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The Promotion of Skin-Bleaching Products in Jamaica: Media Representation and Cultural Impact

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THE PROMOTION OF SKIN-BLEACHING PRODUCTS IN JAMAICA:
MEDIA REPRESENTATION AND CULTURAL IMPACT

by

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A Research Report
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Science

Department of Mass Communication and Media Arts
in the Graduate School
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RESEARCH REPORT APPROVAL

THE PROMOTION OF SKIN-BLEACHING PRODUCTS IN JAMAICA:
MEDIA REPRESENTATION AND CULTURAL IMPACT

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Jessica Edmond

A Research Report Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Science

In the field of Professional Media and Media Management

Approved by:

William Freivogel, Chair

Phil Greer

Graduate School

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TITLE: THE PROMOTION OF SKIN BLEACHING PRODUCTS IN JAMAICA:
MEDIA REPRESENTATION AND CULTURAL IMPACT

MAJOR PROFESSOR: William Freivogel and Phil Greer

Through television commercials, print and digital advertisements, magazines, billboards, and the internet, the ideal skin complexion represented in Jamaican media is fair-skin tones. This idea that fair skin is better is common among other cultures in the world and is spreading to developed as well as developing nations worldwide.

This study looks at different literature dealing with the effects of viewing media representation among women in Jamaica. This study found that there was greater complexion dissatisfaction among darker skinned women, but there was not enough evidence to suggest that this was a direct result of consuming media representation print, audio, television, magazines, etc of the subject.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Media representation, (newspaper, television print, magazines, film, etc.) that equate light skin with beauty results in Jamaican women using skin-lightening products. This research report focuses on the promotion of skin bleaching products through media. Additionally, this research reports on the literature that explores the cultural impacts on Jamaicans from daily media representation of beauty. To explore these questions, this report looks at journal articles, books, internet blogs and internet sites focused on Jamaicans who use various products to lighten their skin. It analyzes skin-lightening as a problem and the effects of these different types of media on African-Jamaican women.

The idea of beauty is often associated with “browning” or “light skin” in Jamaica (Lewis, Robkin, & Njoki, 2011, p. 29). The citizens of Jamaica use subtle and extreme measures to achieve this idea of “fair equals beautiful”. The definition of “skin bleaching” is: “the use of dermatological creams, cosmetic creams, and homemade products by some people to bleach the melanin from the skin. This practice is a phenomenon that occurs in many countries including Jamaica” (Charles, 2003, p 25).

According to Charles (2003), “Skin bleaching creams flourish in Jamaica's markets, [as do] advertisements that glorify skin-bleaching products. Many African-Jamaican women believe the connection between beauty and light skin arises from age-old historical beliefs that are now perpetuated in advertisements for skin-bleaching products. Because skin-bleaching products are advertised in the media, African-Jamaican women are more aware of the culturally determined advantages of being light-skinned,” (Charles, 2003; Djanie, 2009; Hunter, 2011). Which would include: increased pay in the workforce, marriage, and social acceptance. As a result, they make

efforts to look fair (Karan, 2008).

According to Lewis, et al. (2011), “These skin-bleaching creams are mercury-based, [an] element known to control dispersion of melanin in the skin and may increase the onset of diseases and abnormalities [of] the skin.” Glenn (2008) notes that, “the global production and marketing of products that lighten the skin is a very lucrative industry and continues to become more popular in that these products are being requested globally, particularly in Afro-Caribbean geographical locations.”

This research focuses on how skin-bleaching and risks associated with the use of these products and advertisements marketed towards African-Jamaican women affect the cultural ethos of Jamaicans. More specifically, the study will show the promotion of skin-lightening products and the media representations promoting these products.

Some research has shown that, “since the 1970s, there has been a notable demographic change in those who choose to engage in the use of skin-lightening products,” according to O’Brien and Berry (2008, p. 147). Glenn (2008) states, “Whereas previously the practice was typically observed among rural and poor women, there is now a rise of upwardly mobile black women who are propelling the skin-bleaching product market forward and increasing the numbers of skin-bleachers in Africa and Jamaica.” Lewis, et al. (2011) also states, “However, poorer women are still the primary consumers of black market commodities, often creating concoctions from household products to strengthen the potency of these creams. The existing research does not account for the underground promotion and distribution of skin-bleaching products, and therefore may underestimate the number of those who engage in the practice. It is important to understand how Jamaica has evolved as one of the major consumer markets for skin-bleaching products. According to Lewis, et al. (2011), “Colonialism and Westernization

can be understood as intersecting rather than as distinct unrelated phenomena. In its aftermath, colonialism left the region vulnerable to Western influences.”

According to Charles (2003):

The lingering influence of European colonialism is also responsible. There is bombardment from the Caucasian color code in which Blacks are judged by the color of their skin and the Black self is stigmatized as ugly. Bleaching is not only indicative of an identity crisis but it is fashionable, beautiful and it provides socio-economic advantages. Moreover, it is attractive to some Black men and women who only date members of the opposite sex who have brown or white skin (p45).

