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## The Use of Makeup as a Method of Boosting Confidence in Women: A Quantitative Study

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**Abstract** The purpose of this research is to clarify the reasons why women use makeup and to determine whether women prefer themselves with or without makeup. More specifically, this research focuses on women in Cyprus between the ages of 20 and 65+. Questionnaires were distributed to 983 Cypriot women. The survey data was collected anonymously using random sampling, and data analysis was conducted using Excel and SPSS programs. The questionnaire begins with a series of questions outlining the participant's profile, such as age, marital status, etc., and then continues with questions that seek answers to the inquiries of this research.

**Keywords** make up, women, attractiveness, confidence, self-image

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## 1. Introduction

Makeup is an aesthetic technique of using various cosmetic products, usually colored and is applied on the face to promote facial features while also correcting, downgrading and even covering up natural or acquired imperfections. As it boosts female attractiveness, confidence, charm and morale, it is considered the most ubiquitous forms of personal decoration and the carrier for creating and delivering beauty (Edcoff, 2000). Applying makeup, is a daily ritual millions of women around the world can't do without. Before leaving the house, whether they're preparing for work, a big event, or a date with a special person, spend quality time, in front of the mirror using an array of cosmetics (Deezen, 2014). Archaeological evidences reveal that the application of makeup, is not a modern practice. It has been an integral part of humankind and has played an important role in almost every society in all major ancient civilizations. It dates back several thousands of years where women as well as men, used to paint their faces and bodies for various reasons, such as: religious, recreational, aesthetic, social, survival, even attracting the opposite sex. Although over the years, the reasons, the ways of use and the styles have undergone dramatic changes, the use of makeup has been widespread for centuries. From ancient times until today in the evolution of human, regardless of age, appearance and social status, he wanted to appear more beautiful, younger or different. Through various elements and traits, he was trying to identify the model of beauty and constantly sought new ways of grooming. He used various cosmetic formulations to strengthen the epidermis and improve his external appearance, where this was part of his daily individual care. Nowadays, cosmetics are morally neutral agents of beauty enhancement and are freely chosen (Etcoff, 2011). It is proven by many studies using carefully controlled before-and-after photos, that makeup covering facial flaws makes the face more beautiful, thus increases female attractiveness (DiDonato, 2015). This grooming may be temporary, but according to Nancy Etcoff, lead author and an assistant clinical professor of psychology at Harvard University, there is evidence that when women wear makeup boosts their confidence (Etcoff, 2011) and this self-confidence is attractive (Etcoff, 2013). It is noted that a large portion of women today are addicted to makeup use in such an extent that spend hundreds of pounds each year on cosmetics, and as many minutes worrying about the way they look (Cosslett, 2015). Makeup is so ubiquitous in our society that today we rarely see a woman without makeup especially when she is out for a special event. Some women and girls wear makeup completely for themselves and on the other hand, there are those who wear makeup for the perceived benefit of others, or who feel as though they are unacceptable without it (Cosslett, 2015). The purpose of this study is to clarify the reasons why women use makeup, and tries to determine, whether women prefer themselves with or without makeup.

## 2. Literature Review

According Britton and Britton (2012) research outcomes reveal that cosmetic industry has an important impact on women and especially on college women. Today women are continuously being reminded of what exactly is thought to be beautiful. The existence of thousands of advertisements encourages this intangible beautiful image to women of all ages. In the year of 2008, the YWCA USA through a report discussing the aftermath of the beauty persistence on both women and girls in USA, show that this beauty obsession leads in decreasing levels of self-esteem and at the same time reveals that many money are spent. According YWMCA \$7 billion is spent every year on cosmetics (beauty at any cost, 2008) and based on Britton and Britton (2012) the outcomes suggest that college women are included in the large client group of this \$7 billion-dollar cosmetic industry. Recent research indicates that makeup application enhances female attractiveness (DiDonato, 2015). According Loegel et al (2017) women athletes report that facial make up application is frequently view as a self-image strategy that help them to acquire a more 'feminine-looking' body while on the other hand other women in different context report that by wearing make-up allows them to be perceived as more feminine and more attractive helping them to acquire various social benefits. Richetin, Croizet and Huguet (2004) support that facial makeup is related more with positive than negative attributes. Korichi, R. et al. (2008) underpin that makeup has the power to support two different opposite "up" functions such as "camouflage" vs "seduction". Their research outcomes revealed that beyond the simple application of products with nice colors on the area of the face, makeup has two core functional impacts according on particular psychological profiles of women. Therefore, the application of makeup could be the road for minimizing negative influences and/or for increasing positive influences that correlate to self-image and an individual's relationship to the social context (Korichiet al, 2008). Oi and Ohi (2012) conducted research where they support that using make-up often was able to 'catch a glimpse of self-defense measures' until post-menopause, particularly <5 years after climacteric. A year after Oi and Ohi (2013) conducted research and they support that women facing changes in their appearance due to menopause lead to several negative psychological changes and that women compensating these feelings use make up

