

The Effects of Cultural Beauty Standards

Shekainah Guerrero , SOCI-101-86014



What does Cultural Beauty Standards Mean?

According to **Bezael Tsehaye** and **Deb Teklehana** from *The Rangeview Raider Review*, by definition, Cultural Beauty Standard means a person's ideal appearance based on how their culture expects them to look like.

They are mostly common amongst the women around the world, where they are expected to physically look a certain way. Whether it is by facial appearance, skin complexion, body standard, or even added accessory. They are pressurized by society from historic roots their culture has and may apply on them.

There are several different kinds of beauty standards around the world, countries like Korea, Africa, USA, Europe, and etc. They all have differing beauty standards for both men and women. But people fail to realize how much this is greatly affecting the younger kids and adults in our generation and upcoming ones. The mental toll and pressure they have to inherit.



The History Behind Cultural Beauty Standards

- ★ Referencing to an article by *Sustainability Directory*, called *Cultural Beauty Standards*, the origins of these standards are deeply rooted from “historical events, societal structures, and prevailing ideologies” (*Sustainability Directory*).
- ★ There are so many layers as to why individuals dress or present themselves a certain way. Examples vary, such as, religion in a culture and even social hierarchies. Simple ideas such as the weather climate and how much it affects your skin complexion will be normalized in one country, but will be negatively perceived in a different one.
- ★ The ultimate word, “Beauty” can imply so many different ideas. But every country and culture will always have the same standards in beauty. Such simple word can weigh so much to a person, especially since cultural beauty standards are not something you gather from thin air, but passed down.
- ★ Obtaining a proper understanding of historical context, social norms, and geographical influences can help people better understand the idea of Cultural Beauty Standards to deeply get a feel for it. It is incredibly important because it molds to the bigger picture of it all, the development of our social identities and how this pressure affects us.

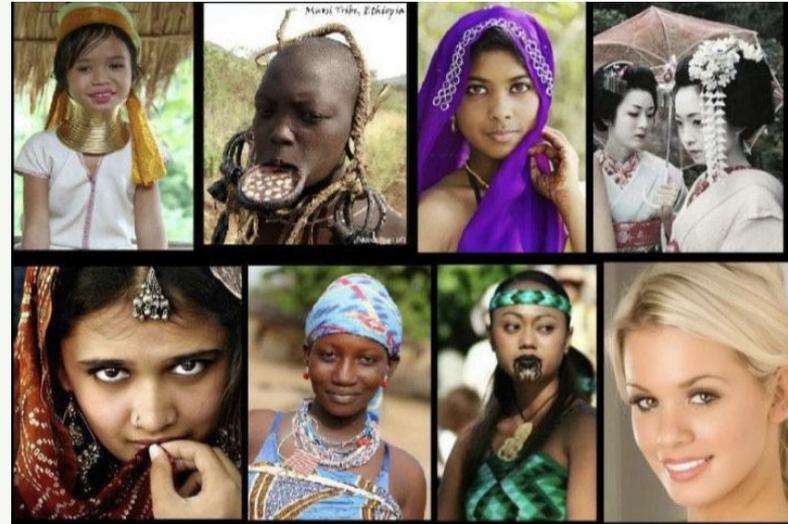


Some examples of Different Types of Cultural Beauty Standards:



One of the most know beauty standards that has been trending is the Korean Beauty standards.

- Kpop Idols are actually required to undergo facial surgery to check these standards. (Some even being extremely young).
- Non- Korean people often fly to Korea to undergo these surgeries since they are well known for them



These group of pictures showcase beautiful girls that participate in cultural beauty standards, some demonstrated are from Japanese, Western culture, Thailand, Nigeria, Maori, India, and etc.

- The great diversity between these photos showcase how each culture pass down different practices.
- It doesn't always have to be about facial features, but also how they wear accessories or even how they wear makeup.

Some examples of Different Types of Cultural Beauty Standards:



Beauty standards come in form of body types as well. From the original image, there has been drastic changes to these body figures and what are normalized. Some may be slim or thick, with the different size stomach, arms, legs, and upper body. Though not only are their proportions changed, so is the skin tone and hair types.



Comparison of Some Cultural Beauty Standards:



Men also have to deal with the beauty standards. These are a few I found from *Bright Side*. They were voted as attractive men at one point in their country. There is an obvious difference in skin complexion, facial features, and even their hair. Facial features that even include facial hair.



Philippines



USA



INDIA



SOUTH KOREA

This is a comparison of Korean Idol Irene, and Kim Kardashian. It shows the facial structures on half of their faces. Irene was voted the prettiest women in Korea at one point because of how much she compliments the Korean Standards. Kim Kardashian obtained a few surgical procedures to acquire her new found look. Regardless both are fit into their countries beauty standards. Both show a difference in lip, eye, cheekbone, nose shapes.



Different Effects
Cultural Beauty
Standards Have on Us



How Cultural Beauty Standards Can Enable Depression/Mental Health:

- ★ Cultural Beauty Standards can take an enormous toll on our mental well being, eventually leaving thought of depression in our mind. Due to the high pressure of these beauty standards passed to down. Some of the younger individuals may struggle with their image and fitting in it.
- ★ To those who do not fit the specific beauty standard of slim body and specific facial features, they are forced away from society as an outsider. People will often view them differently in public and even go out of their way to sneak a laugh or a joke in. With awareness of this, the individual who is getting made fun of will have low self esteem and confidence in themselves.
- ★ They can also find themselves in complete social isolation with the fear of stepping away from their house because of the negative comments they may receive in public.
- ★ In addition to this thought, some beauty standards are quite unrealistic, taking Kim Kardashian for example. She had to undergo several bodily surgical procedures to get the body she desired. So being ashamed of one's appearance will 100% affect how they see themselves. This is labeled as anxiety.

