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# Makeup's Effects on Self-Perception

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**MAKEUP'S EFFECTS ON SELF-PERCEPTION**

**A Research Paper**

**Presented to the Faculty of the Department of**

**Occupational and Technical Studies**

**At Old Dominion University**

**In Partial Fulfillment for the**

**Requirements for the Master of Science Degree**

**in Occupational and Technical Studies**

**By**

**Lauren A. Silverio**

**September 2009**

## SIGNATURE PAGE

This research paper was prepared by Lauren A. Silverio under the direction of Dr. John M. Ritz in OTED 636, Problems in Occupational and Technical Education. It was submitted to the Graduate Program Director as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science in Occupational and Technical Studies.

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

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Date

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In every society there is a standard of appearance that the population is expected to follow. There are those that venture outside of the box and push the envelope as it may, but there are general guidelines that most seem to agree are reasonable, within the context of their society. In most cultures these boundaries of behavior are considered to be cultural norms (Moriarty, 2008).

In the United States most would agree that bathing on a daily basis, brushing ones teeth, and other general bathroom habits have become part of the cultural norm. It has often been an assumption in today's culture that if one does not take the time to groom themselves properly, there is something wrong with them. Many times those who do not keep up with these grooming habits are assumed to have a mental disease or defect, be poorly cared for, or have a low opinion of themselves.

It has also become a cultural norm in the United States for women to wear makeup. It is an accepted process that women should wakeup in the morning and, along with traditional grooming habits, apply products to their face to disguise blemished areas and enhance beautiful ones. Depending upon the individual this is a process that could take five minutes, or more than an hour. A large portion of this culture does wear makeup at some point and time throughout their life, but there are some who still do not.

There is a general expectation of beauty, in the United States, which creates a product driven group of woman that may not feel as valuable if they do

not have the time to make themselves up. There is also the suggestion that makeup is just an accessory, perhaps it does not truly have any effect on the way a woman views herself. With a society that is often driven by multi-million dollar ad campaigns promoting beauty at every corner, this study is important in helping understand whether or not a woman truly values herself the same when she is wearing makeup compared to when she is not.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The purpose of this study was to determine whether wearing makeup directly affects a woman's personal image as perceived by her.

### **RESEARCH GOALS**

To answer this problem, the following questions were established:

1. Does wearing makeup make women feel more confident?
2. Does not wearing makeup make women feel self-conscious?
3. Does a woman view herself as less desirable if she is not wearing makeup?
4. What effect does wearing makeup, on someone who typically does not wear any, have on their perception of themselves?

### **BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

Throughout the ages cosmetic products have been used to make one feel and appear more beautiful. Commonly, products like powder, blusher, mascara, and lip color, to only name a few, have been adopted by woman to enhance their appearance. The practice of beautifying one's self dates back to ancient times, as early as 1500 B.C. Painting around the eyes with various colors and using kohl to darken brows and eyelashes was common in ancient Egypt and Arabia



(Diamond & Diamond, 2008). The Egyptians believed strongly in the use of cosmetics for religious reasons. Their belief was that their appearance had a direct correlation to their spirituality. They used cosmetics not only to appear more beautiful, but they believed that by painting around their eyes they could ward off evil spirits (Mellor, n.d.).

When the Greeks adopted the practice of using makeup the meaning behind wearing the products changed. Egyptians adorned these products for the purpose of spirituality, but for the Greeks wearing makeup was purely for appearance sake (Mellor, n.d.). Centuries later when the Roman Empire implemented the use of cosmetics, it created a high demand and utilization of products throughout Europe. Pumice stone was used to whiten teeth, rouge to stain cheeks, and a white lead powder was used to whiten the skin (Diamond & Diamond, 2008). At this time makeup was used not only to improve appearance but as a sign of social status. Those who were laborers and worked out in the fields always had tanned skin; therefore it was thought more beautiful to have pale skin, a sign that you had money and did not have to work (Mellor, n.d.).

The use of cosmetics continued to grow and evolve through the years. By the late 1800s and early 1900s cosmetic companies had developed a wealth of new products and created additional business for themselves. Despite the fact that makeup had already been around for centuries it was still primarily used by highly sophisticated consumers. Even through the 1950's there were many products that were not considered to be socially acceptable. Socially you were not deemed to be a "nice" girl if you wore too many cosmetic products (Diamond

& Diamond, 2008). In more recent years the cosmetic industry had increased its output by fourfold from 1958 to the early 1980's (Wilder, 1982). During the 1970's the cosmetic industry began to offer a wide variety of products and color options. Women were no longer wearing one simple look, and wearing makeup became somewhat an expression of self (Diamond & Diamond, 2008). Over the next thirty years makeup continued to evolve as fashion progressed. Makeup itself became a staple item that many women used, and continue to use every day. According to current information, the cosmetic industry brought in \$209.9 billion in 2007 (Kirillov, 2008).

Through time makeup has had many different significances, defining spirituality and even defining social class. One thing has always stayed unchanged and that is the idea that makeup causes one to appear more beautiful. This study is important in understanding whether or not this idea really has an impact on how women view themselves. Understanding that makeup enhances beauty is not a new challenge, but understanding whether or not it has an impact on a woman's perception of herself is. Through the collection of data a better understanding of the relationship between use of product and perception of self was developed. This will lead to a greater understanding a woman's purpose for buying makeup, especially on such a personal level, and can lead to greater understanding of use and purchase habits.

