

The Role of Ambassadors, Influencers, and a Brand in Co-Developing Gendered Well-Being: The Case of Selected Dove Philippines Campaigns

Ivanna Chantal A. Espenida

Harriet Sheen B. Gallentes

Cyrielle A. Ontiveros

Rina Rose G. Tugade

Patrick Adriel H. Aure (patrick.aure@dlsu.edu.ph)

De La Salle University, Philippines

Abstract

With the changing trends in business, it is essential to understand how different actors involved in a campaign enable a brand's objective. This study aims to understand how internal stakeholders of advocacy campaigns can lead to a positive outcome in terms of external stakeholders' social well-being, particularly in advocating gender well-being. This study utilized qualitative data collection methods to gather perspectives from both internal and external stakeholders to understand how the roles and responsibilities of internal stakeholders collectively help initiate brand advocacy campaigns. In this study, collaborative networks, partner selection, and research and development were assessed with respect to the co-development business model that leads to positive gendered well-being. It was found that there is an existing tension between the normative aspects of beauty and the internal perceptions of consumers. However, respondents shared that the advocacy campaigns facilitated by both influencers and ambassadors as part of the Dove Philippines projects launched in 2020 and 2021 were effective, since they enhanced their self-acceptance, self-esteem, and self-empowerment. The findings from the study can be used as a foundation for future research regarding influencer and ambassador marketing in the Philippines. In addition, it provides a practical application of the co-development business model not only to achieve mainstream business and marketing goals, but more importantly, advancing well-being.

Keywords: Influencers, brand ambassadors, co-development, social well-being, gendered well-being

Introduction and Literature Review

Business organizations use the latest marketing trends to make brands known for their advocacies. One such emerging trend is influencer marketing. This type of marketing was brought about by the popularity of social media in society (Gajanan, 2017). With more people spending time online and the countless ways the internet can connect different people across the globe, influencer marketing holds a great deal of promise for popular and recently launched brands. One of its advantages is its lower cost as compared to advertisements on media platform, making it attractive for all types of brands, regardless of how established they are. Aside from this, influencers have skills that include gaining engagement on posts and having a community of supporters (Campbell & Farrell, 2020).

In the case of Dove Philippines, it is focused on improving women's body positivity. Dove Philippines has been in the market for a long time, and it has positioned itself as a brand that champions women regardless of their color, height, body type, and hair. This has allowed Dove to be one of the household brands that consumers consider. In the two Dove Philippines campaigns used in this study, influencers and ambassadors were recruited to enable its advocacies while marketing its products to the target audience.

Statement of the Problem and Research Questions

The researchers wanted to explore the roles of influencers and ambassadors in the co-development business model and how its variables, namely, collaborative network, partner selection, and research and development, impact advocacy campaigns on social well-being, particularly gendered well-being. This addresses the research gap on the factors that brands must consider for a successful advocacy campaign and how these factors could influence the external stakeholders, including consumers. This gap is especially true as far as the roles of ambassadors and influencers and their impact on the co-development of the advocacy campaign are concerned. To close this research gap, the following research questions will be answered.

RQ1: What are indicators of a collaborative network, partner selection, and research and development among stakeholders in a big personal care brand campaign?

RQ2: How do the three components work together in order to achieve co-development that leads to gendered well-being, specifically increased self-esteem and women empowerment?

RQ3: What are the different roles of influencers and ambassadors in a collaborative network, partner selection, and research and development that contribute to co-development towards gendered well-being?

Objectives

This study aims to understand how the internal stakeholders of an advocacy campaign can produce a positive outcome for the external stakeholders' social well-being, particularly gendered well-being. To elaborate on the research questions, the following are the objectives of this study:

1. To understand the roles of collaborative networks, partner selection, and research and development in an advocacy campaign.
2. To determine how co-development in an advocacy campaign can enable positive social well-being for consumers.
3. To provide an in-depth understanding of the role of influencers and ambassadors in enabling brand advocacies to improve social well-being, particularly gendered well-being.

Significance of the Study

The researchers probed deeper into understanding the roles of ambassadors and influencers in Dove's co-development towards advancing social well-being. This research aims to help consumers, influencers, ambassadors, marketing managers, business owners, and future researchers.

Scope, Limitations, and Delimitations

This study used two advocacy campaigns from Dove Philippines: Self-Esteem Project and My Hair, My Say. The two campaigns from Dove Philippines are the only ones explored by this study to understand the relationship among all the actors involved in the campaigns and

investigate the role ambassadors and influencer marketing play in advancing social well-being and helping the brand reach its objectives.