The practice of slavery in Jamaica is important to understanding the origins of various complexions one finds on the island of Jamaica. The practice of rape was very prevalent during the occupation of the Jamaican islands by British soldiers. Carter (2003) states, “Through rape, the subservient black female slaves carried their masters’ babies.” Carter (2003) also states, “When the babies were born the babies were considered a new race called mulattos” (Carter, 2003). This new group of Jamaican citizens created a population of Jamaicans whose phenotypic characteristics were very similar to the faces and complexions of their oppressors. Thus, we find colour operating at all levels of Jamaican slave society. From the point of view of the society as a whole, we find the free [fair-skinned] colored group in a middle caste position between the white and slave group. Within the slave group itself, we find the less menial tasks being performed by colored [fair-skinned] slaves (Patterson, 1969, p.64).

Patterson (1969) states that:

One important aspect of these divisions among the slaves was the correlation of color and status...most of the house servants were colored slaves and that among them the darker

paid deference to the lighter shaded. They dressed much better than the field Negroes and they were rarely punished. They considered themselves, as a superior race to the blacks' always referring contemptuously to the latter's colour whenever the two groups had a quarrel. (p64)

Some studies have found that the life of Jamaican slaves who were fair-skinned seemed to be less arduous than for darker-skinned slaves.

Carter (2006), explains how light-skin slaves received privileges:

Whites tended to view mulattos as more intelligent than blacks but not the equal of Caucasians. Because mulattos were intellectually superior to blacks, with whom they were racially grouped, they were leaders in every line of activity under taken by Negroes." (p. 1-2)

Dark-skinned slaves were considered nasty, devilish, and ugly by the whites. Mulattos believed in part that they were better than their fellow man and began to act in this manner towards dark-skinned individuals. The colonizing British soldiers convinced the fair-skinned Jamaicans that they were better than their dark-skinned neighbors. Thus, the mulattos developed a caste society, allowing the dark-skinned slaves to view them and treat them, not as equals, but as better than. According to Heuman (1981):

Some whites, however, argued that coloreds [light-skin] could serve as a protection against the slaves. The most important contemporary historians of eighteenth-century Jamaica and the British Caribbean agreed that the brown [light-skinned] slaves should be freed and apprenticed in a trade or business. This would create a group between the whites and the blacks who "would naturally attach themselves to the white race as the most honorable relations, and so become a barrier against the designs of the Blacks.

Free coloreds [light-skin] not only adopted white values but also tended to compensate for their lower status by abusing slaves. (p. 11)

This study reviews the effects that the media have on society and how these representations affect culture, social norms, media content, and complexion dissatisfaction. The advertising campaigns that promote skin-bleaching creams in Jamaica have influenced women to purchase creams and pomades to lighten their complexion, potentially changing the quality of their lives. Carter (2006) further asserts:

The white media offered several black products that promised the transformation of the dark skin black to the light skin beauty. The media offered bleach that claimed that it would not only whiten clothes but also vowed to lighten skin. These advertisements fed off the black women insecurities of “good hair” and light skin...Black women were not only the targets, but also the main consumers of these harsh deadly chemicals that claimed to “improve” their skin. Black people started to embrace whiteness by purchasing products that vowed to rectify black features (p. 2).

It is important to understand the historical significance of print media in Jamaica and how it influenced black women’s insecurities in the past up until today. The print media that celebrated black pride were very few. “Toward the middle of the [18th] century, several publications became available to the public, but these writings did not emphasize the injustices and inequality that existed in the everyday lives of Jamaicans,” (cited in Charles, 2009, p. 163). “The *Jamaica Gleaner*, and other newspaper publications including the *West Indian Radio Newspaper* and the *British Broadcasting Corporation* were the only publications during this time period,” (Williams, as cited in Charles, 2009, p. 163). “Although these publications provided information on life for Jamaicans, they were established and run by light-skinned African-

Jamaicans who, in the earlier part of the 18th century population, outnumbered that of whites,” (Charles, 2009, p. 163).

The fact that the population demographics in Jamaica—overwhelmingly black Jamaicans, with very few white Jamaicans—had little impact on the reporting of issues surrounding equality, politics, or economics of the predominate African-Jamaican population. Thus, the newspapers portrayed whites as wealthy and prosperous and blacks as lower class and poor. Hope (2006) and Nettleford (1988) concede “the authors and buyers of publications changed in the early [1990s], yet most of the information and ideology was borrowed from Europe,” (as cited in Charles, 2009, p. 163). The propagation of “White is right” coupled with the Christian ideology “we must civilize the uncivilized” was spread throughout the plantations of Jamaica for many decades. The tone and phonetic pronunciation of words were the Queen’s English, not the dialect or language of the people native to the island. The idea of the transference of knowledge and information was clearly biased towards the white colonizers not the native peoples, so we find media representations reflecting this ideology. The publications that expressed the idea of white superiority were read and then shared by literate overseers spreading the racist ideology of the colonizer. Although there is an assumption that Jamaican slaves were literate, they were not able to read the publications that pronounced their social position.

