

Christian Contest Regarding The Use of Cosmetics for Beautification

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ABSTRACT

Use of cosmetic products for beautification of the human physical outlook is a common practice in the society. This practice has been in existence since ancient civilization. However, the practice has often raised concerns among Christians. Questions have arisen as to whether the use of cosmetics is in line with Christian doctrines. Some Christians argue that the human body is a God's dwelling place not to be interfered with and that use of cosmetics is seen as such one way of such interference. This discussion is part of a study that set to investigate the Christians doctrinal teachings and the practice of use of cosmetic products. The study findings revealed diverse perspectives regarding the subject influenced by various aspects including church and individual interpretation of the scriptural messages, different church doctrines and traditions, personal choices and influences of societal and global cultural systems. Themes that emerged include modesty, vanity, self-expression, cultural norms, personal choice and cost and availability of cosmetics products. Those are factors that are associated with the choice to use or not use cosmetics for aesthetics purposes. Conservative view underlined the idea about enhancing natural beauty while prioritizing inner character. Moderate Christian view centred on the need to balance use of cosmetics and the liberal Christian view emphasized on personal conviction on cosmetic usage. These views reflect challenges in reconciling personal expression with faith-based values regarding the use of cosmetics by Christians.

Keywords: Christianity, Cosmetics, Conservatist, Moderates, Liberalists

1.0 Introduction

The use of cosmetic products for beautification has been an issue of religious concern since time immemorial that attract divergent views[1]. Martin (2014) explains that some Christians advocate against the use of beauty cosmetics while others support the use of cosmetics products

and others take a moderate stand. Those who are opposed to use of cosmetics often claim that it is against certain religious doctrines and beliefs. In addition Arthur (2020) further explains that those Christians who opposed the use of cosmetics believe in natural appearance of the human body inspired by the belief that the body is God's dwelling place. Arthur also explains that there are Christians who are open to new ideologies and philosophies on matters concerning cosmetics[2]. They argue that the use of cosmetics can be determined by certain circumstances.

The fundamental question driving the controversy surrounding the use of cosmetics by Christians is whether God ordains the use of beauty products or not. This question elicits different answers based on various religious beliefs [3]. Some arguments being drawn from scriptural teachings while others base it on religious traditions and personal choices.

Christians in Kenya have different views regarding the use of cosmetics. Some Christians think the use of cosmetics should not be allowed because cosmetics alter the physical outlook of the human body [4]. Furthermore, they argue that this alteration of the physical look goes against the nature of God and His creation which 'He was satisfied with.' Therefore, no human is allowed to alter God's perfect creation and that for most Kenyan Christians, the use of cosmetics is considered as the falsification of one's identity to deceive other people and a denial of their own self existence. However, there are churches in Kenya which do not have any issues with the use of cosmetics. For them the use of cosmetics is a personal choice and any one can be allowed to use cosmetics to meet their beauty desires [3].

There are other Christian denominations and individuals who support the use of cosmetics. They argue that Christians should seek perfection of the physical outlook and that the church should not define one individual life style[5]. As such liberal Christians are open to new ideologies and that the idea of cosmetics is something that can be adopted within churches in Kenya [4].

These two extreme positions have been mediated by moderate Christians who take a middle ground on the use of cosmetics. This category of Christians chooses to incorporate the modern systems of Christianity into the old traditions or old systems of Christianity. The moderate Christians in character are not judgmental towards any issue but rather they would choose to be rational towards conflicting issues within the church.

Whether it is based on the scriptures, traditions or individual choices, the controversy still stands among Christians about the use of cosmetics. This controversy raises the following questions: What are the Biblical teachings regarding the use of cosmetics, what is the Christian viewpoint regarding the use of make up? And, what do the church doctrines teach about the use of cosmetics? Following the varying Christian perspectives on the use of cosmetics, it was essential to establish a real view on the use of cosmetics in a Christian multid denominational society. This

study investigated views on the use of cosmetics by Christians in Kenya, specifically in Njoro sub-County, Nakuru County. Njoro sub-County is diverse in terms of Christian faith as it has many and different Christian denominations including the main stream churches, African independent churches, and the new religious movements.

