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Effect of African American Skin Tone on Advertising Communication

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**EFFECT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN SKIN TONE ON ADVERTISING
COMMUNICATION**

by

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Dissertation

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Yuvay Jeanine Meyers, Ph.D.

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Supervisor: Jerome D. Williams

ABSTRACT

Although there has been much research regarding the portrayals of African Americans in Advertising, the central focus has been on categorizing this race as a physiologically homogeneous group. In other fields of research such as, psychology and sociology, there is a stream of study that investigates differentiations in how Blacks are perceived by others based on variations in skin tone within the spectrum of this race. This research suggests that examining skin tone within race may provide a more accurate insight into the effect that ethnicity plays on interacting factors. The focus of this dissertation, therefore, is to extend

this research focus on skin tone to the field of Advertising. Specifically, this study examines whether the skin tone of a Black model in an advertisement affects specific outcome measures of advertising: attitude towards the ad (A_{ad}), attitude towards the product (A_{prod}), attitude towards the model (A_{mod}), and purchase intent (PI). In order to formulate predictions and explain the possible findings of this study, two competing frameworks, hegemony and ethnic identity, were examined. According to the framework of hegemony, people adopt the social standard set by the dominant group and in this case would, in turn, prefer a "lighter" Black model. However, according to research on ethnic identity, a person's level of ethnic identity dictates preference for members of their group. In other words, not all members of a group would necessarily prefer the "light" Black model. Specifically for African Americans, preference would hinge on their level of ethnic identity.

This study employed three independent variables and four dependent variables. Skin tone served as the main independent variable of interest in this analysis. It was manipulated for the purposes of this study by featuring a Black model in an ad whose skin tone was altered to produce a "light" and a "dark" version of the same model. The products used in the advertisements were based upon the other two independent variables, realm of consumption and cultural relevance. These variables, which will be explained in further detail in this

manuscript, provided a basis for understanding the role that reference group effect has on the resulting outcomes. The four dependent variables that were observed in this study were the advertising outcome measures. To determine if differences existed among the treatment groups, a two-way ANOVA was conducted, with eight condition groups in the 2x2x2 design. Approximately 480 subjects from two southwestern universities took a web based survey that was designed to gather the data analyzed in this study.

The results of the study found a significant relationship between skin tone and attitude towards the model. According to the study, more favorable attitudes were formed when the Black model's skin tone was "light" as opposed to when the Black model's skin tone was "dark." In terms of the competing theoretical models presented, generally, people felt more favorable towards the "light" model, suggesting that hegemony dictates consumer attitude formation. Ethnic identity did, however, play a significant role in the attitude towards the Black model with Black participants, with strong ethnic identifiers feeling more positively towards the dark model than those Black participants lower in ethnic identification.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Statement of the problem

Although images and portrayals of African Americans have been extensively studied in advertising research, the common variable in those studies has been race without accounting for variance that may result from skin tone differences within race (Bailey 2006; Cox 1970; Dominick and Greenberg 1970; Kassarian 1969; Shuey, King, and Griffith 1953; Taylor and Lee 1995). As minority spending power and social interactions of different racial groups in America have increased over time advertisers have increasingly been concerned with reaching minority ethnic groups through visual inclusion. With minority purchasing power expected to reach an upward of 14% of total consumer spending by 2009 (Selig Report 2004), research in this area is more important than ever before. However, many companies were initially leery of offending the White majority that was their consumer base (Surlin 1977). In a 1953 study (Shuey, King, and Griffith), only 0.6% of ads contained African Americans. By 1980 (Humphrey and Schuman 1984), that frequency had increased to approximately 5.7%, indicating that the country was becoming more comfortable with the use of Blacks in advertisements. Researchers took interest in this phenomenon of using ethnic faces in ads and desired to gain greater insight into

both how Blacks in ads were received and the roles that they played in these ads. The studies illuminated the potential impact and effectiveness of these portrayals. However, in these studies, skin tone was rarely addressed.

In other fields, such as psychology and sociology, skin tone as a factor of race and racial identity has been examined. Skin tone, defined as the color of a person's skin, has been acknowledged as a specific variable at the root of racially related issues. It has been correlated with feelings of self worth, attractiveness, self control, satisfaction, and with quality of life (Keith and Thompson 2003; Bond and Cash 1992; Boyd-Franklin 1991; Cash and Duncan 1984; Chambers, et al 1994; Okazawa-Rey, Robinson, and Ward 1987). The study of skin tone has also led to a focus on colorism, which is the process of discrimination that gives privilege to people of a lighter-skin tone over their dark-skinned counterparts (Hunter 2005). This phenomenon is not exclusive to African Americans because colorism is concerned with actual skin tone, as opposed to racial or ethnic identity. People of all groups come in various skin tones and race is merely a social concept, not significantly fixed to biology (Hirschman 2004). Research done by Shyon Baumann (2008) has shown that people within our culture, regardless of race, have a set of ideals about how people should look. Lightness and darkness have specific meanings attached to them and we subconsciously relate those meanings to those we encounter. For example, Baumann (2008) suggests that "villainy, mystery, and danger" are associated with darker

complexions and "innocence, purity, and modesty" are associated with fair skin tone. The widespread understanding of these characteristics can be seen in popular literature such as the dark and brooding character of "Heathcliff" in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* and the fair, innocent maiden "Desdemona" in Shakespeare's *Othello*. Certain assumptions about the characters are made by the audience of these stories based on the character's skin tones.

Within the African American community specifically, negative outcomes beyond perception have been identified in relation to skin tone. For example, darker skinned African Americans may face more severe discrimination than their lighter skinned counterparts (Keith & Herring, 1991). This suggests that there may be a connection between skin color and treatment by others. Colorism, or the preferential treatment of lighter skinned Blacks (Russell, Wilson, and Hall 1992), therefore, has both internal implications (e.g., self worth) and external implications (e.g., discrimination) for Blacks as a condition of their race.

Advertising, which tends to have a research disposition toward the cognitive and social behaviors of consumers, would benefit from synthesizing the concepts of skin tone and colorism to better understand the impact of using ethnic models. As research in the field of psychology and sociology suggests, skin tone, a major identifier of race, has the ability to stratify social interactions by classification (light to dark). The effect of skin tone on advertising outcomes deserves to be examined.

Significance of Study

The primary concern of this dissertation work will be the effects that the skin tone of Black models in American advertisements has on a few key marketing communication goals: attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the product, attitude towards the model and purchase intent. This study, which will use the terms Black and African American interchangeably, will focus on the use of Black models in advertising, while paying special attention to the effect skin tone has on resulting measures of perception. Although this issue of skin tone bias can be seen in other ethnicities, this study hopes to start with this group since the color spectrum seen in this ethnicity is seemingly the broadest.

As stated above, skin tone within the Black community is a very complex and polarizing issue, one that is likely to have a significant impact on social perception. From a practical standpoint, understanding the relationship between this variable and the resulting advertising outcomes will enable companies to better tailor marketing efforts to remain socially responsible as well as meet corporate goals. From an academic standpoint, this study is significant because while previously published studies have examined race, the effect of the skin tone of African American models in advertisements on the consumer and the resulting marketing communication outcomes has not yet been extensively researched. In terms of theoretical contributions, this study stands to build on two notable

theoretical frameworks, hegemony and ethnic identity, which will be addressed fully in Chapter 2.

Briefly, according to the study of hegemony, people adopt the social standard set by the dominant group (Gramsci 1971). If this is the case, consumers in a society will prefer that which is socially dominant. For example, in a predominantly White society, an African American model that is closer in appearance to that of the socially dominant group, e.g., having a lighter skin tone would be more highly favored. And the reverse would also be true; an African American model that is further from the socially dominant group's appearance, e.g., having darker skin, would be less favored. This study seeks to build on this theoretical paradigm by making these important linkages in an advertising context. That is, determining whether or not the skin tone of a model in an advertisement affects the reception in that ad.

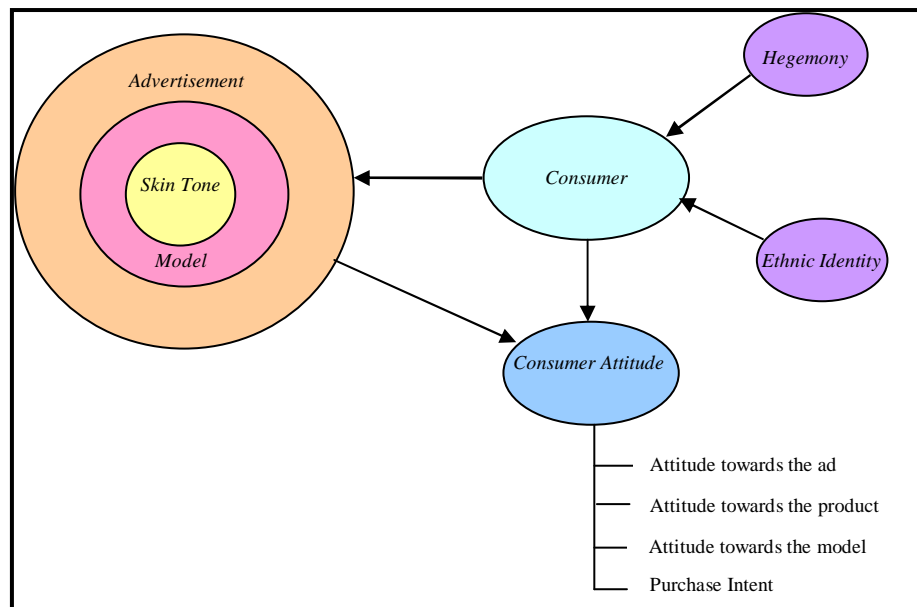
The research on ethnic identity indicates that one's level of ethnic identity may dictate his/her preference for and judgments about their group and other ethnic groups (Phinney 1992). Unlike the framework of hegemony, the framework of ethnic identity leaves room for individual differences in reception. Strong ethnic identifiers feel more positively towards a model who looks more like themselves (Green 1999). In terms of skin color, this theory suggests that Blacks who identify strongly with their ethnicity will feel more positively towards

darker models than will Blacks who identify less with their ethnicity. This study will test these linkages in an advertising context.

In summation, these theories will guide this inquiry into how social and personal identification impacts the consumer attitudes. The goals of this study are to:

1. Extend the study of skin tone to advertising research
2. Build important theoretical linkages between skin tone and the theories of hegemony and ethnic identification
3. Suggest how advertisers might respond to the linkages made here.

Figure 1.1: Theoretical Framework



Overview of Study

This study employs an experimental design to explore the variable of skin tone and its impact on consumers after exposure to an advertisement featuring a Black model whose skin tone has been manipulated to address the needs of the study. With respect to this, four research questions are addressed.

1. “Does the skin tone of an African American model in an advertisement affect a consumer’s attitude towards the ad?”
2. “Does the skin tone of an African American model in an advertisement affect a consumer’s attitude towards the product?”
3. “Does the skin tone of an African American model in an advertisement affect a consumer’s attitude towards the model?”
4. “Does the skin tone of an African American model in an advertisement affect a consumer’s purchase intent?”

Consistent with the theory of hegemony, this study hypothesizes the following:

Hypothesis 1:

An ad featuring an African American model classified as having “light” skin tone will result in a more positive consumer attitude towards the

advertisement than an ad featuring an African American model classified as having “dark” skin tone.

Hypothesis 2:

An ad featuring an African American model classified as having “light” skin tone will result in a more positive consumer attitude towards the product than an ad featuring an African American model classified as having “dark” skin tone.

Hypothesis 3:

An ad featuring an African American model classified as having “light” skin tone will result in a more positive consumer attitude towards the model than an ad featuring an African American model classified as having “dark” skin tone.

Hypothesis 4:

An ad featuring an African American model classified as having “light” skin tone will result in higher purchase intent than an ad featuring an African American model classified as having “dark” skin tone.

In addition to the main hypotheses, the following relationships were hypothesized that examined the resulting advertising outcomes and the measured ethnic identity or self reported ethnicity of the participants

Hypothesis 5:

Blacks who identify strongly with their ethnicity will feel more positively towards “dark skinned” models than will Blacks who identify less with their ethnicity

Hypothesis 6:

Blacks will respond more positively due to their race on the measures of attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the product, attitude towards the model, and purchase intent based upon the skin tone of the model seen in the ad.

Skin tone served as the main independent variable of interest in this analysis. In this study, participants viewed three online ads - one of the ads featured an African American female model whose skin tone has been manipulated to appear either "light" or "dark" depending on the treatment group into which the participant has been assigned. Due to the nature of advertising research, there was a need to account for the product of the ad being presented in the stimuli. The products advertised in the stimuli were based upon two additional independent variables, realm of consumption and cultural relevance. These variables provided a basis for understanding the role that the featured product has

on the outcomes in terms of how the consumer sees them self as a member of a reference group, such as their ethnic group.

Reference group refers to a membership in a group consisting of one or more people that serve as a context for how an individual analyzes information and makes decisions. According to Lessig and Park (1978), this plays an important role in consumers' interactions with models in advertisements because an individual motivated to enhance or support their self-concept would be expected to associate themselves with positive referents and dissociate themselves from negative referents. This consumer will view the endorser, or model, as a referent in terms of the product presented and in turn make judgments about the product based upon this reference group effect. There is implicit social meaning attached to skin tone and this variable as an attribute of the model in an ad may play a role in the reference group effect seen in this study.

It has been proposed that reference group influence on product decisions is a function of two forms of "conspicuousness" (Bourne 1957). The first condition is that it must be seen or identified by others. This can be operationalized in terms of where an item is consumed, publicly or privately. The second condition involves the level of exclusivity that the product has. This is operationalized in this study in terms of the relativity to the culture under examination, which in this study is African American culture. The combination of these concepts, public and

private consumption and high and low cultural relevance, constructs four conditions:

1. Non-Culturally Relevant/ Privately Consumed
2. Culturally Relevant/ Privately Consumed
3. Non-Culturally Relevant/ Publicly Consumed
4. Culturally Relevant/ Publicly Consumed

To account for these four conditions, four products each falling into one of these groups is presented to the participants. When applied with the variable of skin tone, a total of eight relationships are created as the basis of this study. In synopsis, there are eight condition groups in this 2x2x2 design.

Table 1.1: Design Structure (2x2x2) – 8 conditions

		High Cultural Relevance	Low Cultural Relevance
“Dark” Skin Tone	Public	1	2
	Private	3	4
“Light” Skin Tone	Public	5	6
	Private	7	8

The four dependent variables that were observed in this study based upon the independent variables are attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the product, attitude toward the model, and purchase intent. The full methodology used in this study will be detailed in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

Overview of Chapters

Chapter 2 presents an overview of African American history as it relates to skin tone. More specifically, this chapter will address how skin tone has been a mediating factor in the role that race plays in the life of African Americans. This chapter also takes a look at scholarly studies that have investigated the history of and role played by African Americans in American advertisements. And finally, the missing aspects of previous studies are highlighted to justify the need for future investigation and the potential findings this study may provide. Chapter 3 provides research questions as well as the rationale for the hypotheses of the study. Chapter 4 sets up the methodology used in the collection of data in this study. Chapter 5 makes available the results of the analyses of the study. Chapter 6 concludes with a discussion of the implications of this study on advertising decision making and suggestions of directions for further study in this area.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction to Section

One of the most salient attributes for African Americans is race, which is primarily signified by skin color for this group. It is a major life component that impacts the mutual interaction between the person and the environment. The purpose of this section is to provide background and a theoretical foundation for understanding skin tone as a moderating factor of how Blacks are seen by others and how they see themselves.

