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More Than Just A Makeup: Analyzing the Woke Advertising Components in 3 Local Cosmetic Products

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ABSTRACT

Woke advertising has become a strategic approach in the beauty industry, where brands incorporate social advocacy into campaigns to connect with socially conscious consumers. While effective in fostering inclusivity and consumer engagement, this approach also raises concerns about authenticity, with brands risking accusations of "woke-washing" that may damage trust. This study investigates the effectiveness of woke advertising in the Philippine beauty industry, focusing on three local brands: Colourette Cosmetics, GRWM Cosmetics, and Vice Cosmetics. A mixed-methods correlational design was employed. The qualitative component consisted of content analysis of selected campaigns to identify recurring themes of inclusivity, diversity, and advocacy. The quantitative component analyzed TikTok engagement metrics—likes, comments, shares, and views—to assess audience interaction and campaign performance. Findings reveal that all three brands actively employ woke advertising through themes of gender inclusivity, empowerment, and representation. Colourette highlights body positivity and authenticity, GRWM focuses on self-expression and relatability, while Vice Cosmetics emphasizes LGBTQ+ visibility. Quantitative results show strong engagement across campaigns, particularly on TikTok, with Colourette's humor-driven advocacy posts generating the highest interaction. However, the analysis also indicates that excessive reliance on advocacy risks consumer skepticism if not matched by consistent brand practices. This study concludes that woke advertising can significantly enhance consumer engagement when executed authentically and consistently. It contributes to the discourse on purpose-driven marketing in the Philippine context by demonstrating both the potential and pitfalls of social advocacy in beauty advertising. Insights from this research may guide local brands in balancing advocacy and authenticity to maintain consumer confidence while advancing inclusive representation.

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INTRODUCTION

The beauty industry has experienced a significant shift in recent years, moving away from traditional advertising that merely highlights product features toward more value-driven and socially resonant strategies. Modern consumers, especially Millennials and Gen Z, increasingly seek brands that reflect their beliefs, champion ethical causes, and contribute to societal progress. As a result, advertising has evolved into a tool for building deeper emotional connections by aligning brand messaging with values such as authenticity, responsibility, and social awareness. This shift has contributed to the rise of "woke advertising," a form of marketing in which brands openly engage with social, political, and environmental issues to appeal to socially conscious audiences.

Woke advertising emphasizes themes of inclusivity, diversity, sustainability, and justice, and research suggests that such campaigns can yield substantial benefits, including increased long-term brand sales and stronger audience engagement. However, this strategy also comes with risks: consumers are critical of performative efforts, and brands that fail to demonstrate genuine advocacy may face backlash or skepticism. Factors such as cultural context, brand credibility, and consistency in messaging significantly influence how audiences respond. In the Philippine beauty industry, woke advertising has been embraced by brands like Colourette Cosmetics, Vice Cosmetics, and GRWM Cosmetics, all of which integrate advocacy into their marketing identities. This study examines the impact and effectiveness of these campaigns, exploring how woke advertising shapes consumer engagement and contributes to broader conversations about inclusivity, diversity, and social responsibility in contemporary beauty marketing.

Statement of the Problem

This Woke marketing has become a significant strategy in the beauty industry, with brands using social activism to connect with value-driven consumers (Cristobal et al., 2023). However, its specific implementation and measurable impact in the Philippine beauty market remain underexplored. Existing research calls for more culturally grounded studies on brand activism (Dhandra & Gupta, 2023), especially since consumer responses depend heavily on perceived authenticity and the avoidance of performative advocacy (Mrad & Assi, 2022; Hassan et al., 2021).

With 84.45 million social media users in the Philippines—99.2% of internet users as of January 2023—platforms like TikTok play a central role in shaping consumer behavior (Kemp, 2023a). Its largely female audience makes it particularly influential for beauty brands (Kemp, 2023b). Within this setting, questions arise about how local brands construct woke advertising, including the themes they promote and the ways they represent inclusivity through models, influencers, and advocacy messages (Reyes, 2022).

Despite its prominence, there is limited empirical evidence on the effectiveness of these campaigns in generating consumer engagement. Existing studies note that while woke advertising can build positive attitudes, it may not always lead to increased purchases, and concerns about "woke-washing" persist (Cristobal et al., 2022; Journal of Global Business, 2022).

This study addresses these gaps by examining how Vice Cosmetics, Colourette Cosmetics, and GRWM Cosmetics incorporate woke advertising through their campaign themes and representations of diversity, and by assessing how effective these campaigns are in driving consumer engagement. The findings aim to deepen understanding of woke advertising's role in the Philippine beauty industry and inform more authentic, impactful marketing practices.

