Change of Beauty Standards in Indonesian Society Through Beauty Product That Improve Lately

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Abstract
Beauty products that continue to use the words whitening or brightening when selling their products to Indonesians even though most Indonesians have a variety of colors, not just white or bright. This research aims to explore people's views regarding beauty standards which are now starting to change in people's views, reflected in local beauty products promoted by brands that continue to improvise. The method used in the research is a constructive paradigm by interviewing several participants. The results of this research are the opening of the view that beauty cannot be made or set to a standard, especially as many local beauty products make products to suit Indonesian people's skin color. Awareness and openness of people's minds, especially young people, who know that social media is a means to be open to the uniqueness of each individual's beauty.

Keywords: beauty standards; skincare; makeup; society; skintone

1. Introduction

Indonesia’s beauty standards are often tied to the existence of beauty products such as makeup and skincare. However, these standards are often based on the availability of shades for a product, where white is considered the epitome of beauty. Unfortunately, this mindset has been deeply ingrained in...
society, to the point where skincare products often use ingredients that function to whiten, and consumers can’t differentiate between “brightening” and “whitening”.

It is ironic that Indonesia, being a tropical country with a diverse range of skin tones, should have such narrow beauty standards that are often based on Korean products. This is despite the fact that the differences between these countries are very contrasting in terms of seasons, which can significantly affect the skin tones of their respective populations. Clearly, there is a need for changes in beauty products so that individuals can accept themselves without feeling inadequate according to the standards set by beauty products.

Fortunately, there are now beauty products that provide dark shades such as Mad For Make Up, RAINE, Somethinc, BLP, Sea Makeup, which convey the message that every human being has their own unique beauty. One of the changes brought by them is the use of models with diverse skin tones, from white to tan skin. This is a positive step towards changing beauty standards in Indonesia, where products with various shades for tropical skin will become more prevalent.

The first previous study is by Wiryawan & Sutantri. It investigates the issue of Cyber Bullying against Indonesian women’s beauty standards on social media. The research highlights the impact of social media on the development of social stigma around women’s beauty standards in Indonesia, leading to Cyber Bullying. The study employs a qualitative research method to describe the data gathered on the subject. The research concludes that social media plays a significant role in promoting women's beauty standards on social media and also acts as a source of Cyber Bullying.

The second previous study is by Prianti (2013). The study highlights that the advertisements for female beauty tend to focus solely on physical beauty, suggesting that a woman's success in life, including love and career, depends on her appearance. However, the study also points out that this modern concept of beauty may contradict traditional values and ethics.

The third previous study is by Nagara & Nurhajati (2022). The study used constructivism paradigm and social reality construction theory to analyze the construction and adoption of beauty standards among young Indonesian women who use Korean beauty products, and how they perceive and adopt these standards.

The fourth previous study is Karomani (2021). It aims to explore the communication patterns and cultural beliefs surrounding beauty in Indonesia. The study sheds light on how people's perception of beauty impacts their daily behavior, including the cosmetics and clothing they choose to wear. Additionally, the research highlights the economic impacts of beauty perceptions, especially for businesses and media companies advertising beauty products. This behavior is passed down from generation to generation and is influenced by the diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds of the community.
The fifth previous study is by Setyaningsih (2022). This study analyzes the beauty representation in Scarlett Whitening advertisements using Stuart Hall’s representation theory and Roland Barthes’ semiotic theory. The research aims to understand how beauty is portrayed through the denotative, connotative, and mythical forms of signifiers and signifieds. The study uses three advertisement videos from Scarlett’s official Youtube channel as samples and employs a descriptive qualitative approach. The findings indicate that the Scarlett Whitening ads reflect a change in beauty standards inspired by the white and glowing skin criteria and colorful hairstyles of South Korean and Japanese women in line with current trends.

The sixth previous study is by Desiyanti. This research study examines the concept of beauty as portrayed in makeup and skincare advertisements in Women’s Weekly Singapore and Femina Indonesia magazines in 2019. The study aims to analyze how these advertisements construct the idea of beauty in both countries. The approach used in the analysis is descriptive analytical interpretative method, with support from theories such as Social Visual Semiotics by Gunther Kress and Van Leeuwen and Systemic Functional Linguistics by M.A.K. Halliday. The study found that Singapore advertisements promote an unrealistic beauty standard that portrays a white Caucasian model with bright skin, while Femina Indonesia advertisements depict a more realistic beauty standard that features a native Indonesian model with light tanned skin, curly hair, and black big eyes, which is reflective of the typical Indonesian women figure. The written or verbal text also reinforces these beauty ideals. The product promoted in the Femina Indonesia advertisements aims to deliver a beauty standard that is more attainable for most Indonesian women.