African Americans and Skin Tone: Historical Perspective

For this study, it is imperative to understand the historical context under which Blacks have been socially judged based upon skin color. We will review literature regarding the longstanding relationship between African American skin tone and their societal position in order to frame the circumstances which are present in today's environment.

Skin color is a variable that is often circumscribed by the larger categorization of race. Although race is more often spoken about as the major factor, skin tone can also affect the way that the general population of Americans sees Blacks. There is evidence of the idea that White Americans view Black

Americans differently based upon their skin tone (Breland 1998). In other words, skin color has internal and external implications for Blacks apart from and on top of their category of race. The implications manifest as a spectrum of social predilection for lighter skin to social aversion for darker skin.

The preference among Blacks and Whites for Blacks with light skin tones has been accredited to the type of treatment received during European colonization and the slavery era, where lighter skinned Black slaves were assigned “in-house” duties while their darker skin counterparts were typically forced to work outside in the elements. There were many perceived and actual advantages to being a “house” slave. Although it has been argued by some researchers that working in-house was more of a disadvantage because they were afforded less flexibility to make mistakes due to constantly being under such close watch by the slave masters (Herring, Keith and Horton 2004); other researchers contend that in-house slaves had more opportunity to learn how to read, write and sometimes travel, all of which were vital to obtaining freedom and privilege (Breland, 1998; Edwards, 1973).

A majority of the slaves that were allowed to work inside were the offspring of the slave masters. They were referred to as *mulatto*, meaning a person of mixed ancestry with an African and a European parent. Occasionally, slave children of mixed descent were raised inside of their master’ home. These children were sometimes privy to special treatment which gave them an

advantage over the slave children that worked outside. Many Whites felt that these mulatto children should be permitted to have less strenuous duties and, at times, were even freed by their slave master, who may have been their biological father or relative. Once freed, those with literary skills and lighter skin tone were able to secure better paying jobs and receive preferential treatment in the workforce. The skills that were learned inside of the home may have set the stage for this group being more adaptable to living independently in America. Lighter skin increased chances of acculturation because light skin slaves were more likely than those with dark skin to be trained in skilled trades, making them a greater asset to society in general (Hughes & Hertel, 1990).

One phenomenon that allowed lighter skinned Blacks to assimilate into mainstream society was the ability and action of “passing” for white. Passing was a deceptive act where the person adopted the social identity from which they would normally be barred. In the case of lighter skin Black slaves, once they were freed or escaped, blending into White society allowed them to live their lives without the negativity associated with being Black. Their physical features allowed them to present themselves as White without acknowledgement of their Black lineage.

Although Mulattos were of mixed race, they were legally considered to be Black. The legal treatment of Mulattos as non-White may have begun as early as the seventeenth century (Hickman 1997). Even in the case of being one eighth or

one sixteenth percent Black, meant that according to social standard, a person was “Black.” The *Rule of Hypodescent*, also referred to as the “one-drop” rule, was the accepted social standard that racially excluded non-Whites from any associated privilege (Boyd-Franklin 2006). According to this rule, anyone with one drop of Black blood was legally “Black.” In 1890, census reports classified as “Negro” all persons having three-fourths or more of Black blood and as “Mulatto”, “Quadroon”, or “Octoroon” persons with decreasingly smaller portions (Edwards, 1973). The *Rule of Hypodescent* was used post civil war in order to limit Blacks from earning better working positions, higher wages or entering the political arena (Hunter, 2005). Nevertheless, once Blacks did begin to seek higher status positions, a majority of those successful were light skin Mulatto men, thus helping to foster the socially accepted ideology that light skin Blacks are more competent and thus more tolerable than their darker counterparts. The snowball effect initiated during American slavery by granting more privileges to those slaves having lighter skin continued to affect how Blacks progressed as a societal group.

The pseudo-caste system that formed during slavery based upon skin color and access continued to flourish. Light and Dark skinned Blacks began a separation in experience that created an “elite” group within the race. The upper class or “elite” Blacks were of lighter skin tone and better educated than their darker counterparts (Graham 1999). A common scenario would entail a master who freed his Mulatto slaves and allowed them to work for money. The children

from this situation would then, post emancipation, have access to colleges and universities that would permit them enrollment. Schools that were created to educate freed slaves, such as Howard University, Fisk University, and Morehouse College, predominantly comprised of this lighter skinned group that had the access and money needed to validate the time value of money necessary to undertake undergraduate and graduate degrees.

The cycle of access and education as a means of achieving success continued to dictate the stratification of Blacks based upon skin color well into this century. Lighter skinned Blacks had money and education and therefore continued to prosper at a faster pace than darker skinned Blacks. During the first half of the 20th century, the strides that were made by Blacks in the form of business ownership and financial wealth were done mostly by this “elite” group. As time has passed and Blacks of all shades have been able obtain greater access, the “old guard” of the Black upper class is still characterized by lighter skin tone due to the historic level of access and money this group had (Graham 1999).

The social environment that Blacks function within and are judged by has been shaped by these experiences and standards. By understanding the history of African Americans and the impact that skin tone has on their social experience, it becomes clear that social interaction is affected by skin tone. This knowledge helps to provide the context in which a Black model would be viewed and a

foundation for the affect that skin tone has on a person's interaction with this model in an advertisement.

African Americans and Skin Tone: Identity and Outcomes

In today's society, the skin tone of African Americans can still influence how they are perceived by others. The power that this physical characteristic has over the life quality of a member of a race has made skin color an important topic in the study of Blacks in society. It may also determine the discrimination they will face and opportunities that they will be granted in their lifetime (Keenan 1996). In terms of this study, it is important to examine how skin tone has been proven to affect how a person sees themselves, how others see them, and the social outcomes that result from the interaction of society and Blacks according to their skin tone.

Even with the end of the slave system in America, skin-color ideals which dictated that Blacks with lighter skin are "worth more ... than their darker counterparts" (Keith and Herring 1991) still remains embedded in the society we live in. According to a 1991 study, Keith and Herring found that skin color is a better predictor of an African American's occupation and income than their parents' socioeconomic status which is counter to the rule seen in the general population. This finding leads one to believe that darker skinned Blacks are, by birth, at an obvious disadvantage.

Skin color disadvantage is upheld in society through negative stereotypes associated with Blacks. The “halo effect,” derived by equating things that are attractive with those that are good, explains how Blacks are judged in character by their skin tone: Lighter skin means you are good, darker skin means you are bad. This stereotype also plays out on the internal level as a stratifying factor. From the intra-group perspective, it is also more preferential to be of lighter skin color to avoid the same negative associations that society attaches to dark skin. This notion is even thought to be reinforced by the representation of Blacks on TV (Dixon and Linz 2000) with Black beauty being associated with lighter skin and evil or sinister being often represented by darker skin.

In a historic experiment done by psychologists Kenneth and Mamie Clark that helped to build the case for desegregation in *Brown vs. Board of Education*, young Black children were shown four dolls that were identical except for color. When asked questions aimed at determining racial perception. Almost all of the children were able to identify the race of the dolls. However, when they were asked which of the dolls that they preferred, most selected the White doll (Clark 1940). This groundbreaking case was the first to highlight examples of stereotypic beliefs based upon skin color, within and outside of the Black race. As early as preschool, children are conditioned to associate dark skin with negative attributes. Unfortunately, when the Clark test was revisited more than 60 years later (Edney

2006), the results suggested that the bias still remains. Although our society has grown and matured, we still have far to go to rectify this societal issue.

Among African Americans, skin color is related to a variety of factors that can make their lives more or less enjoyable (Hochschild 2006). Building on Clark's landmark study, a number of studies have been conducted that examine how color "matters." Typically when skin tone is used as a cue, test subjects, both Black and White, associate a greater number of negative traits for dark-skinned subjects as opposed to positive traits. And both Blacks and Whites have exhibited similar responses (Maddox and Gray 2002). According to a 2002 study, Maddox and Gray found that dark skinned Blacks are identified using more negative and stereotypic traits, while lighter skinned Blacks are described with more positive and counter-stereotypic traits. Dark skinned Black men were labeled as tough/aggressive, criminal, and less likely to be wealthy in higher frequency than lighter skinned Black men, while dark skinned Black women were labeled as lazy, poor, and unattractive in higher frequency than lighter skinned Black women. These findings provide strong evidence that both Blacks and Whites make cultural distinctions between "light" and "dark" skinned Blacks. The social identity of Blacks is therefore imposed upon them by the color of their skin.

Social identity is defined as the part of the individuals' self-concept that originates from knowledge of their membership in a social group together with the value of that membership (Tajfel 1982). Understanding what it means to be

Black and of a certain skin tone as a factor of social interaction dictates how individuals feel about themselves. This also dictates how others see the individual as a member of society. According to Ransford (1970), two explanations have been recognized to account for the relationship between African American skin tone and social identity/class status: internalization of stereotypes and societal discrimination.

Harvey, et al (2005) label the stigma that Blacks feel regarding the color of their skin an “intra-group stigma” heavily influenced by the group context of race. This means that blacks, although cognizant that all skin tones will fall into the same race category, measure and compare themselves to others in the group. According to the study, this stratification is a way to determine hierarchy within the group. This in-group comparison then plays into the self esteem of individual. With lighter skin being more desirable both within the race and as a member of American society, those with darker skin are left with lower self esteem (Harvey \, et al. 2005).

Stereotypes based on race takes a toll on an individual (Cohen and Garcia 2005). They cause an internal conflict about who a person thinks they are and what value they have. Blacks have been socialized into thinking that they have to appear “White” in order to be socially accepted as beautiful (Hooks, 1992). Black females have tried to assimilate into society by lightening their skin. Techniques that include bleaching the skin have been used to achieve a desired look. The

desire to hide the characteristics that define a person as Black is an idea that has been embedded in our society through media images including consumer product advertising. Skin lightening products are such a popular product that \$44 million worth of the product was sold in 1990 (Russell, Wilson & Hall, 1992). These products are advertised in Black publications and proudly boast statements such as "Lighten your dark skin...Be attractive. Throw off the chains that have held you back from the prosperity that rightly belongs to you" for Black & White Ointment and "It is received by the pigment and combines and harmonizes to produce a remarkably satisfactory, youthful, wholesome and whitened complexion" for Ro-Zol bleach (Russell, Wilson & Hall, 1992).

Blacks confront this variable as a moderating factor for their social acceptance. The need to be attractive is instilled at a very early age. A child's social status amongst his/her peers is known to be positively influenced by his/her physical attractiveness (Boyatzis, Baloff, and Durleux 1998). For a girl, this physical attractiveness includes physical characteristics, such as skin color, in relation to the set standard of beauty. In the case of Black women, the standard is very clear, lighter skin is synonymous with femininity (Hill 2002). Previous studies suggest that there is a preference of Black men for lighter skinned Black women (Udry, Bauman, and Chase 1971). Falling outside of the spectrum of attractiveness can lead to negative feelings about self image, which is something that many Black women face due to their skin color. The connection between

positive self image and skin color is less significant for Black men (Hill 2002), but this situation is nonetheless important to the entire group as a whole. Although this issue has roots in the intra-group dynamic, internal color bias is only a fraction of the societal impact when taking into consideration color bias of the extra-group or general population.

Most individuals tend to use race and color as a social tool for organization. This phenomenon only becomes a point of contention when the tool of social organization marginalizes a group because the associated traits are negative. However, in the case of African Americans, the most negative stereotypes are often attributed specifically to Blacks with darker skin tone (Maddox and Gray 2002). The darker that a Black person's skin tone, the more highly identified with racial stereotypes they are to members of the extra-group. The more Eurocentric that a Black person looks, including skin that is lighter, the more acceptable and socially attractive they are. This stratification of negativity promotes a hierarchy of social acceptability from outside, as well as within the group.

The social acceptability and attractiveness of a model endorser is important in the realm of advertising. In Kahle and Homer's (1985) research, physical attractiveness stood out as having a critical impact on the level of persuasion an endorser had on a brand. With the general feeling of Blacks as less attractive on a sliding scale, darker skin equals less attractive and lighter skin

equals more attractive, Whites being confronted with messaging from a Black source may well use skin color as a tool for organizing the situation. Since there seems to be a significant relationship between skin tone and attractiveness, there is room to evaluate whether the variable of skin tone also plays a role in reception of advertisements.

African Americans and the Media: Stereotyping and Social Perception

Racially based stereotyping in the media has garnered both social interest and academic research in recent years. The major concerns in this area have pivoted around the imagery and its contribution to social issues arising from stereotyping (Hall 1997). Media stereotyping is thought to be enhanced by the spatial difference between the racial groups. This social distance provides opportunity for stereotypes to be accepted as factual since media imagery may be the first or only form of interaction with that group. Researchers in the area of cognition will mostly agree that stereotyping is a method for generalizing information for future reference (Allport 1954). However, when the result is the application of predominately negative attributes to a racial group along with reinforcement through media, issues of discrimination and stigmatization come to the forefront (Cohen and Garcia 2005). Even if the stigmatization is not directed at a particular person, the collective threat of stigmatization of a group member can have equally harmful effects on a person. In other words, all African

Americans are affected by poor representations of Blacks in the media because they share in the experience of their group. In terms of poor representation regarding skin tone, by constantly depicting negative African American characters as having dark skin, a system of negative ideas about Blacks are promoted in our society. African Americans facing stereotyping in the media can have adverse effect to their self esteem, self efficacy, and even their level of achievement (Cohen and Garcia 2005).

Black representation in the media has improved in terms of roles. However, there are still many examples where negative associations are often and habitually connected with Black Americans. With the finding that Blacks are socially judged on a spectrum based upon skin tone, images of African Americans in the media and how society views them based upon prevalent negative stereotypes deserves further investigation.

African Americans and Advertising

In the marketing communications field, there has been a lengthy stream of research regarding the depictions of African Americans in advertising and other forms of marketing communications (Bailey 2006; Cox 1970; Dominick and Greenberg 1970; Kassarian 1969; Shuey, King, and Griffith 1953; Taylor and Lee 1995). The number of African Americans seen in advertisements, although slightly under the percentage of Whites, has been steadily increasing (Taylor and

Lee 1995; Mastro and Stern 2003). The changing beauty standards of advertising models can be attributed to the shifting demographics, values of American society, as well as the increased expectations of American consumers being presented with relatable images (Williams, Qualls, and Grier 1995). As minority buying power grows, so too will the need for advertising that speaks directly to consumers of varying ethnicities.

At the onset of the trend towards using ethnic models, one of the biggest fears faced by marketers was whether appeasing the minority consumers by featuring ethnically diverse models would alienate the White majority audience. Advertising executives were concerned that using minorities in commercials would keep White consumers from connecting with ads featuring Black models instead of the status quo White model (Green 1999). The effect of targeted messaging on the unintended groups has also been researched in order to provide insight into resulting attitude formation (Aaker, Brumbraugh, and Grier 2000). Most researchers have found that White consumers do not react negatively to Black models in ads (Barban & Cundiff 1964; Barban 1969; Guest 1970; Block 1972; Schlinger & Plummer 1972; Bush, Gwinner, & Solomon 1974; Choudhury & Schmid 1974; Solomon, Bush, and Hair 1974; Sybillo & Jacoby 1974; Whittler 1991). Using ethnic models would seem to be a positive option, since the general audience would not reject these ads. And as a bonus to retailers targeting the

African American market, Black consumers tend to have higher recall of ads featuring Black models (Whittler 1991).

This Study

Most previous research around the use of African American models in advertising has focused on race without delving into the specific detail of skin tone. The lessons gained from studies related to African Americans and advertising may have further exploratory room by delving deeper than race and examining skin tone within the race.