Michael Manley was a Jamaican politician who served as the fourth Prime Minister of Jamaica from 1972 to 1980. “Recalling his country’s African roots, he pledged to restructure Jamaica’s system of social [stratification]. In his [first] book, *The Politics of Change*, Manley promised to change the [imbalances] of Jamaican society where people with light complexions enjoy[ed] a psychological advantage and [consciously] or unconsciously [enjoyed] a greater [weight] in society,” (King, 1999, p. 57). Manley’s promise of correcting the “imbalances of the

Jamaican society” never came true. Thus, we find a large segment of the population skin bleaching in the hopes of achieving a more equal social status.

The Significance of This Study

Studying women’s issues in advertisements and media representations of women is vitally important to the understanding of how media representation affect individual women as well as groups of women. Jamaicans are influenced by what they see and interact with every day. These experiences are promoted by different media sources and are interpreted according to each individual (cited in Charles, 2009, p. 155). Skin bleaching, in an attempt to change the tone of the skin, was thought to be a practice of Westerners who want to maintain the aesthetic of white superiority. Tanning the skin to achieve a deep dark rich hue did not become popular until the late 20th century in America. The notion that “white or fair skin” equates to social superiority was propagated through the labeling and advertisements of western products that were exported to the Island of Jamaica. Mosocvici (1988) states, “Representations are the shared images of the object in the minds of people that arise from social thought, which guides people’s behavior.” He also states, “Hegemonic representation is a widely and deeply held representation by a highly structured community or group, and this representation is coercive and uniform” (cited in Charles, 2009, p. 155).

Several sources have found that the ideal complexion for most African-Jamaican women as it is portrayed in advertisements and media is light-skinned. To achieve this light complexion, African-Jamaican women have used several homemade as well as over the counter skin bleaching products. There are many contributing factors to attribute to why African-Jamaican women who suffer from complexion dissatisfaction choose to bleach their skin. This study helps

explain and identify some of the sources of media representation as well as literature related to the cultural impact such representations have on African-Jamaican women. (Hunter, 2011; Cooper, 2008; Djanie, 2009; Charles, 2009).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW:

MEDIA REPRESENTATION IN JAMAICA

Some research shows fair-skinned women are used in the media to promote these products. The population demographics of predominately dark-skinned Jamaicans as the target consumer audience had little impact on equality in media advertising, marketing, promotion, politics, or the economics of the predominate dark-skinned African-Jamaican population. King (1999) also states:

Chevannes (1999) recalled how Jamaica's colonial ruler, Great Britain, historically had downplayed Jamaica's African heritage and glorified Europe as the beacon of civilization. European cultures had been promoted in Jamaica as more pure, handsome, moral, and civilized than Black or African cultures. Even after independence, the Jamaican Labor Party (JLP) continued to reify themselves of European superiority, dismissing Rastafarian and reggae as "crude" throwbacks to a "dark" and "silent" Africa. (p. 85)

Media representation born out of this type of ideology continues to be perpetuated today. Magazines, billboards, television commercials, product labeling, and digital advertisements venerate fair-skinned models. Meanwhile, darker-skinned models are seen only in a negative light. These comparisons are what lead to many women's skin tone dissatisfaction and skin-bleaching practices.

Contemporary Issues

Gabriel (2007) states, “In recent years there has been a preoccupation within the mainstream Jamaican media regarding color issues, particularly skin bleaching, but on the whole, the treatment has been more sensational than constructive and informative.” He also states, “There has never been any attempt at explaining what drives non-white people to burn their skin with chemicals other than subtle attempts to suggest it is borne of a desire to be white, thereby reinforcing the concept of the white beauty ideal” (Gabriel, 2007). “Media images reinforce racial hierarchies by presenting lighter skin as beautiful and preferable over darker skin,” (Lewis, et al., 2011). Farlane (2006) states, “The images of lighter-skinned people seen on music videos and on advertisement boards promote the message that lighter-skin is more beautiful and desirable to the opposite sex, and a prerequisite for access to the ‘good life’” (as cited in Gabriel, 2007, p. 44-45). O’Brien and Berry (2008) convey “It was not until the 1960s that dark-skinned [African] Jamaicans were allowed to work in banks, government offices, or in the front offices of private businesses” (p. 147). Gabriel (2007) states, “In spite of the gains of the Black Power era, how did the BLACK POWER ERA affect Jamaicans? The mantra of *I am Black and I am Proud* has receded into the background only to be replaced, once again, by bleaching creams” (p.44-45).

Hall (1992) states, “The assumed connection between dark skin and crime is ridiculous for many people of darker skin tones, and these assumptions of inferiority are extremely damaging to the progress of the people as a whole.” Hall (2005) also states, “African descended people having darker skin are, more often than any other racial, ethnic, gender, social/culture group, falsely accused of being active participants in criminal activity” (p. 125).

According to Long (2009), “The Western media have a powerful impact on the definition of

beauty [for African- Jamaican women].” Long also states, “Western media representations of women of color [label] darker-skinned women as [prostitutes], seductive, aggressive, and untrustworthy in all forms of media from print to digital.” Long (2009) believes that “Dark skin is associated with thieves, service workers, prostitutes, and the drug addicted segments in Jamaican society.” As mentioned, “lighter-skinned individuals of African descent, who are represented in the same media outlets, are labeled as sexy, but not prostitutes, aggressive in work, but not in attitude, and more trustworthy than their darker-skinned [counterparts],” (Long, 2009; West, 1995; Ford, 1997).