Research Objectives

This study aims to analyze the use of woke advertising of Colourette Cosmetics, Vice Cosmetics, and GRWM Cosmetics, focusing on their branding strategies, consumer engagement, and effectiveness of the campaign. Specifically, it seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To analyze the incorporation of woke advertising in the branding and marketing strategies

of Colourette Cosmetics, Vice Cosmetics, and GRWM Cosmetics.

2. To measure the effectiveness of woke advertising implemented by Colourette Cosmetics, Vice Cosmetics, and GRWM Cosmetics within the Philippine beauty industry on level of engagement.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant to multiple sectors as it offers insights into the effectiveness of woke advertising in the beauty industry. For cosmetic brands, it highlights how woke marketing influences consumer perception, purchase intention, and brand trust. For advertisers and marketing practitioners, it provides a reference for evaluating how socially driven campaigns affect engagement. The study also benefits the woke community by examining the authenticity and credibility

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of brands' advocacy efforts. Additionally, it contributes to academic research in marketing, advertising, and consumer behavior by offering empirical evidence on how socially conscious strategies shape consumer decision-making. Overall, the study deepens understanding of woke advertising's impact on both advocacy and brand growth.

Scopes and Limitations of the Study

This study focuses on Colourette Cosmetics, GRWM Cosmetics, and Vice Cosmetics—three Philippine beauty brands known for using woke advertising that promotes inclusivity, diversity, and social advocacy. These brands were chosen for their strong TikTok presence and consistent release of campaigns that engage Millennials and Gen Z. For each brand, three campaigns were selected, with three advertisement posts per campaign, limited to those released within the last two years and containing identifiable woke advertising elements such as advocacy messages and representational diversity (Vredenburg et al., 2020).

The research is limited in scope by examining only posts from the brands' verified TikTok accounts, excluding influencer content and user-generated posts that may also influence engagement. Additionally, although grounded in Consumer Brand Engagement (CBE) Theory, the study measured only behavioral engagement—likes, comments, shares, and views—without capturing cognitive or emotional responses. It also prioritizes engagement outcomes rather than assessing the authenticity of the campaigns' social messages.

Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable empirical insights into how woke advertising performs in terms of measurable consumer engagement and highlights the need for future work that examines deeper emotional responses and the authenticity behind socially driven marketing in the Philippine beauty industry.

Theoretical Framework

This framework explains how consumer involvement leads to consumer brand engagement (CBE) and, ultimately, to self-brand connection and brand usage intent. Drawing from Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014) and revisited by Obilo et al. (2021), the model argues that when consumers perceive a brand as personally relevant, they invest more attention and cognitive effort, which becomes the foundation for engagement. CBE consists of three dimensions: cognitive processing (thinking about and evaluating the brand), affection (emotional attachment), and activation (behavioral participation such as sharing or interacting with the brand). These dimensions collectively foster a strong psychological bond with the brand and increase the likelihood of continued use or repurchase. Overall, the framework highlights how involvement and multi-dimensional engagement drive long-term loyalty and deeper brand–consumer relationships.

Conceptual Framework

The framework expands the Consumer Brand Engagement (CBE) model to analyze how three Philippine cosmetic brands—Colourette Cosmetics, GRWM Cosmetics, and Vice Cosmetics—use "woke advertising" to influence consumer engagement. It is divided into two stages: Pre-Collection Data and Post-Collection Data. In the Pre-Collection stage, content analysis is used to examine each brand's advertising strategies, focusing on campaign themes, core messages, and representations of inclusivity, diversity, and social advocacy, following Vredenburg et al. (2020). These elements capture how each brand aligns its marketing with socially conscious values to spark consumer involvement. In the Post-Collection stage, the framework uses Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie's (2014) CBE model, proposing that consumer involvement triggered by woke advertising activates three engagement dimensions: cognitive processing, affection, and activation. These reflect how consumers think about brand messages, form emotional bonds with socially responsible brands, and demonstrate behavioral responses such as sharing or interacting with content. Ultimately, these dimensions lead to two outcomes—self-brand connection and brand usage intent—indicating how well each campaign strengthens identity alignment and motivates continued support. Overall, the framework shows that advocacy-driven, inclusive advertising can foster meaningful engagement, deepen brand–consumer connections, and enhance campaign effectiveness for the three cosmetic brands.

Research Design and Approach

The This study uses a correlational research design to examine the relationship between woke advertising strategies of Colourette, GRWM, and Vice Cosmetics and their levels of consumer engagement. For each brand, the campaign with the highest TikTok metrics (likes, views, shares, engagement rate) will serve as the basis for cross-brand comparison. The study also analyzes recurring themes in these high-performing campaigns to identify which woke advertising elements resonate most with audiences. A mixed-methods approach supports this analysis. The qualitative component involves content analysis of campaign visuals and messaging to identify

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advocacy themes, inclusivity, and diversity, which will guide the variables used in the quantitative phase. The quantitative component examines engagement metrics through descriptive statistics to measure how effectively these woke advertising elements drive audience interaction. Overall, this design allows the study to identify key woke advertising characteristics linked to consumer responses and to measure the strength of these relationships within the Philippine beauty industry.