In hopes of understanding how four specific goals of advertising are affected by skin tone as a variable of race, this current study will attempt to understand how skin tone influences perception of advertisements by consumers. From sociology and psychology based research on the topic, it has been found that African Americans are judged by society based upon their most salient feature, which is skin tone. It has also been shown that lighter skinned Blacks are more favorably viewed in society than their darker skinned counterparts. Yet, this situation has yet to be reviewed in regards to marketing communication. If these rules are true in societal interactions, it is worth examining whether they also hold true in consumer advertising.

If marketers decide to feature Black models in their ads, they should also consider that Blacks come in many variations of color. One thing that has yet to be studied in connection with African Americans in advertisement is whether or not the model's skin tone has a significant effect on the ad's outcome measures, specifically attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the product, attitude towards the model, and purchase intent.

Attitude towards the Ad

Psychologists concerned with the study of media influence have focused on the concept of consumer attitudes in contemporary studies. This concentration on attitude has been defined by Petty, Priester, and Brinol (2002) as "people's general predispositions to evaluate other people, objects, and issues favorably or unfavorably." Researchers generally agree that consumer attitude is a good predictor of their consequential behavior (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1977). As such, the attitude construct has become an important variable in marketing research due to the assumption that a person's attitude, whether implicit or explicit, is a significant mediating variable between a consumer's exposure to new information and behavioral change or action. Since the major goal of most advertising efforts is to drive a consumer to take action, specifically to make a purchase, understanding this mediating factor is vital.

Holbrook (1978) suggested that there is significant importance in understanding a consumer's global evaluation of ads. Following this stream of thought, studies by Shimp (1981) and Mitchell and Olson (1981) introduced the importance of the A_{ad} construct. The goal of the advertisement, according to this theoretical groundwork, is to create "favorable attitude toward the advertisement in order to leave consumers with a positive feeling after processing the ad. Underlying the use of such advertising is the tacit assumption that consumers are hedonistically motivated by the desire to feel good" (Shimp 1981). Other moderating variables within the advertisement that can affect behavior, such as the product and the model featured can also be focused upon and manipulated to meet the goal of contributing to the positive feeling gained by consumers after processing an ad. Since skin tone is a prominent characteristic of a model in an ad, the following hypothesis is derived from previous findings in the area of attitude towards the ad.

Attitude towards the Product

Consumers develop an attitude towards a product through evaluation of the situation presented to them. Dependent upon the situation, consumers can use logical thinking in order to decide how they feel about a product, or they can use very little evaluation, in the conscious sense, and simply rely on impulse and intuition (Kotler and Armstrong 2004). The role of advertising is to present the

featured product in the best light possible and with the information needed for the consumers to form a positive attitude about this product. With research from other fields suggesting that some negative attitudes are associated with African Americans based upon their skin tone that can be transferred from an endorser to the product, the following hypothesis was developed.

Attitude towards the Model

A considerable amount of social science research suggests that an individual's initial perception of and reaction to another individual is affected by the physical attractiveness of the other person (Baker and Churchill 1977). When viewing an advertisement featuring a human model, the consumer will utilize their social skills and process certain information about the person. Stereotypes that are attached to features of the model, such as skin tone, may be used to make judgments about the attractiveness and credibility of the endorser. According to the source attractiveness model (McGuire 1985), sources who are similar to the consumer are attractive, and thus persuasive (McCracken 1989). The physical attractiveness of the model in an ad can therefore influence people's evaluations of an advertisement. Baker and Churchill (1977) suggests that attitude towards the model is correlated to the "attention-getting value of the ad and the subjects' liking of the ad." This is an important variable in this study because some of the consumers will be of the same ethnic group as the model and some will not. One

of the current measures of general attractiveness in this country is associated with having fair skin tone, therefore, the following hypothesis corresponds to this idea.

Purchase Intent

A person's attitude towards a behavior will affect the person's intentions to do or not to do a behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975). Purchase intent is the anticipation of consumer action. In the evaluation stage of message processing, purchase intentions will form. It is desired that this purchase intent will be higher after viewing an ad that has presented the consumer with positive information about the product. This is one of the most important goals of advertising. Companies spend advertising dollars in hopes of receiving returns on their investments in terms of increased sales. Researchers have long used purchase intent as a measure of advertising success (Gruber 1970). This study analyzed the variable of purchase intent to help account for the bottom-line effect that skin tone may have on advertising using African American models. With the assumption that purchase intent is correlated to the attitudes formed after viewing an ad the following hypothesis was formed.

Competing Theoretical Frameworks

Given the literature reviewed, there are likely to be more complex social relationships at play along with those discussed in previously published research. Two competing theoretical frameworks, ethnic identity and hegemony, are discussed here as guides used to develop the research questions of this study. The possible participant responses regarding the reception of an advertisement when shown an ad featuring an African American model may be explained by these guiding theories. On one hand, ethnic identity research suggests that a consumer will feel more positively towards an ad featuring a model that is closest to how they view themselves. On the other hand, hegemony research suggests that a consumer will feel more positively towards the ad featuring the model that is closest to what society has dictated as more preferential. Currently, American society deems that lighter skinned Blacks are more preferential than darker Blacks.

Ethnic Identity

Ethnic identity is the way a person sees themselves as a member of a group that is a subset of the larger society. A person's ethnic identity is important because it dictates point of view and is likely to play an important role in how received information is processed (Green 1999). This also translates to consumer based decisions. Researchers have previously made the connection between ethnic

identification and consumer marketplace behavior (Desphande, Hoyer, and Donthu 1986; Donthu and Cherian 1992; Hirschman 1981; Webster 1994). And it has been stated that a consumer's level of ethnic identification may have a significant effect on their evaluation of an advertisement (Cui 1997).

Within an ethnic group, however, there will be varying levels of this identification. In a study done by Corliss Green (1999), African-Americans were examined as a heterogeneous group taking into consideration that their evaluation of ads may be influenced by their level of ethnic identification. It was found in this study that strong ethnic identifiers do feel more positively toward ads that feature Black models while weak identifiers feel more positively toward ads that featured White models. According to this researcher, the rationale for these findings is based upon whether the Black consumer identified more closely with their ethnic identity or identified more closely with the dominant American culture.

Ethnic identity is the aspect of a person's self concept that is centered on their knowledge of membership in an ethnically based social group together with the significance attached to that membership (Tajfel 1981). Minorities tend to feel particularly attached to their ethnic identity due to the fact that race and ethnicity are highly salient to these groups and highly evident to others. However, as the number of minorities in the United States increases, the majority is in turn

becoming a minority. This situation may lead to the issue of ethnic identity becoming a salient issue for both the minority groups as well as the current White majority (Phinney 1992).

Hegemony

Media offer a voyeuristic window into our culture. By viewing American media, such as advertising, one is allowed to see the prevailing norms that define our society. These norms are backed by social power in order to validate the standard that all others are judged by (Pharr 1988). The prevailing norms, however, are often distorted and the images presented are seen through a lens of the prevailing power, or hegemony. Hegemony is the dominance of one social group over another (Gramsci 1971). The theory of hegemony was best defined by Antonio Gramsci in notebooks written between 1929 and 1935 while imprisoned by Mussolini's regime in Italy. His writings analyzed the culture and politics of maintaining power in a society. An important function of the group with power is to push the masses towards a cultural and moral level that is in the interest of the ruling class. According to Gramsci's theory of hegemony, media is controlled by those in power as a way to disseminate information that serves to maintain the prevailing structure. In this same stream of thought, media also serves as a way to stereotype powerless groups. Minorities are often depicted in a fashion that

undermines the social equality of this group. The misrepresentation of minorities in media leads to unwarranted misperception in the mind of the larger society.

A function of modern media is that it constructs social knowledge through imagery that shapes how we perceive the world (Hall 1977). It serves as a vehicle for common thought and what is reflected in the media assists consumers in decoding and processing thoughts including what they see in advertisements. In essence, the world is not seen through each individual's own point of view, but seen through the collective lens that has been dictated by the prevailing power in society. Given that this system of hegemony is successful, all members of the society, including both the powerful and the powerless, will feel more positively about media imagery that is in sync with the prevailing "norm." In terms of advertising, this means that since it has been reinforced through media that "Whiteness" is the societal norm, ads featuring a White model are favorable. In the case of being presented with ads featuring an African American model, a model that is most similar to the societal norm, i.e., lighter skin, will be more highly favored over one that is least similar to the societal norm, i.e., darker skin.

Reference Group and Product Consumption

Advertising attitudes are influenced by the product categories viewed in an ad (Biehal, Stephens, and Curlo 1992.) Therefore, studies interested in the role of ethnicity and skin tone in advertising also need to account for perceived product

endorsement and product categories. For this study, the products featured were chosen based upon categories that were congruent with understanding the role ethnicity and skin tone would play in the reception of an ad with an African American model.

Endorsement of a product by a model that belongs to your group can influence your information processing, attitude formation and your purchase behavior (Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel 1989). The products that a consumer purchases and the brands that they select can be significantly influenced by the reference groups they subscribe to based upon a quantitative study conducted by Bearden and Etzel (1982). Two types of referent groups have been presented in the previous literature: comparative and normative referents (Childers and Rao 1992). Normative referents are close in proximity to the average consumer. Peers and family members would fall into this category. Normative referents set the standard of behavior and values that are provided for the individual to assimilate to (Ostlund 1973). A consumer would be influenced by this type of reference group because they want to fit in and be accepted by this group.

Comparative referents act as a "yardstick against which the individual can evaluate their position relative to others" (Ostlund 1973). Comparative referents often have far proximal distance to the consumer. In the marketing process, professional athletes, entertainers and celebrities along with other endorsers would fall into this category. Although the average consumer does not have direct

contact with these individuals, they can be a representative of the product they endorse. According to McCracken (1989), models in an ad can bring non verbal meaning to a message based upon how the viewer interprets visual cues or previous knowledge about that endorser. Visual cues and socially attached stereotypes may then play a role in how a consumer views an ad. If the model is the representative of the product and the consumer becomes associated with the product, there is a chance that the meaning attached to the model is the measure that the consumer will be judged upon. The skin tone of African Americans, being a visual cue and also having attached social meaning, can then possibly transfer meaning on to the consumer. This study will control for comparative reference group effect based upon two attributes, realm of consumption and cultural relevance.

Realm of Consumption

Public goods are products or services that are used by a consumer for which others are aware that the consumer uses or owns them. Private goods are used at home or in private where others outside of immediate family or friends may not be aware that the consumer uses or owns them. Whether or not a product is consumed publicly or privately will dictate the influence that reference groups have on a consumer purchasing and using a product. For reference group influence to affect the purchase or usage of a product by a consumer, the product must be seen and identified by others (Bearden and Etzel 1982). If others are

unaware of the product usage by a person (private good), influence becomes irrelevant.

Cultural Relevance

The cultural relevance of a consumer good to its audience is directly related to their self identity. How a consumer views him/herself and the group culture to which they subscribe is paramount to how they interpret cultural cues that are present in advertisements (Grier, Brumbaugh, Thornton, 2006). The context in which the audience identifies themselves will determine whether they will find relevance in the messaging. This means that if the message is intended for a group, the cues that are meaningful to the group in which the audience is a member will add significance to the message.

People may seek out consumer goods that define, enhance and connect them to their social identity. In Tajfel's Social Identity theory, this "individual's self concept is derived from his knowledge of his group membership and the emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1978). When a message or product is meant to speak to the needs of a consumer's social identity, it would be vital to include the audience using cues that highlight the importance of this group membership.

The cultural relevance of a product to a consumer is hence correlated to the context in which they view themselves. The groups they align themselves with

and the importance they place on these groups will dictate the cultural relevance of the product.

Chapter 3

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Introduction to Section

This section will present an overview of the research questions under investigation. The hypotheses of this study will also be listed. Based on the preceding literature review, the following research questions will guide this research effort.

Research Questions

Research Question 1:

Does the skin tone of an African American model in an advertisement affect a consumer's attitude towards the ad?

Research Question 2:

Does the skin tone of an African American model in an advertisement affect a consumer's attitude towards the product?

Research Question 3:

Does the skin tone of an African American model in an advertisement affect a consumer's attitude towards the model?

Research Question 4:

Does the skin tone of an African American model in an advertisement affect a consumer's purchase intent?

The hypotheses of this study are as follow:

Hypothesis 1 - Attitude towards the Ad

Hypothesis 1:

An ad featuring an African American model classified as having “light” skin tone will result in a more positive consumer attitude towards the advertisement than an ad featuring an African American model classified as having “dark” skin tone.

Hypothesis 2 - Attitude towards the Product

Hypothesis 2:

An ad featuring an African American model classified as having “light” skin tone will result in a more positive consumer attitude towards the product than an ad featuring an African American model classified as having “dark” skin tone.

Hypothesis 3 - Attitude towards the Model

Hypothesis 3:

An ad featuring an African American model classified as having “light” skin tone will result in a more positive consumer attitude towards the model than an ad featuring an African American model classified as having “dark” skin tone.

Hypothesis 4 - Purchase Intent

Hypothesis 4:

An ad featuring an African American model classified as having “light” skin tone will result in higher purchase intent than an ad featuring an African American model classified as having “dark” skin tone.

Hypothesis 5 - Ethnic Identity

Given the competing frameworks used to analyze the results of this study, it seems reasonable to assume that both have the ability to affect the reception of advertisements that feature African American models. With this in mind, the following hypothesis addresses the framework of ethnic identity as potential mediating factor of the study's outcome when singling out Black participants.

Hypothesis 5:

Black study participants that are strong in ethnic identification will feel more positively towards “dark skinned” model than those Black study participants that are weak in ethnic identification.

Hypothesis 6 - Ethnicity

The last hypothesis of this study will examine the role of the respondents' self reported ethnicity to help determine if there is significance between the ethnicity and the attitudes formed from seeing the stimuli ad.

Hypothesis 6:

Blacks will respond more positively due to their race on the measures of attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the product, attitude towards the model, and purchase intent based upon the skin tone of the model seen in the ad.

Chapter 4

Methodology

Introduction to Section

The purpose of this section is to outline the methodology that was used to examine the role of skin tone in relation to four major advertising goals: attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the product, attitude towards the model and purchase intent.

Study Design

This dissertation experiment employed a two-way ANOVA design. The execution of this study was in the form of an online survey. This format was ideal to meet the needs of this study because the self reported data allowed for insight into the mind of a large number of consumers.

Skin tone served as the main independent variable of interest in this analysis. This variable is examined as a more direct factor of race and racially based issues in advertising. Given the subjective nature of analyzing skin tone, the measurements of skin tone were given as the bi-polar adjectives of “light” and “dark.” Narrowing the adjectives to two options was in hopes of avoiding a catch-all compartment of “medium” as the skin tone classification. Realm of

consumption and cultural relevance are the other two independent variables used to understand the role that reference effect has on the resulting outcomes.

The four major dependent variables involved in this study are attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the product, attitude toward the model, and purchase intention. These outcome measures are of great importance to advertisers due to their indication of consumer acceptance of the message. Since advertising is a paid for method of mass mediation, understanding these outcome variables also validates the money used for product and brand communication efforts.

To operationalize and access the dependent variable, three advertisements were shown to the participants. One of these ads served as the study stimulus and the other two served as foils or “dummy ads” to help disguise the purpose of the study. The stimulus ad featured one of two models, a “light” and a “dark” version of the same African American female whose skin tone has been digitally manipulated. The product advertised in the stimulus ad is one of four products that are categorized by their cultural relevance and realm of consumption. The products used will be discussed further in a following section of this chapter.