The limitations of this study include the lack of credible case studies regarding influencer marketing and ambassador marketing in the Philippine context. Moreover, this study only focused on qualitative data without regard to the financial objectives or the media reach of the two Dove campaigns mentioned above.

Definition of Terms

This section comprises topics related to advocacy-driven campaigns, influencer marketing, ambassador marketing, social well-being, women's empowerment (gendered well-being), self-esteem, and the co-development model.

Influencer Marketing. Influencer marketing involves capitalizing on individuals with a certain influence over consumers to promote and support a product or service offered by a company. Influencer marketing is becoming centered around social media (Glucksman, 2017).

Ambassador Marketing. Geyser (2021) defined brand ambassadors as a human representation of brands. They play a significant role in representing the brand's personality and message. Brand ambassadors are known to make emotional connections between the consumer and the brands and impact the purchasing intent of consumers (Wang & Hariandja, 2016).

Social Well-being. According to Tov (2018), assessing one's well-being means including all their experiences and emotions. The factors affecting well-being can include material living conditions, employment, work-related factors, health, education, social relationships, governance, fundamental rights, natural and living environment (Huppert, 2014).

Co-Development. The co-development business model proposed by Tsou, Chen, and Yu (2018), focused on how (1) collaborative network, (2) IT capability, and (3) partner selection become actors of co-development that could influence companies to venture into superior innovation performance within a business ecosystem. They have defined co-development as an organization or firm's ability to develop competitive advantage, customer-focused products, and services.

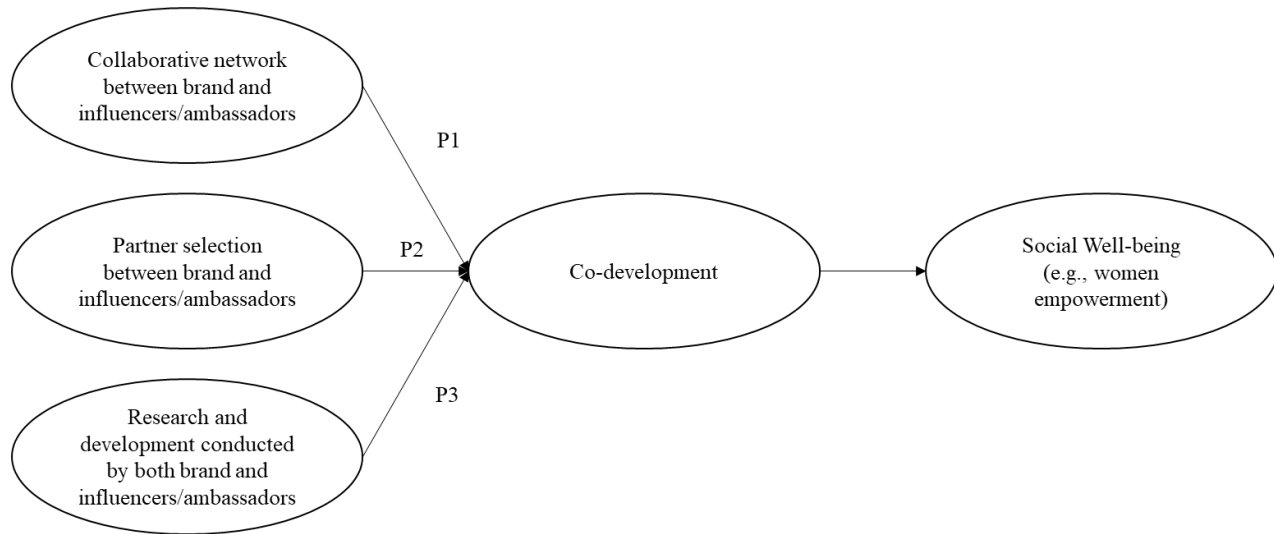
Research Framework, Design, and Methodology

