

Disadvantages of cosmetic products term paper

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



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Introduction

Cosmetic products are commercial beauty products manufactured and marketed for the use of improving the appearance of an individual. They can be used to enhance the skin colour, the odour of a person, the lustre and hair. These products include makeup powders, hair creams and gels. Most commercial cosmetic products are synthetic. However, some are naturally sourced. They are meant to improve the appearance of a person without having any effect or interference to the normal basic bodily functions.

However, rather than being beneficial to the users, cosmetic products have been found to have serious disadvantages to those who use them. The three disadvantages of using cosmetic products are: exposure to harmful chemicals, addiction to use of makeup, and they are expensive to buy.

Exposure to Harmful Chemicals

Different cosmetic products are formulated to achieve different results. The chemical engineering of a cosmetic product determines the effect that a particular product will have to the body of the user. The chemical component of a cosmetic product that is useful in enhancing the appearance of the user is known as the active ingredient (Tejal et al., 2013). Unlike when dealing with food products, most consumers of cosmetic products do not pay attention to the active ingredients present and their concentrations in the cosmetic products that they use. In addition to this, most manufacturers of the cosmetic products use packaging that has labelling that overstates the alleged advantages that the consumer will get from using the products (Tejal

et al., 2013). Therefore, most customers will be blinded by the attractive packaging and they end up being victims of the use of cosmetic products containing harmful chemical.

Initially, most cosmetic products were formulated using naturally derived active ingredients and scents and aromas for a market of the exclusive elite people in the society. According to Malkan (2007), however, the market for cosmetic products increased by a large margin in the 21st century. This was necessitated by the need of the human being to feel appreciated and find the perfect mate. In addition to this, the diversity and magnitude of the expectations of the consumers shifted in a great way. This was in tandem with the global wave of civilisation and the subsequent urbanisation (Malkan, 2007). Following these developments in the market dynamics there was a need to find a commercially viable source of the active ingredients. The naturally derived ingredients were deemed expensive to produce hence they were less popular with the cosmetic products manufacturer.

The answer to these challenges was synthetic active ingredients and other chemical derivatives that would achieve a similar effect. Malkan (2007) further observes that the new formulations of chemical ingredients that are now used in the cosmetic products are Hydroquinone, Mercury, Parabens, Diethanolamine, Formaldehyde, synthetic scents, petrolatum, Talc, poorly refined mineral oils, Sodium lauryl sulphate, chemically formulated sunscreens like Oxybenzone, Aluminium, Arsenic, Nickel, Lead and other heavy metals.

These synthetic chemicals have been tested and shown to be toxic and harmful not only to the human body but also to the environment. Over 45%

Of the cosmetic fairness creams manufactured in India contain mercury. Statistics show that over 80% of the cosmetic products in the market contain at least one of the harmful ingredients mentioned above (Malkan, 2007). Some are carcinogens that cause cancer following repeated use (Tejal et al., 2013). Skin cancer and mouth cancer are some of the cancers caused by consistent use of an assortment of skin cosmetic products. Dermatitis can also result from consistent use of some cosmetic products (Frosch et al., 2006). Others, especially the synthetic perfumes, are allergens that elicit an allergic reaction when used by the consumer (Tejal et al., 2013). This is responsible for illnesses such as asthma and most of the ailments of the human respiratory system.

In addition to these effects, the majority of the active ingredients disrupt the human hormonal cycles causing a myriad of health complications. For instance, the disruption of the hormone cycles has the effect of accelerating the process of ageing (Malkan, 2007). Continued use of cosmetic products containing plasticizers, especially sunscreens and moisturizers, reduces the elasticity of the skin. The reduced elasticity contributes to the ageing process prematurely (Malkan, 2007). Arsenic, mercury and other heavy metals that are used in most bleaching cosmetic products can have a detrimental effect to the unborn foetus (Malkan, 2007). When these chemicals end up in the environment when they are washed off from the human body, they end up poisoning fish and other creatures in the affected habitats.

Addiction to the use of makeup

Most people, especially women, use cosmetic products like makeup in order to look more appealing and attractive. Some also use the makeup in order to obscure blemishes and other defects that make them feel less confident (Louis, 2011). This in turn makes them look more competent and confident when handling themselves in public (Louis, 2011). However, the effect of the makeup does not last for a long time. The user of the cosmetic products needs to use them repeatedly to achieve the exact desired effect. The frequency of the product use varies with each user, from once daily to even ten times a day.

In the case where the frequency of cosmetics use is abnormally high, the user is said to be addicted. According to Louis (2011), the woman in this case is enslaved by the behaviour of makeup use to the extent that she cannot leave the house or express herself in public without putting on some makeup. This affects their normal live because they must have makeup at all times and they become obsessed with makeup use (Louis, 2011). This obsession with cosmetics use is known as a cosmetic addiction. Most women become addicted to cosmetics use in their quest to align themselves to the global fashion trends. They also do this in an attempt to look beautiful using the popular media as a standard for beauty (Tejal et al., 2013). This misleads them and they develop an obsession for the makeup use in the endeavour to look like the models portrayed in the popular media.

Cosmetic products are expensive to buy

The packaging of the cosmetic products also disadvantages the consumers. Most cosmetic products are packaged in small tubes, containers and vials.

However, the price tag of these small packages is usually high. In order to get a high quality cosmetic product, the consumer has to part with a large amount of money for a small quantity of the product. In addition to this cosmetic products come in many forms (Frosch et al., 2006). Each of these is meant to enhance a specific feature of the user. For instance, the user may need a lip balm, lip gloss, mascara, nail polish, deodorant, moisturiser, hairspray, foundation and eyeliner all to be used in a single session of application. This means that the user will spend money on each of the products used in enhancing their looks at any one time. This makes the use of the cosmetic products a very costly affair to the consumer.

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