more often. Moreover, Korichi, R. et al. (2011) suggest that make up is used differentially, based to stable psychological profiles of women, in order to control particular optical/morphological facial characteristics associated in attractiveness but they also note that these results should be cautious when comparing with other socio-cultural backgrounds as the outcomes of their research have been acquired by just a single geographical location. Moreover, according Lee and Oh (2018) makeup application allows to cover facial flaws and boosts the self-confidence while additionally helps positively in interpersonal relations and serves as a mean that connects human emotion. Today according Narang (2013), 44 percent of American women don't feel comfortable when they leave home without applying their make up on despite their destination. Make up application has transformed to a source of expression for American women and this population does not feel beautiful enough without it (Narang, 2013). Based on Ueda and Koyama (2010) women in Japan are using make up very often and are very heavy users of make-up. This is because of their ambition to make their faces look closer to the ideal face and additionally because they do not like to reveal their natural faces to others. It is interesting to note that based on COLIPA Statistics Working Group, Euromonitor, among the new member states of EU, a higher divergence in per capita spending terms exists and more specifically the report shows that Cyprus is among the largest per capita cosmetics spender with the amount reaching at €212. In the second place according to the report is Malta with the amount reaching at €144 and with the countries of Czech Republic and Slovakia to follow with €82 and €81, respectively. Finally, Romania and Bulgaria hold the lower position in the list (the Study of the European Cosmetics Industry, 2007, p6).

According Barel et al, (2009) researchers believe that the use of makeup acts and stimulates positively three of the human's senses such as touch, which encompasses all sensations from the body surface, smell (fragrance), and sight (the process of becoming and looking beautiful). These three senses can induce sensory as well as psychological pleasure. A study initiated in 2007 by the cosmetics company "Kanebo" in collaboration with the Japanese scientist of neurology, Dr. Ken Mogi, named "Cosmetics, Beauty and Brain Science", determine how women perceive themselves both with and without makeup, and the difference that specific types of color makeup have on their self-esteem. Using a brain scanner, it was discovered that as women prepare for their makeup routine, experience a wave of euphoria and optimism (Ryall, 2009). Furthermore, Jones, Kramer and Ward (2014) study findings suggest that "attractiveness perceptions with cosmetics are a form of pluralistic ignorance, whereby women tailor their cosmetics preferences to an inaccurate perception of others' preferences". Bitai et al (2016) supports that wearing cosmetics is very common among women of different cultures all over the world, not only for facial attractiveness but to show the culture, the religion and the social group they belong. With the use of cosmetics increasing worldwide, consumers must be aware of the proper use of cosmetics and the implications of the cosmetics to their health. The cosmetic industry often supports that a youthful, healthy looking skin without hair and blemishes is more desirable. Hence, even minor facial imperfections have major impact on a woman's life quality and mental health, making them more prone to depression. Make up can improve a woman's life quality as it influences positively self-perception and perception by others, especially men that seem to prefer women with make-up. Studies have shown that the positive effect of make up on self-esteem and self-perception is not only found among young and middle age women but is also confirmed by elderly women aged 60-96 years (Samson et al 2010). On the other hand, Graham and Kligman (1985), observed that attractiveness did not seem to be associated with the use of cosmetics among the elderly. Furthermore, cosmetics have positive effect on self-esteem that cause positive emotions and influence the autonomous nerve system as well as the physiological health by decreasing the heart rate and the level of cortisol which is a stress-related hormone in our body (Possel et al, 2005). Make up has an enhancing result on facial attractiveness and an important role in recognizing facial identity. A study presented that by enhancing the face characteristics with light make up made it easier to recognize a face, while heavy make-up can enhance facial symmetry by decreasing the distinctive characteristics of a face making it difficult to recognize (Ueda et al, 2011). According Gueguen et al (2011) it is found that the social perception of women with make-up is positive evaluated, as those women consider more feminine, more tidy and cleaner, more interesting, confident, sociable, organized and more physically attractive. In addition, women with make-up consider to be from a higher socioeconomic background and healthier (Jones et al, 2015). A study regarding female attractiveness and tipping behavior in restaurants, showed that both female and male customers evaluated more positive the physical attractiveness of the waitress in make-up condition and larger amount of tipping was given to waitress with make-up (Gueguen et al 2011). A study about facial attractiveness by the Psychology Department of Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College in the UK, identified that eye make-up considers by women more effective in enhancing a look, as they are the focal point of the face. On the other hand, men evaluated both foundation and eye make-up equally important for facial beauty. Unexpectedly, both women and men did not find lipstick to contribute to attractiveness. In conclusion,