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study will be based on the Co-Development Business Model by Tsou et al. (2018). This model highlights the importance of collaboration in accumulating needed resources for developing products or services (Kandemir, Cavusgil, & Yaprak, 2006; Baraldi, Gressetvold, & Harrison, 2012; Tsou & Chen, 2012; Tsou et al., 2018). Integrating this model allows a business to have a competitive advantage and mutually beneficial relationships with different actors. All the activities which transpire in the business model lead to co-development in different areas: absorptive capacity, coordination capability, and relational capability (Ettlie & Pavlou, 2006; Tsou & Chen, 2012; Grunwald & Kieser, 2007; Grant, 1996; Matusik, 2002; Tsou et al., 2018). Concerning what constitutes co-development, Tsou et al. (2018) mentioned collaborative networks, IT capability, and partner selection among actors in a business ecosystem. The first component, the collaborative network, allows businesses to perform various activities that allow for knowledge sharing in exchange for resources (Clarysse, Wright, Bruneel, & Mahajan, 2014; Madhavan, Gnyawali, & He., 2004; Tsou et al., 2018). The second component, IT capability, highlights the use of IT equipment in allowing businesses to adapt to changes and innovate (Lu & Ramamurthy, 2011; Tsou et al., 2018). Lastly, partner selection is about selecting people or partners to collaborate with, by using intangible assets and market knowledge as criteria (Wu, Shih, & Chan, 2009; Tsou et al., 2018). All the three components together allow for co-development among all the actors involved in a business. Moreover, through co-development, innovation performance is achieved. Innovation performance is applied for either products or services offered by a business and is the main objective of co-development.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: Co-development Business Model



Source: Authors' own

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework used in this study. The proponents identified three factors that lead to co-development, namely (1) collaborative network, (2) partner selection, and (3) research and development. The model proposes that the three identified factors positively affect co-development, leading to social well-being.

A collaborative network is composed of entities working together to achieve common goals. In this study, collaborative networks will focus on how internal stakeholders, such as brand managers, project heads, influencers, and ambassadors, interact to achieve positive social well-being. Partner selection will focus on the standards set by internal stakeholders in choosing individuals who will represent the brand and the advocacy it promotes, such as their alignment of vision, stands, values, beliefs, and others. It will also look into the criteria set by influencers and ambassadors for choosing the brand they partner with. Furthermore, research and development

will focus on how brands develop campaigns and how partners conduct their research to partner with brands. The following are the propositions illustrated in the conceptual framework:

Within a business ecosystem,

P1: Collaborative networks between brand and influencers/ambassadors have a positive effect on co-development that leads to social well-being.

P2: Partner selection between brand managers and influencers/ambassadors has a positive effect on co-development that leads to social well-being.

P3: Research and development conducted by both brand and influencers/ambassadors has a positive effect on co-development that leads to social well-being.

Methodology

Internal stakeholders were interviewed to understand how a collaborative network, partner selection, and research and development can affect co-development in a brand advocacy campaign. For this research, the sample respondents were those who had worked directly in Dove Philippines' advocacy campaigns, specifically My Hair, My Say, and the Self-Esteem Project. The respondents comprise one brand manager, one project lead, one project associate, two influencers, and two ambassadors. The brand manager was the overseer of the whole project. The project lead took the role of manager of the project while the project associate assisted the project lead in project management. The influencers and ambassadors were those whom Dove Philippines contacted to participate in the advocacy campaign. Considering that each has directly worked on the projects, they could provide insights on how exactly collaborative network, partner selection, and research and development work together to accomplish their advocacy campaign goals.

An online survey questionnaire was released to the external stakeholders to understand how co-development and advocacy campaigns can affect consumers. For this research, the research participants were specified as consumers of personal care products that fit the following demographic characteristics: (1) female, (2) aged 18-23 years old, and (3) active on social media. The sample demographic was chosen because this group is whom the Dove advocacies were aimed towards. The research participants, a total of 20, were asked to watch two sets of videos,

one from Dove's Self-Esteem Project and another from My Hair, My Say. They were asked to answer an open-ended questionnaire so that their initial reactions could be collected.

After the interview had been accomplished, the responses of internal stakeholders were recorded and transcribed. The responses on the collaborative network, partner selection, research and development, and co-development were then assessed and compared. The brand manager, project lead, and project associate were categorized as brand respondents, while the ambassadors and influencers were categorized as partner respondents. The results were then analyzed for each factor, namely collaborative network, partner selection, and research and development. The results were analyzed for the resulting co-development with respect to the factors mentioned earlier.

After the survey data was gathered, the data from the external stakeholders was analyzed through thematic analysis, as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The first step was to transcribe the data, while the second step was to generate codes. Codes were generated by identifying interesting answers or potential patterns that could be useful in the research. The third phase identified themes, indicating how the codes could be grouped. At this point, unnecessary codes were also removed. The fourth phase was reviewing the themes, which was done to ensure that the themes were substantial for the data set. The fifth phase was to define and refine the themes presented. The themes were used as a narrative to explain the specific meaning of self-esteem, empowerment, and other indications of social well-being. Finally, in the sixth phase a coherent and logical report was produced, which was done in the discussion section of this paper. For this study, the thematic analysis was done individually on the answers to specific questions. The results from the analysis were used to explain the relationship between co-development in advocacy campaigns and consumers' self-esteem, empowerment, and social well-being. Since the research themes were expected to be interconnected, the flow of the analysis switches between themes in understanding the narrative.