The seventh previous study is by Amalia et al. aims to investigate the perception of young women towards the value of beauty in media, particularly in advertising, and its impact on women. To explore this perception, a qualitative method was used, which revealed that brands should pay attention to their female customers’ perception of how they desire to appear in the media. Instead of using idealized women, brands should opt for natural models to promote inclusion and diversity.

2. Methods

This research will use a constructive paradigm. The reason for using the paradigm is because this research will analyze the changing construction of beauty standards through beauty products in Indonesia and beauty trends in society. According to the writers, the research study is based on relativism and subjectivism, which are closely linked to constructivism. The constructivist paradigm is an approach that holds that the truth of a social reality is shaped by social construction, and therefore, the truth of a social reality is subjective. This paradigm is categorized into three types, namely symbolic, phenomenological, and interaction hermeneutics. It is a critique of the positivist paradigm in social science, and it falls under the interpretivism perspective. The concept of social construction is central
to relativism, which holds that reality is constructed rather than inherent. According to Patton in Sri Hayuningrat Journal (2010: 96-97) constructivist researchers explore how individuals create their own realities and how these constructions affect their interactions with others. According to Patton, in constructivism, researchers explore how individuals construct their own realities and how these constructions affect their interactions with others. This approach acknowledges that each person has a unique experience and viewpoint, and therefore every perspective is considered valid and deserving of respect in research.

In constructivism, each person's experiences are unique. Therefore, research conducted with this approach acknowledges the validity of each individual's perspective and emphasizes the importance of respecting it. Constructivism comprises of two key components, namely construction and reality. This is an essential element in social construction because it emphasizes the process of construction. In addition, it highlights the impact of knowledge on how individuals construct and interpret their world.

One on one interviews will be conducted with selected informants. The selection of sources for this research were English literature students, women aged 20-21 years, using Indonesian beauty products. The 6 informants are Riftiana Dwi 20 years old, Viona Andriani 21 years old, Aena Farida 21 years old, Rumeilla Hasna 20 years old, Ade Syifa 21 years old, Shalsa Firli 20 years old.

3. Results and Discussion

The participants received information or updates regarding Indonesian beauty products through social media, including Instagram, TikTok, X, and acquaintances. Social media, such as Instagram, TikTok, and X have a big influence on consumers. With social media, it is easier for consumers to find information about the products they are interested in. Not infrequently, many parties from these products place beauty advertisements. Searching for information through social media is more practical because now many people provide honest reviews in the form of before and after photos, the change process and the effects they feel. This honest review provides benefits for many parties. The party reviewing usually gets an endorsement or is purely reviewing, the consumer gets the information needed and the product party will of course get benefits in the form of insight into social media accounts.

The way brands communicate with consumers has been transformed by the emergence of social media. Instead of relying on traditional advertising methods like billboards and posters, brands can now reach out to consumers through social media platforms, which are accessible from anywhere, anytime. This is particularly beneficial for beauty consumers who can stay up-to-date with the latest trends and tips by following their favorite brands on social media. Brands are also leveraging social media to offer a seamless shopping experience to their customers. By engaging with their consumers, brands can create products that cater to their needs and preferences, and develop their own unique brand identity.

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The effect that social media has on skincare is a trend. Viral skincare contains salicylic acid, niacinamide, retinol, tea tree and many more. This trend can also make beauty products release new products that follow market demand. Ingredients that go viral are packaged in various forms, including fun ones, toners and moisturizers. The innovation that emerged from the effects of this trend is combining skincare and make up in one product such as serum foundation. Skin-tint, sunscreen foundation, serum-lip tint.

3.1. The Meaning of Beauty

The term “beautiful” refers to something that is pleasant and aesthetically pleasing. Beauty is commonly associated with physical appearance, whether it be the beauty of a person, nature, or other created beings. However, the beauty of a woman can also be attributed to qualities that are both internal and external to them.