Both Higgs (2002) and Keenan (1996) assert, “constructs of beauty in Jamaica have historically been characterized by the fairness of Jamaicans' skin and, as such, skin-bleachers are perceived as more desirable than their dark-skinned counterparts.” According to Brown-Glaude (2007), some studies showed a correlation between the “rise in the use of products to lighten the skin [which] adds to the ongoing [perception] among Jamaicans that fair skin is connected with affluence and privilege. Women in Jamaica are exposed to [several] images [every day] of their lives telling them they are not as desirable as [every day] women who have a fairer complexion.” “This ideology will continue to be perpetuated as long as the advertisers continue to use western media [representation] to market western life style preferences to Jamaicans,” (Brown-Glaude, 2007).

The constant support of these ideologies through advertisements and marketing strategies is aimed at African-Jamaican women. Hunter (2011) states, “Media [representation suggest] that darker-skinned African-Jamaicans lighten their skin in an attempt to fit into the aesthetic mold [of] the West.” Hunter (2011) adds, “This has become the ideal for the success of many Jamaicans of African decent.”

Charles (2009) states, “Skin-bleaching is the fastest way to achieve this aesthetic. There are several products used by Jamaicans to achieve lightness.” “Symba Cream,” “Neoprosone Gel,” “Ambi,” and “Cake Soap” are a few of the more popular choices that can be purchased over the counter (Charles, 2009).

Opala (2001) states that, “Jamaican women suffer severe health issues as a result of using skin-bleaching products,” (as cited in Hall, 2005). Opala (2001) also points out that, “mercury, one of the many active ingredients in skin-bleaching products has been linked to kidney failure and damage to the brains of unborn babies. This information was not provided in marketing these products, and it was not [required by the] government to be [on] warning labels. More recently, these labels have been added to the products but do not stop the thousands of Jamaican women who use the products daily in their quest to lighten their skin and their quality of life,” (as cited in Hall, 2005).

Brown-Glaude (2007) states, about the Don’t Kill the Skin Campaign:

While I applaud these efforts I cannot help but notice the significance of launching the campaign during Jamaica’s Black History Month—a month dedicated to the celebration of black history and culture. What is the message here? Are the goals of the campaign strictly medical or are there political ones as well? In other words, is the Don’t Kill the Skin Campaign aimed simply at saving the skin or is it also saving blackness? (p. 34)

CHAPTER 3

CULTURAL IMPACT ON JAMAICAN CULTURE

Virtually all of the studies that have been reviewed framed skin-bleaching as a problem. Furthermore, most articles described the practice and participants through a framework of social pathology that had a racial dimension. “There were at least two recurring themes in the articles: 1) the process of using products to lighten the skin is a manifestation of self-concept issues, and 2) African Jamaicans who lighten their skin suffer from a color complex issue that can be traced back to issues related to colonization,” (Lewis, et al, 2011).

Cicchetti and Cohen (2006) states, in practical terms, “in all societies, lighter-skinned African women are valued over darker-skinned African women.” Charles (2009) states, “Since the influx of colonization, the ideology that light skin is better than dark skin persists in Jamaican culture. In all forms of Jamaican ‘societal institutions’ we find the promotion and preservation of this ideology.”

Brown-Glaude (2007) conveys the point that, “[the] poorer sectors of Jamaicans are not the only ones using skin-bleaching products in Jamaica.” Brown-Glaude (2007) adds, “Jamaicans who have more money are able to use less toxic products to produce a more natural lightening over time,” (Brown-Glaude, 2007).

Beauty is supposed to be synonymous with intelligence, desirability, and ability in Jamaica. As a result, Ntambwe (2004) states, “African-Jamaican women who wish to beautify themselves are more likely to use skin-bleaching products than men.” Some evidence suggests that not all women, but some women who do use the products, are considered more attractive than women who do not (Ntambwe, 2004).

According to Ntambwe (2004):

The mass media, particularly television, contributes to this perception by portraying "whiteness or lightness" as a symbol of what is attractive, adorable, desirable, pure, loveable and competent. Lighter skin tone is thus portrayed as a standard for attractiveness and competence. (para 5)

Social class has an impact on representations and practices of skin-bleaching. Brown-Glaude (2007) states, "[More] economically privileged groups are better able to mask their skin-bleaching practices and thereby shield themselves from public criticism. Describing other ways in which Jamaicans of varying social classes bleach." He also states, "People refuse to have children with someone whose complexion is as dark as or darker than theirs. They are, in fact, lightening their lineage, bleaching generation next, if you will" (p. 45).

When you look at online advertisements that relate to products that lighten the skin, "you will find reflections of this notion, that privilege is attributed to those who lighten [their] skin," (as cited in Charles 2009). In Jamaican advertisements, Anderson asserts that, "the bleaching syndrome is a function of the need to improve physical appearance because of the dysfunctional preoccupation with body perfection" (as cited in Charles, 2009, p.26).

