THE IMPACT OF BLACK FEMALE INFLUENCERS ON TRANSNATIONAL KOREAN BEAUTY: 
A CASE STUDY OF TWO BLACK BEAUTY VLOGGERS

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ABSTRACT
The trend of Korean beauty has started to gain attention from international countries as the phenomenon of Korean wave a.k.a. *hallyu* has spread globally. The concept of Korean beauty itself is known to be highly associated with having fair skin. Nevertheless, the popularity of Korean skin care products and cosmetics has drawn not only fair skin women, but also women with dark skin. Although their dark skin colour does not fit the concept of K-beauty, they devotedly follow the trend. Two of them are YouTube black female influencers, Darcei Amanda and Kennie JD, who like to create contents related to Korean beauty. Their contents on Korean make up look and fashion style has influenced Korean beauty industry to become aware of the demand and needs of dark-skinned women. Some scholars have addressed the influence of *hallyu* on cultural hybridization. Woongjae Ryo (2009) Korean wave is an indication of the new global and local transformation. Agustina and Lukman (2017) mainly discusses the hybrid cultures developed by Indonesian beauty vloggers who persistently use halal-certified Indonesian cosmetics to acquire the Korean look. Jin and Yoon (2016) social media platforms and fans’ interactions have increased the spread of Korean wave. beauty influencers, Charlotte (2017) discovered about the influence of beauty vloggers on consumer-buying intention. Hence, this paper aims at exploring how these female vloggers use their platform to give impact on the phenomenon of Korean beauty. The research findings revealed that these black beauty vloggers managed to influence the Korean beauty industry to be more inclusive.

KEYWORDS: Korean beauty, local concept, inclusivity, black influencer, YouTube

INTRODUCTION
The global beauty industry today seems to be driven by Korean beauty, as the productions of *hallyu*, a coined term for Korean wave, including Korean television, drama, or pop music, have been attracting a large number of people in Asia and Western countries. The growth of Korean wave, therefore, has a great impact on the diffusion of Korean beauty standard as a transnational reference for aesthetics (Epstein and Joo 2013, Elving-Hwang 2013). The concept of Korean beauty becomes transnational as it is massively consumed by audiences from non-local countries. Beauty care and plastic surgery has become tourist attractions in South Korea. The trend of Korean beauty becomes a global interest since they do not only focus on cosmetic products, but also on primarily providing good quality of skincare
products. Korean skincare focuses on health and vitality and stresses on the importance of plant-based skincare, since natural ingredients are important to the consumers (Maria and Vlad, 2013). Additionally, South Korea has been well-known for their 10-step skincare treatment. This skincare routine by South Korea is intended to achieve the glass skin or healthy glowing look by moisturizing the skin and maintain its naturalness without putting on too much makeup.

Exports of both Korean skincare and Korean cosmetics have been seen to have grown rapidly since 2015. According to International Trade Administration (2019), the number of exports of Korean beauty products is higher than the imports. In 2017, the market size was estimated to be $8.8 billion; the total local production and total exports increased approximately 28.7% and 56.718.3% respectively from 2015. In addition, the high level of aesthetic plastic surgery in South Korea shows the high demand toward the ideal beauty in Korea. The influence of Korean entertainment plays a big part in making Korea a country with the highest rate of plastic surgery. In order to reach their beauty standard there is a high demand for skin whitening products, and double eyelid as well as nose surgery. The features characterizing the beauty ideal in South Korea, such as white skin, double eyelid and pointed slim nose show the influence of Western ideal of beauty. According to Gelézeau (2015), in Korea, the promotion of Western standards of beauty is part of the auto-definition of Korean beauty.

The expansion of Korean beauty as a transnational culture in the West is greatly encouraged by mass media, especially social media. In visual online platforms, such as YouTube, many beauty brands have been approaching social media influencers to endorse or review their brands products on their YouTube channels. This is because consumers nowadays are more often exposed to beauty products by social media influencers, as what is assumed to be an unbiased content by the influencers is proven to be preferred than the beauty brand advertisement itself (Nandagiri & Philip, 2018). Hence, Korean beauty influencers on YouTube, or also known as K-beauty vloggers, have significant impact on trending the concept of Korean beauty across Asia, America, and Europe. Nonetheless, K-beauty vloggers are not only limit to those having fair skin as expected by Korean beauty industry. Non-Korean beauty vloggers with dark skin complexions are also attracted, among others, Darcei Amanda and Kennie JD, are also attracted to recreate Korean makeup look and review Korean beauty products. Among the many black beauty vloggers, such as Nyma Tang, Kaiser Coby, or Damilola Adejonwo, only Darcei and Kennie are devoted to K-beauty. Darcei is even more dedicated because she does not only do Korean makeup or skincare review, but also dresses up in Korean style.

