

# The Wise Generation Chooses Safe Cosmetics at PAB 5 Private Vocational School in Klambir V Kebun Village, Hamparan Perak District, Deli Serdang Regency

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**Abstract** This study aims to evaluate the understanding and practices of the younger generation in choosing safe cosmetics at SMK Swasta PAB 5, Desa Klambir V Kebun, Kecamatan Hamparan Perak, Kabupaten Deli Serdang. With the increasing use of cosmetics among teenagers, it is important to understand their knowledge and attitudes towards the safety of cosmetic products. This research employs a descriptive quantitative method with a survey conducted on 100 students. The results show that most students have basic knowledge about safe cosmetics, but only a few apply this knowledge in their daily practices. The study suggests the need for further education and campaigns on choosing safe cosmetics.

**Keyword:** Cosmetics, knowledge, generation, vocational high school.

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## 1 Introduction

The use of cosmetics among teenagers has been increasingly rising in line with the development of beauty and fashion trends (1). In recent years, cosmetics have become an integral part of many teenagers' daily routines, influenced by pop culture, social media, and advertisements that highlight the latest beauty products. The desire to look attractive and keep up with the latest trends often drives teenagers to experiment with various cosmetic products. This phenomenon is also fueled by influencers and celebrities who actively promote cosmetic products, creating pressure to follow popular beauty trends (2).

Although cosmetics can boost self-confidence and help teenagers express themselves, using unsafe products can pose health risks. Many cosmetic products contain chemicals that may not be suitable for certain skin types, especially if used excessively (3). Ingredients like parabens, sulfates, and synthetic dyes can cause irritation or allergic reactions on sensitive teenage skin. Therefore, it is important for teenagers to have a good understanding of cosmetic ingredients and their impact on skin health.

Education about safe cosmetics is crucial to protecting the skin health of teenagers. Often, teenagers do not read product labels carefully or are unaware of the potential dangers of certain ingredients (4). Basic knowledge about how to choose safe cosmetic products, such as ensuring that the products are registered with the food and drug regulatory agency and understanding the composition of ingredients, can help reduce risks (5). Schools and families play a significant role in providing accurate information and educating teenagers on choosing safe and quality products.

The use of cosmetics among teenagers can also be influenced by social and psychological factors (6). Peer pressure and social expectations often drive teenagers to use cosmetics to be accepted in their social groups (7). In some cases, dependency on cosmetics to feel confident and accepted can have negative effects on the mental and emotional health of teenagers. Emotional support and proper education can help teenagers develop a positive attitude toward themselves without relying on cosmetics as the main source of self-confidence (8).

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## **2 Methods**

A descriptive quantitative approach was employed, utilizing a survey method to collect data from a sample of 100 students randomly selected from a population of 200. The research instrument was a questionnaire designed to measure students' knowledge of safe cosmetics, their attitudes toward product selection, and their daily practices. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to provide an overview of the students' understanding and behavior related to cosmetic safety.

## **3 Results and Discussion**

The survey results indicate that 70% of students possess basic knowledge about safe cosmetics, including awareness of harmful ingredients. This knowledge encompasses a general understanding of substances to avoid, such as parabens, sulfates, and synthetic dyes, as well as an awareness of the importance of choosing cosmetics that are registered and have been tested for safety. This data reflects a good level of awareness among students regarding the potential risks posed by harmful ingredients in cosmetics and the importance of using products approved by regulatory bodies like the BPOM.

However, despite this foundational knowledge, only 40% of students consistently apply this knowledge when selecting their daily cosmetic products. This highlights a significant gap between knowledge and practice. Many students may still struggle to translate the information they possess into concrete actions when choosing cosmetics. This gap could be due to various factors, including limited access to truly safe products, the strong influence of marketing and trends, and personal habits or preferences that may not always align with the knowledge they have acquired.

This gap underscores the need for additional interventions in education about safe cosmetics. While students may have theoretical knowledge about the dangers of certain ingredients, practical application of this knowledge requires a more integrated approach. More in-depth education and practical training on how to effectively read product labels and evaluate the available cosmetic information could help bridge this gap. For example, workshops or seminars that teach product evaluation techniques and how to identify genuinely safe cosmetics could enhance students' ability to make wiser choices.

Moreover, social factors and marketing play a role in students' cosmetic decisions. Advertisements, product promotions, and peer or social media influence can affect students' purchasing decisions, often overshadowing their knowledge about cosmetic safety. Therefore, efforts to enhance students' knowledge need to be accompanied by strategies to counteract external influences that might disrupt their decision-making process.

Involving parents and supervision from the school can also help reinforce the application of knowledge about safe cosmetics. Educational programs that involve parents in the learning process can strengthen the information received at school and ensure that this knowledge is consistently applied at home. With broader support from family and the surrounding environment, students are expected to find it easier to apply their knowledge about safe cosmetics in daily life.

Overall, while the survey results indicate that students have a good basic understanding of safe cosmetics, practical application of this knowledge still requires attention. Efforts to link knowledge with real-world practice and address external influences can help improve students' awareness and adherence to using safe cosmetics.

Most students do not carefully read product labels and do not check whether the products are registered with BPOM. This finding reveals a gap between the knowledge students have and the practices they carry out. This may be due to a lack of accurate information and insufficient awareness of the importance of reading cosmetic labels.

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#### 4 CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that although students at SMK Swasta PAB 5 possess basic knowledge about safe cosmetics, their application of this knowledge in daily practice is still lacking. There is an urgent need to enhance education on the selection of safe cosmetics and the importance of reading product labels. Awareness campaigns and further training can help mitigate the health risks associated with the use of unsafe cosmetics. Educational programs that involve parents, teachers, and medical professionals in schools could be strategic steps toward encouraging the younger generation to choose safer and higher-quality cosmetics.

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