Charles (2003) believes, "Advertisements that promote the use of skin lightening products reflect the attitudes of local African-Jamaican women who believe that light-skinned Jamaican women not only appear better than their darker-skinned co-workers, but they are [also] evaluated as better workers." This ideology, "has been passed down from generation to generation, through various media vehicles as the norm in all forms of Jamaican society, which would include: government, religion, and cultural representations," (Charles, 2009).

Jamaican advertising media have become more modern. The spread of the ideology that fair skin is better can be attributed in part to new media vehicles such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter,

etc. These are social media representation Jamaican women see and interact with every day. Charles (2009) asserts, “Identity by nature is dual because it is elaborated internally, having been constructed externally. People internalize identity construction, which manifests itself in the appearance of social actions” (p.155).

Mosocvici (1988) states, “Representations are the shared images of the object in the minds of people that arise from social thought, which guides people’s behavior.” Mosocvici (1988) also states, “Hegemonic representation is a widely and deeply held representation by a highly structured community or group, and this representation is coercive and uniform” (as cited in Charles, 2009, p. 155).

According to Charles (2009):

Poorer Jamaicans have a variety of social interpretations of skin-bleaching creams [that differ from those of] wealthy Jamaicans. Jamaicans who are wealthy and educated will interpret behaviors and what they observe in daily life differently than poorer Jamaicans. Darker-skinned African Jamaicans, as defined by popular culture, have a lower [status] in life than lighter-skinned African Jamaicans and [fewer possibilities] in making successful lifestyle, education, and employment choices. This reality does not apply to all Jamaicans, as each individual does not share the same [personal experiences] (p.155).

Each individual experiences the same processes of “affect,” “thought,” and “action” in his or her interpretation, in that each individual is bombarded with media that affect their personal quality of life choices. Those individuals make considerations and comparisons about representations they see in advertisements that convey the message that fair-skinned people live care free. Then they take action based on their collective denial or “acceptance of media representations that attempt to define Jamaicans in better than and less than or lighter-skinned

and darker-skinned categories” (p. 155).

According to Cicchetti and Cohen (2006), in Jamaica, “media representations have adversely affected the [culture] of the people. Systemic bias and inequity on the basis of skin color (usually privileging lighter-skin tones over darker ones), even predates the notion of race in many societies.” The United States of America has historically dealt with the light-skinned vs. dark-skinned paradigm, typically defined as “colorism.” According to Hunter (2011), “skin-bleaching is more common in the United States, there are also increasing issues that touch on the issue of skin-bleaching in both countries, involving men and women.”

According to Hunter (2011, cited by Charles, 2009a):

... the rise of skin bleaching around the globe can also be attributed to the constant, current mass-marketing of contemporary images of white beauty. Charles (2009a) suggests that hegemonic representations of white skin are thoroughly rooted in multiple social institutions including education, religion, mass media, and popular culture.

Wealthy nations like the United States, Japan, and many European nations create many of the global images of white (or light) beauty (Burke, 1996). In turn, these same nations are also home to the cosmetics companies that produce some of the top-selling skin-bleaching creams, including L’Oreal, Unilever, Shiseido, and others (p.143-144).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES

This researcher found that most studies have framed the use of skin-lightening products as a problem for African-Jamaican women; in particular, these women are continually manipulated by images that reinforce negative ideals about who they are. This study found that there are several misrepresentations that are perpetuated daily and continue to fatten the pockets of the companies that produce the products with no consideration on how these products are destructive to a segment of the population, arguably the entire population.

Regarding social class and the practice of skin-bleaching, the more economically privileged groups are able to mask their practices and shield themselves from public criticism. This secret ambiguous behavior describes other ways in which Jamaicans of varying social classes bleach. Brown-Glaude (2007) asserts, “[p]eople refuse to have children with someone whose complexion is as dark as or darker than theirs. They are, in fact, lightening their lineage, bleaching generation next, if you will” (p. 45).

This research deals with the issue of African-Jamaican women who are faced with the ongoing argument regarding the origins of the practice of lightening skin for the purpose of achieving a perceived higher status in life. As stated in chapter one, African-Jamaican women believe that there is a connection between what they have learned generationally about skin tone and personal attractiveness; they are aware of the global media representations that are perpetuated daily in advertisements on television, billboards and in magazines. This acknowledgement has adverse effects on the health and self-conception of African-Jamaican women. As a consequence of the barrage of images and other media representation that promote

fair skin and the use of skin-bleaching products, Jamaica is at the forefront of the world consumers of skin-bleaching products.

This study found that, Jamaican advertisements promoting skin-bleaching products have a greater number of fair-skinned models as compared to advertisements promoting any other product.