## **LIMITATIONS**

The following were limitations to this research study:

- The participants of this study were Old Dominion University students enrolled in the courses OTS 220, The Fashion Industry, and OTS 110, Technology and Your World, in Spring 2009.
- Students participated in the OTS 220 course, The Fashion Industry, as a major requirement to receive a Bachelor's of Science in Occupational and Technical Studies.
- Students participated in the OTS 110 course, Technology and Your World, as a general education requirement for their chosen area of study.
- The participants of this study were all female.
- The reference of makeup in this study is limited to facial cosmetic products.

## **ASSUMPTIONS**

The assumptions made for this study were as follows:

- The participants in this study were familiar with and had at least a basic knowledge in the application of makeup.
- The participants had worn and/or purchased makeup at some time in their lives.

## **PROCEDURES**

For the purpose of performing this study an anonymous survey was created. This was done to help develop findings in relation to the research goals. The survey was devised to establish whether the participants were frequent

users of cosmetic products. The survey was also used to understand the impact of wearing makeup on the participants and measure their opinion on feelings of self-worth based on the amount of makeup worn.

The survey was presented to students at Old Dominion University enrolled in courses under the Department of Occupational and Technical Studies. Two separate course selections were chosen to ensure a broader result platform. The courses used were OTS 220, The Fashion Industry, and OTS 110, Technology and Your World. The instructors of the respective courses handed out the survey packets in each of their classes. Each packet contained a cover letter, instructional guide, and survey. Upon completion each student returned the survey back to the envelope. The surveys were returned to the researcher within a twenty-four hour period. The researcher then tabulated and analyzed the data for results.

### **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

The following definitions were relevant to this study:

- Cosmetics/Makeup- “articles intended to be rubbed, poured, sprinkled, or sprayed on, introduced into, or otherwise applied to the human body or any part thereof for cleansing, beautifying, promoting attractiveness, or altering the appearance” (Food and Drug Administration, 2009, Sec. 201.).
- Culture- “the complex whole of tangible items, intangible concepts, and social behaviors that define a group of people or way of life” (Moriarty, 2009, p. 132).

- Social Influences- “the forces other people exert on your behavior” (Moriarty, 2008, p. 128).
- Beauty- “a socially defined standard of attractiveness; symmetry of facial features and a healthy appearance are universal signs of physically acceptable looks” (Berry, 2007, p. 3).

## **OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS**

Chapter I stated the problem to be researched which was to determine whether wearing makeup directly affected a woman’s personal image as perceived by her. To support this problem research goals were established dealing with self confidence, self consciousness, desirability, and self perception. Chapter I gave a brief overview of the history of cosmetics to guide the reader in understanding the foundation of the study and the implications of cosmetics over time. In addition, it highlighted specific terms and participant qualifications in order to set forth a precedent of understanding.

In Chapter II a review of literature was conducted. This chapter was focused on better understanding the effects of women’s appearance and its social implications. This chapter also focused on other research studies and articles with pertinent information in furthering the comprehension of this topic. In Chapter III a survey was developed to help understand the relationship between women’s self perception and the use of cosmetic products. As well, the procedures for data collection were outlined.

Chapter IV highlighted the findings of the survey, providing the results and data collected. In Chapter V conclusions and recommendations were provided based upon the research performed.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The purpose of this study was to determine whether wearing makeup directly affects a woman's personal image as perceived by her. In order to analyze this problem it was important to review other research related to these topics. This chapter discusses different facial cosmetic products and their use, as well as, presents the information found to better understand the perception of beauty in today's society, and beauty's role in confidence and desirability.

#### **FACIAL COSMETIC PRODUCTS**

The first and most commonly used cosmetic product is foundation. Foundation is a product that comes typically in two different forms, powder and liquid, and is used over the whole face to even out the complexion and cover any blemished areas. Starting in the 1970's foundation became a more natural looking product. The goal was to match the skin tone but enhance the color to give a healthy, even complexion (Sherrow, 2001). This was not always the case though, in early Roman times and through the Middle Ages, white lead powder was often used to lighten the skin as pale skin was a sign of rank and beauty. Up until the 1970's having a slightly paler or matte foundation was considered to be attractive. As the 70's ushered in an age of "natural" beauty, the use of powder foundation diminished, while liquid foundation became increasingly popular (Pointer, 2005). In today's society, where the average person spends most of their day working indoors, having a tan or bronzed complexion is now considered ideal.

The next product typically used has had many names over the years: blusher, rouge, blush, and the more modern use of the product is bronzer. This product is typically applied to the cheeks along the cheekbone, with a light dusting on the temples and across the nose and chin. The purpose is to add a little highlight and warmth to the face that may be lost with the use of foundation. According to Pointer (2005), "rouge in particular was probably the most common cosmetic in use at any point in our past" (p. 19). Having rosy cheeks has typically been viewed as a sign of health and often, even when having a pale complexion was seen as ideal, color was still placed on the cheeks for a healthy, brightened appearance. The use of blusher has remained a staple throughout time, although the color and amount used over the years has fluctuated based upon current fashions (Sherrow, 2001).