How Cultural Beauty Standards Affect our Physical Health:

- ★ The idea of surgical procedures being normalized in some countries to look a certain way/the stereotype for the said country will take an effect on our physical health as well. There has been so many celebrities, influencers, and idols who have gotten unrecognizable surgical procedures that make them look unhealthy.



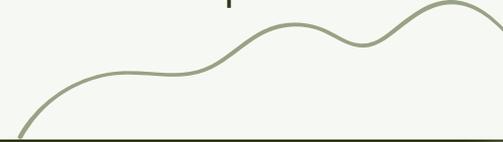
The first photo is of a girl now named Lisa Yo, who completely wanted to change her race. That is her before and after. The second goes by Oli London, a UK individual who got surgery to look like Jimin from BTS.

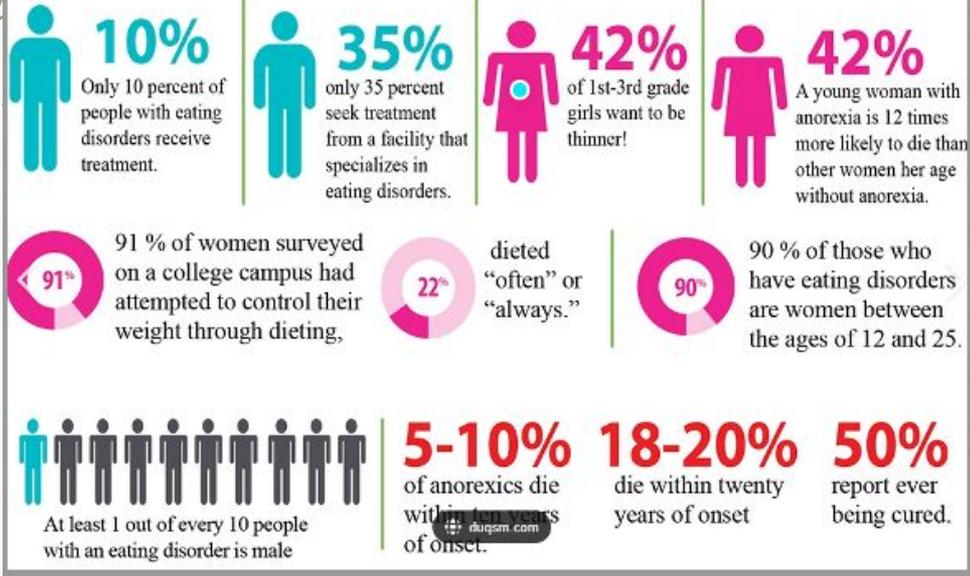
- ★ Plastic surgery has so many health risks such as excess bleeding, blood clots, infection, scarring, nerve damage, and way more.
In addition to this, people will gain body dysmorphia and have bad dieting habits, bad weight behaviors, eating habits, excessive exercise, etc.
All these reasons promote a damaging factor in our physical health.





How Cultural Beauty Standards Affects The Upcoming Generations:

- ★ With the huge blow up on the influencers our age, they have the ideal body and facial types our society deems “beautiful” I will always consider the algorithm that social media platforms such as snapchat, instagram, and tiktok to be biased towards skinny and pretty girls showing up more than others. With said algorithm, people look different from one another, but my generations and even the younger one, I have seen so many people of different races abide by the Western beauty type more.
 - ★ Even my friends and family try to match to the skinny body stereotypes which is upsetting because of the unhealthy ways to go about it. The idea of these people changing their appearance based on society and not because they want it for themselves completely shifts the main idea of it all.
 - ★ Our generation views these standards as a competition with each other instead of gaining self acceptance, the idea of never being enough. Some parents even enforcing these stereotypes to their children because of the pure embarrassment they feel for them not being socially acceptable for society.
 - ★ It alters their brainwaves and how they ultimately view others as well with a picture of one thing as “perfect” in their mind.
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This is several statistical examples of body image standards affecting our way of living.

- Some discusses about eating disorders and how they receive treatment for it
- Different age groups that experience eating disorders and how they want their body to look slimmer
- How dieting has affected people and the amount of people that actually have between teens, young adult, and adult.
- There is even an example of men results on eating disorder
- The reason for showing this is to showcase how common it is to let these standards affect us.

Final Thoughts/Conclusion

- ★ I was raised in a household I was never told to look a certain way but be weary of people who may advice it. For example different family members telling me to watch my weight or even fix my appearance. I think in order to gain self acceptance, you need to surround yourself with people who accept you for who you are.
- ★ The idea of culture having to control someone's life unwillingly is upsetting and should not be something future generations should have to inherit unless it is something traditional.
- ★ The factors of our mental and physical health being in danger just to abide what society wants us to look like should not have been normalized because we are so deep into that idea, it is a hard concept to fight back and undo.
- ★ Overall I think that in order to step into the bigger picture, our society needs to stop judging each other. With so many people who plays a role in society that actually likes or applies with the beauty standard. People should also learn how to ignore any negativity that is thrown their way because in the end that can help blossom them into a better individual.



Moral of the story: Everyone is beautiful the way they are and standards should not have a say in uniqueness.