Data Results and Analysis

Collaborative Networks. For the brand respondents, the importance of collaborating with ambassadors and influencers is that they would be real people whom the target audience would be able to relate with. According to Uzunoğlu and Kip (2014), influencers and ambassadors have more credibility than celebrities whose influence comes from being famous. Both influencers

and ambassadors serve as a communication hub that provides essential information to their peers. The authenticity brought by influencers and ambassadors helps influence the purchasing behavior of consumers (Cheng, Wei, & Zhang, 2020). One respondent shared that *“Influencers and ambassadors help us achieve this because they are real women and real people, which we try to have in Dove.”* This shows the consumers that they do not have to fulfill a particular requirement to be acknowledged. This also shows that Dove hopes to become as genuine as possible when collaborating. One respondent shared that *“It is a nice dynamic since we give influencers and ambassadors the freedom to be creative, and Dove can view the situation from a distance, giving feedback based on the brand pillars and global direction.”* According to Jones (2018), authentic content helps reach specific people who are more likely to engage with it. Thus, Dove Philippines gives creative freedom to influencers and ambassadors, which allows for more genuine and realistic content that the audience can relate to. For the collaborative process, communication is also an essential factor. Both brand and partner respondents agreed that communication is essential in a collaborative network. One respondent stated that *“Constant communication like weekly huddles for plans and updating of goals ensures that we are aligned and are working towards one goal”*. This shows that communication ensures that the brand and partners work together for a common goal and plan the project's next steps. Communication allows collaboration to be more effective and productive (O'Connor, 2015). Thus, both brand and partners consider communication a factor in building a successful collaborative network. Respondents shared that the main objective of the advocacy campaign is to spread the message of the campaign through the help of influencers and ambassadors, which can be done through constant communication between the brand and partners. This shows that Dove's collaboration process includes a multi-perspective approach wherein different concerns are addressed during the project.

Partner Selection. When asked about partner selection, the brand respondents explained that partners are chosen based on following, content, and brand deals. However, Dove Philippines' looks more into the influencers' and ambassadors' values, advocacies, and stories. This can be summarized by a respondent's statement, *“Ambassadors or influencers who have the same advocacy with Dove can make the campaign more genuine and make success more achievable.”* According to Watenpaugh (2019), a good partnership revolves around shared

values and shared vision. The common values between the brand and influencers or ambassadors are what cements a partnership that will produce positive results. It was also found that partner selection can be crucial in reaching the expected social impact of their advocacy campaigns. One respondent shared that *“Through careful partner selection, ambassadors or influencers can show how committed they are in the advocacy and with the goals of Dove Philippines.”* The brand ensures that the chosen influencers and ambassadors are the right people to represent Dove Philippines and its advocacy campaigns. According to Brorsson and Plotnikova (2017), working with the right influencers contributes to the overall success of a campaign as they can deliver the right message to the right audience. Partner selection in an advocacy campaign is a crucial process. Partners play a significant role in conveying a message, so brands should ensure that they are passionate about the campaign. The content they produce is based on their stories and experiences. Another gave an example that *“With ‘My Hair, My Say’, was all about giving a voice to women who have gone through some form of injustice. Dove is trying to ensure that these barriers are knocked down or slowly chipped away at, in order for women to shine.”* From this, it can be seen that Dove Philippines’ partner selection focuses on the partners' commitment to the advocacy campaign and those who may have witnessed the social problem the advocacy hopes to resolve. Furthermore, the partner respondents shared that Dove Philippines has a higher role in partner selection. All partner respondents agreed that Dove Philippines ensures that the influencers and ambassadors embody the campaign. Dove Philippines filters prospects to find the more genuine and relatable ones. However, the partners also had a take on whether to accept Dove Philippines’ invitation. Respondents unanimously shared that they would only partner with those who respect and align with their beliefs. *“I only partner with brands that align with my values, and I ensure that my content is authentic,”* and *“I make sure that my advocacy/values align with the brand I am working with”* are some of the respondents’ statements regarding partnering with brands in general. This shows that if a brand is not genuine or has different ideals, ambassadors and influencers may opt not to partner with them.