Instruments and Materials

The study uses advertising materials from Colourette, GRWM, and Vice Cosmetics, specifically their TikTok campaigns that incorporate woke advertising. These include official campaign posts such as Colourette's #ThatPeach and #TrueColour, GRWM's #FaceCard and #GRWMxPawssion, and Vice's #VxJellyFilterPalette and #FeelTheFling. Social media metrics—likes, shares, comments, and views—will be collected to measure engagement. These materials will undergo content analysis to identify themes, messaging techniques, and visual elements that reflect how each brand integrates social advocacy into its marketing strategies.

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Data Collection Plan

The study's data collection has two phases: pre-collection content analysis and post-collection engagement measurement. In the pre-collection phase, TikTok campaigns from Colourette, GRWM, and Vice Cosmetics are analyzed to identify themes, advocacy elements, and strategies related to inclusivity and representation. In the post-collection phase, engagement metrics—likes, comments, views, and saves—are gathered from the brands' verified TikTok posts to assess campaign performance. Combining the qualitative findings with quantitative data provides a comprehensive understanding of how woke advertising influences consumer engagement in the Philippine beauty industry.

Data Analysis

The study uses both qualitative and quantitative data analysis. The qualitative phase applies thematic analysis to identify recurring motifs, strategies, and advocacy-related themes—such as inclusivity and diversity—across the campaigns. This method helps interpret how brands embed woke messaging within their advertising. The quantitative phase uses descriptive statistics to summarize engagement levels and correlational analysis to examine how specific woke advertising elements relate to metrics like likes, comments, shares, and views. The highest-performing campaign from each brand serves as the basis for comparison. Together, these methods reveal how woke advertising is presented and how effectively it drives measurable consumer engagement.

Ethical Considerations

Since the study relies on publicly available social media content, no direct interaction with human participants will occur. However, ethical considerations will still be observed by ensuring that only official brand content is analyzed, and that data will be reported in aggregate form without manipulation. Proper acknowledgment of the campaigns and adherence to academic integrity standards will be maintained throughout the study.

Results and Discussion

In the contemporary Philippine beauty industry, inclusivity has become both a cultural imperative and a strategic instrument for brand differentiation. As consumers grow more attentive to issues of representation, identity, and authenticity, beauty brands are increasingly compelled to move beyond conventional promotional strategies and produce campaigns that reflect the diversity of their audiences. This shift signals a broader cultural demand for visibility and validation, particularly within advertising spaces that have historically marginalized certain identities. Within this context, Colourette, GRWM, and Vice Cosmetics demonstrate how local beauty brands have reoriented their communication strategies to position inclusivity as a central narrative rather than a peripheral feature.

The findings of this study reveal that the three brands have integrated woke advertising into their branding strategies in distinctive yet interconnected ways, confirming the first research objective. While their tones, creative styles, and brand goals differ, Colourette, GRWM, and Vice Cosmetics all strategically employ inclusivity, diversity, and representation as core drivers of consumer engagement and trust. What unifies their executions is the recognition that inclusivity is not simply a stylistic choice but a cultural and commercial necessity in a diverse Philippine market. The highest-performing campaigns from each brand—Colourette's #ThatPeach, GRWM's #GRWMMegaCollection, and Vice's #VxJellyFilterPalette—reveal a consistent pattern: campaigns that validate consumer identities and champion representation are the ones that generate the greatest resonance.

Colourette's #ThatPeach campaign illustrates how humor, when intertwined with inclusive representation,

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operates as a powerful persuasive device. Garnering 3.3 million views and over 357,000 likes, the campaign leveraged playful exaggeration not merely for entertainment but to foreground gender-diverse and queer identities. This dual strategy demonstrates how humorous narratives, when grounded in social consciousness, can transform virality into deeper relational engagement. The approach aligns with scholarship asserting that humor enhances emotional engagement and shareability while strengthening brand-personality perceptions (Eisend, 2011; Warren et al., 2019). In contrast, GRWM's #GRWMMegaCollection centered on shade inclusivity and everyday authenticity. By showcasing a comprehensive range of complexion matches, the brand addressed persistent issues related to exclusionary shade ranges in beauty marketing. The campaign resonated strongly because it positioned inclusivity as a product-based commitment rather than a symbolic gesture. Research affirms that authenticity and inclusive product design foster trust and positive brand attitudes, particularly in multicultural settings (Sakallı et al., 2022; Wicaksono, Ray, & Prakosa, 2025). GRWM's emphasis on lived experiences and self-acceptance illustrates how authenticity and ethical alignment strengthen loyalty and positive electronic word-of-mouth. Vice Cosmetics' #VxJellyFilterPalette bridged the approaches of the first two brands by blending aspirational aesthetics with inclusive representation. Through influencer credibility, polished narratives, and community presence, Vice produced campaigns that were aspirational yet accessible. This strategy supports findings that aspirational branding is more effective when tempered by inclusivity, as such messaging avoids alienating broad audiences while still appealing to status-driven consumer segments (Moorman et al., 2024). Vice's execution illustrates how brands can maintain glamour while embedding authentic representation, thereby achieving a balance between prestige and relatability.