women of ages 31-38, use make-up to enhance their self-esteem and facial attractiveness, as well as their desirability by the opposite sex (Mulhern et al, 2003).

### 3. Methodology

For the purpose of this scientific research, quantitative research has been employed in order to find relationships between different factors. Quantitative research refers to the systematic investigation of phenomena with statistical methods, mathematical models and numerical data. Data collection was complete using a structured protocol such as a questionnaire. The questionnaire is in electronic form using Google Drive and is consisted by sixteen closed type questions that are easier to answer, it takes less writing and it does not take long to answer them. The questionnaire begins with a series of questions that outline the profile of the participant such as age, marital status, etc. Then continues with questions that seek answers to the inquiries of this research. The population survey targets the women of Cyprus, with ages range from 20 to 65+ years. Based on the Statistical service of Cyprus and the Demographic report 2017, the female population is 387,000. According to the sample number, the questionnaire must be complete by 1,065 women in Cyprus. The sample number was calculated based on the following formula

$$z^2 p(1-p)$$

Sample size = -----

$$z^2 p(1-p)$$

$$1+ ( \dots\dots\dots)$$

$$e^2 N (1)$$

where N is the population size, e is margin of error (percentage in decimal form), and z is the z-score. The confidence level is 95% and the probable error +, -3%. The survey data was collected anonymously, by random sampling and data analysis was done by processing the data in Excel and SPSS program.

### 4. Results

Table 1 The questionnaires were given to 983 Cypriot women. The largest percentage of 74% is between the ages 20 to 39 and the smallest percentage of 26% is between the ages 40 to 65 +.

**Table 1**

what is your age?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20-24	223	22.7	22.7	22.7
	25-29	197	20.0	20.0	42.7
	30-34	178	18.1	18.1	60.8
	35-39	136	13.8	13.8	74.7
	40-44	91	9.3	9.3	83.9
	45-49	49	5.0	5.0	88.9
	50-54	49	5.0	5.0	93.9
	55-59	29	3.0	3.0	96.8
	60-64	17	1.7	1.7	98.6
	65+	14	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	983	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 To the question "Why do you wear makeup?", allages responded very positively to options "To cover flows" and "To boost confidence". While the slight positive rate was given from age 50 to 65 +, to options" Because I feel unattractive without it" and" To fit in".

