

THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

Departmental Research Seminar



Power In the Eye of the Beholder? Marketplace Outcomes in Ingroup/Outgroup Perceptions

By

Prof. Nancy Wong
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Date : 12 Mar 2024 (TUE)
Time : 10:30 am – 12 noon
Venue : N001

Abstract

The effects of skin tone hierarchy on individuals and societies are often tied to the cultural and historical roots of each society and the forces of politics, economics, and colonization/migration. In this paper, we apply social identity theory to explore the motivations that underlie the global phenomenon of skin-lightening products as the outcomes of ingroup/outgroup perceptions between majority/minority groups in society. We focus on the perception dyad between the perceiver (consumer) and the perceived (marketing images) in the manifestation of minority/majority social identity in a skin tone hierarchy. This perception dyad reveals how skin tone hierarchy influences the power structure of a society dominated by a majority White beauty standards. We conducted a pilot, three experiments and an analysis of consumer reviews data across different population samples to illustrate the social identity process that leads to the outcomes of skin lightening products consumption as a desire for empowerment. Managerial and policy implications are discussed in terms of marketplace interventions that could be mutually beneficial to both marketers and consumers.

Prof. Nancy Wong holds the Kohl's Chair in Retail Innovations and is Professor of Consumer Science, and the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Graduate Education at the School of Human Ecology at University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research has focused on the influence of culture in consumption decisions, affective responses, and consumption values such as materialism. She also conducts research on consumer decisions in healthcare, personal finance and sustainable consumption. Her research has been published in *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, *Journal of International Business Studies*, *Psychological Methods*, *Cognition and Emotion*.

All interested are welcome.



THE HONG KONG
POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY
香港理工大學

Department of
**MANAGEMENT
& MARKETING**
管理及市場學系