Research and Development. With regards to research and development, it was said that this department provides insights on who needs help and what campaign should be developed. For this, a respondent explained that *“The people from there do the research and development, and then they pass it on to Dove Philippines, and then we create advocacy campaigns according*

to that.” Research is what provides substance and meaning to the campaign. According to Kendall (2022), research findings help establish an advocacy campaign with the right and relevant message. This shows the importance of research and development in helping build a campaign that is effective and relatable. The respondents unanimously said that the research and development department is the source of most insights for the advocacy campaign team, which helps during the conceptualization phase. One respondent said, *“Research and development is responsible for providing reports and important insight. This will then be used to create the advocacy campaign. The campaign is patterned from the results of the research.”* According to Zarah (2022), research and development is an essential foundation that can help produce a successful advocacy campaign. It provides valuable information that can be used in planning and executing the overall campaign. Through research, relevant issues are identified, and possible solutions provided. Another respondent said that *“All campaigns are created based on research. Without the insights/report from research and development, there will be no campaigns.”* This shows that Dove Philippines values the insights of the research and development department to ensure that the message of the advocacy campaign is relevant, timely, and fundamentally sound. On the other hand, partners do not have the same research and development team as the brand. This means that they do their research themselves. All partner respondents explained how background research is done on the brand before accepting the offer to ensure that they are sincere. An influencer shared her research experience, *“Before accepting the offer, I ‘stalk’ the brand, on Shopee/Lazada or their profiles. For Dove, I just focused on the campaign, like how to promote love for oneself. I can see Dove’s sincerity and hopefully partner again.”* Aside from the brand itself, the respondents also shared that they would research the issue. This could come from the personal research and the materials given by Dove Philippines’ research and development team. One respondent said, *“The learning materials used to train ambassadors and influencers contained relevant insights based on studies about self-esteem and confidence among the youth. It helped the campaign be delivered more effectively since everything is backed by research.”* This shows that the partner respondents value insights on the issue so that they may be more equipped and developed to promote the campaign efficiently.

Co-Development. This creates a more concrete project upon the culmination of collaborative networks, partner selection, and research and development. One respondent shared

that *“All of the variables come together by making sure that we are looking in the right places and working with the right people, that our avenues are aligned to our message and avoidant risks, and that we iterate our strategy based on learnings from past campaigns and executions.”* The variables all help develop a more holistic campaign that shows how co-development in Dove Philippines encourages perspectives of many sides to avoid risks and to have an efficient advocacy campaign that sticks to the core message. Talking about the overall social impact of co-development, one respondent explained that *“Everything helps to drive the brand’s messaging and reach. If it helps people unlearn stereotypes, this pushes them to think about a different perspective. It massifies the movement.”* It can be seen how a successful co-development could cause a movement in both media and society, allowing positive outcomes such as advancing positive social well-being. Finally, when asked whether one variable stands out, everyone was unanimous in the belief that all parts were essential in achieving the brand’s objectives and social impact. The partner respondents' views on co-development were very similar to the answers of the brand respondents. They all agreed that collaborative networks, partner selection, and research and development are integral components of co-development and of equal value to its success. One respondent shared that *“I think all of those variables are important in affecting social well-being. No variable is more important. It all works together and supports the development of the ambassadors and the brand and the audience as well.”* This creates the impression that collaborative networks, partner selection, and research and development encourage mutual growth for the brand and the partners. As growth occurs, the advocacy is strengthened and embodied by the partners. When the campaign begins, both brand and partner are united in achieving their social impact goals.

Discussion

Virality and the Impact of Trends on the Normative Gaze

A valid skeptical take is that Dove Philippines’ recent projects are mere extensions of a cultural fad of wokeness and political correctness, but to pinpoint the reasons behind their popularity means to analyze the context and history in which these campaigns originated. Labao (2016) firmly recounts that *“Dove ads became viral even before viral became a thing”* (p. 78). While hyperbolic, it is undeniable that Dove is the brand that many people associate with feminism and women’s empowerment, especially with its flagship Dove Campaign for Real Beauty (CRB),

launched in 2004 with a much-talked-about advertisement featuring real women whose appearances are outside the stereotypical norms of beauty. It started when Dove's PR agency, Edelman, conducted a study of more than 3,000 women in 10 countries to learn about women's priorities and interests. Since then, the campaign has had advances throughout the decades, leading the way to a wave of feminist campaigns. In 2010, Dove set out a bold new vision for the brand with the Dove Movement for Self-Esteem, which provided women everywhere with opportunities to mentor the next generation and celebrate real beauty. More recently in 2020, Dove Philippines released "*Because beautiful Filipina hair is everywhere*" commercial under the My Hair, My Say campaign featuring Alexi from Ilo Ilo, Kayla from Isabela, and other influencers from different backgrounds, that highlights the natural beauty of Filipinas from various regions of the Philippines.