2.0 Methodology

The research was conducted in Njoro sub-county, in Nakuru County, Kenya. The subjects were drawn from various Christian churches within Njoro sub County. The sub County has various religions although Christianity is the dominant religion. Some of these Christian denominations include; Seventh Day Adventist, African Inland Church, Pentecostal Churches, the Roman Catholic Church and further the independent churches such as; worldwide ministry, Full gospel church of Kenya, the Repentance and Holiness Ministry among others. The sample population for the study was 150 participants. This study adopted a cross-sectional qualitative exploratory design. This design uses methods of evaluation that involves qualitative research designs, giving options to the investigator for selecting tools while collecting data. The following tools were used for data collection;

2.1 Structured Interviews

In-depth oral interviews targeted the clergy. The interview guides included a list of questions for the oral in-depth interviews. Interview questions elicited dialogues and open inquiries, which encouraged sessions of questions that were connected to the study objectives. These scheduled oral interviews elicited information from respondents, allowing them to give ideas regarding the different perspectives on the use or non-use of cosmetics by Christians.

2.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

15 focus groups discussions were scheduled in this study: Each FGD comprised of a maximum of 8 people with common interests and similar traits. The participants included specific church members of particular denominations. The discussions were carefully arranged to obtain information from the participants' opinions and perceptions regarding the use of cosmetics by Christians. FGD method is reliable as it allows the researcher to acquire large amounts of information which is also effective for exploration and identification of various aspects while studying the research participants.

2.3 Observation

This study also made use of the observation method. A check list was developed which had specific observable aspects including the habit of Christians wearing cosmetics or not. The checklist included some cosmetics items the table in the results and discussions below indicates.

3.0 Results and Discussions

Table 1.1 Observational Data Collected During Field Study

	Lipstick	Lip-liner	Lip-gloss	Eyeshadow	Eyeliners	Eyelashes	Mascara	Facial foundation/skin powder
Anglican church of Kenya	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
African in church	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Presbyterian church of east Africa	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Seventh day Adventist	√	√	√	X	X	X	X	√
PAG	√	√	√	X	X	X	X	√
Roman catholic church	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Worldwide church of Kenya	√	√	√	X	X	X	X	√
Winners chapel	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Repentance and holiness	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gospel outreach church	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Bible way church	√	√	√	X	X	X	X	√
Full gospel church of Kenya	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Baptist Church	√	√	√	√	√	X	X	X
Gospel Outreach church Egerton	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

The symbol (X) indicates that the cosmetic product selected was not observed to be used while symbol (√) was indicates that the cosmetics product that was observed to be used.

3.1 The tradition of various Christian denominations on the use of cosmetic products

This research sought to explore the tradition of various Christian denominations on the use of cosmetic products. Generally, Christianity teaches that beauty is a quality that God possesses. They observe that the Lord is beauty, and He endows image-bearers with the ability to both reflect and experience beauty [6]. The author notes that God Himself is the secret to beauty, especially as it pertains to Christians. The source of all beauty in the created world is Him as recorded during research.

A Catechist from the Roman Catholic Church said that, *“All creatures bear a certain resemblance to God, especially man, who was created in the image and likeness of God.”* This catechist further argued that being drawn to beauty or finding it attractive is not a bad thing as argued by some Christians. This is similar to the observation by a participant from the same denomination in focused group discussion who stated that *“beauty helps us elevate our hearts and brains from the material to the transcendent realm”*. According to this participant, beauty is a transcendental to Truth and Goodness-or at least, depending on the philosopher you ask [6]. This statement suggests that the infinite perfection of God is reflected in the myriad perfections of beings, including their goodness, truth, and beauty thus adding value to doctrinal teachings towards the use of cosmetics.

Further, while studying Christian doctrines towards the use of cosmetics, the exploration of attitudes towards cosmetics across different Christian denominations reveals a spectrum of perspectives, each influenced by theological principles, cultural contexts, and individual interpretations of modesty and personal appearance [7]. For most churches, the doctrinal concerns towards cosmetics could largely be influenced by the above perspectives either in support or in opposing the use of cosmetics. This will be reflected clearly and specifically in the discussions below.

Likewise, the use or non-use of cosmetics among various Christian denominations in Njoro Sub-County reflects a diverse range of beliefs and practices. Each denomination approaches the topic of cosmetics through the lens of its theological principles, cultural context, and denominational or even individual interpretations of scripture. Below is a discussion of the Christian doctrines and traditional practice of use of cosmetics from the perspective of the Roman Catholic Church, Repentance and Holiness Ministry Anglican Church of Kenya, African Inland Church, Pentecostal Church, Seventh-day Adventist Church, Baptist Church, Pentecostal Church of East Africa and Gospel Out Reach Ministry as an Evangelical Church.