**Table 2**

	<b>what is your age?</b>									
	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Why do you wear make-up? (Give one answer for each part) [To fit in]	3.7	3.4	3.2	3.0	2.9	3.0	2.7	2.9	2.9	3.1
Why do you wear make-up? (Give one answer for each part) [Because I feel I must]	3.3	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.1	2.8	2.8
Why do you wear make-up? (Give one answer for each part) [Because I feel unattractive without it]	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.3	3.0	3.1	3.2	2.7	3.3	3.2
Why do you wear make-up? (Give one answer for each part) [Work-related]	3.7	4.1	4.1	4.1	3.8	4.1	4.1	3.2	3.8	3.6
Why do you wear make-up? (Give one answer for each part) [To boost confidence]	4.3	4.4	4.1	4.1	4.3	4.0	3.8	3.1	4.1	4.5
Why do you wear make-up? (Give one answer for each part) [To cover flaws]	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.2	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.7	4.1	4.3

Table 3-4. We notice that all ages feel confident when wearing makeup. While they do not feel uncomfortable and weird when wearing makeup. On the other hand, in Table 4 we see a decrease in the sense of satisfaction, beauty and confidence when not wearing makeup. It is noteworthy that when wearing makeup, at the ages of 60 to 64 this difference seems very noticeable in the "Satisfaction" option with 4.7, while without makeup is 3.7. The same is observed in the "Beautiful" option when wearing makeup with 4.5 while without makeup 3.6.

**Table 3**

	<b>what is your age?</b>									
	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
How do you feel with make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Uncomfortable]	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.6	2.6	2.8	3.0	3.1	3.6	3.9
How do you feel with make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Proud]	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.5	3.6	3.8	2.9	3.8	3.2
How do you feel with make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Happy]	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.0	3.7	4.3	4.2

How do you feel with make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Satisfied]	4.4	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.3	4.7	4.7	4.2	4.7	4.2
How do you feel with make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Attractive]	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.3	3.5	4.2	4.1
How do you feel with make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Beautiful]	4.7	4.7	4.8	4.6	4.5	4.3	4.6	4.0	4.5	4.6
How do you feel with make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Confident]	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.1	4.2	4.6
How do you feel with make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Weird]	2.9	3.0	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.7	3.1	2.7	3.6	3.9
How do you feel with make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Powerful]	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.5	3.4	2.7	3.2	2.9

**Table 4**

	<b>what is your age?</b>									
	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
How do you feel without make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Naked]	3.0	3.0	2.9	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.7	3.3	3.4
How do you feel without make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Embarrassed]	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.4	3.2	3.2
How do you feel without make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Proud]	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	2.8	3.1	3.6
How do you feel without make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Indifferent]	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.5	2.8	3.2	3.4
How do you feel without make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Satisfied]	4.0	4.2	4.3	3.8	3.5	3.9	4.0	3.6	3.7	4.3
How do you feel without make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Dissatisfied]	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.3	3.3	3.1

How do you feel without make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Confident]	4.0	4.0	4.1	3.6	3.4	3.6	3.9	4.1	3.5	4.4
How do you feel without make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Beautiful]	4.3	4.4	4.2	3.9	3.6	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.6	4.1
How do you feel without make-up on? (Give one answer for each part) [Self-lothing]	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.3	2.7	3.0

Tables 5-9 In the question "How often do you wear makeup during the week?", we have an incremental increase in the "Everyday" option until age 40 to 44, compared to older ages from 55 to 65 + where the highest percentages are in the "Never" option. We also observe at the ages of 20 to 34 that the highest percentages were given on option "Most of the days".

Table 5

		what is your age?			
		20-24		25-29	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
How often do you wear make-up during the week? (Please select one)	Never	9	4.0%	15	7.6%
	Once a week	71	31.8%	43	21.8%
	Most of the days	96	43.0%	87	44.2%
	Everyday	47	21.1%	52	26.4%
	Total	223	100.0%	197	100.0%

Table 6

		what is your age?			
		30-34		35-39	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
How often do you wear make-up during the week? (Please select one)	Never	10	5.6%	7	5.2%
	Once a week	43	24.2%	22	16.3%
	Most of the days	71	39.9%	51	37.8%
	Everyday	54	30.3%	55	40.7%
	Total	178	100.0%	135	100.0%

Table 7

		what is your age?			
		40-44		45-49	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
How often do you wear make-up during the week? (Please select one)	Never	4	4.4%	2	4.1%
	Once a week	19	20.9%	5	10.2%

select one)	Most of the days	27	29.7%	23	46.9%
	Everyday	41	45.1%	19	38.8%
	Total	91	100.0%	49	100.0%