When speaking of eye makeup it is important to address three elements: eyeliner, eyeshadow, and mascara. Each of these products can be used together or alone but their sole purpose is to enhance the eye and make it appear more prominent. Eyeliner is typically a line drawn around the eye in the lash line to accentuate the size and shape of the eye. Eyeshadow is used on the lid, in the crease, and on the brow bone to add depth and accentuate the eye. Last, mascara is used to tint the eyelashes to make them appear more predominant. "For thousands of years, people have applied various substances to the eye area to add color, depth, and definition" (Sherrow, 2001, p. 106). Ancient Egyptians often lined their eyes with kohl and painted their lids with different colored pigments to beautify themselves, but also to protect their eyes from the harsh



sun. During the time of the Roman Empire women often used burnt cork to darken their lashes, not unlike modern day mascara. The use of eye makeup diminished starting in the renaissance period and continuing up through the 1800's, but picked it up again in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when kohl eyeliner began making a comeback. By the 1950's the use of cosmetic eye products was widespread and predominant (Sherrow, 2001). In modern society the choice of cosmetic eye products is enormous, with colors and styles changing from season to season, as with fashion trends.

The last product to be discussed would be lip color. Lip color can be referenced by lipstick, lip stain, or lip gloss. All of these products serve the same purpose, to add color, ranging from a deep pigment to a sheer tint, on the lips. The history of lipstick is slightly harder to trace, while many agree that lip color was regularly used, finding hard evidence is much more difficult (Pointer, 2005). There is, however, evidence that the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans combined oils and waxes with some tints of color to create a product that protected the lips. In today's society there are multitudes of lip products available for any consumer preference, ranging in color, texture, and density (Sherrow, 2001).

The use and history of each cosmetic product really has its own purpose, and tells its own story. While some products were developed and used for protection purposes, certainly most were used in the hopes of beautifying and making oneself more appealing to the eye, as well as portraying an image one believed they personified.

## PERCEPTION OF BEAUTY

It should come as no surprise that people are judged on a daily basis by their appearance. It should also come as no surprise that women are scrutinized even more so than men in this arena. When speaking of judging one another based on appearance how far is this really taken?

According to Jackson (1992), the author of *Physical Appearance and Gender*, facial appearance provides strong societal implications about people, even more for women than men. This research suggests that often times a stigma is placed on women who are considered unattractive, as more likely to engage in criminal behavior. While there is very little proof that having a specific facial type makes you more likely to commit a crime, there are a number of studies that confirm the fact that there are specific facial stereotypes that would cause one to associate certain facial features with a particular crime.

If having seemingly unattractive features would bring about the expectation of a person to be socially deviant, it would also be important to investigate if the opposite assumption is true. In a study performed by Wilson and Eckel (2006), which measured the amount of trust people have for more attractive people, they found that those people who do have a higher attractiveness rating were perceived to be more trustworthy upon first meeting. Unfortunately the old adage, "don't judge a book by its cover," seems to have lost its appeal in this product and beauty driven culture. Appearance has been an overwhelming factor in how people judge not only others, but themselves.

In today's society it is not surprising for women to be competitive with one another. What is an interesting point is the idea that men tend to be competitive more based on ability and intellect where as women are deemed to be competitive based upon appearance and facial attractiveness (Jackson, 1992). On the surface this may appear that women are just more vain, but is that really the case? It is undeniable that physical appearance has an impact on many parts of life. It has the ability to "influence the social power that we possess or are deprived of possessing, including the jobs we get, the salaries we earn, the clubs we join, the people we marry, the friendships we make, and the colleges we enter" (Berry, 2007, p. 3).

Beauty has proven to be very commonly related to social aptitude. It is often times assumed that people who are considered to be more attractive have greater social skills and are considered to have fewer difficulties with loneliness and social anxiety than unattractive people (Jackson, 1982). In a study performed by Abbott and Sebastian (1981), which related physical attractiveness to expected success, they found that overall high ratings of physical attractiveness were directly related to anticipating success in social situations. This study involved observers as well as people assessing themselves. Both groups' results were similar when examining the relationship between beauty and the expectation of success. This says a lot about the perception of beauty and the impact it is expected to have on an individual, after all social situations are typically a large part of daily life.

## **BEAUTY'S ROLE IN CONFIDENCE AND DESIRABILITY**

When speaking of significant parts of life, finding a partner has regularly been seen as being of great importance. From the time children are little they are presented with the idea that when they grow up they will one day meet someone, fall in love, and get married. It is reasonable to say that when you meet that person, you will find them attractive or desirable. Research indicates that facially attractive women are more apt to get married and are more likely to marry of higher social status (Jackson, 1982). It has also been found that facial beauty is of greater importance to men when picking a partner, than is for women when considering men to be their mate (Alley, 1988). In addition, it has also been suggested that attractive people have better marriages; this assumption being made when analyzing trends of longevity and marital satisfaction (Jackson, 1982). Based upon this information it is reasonable to say that a woman's wants or needs to feel and look more beautiful is well founded.