Few researches have addressed this issue. Some scholars have defined the effect of hallyu on cultural hybridization. For instance, in his research, Woongjae Ryo (2009) focuses on transnational popular culture in cultural hybridization. He argues that Korean wave is an indication of the new global and local transformation. Meanwhile, Agustina and Lukman (2017) mainly discusses the hybrid cultures developed by Indonesian beauty vloggers who persistently use halal-certified Indonesian cosmetics to acquire the Korean look. The study examining social media related to hallyu can be seen in Jin and Yoon (2016) who discuss about how the Korean wave is integrated into social mediascape. The result indicates that social media platforms and fans' interactions have increased the spread of Korean wave. Focusing on
the issue of beauty influencers, Charlotte (2017) discovered about the influence of beauty vloggers on consumer-buying intentions. Her study shows that beauty vloggers’ social attractiveness has the biggest influence on consumer buying intentions. In addition, Kaylin Skipwith (2016) explores how YouTube vloggers successfully market and promote services and products to viewers. However, a research gap exists in regard to the influence of beauty vloggers on the concept of beauty. Therefore, this research paper looks into the role of two black female influencers, Darcei Amanda and Kennie JD, on their YouTube channel in giving impact on the concept of Korean beauty as a transnational culture. This paper sees to answer the following research questions: How does Korean beauty become transnational? How do Darcei Amanda and Kennie JD, as Korean beauty vloggers with dark skin tones, adapt the concept of Korean beauty? How do they influence the concept of Korean beauty?

METHODOLOGY

This research collected the data online using digital ethnography which is also known as netnography by observing Darcei and Kennie’s YouTube videos related to Korean beauty. The main research method is content analysis on how these vloggers influence the concept of transnational Korean beauty to become more inclusive. In addition, the audiences’ comments on each vlog and these Korean vloggers’ responses will also be analysed, as the comments may draw new insights in relation to the issue. Hence, understanding such complex issues can, to some extent, be explained with two different theories. The first theory is Naomi Wolf’s conceptualisation of beauty myth (1990) which is about how women feel the need to stick to the irrational social standards of beauty due to the impact of commercials on the mass media. The second is the theory of social influence by Kelman (1958), in which it focuses on how individual’s attitudes, opinions, and behaviours are influenced by others.

KOREAN BEAUTY AS A TRANSNATIONAL CULTURE

The standard of beauty has always been evolving significantly throughout the history. “Beauty is a currency system like the gold standard,” (Wolf, 1996). How women see themselves and define the concept of beauty is complex, since beauty has always been a measure of human’s social value. Whether it is having pale skin or having tiny rosebud lips, the idea of being beautiful varies differently by culture. As it is a cultural concept, Western perceptions of beauty, for example, differs from Asian beauty standard. Nevertheless, the concept of Korean beauty nowadays has become such an international trend for women not only from other Asian countries, but also from non-Asian countries, including the Western world. Because of this, Korean beauty has emerged from a local culture to a transnational cultural phenomenon.

As stated in the document, the number of exports of Korean cosmetics in 2017 was around USD 4.3 billion. The total export in 2017 was surprisingly 56.7% higher than in 2014 (International Trade Administration, 2019). Having natural, white, and glowing skin, or also known as glass skin, has become a huge trend in Korea. In fact, Korean women have adored flawless white skin without any freckles since the first dynasty in the history of Korea (Eric et
In this country, there have been different methods invented in order to create smooth and translucent skin, such as using miansoo lotion and honey (Jeon, 1987). In Korean history, having fair and flawless skin has been related to the wealthy upper class. Therefore, children of the upper class of the Koryo dynasty (918-1392), used flower water to cleanse their skin to achieve white transparent skin (Jeon, 1987). Today, the same idea remained as Korean beauty industry offers a range of skincare products that will create flawless and white skin. Because they are also concern with healthy skin, Korean beauty products also promote the use of natural ingredients that helps to clean, refine, exfoliate, as well as soothe the skin. This is what makes the 10-step skincare routine of K-beauty phenomenal.

