GUIDELINES FOR ADVERTISING OF SKIN LIGHTENING OR FAIRNESS IMPROVEMENT PRODUCTS

Preamble

While all fairness products are licensed for manufacture and sale by relevant state Food & Drug Administrations (FDA) under the Drugs & Cosmetics Act, there is a strong concern in certain sections of society that advertising of fairness products tends to communicate and perpetuate the notion that dark skin is inferior and undesirable. ASCI code's Chapter III 1(b) already states that advertisements should not deride race, caste, colour, creed or nationality. Yet, given how widespread the advertising for fairness and skin lightening products is, and the concerns of different stakeholders in society, ASCI, therefore, felt a need to frame specific guidelines for this product category.

Guidelines:

The following guidelines are to be used when creating and assessing advertisements in this category.

1) Advertising should not communicate any discrimination as a result of skin colour. These advertisements should not reinforce negative social stereotyping on the basis of skin colour. Specifically, advertising should not directly or implicitly show people with darker skin, in a way which is widely seen as, unattractive, unhappy, depressed or concerned. These advertisement should not portray people with darker skin, in a way which is widely seen as, at a disadvantage of any kind, or inferior, or unsuccessful in any aspect of life, particularly in relation to being attractive to the opposite sex, matrimony, job placement, promotions and other prospects.

2) In the pre-usage depiction of product, special care should be taken to ensure that the expression of the models in the real and graphical representation should not be negative in a way which is widely seen as unattractive, unhappy, depressed or concerned.

3) Advertising should not associate darker or lighter colour skin with any particular socio-economic strata, caste, community, religion, profession or ethnicity.

4) Advertising should not perpetuate gender-based discrimination because of skin colour.

Chairman
Board of Governors, ASCI
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