It is important to look at the relationship between the purchasing and use of cosmetic products, in relation to objective perception and self perception of beauty. With the previously mentioned factors it seems no surprise that billions of dollars a year are being spent by women on products to beautify themselves (Krillov, 2008). It has been found that cosmetics do increase perceived attractiveness as well as enhance certain characteristics that are deemed desirable such as femininity (Jackson, 1982). According to Berry (2007), the author of "Beauty Bias", cosmetic products are not only seen as methods of enhancement, but also as a source of projecting an image of power and status.

“We look into the mirror not merely to see how we look, but how we expect others to see us, and, unless amazingly self-confident, we attempt to modulate our appearances in order that others shall see us as we hope to be seen” (Brand, 2000, p. 72). This author goes on to explain that often time in today’s society happiness and unhappiness is gauged by appearance. It is hard to really know if being attractive truly provides a greater amount of happiness, but if that is the perception of people, it would provide a greater understanding of why the masses are consistently striving for beauty.

Understanding beauty’s effect on self-esteem is a difficult topic to fully grasp. There are some studies that show a positive correlation between attractiveness and self-esteem, more so for women than men, however many of the studies seem to portray weak relationships between the two. Yet there are also studies that strongly suggest a definite relationship between beauty and self-esteem using measures of psychological well being (Jackson, 1982).

There are many different variables to look at when trying to understand this data. The greatest seems to be the fact that the judgment of self-esteem is largely subjective. “As a society we seem unable to decide whether true self-esteem lies in accepting one’s lumps and rolls or in managing to achieve the discipline it takes to get rid of them” (Brand, 2000, p. 31). Simply stated, there is much conjecture whether accepting one’s flaws or striving for perfection provides a higher level of self-esteem.

There is another explanation to consider, which is that people who are considered to be more attractive have learned to place an extreme amount of

value in that, in fact they may believe that attractiveness is all they have going for them. Studies suggest that often time attractive people are less likely to accept and believe positive feedback that came from people that were deemed less-attractive (Jackson, 1982). The reasoning is that they feel they are being praised or given preference based on their facial appearance.

It would be safe to assume based on the research provided that today's society holds appearance at a high regard. Due to social influences it is not surprising that often time's women feel the need to look and display confidence, as well as, desirability. While these factors are still subjective there is no denying that purchasing and applying beautifying products plays some role in the attempted achievement of beauty. In interviews performed by researchers Getz and Klein (1994), it was found that there are two specific reasons women are thought to wear makeup: the first expressed the idea that she would feel incomplete without it, and the second articulated that the woman herself is complete but flawed and unattractive without the use of cosmetics (Callaghan, 1994). A similarly interesting area to address would be to relate the fact that there are also studies that show if a woman wears too much makeup she is seen as trashy or sexually promiscuous, on the other hand if she wears too little she is seen as not caring enough about her appearance (Callaghan, 1994). There seems to be a fine line between improving upon what is and trying to change who you are.

When assessing the research provided in the previous paragraphs it is important to recognize that what makes these subjects complex is the fact that

many of the variables involved are largely subjective, and really based on people's opinions and perceptions of themselves as well as others.

### **SUMMARY**

Chapter II presents literature to further understand and support the significance that society and individuals place on beauty. This chapter explained and provided examples of the perception of beauty and its impact on how individuals judge one another, key points being that society judges attractive individuals to be more successful, socially adept, and happier. As well, this chapter discussed the importance beauty has when assessing self-esteem, confidence, and desirability. Again, it is deemed that individuals that are considered to be beautiful are assumed to have higher self-esteem and confidence. It was also found that being considered desirable was related to attractiveness which generated more interest from the opposite sex. Chapter III discusses the methods and procedures used in order to collect data to further examine the research problem established.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

The objective of this study was to determine whether female, Old Dominion University undergraduate students' perception of themselves is altered or affected by wearing facial cosmetic products. In this chapter, methods and procedures were developed which were then used to produce data exploring Old Dominion University students' feeling about themselves when they are, and when they are not, wearing makeup. Furthermore, this data will assist in understanding whether or not there is a significant relationship between the two. This chapter includes information on population, instrument design, methods of data collection, and statistical analysis.

### **POPULATION**

The population of this study was Old Dominion University students enrolled in one of four courses in the Spring 2009 semester. The courses used were two sections of OTS 110, Technology and Your World, and two sections of OTS 220, The Fashion Industry. OTS 110, Technology and Your World, is an undergraduate general education requirement, while OTS 220, The Fashion Industry, is a major requirement for a bachelor's degree in Occupational and Technical Studies. The study population consisted of only female undergraduate students. Being that only female students were used for this study when the surveys were handed out, they were given based on the approximation of female students in the class. OTS 220, The Fashion Industry, was made up of all women; therefore the classes were given twenty-four surveys each. OTS 110,



Technology and Your World, was approximately half female students therefore each class was given fifteen student surveys. A total of seventy-eight surveys were handed out to students enrolled in OTS 220 and OTS 110.

### **INSTRUMENT DESIGN**

In order to generate findings an anonymous survey was used. The survey was divided into three sections. The first section utilized closed-ended questions to gain background knowledge pertaining to the students' average use of makeup. The second section was developed using forced choice responses. The response options included strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. This section was used to further understand the students' personal feelings about themselves and its relationship to their use of makeup. The last section provided one open-ended question to gain a more personal insight on the topic. Each survey question was developed in relation to the research goals established for this problem.

