Colourism in the East and South Asian Beauty Markets*

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The cosmetic industry has been instrumental in perpetuating and exacerbating colorism across Asia. This study employs data from The Pudding to analyze the relationship between foundation shades offered by popular makeup brands and the range of skin tones in Japan and India. Based on the findings, there is a noticeable similarity in the distribution of lightness among foundation shades in both Indian and Japanese cosmetics. The findings reveal that while certain Japanese beauty brands offer foundation shades that are suitable for East Asian skin tones, the range of available colors is biased towards lighter skin tones. Conversely, foundation shades available in India are considerably brighter than the natural skin tone of South Asians. The results demonstrate the influence of colorism and the pursuit of proximity to whiteness.
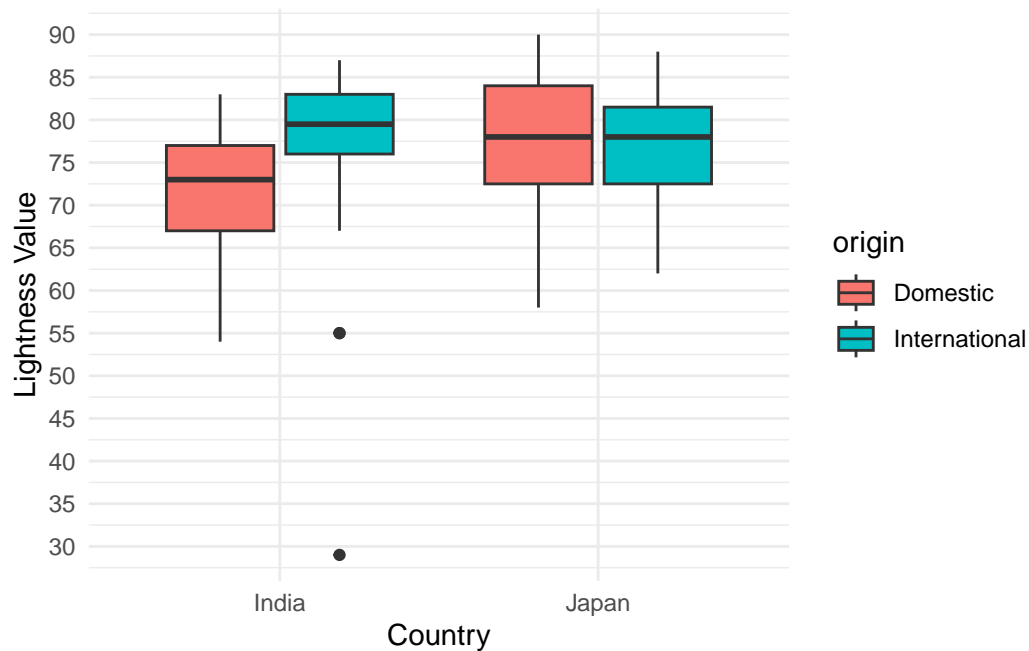
Table of contents