The first section of the survey asked respondents questions related to the participants attitude towards the ad. This section featured a scale that is made up of a number of bi-polar adjectives that are geared at measuring the affective component of the subjects’ attitude. The second section asked respondents about

their attitude towards the product. The format of this section was a seven item, bi-polar statement scale to measure the consumer's evaluation of the product. The third section asked respondents about their attitude towards the model. Since the two dummy ads did not feature models, the questions were manipulated to fit the ad presented. The fourth section asked questions related to purchase intent based upon the ad. Tested and approved marketing scales were used. The ones selected were recommended for the determination of attitude towards the ad, the product, the model, and purchase intent by the American Marketing Association Marketing Scales publication (Bruner, Hensel, and James 2005). The fifth section examined the ethnic identity of the respondent using the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure Scale (Phinney 1992). The final section will include some general demographic information of the subjects regarding age, gender, ethnicity and school.

Measurement

The scale used in the survey to examine the participants' attitude towards the ad is based upon the affective component of the participants' reception of the stimuli. The scale consists of four groups of bi-polar sentences, such as "I dislike the ad" versus "I like the ad", to address the goal of the scale assessed on a seven point differential. When used by Holbrook, and Batra (1987), this scale had a documented reliability (α) of 0.99.

In order to examine the participants' attitude towards the product, the scale used in the survey was adapted from a scale used by Shamdasani, Stanaland, and Tan (2001). The scale uses four groups of bi-polar sentences, such as "This is a bad product" versus "This is a good product," related to the product and assessed on a seven point differential that has a previously recorded alpha (α) of 0.95.

To measure the participants' attitude towards the model, the scale used in the survey is from a study completed by Bower (2001). This scale has a previously recorded alpha (α) of 0.95 and meets the need of the study by making a statement about the model and provides the respondent bi-polar options for response. An example of the statements used is, "Relative to other female models seen in advertising, this model's beauty makes her ____." The respondent will then make a choice that best fits their opinion between bi-polar options on a seven point differential scale such as "much less noticeable" and "much more noticeable."

The scale used to probe the hypothetical purchase intention of the study participant after viewing the stimuli was first used in a study by Baker and Churchill (1977). This scale, also assessed on a seven point differential, is widely accepted and most recently reported an alpha (α) of 0.81 (Stafford 1998). An example of the questions asked is "Would you like to try this product?" with the respondent answering on a spectrum between "yes" and "no."

In order to measure the construct of ethnic identity, a subscale of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure Scale (Phinney 1992) was employed. The MEIM scale addresses the general aspects of ethnic identity by focusing on components that are common across all ethnic groups: self identification as a group member, a sense of belonging, behaviors unique to that group, and a feeling of pride due to group achievement (Phinney 1990). Three subscales were developed to address these components.

The subscale of the MEIM scale called “Affirmation and Belonging” focuses on the key aspect of ethnic identity that has been included in most previous studies in the area which is the feeling of belonging to an ethnic group and the feelings that a group member has towards that group (Phinney 1992). Statements like "I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to" are presented to the respondent and they are asked whether they agree or disagree on a four point differential. This subscale is a five question scale that has a reported reliability of 0.86 (Phinney 1992). This is the scale that was employed in this study. Please see Appendix A for full questionnaire.

Stimuli

This experiment employed eight ads as the study stimuli along with two ads that served as foils or “dummy” ads. These ads were developed by Reginald Hankerson, an award winning creative and graphic designer who has worked on

print advertisements for clients such as BMW, Nationwide Insurance, BellSouth, Chase, and many others. By acquiring the assistance of a professional designer, the goal is the result of using realistic stimuli that would be comparable to ads currently seen in the market.

There are four sets of stimuli advertisements, two ads for each of the four products presented. Within each set, an identical image is shown with the exception of the skin tone of the single, black model. One ad in each set featured a lighter skinned black model (referred to as “light” ad) and the other ad featured the same model with skin tone manipulation that makes her appear darker (referred to as “dark” ad).

The effect of the model’s skin tone on the participant’s attitude towards the advertisement, the product, the model, and towards purchase intent was determined based upon the differences in responses noted by the two groups who each viewed one of the advertisements in the product set. A manipulation check of the stimuli was also conducted during the experiment. Please see Appendix B for stimuli ads.

Products Used in Stimuli

For this study, the products featured in the stimuli ad fall into a matrix that examines the interaction between cultural (racial) reference group and the realm product consumption (private or public). A consumer’s cultural group and how

they feel about this group (ethnic identity) combined with the realm of consumption, may provide a deeper understanding for how consumers feel about a product advertisement. In this study, "cultural relevance" will be operationalized in terms of African American culture. Adapted from "Reference Group Influence on Product and Brand Purchase Decisions" by William Bearden and Michael Etzel published in the Journal of Consumer Research (1982), The below matrix is a visual of the interaction of these variables.

Figure 4.1: Reference Group - Product Matrix

		Cultural Relevance of Product	
Realm of Consumption	Non-Culturally Relevant/ Privately Consumed	Culturally Relevant/ Privately Consumed	
	Non-Culturally Relevant/ Publicly Consumed	Culturally Relevant/ Publicly Consumed	

Products that fall into the first cell, "Non-Culturally Relevant/ Privately Consumed" are products that are used in private and do not have any cultural attachments based upon brand, usage, or attributes. An example of a non-

culturally relevant product that is privately used is soap. Soap is a product that is used by most consumers in the privacy of their homes, regardless of race. Also, a consumer's peers usually do not see them use toothpaste, and therefore the influence of referent group is minimal.

Products that fall into the second cell, "Culturally Relevant/ Privately Consumed" are products that are used in private but have cultural attachments based upon brand, usage, or attributes. Examples of culturally relevant products that are privately used are hair care products or ethnic foods and seasonings. These products are used by most consumers in the privacy of their homes, but there are different usages, requirements and desires of the product based upon race. Again, a consumer's peers usually do not see them use these products and therefore the influence of referent group is minimal.

Products that fall into the third cell, "Non-Culturally Relevant/ Publicly Consumed" are products that most people are familiar with since they are used in public, but they do not have any cultural attachments. An example of a non-culturally relevant product that is publicly used is a car. A consumer's peers can see them driving their car so there may be influence to have a socially acceptable product based upon peer group.

Finally, products that fall into the fourth cell, "Culturally Relevant/ Publicly Consumed" are products that most people are familiar with since they are used in public, but they have cultural attachments. Examples of culturally relevant

products that are publicly used are ethnic clothing such as kente cloth apparel or a sari. A consumer's peers can see them wearing these products and since it is culturally relevant, the consumer will have reference group influence from their peer group.

A pretest was conducted with a participant pool of 30 respondents in order to select the products to be used in the dissertation study. The goal of this pretest was to insure that the products used in the dissertation study would be accounted for in terms of their effect on perception. The products fall into a matrix that examines the interaction between cultural relevance (high or low) and the realm product consumption (private or public). How the consumer perceives the cultural relevance of the product combined with the realm of the product's consumption, may provide a deeper understanding for how consumers feel about a product advertisement. According to Bearden and Etzel (1982), the products that a consumer purchases can be inferentially influenced by the reference groups they subscribe to. Using that study as a format, the reference group effect on a list of 30 products was tested in order to determine the level of relevance the product had to a consumer based upon the realm of consumption and cultural relevance.

Each of the 30 products questioned were then rated in two sections, the first section asking where on a spectrum does a product fall in terms of being a public or private good. A public product is defined for the consumer as one that other people are aware that you possess and use. If they want to, others can

identify the brand of the product with little or no difficulty. And a private product is defined for the consumer as one used at home or in private at some other location. Except for your immediate family, people would be unaware that you own or use the product. For reference group influence to affect the purchase or usage of a product by a consumer, the product “must be seen and identified” by the group (Bearden and Etzel 1982). If the referent group is unaware of the product usage by a group member (private good), their influence cannot be transmitted. The second section of this product pretest asks where on a spectrum do these same 30 products fall in terms of being high or low in cultural relevance. A product that is high in cultural relevance is defined for the consumer as one that people may use or think about differently based upon their race or ethnicity. And a product that is low in cultural relevance is defined for the consumer as one that people use or think about the same way as other consumers regardless of their race or ethnicity. By using products that can be identified as private versus public in consumption, or high versus low in cultural relevance, it can be inferred whether or not the consumer’s reference point in regards to these two chosen variables is in fact playing a role in the way they feel about the product and other subsequent effects. Four products were chosen based upon the rating scale provided by Bearden and Etzel’s 1982 study design that fall into each of the prescribed categories: publicly consumed/ high in cultural value, publicly

consumed/ low in cultural value, privately consumed/ high in cultural value, and privately consumed/ low in cultural value

- Toothpaste
 - Private Consumption (mean = 4.56)
 - Low Cultural Relevance (mean = 4.53)
- Cell Phone
 - Public Consumption (mean = 2.46)
 - Low Cultural Relevance (mean = 4.59)
- African Art
 - Private Consumption (mean = 4.50)
 - High Cultural Relevance (mean = 1.68)
- Make up
 - Public Consumption (mean = 2.82)
 - High Cultural Relevance (mean = 2.94)

Independent sample t-tests were performed to assess whether the mean scores of the products used in each cell was significantly definable by the cells designation. When examining products that are low in cultural relevance, there was a significant difference found in the means of consumption [$t(82) = 6.4157$, $p < 0.001$]. Significance was also found when examining the means of

consumption of products that are high in cultural relevance, [$t(82) = 5.1325$, $p < 0.001$]. When examining products that are low in cultural relevance, there was a significant difference found in the means of consumption [$t(82) = 5.0408$, $p < 0.001$]. The same pattern was found when examining products that are low in cultural relevance. There was a significant difference in the means of consumption [$t(82) = 8.7069$, $p < 0.001$]. In other words, in all of the products that are used in the study, the pretest shows that participants were able to significantly distinguish between whether the products were public or private in use and whether the product is high or low in cultural relevance. Please see Appendix C for reference group product pretest questionnaire.

Sampling and Recruitment

The participant recruitment goal of this study was approximately 480 subjects: 240 from a student sample at the University of Texas at Austin and the other 240 from a student sample at Huston-Tillotson University. The goal was to have two samples that will be rich in both the number of White and Black subjects. Since both schools lack diversity in terms of those two races, both subject pools were investigated to make up for this shortfall. The University of Texas at Austin is a predominately White school, with 56.6% of the population being Caucasian and 3.9% of the population being African American (University of Texas at Austin, 2006). In contrast, the reverse population trend can be found

at Huston-Tillotson University with 75% of the student population being African American and 10% identifying as Caucasian (Houston Tillotson University, 2008). In this study, the Advertising department's student "Participant Pool" was employed to recruit subjects at The University of Texas at Austin. In order to recruit students at Huston-Tillotson University, all of the faculty in the university were contacted via email and asked to pass along the study link to their students.

Actual Sample

The students took part in the study with the incentive of being entered into a drawing for one of four \$50 gift cards. There were 468 valid completions of this experimental study, 243 from The University of Texas at Austin, 219 from Huston-Tillotson University, and 6 responding as attending "other" schools or not a student. Most of the respondents were female, comprising 66% (313) of the sample, with men making up 33% (155). Since this was a college sample, most of the participants' ages fell between the ages of 18 and 23 (87%). Participants from The University of Texas at Austin had a racial demographic that was predominantly White (58%) with Asian (14.8%), Hispanic (11.1%), Black (4.9%), Mixed (10.7%) and Other (0.4%) following in frequency. Huston-Tillotson University had a racial demographic that was predominantly Black (90%) with Hispanic (3.7%), Mixed (3.2%), White (1.8%), Other (0.9%), and American Indian (0.5%) following in frequency. Please see Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 4.2 University of Texas at Austin Participant Racial Breakdown

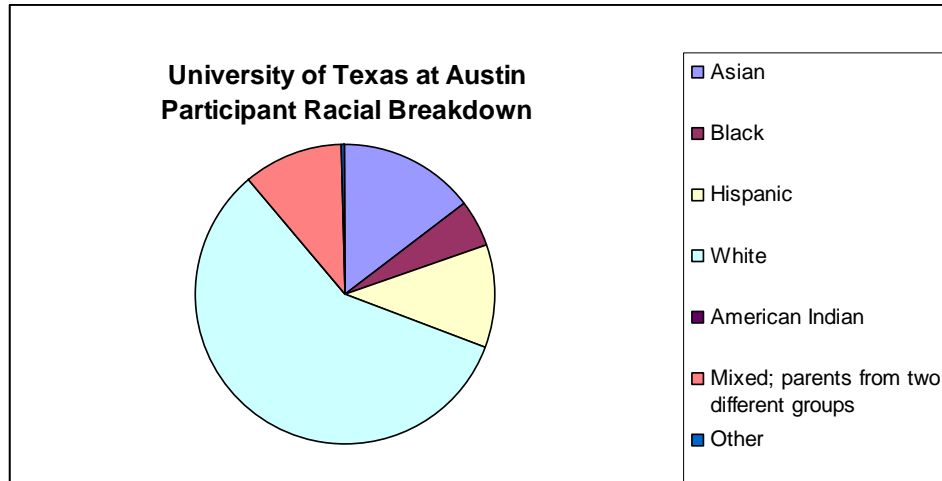
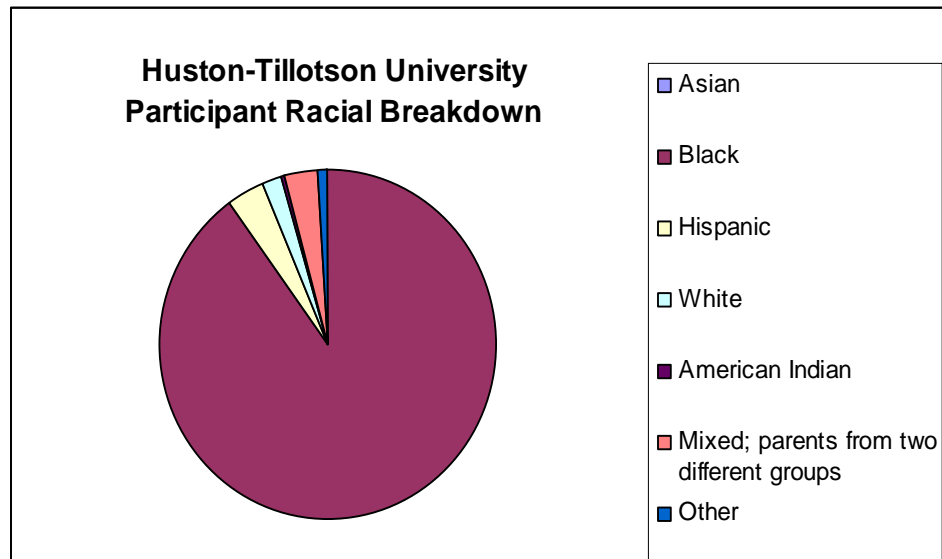


Figure 4.3 Huston-Tillotson University Participant Racial Breakdown



Pilot Study

A pilot of this study was completed in the spring of 2007 in order to pretest the stimuli to be used in the dissertation study. Only three scales were used in this study: attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the brand, and purchase intent. 56 participants completed this version of the survey and a convenience sample was used. The participants of this study were mostly undergraduate college students at The University of Texas at Austin who volunteered for class credit through the school's Department of Advertising Research Participant Pool. This student pool is not a set group of participants, so age, gender, race and other demographic information varies from study to study with this panel.

The study design was a self-administered, web-based survey. A quasi-experiment was conducted by having the participants view one of two possible advertisements for the purpose of examining the effect that African American model's skin tone has on three outcome measures of Advertising. This pilot was a necessary predecessor of the larger dissertation study in order to test for possible issues that may arise with the larger sample. Manipulation checks and statistical analysis were used to prepare and circumvent issues in the dissertation study that were present in the pilot.