### **METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION**

Participants were selected by examining the student body at Old Dominion University and choosing two courses that gave an overall range of students. Students enrolled in OTS 110, Technology and Your World, and OTS 220, The Fashion Industry, provided a sampling of two populations. One, a more generalized population being that OTS 110, Technology and Your World, is a general education requirement for different majors. The other, a more fashion focused group being that OTS 220, The Fashion Industry, is a major requirement

under Occupational and Technical Studies, and in the fashion merchandising program. Using these two separate courses provided a broad range of opinion.

The researcher provided the instructors of the two courses with survey packets for each class. The instructors passed out the survey at the beginning of class explaining that this was an optional class activity. For those who chose to participate, they were instructed to open their packets and read the included instructions. Each packet included a cover letter, instructions, and a survey. Once the students completed the survey they placed it back in the included envelope, which was then returned to the front of the class. Once all of the survey packets were placed at the front of the class, the instructor then returned them to the researcher.

### **STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

The collected data were reviewed, tabulated, and analyzed. The mean was calculated for each forced-choice response to determine what relationship wearing makeup has to women's feelings of self-confidence, self-consciousness, and desirability. The number and frequency of responses were also tabulated. The findings collected from the open-ended question were then analyzed to identify any patterns of commonalities for the student's personal reasoning behind wearing makeup. These patterns were then organized and described according to their number and frequency of occurrence.

### **SUMMARY**

Chapter III discussed the methods and procedures used to collect data that was pertinent to answering the problem of this study. The population of this

study was students from OTS 110, Technology and Your World, and OTS 220, The Fashion Industry. A survey was developed to measure the relationship between these students, their use of cosmetic products, and its effect on their self-perception. Chapter IV will then explain the findings of these surveys and explain in detail the relationships established.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS**

The purpose of this study was to determine whether wearing makeup directly affects a woman's personal image as perceived by her. This study provided information regarding the average use of makeup and impacts on feelings of confidence and desirability. A survey was administered to female students at Old Dominion University in order to obtain the necessary data. This chapter reports the findings from the data collected. In this chapter the findings will be presented in seven sections: An overview of responses, data analysis, effects on confidence, effects on self-consciousness, effects on desirability, effects on self-perception, and an open-ended question.

#### **OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES**

The participants of this study were female students at Old Dominion University enrolled in OTS 220, The Fashion Industry, or OTS 110, Technology and Your World. Two sections of each course were given surveys to complete, meaning four classes in total. There were twenty-four students in total in each class. For OTS 220, The Fashion Industry, the class was all female and therefore was given twenty-four surveys to complete, with a total of forty-eight for the two classes. OTS 110 was more of a mixed class with approximately half of the class being female. Each class was given fifteen surveys to complete with a total of thirty for the two courses. All together seventy-eight surveys were distributed. A total of fifty-five, or seventy-two percent, of the surveys were returned and used in the completion of this study. See Table 1.

**Table 1. Survey Statistics**

<b>SURVEY STATISTICS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Surveys Handed Out</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Student Participation</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Percentage of Return</b>	<b>71%</b>

### **MAKEUP USE**

The survey responses were analyzed to identify any patterns of commonalities between the average amount of makeup worn and the overall feelings of self-confidence and desirability. It was first important to determine the average use of makeup. Question 1 was on the daily use of makeup. It was found that for daily use of makeup sixteen percent, or nine women, wore no makeup; thirty-three percent, or 18 women, wore very little; forty percent, or twenty-two, wore foundation, lip gloss, and eye makeup; and eleven percent, or six women, wore a full face of makeup. This indicated that a majority of the women wear at least a little makeup, and many of them wear foundation, lip gloss, and eye makeup on a daily basis. See Table 2.

**Table 2. Daily Makeup Wear**

<b>DAILY MAKEUP WEAR</b>	<b>Number of Use</b>	<b>% of Use</b>
<b>None</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Very little, foundation and lip gloss</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Foundation, lip gloss, and a little eye makeup</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>A full face of makeup</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11%</b>

Question 2 examined the use of makeup for special events. It was found that five percent, or three, of the women wore no makeup; and eighteen percent, or ten of the women, wore very little; forty-six percent, or twenty-five of the

women, wore foundation, lip gloss, and eye makeup; and thirty-one percent, or seventeen of the women, wore a full face of makeup. This indicated that these women increased their use of makeup for a special event. A majority of women used foundation, lip gloss and eye makeup, and there was a large increase in those who used a full face of makeup. See Table 3.

**Table 3. Special Event Makeup Use**

<b>SPECIAL EVENT MAKEUP WEAR</b>	<b>Number of Use</b>	<b>% of Use</b>
<b>None</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Very little, foundation and lip gloss</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Foundation, lip gloss, and a little eye makeup</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>46%</b>
<b>A full face of makeup</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>31%</b>

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

In the Part II of the survey twelve statements were given and the participant was asked to rate their responses as follows: 5, strongly agree; 4, agree; 3, uncertain; 2, disagree; 1, strongly disagree. The mean for each statement was calculated. The results of the survey were then analyzed further and were divided into a percentile analysis. This was then calculated and reported by frequency for each category of responses on a percentile basis.