In addition to flawless fair skin, women are considered beautiful in Korea when they have perfect facial proportion with a “narrower lower face, large eyes, a small mouth and a fine, oval jaw line” (Rhee Seung Chul cited by Elfving-Hwang 2013). Because of this beauty standard, there has been a high demand for aesthetic plastic surgeries in South Korea, especially double eyelids and nose surgeries. Indeed, the high demand for plastic surgery has led this country to become the world’s plastic surgery capital with over 980,000 surgeries recorded in 2014 alone (Kim, 2018). Nevertheless, what is believed to be Korean’s perfect facial proportion is actually inspired by the physical characteristics of Western people because Asians are naturally known to have narrow eyes with single eyelids. The high demand for nose surgery and double eyelids is aimed to diminish their Asianess (Sergile & Obata, 1997). According to Haeun, Korean’s obsession with plastic surgery to look more Western is very much influenced by mass media through the bombardment of Hollywood and satellite TV. There is no glorification of dominant Asian features, such as small eyes or flatter noses, in mainstream media (2009). On top of that, media has influenced the globalization of beauty standards, that is the idealization of having thin body by Koreans following the same obsession of having thin, tall, and toned body in Western cultures (Cunningham et al., 1995). Frith et al. (2004) also argued that the media act as agents of socialization, perpetuating certain global beauty standards, including thinness.

Korean beauty has been transnationally recognized, and it has started to become a point of national pride. One main influence of the popularity of Korean beauty in the global world is the phenomenon of Korean wave a.k.a hallyu, especially K-pop. The popularity of K-pop, in fact, does not only represent the success of Korean music industry, but also shows the visual influence of K-pop idol on the fans. According to Duffet (2013), a fan is someone who has deep and positive emotional connection with something or someone popular that makes them discover their identity. As K-pop idols are highly related to fandom, many of those who are a fan with K-pop idols are obsessed with their appearance, which represents Korean beauty. K-pop fans view their idols as their public figures who have the ideal face, whether they are naturally beautiful or under cosmetic surgery. Because of this, K-pop fans globally start to look at the trend of Korean beauty in order to imitate their idols. The global K-pop fans, as a result, gives a massive influence in transnationalizing Korean beauty. On top of that, cosmetic companies, in this case, also contribute to enhance the transnational flow of Korean beauty. For example, Amore Pacific, the biggest cosmetic and beauty company in Korea whose brands includes Sulwhasoo, Laneige, Mamonde, Etude, and Innisfree, has an important role in making the Korean beauty trend global by becoming a world-class beauty company. By implementing
brand marketing strategies from cosmetic companies outside Korea, the company has successfully intermingle both Eastern and Western beauty inspirations. In 2015, Amore Pacific successfully became one of the top-10 companies with $4 billion in total sales, including international sales that built up to $1.2 billion (Ghemawat, Knoop, & Kiron, 2006).

Even though the trend of Korean beauty today is considered a transnational culture, based on the explanation above, the beauty concept itself cannot be defined literally as transnational. Based on Cambridge Dictionary, the term transnational means “involving several nations” or “used to describe companies or business activities that exist or take place in more than one country”. In reality, however, the concept of Korean beauty that has been idolizing white skin for ages indicates that Korean beauty, which has become transnational, is only suitable for those with light skin complexion. People who are naturally born with darker skin are automatically excluded from joining the global trend of Korean beauty. Due to its idealization for white transparent skin, the trend of Korean beauty is conceptually still local, inspite of its emergence as a transnational culture. Despite the fact that the Western ideal of beauty is basically rooted in the concept of Korean beauty, the Korean beauty as a transnational cultural flow is still viewed as “local” by the international K-beauty enthusiasts.

ADAPTING KOREAN BEAUTY CONCEPT: CHALLENGING BEAUTY MYTH?