3.2 Roman Catholic Church

Although the Roman Catholic Church doctrines do not out rightly allow the use of cosmetics, generally participants from the Roman Catholic Church had tended towards a moderate stance. While conducting an FGD among the participants from this church one of them said that;

“The Roman Catholics may not have strict doctrines regarding the use of cosmetic products, but rather they emphasize the importance of modesty and humility.”

This is supported by a Roman Catholic Priest from an oral interview who explained that:

“Njoro, as in many parts of Kenya, Catholic teachings may be influenced by local cultural norms.”

From the observational data in the table 1.1 above, Roman Catholic’s were observed to use some cosmetic items although not in an overly exaggerated manner. This observation revealed that the Roman Catholics use cosmetics in moderation. More analysis of literature further revealed that Roman Catholics might use cosmetics to enhance their appearance but are encouraged to avoid excessive vanity and to focus on inner spiritual growth as part of their culture.

According to the Roman Catholic Church the use of cosmetics is not explicitly prohibited; rather, it emphasizes a balanced approach that prioritizes modesty and inner beauty.[8] Mavropoulos adds that the Roman Catholic Church teaches that while it is acceptable to enhance one's appearance, the intention behind using cosmetics is crucial. The Roman Catholic tradition suggests that cosmetics should not be used to create a false impression or to indulge in vanity. Instead, they can be seen to enhance natural beauty, if they are used with the right motives [9] . DeCrane argues that The Roman Catholic Church cautions against excessive use of cosmetics that may lead to vanity or a distorted self-image, aligning with the belief that one's worth is found in their relationship with God rather than their outward appearance

On the other hand there are Roman Catholics who adopt a more permissive stance on the use of cosmetics, emphasizing individual freedom and personal choice within the framework of faith [10]. Mavropoulos explains that some Roman Catholics view cosmetics as a tool for self-expression and enhancing natural beauty, provided it does not lead to vanity or excessive focus on physical appearance. Unlike conservative perspectives, which may see cosmetics as interfering with the sanctity of the human body as God's creation, liberal Catholics are more open to modern practices, arguing that modest and thoughtful use aligns with evolving societal norms. Ultimately, their approach seeks a balance between spiritual values and contemporary aesthetics.

3.3 Repentance and Holiness Ministry

The Repentance and Holiness Ministry, strictly opposes the use of cosmetics for body beautification. The ministry teaches that women should avoid makeup and any form of bodily adornment, viewing such practices as contrary to holiness and as potential sources of impurity, lust, and temptation[11].

A group of local church leaders at an oral interview, including a clergy member and an assistant pastor, emphasized that the Repentance and Holiness Ministry enforces strict rules on the use of cosmetics for women. One of them stated that,

“The doctrine of purity views women's bodies as sacred and requires them to honour their bodies through modest dress which also involves the non-use of makeup.”

The doctrine of purity that views women's bodies as sacred emphasizes honouring the body through modest dress as a reflection of inner holiness and respect for God's design [12]. Further this perspective holds that a woman's body is uniquely sacred because of its capacity to bring forth new life, and thus requires reverence expressed outwardly by modest, dignified clothing that conceals rather than reveals the figure. This explains that women should avoid cosmetics that could enhance their appearance or provoke lustful thoughts in men.

During a focus group discussion, a youth leader from the Holiness and Repentance Ministry shared that;

“Prophet Owuor's sermons discourage even basic products like Vaseline.”

According to this participant, the reason for the above stand is that such products make women more alluring and distract from their spiritual responsibilities.

Another participant added that;

“This stance reinforces harmful cultural and gender dynamics, where women's worth is tied to their adherence to modesty standards”.

This participant further added that,

“Modesty is not about restricting freedom but about embodying a spiritual reality where external dress mirrors internal godliness, promoting self-control, respectability, and a sense of sacredness. ”

This approach encourages women to dress in ways that avoid provoking lust or scandal, thereby honouring both themselves and others, and maintaining the distinction between sexes as ordained

by God. The clothing serves as a symbol of the sacredness of the female body and a witness to the wearer's spiritual purity and dignity.

According to the Repentance and Holiness Ministry, they emphasize a life of holiness and simplicity, advocating for an appearance that reflects one's commitment to God. Members are encouraged to avoid cosmetics that may promote vanity or draw attention to oneself [13]. As Nandi *et al.*, (2015).

Further another participant in a similar group discussion said that;

"The doctrinal teachings of the Repentance and Holiness Ministry highlights the importance of inner transformation over outward appearance."