### **EFFECTS ON CONFIDENCE**

#### **Statement 1, When I wear makeup I feel more put together.**

Thirty-seven percent (20) of the participants strongly agreed that they feel more put together when wearing makeup; forty-two percent (23) agreed; seven percent (4) were undecided; seven percent (4) disagreed; and seven percent (4)

strongly disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 3.90, indicating that the average response to this statement was to agree. See Table 4.

**Statement 2, I feel like makeup helps to hide any “flaws”.**

Twenty-seven percent (15) of the participants strongly agreed that they feel makeup helps to hide any “flaws”; thirty-one percent (17) agreed; nine percent (5) were undecided; eighteen percent (10) disagreed; and fifteen percent (8) strongly disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 3.38, indicating that the average response to this statement was uncertain. See Table 4.

**Statement 3, When my makeup looks good, I feel good.**

Fifty-three percent (29) of the participants strongly agreed that when their makeup looks good they feel good; forty percent (22) agreed; two percent (1) were undecided; two percent (1) disagreed; and three percent (2) strongly disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 4.36, indicating that the average response to this statement was to agree. See Table 4.

**Table 4. Confidence Statements**

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD	MEAN
<b>1. When I wear makeup I feel more put together.</b>	5	4	3	2	1	3.90
<b>Percentage of Responses</b>	37%	42%	7%	7%	7%	
<b>2. I feel like makeup helps to me to hide any “flaws”.</b>	5	4	3	2	1	3.38
<b>Percentage of Responses</b>	27%	31%	9%	18%	15%	
<b>3. When my makeup looks good, I feel good.</b>	5	4	3	2	1	4.36
<b>Percentage of Responses</b>	53%	40%	2%	2%	3%	

## EFFECTS ON SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

**Statement 4, I always wear a little makeup, even if just running out to the store.**

Seventeen percent (9) of the participants strongly agreed that they always wear a little makeup even if just running to the store; twenty-seven percent (15) agreed; nine percent (5) were undecided; twenty percent (11) disagreed; and twenty-seven percent (15) strongly disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 2.85, indicating that the average response to this statement was uncertain. See Table 5.

**Statement 5, If I'm not wearing any makeup I hate running into people I know.**

Eighteen percent (10) of the participants strongly agreed that they hate running into people they know if they are not wearing any makeup; eighteen percent (10) agreed; eleven percent (6) were undecided; eighteen percent (10) disagreed; and thirty-five (19) percent strongly disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 2.67, indicating that the average response to this statement was uncertain. See Table 5.

**Statement 6, I feel like others think I'm unattractive without makeup.**

Five percent (3) of the participants strongly agreed that they think others think they are unattractive without makeup; nine percent (5) agreed; fifteen percent (8) were undecided; twenty-seven percent (15) disagreed; and forty-four percent (24) strongly disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 2.05,



indicating that the average response to this statement was to disagree. See Table 5.

**Statement 7, I feel unattractive without makeup on.**

Five percent (3) of the participants strongly agreed that they feel unattractive without makeup on; thirteen percent (7) agreed; nine percent (5) were undecided; thirty-three percent (18) disagreed; and forty percent (22) strongly disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 2.10, indicating that the average response to this statement was to disagree. See Table 5.

**Table 5. Self-consciousness Statements**

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD	MEAN
<b>4. I always wear a little makeup, even if just running out to the store.</b>	5	4	3	2	1	2.85
<b>Percentage of Responses</b>	17%	27%	9%	20%	27%	
<b>5. If I'm not wearing any makeup I hate running into people I know.</b>	5	4	3	2	1	2.67
<b>Percentage of Responses</b>	18%	18%	11%	18%	35%	
<b>6. I feel like others think I'm unattractive without makeup.</b>	5	4	3	2	1	2.05
<b>Percentage of Responses</b>	5%	9%	15%	27%	44%	
<b>7. I feel unattractive without makeup on.</b>	5	4	3	2	1	2.10
<b>Percentage of Responses</b>	5%	13%	9%	33%	40%	

**EFFECTS ON DESIRABILITY**

**Statement 8, I would go on a date without makeup on.**

Twenty-nine percent (16) of the participants strongly agreed that they would go on a date without makeup on; twenty-two percent (12) agreed; seven percent (4) were undecided; twenty-two percent (12) disagreed; and twenty percent (11) strongly disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 3.10,

indicating that the average response to this statement was uncertain. See Table 6.

**Statement 9, When I wear makeup it makes me feel more sexy/desirable.**

Twenty-two percent (12) of the participants strongly agreed that wearing makeup makes them feel more sexy and/or desirable; forty-five percent (25) agreed; thirteen percent (7) were undecided; eleven percent (6) disagreed; and nine percent (5) strongly disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 3.60, indicating that the average response to this statement was to agree. See Table 6.

**Statement 10, I don't think a date would find me as attractive without makeup.**

Seven percent (4) of the participants strongly agreed that they don't think a date would find them as attractive without makeup; fifteen percent (8) agreed; eighteen percent (10) were undecided; twenty-five percent (14) disagreed; and thirty-five percent (19) strongly disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 2.34, indicating that the average response to this statement was to disagree. See Table 6.