The global phenomenon of Korean beauty trend cannot be separated from the large influence of mass media. The use of mass media, especially visual media such as YouTube, has drawn the interest of many beauty customers around the world. Most often, these beauty customers or YouTube beauty users take advantage of visual media to do review or tutorial videos, also known as vlog or video blog, of their favourite beauty products. In line with what has been stated by Baker (2017), the vlog helps to deliver a message to the users by the use of visual materials. In addition, with the advance of the internet, there is a change in the relations between companies and consumers, and social media itself has also transformed how the customers associate themselves with product brands (Fiorella & Brown, 2013). This means that beauty brands have also started to reach more potential customers on social media. YouTube vlogs nowadays, therefore, has become an essential part for both the customers and the brands in the beauty industry. Because of the high popularity of YouTube, well-liked vloggers get praised and gain a large number of subscribers. They are often called as social media influencer because they are capable in setting trends.

The popularity of K-beauty on YouTube seems to have attracted a lot of viewers. According to Statista, there are more than 40000 channels on YouTube that literally focus on creating contents about fashion and beauty trend (2017). As contents of beauty on YouTube and the trend of Korean beauty in common are obviously in high demand, being a Korean beauty vlogger today means being highly viewed. If we type “Korean beauty” on YouTube search bar, there will be many YouTube channels from all over the world, not only from Korea, that provide similar contents. TheBeautyBreakdown, Gothamista, No Cloud, Jennifer Chiu, and Devienna Makeup are examples of YouTube channels on Korean beauty that are from countries outside Korea. Although they come from different countries, the beauty vloggers have skin colours that are in line with the ideal concept of Korean beauty. Kennie JD and Darcei
Amanda, on the other hand, are African American beauty vloggers having dark skin complexion. Despite their dark skin, Kennie JD and Darcei Amanda like to recreate the look of Korean flawless and glowing skin by using Korean beauty products. Kennie JD created one specific playlist which is “KBEAUTY~ Korean Makeup and Skincare” on her YouTube channel to categorize her videos that specifically focus on her Korean beauty contents. However, Kennie does not only use YouTube to talk about Korean beauty, but also about Korean language learning and Korean story time. In some of her videos, she displays her ability to speak Korean because she studied in this country. Meanwhile, Darcei Amanda categorizes her K-beauty videos into several playlists, which are “Makeup”, “Storytimes & Talks”, and “Black Girl Tries.” Unlike Kennie, Darcei does not speak Korean. She is only interested in Korean beauty, fashion, and pop music. Because of this, she often made videos about K-beauty that are related to her K-pop idols. She often does tutorials of Korean products advertised by K-pop idols and recreate the makeup style of her favourite K-pop idols. Although they don’t have the ideal fair skin, Kennie JD and Darcei Amanda managed to prove that dark skin women can follow and apply K-beauty trend. By breaking the stereotypes, they challenge the Korean beauty myth. Beauty myth, according to Naomi Wolf (1991) has been used by feminist scholars to make sense of how images of beauty encourage male superiority against women. Beauty, therefore, is defined in Wolf’s view as a culture that is constructed by the oppressive patriarchy system. Beauty industry has been historically maintaining women stereotypes, showcasing slim, white, and youthful skin in their commercials while marginalizing other women who do not fit the so-called ideal type. The passion of the Korean people to achieve the ideal type is no exception.