Almost all women believe that beauty is a symbol of perfection (Kartini, 2016). Individuals who possess inner beauty tend to radiate an attractive and admirable aura, while physical beauty, also known as outer beauty, only refers to the visible appearance perceived by our senses. This is according to Indriya (2010:4). Real beauty is not just about having fair skin and a slim figure, but it should also radiate positive energy to the people around us. This means that beauty standards should be based on an individual's abilities, achievements, and their contributions towards the betterment of society. A beautiful person should possess good behavior, a desire to help others, and other admirable qualities (Syata, 2012).

The concept of beauty is inherent in all of us and it involves a balance between objective criteria and subjective impressions, as well as the ability to perceive order, symmetry, and harmony. Beauty requires a balance between the whole object and its parts, and the various parts in relation to each other. The lack of this balance results in the “unattractive”. Throughout history, many attempts have been made to define beauty and various concepts of beauty have been celebrated in different places and times. The ancient Greeks believed that a beautiful face was defined by a harmonious proportion of facial features. The standard of feminine beauty in the Middle Ages was a waxy, pale complexion, while the Renaissance included emotional and spiritual components in their concept of feminine beauty. Royalty and Hollywood stars have also served as models of beauty in different eras. Although some “beautiful faces” go in and out of fashion, certain faces in every era are considered truly beautiful (Antonio, 2002).

3.2. Opinion from participants about the meaning of beauty

According to participant A, “From an abstract perspective, in my opinion, beauty is when someone feels confident and also when someone feels comfortable being themselves. Usually their aura radiates, especially if they smile easily and can articulate themselves well.” Meanwhile, participant B...
comments that, “In my opinion, beauty is relative. Beauty is a subjective impression related to a harmonious combination of shape, character and visual appeal that captivates the individual's feelings.” Participant C said that “Beauty is when someone is confident about themselves.” On the other side, participant D stated that “Beauty is when someone can amaze other people through what they do/achieve. It cannot be denied that physical appearance is also the definition of beauty in my opinion. However, having beautiful physical privilege does not guarantee that beauty will shine through. True beauty radiates when a person has confidence that he or she is beautiful. The more confident someone feels, the more their aura of beauty radiates.” From different perspective, participant E comments that “Something beautiful and interesting according to each individual”. Lastly, participant F stated that “Beauty is relative. Depends on each person's definition. Beauty can mean having a good personality and physique. Which means that beauty has different versions depending on each person's perception.”

Beauty from time to time, different generations, different regions will have different definitions for the individual. The meaning of beauty varies because people have different eyes in seeing an object. Beauty is not only physical, but beauty can be in the form of glory days, good behavior or intelligence. Definitions of beauty are quite diverse because each human being has their own beauty and there is no standard to define what is beautiful. The opinions of the participants are more directed towards personality. If the person's personality is good then people will see that the person is beautiful. Beauty cannot be defined by certain parts alone. Feeling confident will make a person beautiful because he can appreciate, accept and love himself well. People who are confident and have a good personality are also one definition of beauty.

Apart from changes in demographics, a shift in attitude has become one of the most significant factors in recent times. The younger generation now has a broader definition of diversity and beauty, where traditional notions of success and attractiveness have given way to a more inclusive approach. This shift has been embraced by influencers, brands, and celebrities, who seek to empower consumers to embrace and celebrate their unique identities, regardless of their age, gender, or ethnicity. As a result, consumers are increasingly seeking personalized products and brands that cater to their individuality, which is why diversity in beauty has become increasingly important. What were once considered minority groups are now the most influential consumers, while even the majority now prefers brands that embrace this new era of diversity in beauty.

In today's interconnected world, people are more interested in preserving and showcasing their unique cultural identities. As a result, there is a rising demand for products that cater to specific cultural heritage. For instance, in Indonesia, a significant percentage of consumers believe that their cultural heritage is a crucial part of their personal identity. Additionally, the Halal cosmetics market is rapidly expanding, and companies should take advantage of this trend to cater to diverse and influential emerging markets such as Indonesia (Dynata/Mintel; Rakuten/Mintel, 2020). At Provital, we have been
leading the way in creating effective beauty ingredients for brands that celebrate diversity. We are constantly keeping up with the latest trends and changes in definitions, which is why we are always coming up with new and innovative solutions. Our range of natural and sustainable ingredients have been tested on diverse in vivo panels, and we are dedicated to helping brands reach a wider audience in a constantly evolving market.