**Table 6. Desirability Statements**

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>MEAN</b>
<b>8. I would go on a date without makeup.</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.10</b>
<b>Percentage of Responses</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>20%</b>	
<b>9. When I wear makeup it makes me feel more sexy/desirable.</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.60</b>
<b>Percentage of Responses</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>9%</b>	
<b>10. I don't think a date would find me as attractive without makeup.</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2.34</b>
<b>Percentage of Responses</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>35%</b>	

## EFFECTS ON SELF-PERCEPTION

**Statement 11, If I was wearing more makeup than normal I would feel uncomfortable.**

Fifty-three percent (29) of the participants strongly agreed that they would feel uncomfortable if they were wearing more makeup than normal; eighteen percent (10) agreed; seventeen percent (9) were undecided; seven percent (4) disagreed; and five percent (3) strongly disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 4.00, indicating that the average response to this statement was to agree. See Table 7.

**Statement 12, Wearing makeup makes me feel fake.**

Seven percent (4) of the participants strongly agreed that wearing makeup makes them feel fake; two percent (1) agreed; thirteen percent (7) were undecided; thirty-three percent (18) disagreed; and forty-five percent (25) strongly disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 1.92, indicating that the average response to this statement was to disagree. See Table 7.

**Table 7. Self-perception Statements**

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD	MEAN
<b>11. If I was wearing more makeup than normal I would feel uncomfortable.</b>	5	4	3	2	1	4.00
<b>Percentage of Responses</b>	53%	18%	17%	7%	5%	
<b>12. Wearing makeup makes me feel fake.</b>	5	4	3	2	1	1.92
<b>Percentage of Responses</b>	7%	2%	13%	33%	45%	

## **OPEN-ENDED QUESTION**

For Part III of the survey, an open-ended question, was established to supplement the forced answer questions. The purpose of this question was to gain further understanding into the individual participant's personal reasons for wearing makeup. The responses were then reported by frequency, taking into consideration that some individuals gave several answers to the question.

### **Question: Why do you wear makeup?**

The answers collected were reported as follows:

1. Enhance features (20)
2. Hide flaws (17)
3. To look "put together" (10)
4. It's fun (7)
5. It's like an accessory (5)
6. It completes the look (5)
7. It brings life to the face (4)
8. For special occasions (3)
9. It gives confidence (3)
10. Feels naked without it (2)
11. It provides a little change from the average look (2).

## **SUMMARY**

In this chapter the findings from the student surveys were analyzed and presented. The surveys were used to understand the relationship between women's use of makeup and their self-perception. The first set of data displayed

the number and percentage of responses to the survey as compared to the amount of surveys distributed. The second set of data revealed the average use of makeup for daily and special occasion use. The third set of data illustrated the mean and percentage rate of responses to the statements presented in the survey. Finally, the last set of data revealed the ten most common answers to the short answer question at the end of the survey. In Chapter V a summary of the research will be presented, as well, conclusions will be drawn and recommendations made based on the data collected.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter summarizes the research conducted throughout this study. Conclusions will be drawn from the data collected and the research goals will be answered. Recommendations will then be made based upon the findings of this study.

#### **SUMMARY**

Cosmetics have been used for thousands of years to alter or “improve” a person’s appearance. While cosmetics have changed throughout time, beginning with the rudimentary use of natural ingredients like kohl and evolving into a multi-billion dollar industry using chemically and naturally produced ingredients, its real use has never changed. While it has been used at times for religious reasons and as protection from the elements, it has always been used to beautify the wearer. Over the years makeup has been worn by both men and women, but in today’s society it is mostly women that wear makeup on a daily basis.

In our society beauty is often times related with certain personal characteristics and achievements. It is not uncommon for people to think that a person who is more attractive has more self-confidence or is more desirable to the opposite sex. This being the case, it is important to understand the effects that using beautifying products, particularly cosmetics, have on women.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether wearing makeup directly affects a woman’s personal image as perceived by her. In order to reach this objective certain research goals were established:

1. Does wearing makeup make women feel more confident?
2. Does not wearing makeup make women feel self conscious?
3. Does a woman view herself as less desirable if she is not wearing makeup?
4. What effect does wearing makeup, on someone who typically does not wear any, have on their perception of themselves?

This research was conducted using female students at Old Dominion University. The participants from this study were enrolled in sections of OTS 110, Technology and Your World, and OTS 220, The Fashion Industry. This research was performed in the Spring semester of 2009. In total seventy-eight surveys were distributed. Fifty-five, or seventy-two percent, were completed and used for this study

A survey was used to gather data relating to the research problem and goals established. The survey utilized both forced choice responses as well as an open-ended question. The forced choice responses included strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. Each statement and question was developed to correlate with the research goals of this study. The survey was designed to determine what perceptions women made about themselves when they do or do not wear makeup.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The following conclusions were made based upon the findings of the research conducted and were organized by the research goals established:

**Goal 1: Does wearing makeup make women feel more confident?**

The results of the survey recognized that, with a mean score of 3.90, women do feel more put together when they wear makeup. As well with a mean score of 4.36, most women agreed to the fact that they felt good when their makeup looks good. The one area that the participants were most undecided was to whether or not they felt that makeup helps them to hide anything they considered to be a flaw. As a result of this data it was concluded that wearing makeup does provide a certain amount of self-confidence to the wearer.