According to Keenan (1996):

Critics have suggested that advertising, particularly in mainstream or nonblack media, reinforces complexion and feature discrimination by using models with light skin and Caucasian-like facial characteristics. Empirical research, although limited, has suggested these criticisms may be valid... The research here examines the complexion and features of blacks in advertising relative to the larger black population and looks at differences among types of magazines, product categories, and models on these variables. By comparing blacks in ads to those in non advertising or “editorial” photos, this research extends prior work on colorism in advertising. (p. 907-908)

According to Desmond-Harris (2011):

Most Jamaicans who bleach their skin use over-the-counter creams, which are often knockoffs imported from West Africa. Long-term use of hydroquinone, one of the main ingredients, has been linked to a disfiguring skin condition. It’s been removed from over-the-counter products in Japan, the [European Union] EU, and Australia. But in Jamaica, lightening creams are not effectively regulated. The [Associated Press] AP reports that Eva Lewis-Fuller, the ministry’s director of health promotion and protection, is redoubling education programs to combat bleaching in this predominantly black island of 2.8 million people, where “images of fair-skinned people predominate in commercials for

high-end products and in the social pages of newspapers,” (www.theroot.com/buzz/skin-bleaching-rampant).

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

After researching articles addressing effects of advertising on Jamaican women, This researcher came to the conclusion that women in Jamaica are affected by advertising that directly relate to skin-bleaching. These articles share a common theme: white skin is good, black skin is bad. There are many articles that support the hypothesis that skin-bleaching is prompted through media representations which affect Jamaican culture. Although, there is enough information to show that Jamaican women use skin-bleaching products to improve their perceived social status, there was not enough evidence to suggest that these practices are only the result of observing skin-bleaching product promotions.

Colonialism and Westernization can be understood as intersecting rather than as distinct unrelated phenomena. In its aftermath, colonialism left the region vulnerable to Western influences (Lewis, et al., 2011). It was found that virtually all of the articles investigated framed skin-bleaching as a problem. Furthermore, almost all of the articles described the practice and participants through a framework of social pathology that had a racial dimension. There were at least two recurring themes in the articles: 1) the process of using products to lighten the skin is a manifestation of mental illness and 2) Jamaicans who lighten their skin suffer from a color complex issue that can be traced back to issues related to colonization.

According to Carter (2003):

The white media offered several black products that promised the transformation of the dark skin black to the light skin beauty. The media offered bleach that claimed that it would not only whiten clothes but also vowed to lighten skin. These advertisements fed off the black women insecurities of “good hair” and light skin. The white media was

aware that black women were filled with insecurities of beauty and obtained low self-esteem about their appearance. Black women were not only the targets, but also the main consumers of these harsh deadly chemicals that claimed to “improve” their skin.

Black people started to embrace whiteness by purchasing products that vowed to rectify black features (p. 2).

Some studies that were directly related to the promotion of skin-bleaching products found that when comparing Jamaican women’s views of their skin tone, dark-skin Jamaican women did place a greater importance on their complexion. They were also more critical towards their skin tone and thus lower self-esteem.

Limitations

There are a few limitations to this study that should be mentioned. The topic of how African-Jamaican women view advertising in print media is a very broad topic, which could yield many different results depending on the demographic or other factors that can influence how different women view their complexion. One of the limitations of this study is that it did not allow time for original research. If the study were to be conducted again, it would include participants from different demographics. For example, women in different age groups and social status need to be interviewed and or surveyed.

First, such a broad topic could produce many different causes for complexion dissatisfaction among African-Jamaican women. One restriction in this study was time. It is difficult to find a sufficient amount of information, analyze it, and make conclusions in a limited timeframe. There was not enough time to read and analyze enough articles to make a strong argument for either conclusion.

Second, language was a big limitation, because it limited the study to only one language, English. This also limited the study's depth by excluding cultural differences, as well. With surveys or interviews, a human subjects approval would have been necessary, and this also hindered the gathering of research in the short time allowed for this study.

Future Research

This study analyzed previous research conducted on the overall complexion dissatisfaction of African-Jamaican women. It also studied how light-skinned women in print media have influenced skin-bleaching in African-Jamaican women's culture. This information, however, is not complete; there is more research that can be conducted concerning this topic.

For future research, this researcher suggests researching reasons for the increase in the use of skin-bleaching products by African-Jamaican women in Jamaica. It is important to know more information about the lives of African-Jamaican women and different reasons for choosing such drastic measures for changing their appearance. It would also be advantageous to interview African-Jamaican women from several different generations to find if the view of women's varying complexions is different or has changed from one generation to the next. It is important to discover if media influences from generation to generation have increased or decreased significantly to discover any correlations between advertisements, media representation, and skin-bleaching practices.

Further research should investigate the initial causes of this practice and ask, "what are the origins of the ideal that fair-skin tone is more favorable than dark-skin tone?" Is it a consequence of the colonization of Jamaica by whites and the belief by many Jamaicans that "white is right"? Additionally, will further research show that the globalization of media has

adversely affected the ideal self-concept of African-Jamaican women? Further research should be conducted to explain why Jamaican women persistently use skin-bleaching products in light of the damaging effects to the skin. Additional research should be conducted in West Africa, The Philippines, Brazil and The United States of America, to understand the implications of the globalization of media representation that promote skin-bleaching practices. Additional research should be conducted to determine the implications of skin bleaching product promotions on men. Focus groups should be conducted with Jamaicans to determine the direct cultural impacts on Jamaican citizens.