The advertisements were identical with the exception of the skin tone of the single, black model. The first ad featured a lighter skinned black model (referred to as "light" ad) and the second ad featured the same model with skin

tone manipulation that makes her appear darker (referred to as “dark” ad). Their perceptions were evaluated via a survey using web-based data collection. The effect of the model’s skin tone on the participant’s attitude towards the ad and product along with purchase intent was identified based upon the differences in responses noted by the two groups who each viewed one of the advertisements.

The survey consisted of four main sections. After viewing the ad, the first section asked respondents questions related to the participant attitude towards the ad. This particular scale had a reliability of $\alpha = 0.95$ (Olney, Holbrook, and Batra 1991). This section featured a scale that is made up of a number of bi-polar adjectives that are geared at measuring the affective component of the subjects’ attitude. The second section asked respondents about their attitude towards the brand and had a previously recorded reliability of $\alpha = 0.89$ (Peracchio and Meyers-Levy 1994). The format of this section was an eight item, seven-point differential scale to measure the consumer’s evaluation of the product. The third section asked questions related to purchase intent based upon the ad and had a reported reliability of scale $\alpha = 0.81$ (Baker and Churchill (1977)). This section was also a seven point differential scale accompanied by three questions for the consumer regarding future purchase inclination. The final section included some general demographic information of the subjects regarding age, gender, ethnicity and educational level.

Of the 56 participants who completed the survey, 26 were primed with the “dark” ad and 30 were primed with the “light” ad. In the first section of the questionnaire, the participants responded more positively when asked about their attitude towards the ad when primed with the “light” ad compared to when primed with the “dark” ad. The bi-polar adjectives picked from the scale geared at measuring the affective component of the subjects’ attitude were more positive for the light ad. To examine this section, frequency was noted. There were 20 adjectives, and in all but 1 case, the lighter ad received a higher percentage of the more positive adjective option.

In the second section, respondents were asked about their attitude towards the brand. The format of this section was an eight item, seven-point differential scale to measure the consumer’s evaluation of the product. The mean scores of the eight items were examined and signs of color bias between the ads surfaced. The ad featuring the lighter model garnered higher ratings across the board indicating a more positive attitude toward the brand. Independent sample t-tests were used to examine the data and to note the significance of findings. Six out of eight of the items were significant at or beyond a 95% confidence level. The other two items were significant at least at the 90% confidence level.

The third section asked questions related to purchase intent upon viewing the ad. The format of this section was also based upon a seven-point differential scale. The mean scores of the three questions also provided evidence of color bias

in the ads. In all cases, the “light” ads scored lower signifying higher purchase intention. However significance was not adequately proven through t-tests of this data.

All other things equal, the ad featuring the black model whose skin was altered to a lighter color was rated much more highly than its counterpart. These findings of this pilot study support the hypotheses presented for this dissertation. The pilot gave insight and justification to the study design of the following dissertation experiment.

Chapter 5

Analysis and Results

Introduction to Section

This chapter details the analysis of the data collected in this dissertation study in order to answer the posed research questions:

Research Question 1:

Does the skin tone of an African American model in an advertisement affect a consumer's attitude towards the ad?

Research Question 2:

Does the skin tone of an African American model in an advertisement affect a consumer's attitude towards the product?

Research Question 3:

Does the skin tone of an African American model in an advertisement affect a consumer's attitude towards the model?

Research Question 4:

Does the skin tone of an African American model in an advertisement affect a consumer's purchase intent?

The descriptive statistics of the findings will be presented in the following sections. The hypotheses of this study will then be addressed briefly in terms of the findings.

Descriptive Data

In this three-factor analysis of variance, seven tests of significance were done, one for each of the three main effects, one for each of the three two way interactions and one test of the three way interaction of the independent variables.

The three factors in this experiment are as follows:

1. Skin Tone - The model in the ad is classified as having either "light" or "dark" skin tone.
2. Realm of Consumption - The product in the ad is classified as being either "private" or "public" in the normal mode of consumption.
3. Cultural Relevance - The product in the ad is classified as being either "high" or "low" in cultural relevance to the average consumer.

This experiment, in other words, can be described as having a Skin Tone (2) x Realm of Consumption (2) x Cultural Relevance (2) factorial design. There was an average of 57 subjects in each of the eight conditions.

Variable Interaction

In order to address the research questions based upon the study design, Table 1 shows the ANOVA source table of the 2x2x2 interaction between independent variables of this study. From this data, there does not appear to be a significant three way interaction between the skin tone of the model in an ad, the realm of consumption where the product featured in the ad is used, and the cultural relevance of the product. Although no statistically significant two way effects are present, several interactions marginally approached significance according to the findings of this analysis. The interaction between realm of consumption and cultural relevance provided a marginally significant effect on attitude towards the model (A_{mod} [F(1,455) = 3.108, p = 0.079]), attitude towards the product (A_{prod} [F(1,455) = 2.772, p = 0.097]), and purchase intent (P.I. [F(1,455) = 3.783, p = 0.052]). Marginal significance was also approached in the effect that the interaction between cultural relevance and skin tone had on attitude towards the product (A_{prod} [F(1,455) = 2.831, p = 0.093]) and purchase intent (P.I. [F(1,455) = 3.523, p = 0.061]).

The main effects of the study, however, did produce data indicative of one significant difference. The outcome of the test indicates that a significant difference exists between skin tone for attitude towards the advertisement [F(1,455) = 5.209, p = 0.023]. Hypothesis 1 is therefore supported. This finding is

consistent with the literature previously discussed in the preceding chapters of this manuscript. The outcome of the test does not, however, indicate that a significant difference exists between skin tone and attitude towards the product, attitude towards the model, or purchase intent. Hypothesis 2 [$F(1,455) = 0.780, p= 0.377$], Hypothesis 3 [$F(1,455) = 1.035, p= 0.310$], and Hypothesis 4 [$F(1,455) = 0.716, p= 0.398$] are therefore unsupported.

Table 5.1: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	AAD	33.772(a)	7	4.825	1.874	.072
	AMOD	20.272(b)	7	2.896	1.187	.308
	APRO	24.601(b)	7	3.514	1.195	.304
	PURC	23.213(c)	7	3.316	1.628	.125
Intercept	AAD	7390.394	1	7390.394	2870.300	.000
	AMOD	6294.824	1	6294.824	2580.818	.000
	APRO	5681.920	1	5681.920	1931.806	.000
	PURC	6562.930	1	6562.930	3222.536	.000
R_OF_C	AAD	.005	1	.005	.002	.964
	AMOD	.183	1	.183	.075	.784
	APRO	4.336	1	4.336	1.474	.225
	PURC	.214	1	.214	.105	.746
C_R	AAD	2.336	1	2.336	.907	.341
	AMOD	.446	1	.446	.183	.669
	APRO	.107	1	.107	.036	.849
	PURC	.019	1	.019	.009	.924

SKIN_TON	AAD	13.412	1	13.412	5.209	.023
	AMOD	2.525	1	2.525	1.035	.310
	APRO	2.296	1	2.296	.780	.377
	PURC	1.458	1	1.458	.716	.398
R_OF_C * C_R	AAD	5.815	1	5.815	2.258	.134
	AMOD	7.581	1	7.581	3.108	.079
	APRO	8.153	1	8.153	2.772	.097
	PURC	7.704	1	7.704	3.783	.052
R_OF_C * SKIN_TON	AAD	4.058	1	4.058	1.576	.210
	AMOD	5.269	1	5.269	2.160	.142
	APRO	.025	1	.025	.008	.927
	PURC	.571	1	.571	.280	.597
C_R * SKIN_TON	AAD	3.703	1	3.703	1.438	.231
	AMOD	3.200	1	3.200	1.312	.253
	APRO	8.327	1	8.327	2.831	.093
	PURC	7.174	1	7.174	3.523	.061
R_OF_C * C_R * SKIN_TON	AAD	3.888	1	3.888	1.510	.220
	AMOD	.612	1	.612	.251	.617
	APRO	.561	1	.561	.191	.663
	PURC	4.671	1	4.671	2.294	.131
Error	AAD	1171.526	455	2.575		
	AMOD	1109.782	455	2.439		
	APRO	1338.268	455	2.941		
	PURC	926.641	455	2.037		
Total	AAD	8661.375	463			
	AMOD	7443.315	463			
	APRO	7061.741	463			
	PURC	7566.744	463			

Corrected Total	AAD	1205.297	462			
	AMOD	1130.054	462			
	APRO	1362.869	462			
	PURC	949.854	462			

- a. R Squared = .028 (Adjusted R Squared = .013)
- b. R Squared = .018 (Adjusted R Squared = .003)
- c. R Squared = .024 (Adjusted R Squared = .009)

In order to make a directional analysis regarding the findings of this study, the means of the resulting attitudes in each cell have been reported. In almost all of the cells, the mean of the "light" version of the ad featuring the same product produced overall higher, more positive attitudes than the "dark" version. The exception was the ad featuring the cell phone, where the mean difference between the "attitude towards the product" is only slightly higher. Although there are no significant main effects supporting hypotheses 2, 3, and 4, these means provide evidence of a possible connection between skin tone and the three variables addressed by these hypotheses. Further investigation may be needed to probe into the relationship.

Makeup/ "Light" Model vs. Makeup/ "Dark" Model

In the cells that presented makeup as the product, which is high in cultural relevance and a publicly consumed, a difference can be found between the attitudes formed after viewing the "light" ad or viewing the "dark" ad. In all four dependent measures of the study, more positive attitudes were formed after

viewing the "light" ad, however, all differences were not statistically significant. The difference between the attitude towards the ad displayed in the "light" ad [mean = 4.23, SD = 1.46] was significantly different than the attitude towards the ad displayed in the "dark" ad [mean = 3.44, SD = 1.64] with $t(127) = 2.93$, $p = 0.004$. However, the mean differences between the attitude towards the product [light ad: mean = 3.30, SD = 1.73; dark ad: mean = 2.91, SD = 1.70], the attitude towards the model [light ad: mean = 3.61, SD = 1.51; dark ad: mean = 3.34, SD = 1.55] and purchase intent [light ad: mean = 3.80, SD = 1.45; dark ad: mean = 3.54, SD = 1.45] were not statistically different after viewing the ad [attitude towards the model: $t(127) = 0.98$, $p = 0.3309$; attitude towards the product: $t(127) = 1.27$, $p = 0.2059$; purchase intent: $t(127) = 1.03$, $p = 0.3030$].

Table 5.2: Independent Variables * Makeup/Dark Ad (High CR-Public)

Makeup/Dark Ad (High CR-Public)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	3.4355	3.3494	2.9144	3.5371
	N	62	62	62	62
	Std. Deviation	1.63838	1.54893	1.69605	1.45042
Total	Mean	3.4355	3.3494	2.9144	3.5371
	N	62	62	62	62
	Std. Deviation	1.63838	1.54893	1.69605	1.45042

Table 5.3: Independent Variables * Makeup/Light Ad (High CR-Public)

Makeup/Light Ad (High CR-Public)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	4.2351	3.6121	3.2985	3.8010
	N	67	67	67	67
	Std. Deviation	1.46220	1.50708	1.73138	1.44573
Total	Mean	4.2351	3.6121	3.2985	3.8010
	N	67	67	67	67
	Std. Deviation	1.46220	1.50708	1.73138	1.44573

Toothpaste/ "Light" Model vs. Toothpaste/ "Dark" Model

In the cells that presented toothpaste as the product, which is low in cultural relevance and a privately consumed, all but one of the variables showed significance between the attitudes formed after viewing the "light" ad or viewing the "dark" ad. The mean difference between the attitude towards the product [light ad: mean = 4.39, SD = 1.24; dark ad: mean = 4.07, SD = 1.39], was not statistically different after viewing the ad [$t(117) = 1.29$, $p = 0.20$]. However, significance can be found in the means of the attitude towards the ad [light ad: mean = 4.88, SD = 1.29; dark ad: mean = 4.03, SD = 1.54], the attitude towards the model [light ad: mean = 4.23, SD = 1.42; dark ad: mean = 3.49, SD = 1.49] and purchase intent [light ad: mean = 4.23, SD = 1.27; dark ad: mean = 3.63, SD = 1.33]. The results for the test of significance are as follows: attitude towards the ad: $t(117) = 3.23$, $p = 0.0016$; attitude towards the model: $t(117) = 2.77$, $p = 0.0065$; purchase intent: $t(117) = 2.49$, $p = 0.0140$].

Table 5.4: Independent Variables * Toothpaste/Dark Ad (Low CR-Private)

Toothpaste/Dark Ad (Low CR-Private)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	4.0317	3.4917	4.0743	3.6346
	N	63	63	63	63
	Std. Deviation	1.54208	1.48782	1.39280	1.33140
Total	Mean	4.0317	3.4917	4.0743	3.6346
	N	63	63	63	63
	Std. Deviation	1.54208	1.48782	1.39280	1.33140

Table 5.5: Independent Variables * Toothpaste/Light Ad (Low CR-Private)

Toothpaste/Light Ad (Low CR-Private)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	4.8795	4.2325	4.3870	4.2325
	N	56	56	56	56
	Std. Deviation	1.29157	1.41587	1.24377	1.27465
Total	Mean	4.8795	4.2325	4.3870	4.2325
	N	56	56	56	56
	Std. Deviation	1.29157	1.41587	1.24377	1.27465

Cell Phone/ "Light" Model vs. Cell Phone/ "Dark" Model

In the cells that presented a cell phone as the product, which is low in cultural relevance and a publicly consumed, hardly any difference can be found between the attitudes formed after viewing the "light" ad or viewing the "dark" ad. The mean differences between the attitude towards the ad [light ad: mean = 4.23, SD = 1.35; dark ad: mean = 3.72, SD = 1.80], the attitude towards the product [light ad: mean = 3.33, SD = 1.56; dark ad: mean = 3.35, SD = 1.95], the attitude towards the model [light ad: mean = 3.87, SD = 1.37; dark ad: mean =

3.57, SD = 1.69] and purchase intent [light ad: mean = 3.97, SD = 1.14; dark ad: mean = 3.80, SD = 1.56] were not statistically different after viewing the ad [attitude towards the ad: $t(113) = 1.73$, $p = 0.0873$; attitude towards the model: $t(113) = 1.04$, $p = 0.2986$; attitude towards the product: $t(113) = 0.06$, $p = 0.9544$; purchase intent: $t(113) = 0.65$, $p = 0.5191$].

Table 5.6: Independent Variables * Cell Phone/Dark Ad (Low CR-Public)

Cell Phone/Dark Ad (Low CR-Public)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	3.7217	3.5725	3.3523	3.8047
	N	53	53	53	53
	Std. Deviation	1.80055	1.69420	1.95151	1.56148
Total	Mean	3.7217	3.5725	3.3523	3.8047
	N	53	53	53	53
	Std. Deviation	1.80055	1.69420	1.95151	1.56148

Table 5.7: Independent Variables * Cell Phone/Light Ad (Low CR-Public)

Cell Phone/Light Ad (Low CR-Public)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	4.2298	3.8711	3.3335	3.9681
	N	62	62	62	62
	Std. Deviation	1.35221	1.37137	1.56425	1.13996
Total	Mean	4.2298	3.8711	3.3335	3.9681
	N	62	62	62	62
	Std. Deviation	1.35221	1.37137	1.56425	1.13996

African Art/ "Light" Model vs. Art/ "Dark" Model

In the cells that presented African art as the product, which is high in cultural relevance and a privately consumed, a difference can be found between the attitudes formed after viewing the "light" ad or viewing the "dark" ad. Statistically significant difference can be found in two of the variables. The differences between the attitude towards the model [light ad: mean = 4.31, SD = 1.47; dark ad: mean = 3.41, SD = 1.62] and purchase intent [light ad: mean = 4.08, SD = 1.34; dark ad: mean = 3.42, SD = 1.57] was statistically significantly [attitude towards the model: $t(97) = 2.90$, $p = 0.0046$; purchase intent: $t(97) = 2.24$, $p = 0.0276$]. However, the mean differences between the attitude towards the ad [light ad: mean = 3.94, SD = 1.72; dark ad: mean = 3.79, SD = 1.59] and the attitude towards the product [light ad: mean = 3.76, SD = 1.85; dark ad: mean = 3.16, SD = 1.72] were not statistically different after viewing the ad [attitude towards the ad: $t(97) = 0.4464$, $p = 0.6563$; attitude towards the product: $t(97) = 1.65$, $p = 0.1014$].