**Goal 2: Does not wearing makeup make women feel self conscious?**

The survey results indicated, with mean score of 2.85, most women were undecided about whether or not they felt the need to wear makeup when just running out for a simple errand. As well women were almost equally as undecided, with a mean score of 2.67, about their feelings on running into someone they know when they were not wearing any makeup. However it was also found that with a mean score of 2.10, most women did not consider themselves unattractive without makeup on. In addition, with a mean score of 2.05, most women did not believe others found them unattractive when they were not wearing makeup. As a result of this data, combined with the previous set of data, it was concluded that while wearing makeup may provide women with self confidence, not wearing makeup did not necessarily cause a lack in self confidence. Looking at all three statements and responses together, while the average response was uncertain, an inclination to disagree with the aforementioned statements leading the researcher to believe that not wearing makeup does not have such an impact on self-confidence.



**Goal 3: Does a woman view herself as less desirable if she is not wearing makeup?**

The results of the survey indicated, with a mean score of 2.34, women did not believe that a date would find them unattractive without makeup. Most women were however undecided about whether they would go out on a date without makeup with a mean score of 3.10. Finally, with a mean of 3.60, most women agreed that wearing makeup did make them feel more sexy and desirable. After examining the results of this data it was concluded while wearing makeup does in fact make a woman feel more desirable, it did not mean that she felt undesirable without it.

**Goal 4: What effect does wearing makeup, on someone who typically does not wear any, have on their perception of themselves?**

The results of this survey indicated, with a mean score of 4.00, most women agreed that they would feel uncomfortable if they were wearing more makeup than they normally wore. However, with a mean score of 1.92, most women disagreed that wearing makeup made them feel fake or phony. After evaluating these and the above results, it was concluded while wearing makeup can provide a bit of self-confidence, wearing too much can do just the opposite. While actually wearing makeup does not make one feel fake, it does make one unnatural to wear too much.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The researcher has developed recommendations based upon the conclusions drawn from the research performed. The recommendations are as follows:

1. Since the study focused only on Old Dominion University students, future research should be performed on a broader scale possibly using multiple universities across the country.
2. Since this study focused on college students, future research should be performed using participants of varying age and background.
3. Future research should be done in this area comparing cultural backgrounds and its influence on the results since the study was focused primarily on American students.

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## **APPENDICES**

APPENDIX A: COVER LETTER

APPENDIX B: SURVEY

**APPENDIX A**  
**COVER LETTER**

Dear Students,

Your participation in this survey would be greatly appreciated in order to aid me in my graduate research. Completion of this work will fill the research requirement to receive my master's from Old Dominion University in the department of Occupational and Technical Studies. This survey is entirely anonymous and optional. Whether or not you decide to complete this survey will have no impact on your grade in this course. Any disclosed information provided to me in this survey will not be shared or linked to the participant. It is also important to stress that you should place no identifying marks on the survey provided, to help protect your anonymity.

This survey will measure your opinion on the amount of you makeup you wear, as well as, its effects on your perception of self. The results of this survey will be tabulated and used to substantiate the relationship, or lack thereof, between the use of makeup and self-perception. Your participation is important, as this study is based upon its relationship with Old Dominion University students.

I thank you in advance for your participation. Please remember that this survey is entirely anonymous so your honesty is greatly appreciated. Please follow the instructions provided.

Thank you,

Lauren Silverio

## APPENDIX B

### SURVEY

#### Part I:

**Answer the following questions about your personal use of makeup:**

1. On an average day going to school or work, how much makeup do you wear?
  - a. None.
  - b. Very little, foundation and lip gloss.
  - c. Foundation, lip gloss, and a little eye makeup.
  - d. A full face of makeup
  
2. When going out to a special event, how much makeup do you wear?
  - a. None.
  - b. Very little, foundation and lip gloss.
  - c. Foundation, lip gloss, and a little eye makeup.
  - d. A full face of makeup

#### Part II:

**For this part of the survey rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by circling the appropriate number. Indicate your answers by rating each item on the following scale, 5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Uncertain, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree.**

Question Number	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. When I wear makeup I feel more put together.	5	4	3	2	1
2. I feel like makeup helps to me to hide any "flaws".	5	4	3	2	1
3. When my makeup looks good, I feel good.	5	4	3	2	1
4. I always wear a little makeup, even if just running out to the store.	5	4	3	2	1

**Please do not write your name or place any distinguishing markings on the packet.**

5. If I'm not wearing any makeup I hate running into people I know.	5	4	3	2	1
6. I feel like others think I'm unattractive without makeup.	5	4	3	2	1
7. I feel unattractive without makeup on.	5	4	3	2	1
8. I would go on a date without makeup.	5	4	3	2	1
9. When I wear makeup it makes me feel more sexy/desireable.	5	4	3	2	1
10. I don't think a date would find me as attractive without makeup.	5	4	3	2	1
11. If I was wearing more makeup than normal I would feel uncomfortable.	5	4	3	2	1
12. Wearing makeup makes me feel fake.	5	4	3	2	1

**Part III:**

**After the question, please explain your response by writing your answer on the lines provided.**

1. Why do you wear makeup?

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