Kennie, in her YouTube video titled “BLACK GIRL TRIES A FULL FACE OF KOREAN MAKEUP CHALLENGE” showed her struggle in applying Korean make up products because she could not find the right shade of a Korean CC cushion for her dark skin. The fact that Korean make up products only offer ivory to beige colours show that Korean beauty industry marginalized women with darker skin tones. This shows how beauty industry in Korea still marginalized “other” women who fail to fit the industry standard. Many Korean products are only produced for those with light skin reinforcing the beauty standard. According to Naomi Wolf (1991), the beauty standard or the beauty myth, in fact, is not about women at all. It is about the institutional power of the beauty industry. The power of Korean industry has its tendency to represent the unrealistic, idealistic definitions of beauty. Therefore, while creating the Korean makeup video, Kennie had to encounter colourism problem for the Korean beauty industry do not provide ranges of colour for people with dark skin complexion. The absence of the darker range of colours implies that Korean beauty industry does not include darker skin people as its customers, and this creates a sense of being marginalized and discriminated against of dark-skinned women. In response to her being excluded, Kennie used the Korean make up to create edgy and smoky look instead of natural makeup look of Korean beauty. By deliberately did the opposite of what the Korean beauty products were intended for, Kennie shows her resistance in being dictated by the Korean beauty standard endorsed by its industry. Her resistance follows Wolf’s (1991) encouragement that women should have the choice to do whatever they want. Similar to Kennie, Darcei Amanda also experiencing the same situation with Korean beauty products. The exclusivity of Korean make up products led
her to find ways to create Korean look using non-Korean beauty products. In her video on her YouTube channel titled “I GAVE MYSELF A KOREAN DRAMA MAKEOVER”, she substituted Korean makeup products that did not match her skin tones with non-Korean products. This is another way of confronting the exclusiveness of Korean beauty products, that by demonstrating that the products are replaceable. She also expressed her discontent and protest of the very limited dark shades in Korean product when she was asked by the audience to review a Korean brand’s darkest shades of foundation in another YouTube video titled “TRYING THE DARKEST SHADE OF A KOREAN FOUNDATION | VT COSMETICS x BTS”. She complained that Korean beauty industry has little attention to inclusivity and authentic representations of racial diversity. Again, she substituted the Korean brand with non-Korean products to create a Korean makeover. By protesting and by persistently recreated Korean make up look on her dark skin, Darcei was challenging the white myth in Korean beauty industry. The absence of Korean products that match her skin did not stop her from creating videos for a K-drama makeover because she showed the Korean beauty industry that other products could also be used to create the same look. This is similar to what Agustina and Lukman (2017) found with Indonesian beauty vloggers who substituted Korean beauty products with the halal-certified Indonesian cosmetics to achieve the same Korean look. As a result, this suggests that even though women who may have different skin complexion do not fit into the ideal concept of Korean beauty, they can still follow the trend of K-beauty without letting the industry fail them.

Apart from that, on her makeover video, Darcei also showed her confidence in having endomorph body type while recreating the look of K-drama actresses with their ideal slim and tall body. Without appearing as a thin woman like the real K-drama actor, Darcei still found joy and courage in making K-drama makeover video. To create a look alike of a K-drama actress, she she put on a straight hair wig to hide her untamed curly hair and wore Korean style outfit. Unlike Wolf’s (1991) complaint that women’s problem is their lack of choice, Darcei did not feel oppressed and insecure for not being able to fit in the standard of Korean beauty. She refused to be trapped within the beauty myth, instead, she felt liberated by challenging the image of Korean beauty. Therefore, even though she did not own ideal features for being “beautiful” in terms of K-beauty, Darcei still had the confidence in followed the trend of Korean beauty. She also demonstrated that Korean look can be achieved by women with all types of skin tones. With her make up challenge she proved that Korean beauty does not only apply to those with fair skin and that the look can be achieved by using products that are not necessarily Korean. With this, she challenged the exclusivity of Korean beauty industry.

Since the trend of Korean beauty does not only revolve around makeup but also skincare routine, the vloggers’ efforts in adapting Korean beauty can also be viewed from how they use Korean skincare products to their routine. As K-beauty vloggers, both Darcei and Kennie have made several videos regarding Korean skincare on their YouTube channel. Their Korean skincare videos were aimed to tell their audiences the skincare products they used to take care of their skin or which products they personally liked. For example, on her video titled “HOW TO GET KOREAN GLASS SKIN: Skincare & Makeup”, Kennie showed that they don’t need to follow strictly the 10-step of skincare routine promoted by Korean beauty industry. Instead, Kennie showed that doing 4-step of skincare would be enough to get the
intended results. By doing this, Kennie showed that she was a smart consumer who did not let herself being dictated by the Korean beauty industry. Similar attitude was taken by Darcei who displayed her knowledge and understanding on how each skin care product works when she gave the video tutorial on “HOW TO GET GLASS SKIN | KOREAN SKINCARE”. Therefore, although they seemed to be co-opted by Korean beauty myth, they showed that following Korean beauty did not prevent them from being woke. Based on how Korean beauty is adapted by Kennie JD and Darcei Amanda, we found that they did not fully adapt the original concept of K-beauty because there were instances where they could not fit in the ideal standard of K-beauty. First, we discovered that K-beauty that focused on creating natural and glowing skin has attracted both Kennie and Darcei as dark-skinned women. Second, the exclusivity of Korean products that did not properly offer dark shades has led the vloggers to look for other alternative, which is by using other products to create the Korean look. This can be interpreted as their resistance against white myth in K-beauty. Last, they also showed that doing skincare did not limit them from being knowledgeable about the products they used to maintain their healthy skin. Without fully following the 10-step skincare routine, we can still get the Korean glass skin. Therefore, how they challenged the beauty myth in K-beauty that demand certain beauty standards among women indicates that they rejected to fall into beauty myth. They showed that they did not want to let them suffer at the hands of the beauty myth that was proven to be discriminative and racist, especially towards dark-skinned women.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE VLOGGERS’ CRITICAL VIDEOS ON K-BEAUTY CONCEPT

