

Day: _____

Date: _____

Beauty Industry And Cultural Imperialism

1. Introduction

- a. Intersection between the beauty industry and the cultural imperialism
- b. "The beauty industry plays a significant role in imposing cultural imperialism by promoting western beauty standards, often leading to the demonisation of local cultures, marginalisation of local beauty industries, and creating identity crisis among societies."

2. Historical Context of beauty Industry

- a. Rise of Western beauty standards through colonialism and Hollywood.
- b. The Global spread of Western beauty ideals through Media, fashion, and celebrity culture.
- c. Expansion of Western cosmetic brands and products into non-western markets.

3. Drivers of Cultural Imperialism In Beauty Industry

Day: _____

Date: _____

- a. Advertising and media influence through TV, magazines and online media.
- b. Global beauty brands promoting products designed to alter natural features.
- c. Erasing cultural diversity in beauty practices.

4. Impact of Cultural Imperialism

- a. Marginalisation of indigenous beauty norms
- b. Cultural erosion leading to identity crisis
- c. Economic consequences and clash with local beauty industries.

5. Conclusion.

Day: _____

Date: _____

"Beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder" - a phrase that has always been on the tip of every tongue, but practically went unimplemented over the decades. The need

for beauty industry - a global industry garnishing products and services related to personal appearance - emerged only when one type of beauty got standardized as 'less beautiful' or 'not beautiful' than the others. Consequently, specific ethnicities and cultures popularized themselves as superior to others in terms of beauty standards.

This standardization led to the cultural imperialism in societies like Asia and Africa by promoting Western and Eurocentric beauty standards. As a result, the imposition of certain western cultural values, norms, and practices, started getting normalized.

Thus, the beauty industry - aimed at providing personal care services - plays a significant role in imposing cultural imperialism by promoting Western beauty standards often leading to the demonisation of local cultures, marginalisation of local beauty industries, and creating identity crisis

among societies like Asia and Africa.

From the European Colonialism to Hollywood's global influence, the rise of western beauty ideals shaped the upcoming generations of beauty products. The European colonialism in countries like India and continents like Africa promoted a sense of marginalisation and demonisation of darker skin tones and curly hair. Moreover, the idea of slavery being associated with darker skin tones and higher positions attributing to the people with fair colour, nourished a sense of inferiority among the natives of such countries. ~~Moreover,~~ In addition, the use of Hollywood portraying the protagonists as fair skinned, slim bodied, and Eurocentric featured while the antagonist being most often a dark skinned human with broad physical appearance, played a role in shaping the beauty standards, consequently, giving rise to such beauty products promoting ~~the~~ changes in physical appearance. Additionally the emergence of western ideals through fashion, media and celebrity

Day: _____

Date: _____

culture^e powered the historical rise of beauty industry and its standardization. As the constructivism theory of international relations explains the role of media—whether print or digital—in shaping discourses among the general masses, it plays a similar role in building beauty discourse among the general populace. In the 1990s and 2000s, the "heroin chic" look, popularized by models like Kate Moss, dominated global beauty standards and perpetuated slimmness as the standard of beauty. In the same way, stars like Marilyn Monroe earned the global fame as the "ideal" featuring Eurocentric physical characteristics. As a result, such historical discourses shaped the general superiority of Western culture in beauty industry.

The expansion of western cosmetic brands in the global arena is yet another historical factor shaping the current beauty dynamics. Global brands like the emergence of Olay and Pantene in the Asian market particularly focused on products like skin whitening creams, created a mass

Day: _____

Date: _____

hysteria among the locals regarding fair skin colour. Thus, such international products entering a market where the majority of the population owns a darker skin, created, nourished, and shaped the western beauty standards in the modern societies.

There are certain forces particularly aimed at driving the cultural imperialism in the beauty industry. Such forces include the advertising and its media influence, the cosmetic products and their standardization, the celebrity and influencers culture in films and on social media, and finally the erasure of cultural diversity in beauty practices. These driving forces, in turn, enable the cultural imperialism in marginalised societies.

The advertising agencies in the global beauty market portray a certain standard of beauty in Magazines like Vogue and Elle. Such advertising companies sell and feature primarily white models through print and digital media. The advertising, therefore, reinforces the western standard of beauty as the universal ideal.

Day: _____

Date: _____

In addition, there has been a standardization in the formation of beauty products that sell worldwide. The "one-size-fits-all" beauty marketing predominantly features western standards and enables the widespread selling of the same standards to the people wanting to transform their bodies into those standard ideals. Though, Dove launched a 'real beauty' campaign in 2004 showing variety of body types, it was still criticized for favouring lighter-skin, western-looking women.

Another factor that drives the cultural imperialism is the influence of culture on social media. For example, the Kardashian family, particularly Kim Kardashian, has played a huge role in shaping beauty standards by promoting a certain type of body. In the same way, the self-made social media 'influencers' create an impact on the psychological well-being of their audience, shaping the beauty ideals into limited varieties, by using filters and makeup.

The Global beauty practices, furthermore, erasing culture diversity by promoting products

Day: _____

Date: _____

designed to alter natural features. For example, skin-lightening products such as 'Fair and lovely' have been heavily marketed in India and Pakistan selling the idea of a lighter skin being more desirable. In the same way hair straightening products have been marketed in Africa promoting straight hair as more beautiful and manageable. Such rise of Western-style beauty standards led to the wide-spread use of products altering natural features and thus, eroding traditional beauty practices.

The standardization of beauty industry driven by cultural imperialism has a profound impact on local cultures and traditional beauty standards. It led to the marginalisation of the indigenous beauty norms, created a sense of cultural identity crisis driven by psychological pressure to conform to beauty standards, and the economic loss of the local industries as well as them creating products trying to match foreign beauty standards.

The rejection of traditional beauty practices in favor of the western ideals pushed the traditional beauty practices aside. For example in countries like India and Nigeria, where the indigenous population is dark skinned, locals conformed to products that lightened the skin, in order, to look more acceptable to foreign beauty standards. These practices lead to the marginalization of already built traditional beauty featuring darker skin. Thus, creating a sense of inferiority among people with darker skins.

Furthermore, the cultural imperialism through beauty standardization impacted the psychological well-being of the non-western societies. The locals of societies with non-western features feel psychologically pressured to resort to beauty practices that enable them to look like foreigners, in order to be more desirable in their society. This has further led to low self-confidence and self-esteem. For example, in Phillipines, the increasing popularity of

Day: _____

Date: _____

of fair skin has led many to undergo skin whitening treatments, even at the cost of their health to resort to western beauty standards.

As a result, the local beauty industries have been lagging behind due to the consumer demand for international products. Global brands like L'Oréal and Estée Lauder have overtaken local cosmetic companies in many countries, forcing the local businesses to adopt to western beauty ideals. Such wide-spread consumer demand has led to the loss of economy for the local businesses as well as brought them under clash with the international beauty marketing products.

In conclusion, the cultural imperialism posed by the beauty industry by setting fixed Eurocentric standards, has created profound impacts on the non-western societies. Such societies have resorted to the need for creating a look like the western society, however, at the cost of the marginalisation of their own cultures.