Table 5.8: Independent Variables * Art/Dark Ad (High CR-Private)

Art/Dark Ad (High CR-Private)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	3.7941	3.4118	3.1698	3.4184
	N	51	51	51	51
	Std. Deviation	1.58801	1.61603	1.71963	1.56750
Total	Mean	3.7941	3.4118	3.1698	3.4184
	N	51	51	51	51
	Std. Deviation	1.58801	1.61603	1.71963	1.56750

Table 5.9: Independent Variables * Art/Light Ad (High CR-Private)

Art/Light Ad (High CR-Private)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	3.9427	4.3127	3.7635	4.0767
	N	48	48	48	48
	Std. Deviation	1.72377	1.46602	1.85275	1.34451
Total	Mean	3.9427	4.3127	3.7635	4.0767
	N	48	48	48	48
	Std. Deviation	1.72377	1.46602	1.85275	1.34451

Ethnic Identity and Ethnicity

The mean ethnic identity scores for participants who viewed the "light" or the "dark" ads were equitable and yet still, the attitude towards the model was more favorable when the "light" model is featured. However, there is no statistical significance found in the means of these measures [$t(461) = 0.9649$, $p = 0.3351$]. Please see Table 5.10 for the ethnic identity scores reported in the groups that saw the "light" model versus the "dark" model version of the ads.

Table 5.10: Skin Tone Means

SKIN_TON		AMOD	ETHID
Light	Mean	3.7616	3.4767
	N	232	232
	Std. Deviation	1.50410	.67777
Dark	Mean	3.6234	3.4798
	N	231	228
	Std. Deviation	1.62220	.72885
Total	Mean	3.6926	3.4783
	N	463	460
	Std. Deviation	1.56397	.70278

When categorizing these participants by race, the reported ethnic identity of the participants was skewed. Blacks, Hispanics, American Indians, and those self classified as "Other" reported a higher level of ethnic identity than Whites, Asians, or those self classified as Mixed. To examine the results of this study in relation to Hypothesis 5, high ethnic identity will be operationalized as an ethnic identity score that falls above the mean for Black participants (mean =3.715).

Table 5.11: Ethnic Identity Means by Race

Ethnicity	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Asian	3.1538	39	.89966
Black	3.7150	207	.60621
Hispanic	3.5543	35	.63261
White	3.2317	145	.69429
American Indian	4.0000	1	.
Mixed	3.2750	32	.72690
Other	3.6667	3	.57735
Total	3.4736	462	.71084

There was an interesting interaction found when examining whether Blacks that are high in ethnic identity (mean above 3.715) present a more positive attitude towards the dark model than Blacks that are low in ethnic identity (below 3.715). There were 157 Black participants in this study, of which only 48 qualified as having low ethnic identity. Of these participants, 106 saw the "light" ad and 99 saw the "dark" ad. Please see Table 5.11 for the breakdown. When an ANOVA was conducted to determine whether there is a significant interaction between the skin tone of the model, the ethnic identity of the Black participants and the resulting attitude towards the model, significance was found in the interaction effects of these variables. The outcome of the test indicates that a significant difference exists between skin tone and attitude towards the model [$F(1,201) = 6.469, p = 0.012$]. The outcome of the test also indicates that a significant difference exists between ethnic identity and attitude towards the model [$F(1,201) = 6.003, p = 0.015$]. The interaction effect found in these factors shows that there is a connection between ethnic identity and the skin tone of a black model and their effect on a consumer's attitude towards the model [$F(1,201) = 9.237, p = 0.003$]. Since a statistically significant interaction was found, a graph is presented in Figure 5.3 that will help to show the specific nature of the interaction. The graph shows that Black study participants that were stronger in ethnic identification felt more positively towards the "dark skinned" model than those Black study participants that were weak in ethnic identification. These

finding provides evidence supporting Hypothesis 5. Please see Table 5.12 for the source table of this ANOVA.

Table 5.12: Between-Subjects Factors (Black Participants)

		Value Label	N
SKIN_	1	Light	106
TON	2	Dark	99
EIHIL	1.00		48
O	2.00		157

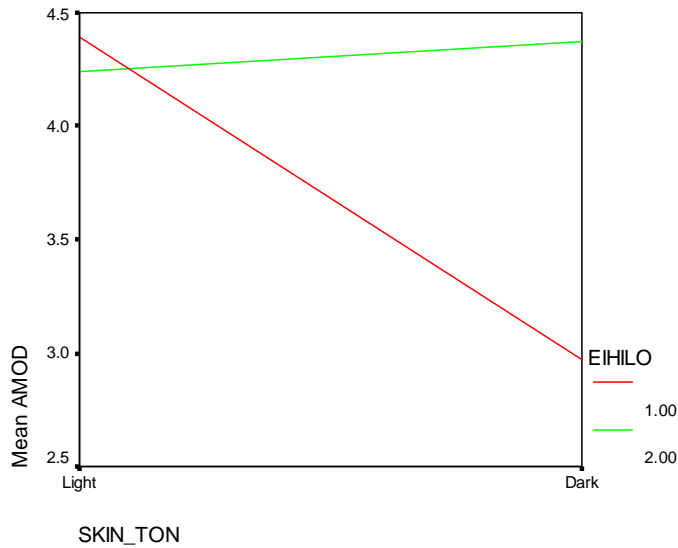
Table 5.13: Test of Between-Subjects Factors (Black Participants)

Dependent Variable: AMOD

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	35.271(a)	3	11.757	4.955	.002
Intercept	2318.828	1	2318.828	977.228	.000
SKIN_TON	15.351	1	15.351	6.469	.012
EIHILO	14.243	1	14.243	6.003	.015
SKIN_TON * EIHILO	21.919	1	21.919	9.237	.003
Error	476.946	201	2.373		
Total	4097.905	205			
Corrected Total	512.216	204			

a. R Squared = .069 (Adjusted R Squared = .055)

Figure 5.3 Graph of Interaction between Skin Tone and Ethnic Identity



When examining whether respondent ethnicity plays a significant role in the measures of attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the product, attitude towards the model, and purchase intent based upon the skin tone of the model seen in the ad, statistically significant main effects were found between the factor ethnicity and all four of the dependent variables. Attitude towards the ad [F(1,447) = 3.556, p= 0.002], attitude towards the product [F(1,447) = 8.535, p< 0.000], attitude towards the model [F(1,447) = 7.793, p< 0.000], and purchase intent [F(1,447) = 5.609, p< 0.000] are all affected by the consumer's self reported ethnicity. Hypothesis 6 is supported by these findings.

Table 5.14: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	AAD	74.753(a)	12	6.229	2.574	.003
	AMOD	117.140(b)	12	9.762	4.490	.000
	APRO	149.579(c)	12	12.465	4.737	.000
	PURC	87.012(d)	12	7.251	3.954	.000
Intercept	AAD	800.958	1	800.958	330.920	.000
	AMOD	700.476	1	700.476	322.219	.000
	APRO	614.849	1	614.849	233.681	.000
	PURC	747.056	1	747.056	407.391	.000
RACE	AAD	51.638	6	8.606	3.556	.002
	AMOD	101.649	6	16.941	7.793	.000
	APRO	134.745	6	22.457	8.535	.000
	PURC	61.716	6	10.286	5.609	.000
SKIN_TON	AAD	2.798	1	2.798	1.156	.283
	AMOD	.206	1	.206	.095	.759
	APRO	1.377	1	1.377	.523	.470
	PURC	.003	1	.003	.002	.968
RACE * SKIN_TON	AAD	9.169	5	1.834	.758	.581
	AMOD	9.524	5	1.905	.876	.497
	APRO	7.726	5	1.545	.587	.710
	PURC	20.369	5	4.074	2.222	.051
Error	AAD	1081.918	447	2.420		
	AMOD	971.740	447	2.174		
	APRO	1176.124	447	2.631		
	PURC	819.688	447	1.834		
Total	AAD	8661.375	460			

Corrected Total	AMOD	7443.315	460		
	APRO	7061.741	460		
	PURC	7566.744	460		
	AAD	1156.671	459		
	AMOD	1088.880	459		
	APRO	1325.703	459		
	PURC	906.700	459		

a R Squared = .065 (Adjusted R Squared = .040)

b R Squared = .108 (Adjusted R Squared = .084)

c R Squared = .113 (Adjusted R Squared = .089)

d R Squared = .096 (Adjusted R Squared = .072)

Summary of Results

Although one of the F-tests for the skin tone factor proved to be significant, because there are only two levels associated with this factor, no post hoc tests will be applied. The results of this study therefore only support one of the main hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: SUPPORTED

An ad featuring an African American model classified as having “light” skin tone will result in a more positive consumer attitude towards the advertisement than an ad featuring an African American model classified as having “dark” skin tone.

Hypothesis 2: NOT SUPPORTED

An ad featuring an African American model classified as having “light” skin tone did not result in a more positive consumer attitude towards the product than an ad featuring an African American model classified as having “dark” skin tone.

Hypothesis 3: NOT SUPPORTED

An ad featuring an African American model classified as having “light” skin tone did not result in a more positive consumer attitude towards the model than an ad featuring an African American model classified as having “dark” skin tone.

Hypothesis 4: NOT SUPPORTED

An ad featuring an African American model classified as having “light” skin tone did not result in higher purchase intent than an ad featuring an African American model classified as having “dark” skin tone.

The additional hypotheses that focused on the ethnic identity and self reported ethnicity of the participants provided interesting insight into effect that skin tone has on consumers' attitude towards the model.

Hypothesis 5: SUPPORTED

Black study participants that are strong in ethnic identification will feel more positively towards the “dark skinned” model than those Black study participants that are weak in ethnic identification.

Hypothesis 6: SUPPORTED

The ethnicity of the respondents will play a significant role in the measures of attitude towards the ad, attitude towards the product, attitude towards the model, and purchase intent based upon the skin tone of the model seen in the ad

Chapter 6

Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction to Section

This chapter discusses the findings of this dissertation study. Limitations that were encountered in this experiment will be addressed in this section as well as the future direction of research in this area.

Discussion of Results

The results of this study suggest that there is a significant connection between skin tone and a consumer's attitude towards the ad. This finding is in line with the literature presented in earlier chapters of this dissertation. Unlike previously published literature, this study succeeded at isolating the variable of skin tone as an identifier of race in order to make an assessment on its effect on consumer behavior. This is a significant learning for our field because, moving forward, this is a variable that advertisers should consider as a creative factor. Purchase intent, and therefore the monetary bottom line, does not seem to be connected to this variable. The color of a model's skin is, according to this study, a moderator of how consumers feels about the advertisement, but this feeling may not transfer on to their purchase intentions.

The role that reference group, in terms of realm of consumption and cultural relevance, plays in attitude formation was not substantiated by this study. Since no significant connections between these qualifiers of reference group were found, the social yardstick against which a consumer evaluates their position relative to others does not appear to be a vital attribute influencing attitude formation. Although ethnic identity did not play a significant role in the formation of attitudes for all of the participants, it did seem to play a role in the African American participant's attitude towards the model. This suggests that ethnic identity, in regards to advertising, does affect consumer attitude formation.

Practical Implications

Researchers have confirmed that understanding the use of African Americans in advertising is of great importance, however, there is a lack of literature in the major advertising and marketing journals that specifically address skin tone of ethnic models and the impact on advertising outcome goals. Skin tone has yet to be broadly used as an important factor in ethnic advertising research. Having an understanding of the role that race plays in the reception of advertisements is a foundation for understanding what specifically about race determines how the advertisement is perceived. Therefore, this study provides further understanding of the effect that featuring Black models has on the reception of ads in America.

This study also sheds light on visual preferences held by the general public regarding African Americans based upon their color. The findings presented here should serve as motivation for American media to present Blacks of all colors in a more positive light in order to help break the association between color and stereotypes that may have influenced the less positive feelings of the participant sample towards the "dark" Black female. It is important to understand the effect that results from perpetuating stereotypes such as "darker" Blacks are likely to be criminally prone, poor, or uneducated. Negative racial stereotypes can become a part of the collective and prevailing beliefs of the society, which further enables the lack of inter-cultural unity by exaggerating differences between groups instead of promoting similarity. On the same note, creative decision making, such as casting in media and advertising, should be cognizant to avoid promoting associations between negativity and dark skin tone. This is not to say that only one tone of skin color should be promoted as the representation of the Black race. It is, however, to promote straying from the normative, light equals beauty and dark equals aggressive formula that is readily understood and accepted in our culture.

Implications can also be seen when these findings are translated to African American targeted advertisement. This reaffirms for companies that Blacks still feel favorable towards seeing Black models in advertisements. It also provides a reason to diversify the skin tones present in targeted advertising, something that

seems to be lacking in the present Black targeted media. Ethnic identity plays a role in the acceptance of a Black model in an ad. For media outlets such as Ebony or Jet Magazines that target African Americans who seek out information based upon race, ads or images do not need to primarily feature light or ethnically ambiguous models in order to be received as beautiful and therefore positive.

Limitations of Study

The sample used in this study was comprised of college students. Although it is a valid sample, this population is not an accurate representative of the general population. The fact that the ages of the participants largely lie between 18 and 23, may have played a decisive role in the findings of this study. Younger populations, who have generally have more direct contact with members of other ethnic groups, may hold less stereotypic ideas about Blacks based upon skin tone.

Difficulty also arises with stimuli development in regards to skin tone manipulation. There are inherent issues that arise when attempting to digitally manipulate the skin tone of a person in an image. First, from a mechanical viewpoint, software used to alter the colors in an image has difficulty automatically adjust for the subtle nuances that occur in the natural skin tone of a Black person. All of the many pixels that make up the skin of a model in an image vary in color. Adjusting for desired color and accounting for lighting reflecting

from the skin is complicated and often will not appear as natural as a non-manipulated image.

There are also facial phenotypes that often go along with certain skin tones. In Blacks, darker skin is often associated with larger and wider features, while lighter skin is more often associated with smaller, narrower features. With the skin tone alteration of a Black person in an image, there is the risk of "creating" a person that looks unnatural. While developing the stimuli of this study, it was a conscious decision not to make the "light" model extremely light or the "dark" model extremely dark in order to account for her physical features seeming unmatched to her color. This limitation appears to have played a major role in this study as the manipulation check show the model's being fairly close in skin tone ratings. This translates into the subjects feeling that the model was neither extremely "light" nor extremely "dark" in color.

This study solely examined the effects of the given variables under the constraints of one model, of one gender. Although there is research that states skin tone is not as critical of an attribute for men in terms of attractiveness, this may or may not translate to a male model's role as an endorser of a product. For instance, the negative stereotypes associated with darker skinned, Black males may transfer into how the average consumer views a dark skinned, Black male model as an endorser of a product.

In order to avoid a catch-all category of color classification, two extremes, "light" and "dark" were used to represent disparity in Black skin tone. Given the wide spectrum of colors that ethnically Black individuals come in, this possible limitation was considered prior to the start of the study. After consideration, this decision was deemed less of a limitation and more of a necessity in order to make generalizations about color disparity.