3.3. Beauty Standard

Society uses beauty standards as the basis for judging a person’s appearance. These standards often include characteristics such as light skin, straight hair, and a tall, thin frame. Despite efforts by many women to challenge these norms and promote diverse beauty ideals, the prevailing standards have had a negative impact on some women’s self-esteem. When women are unable to conform to certain beauty standards, they may experience feelings of shame about their bodies. Body shaming involves criticizing women’s bodies in a negative manner. This phenomenon is closely intertwined with patriarchal culture, which often views women as inferior. Additionally, the media plays a role in shaping women’s perceptions of the ideal body, leaving them open to body shaming. The beauty standards that are considered universal today have a history rooted in racism, classism, and colorism. These harmful ideas were spread through European colonization of other nations, particularly in Asian and African countries. Some people believe that Europeans, who historically had lighter skin, looked down upon those with darker skin because they were considered inferior colonial peoples. Women continue to exist within a society that promotes a culture of sexism and enforces a standard of beauty. Women play a part in upholding patriarchy and keeping women in a subordinate position. The idea that women must be physically attractive has been ingrained in their minds. Ultimately, women will feel content if they conform to the currently accepted norms of beauty. The prevailing belief is that women will experience happiness if they are considered beautiful.

Perspectives from participants about are they have certain standards for beauty:

- Participant A: "Now there isn't, because beauty can be interpreted in many versions."
- Participant B: "When we talk about beauty standards, it really depends on ourselves, we all have our own definition of beauty. For me, my standard of beauty is if someone is clean and smells good. That's already beautiful. It doesn't have to be a shiny face, white, or exotic, or whatever."
- Participant C: "No"
- Participant D: "No, the word beautiful itself can be formed in various ways."
- Participant E: "Yes, when you see someone who is confident and tries to look neat"

Based on the opinion above, it can be concluded that today’s teenagers do not set standards for being beautiful even though these standards still exist in society. The existence of beauty standards does
not mean that humans are obliged to comply with or follow these standards. The differences that occur in the current generation, which tends to see that beauty is diverse, cannot be pegged to one standard. Ways to love yourself can take the form of caring for your health, self-love, self-esteem and following beauty campaigns which are widely broadcast via social media for a product. Self love is loving yourself completely, treating yourself with kindness and respect, and nurturing growth and happiness. Not only that, loving yourself not only includes how you treat yourself, but also your thoughts and feelings about yourself. Developing self-love is crucial as it provides the foundation for assertiveness, healthy relationships, pursuing interests, and feeling proud of oneself. Managing self-love well is important, as it has various benefits for both physical and mental health. For instance, it can lead to increased life satisfaction, motivation to maintain a healthy lifestyle, higher self-esteem, and reduced risk of developing mental disorders. Accepting yourself as you are and taking responsibility for your actions are key aspects of self-love, which can ultimately lead to a healthier and happier life.

3.3.1. Can beauty standards change?

In Indonesia, beauty standards are often associated with having white skin, straight hair, and an ideal body shape. This perception is largely influenced by the media, which tends to portray white women with slim bodies as the epitome of beauty. The beauty industry also reinforces this notion, creating a stigma that equates beauty with having a slim body. As a result, people tend to focus on physical appearance, including body shape and skin color, as a benchmark for beauty. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary, beauty standards are defined as certain measurements used to gauge a person's beauty.

It’s important to understand that you don't have to conform to anyone else's beauty standards but your own. Your body is a gift from God, therefore taking care of it is a commandment. Maintaining good health should be the ultimate beauty standard for everyone, regardless of skin color or gender. Remember, you are living your life for yourself, not to please anyone else, especially men. Rather than dieting and exercising for the sole purpose of conforming to societal standards, prioritize taking care of your body to maintain a healthy and fit physique. Don’t let insecurities about having a flat chest or butt consume you, as long as your body functions well. Instead of waiting for society to change, learn to feel comfortable and confident in your own skin.