Locally, this has proven groundbreaking in a Philippine society entrenched in historical colorism, as highlighted by Rondilla (2012), wherein "*it is not farfetched to spout that the hierarchy of power in itself reflects a gradient of color - that the social pyramid of 19th century Philippines can be drawn, top to bottom, from white to brown*" (p. 45). However, the local extensions of the international project Dove undertook over 12 years ago are still in full force with the My Hair, My Say, and the Self-Esteem Project driven by the brand together with influencers and ambassadors. This stands in stark contrast in the postmodern context, where skin color is a means to beauty and economic survival, and fair skin a gateway to likeability, better jobs, and ultimately better socio-economic opportunities. The success of these advocacy campaigns started a feedback loop, with other similar campaigns emerging within and outside the beauty industry.

Beauty Campaigns and the Grey Ethics of Commodity Feminism

These new advocacy campaigns constitute an undeniable subset of commodity activism wherein action is increasingly understood through the ways it is mapped onto merchandising practices, market incentives, and corporate profits (Jenkins, 2013). In particular, this is called commodity feminism, wherein feminist ideas and icons are appropriated to sell consumer goods (Labao, 2016). These conceptual considerations are essential in the context of capitalism, wherein campaigns cannot be estranged from the profiteering nature of the companies that drive them. This thread of discussion succinctly opens the problematic ethics of whether the ends of mutual

empowerment necessitated by co-development justifies a relatively corporate-sided means. In the case of Dove, indeed, feminist ideals were effectively attached to the products, exceptionally packaged as promoting self-esteem and fighting labels and gender stereotypes.

However, the pertinent question of whether the brands and campaigns analyzed are (or were) active in proposing social action for the issues they represent (i.e., whether they genuinely did those programs for the sake of social action or if those were merely public relations gimmicks) cannot be fully explored by this study. For the record, however, it cannot be misconstrued that Dove has done nothing to make social advances regarding topics and issues used in its advertisements. Internationally, Dove has always partnered with TED and other educators for their Puberty Education program, which aims to teach confidence in young girls. Additionally, they have partnered with institutions such as the Girls Scouts of America to create programs for young girls (Labao, 2016). Locally, as part of their Dove Self-Esteem Project in partnership with Edukasyon.ph, they held the *Confident Me: Virtual Camp* to instill confidence in young Filipinos. In this virtual camp, 18 to 19 years old women were encouraged to join the Dove Ambassador Program and take the Confident Me Quest, where they read blogs, answered quizzes, watched educational videos, and were generally exposed to tools centered around their goal of building confidence in themselves.

Regardless of the motivation, Dove's advocacy campaigns have helped women with their problems, and it is only fair to give credit where it is due. The phenomenon of commodity feminism may feel like a threat to the integrity of feminism. Despite this, the proponents of this study find that commodity feminism is a pioneer advertising and marketing strategy, and its impact on mainstream female representation cannot be understated. If anything, with the proper use of feminist-driven campaigns, companies have the chance to forge a connection with their target market. At the same time, the proponents maintain that companies who use these concepts should at least be respectful enough to acknowledge that this strategy employs the use of ideals that women have fought for years. If companies and advertisers still want to continue the use of commodity feminism, the least they can do is create social action for the topics and issues they use. The commodity feminism that this study condones returns to the root of the aforementioned co-development, wherein advocacy campaigns are not a predatory strategy that threaten and feed on feminism, instead they are a means to promote mutual benefits for both the company and the feminist movement.

Entanglement of Internal and External Stakeholders in Pursuing Co-Development

Critics may reduce campaigns such as Dove's as a mere expansion of their market base, catapulting a once less relevant brand into a modern beauty staple. However, both literature and respondent data have evidence of positive affirmations among consumers. The brand's relationship with the advocacy or issue it represents is significant in eliciting a feeling of authenticity and being genuine from the advertisements.