Future Research

In future studies in this area, the inclusion of the effect that gender has as a moderating variable of the reception of an ad is important. The research regarding Black male attractiveness and the held stereotypes associated with Black men based upon skin tone would make an interesting premise regarding which framework is the better predictor of consumer attitude towards Black male endorsers. The findings from that study would enhance the knowledge available regarding the use of ethnic models.

Physical identifiers of ethnicity can influence the processing of an advertisement by consumers of various ethnicities (Brumbaugh and Grier 2006). Although this study primarily focused on Blacks, the phenomenon of skin tone bias has been reported in other ethnic groups (Herring 2003). Hispanics and Asian ethnic groups would benefit from a replication of this study. Using models from those ethnicities could help to determine how consumers, both within and outside

of their group, respond to the spectrum of color that may be represented as an endorser from that group. In addition to researching other ethnicities of Americans, it would be valuable to test the effect of minority faces in advertising within the African Diaspora. For example, Britain has an estimated Black population of over a million people (National Statistics 2001). These citizens have a decisive amount of purchase power as well as visibility in the nation. The same impact and importance of this study in American would also translate to international markets such as Britain. The more companies understand about how the model selections affect the attitude of the consumer, the more adept they become at both targeting groups adequately and presenting ethnic models as endorsers.

When targeting African Americans, another interesting variable that would add to the knowledge of the role that skin tone plays in the reception of an ad featuring a Black model is the skin tone of the Black consumer. This would be a difficult variable to identify given that skin tone is subjective. It would require determining whether that variable should be self reported or recorded by an interviewer. Both of these methods of data collections would be subject to scrutiny. The reliability of that self report would be questionable because there is no way to validate that the self report of all of the participants was accurate. On the other hand, with trained interviewers taking note of the subjects' skin tones, a scale of color must be identified and agreed upon. Color classification is not the

same for everyone; it is affected by culture and language (Franklin et al, 2008). With color being severely subjective, it may be difficult to get consensus on the description applied to each subject.

In closing, this research has the ability to fuel research initiatives on the effect skin tone plays in the reception of advertisements. There is more work that needs to be done to fully understand the effect this variable has as a circumscriber of race.

Tables and Figures

Figure 1.1: Theoretical Framework

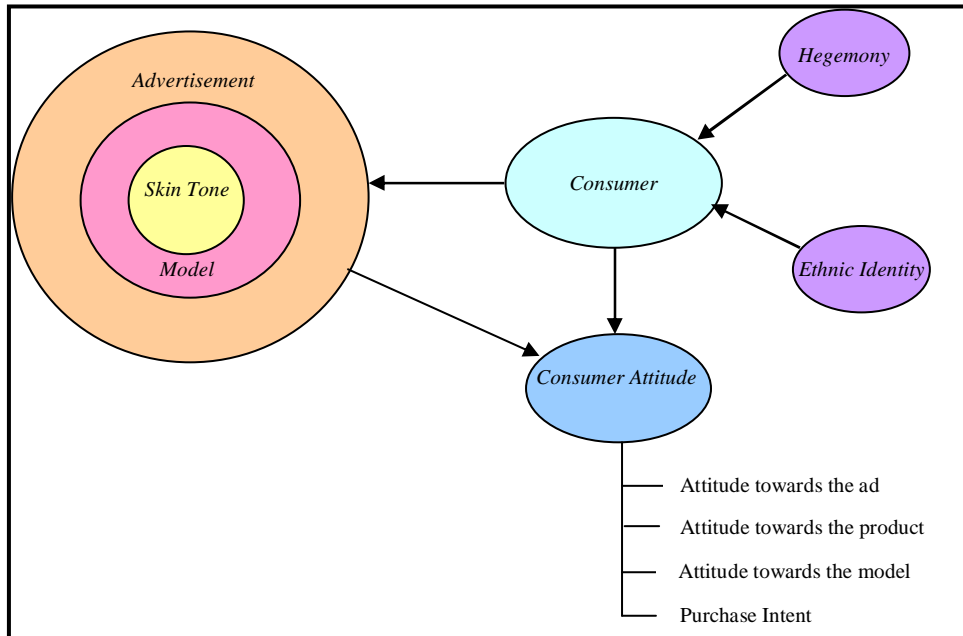


Table 1.1: Design Structure (2x2x2) – 8 conditions

		High Cultural Relevance	Low Cultural Relevance
"Dark" Skin Tone	Public	1	2
	Private	3	4
"Light" Skin Tone	Public	5	6
	Private	7	8

Figure 4.1: Reference Group - Product Matrix

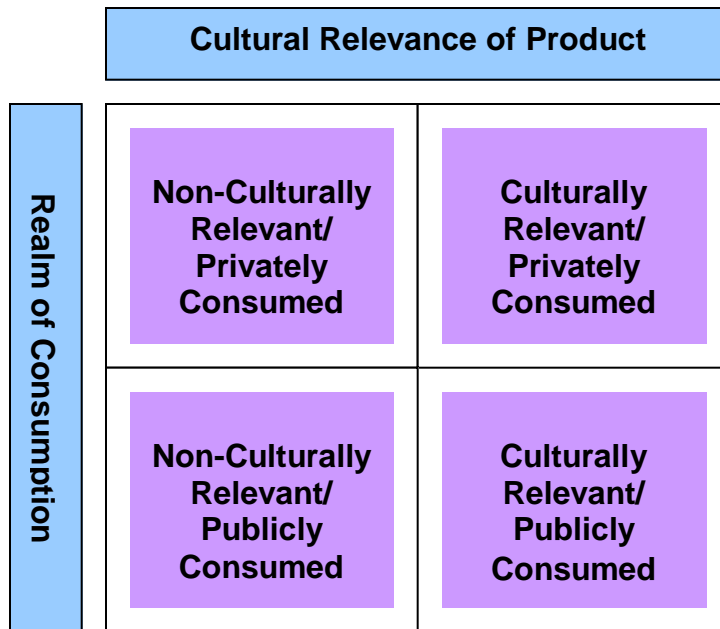


Figure 4.2 University of Texas at Austin Participant Racial Breakdown

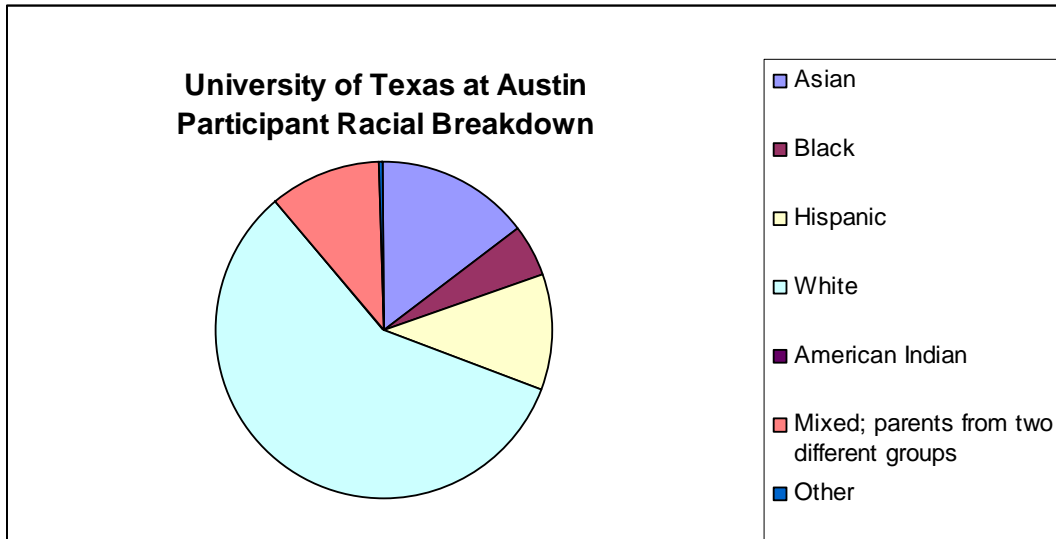


Figure 4.3 Huston-Tillotson University Participant Racial Breakdown

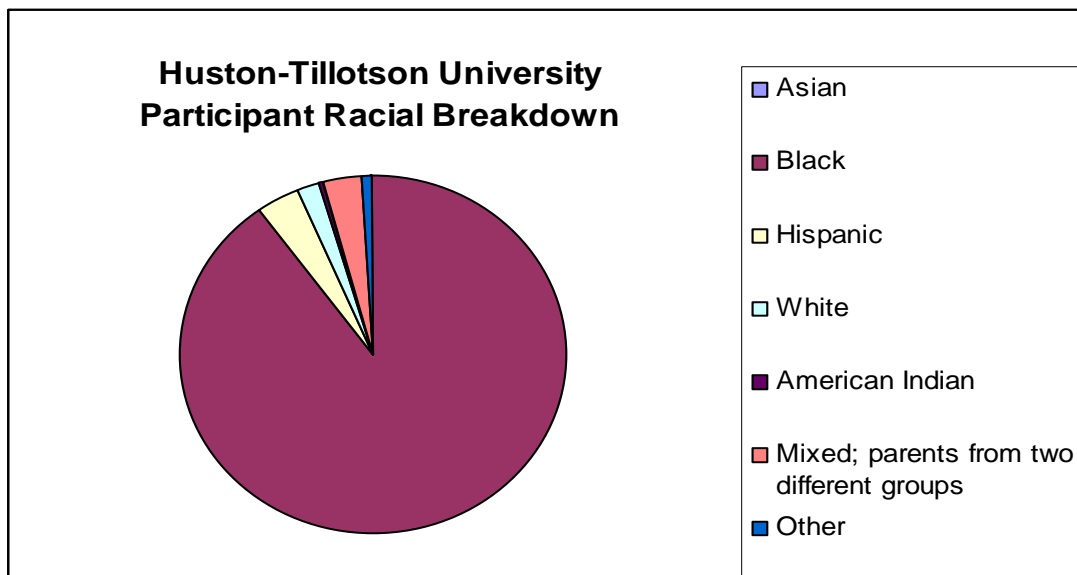


Figure 5.3 Graph of Interaction between Skin Tone and Ethnic Identity

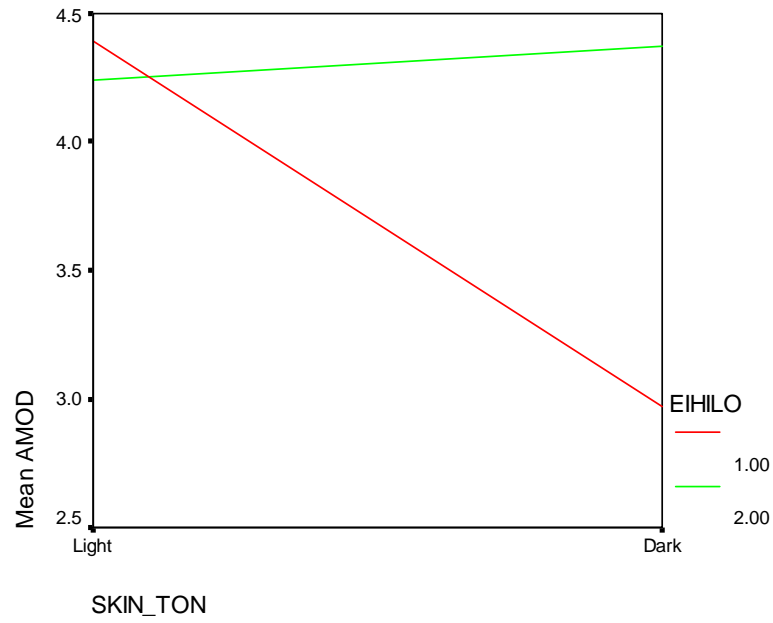


Table 5.1: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	AAD	33.772(a)	7	4.825	1.874	.072
	AMOD	20.272(b)	7	2.896	1.187	.308
	APRO	24.601(b)	7	3.514	1.195	.304
	PURC	23.213(c)	7	3.316	1.628	.125
Intercept	AAD	7390.394	1	7390.394	2870.300	.000
	AMOD	6294.824	1	6294.824	2580.818	.000
	APRO	5681.920	1	5681.920	1931.806	.000
	PURC	6562.930	1	6562.930	3222.536	.000
R_OF_C	AAD	.005	1	.005	.002	.964
	AMOD	.183	1	.183	.075	.784
	APRO	4.336	1	4.336	1.474	.225
	PURC	.214	1	.214	.105	.746
C_R	AAD	2.336	1	2.336	.907	.341
	AMOD	.446	1	.446	.183	.669
	APRO	.107	1	.107	.036	.849
	PURC	.019	1	.019	.009	.924
SKIN_TON	AAD	13.412	1	13.412	5.209	.023
	AMOD	2.525	1	2.525	1.035	.310
	APRO	2.296	1	2.296	.780	.377
	PURC	1.458	1	1.458	.716	.398
R_OF_C * C_R	AAD	5.815	1	5.815	2.258	.134
	AMOD	7.581	1	7.581	3.108	.079
	APRO	8.153	1	8.153	2.772	.097
	PURC	7.704	1	7.704	3.783	.052
R_OF_C * SKIN_TON	AAD	4.058	1	4.058	1.576	.210
	AMOD	5.269	1	5.269	2.160	.142
	APRO	.025	1	.025	.008	.927
	PURC	.571	1	.571	.280	.597
C_R * SKIN_TON	AAD	3.703	1	3.703	1.438	.231
	AMOD	3.200	1	3.200	1.312	.253
	APRO	8.327	1	8.327	2.831	.093
	PURC	7.174	1	7.174	3.523	.061

R_OF_C * C_R	AAD	3.888	1	3.888	1.510	.220
* SKIN_TON	AMOD	.612	1	.612	.251	.617
	APRO	.561	1	.561	.191	.663
	PURC	4.671	1	4.671	2.294	.131
Error	AAD	1171.526	455	2.575		
	AMOD	1109.782	455	2.439		
	APRO	1338.268	455	2.941		
	PURC	926.641	455	2.037		
Total	AAD	8661.375	463			
	AMOD	7443.315	463			
	APRO	7061.741	463			
	PURC	7566.744	463			
Corrected Total	AAD	1205.297	462			
	AMOD	1130.054	462			
	APRO	1362.869	462			
	PURC	949.854	462			

a R Squared = .028 (Adjusted R Squared = .013)

b R Squared = .018 (Adjusted R Squared = .003)

c R Squared = .024 (Adjusted R Squared = .009)

Table 5.2: Independent Variables * Makeup/Dark Ad (High CR-Public)

Makeup/Dark Ad (High CR-Public)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	3.4355	3.3494	2.9144	3.5371
	N	62	62	62	62
	Std. Deviation	1.63838	1.54893	1.69605	1.45042
Total	Mean	3.4355	3.3494	2.9144	3.5371
	N	62	62	62	62
	Std. Deviation	1.63838	1.54893	1.69605	1.45042

Table 5.3: Independent Variables * Makeup/Light Ad (High CR-Public)

Makeup/Light Ad (High CR-Public)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	4.2351	3.6121	3.2985	3.8010
	N	67	67	67	67
	Std. Deviation	1.46220	1.50708	1.73138	1.44573
Total	Mean	4.2351	3.6121	3.2985	3.8010
	N	67	67	67	67
	Std. Deviation	1.46220	1.50708	1.73138	1.44573

Table 5.4: Independent Variables * Toothpaste/Dark Ad (Low CR-Private)