One interesting similarity that is shared by Kennie JD and Darcei Amanda is their critical view regarding Korean beauty concept. As influencers, they are aware that their opinions affect their audience. They are also aware that beauty industry nowadays makes use of social media influencers as part of their marketing strategies. The advertising campaign in social networks is more effective due to the great power and influence of bloggers today (Likhareva & Kulpin, 2018). According to Kelman, social influence happens when a person (P) changes his behaviour as a result of induction by another person or group (O). In this case, both Kennie and Darcei act as a vlogger (O) who induce or influence a group of society (P), which is their audiences, including the netizen and the beauty industry, in regard to the concept of K-beauty.

In one of Kennie’s videos titled “THERE IS NO PLACE FOR DARK SKIN IN K-BEAUTY???” (with 518K views and 3.6K comments), Kennie basically explained how the concept of K-beauty caused the feeling of being marginalized among women with dark skin complexion. She expressed how K-beauty industry, which has gone international, did not cater for non-Koreans with darker skin. She revealed how Korean industry only cater to lighter skin tones. Additionally, she also said that regardless of Korean traditional beauty that valued the purity of light skin, Koreans, in fact, still come in different colour tones. To strengthen her point, she mentioned some Korean celebrities who do not have the ideal fair skin, such as Hyorin Sistar, Seolhyun AOA, Hwasa Mamamoo, and Jessie. Korean celebrities with darker skin were often seen to apply lighter foundation than their actual skin tone. From this video,
we can see that Kennie had a specific aim to tell her audiences that there is no place for dark skin in K-beauty. Therefore, it is clear that Kennie’s induction on influence others to rethink about the exclusivity in the concept of K-beauty through her video is intentional. According to Kelman, “Induction may be deliberate and intentional, as in those cases in which O tries to persuade, order, threaten, express expectations to, or provide guidelines to P.” (1974). Here, Kennie, as a K-beauty vlogger, provided information to guide the audiences in being critical to the trend of K-beauty, so that they would be aware that K-beauty concept should be inclusive.

Kenne’s critical view about the exclusivity of K-beauty received positive responses from her audience. Many responses come from those who feel the unfairness of the white myth endorsed by Korean beauty industry. One response from Eunwoo expressed her dejected feeling from being judged as a non-Korean in her own country just because she has darker skin. A comment from Katsumin mentioned that actually many Korean women themselves felt being excluded by Korean beauty industry and demanded that the industry expand the colour range of their products. These kinds of responses indicate that Kennie’s view is influential enough that encourage others to share similar perception. Based on social influence theory, positive influence is the equivalent of conforming behaviour. The way these audiences showed similar opinions on the exclusivity of K-beauty concept means Kennie has positively influenced them to perceive the same attitude towards K-beauty.

Meanwhile, Darcei’s efforts to influence her audiences regarding K-beauty concept can be found from her critical video about cancelling a Korean brand. In her video titled “KOREAN MAKEUP BRAND IS CANCELLED | STYLENANDA BLACK HAND CONTROVERSY” (with 177K views and 770 comments), Darcei called out a South Korean makeup brand Stylenanda, one of Darcei’s favorite Korean brand, for blackwashing a hand model in a nail polish advertisement because the palm of the hand model is shown to have the same dark colour as the back of the hand. Commenting on this peculiarity, Darcei commented, “This is not a black person’s hand, but simply a Korean person’s hand, ... covered in what seems to be possibly a dark foundation.” As a black person herself, she knew that the palm of a person with dark skin usually has lighter colour than the person’s skin tone. Her opinion is well explained in Popular Science (2002) that expounds the reason why the palm is lighter in colour. “The thick layer of dead skin that covers the undersides of feet and hands reduces the amount of UV light that penetrates to the living layers beneath …giving the skin a lighter appearance than other areas.” Because of this, the brand was assumed to be ignorant about other’s race and even racist because Darcei also questioned why the black hand model only on the particular orange nail polish advertisement and is not shown in the advertisement of the other colour scheme of the same nail polish. Darcei accused the beauty industry of practicing colour stereotyping toward dark skin people.