This suggest that true beauty comes from a heart aligned with God's will. As such, the use of cosmetics is generally discouraged.

The Repentance and Holiness Church as analyzed from observational data in the table directs that they do not use any kind of cosmetics. Typically they adopt a strict conservative stance towards cosmetics, often viewing them as unnecessary adornments that people distract from spiritual devotion thus, emphasizing on modesty in both dress and demeanor within the Repentance and Holiness Ministry[12]. This attitude shows that the Ministry of Repentance and Holiness has a conservative stand regarding the use of cosmetics.

3.4 Anglican Church of Kenya

The Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) does not have a publicly detailed official stance specifically on the use of cosmetics for body beautification.. However, based on general Anglican teachings and Christian principles, the church likely emphasizes personal freedom in such matters, provided that the use of cosmetics does not lead to idolatry, vanity, or an excessive focus on physical appearance, aligning with broader Christian values of modesty and inner beauty[14].

A pastor from the Anglican Church of Kenya in Njoro noted in an oral interview that Anglicans generally emphasize modesty and inner beauty. He explained that,

"While there are no specific rules regarding cosmetics, members are encouraged to reflect on Christian values in their appearance."

In a different discussion, an elderly ACK woman shared that,

"Cosmetics usage is influenced by cultures."

She added that,

“Anglicans in Njoro sub-County may use cosmetics in a manner that respects cultural norms while avoiding ostentation.”

Supporting her statement, a youth member of the church explained that,

“Anglicans focus on maintaining modesty and balancing outward appearance with inner virtues.”

Another member from a different ACK Church stated that,

“Anglican women may use cosmetics as long as it does not conflict with the principles of modesty and humility”.

The above stand is reflected in the observational table where members of the ACK were observed to use certain cosmetics like lip-gloss, lip liner, skin foundation eyeliner etc. While the ACK acknowledges the cultural significance of personal grooming and appearance, it also encourages members to approach cosmetics with moderation and discernment [15]. This is in line with the ACK doctrines that cosmetics can be used as a form of self-expression and care for one's body, which is viewed as a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). However, Anglicans are also reminded to prioritize inner beauty and character over external appearance [16]. This is reflected in the observation table above where it is noted that members of ACK in Njoro sub-County seem to focus on modest use of cosmetics.

3.5 Africa Inland Church

Africa Inland Church (AIC), generally emphasizes on modesty and the importance of inner beauty, aligning with broader Christian teachings that caution against vanity and the alteration of God's creation in ways that conflict with biblical principles. Thus, cosmetic use is acceptable if it respects these boundaries and does not compromise one's faith or witness[17].

A church elder in a focus group discussion at the AIC Church in Njoro shared that,

“The church promotes a conservative Christian doctrine with a strong emphasis on modesty and moral conduct.”

This participant explained that although there are no specific teachings regarding the use of cosmetics in Njoro sub-County, the general teaching of the church encourages prioritizing inner beauty and spiritual attributes over outward adornment.

An Assistant Bishop from in Njoro, during an oral interview, said that,

“Artistic influences play a significant role in shaping individual attitudes towards use of cosmetics by the AIC community.”

Another participant in a focus group discussion observed that,

“Local customs may lead individuals to view cosmetics as a form of self-expression.”

This participant recognized that however, other members might see the use of cosmetics as unnecessary or potentially contrary to their spiritual commitments.

As a result, the decision to use cosmetics among AIC members appears to vary widely, reflecting personal convictions and differing interpretations of modesty within the context of both their faith and local cultural norms.

From observational data in the table above some members were noticed to have applied cosmetics meaning that may not be out rightly banned in the AIC Church, but its use is often discouraged in favour of a more natural and modest presentation. This is reflected by the observation made by some members of the church that African Inland Church teachings encourage simplicity and modesty in appearance, aligning with broader cultural values that emphasize humility [18]. Additionally the Church promotes the idea that true beauty is reflected in one's character and actions rather than in physical appearance.[19]. Members are often advised to avoid excessive adornment and to focus on cultivating inner virtues.

3.6 Presbyterian Church of East Africa

The Presbyterian Church of East Africa, generally adopts a conservative view on cosmetics for body beautification, emphasizing that the human body is God's creation and should not be altered artificially, as this may contradict the belief in honouring God's perfect design[20]. However, from this research there is some variation among the Pentecostals in Kenya, with some allowing modest use of cosmetics while others strictly oppose it as inconsistent with Christian teachings.