**Table 8**

		what is your age?			
		50-54		55-59	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
How often do you wear make-up during the week? (Please select one)	Never	7	14.3%	11	37.9%
	Once a week	6	12.2%	7	24.1%
	Most of the days	17	34.7%	3	10.3%
	Everyday	19	38.8%	8	27.6%
	Total	49	100.0%	29	100.0%

**Table 9**

		what is your age?			
		60-64		65+	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
How often do you wear make-up during the week? (Please select one)	Never	7	41.2%	9	64.3%
	Once a week	1	5.9%	1	7.1%
	Most of the days	3	17.6%	2	14.3%
	Everyday	6	35.3%	2	14.3%
	Total	17	100.0%	14	100.0%

Table 10 It is perceived that on a normal day the time needed for women to apply their makeup is 0-9 minutes, with the highest rates given from all ages. The lowest rates are given at 30 minutes or more.

**Table 10**

		what is your age?			
		Total		20-24	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
On a regular day, how much time would you spend applying your make-up? (Please select one)	1	2	0.2%	1	0.4%
	0-9 min	533	54.2%	99	44.4%
	10-19 min	320	32.6%	75	33.6%
	20-29 min	101	10.3%	37	16.6%
	30-59 min	22	2.2%	8	3.6%
	60+ min	5	0.5%	3	1.3%
	Total	983	100.0%	223	100.0%



Tables 11(a)&(b). In the question "I prefer myself with makeup?" it is generally observed that all women of all ages prefer themselves with makeup. Ages 35 to 39 are most likely to favor themselves with makeup, while neutral to slide positive are ages over 65+.

**Table 11 (a) &(b)**

	<b>what is your age?</b>					
	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
I prefer myself with make-up:	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.9	3.8	3.8

	<b>what is your age?</b>			
	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
I prefer myself with make-up:	3.6	3.2	3.5	2.6

Table 12(a) & (b) In the table below, you can see that divorced women wear makeup every day, with a percentage of 47.5%, while widows do not wear makeup with 71.4%.

**Tables 12(a)-(b)**

		<b>What is your marital status?</b>			
		Total		Divorced	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
How often do you wear make-up during the week? (Please select one)	Never	81	8.3%	1	1.6%
	Once a week	216	22.2%	11	18.0%
	Most of the days	377	38.7%	20	32.8%
	Everyday	301	30.9%	29	47.5%
	Total	975	100.0%	61	100.0%

		Separated		Widowed	
		Count	Column N %	Count	Column N %
How often do you wear make-up during the week? (Please select one)	Never	0	0.0%	10	71.4%
	Once a week	3	42.9%	0	0.0%
	Most of the days	3	42.9%	4	28.6%
	Everyday	1	14.3%	0	0.0%
	Total	7	100.0%	14	100.0%

Table 13 It is found that "Self-employed" and "Employed full time" women often wear makeup with 3.9, while women who are "Housewives" have a negative 2.3.

**Table 13**

	<b>What is your current employment status?</b>				
	1	Unemployed not looking for work	Unemployed looking for work	Self-employed	Unable to work
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
I often wear make-up:	3.0	3.1	3.5	3.9	3.5

	<b>What is your current employment status?</b>			
	Employed part time	Employed full time	Student	Housewife
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
I often wear make-up:	3.6	3.9	3.3	2.3

## 5. Conclusions

The purpose of this research was to clarify the reasons why women in Cyprus use makeup and to determine whether women prefer themselves with or without make up. Additionally, this research paper investigates the use of makeup as a method of boosting the women confidence. The findings of this research strongly show that women of all ages have a boost confidence when they are wearing makeup while when they're not using make up feel less confidence, beautiful and not so much satisfied with their-selves. Working women for example based on the findings, tend to use more often make up than women that do not work. Based on the results when people were asked 'why they use make up', all ages responded very positively to options "To cover flaws" and "To boost confidence". While the slight positive rate was given from age 50 to 65 +, to options "because I feel unattractive without it" and "To fit in". This shows us that the reasons why women wear makeup varies and that using make up plays a vital role in women life and how they perceive themselves.

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