

THE IRONY OF SKIN WHITENING PRODUCT IN ADVERTISING

Davita Soimatul Fauziah

18020154010

The idea of beauty standards was expected and cannot be separated from our society, especially for women. Our society has created those standards, make the ideal of beauty based on their perspectives. Those perspectives then raise the stereotype that a person, especially a woman, will be labelled as beautiful if they conform to existing standards. The expectations of beauty standards were mainly created based on their physical appearance. For instance, the stereotype of a beauty standard that exists in Indonesia is by having fair skin. Historically, the judgment of beautiful women by having fair skin was a culture in Indonesia since a long time ago. Saraswati in her book (Putih: Warna Kulit, Ras, dan Kecantikan di Indonesia Transnasional, 2013), stated that the stereotype of fair skin grew since pre-colonialism, then continued to grow until the Dutch colonialism, which continued again by the Japanese. Not stopping at that time, the concept of beauty was growing with the emergence of various beauty products that wrapped the stereotype in a capitalistic frame.

Unwittingly, the idea of beauty standards has also penetrated through the mass media. This opportunity is also utilized by beauty product manufacturers to market and promote their products through mass media. This statement follows Roesli (2004) opinion, which states that advertising has a much greater expansion power, and without being aware of advertising forms a consumer culture that becomes the leading joint marketing of goods and services. Many manufacturers of beauty products in Indonesia offer skin whitening products, such as Ponds that voice their jargon "white beauty," Fair and Lovely with white skin battle in their television advertisement, and the most popular one, for now, is Scarlett whitening. Different from their competitors, Scarlett whitening utilizes social media such as Instagram, Twitter and Tik Tok. They paid selebgram (selebritis Instagram) or influencers who are considered to have high exposure to promote their products so that the public can be interested in trying and buying their products. The characteristic of their marketing product is to show the difference in the hand smeared with the Scarlett whitening lotion becomes white "instantly" compared to

the other hand that has not been given the product, which shows that the consumers could get their fair skin just in second only by using this product.

The development of social media Tik Tok also being the target marketing of Scarlett whitening. The popularity of this product attracted the attention of Tik Tok users until the term "racun Tik Tok" appeared for Scarlett's whitening products recommended by many famous Tik Tok users. Then coming up, a trending video called "from this to this" shows their skin condition, which they admit is more way better rather than before. Those in the video stated that they now feel more confident because they have white skin resulting from Scarlett's whitening products.

The trend of using Scarlett whitening also impact the author's environment. Many of the author's friends are tempted by the advertising of this product that provides instant white assurance, and they stated they wanted to be whiter after seeing *selebgram* use it. Whereas reality, the Indonesian people's original skin color, which is tan, will look to be grey if given the skin whitening product. Instead of being beautiful, it looks strange and unnatural.

In short, it can be concluded that our society is quickly consumed by what beauty product manufacturers offer in advertising. Not to mention the ingenuity of the manufacturers of these products who deliberately utilize stereotypes about beauty standards in the form of whites to lure buyers. Nevertheless, back again, the question is, do we need these skin whitening products in order to become more beautiful and recognized by the public? Isn't it an irony that being "beautiful" has to be by changing the look of yourself? So, be the real you and found your true beauty.

References

Roesli, H. (2004). Iklan dan Budaya Konsumtif. *Unpublished* .

Saraswati, L. A. (2013). *Putih: Warna Kulit, Ras, dan Kecantikan di Indonesia Transnasional*. Jakarta: Marjin Kiri.

Biodata Penulis



Davita Soimatul Fauziah. Lahir di Kediri, pada Januari tahun 2000. Davita adalah seorang mahasiswa prodi S1 Sastra Inggris di Universitas Negeri Surabaya. Mahasiswa semester 6 ini, pernah menjuarai lomba “Surat untuk Bapak Walikota Kediri”. Memiliki jiwa sosial yang tinggi ia beberapa kali tergabung menjadi relawan untuk kegiatan sosial. Selama pandemi, ia bersama teman-temannya membantu anak-anak sekitar rumah belajar membaca dan berbahasa Inggris. Pada akhir tahun 2020, ia juga turut membantu menyelesaikan pembelajaran literasi di SD dengan mengikuti program Kampus Mengajar Perintis.

Tempat ekspresinya di: [Dav \(davfauziah.blogspot.com\)](http://Dav.davfauziah.blogspot.com)

Emailnya: davita.18010@mhs.unesa.ac.id dan davitasfauziah@gmail.com

HP/WA: 081332456908