In an oral interview, a clergy member from one of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa Ebenezer noted that,

“Churches in Njoro, as well as other Presbyterian congregations place a significant emphasis on personal holiness and simplicity.”

A local church leader pointed out that,

“Most Presbyterian churches advocate for a conservative approach to personal appearance, including the minimal use of cosmetics.”

He added that,

“This practice is seen to maintain focus on spiritual matters rather than worldly distractions.”

An elderly member of the Church during a focus group discussion pointed out that,

“The influence of local culture plays a significant role in these practices.”

A local church pastor from Presbyterian Church of East Africa Ng’onde made similar observation by saying that,

“The local Presbyterian community in Njoro sub-county often embraces an austere lifestyle, which includes modest dress and a natural appearance.”

Further, a member from the congregation during a discussion explained that,

“Women in Njoro might limit their use of cosmetics as a reflection of their commitment to spiritual purity and modesty.”

According to Rentas (2019), while there is an emphasis on modesty, many Presbyterian congregations recognize that cosmetics can be a means of self-expression and personal care [21]. The author highlights that the Presbyterian teaching emphasizes the importance of the heart's intention behind using cosmetics, encouraging members to ensure that their appearance does not distract them from their witness as Christians.

Further from observational data, it is noted that a wide range of cosmetics was being used the members of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa in Njoro sub-County. This therefore means that the Presbyterian tend to embrace a more liberal view regarding cosmetics, allowing for personal choice in their use. Adding to the knowledge on doctrinal teachings of cosmetics, the Presbyterian tend to focus on balancing personal grooming with a commitment to spiritual growth and integrity, suggesting that cosmetics can be used thoughtfully without compromising one's faith[22].

3.7 Seventh-Day Adventist Church

The Seventh-Day Adventist Church traditionally discourages the use of cosmetics for body beautification, emphasizing modesty and simplicity in appearance[23]. Braun says this stance is rooted in biblical principles which advocate for inner spiritual beauty over outward adornment. The Church views excessive focus on physical appearance, including makeup and jewellery, as inconsistent with Christian values of humility and self-denial.

During a focus group a church leader noted that,

“Seventh-day Adventists commonly advocate for modesty and simplicity.”

This participant further advised their members to avoid excessive use of cosmetics and instead focus on natural beauty.

A representative of the church clergy during an oral interview explained that,

“In Njoro, Seventh-Day Adventist members tend to use cosmetics sparingly, adhering to their principles of simplicity”.

The Seventh-Day Adventist Church’s doctrine on use of cosmetics often reflect a holistic view that encompasses physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, suggesting that cosmetics should not distract from one’s primary focus on God and spiritual growth [21].

Women in this denomination were observed to use basic cosmetics according to the table above even though the general impression suggests a conservative stand. The Church teaches that while using cosmetics is not inherently sinful, members should be cautious about their use and the messages they convey[24]. This idea is supported by Epstein (2009) that the Adventists emphasize is on promoting a healthy lifestyle and a natural appearance that reflects one’s commitment to God. They are encouraged to avoid excessive adornment and to prioritize inner beauty and character over outward appearance.

3.8 The Baptist Church

The Baptist Church’s view tends to allow cosmetics if used modestly and with a heart focused on godliness rather than vanity, reflecting biblical principles rather than strict prohibitions[25].

During an oral interview at the Baptist Church in Njoro, one of the clergy members shared that,

“Baptist church promotes modesty and personal integrity.”

The Baptist Church generally holds a moderate view on the use of cosmetics, allowing for personal discretion while emphasizing the importance of modesty [26]. This observation is backed up by the clergy member in the interview who explained that many Baptist congregations encourage women to dress modestly and to avoid excessive adornment, aligning with the Biblical teachings that prioritize inner beauty and character.

Another member explained that,

“While there aren’t strict rules regarding cosmetics, Baptists lay much emphasis on `avoiding vanity and keeping a focus on spiritual matters.”

In addition, one of the members at a focus group discussion noted that,

“When reflecting on local social norms, Baptists in Njoro tend to adopt a moderate approach to cosmetics.”

The pastor explained that women in the Baptist Church use cosmetics in a way that aligns with their denomination’s emphasis on modesty while also respecting personal convictions. One more participant in the group discussion seconded the pastor’s statement and added that,

“The approach allows for individual discretion while maintaining a focus on avoiding vanity and prioritizing spiritual concerns.”