In the video, Darcei used the influencing strategies as explained by Kelman (1974). Based on social influence theory, the influencing agent (O) tries to induce other people (P), followed with challenging P’s existing beliefs, attitudes, or action to finally persuade them to make the necessary changes. At the beginning of the video, Darcei said how colorism issue has become beauty myth in Korea. She stated that Koreans were ignorant about other’s race: “Why Koreans acting like they have never seen ‘Black Panther’?” After that, she explained her view on what she deemed controversial advertisement posted by Sylenanda, the Korean beauty
brand. Darcei (O) tried to induce the brand (P) on their campaign that turned out to be a practice of blackwashing. Even though she appreciated the brand’s effort to become more inclusive, their attitude towards inclusivity was challenged by Darcei due to the act of blackwashing. Darcei used her platform as a K-beauty vlogger to object to the brand’s action for being ignorant and racist towards black community. She also suggested that Korean brand should have hired a black person instead to properly represent the black community in their campaign. Hence, Darcei’s goal from creating the video was to influence and make some changes within the K-beauty community itself.

Soon after Darcei criticized Stylenanda for blackwashing a hand model on their nail polish advertisement, the Korean brand immediately apologised. Not only that, they also pulled out the orange nail polish from their market. According to an article on Global Cosmetics News, “3CE brand (part of the Stylenanda umbrella) has been forced to issue an apology after it released an advertising image for a nail varnish featuring a and painted to appear black.” They also added, “Beauty vlogger Darcei Amanda called out the brand over the image, prompting several commentators to point out that black people do not have black palms” (Caldwell, 2018). From this phenomenon, we can see that Darcei’s goal to influence others and change the brand’s attitude was successful. If someone’s challenge in influencing others is successful, then the person influenced will be motivated to reconsider his attitude (Kelman, 1974). The Korean brand Stylenanda was motivated by Darcei’s critical influence to take any action upon their controversial attitude in their attempt to be more inclusive.

The way Kennie and Darcei used their platform to challenge and finally make changes to K-beauty through their critical videos shows that they have positive influence as a K-beauty vloggers. Their positive influence here is, therefore, relevant to the achievement of the goal that Kennie and Darcei had. As a dark skinned K-beauty vloggers, they aimed to show their audiences how K-beauty should be inclusive and start to embrace diversity. They spoke up for the right of black or dark-skinned women, so that they do not feel marginalised and stereotype in K-beauty. “We can dress up for our pleasure, but we must speak up for our rights” (Wolf, 1991). Even though they often showed how they found pleasure and confident in adapting K-beauty, they did not ignore the exclusivity rooted in K-beauty. Therefore, their actions to speak up for other women shows that they successfully influence K-beauty to include dark-skinned women in the community by demanding for shade range expansion.
CONCLUSION

From the analysis above, we discovered that the two black female YouTube influencers have impacted the concept of Korean beauty. They showed how they were capable to adapt K-beauty while challenging the myth in K-beauty. The way they challenged the myth in K-beauty can be seen from how they did not fully follow the concept of K-beauty in order to create the Korean look. They have successfully adapted K-beauty without concerning on having light skin tone. Other than that, by looking at their critical videos on K-beauty, we also see that both Darcei and Kennie used their platform to speak up for inclusivity and diversity in K-beauty. From social theory, they appeared to have positive influence. This is because their intention towards K-beauty industry to properly include dark-skinned women and cater for dark skin tones was supported.

From the paper, we also found that indeed, there are native Koreans with darker skin who feel marginalised by the concept of K-beauty, too. Therefore, how darker-skinned Korean vlogger reacts to K-beauty can be discussed further in other research. The researcher only analysed how Kennie and Darcei used their YouTube channel to give impact on K-beauty. In fact, these vloggers also used other social media platform while being a K-beauty vlogger. Research on comparison between how they used YouTube and other social media as a K-beauty vlogger can be discussed later. In addition, since YouTube is mostly used for commercial purposes, this research did not view the vlogs as a form of commercial content. More research can be done to contextualise this cultural phenomenon within profit-oriented situation.

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