

About Step Up AA

Our mission is to use education to take action against racial injustices within our community and around the world.



Join us in
our
mission!



**Educate.
Engage.
Empower.**

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Step Up Anti-Racist
Association

PRESENTS

Colourism

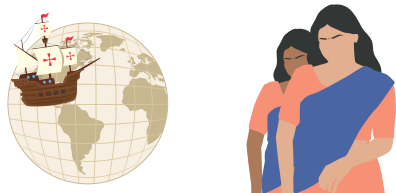
IN DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES



Origins of Colourism

Within black communities, colourism evolved as a bi-product of slavery. Colonizers typically gave less physically strenuous roles to lighter skinned black people like indoor roles and hard labour roles to dark skinned people. Once slavery was abolished, lighter skin black people had a lot more job opportunities compared to their black counterparts.

Colonialism also played a key role in perpetuating colourism directly and through the caste system in South Asian communities. Similar origins can be found in countries in Asia colonized by east Asian countries like Japan and China.



Skin Lightening Industry

The skin-lightening industry is a **multibillion-dollar industry**. They are running successfully with endorsements from the most famous actors, athletes and other celebrities. The Skin Lightening Industry in the U.S. alone is estimated to be worth around **\$341.9 Million!**



Top 5 countries where the term "Skin bleaching" was most searched:

1. St. Vincent and Grenadines
2. Jamaica
3. Ghana
4. Nigeria
5. Zimbabwe

South Asian countries such as Pakistan, Sri Lanka and India commonly searched "skin whitening"

What is Colourism?

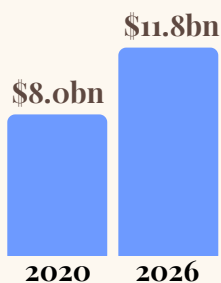
A graphic showing a dictionary entry for 'colourism'. It includes a speaker icon, the word 'col·or·ism', the phonetic transcription '/kələˈrɪzəm/', the part of speech 'noun', and the origin 'US'. The definition is 'prejudice or discrimination against individuals with a dark skin tone, typically among people of the same ethnic or racial group.'

Colourism presents itself in different ways in many communities throughout history. We will look at a few ways colourism prevails by looking at examples within East Asian, South Asian, Black and Latine communities. Along with these examples, colourism is also carried through casual conversation and dismissive attitudes.

Facts



62% of Hispanic adults say having a darker skin colour hurts Hispanics' ability to get ahead in the United States.



Global Market for Skin Lightening is projected to continue to increase

Source: StrategyR

Employment



A study done with Chinese college students in 2012 concluded that a woman's appearance is an important factor for employment; therefore, skin colour plays a role in employability.

Media Representation



Darkskin black women were rarely shown portraying the wife throughout the 90's and early 2000's American TV. Dark skin Black women were instead portrayed as the Sapphire; the angry, sassy Black woman that drove her partners away.

Majority of south asian actresses with lead roles as the love interest are light skinned. Darskinned women are mostly given the role as the comedian or friend to the lightskin romantic lead.



Sources

Skin whitening: What is it, what are the risks and who profits?, ww.cnn.com

Arora N, Amin S. Analyzing Global Interest in Skin Whitening by Geographic Region. Proc (Bayl Univ Med Cent). 2024 Mar 14;37(3):505-507. doi: 10.1080/08998280.2024.2328448. PMID: 38628344; PMCID: PMC11018027. StrategyR