Taken together, these insights demonstrate that woke advertising in the Philippine beauty industry operates along a spectrum of creative executions that converge on the same outcome: meaningful consumer connection. Across all three brands, consumer engagement was positively influenced, supporting the second research objective and affirming that woke advertising resonates with Filipino audiences by aligning with their expectations of inclusivity, diversity, and ethical brand behavior. The correlation among these campaigns indicates that entertainment (Colourette), authenticity (GRWM), and aspirational relatability (Vice) serve as different but complementary pathways toward driving consumer engagement. Their effectiveness lies not in a single factor but in the interplay between emotional resonance, social alignment, and creative differentiation.

These findings also align with existing literature asserting that contemporary consumers, particularly younger demographics, reward brands that demonstrate genuine social responsibility and avoid superficial or performative activism (Vredenburg et al., 2020; Mrad & Assi, 2022). The campaigns examined in this study exemplify this shift by localizing inclusive messaging within the Philippine context, where diverse identities seek representation in mainstream advertising. Ultimately, the success of these campaigns underscores the expanding role of woke advertising as both a cultural movement and a strategic imperative for beauty brands in the Philippines.

Conclusion

This study analyzed the woke advertising strategies of Colourette Cosmetics, GRWM Cosmetics, and Vice Cosmetics, focusing on their branding, consumer impact, and campaign effectiveness. The correlational analysis demonstrated that while the three brands adopt distinct approaches—humor and relatability for Colourette, authenticity and shade inclusivity for GRWM, and aspirational aesthetics tempered by inclusivity for Vice—they share a common thread in recognizing inclusivity as a cultural baseline. The research objectives were met as follows: first, the analysis showed that woke advertising was deliberately incorporated into each brand's creative and strategic direction. Second, the effectiveness of woke advertising was demonstrated through strong engagement metrics, particularly with Colourette's viral performance and GRWM's trust-building narratives, confirming that these strategies extend beyond visibility to influence deeper consumer-brand

Relationships. The research assumption was also validated: woke advertising by Colourette Cosmetics, GRWM Cosmetics, and Vice Cosmetics positively influenced consumer engagement. By weaving social

inclusivity into their narratives, these brands reduced the risk of woke-washing and instead built campaigns that were both socially resonant and strategically effective. This suggests that Filipino

consumers are not only attentive to entertainment and aesthetic appeal but are also highly responsive to campaigns that reflect authenticity, inclusivity, and representation.

Ultimately, this study contributes to academic and practical understanding of woke advertising by showing that its success lies in balancing creativity with cultural alignment. For the Philippine beauty industry, the

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implication is clear: inclusivity is no longer optional, but essential in shaping brand reputation, fostering trust, and ensuring long-term consumer loyalty.

Recommendations

While this study successfully examined the engagement levels and strategies behind the woke

advertising campaigns of Colourette Cosmetics, GRWM Cosmetics, and Vice Cosmetics, several

areas for future research remain. A key recommendation is to extend the study beyond engagement metrics to explore the direct relationship between exposure to woke advertising and consumer

purchase intention. Future research may employ a quantitative survey targeting Gen Z and Millennial Filipino consumers to determine whether high social media engagement translates into actual purchasing behavior, brand preference, or loyalty. This approach would help bridge the gap between consumer interaction and commercial intent, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of woke advertising.

Another recommended direction is to examine the intersection between woke advertising and economic accessibility. While the analyzed brands advocate inclusivity and diversity in their campaigns, product affordability remains an important aspect of authentic social responsibility. Future studies should investigate how economic factors influence consumers' perceptions of inclusivity and whether these campaigns genuinely democratize beauty or unintentionally reinforce exclusivity. Additionally, researchers may refine their analytical framework by adopting the structured rubric of Vredenburg et al. (2020), which evaluates campaigns through three dimensions: theme or social issue, message or advocacy, and representation of inclusivity, diversity, and social justice. This rubric ensures consistent evaluation and strengthens the reliability of future

content analyses.

Lastly, future research may expand beyond the beauty industry to explore how other sectors—such

as fashion, food, or technology—employ woke advertising strategies within the Philippine context.

Such a comparative approach would help determine whether the success of woke advertising is

industry-specific or part of a broader cultural shift among Filipino consumers toward valuing

authenticity, inclusivity, and representation in brand communication.

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