Finally, movie could also be used for future studies, which might shed some light on the effects of movies on body image in Jamaica. This avenue of research could possibly reveal the current beliefs and attitudes towards certain skin tones portrayed in the media.



Wonderful things happen

when your complexion is clear, bright, Nadinola-light

Give romance a chance! Don't let a dull, dark complexion deprive you of popularity. Don't let oiliness, big pores, blackheads cheat you of charm. Chase away those bad-complexion blues with NADINOLA Bleaching Cream. Nothing—absolutely nothing—will improve your skin faster, in more different ways!

Contains wonder-working A-M! This remarkable medicated ingredient of NADINOLA works deep down within the skin to brighten and lighten it, combat blackheads and externally caused pimples. Soon your skin feels cleansed and cleared, smoother and softer, glowing and glamorous.

Effective but oh, so gentle! NADINOLA acts so positively yet is so kind to your skin that we guarantee you will be delighted with its results. There are two types—one for oily skin and the other for dry skin. Choose the type that is right for you. Buy it confidently, use it happily. NADINOLA, Paris, Tennessee.

NADINOLA BLEACHING CREAM

Just one jar will make your complexion brighter, clearer, lighter and lovelier.



Figure 1



Life is a whirl for the girl
with a clear, bright, Nadinola-light complexion

Give romance a chance! Don't let a dull, dark complexion deprive you of popularity. Don't let oiliness, big pores, blackheads cheat you of charm. Chase away those bad-complexion blues with NADINOLA Bleaching Cream. Nothing—absolutely nothing—will improve your skin faster, in more different ways!

Effective but oh, so gentle! NADINOLA acts so positively yet is so kind to your skin that we guarantee you will be delighted with its results. There are two types—one for oily skin and the other for dry skin. Choose the type that is right for you. Buy it confidently, use it happily. NADINOLA, Paris, Tennessee.

NADINOLA BLEACHING CREAM

Just one jar will make your complexion brighter, clearer, lighter and lovelier.



Figure 2



LIFE IS MORE FUN when your complexion is clear, bright, Nadinola-light!

Don't let dull, dark skin rob you of romance. Don't let oiliness, big pores, blackheads cheat you of charm. Chase away those bad-complexion blues with NADINOLA Bleaching Cream. Nothing—absolutely nothing—will improve your skin more different ways, faster!

That's because NADINOLA contains wonder-working A-M! This remarkable medicated ingredient works deep down within the skin to brighten and lighten it, combat blackheads and externally caused pimples. Soon your skin feels smoother and softer, fresh and fascinating, glowing and glamorous.

There are two types of NADINOLA. Buy either with our absolute guarantee of satisfaction. NADINOLA, Paris, Tenn.

NADINOLA BLEACHING CREAM



Figure 3

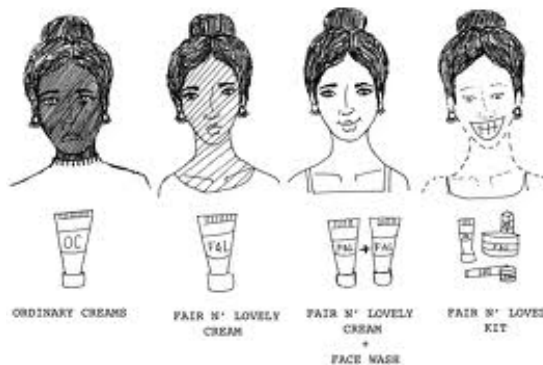


Figure 4

get up to **2 tones fairer** in just **7 days.**
measure and see.

GARNIER
LIGHT SPF15
DAILY MOISTURISER
FAIRNESS + DARK SPOTS PREVENTION

GARNIER
SKIN NATURALS
Light
Daily moisturiser

Best performance comes with proof. Garnier Light gives you real proof of fairness with the Garnier Fairness Scale. Now check your skin tone and watch the power formula of Garnier Light make your skin tone:
 • With Pure Lactan, Essence and Vitamin C to clarify and smoothen skin.
 • With LHA and LHA there to protect the skin with anti-oxidant help of the skin.

Day 1 Day 7

Use a up to 2 tones fairer in just 7 days. Use each night before bed.
 Results Day after day - soft, even and really fairer skin with reduced dark spots.

Take care.
GARNIER

4 week clinical study in Indian women. 2000 to 5000. *Instrumental evaluation. For further details write to The Garnier Skin Care Division, Parvathy Chokkikulam Park, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala 695 013. E-mail: admarketing@parvathy.com or call on toll free no: 1800-22-3000. SMI print number is 67570 (Garnier -skincare -Garnier). Charges up to Rs. 1 per 1000.

Figure 5

L' O R

É A L PARIS
DERMO-EXPERTISE

Flawless. Spotless.
Pearl perfect fairness.

PEARL PERFECT
Re-Lighting Whitening
Day Cream SPF15

New

• **LIGHT REFLECTING MICRO-PEARLS**
Visibly brighten the skin for
sparkle, firmness and radiance.

