote a more inclusive representation of beauty. Engage influencers, bloggers, and content creators with diverse backgrounds to collaborate with fashion brands. Their influence can help promote inclusive messaging and challenge prevailing beauty standards. Develop and implement ethical guidelines within the fashion industry that explicitly address issues of diversity. Provide platforms and opportunities for designers, stylists, photographers, and makeup artists from diverse backgrounds. Consumers can drive change by supporting brands that prioritize diversity and inclusivity while boycotting those that perpetuate exclusivity or bias. Use social media platforms to advocate for greater representation and highlight the need for change. Recognize that addressing fair skin preference and colorism is an ongoing process. Make a long-term commitment to diversity, inclusivity, and equal representation within the fashion industry.

Ignoring or denying the existence of fair skin preference and colorism will not address the problem. It is crucial to acknowledge and confront these biases in order to work towards a more inclusive industry. Merely including models with darker skin tones in campaigns without addressing the underlying biases and systemic issues within the industry may not lead to meaningful change. It is important to address the root causes of colorism and promote inclusivity at all levels, including decision-making and creative process. Without holding fashion brands, agencies, and industry professionals accountable for their actions, progress towards inclusivity may be limited. It is necessary to establish ethical guidelines, promote transparency, and demand accountability from those involved in perpetuating biases and discrimination. In order to effect meaningful change, a multifaceted approach that encompasses structural, cultural, and systemic shifts is necessary.

In conclusion, fair skin of beauty in certain countries is influenced by a combination of historical, cultural, social, and economic factors. These factors, such as historical associations, colonialism, symbolism, media influence, and economic incentives, have contributed to the perpetuation of fair skin as a beauty ideal. By promoting diverse beauty standards, and equal representation, we can strive for a future where beauty is celebrated in all its diverse forms, regardless of skin color. It is through collective efforts and continuous commitment that we can challenge prevailing biases and create a more inclusive and accepting world. It is important to Challenging and questioning these standards is essential to promote inclusivity and diversity in beauty ideals.

Work Cited

1. Thomas, Kaiya. "Why Is Colorism Still a Problem in the Fashion Industry?" *Medium*, 13 Dec. 2019, medium.com/@xkaiya360/why-is-colorism-still-a-problem-in-the-fashion-industry-95b833b6bcab.
2. Jones, Jari. "Colorism Is Still the Law of the Land in Fashion." *Out Magazine*, 26 Sept. 2019, www.out.com/fashion/2019/9/26/colorism-still-law-land-fashion.

3. "Colorism in High Fashion." *The Pudding*, pudding.cool/2019/04/vogue/. Accessed 17 May 2023.
4. Elder, Abbey K., et al. "Race and Ethnicity." *Dress Appearance and Diversity in US Society*, 1 Aug. 2020, iaestate.pressbooks.pub/dressappearancediversity/chapter/race-and-ethnicity/.