Toothpaste/Dark Ad (Low CR-Private)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	4.0317	3.4917	4.0743	3.6346
	N	63	63	63	63
	Std. Deviation	1.54208	1.48782	1.39280	1.33140
Total	Mean	4.0317	3.4917	4.0743	3.6346
	N	63	63	63	63
	Std. Deviation	1.54208	1.48782	1.39280	1.33140

Table 5.5: Independent Variables * Toothpaste/Light Ad (Low CR-Private)

Toothpaste/Light Ad (Low CR-Private)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	4.8795	4.2325	4.3870	4.2325
	N	56	56	56	56
	Std. Deviation	1.29157	1.41587	1.24377	1.27465
Total	Mean	4.8795	4.2325	4.3870	4.2325
	N	56	56	56	56
	Std. Deviation	1.29157	1.41587	1.24377	1.27465

Table 5.6: Independent Variables * Cell Phone/Dark Ad (Low CR-Public)

Cell Phone/Dark Ad (Low CR-Public)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	3.7217	3.5725	3.3523	3.8047
	N	53	53	53	53
	Std. Deviation	1.80055	1.69420	1.95151	1.56148
Total	Mean	3.7217	3.5725	3.3523	3.8047
	N	53	53	53	53
	Std. Deviation	1.80055	1.69420	1.95151	1.56148

Table 5.7: Independent Variables * Cell Phone/Light Ad (Low CR-Public)

Cell Phone/Light Ad (Low CR-Public)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	4.2298	3.8711	3.3335	3.9681
	N	62	62	62	62
	Std. Deviation	1.35221	1.37137	1.56425	1.13996
Total	Mean	4.2298	3.8711	3.3335	3.9681
	N	62	62	62	62
	Std. Deviation	1.35221	1.37137	1.56425	1.13996

Table 5.8: Independent Variables * Art/Dark Ad (High CR-Private)

Art/Dark Ad (High CR-Private)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	3.7941	3.4118	3.1698	3.4184
	N	51	51	51	51
	Std. Deviation	1.58801	1.61603	1.71963	1.56750
Total	Mean	3.7941	3.4118	3.1698	3.4184
	N	51	51	51	51
	Std. Deviation	1.58801	1.61603	1.71963	1.56750

Table 5.9: Independent Variables * Art/Light Ad (High CR-Private)

Art/Light Ad (High CR-Private)		AAD	AMOD	APRO	PURC
1	Mean	3.9427	4.3127	3.7635	4.0767
	N	48	48	48	48
	Std. Deviation	1.72377	1.46602	1.85275	1.34451
Total	Mean	3.9427	4.3127	3.7635	4.0767
	N	48	48	48	48
	Std. Deviation	1.72377	1.46602	1.85275	1.34451

Table 5.10: Skin Tone Means

SKIN_TON		AMOD	ETHID
Light	Mean	3.7616	3.4767
	N	232	232
	Std. Deviation	1.50410	.67777
Dark	Mean	3.6234	3.4798
	N	231	228
	Std. Deviation	1.62220	.72885
Total	Mean	3.6926	3.4783
	N	463	460
	Std. Deviation	1.56397	.70278

Table 5.11: Ethnic Identity Means by Race
ETHID

Ethnicity	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Asian	3.1538	39	.89966
Black	3.7150	207	.60621
Hispanic	3.5543	35	.63261
White	3.2317	145	.69429
American Indian	4.0000	1	.
Mixed	3.2750	32	.72690
Other	3.6667	3	.57735
Total	3.4736	462	.71084

Table 5.12: Between-Subjects Factors

	Value Label	N
SKIN_ 1	Light	106
TON 2	Dark	99
EIHIL 1.00		48
O 2.00		157

Table 5.13: Test of Between-Subjects Factors (Black Participants)

Dependent Variable: AMOD

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	35.271(a)	3	11.757	4.955	.002
Intercept	2318.828	1	2318.828	977.228	.000
SKIN_TON	15.351	1	15.351	6.469	.012
EIHILO	14.243	1	14.243	6.003	.015
SKIN_TON * EIHILO	21.919	1	21.919	9.237	.003
Error	476.946	201	2.373		
Total	4097.905	205			
Corrected Total	512.216	204			

a. R Squared = .069 (Adjusted R Squared = .055)

Table 5.14: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	AAD	74.753(a)	12	6.229	2.574	.003
	AMOD	117.140(b)	12	9.762	4.490	.000
	APRO	149.579(c)	12	12.465	4.737	.000
	PURC	87.012(d)	12	7.251	3.954	.000
Intercept	AAD	800.958	1	800.958	330.920	.000
	AMOD	700.476	1	700.476	322.219	.000
	APRO	614.849	1	614.849	233.681	.000
	PURC	747.056	1	747.056	407.391	.000
RACE	AAD	51.638	6	8.606	3.556	.002
	AMOD	101.649	6	16.941	7.793	.000
	APRO	134.745	6	22.457	8.535	.000
	PURC	61.716	6	10.286	5.609	.000
SKIN_TON	AAD	2.798	1	2.798	1.156	.283
	AMOD	.206	1	.206	.095	.759
	APRO	1.377	1	1.377	.523	.470
	PURC	.003	1	.003	.002	.968
RACE * SKIN_TON	AAD	9.169	5	1.834	.758	.581
	AMOD	9.524	5	1.905	.876	.497
	APRO	7.726	5	1.545	.587	.710
	PURC	20.369	5	4.074	2.222	.051
Error	AAD	1081.918	447	2.420		
	AMOD	971.740	447	2.174		
	APRO	1176.124	447	2.631		
	PURC	819.688	447	1.834		
Total	AAD	8661.375	460			

Corrected Total	AMOD	7443.315	460		
	APRO	7061.741	460		
	PURC	7566.744	460		
	AAD	1156.671	459		
	AMOD	1088.880	459		
	APRO	1325.703	459		
	PURC	906.700	459		

a R Squared = .065 (Adjusted R Squared = .040)

b R Squared = .108 (Adjusted R Squared = .084)

c R Squared = .113 (Adjusted R Squared = .089)

d R Squared = .096 (Adjusted R Squared = .072)

Appendix A: Dissertation Study Questionnaire

Consent Form

Principle Investigator:

Yuvay Jeanine Meyers, Doctoral Candidate
The University of Texas at Austin,
Department of Advertising, A1200
yuvay@mail.utexas.edu

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. Please read the information below and contact the researcher, Yuvay Jeanine Meyers, via the email address above to ask questions about anything you don't understand before deciding whether or not to take part. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You can stop your participation at any time by simply not completing the survey.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate your attitude toward the three ads that will be presented.

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following:

- Complete a short questionnaire (Total estimated time to participate in study is 10-15 minutes)

Risks and Benefits of the Study:

- Risk is not expected to be greater than those encountered in everyday life. There will not be any known physical, psychological, social, or legal risks involved in this study. There are no benefits.

Compensation:

- Incentive: Chance to win 1 of 4 \$50 Gift Cards

Confidentiality and Privacy Protections:

The records of this study will be stored securely and kept private. Authorized persons from The University of Texas at Austin, members of the Institutional Review Board, and (study sponsors, if any) have the legal right to review your research records and will protect the confidentiality of those records to the extent permitted by law. All publications will exclude any information that will make it possible to identify you as a subject.

Your responses will not be linked (directly or indirectly) with any information that might identify you and will be anonymous. The data resulting from your participation may be made available to other researchers in the future for research purposes not detailed within this consent form. In these cases, the data will contain no identifying information that could associate you with it, or with your participation in any study.

Contacts and Questions:

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, complaints, concerns, or questions about the research please contact Jody Jensen, Ph.D., Chair, The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at (512) 232-2685 or the Office of Research Support and Compliance at (512) 471-8871 or email: orsc@uts.cc.utexas.edu

Consent:

By clicking on the “Agree” button, you are agreeing to be a part of the study detailed above. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. By clicking the “Decline” button, you are declining participation in the study.

Demographics

- What is your age?
- What is your gender?
- What school do you attend?

Attitude towards the Ad

- I dislike the ad / I like the ad
- I react unfavorably to the ad / I react favorably to the ad
- I feel negative toward the ad / I feel positive toward the ad
- This ad is bad / This ad is good

Attitude towards the Product

- This is a bad product / This is a good product
- I dislike the product / I like the product
- I feel negative toward the product / I feel positive toward the product
- This product is awful / This product is nice
- This product is unpleasant / This product is pleasant
- This product is unattractive / This product is attractive
- I approve of this product / I disapprove of this product

Attitude towards the Model

Relative to other female models seen in advertising, this model's beauty makes her

- Much less noticeable
- Much more noticeable

Compared to other female models I normally see in advertisements, this model's beauty is

- Far below average
- Far above average

This model's superior beauty would stand out among other models in a magazine

- Strongly disagree
- Strongly agree

Questions to replace Ad towards Model in dummy ads

Relative to other (scenic) images seen in advertising, this scenic image is

- Much less noticeable
- Much more noticeable

Compared to other (scenic) images I normally see in advertisements, this scenic image is

- Far below average
- Far above average

This (scenic) image's superior beauty would stand out among other (scenic) images in a magazine

- Strongly disagree
- Strongly agree

Purchase Intent

Would you like to try this product?

- Yes
- No

Would you buy this product if you happened to see it in a store?

- Yes
- No

Would you actively seek out this product in a store to purchase it?

- Yes
- No

Ethnic Identity

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Somewhat disagree 3 = Somewhat agree 4 = Strongly agree

- I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.
- I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.
- I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group and its accomplishments.
- I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.
- I feel good about my culture or ethnic background.

My ethnicity is

1. Asian or Asian American
2. Black or African American
3. Hispanic or Latino
4. White, Caucasian, European, not Hispanic
5. American Indian
6. Mixed; parents are from two different groups
7. Other

My father's ethnicity is (use numbers above)

My mother's ethnicity is (use numbers above)

Manipulation Check

How many of the ads that you viewed had a human model?

- 1
- 2
- 3

Was the model a male or female?

- Male
- Female

For an African American, the model's skin tone was _____

- Light
- Dark

Debriefing Statement

At the beginning of the study, you were asked to view three advertisements and provide feedback on your perception. You were shown two standard ads and then one of eight advertisements that featured an African American model. The eight ads were identical with the exception of the model's skin color and the product presented.

From the information you provided in the questionnaire, an analysis will be made regarding the impact of the skin tone of an African American model on the reception of an advertisement in terms of purchase intent, attitude towards the product, attitude towards the model, and attitude towards the ad itself. The research results obtained from your information will be reported in aggregate and your identity will not be disclosed in any part of the report.

This study will be completed by May 2008. If you are interested in receiving the results of the study or have any questions regarding the study, please contact the principal investigator via email.


Principal Investigator: Yuvay Jeanine Meyers
Doctoral Student
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The University of Texas at Austin
yuvay@mail.utexas.edu

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Jerome Williams, Professor
University of Texas at Austin
Department of Advertising, A1200
jerome.williams@mail.utexas.edu

Thank you very much for your time and your participation in this study.

Appendix B: Dissertation Study Stimuli Ads


Dummy Ad #1: Airlines




Coastal Airlines...

...fly away because you deserve it!

| Coastal Airlines now flies to more tropical locations for less!

 **COASTAL AIRLINES** | www.coastal-air.com

Dummy Ad #2: Umbrella



Rain Shield
Cover your head with style!

Now, Rain Shield Umbrellas come in 20 different colors and patterns so that you can pick the one that suits your style!

Rain Shield Umbrellas
www.rainshield-umbrellas.com

Stimuli Ad #1: High Cultural Relevance - Private (Dark)



Share the news, Iman African Art is here!

IMAN AFRICAN ART is handcrafted in Africa and imported here for your enjoyment!

 **IMAN AFRICAN ART**

www.imanafricanart.com

Stimuli Ad #2: High Cultural Relevance - Private (Light)



Share the news, Iman African Art is here!

IMAN AFRICAN ART is handcrafted in Africa and imported here for your enjoyment!

 **IMAN AFRICAN ART**

www.imanafricanart.com

Stimuli Ad #3: Low Cultural Relevance - Public (Dark)



RELI-able cellphones, Affordable prices...

RELI-ABLE CELLPHONES are specially made to prevent dropped called so that you can enjoy your conversations! Now available through most nationwide carriers.

 **RELI CELLPHONES**

www.reli-cellphones.com

Stimuli Ad #4: Low Cultural Relevance - Public (Light)




RELI-able cellphones, Affordable prices...

RELI-ABLE CELLPHONES are specially made to prevent dropped called so that you can enjoy your conversations! Now available through most nationwide carriers.

 **RELI CELLPHONES**


www.reli-cellphones.com

Stimuli Ad #5: High Cultural Relevance - Public (Dark)



Silky finish, satiny smooth....

SILK FOUNDATION has a new formula that leaves your skin
with a finish as smooth as satin!

 **SILK FOUNDATION**

www.silkfoundation.com

Stimuli Ad #6: High Cultural Relevance - Public (Light)




Silky finish, satiny smooth....

SILK FOUNDATION has a new formula that leaves your skin
with a finish as smooth as satin!



www.silkfoundation.com

Stimuli Ad #7: Low Cultural Relevance - Private (Dark)




Bright future, Bright smile...

BRIGHT TOOTHPASTE® has a new formula that polishes teeth
for a deep clean you can see!

 **BRIGHT TOOTHPASTE**


www.brightsmiletoothpaste.com

Stimuli Ad #8: Low Cultural Relevance - Private (Light)



Bright future, Bright smile...

BRIGHT TOOTHPASTE® has a new formula that polishes teeth
for a deep clean you can see!

 **BRIGHT TOOTHPASTE**

www.brightsmiletoothpaste.com

Appendix C: Reference Group Product Pretest Questionnaire

In this questionnaire we are interested in finding out if you view certain products as high or low in cultural relevance and if you think these products are generally used publicly or privately by consumers.

Part I. Public-Private Use

In this section, the following definitions must be understood:

A public product is one that other people are aware that you possess and use. If they want to others can identify the brand of the product with little or no difficulty.

A private product is one used at home or in private at some other location. Except for your immediate family, people would be unaware that you own or use the product.

For each product, please select the number that best describes your feelings about whether the product is used publicly or privately. The numbers from 1 to 6 are described as:

- A public product for everyone
- A public product for almost all people
- A public product for the majority of people
- A private product for the majority of people
- A private product for almost all people
- A private product for everyone

Part II. High-Low Cultural Relevance

In this section, the following definitions must be understood:

A product that is high in cultural relevance is one that people may use or think about differently based upon their race or ethnicity.

A product that is low in cultural relevance is one that people use or think about the same way as other consumers regardless of their race or ethnicity.

For each product, please select the number that best describes your feelings about whether the product is high in cultural relevance or low in cultural relevance. The numbers from 1 to 6 are described as:

- A product high in cultural relevance for everyone
- A product high in cultural relevance for almost all people
- A product high in cultural relevance for the majority of people
- A product low in cultural relevance for the majority of people
- A product low in cultural relevance for almost all people
- A product low in cultural relevance for everyone

Product list (30 products)

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Automobile | 16. Refrigerator |
| 2. Kitchen table | 17. Smoking pipe |
| 3. Wrist watch | 18. Spices |
| 4. Bed | 19. Make up |
| 5. Women's dress | 20. Cigarettes |
| 6. Sofa | 21. Cell Phone |
| 7. Cola drink | 22. Kente cloth accessories |
| 8. Hand gun | 23. Petroleum Jelly |
| 9. Shampoo | 24. Bandana |
| 10. Pool table | 25. Deodorant |
| 11. Lawn mower | 26. Umbrella |
| 12. Imported Beer | 27. Perfume |
| 13. Rice | 28. Airlines |
| 14. Man's suit | 29. Tea |
| 15. Television | 30. Barbeque grill |

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