• **MELANIN BLOCK AND UV FILTERS**
Reduce dark spots and protect from
skin darkening.

Indian Women Agree
SKIN LOOKS VISIBLY FAIRER : 94%
DARK SPOTS VISIBLY REDUCED : 85%
Percentage of women agreeing by the skin. Fairness before & after 2 weeks.

Because you're worth it.
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"On and off screen,
my skin looks perfect!"
Sohini Kapoor.

Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11

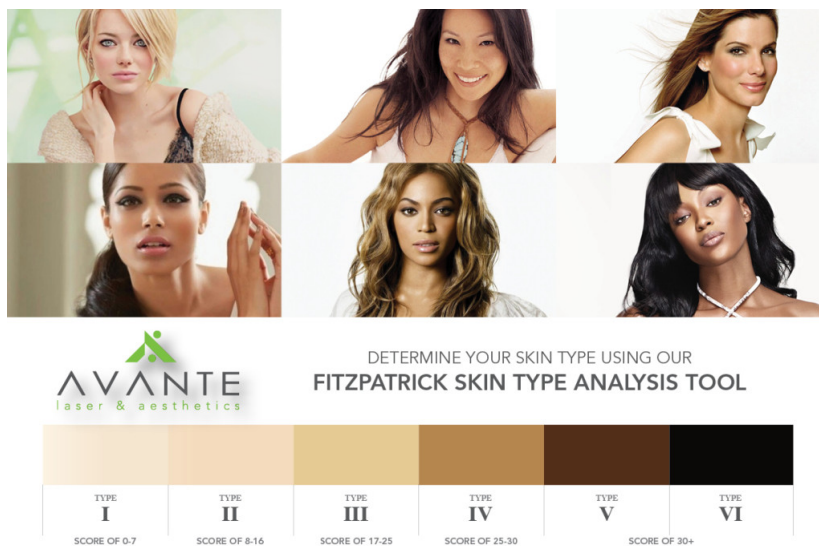


Figure 12



Figure 13

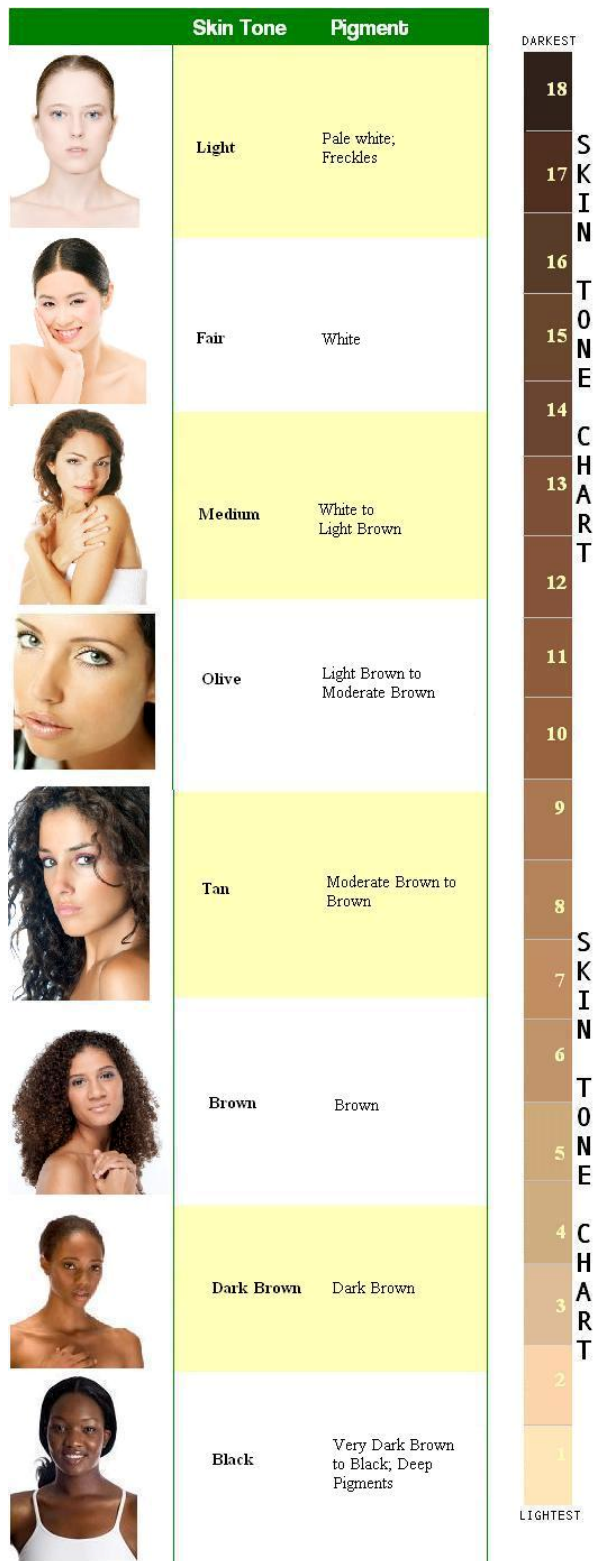


Figure 14

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