- Participant A: “Maybe it's more about each person's thinking paradigm, right? How to change it? It can be started by campaigning about the definition of beauty itself. If, for example, there are more people calling for opinions about diversity, it will take time for beauty standards to change. We must continue to normalize that whatever race, whatever body shape, skin color, hair color, acne or not, beauty is still something everyone deserves to have. But yeah, it's a long journey, right? Since beauty standards have become part of society's stereotypes.”
Participant B: “Beauty standards can be influenced by a variety of factors, including culture, mass media, and fashion trends. Changes in societal values, the body diversity movement, or shifts in definitions of beauty may influence beauty standards over time. Awareness of diversity and acceptance of diverse beauty can bring changes in collective perceptions regarding beauty.”

Participant C: “This is difficult to do but it is possible to happen. To change existing beauty standards requires self-awareness that everyone is born with privileges and advantages in different forms.”

Participant D: "There is a sense of self-confidence and value."

Participant E: "People's mindset, education regarding stereotypes of beauty standards, and the awareness that a brand has to see that all skin is the same."

Participant F: “There is. Which is about body acceptance or the love myself campaign. This can lead to the fact that beauty standards are not always the same for everyone.”

Beauty standards that have been embedded in society because of society itself. It is not easy to change what already exists but it can be done with self-awareness starting with yourself and those closest to you. As a generation that is open to differences, we must get rid of what should not be standard which creates or has a bad effect on society. To have self-esteem, start by doing esteemable things. What this means is that you can start by taking actions that are in accordance with the values you believe in. For example, you have the value that responsibility is very important. Therefore, you carry out all your obligations with full responsibility. If there is a match between your values and the actions you take, you can feel comfortable with yourself.

It is important to fully accept and acknowledge all parts of yourself, including those that you may not like. Practicing affirmations and positive self-talk can help you see yourself in a more positive light and feel worthy. It's also important to speak your truth and express your thoughts and feelings, even if you fear judgment from others. Daily inventory can help you reflect on your strengths and successes, as well as identify areas for improvement. Remember to focus on the good things you have accomplished each day, not just the less satisfying ones. As social creatures, we need other people to increase our self-love. Connecting with those who accept us for who we are and help us grow is essential. Cultivating gratitude by appreciating even the small things in life can also boost our self-love. Practicing compassion and forgiveness towards ourselves is equally important as it is towards others. Learning to laugh at ourselves can help us accept ourselves and treat ourselves kindly. Lastly, being of service to others within our limits can be a way to show kindness to both others and ourselves.

3.4. The Changing of Beauty Standard Through Indonesian Beauty Product

Many beauty product advertisements in Indonesia glorify the color white. As if white is the only and most beautiful color. The interpretation of beauty through advertising, apart from using Change of Beauty Standards in Indonesian Society Through Beauty Product That Improve Lately
whitening words, is the use of storylines and choosing models that match the beauty criteria of a product. Before 2018, many beauty products compared two skin colors, namely white and tan. The use of the product in this advertisement illustrates that dark skin is dirty. Even though Indonesian women have a lot of skin tone because they live in tropical areas. Likewise with body shape, most of the models used in the past for advertisements were thin and slim. However, as time goes by, many Indonesian beauty products appear that have various beauty campaigns, both in terms of skin color, body shape and highlighting each individual's uniqueness.

The differences between old and nowadays beauty advertisement:

- Participant A: “Yeah. In the past, it seemed like beauty product advertisements were too limited in terms of models. Usually thin, slim, white, lips pink, smooth. Now it seems like the reach is much wider. It shows that people are different and that is a very normal thing. For example, now there are many models who are fat, or have brown, dark skin. There are also models wearing the hijab. So the difference is really visible.”
- Participant B: "There are, for example, make-up products which are now improvising a lot and providing products for dark and brown skin.”
- Participant C: "Yes, recently more beauty products have started to use models with dark skin tones compared to before 2018."
- Participant D: There is. In the past, many products flocked to encourage consumers to become white. The products released are also for fair skin or white skin, even though the majority of Indonesian people have olive and brown skin. "This is very good progress because now many products provide a range of shades from fair skin to tan skin, making it easier for our people to choose the appropriate shade.”
- Participant E: "Yes, in the past there were many products with the claim "whitening" and it was difficult to find make-up colors that suited your skin tone because of the limited choice of colors on offer. "But now many local brands are aware that Indonesian people have a variety of skin colors.”
- Participant F: “Yes, here. Before 2018, beauty was characterized by clean, white skin without blemishes. Meanwhile, after 2018, beauty is defined as having healthy skin.”

