

Peer Review

Review of: "Fair or Foul? A Qualitative Study of Fairness Cream TVCs in the Indo-Pak-Bangladesh Region Between 2011 and 2020"

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Below is a detailed reviewer report for the paper titled "Fair or Foul? A Qualitative Study of Fairness Cream TVCs in the Indo-Pak-Bangladesh Region Between 2011 and 2020":

Reviewer Report

Title and Abstract

- **Title:** The title accurately reflects the research content, covering the geographical scope, time period, and focus on fairness cream television commercials (TVCs). It is concise and informative.
- **Abstract:** The abstract effectively summarizes the study's objectives, methodology, and key findings. It clearly outlines the focus on cultural, gender, and aesthetic dimensions of fairness cream TVCs. However, it would benefit from explicitly mentioning the theories applied (Cultivation and Reinforcement Theories).

Introduction

- **Strengths:**
 - Provides a thorough background on the obsession with fair skin in South Asia.
 - Establishes the relevance of TVCs as a medium of study.
 - Presents a clear rationale for focusing on India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.
- **Areas for Improvement:**

- The introduction could be more concise. Some historical and anecdotal details might be condensed to maintain focus.
- The transition to the research questions could be smoother, emphasizing how the study fills existing gaps.

Literature Review

- **Strengths:**
 - A comprehensive overview of fairness cream advertisements and their sociocultural implications.
 - Well-structured discussion on historical, cultural, and religious factors contributing to colorism.
- **Areas for Improvement:**
 - More emphasis could be placed on recent studies addressing advertising ethics or shifts in consumer behavior.
 - Limited references to literature specific to Bangladesh, as acknowledged in the study. The author might consider drawing insights from related South Asian contexts.

Theoretical Framework

- **Strengths:**
 - The application of Cultivation Theory and Reinforcement Theory is appropriate for analyzing the long-term effects and reinforcement of stereotypes.
 - Clearly explains the relevance of both theories in the context of the study.
- **Areas for Improvement:**
 - The discussion could benefit from more integration with the findings. For example, linking specific TVC trends to theoretical insights.

Methodology

- **Strengths:**
 - Detailed explanation of sampling strategy and inclusion/exclusion criteria.
 - Use of qualitative content analysis aligns well with the research objectives.
 - Provides transparency about the data sources and coding process.

- **Areas for Improvement:**
 - The rationale for excluding dubbed TVCs is reasonable but could exclude important cross-cultural nuances. Consider addressing this as a limitation.
 - While the analysis is comprehensive, the small sample size (21 TVCs) might affect the generalizability of the findings.

Results

- **Strengths:**
 - Well-organized presentation of findings, categorized by gender, cultural narratives, and aesthetics.
 - Detailed insights into how positive feelings and attitudes are depicted in TVCs.
- **Areas for Improvement:**
 - Statistical summaries or visual aids (e.g., tables or graphs) could enhance clarity.
 - The section could explicitly link findings to the research questions for better alignment.

Discussion

- **Strengths:**
 - Thoughtful analysis connecting findings to broader cultural and media practices.
 - Identifies shifts in advertising strategies over the decade, reflecting evolving societal norms.
- **Areas for Improvement:**
 - The discussion could more explicitly address how findings contribute to the theoretical framework.
 - Further exploration of ethical implications and recommendations for advertisers could strengthen the section.

Limitations and Future Research

- **Strengths:**
 - Acknowledges limitations, including sample size, bias, and lack of intercoder evaluation.
 - Suggests future research areas, such as inter-country comparisons of fairness obsessions.
- **Areas for Improvement:**

- The discussion on limitations could elaborate on how these affect the study's validity and reliability.

Conclusion

- **Strengths:**
 - Highlights the need for ethical advertising and societal change.
 - Provides a balanced view of progress in reducing colorism in advertising.
- **Areas for Improvement:**
 - The conclusion could be more concise, reiterating key contributions and practical implications.

Writing Quality and Organization

- **Strengths:**
 - Clear and accessible language.
 - Logical flow from introduction to conclusion.
- **Areas for Improvement:**
 - Occasional redundancy in descriptions and examples. Streamlining content would improve readability.

References

- Comprehensive and well-cited, covering diverse sources. However, a stronger balance between older foundational works and recent studies would be ideal.

Overall Recommendation

The paper provides a valuable contribution to the discourse on colorism and gendered advertising in South Asia. It is well-structured and rooted in relevant theories. However, revisions to streamline the introduction, expand the discussion, and incorporate visual aids would enhance its impact. With these improvements, the paper would be suitable for publication in a high-impact journal.

Recommended Decision: **Minor Revision**

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.