According to The Global Gender Gap Report (2014), the Philippines was ranked ninth globally and first in the Asia-Pacific in gender-equality rating. While not solely attributable to changing beauty standards and social/corporate campaigns, it is undeniable that these decades forward have shifted away from showing women in just confined roles such as the wife, the mother, the caretaker, the homemaker, the desperate-to-be-slim individual, and others to the now modern portrayal of a woman with inherent beauty, capability, and agency. If anything, there has been a remarkable change in the intersectional representation of women—there is absolutely no reason to settle for just mere “representation” and there is absolutely no reason to stop now.

In the Dove Philippines' campaigns, collaborative networks, partner selection, and research and development are equally given importance for co-development, and how it can promote a unified, comprehensive, and genuine advocacy campaign. When these elements work together, the result is an advocacy campaign that can connect with both internal and external stakeholders by moving towards a more inclusive stand on beauty.

The brand respondents stated the importance of collaborative networks in ensuring that the campaign's goals are met. The message that Dove Philippines wanted to convey can be spread faster through collaborating with influencers and ambassadors. As for partner respondents, collaborating with brands helps achieve their personal goals of promoting advocacies they are passionate about. Through these collaborations, they can reach and relay the message to their audience. Collaborative networks would then ensure that the right strategy for messaging and execution would be implemented, with both the brand and partner respective, while sharing the same values. Since collaborative networks ensure the uniformity and efficiency of a project, this would positively affect social well-being. In the advocacy of the Dove Philippines' projects, the audience understood the message and felt a boost in their internal perceptions of beauty. This proves the first proposition: “Within a business ecosystem,

collaborative networks between brand and influencers/ambassadors have a positive effect on co-development that leads to social well-being.”

Moreover, partner selection would ensure that partners are knowledgeable about the issue and are the right people the audience can relate with. Considering that the partners may have stories that resonate with themselves, consumers may become more trusting of the brand and its message. The partners would also help bring the message to a broader audience, thus increasing the success of the advocacy campaign. Partners were selected on the basis of their story, determination, and authenticity in the Dove Philippines advocacy campaigns, which enhanced the genuineness of the project. This proves the second proposition: “Within a business ecosystem, partner selection between brand managers and influencers/ambassadors have a positive effect on co-development that leads to social well-being.”

The research and development of the internal stakeholders ensures that the advocacy done is timely and relevant to the social well-being needs of the consumers. The partners would be educated on the issue, and the team will base their campaign methods on what has worked before. This sets a foundation for the advocacy campaign. This would positively affect social well-being because it targets the problems and issues that consumers may face. This then proves the third proposition, which states, “Within a business ecosystem, research and development activities conducted by both brand and influencers/ambassadors have a positive effect on co-development that leads to social well-being.”

The analysis conducted on the responses and insights gathered from the interviews and discussions with both brand representatives and partners (i.e., influencers and ambassadors) reveals that the three components of co-development, namely, collaborative network, partner selection, and research and development, each had corresponding indicators. For collaborative network, the recurring theme and indicator found in the responses was communication which allows for synergy, co-creation, and cooperation between brand representatives and partners in a campaign. On the other hand, alignment, in terms of having a shared vision, coherence of campaign execution, and authenticity in message delivery, was the indicator found for partner selection in advocacy campaigns. Finally, an indicator of research and development is well-founded insights that facilitate continuous improvement in campaign strategies, relevance and timeliness of advocacies, and effectiveness of campaign executions. The next figure shows a framework that includes the corresponding indicators per component.

Conclusion

Companies and customers must comprehend the sociopolitical and ethical problems behind advertising campaigns and decisions. Brands, feminism, and beauty standards have competing interests and views, making compromises difficult. To envision beauty promotion without ethical consequences is foolish and self-defeating. There is a conflict between obedience and curiosity, knowledge and innovation, prejudice and transparency, experience and epiphany—in short, between the modest awareness of today's beauty standards among corporate ambassadorships and future co-development. This report sought to fill a research gap on ambassadors and influencers in advocacy campaign co-development. This research also addressed the research gap on the elements that brands must consider when launching an advocacy initiative, and how they may affect customers' social well-being. Internal and external stakeholders were interviewed. The data was collated and evaluated in order to learn about co-development and advocacy initiatives, and find the answers to the research questions.