If in the past beauty products only focused on white labels, now beauty brands are emerging that provide many different colors. The direction used by Indonesian beauty products changes from time to time. Awareness from beauty product owners is very necessary regarding adjusting the target market. The diversity of colors currently available is also determined by skin undertone which is divided into three, namely warm, cool and neutral. From skincare products that previously only focused on whitening, there are now various variations with different focuses such as anti-aging, exfoliating,
brightening, calming and relieving acne. Community awareness began to change over time. They are aware that skin must be well cared for and healthy. Don't just focus on white because skin needs are different. Here is some beauty product provided many skin tones of complexion and vary of skincare:

3.5. The Effect of Beauty Campaign

The beauty campaign is an initiative aimed at promoting ideas and conversations about beauty. Its objective is to correct the distorted perceptions and the narrow definition of beauty that have been ingrained in Indonesian society. Such views have affected the majority of women in the country, leading them to adopt various methods to conform to these standards.

Picture 1. SASC’s beauty campaign

This particular brand is well-known for its makeup and skincare products and has an inclusivity campaign called Bigger Than Beauty. The campaign is an invitation for everyone to embrace their uniqueness, and it was launched alongside the WE’RE UNSTOPPABLE Lip Tint Series. To add to the campaign’s inclusivity, SASC invited models with different looks, including women wearing hijabs, women with curly hair and deep skin tones, and even men.

Picture 2. Somethinc’s beauty campaign

This homegrown brand is known for its commitment to inclusivity in its advertising campaigns. When it comes to the quality of Somethinc’s products, there is no doubt that they’re of top-notch quality. However, Something is not content with just that. Through their ‘Celebrate Your True Self’ campaign and the launch of the Copy Paste Breathable Cushion, they seek to offer more inclusive products. The

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line of shades, consisting of four colors, is the result of a collaboration with beauty influencer Lifni Sanders, who advised Something to create colors that cater to those with deeper skin tones. Now, they have a total of 14 cushion colors that are suitable for people with fair to deep skin tones.

![Picture 3. BLP Beauty's beauty campaign](image)

BLP Beauty is a local brand that is known for its inclusivity. The brand has launched makeup products with a diverse choice of shades, ranging from very light to deep skin tones. With the release of these 12 foundation colors, BLP Beauty wants all Indonesian women to be proud of their skin color and more confident. The brand also promotes self-love by echoing the phrase 'The best version of yourself is you'

The effect of beauty campaign that conveys beauty is diverse:

- Participant A: “About what beauty is according to each individual. Beauty is relative. It can't be defined in one adjective. Beauty is complex. So in my opinion, beauty can’t be used as a standard, I agree. Because humans are much more complex than that.”
- Participant B: “Very good and effective.”
- Participant C: “I really agree with that statement. Moreover, Indonesia has various cultures, races and ethnicities which have their own characteristics in various ways. So beauty standards in Indonesia should not be generalized.”
- Participant D: “I really agree because there is no specific standard for beauty, it has to be like A, like B. Everyone has their own beauty.”
- Participant E: "This is a good step because each individual's definition of beauty is definitely different. Apart from that, this can encourage people to appear as themselves."
- Participant F: “In my opinion, I agree with this because beauty standards will only create a condition of self-doubt or insecurity in everyone. "Indeed, rigid beauty standards should have been broken down a long time ago.”
The effect that beauty campaigns have on society is that ideas about beauty are diverse, relative, unique and cannot be generalized. Through beauty products that promote campaigns like this, many people who were initially insecure about themselves will become more confident. It is not easy to provide education about beauty to the public, but this can start with yourself and the people around you so that you don't follow existing standards and love yourself more.

4. Conclusions

The role of social media is one of the main factors in society in receiving information that will make them more open to views on beauty standards. The differences that exist: In the past, brown skin was labeled as less clean skin, but Indonesian beauty brands now see that there are many skintone colors in Indonesia. This makes brands realize that they also have to follow society's demands, directly and slowly society's views on beauty are becoming diverse and cannot be pegged to one particular beauty.

References


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