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group (20,30] (50,60] (60,70] (70,80] (80,90] Total
India     1       3      14      23      16     57
Japan     0       3      12      32      27     74
```

1
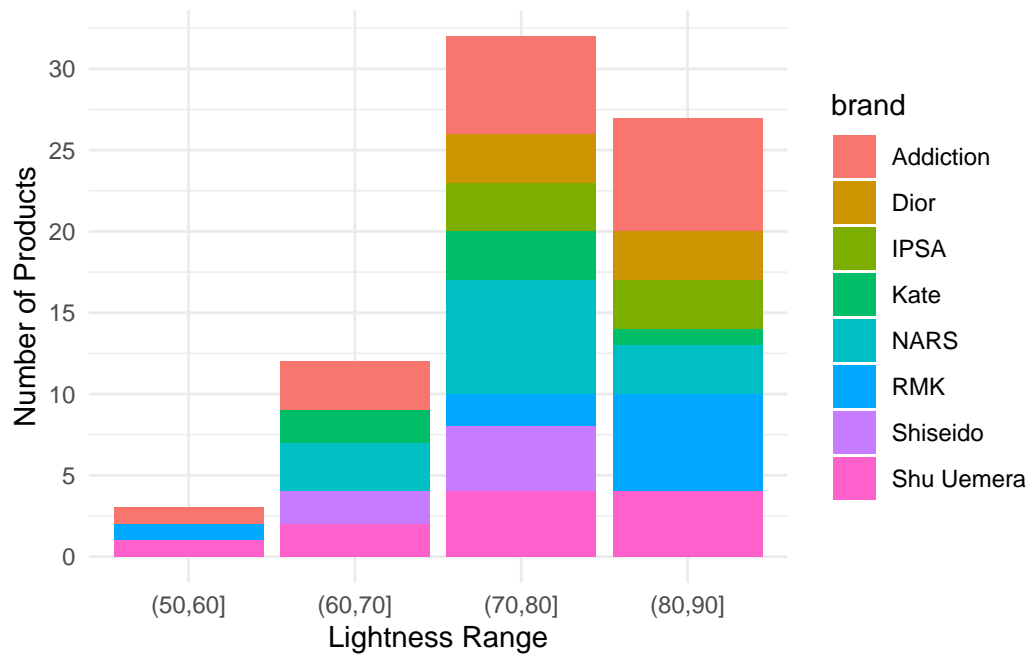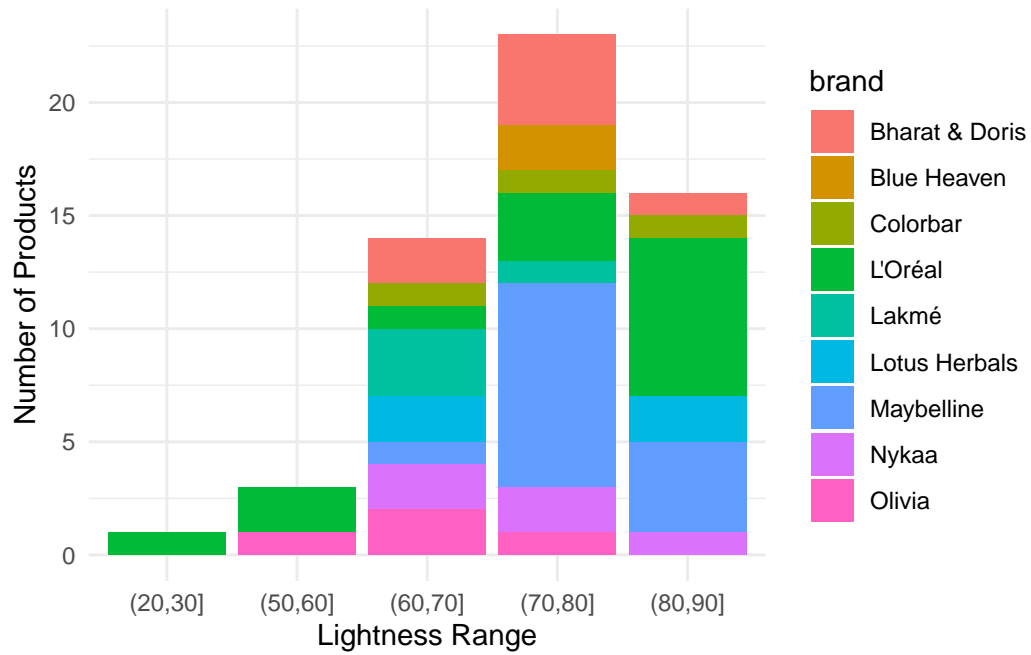
```
# A tibble: 1 x 0
```

```
  model <- lm(L ~ group, data = brand_origin)

  summary(model)
```

```
Call:
lm(formula = L ~ group, data = brand_origin)

Residuals:
    Min      1Q  Median      3Q     Max
-45.228  -5.228   1.772   6.406  13.041

Coefficients:
            Estimate Std. Error t value Pr(>|t|)
(Intercept)   74.228      1.202  61.733   <2e-16 ***
groupJapan     2.731      1.600   1.707   0.0902 .
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Signif. codes:  0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Residual standard error: 9.078 on 129 degrees of freedom
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Multiple R-squared:  0.0221,    Adjusted R-squared:  0.01452
F-statistic: 2.915 on 1 and 129 DF,  p-value: 0.09017
```

$H\_ij = + \_i + \_j + ( )\_ij + \_ij$

where:

H_ij is the hue value of the ith group and the jth brand   is the overall mean hue value _i is the effect of the ith group (i.e., country) _j is the effect of the jth brand ( )_ij is the interaction effect between the ith group and the jth brand _ij is the error term for the ith group and the jth brand

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Data Acknowledgement

Resources Acknowledgment

The primary tool used to analyse data in this paper is R, an open-source statistical programming language (R Core Team 2022b). The paper also uses a number of R packages, including: dplyr (Wickham et al. 2022), foreign (R Core Team 2022a), ggplot2 (Wickham 2016), here (Müller 2020), janitor (Firke 2021), kableExtra (Zhu 2021), knitr (Xie 2023), lubridate (Grolemund and Wickham 2011), readr (Wickham, Hester, and Bryan 2022), RColorBrewer (Neuwirth 2022), scales (Wickham and Seidel 2022), and tidyverse (Wickham et al. 2019).

0.1 Appendix

0.2 References

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