The two Dove campaigns namely, My Hair, My Say and The Self-Esteem Project aimed to help increase self-esteem and champion empowerment among women. This research explained how collaborative networks, partner selection, and research and development worked together to create an advocacy campaign to improve the social well-being of stakeholders. Collaborative networks revolve around how the brand and partners can communicate to make better plans to use their resources to efficiently spread the message to more people. Through co-creation, where ideas are shared and improved together, the brand is able to create appropriate messaging intended to help boost self-esteem and become empowered. Partner selection revolves around the recruitment process of brands and the acceptance of partners for joining the advocacy campaign. Genuineness of partners would mean greater relatability and believability of the campaign. The brand gives importance to the experience of influencers and ambassadors. In the campaign “My Hair, My Say”, influencers talked about their own experiences, more specifically the different injustices they have gone through. This shows that the brand only partners with influencers or ambassadors who can authentically communicate their own stories to the audience because Dove Philippines views the influencers’ and ambassadors’ experiences as a vessel to send the message and to knock down barriers and make way for women to be even more empowered and courageous with their self-expression, and their self-esteem. Finally, research

and development revolves around understanding the needs of the external stakeholders and presenting them to the brand and partners. The insights provided by research and development set the foundation for campaigns with substance and meaning. Moreover, it makes sure that the campaign being created is effective and relatable. The effectiveness of a campaign starts with research and development, because this is where relevant issues are identified and possible solutions provided. The campaigns, “My Hair, My Say” and “Self-Esteem Project” are both based on intensive research that explored timely issues and possible solutions to address these issues. Thus, the brand was able to produce a campaign intended to help promote positive social well-being.

All variables would then merge in co-development to produce an advocacy campaign. Ambassadors and influencers impact co-development in that, they play a crucial role in each factor in co-development by (1) acting as a medium that conveys the message (2) integrating their insights to the advocacy campaign planning, and (3) ensuring that the right demographics are reached. Co-Development by both brands and partners in making an efficient advocacy campaign, improves consumer well-being. The research was also able to prove that the social impact that the campaigns aimed for was achieved. Both campaigns were considered as successful by the respondents because they managed to influence the emotions of the external stakeholders, which led to a feeling of increased self-esteem and empowerment. The feelings of self-acceptance, increased self-esteem, and empowerment can be traced to how the advocacy campaigns were presented to the external stakeholders. The campaigns facilitated by both influencers and ambassadors were able to discuss issues regarding body positivity of women which allowed external stakeholders to learn more about self-acceptance, self-esteem, and empowerment. The campaigns were also an opportunity for external stakeholders to engage and reflect about a broader and more inclusive definition of beauty. Thus, Dove Philippines was able to contribute positively to positive social well-being by bringing attention to issues such as body image and discrimination against women.

In the past, the normative aspects of beauty were restrictive and westernized in the Philippines, therefore, more consumers felt emotions of self-acceptance, self-esteem, and empowerment upon seeing Dove advocacy campaigns. This could then be a model for other brands to create their advocacy campaigns. A final takeaway is indeed that beauty should never be value-free—not when it involves real people. It is through integration of stakeholders that

campaigns may be developed to represent a compromise between the criteria determined by brands and the self-empowerment of the concerned communities.

Recommendations

Future academics should investigate what motivates brand ambassadors and influencers, who seek a brand's ideals and concepts before joining. A deeper brand acceptability analysis is feasible. Future research might use Icek Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior to assess ambassadors' and influencers' brand partnership intentions and behaviors.

This may be explored in a timely thematic analysis, notably how influencers and their persuasive tactics changed during and after the pandemic. There is evidence that the influencers have become more health- and pandemic conscious to ensure relevancy and currency, thus studying how pre-pandemic standards of being confident, aspiring, relatable, and authentic have seen a shift towards a new normal of more self-aware and health-inclusive messaging to relate to the current times and audience. YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok, as well as lifestyle influencers, should be studied. These studies might also include qualitative, in-depth interviews with influencers to understand their communication adjustments. A quantitative research that tracks likes, posts, and comments throughout and after the epidemic can show post-pandemic consumption tendencies. Future research should show how influencer marketing has or has not succeeded in establishing creative approaches to navigate the epidemic while keeping their brand's unique image and design.

Importantly, these insights must be applied to the community. Gradual perceptual improvements in society, whether via classic or current influencer marketing, are significant but escape the bite of today's numerous difficulties faced by women, including increased employment prospects, good work, and the battle for gender equality in labor markets. Beauty campaigns have shown that perceptions can change over time; the question now is how to enact cultural and systematic change in the still conservative Philippines. The problem is connecting the increased awareness of women's empowerment with genuine laws and policies that protect and empower women in the country (i.e., in the workplace, reproductive health, maternity, family planning, and the like). After all, womanhood is neither constituted by nor ends in beauty alone.

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