In the table above members of the Baptist Church are shown to use certain cosmetic products like; Lipstick, lip-liner, lip-gloss, eyeliner and eyeshadow. This means that the Church does not out rightly condemn the use of cosmetics. According to the Baptist the focus is on ensuring that one's appearance does not become a source of pride or distraction from one's relationship with God [27]. The Baptist teachings conquering with thoughts from some authors, often encourage members to consider their motives and intentions when using cosmetics, promoting a balanced approach that honours both personal choice and biblical principles (Kidd 2005).

3.9 Gospel out Reach Ministry

Gospel out Reach Ministry an Evangelical church largely advocate discernment and self-reflection, emphasizing that true beauty lies in a Christ-like character rather than external enhancements[28].

A senior pastor at an oral interview at Gospel out Reach Ministry mentioned that,

“Evangelicals often interpret scripture individually out of their own personal convictions.”

According to this pastor, this leads to a wide range of practices regarding cosmetics. He gave an example that,

“Some Christians may use makeup for self-expression or to enhance their appearance, while others avoid it to stay true to their personal understanding of modesty.”

According to some evangelical Churches, religious teachings significantly influence perspectives on cosmetics, with different denominations offering varied interpretations of scripture regarding beauty and adornment. For instance, some conservative Christian groups discourage the Evangelical Churches often present a diverse range of views on the use of cosmetics, reflecting the broader cultural and theological spectrum within the movement. Many evangelicals accept

the use of cosmetics as a personal choice, emphasizing that they should be applied modestly and with the right intentions [29]

A youth in a focus group discussion explained that,

“In contemporary evangelical communities, there is an increasing diversity of views on cosmetics.”

He explained that many Christians view the use of cosmetics as a personal choice rather than a strict matter of faith. He added that,

“Most Christians’ considerations tend to be the intention and attitude behind the use of cosmetics rather than the act itself.”

Evangelical views on cosmetics can range from conservative to liberal, with emphasis often placed on personal conviction, modesty, and cultural context. Everyone’s approach can reflect their personal beliefs, denominational teachings, and interpretation of Biblical principles [30].

The in the observation table indicates that evangelicals embrace all kinds of cosmetics. They use cosmetics without any limit signifying a liberal approach towards the use of cosmetic. Similarly, Mile (2006), adds that more liberal denominations may permit cosmetic use, provided it aligns with principles of modesty and sincerity. In this case therefore the interpretation of biblical texts related to beauty often leads to differing conclusions about the appropriateness of cosmetics. This divergence reflects broader theological debates about the role of external appearance in the life of a believer and the balance between inner and outer beauty [31].

The evangelical teachings lean towards encouraging individuals to focus on their relationship with God and to ensure that their appearance does not overshadow their spiritual commitments[32]. According to Neal (2006), some evangelical leaders caution against the potential for vanity or distraction, promoting a balanced approach that honours both personal expression and biblical values. The Evangelicals’ emphasis is on cultivating a heart attitude that prioritizes inner beauty and character over outward appearance as indicated in the responses by some participants, even though they may have varying sentiments towards the use of cosmetics.

4.0 Conclusion

Christian teachings and traditions on the use of cosmetics vary. While there is generally no universal prohibition against cosmetics in Christianity, some denominations and individuals emphasize modesty and simplicity in appearance as virtues aligned with Biblical teachings. Others view cosmetics as a way of enhancing natural beauty, expression personal style and values, and as a reflection of cultural norms. The acceptance or restriction of cosmetics largely

hinges on the interpretation of Biblical principles, focusing on modesty, humility, and the importance of inner character over outward appearance. Some Christian traditions permit personal discretion, guided by individual faith and community values. This reflects a complex interplay between cultural norms, theological beliefs, and individual identity and personal values. The diversity in Christian teachings and traditions underscores the need for ongoing dialogue about the role of personal appearance in faith contexts and how it shapes community dynamics among believers. The intersection of religion and personal grooming continues to evolve, reflecting broader societal changes while remaining grounded in specific cultural and theological aspects.

5.0 Recommendation

Understanding the historical and cultural contexts in which various Christian traditions regarding cosmetics developed is crucial for grasping why certain denominations hold specific views on cosmetic use. Engaging in respectful dialogue with members and leaders from different denominations can further enrich this understanding by providing firsthand insights into the theological foundations and practical applications of cosmetic usage. Throughout this exploration, it is essential to maintain religious tolerance and openness. This balanced approach promotes an objective analysis about Christian understanding of cosmetic use.

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