

**EVALUATION OF APPEARANCE MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOUR AMONG  
STUDENTS IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING IN MERU COUNTY,  
KENYA**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE IN FASHION  
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AND MEDIA STUDIES, KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**

**OCTOBER, 2021**

## DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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**DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to all beloved members of my entire family for their encouragement and support throughout.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AM	:	Appearance Management
AMB	:	Appearance Management Behaviour
IHL	:	Institutions of Higher Learning
KU	:	Kenyatta University
NACOSTI	:	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
SCT	:	Social Comparison Theory
WHO	:	World Health Organisation

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

**Appearance:** The way someone looks; the clothes they wear, their hairstyle, expression of their facial features, the tone of their skin, and posture. All these factors form one's overall appearance.

**Appearance Management Behaviour:** Covers alteration to the body, which includes clothing, makeup and personal grooming activities.

**Gender:** Relates to the difference in sex (either male or female) and how this quality affects one's disposition and perception towards life.

**Institutions of Higher Learning:** Tertiary colleges and universities.

**Issues:** Factors or attributes that lead or guide in Appearance Management process.

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Appearance Management:** Are the activities that students perform to present themselves before him/herself and others and include clothing, grooming, dieting and body building.

**Body Image:** Refers to how a person perceives the aesthetics and sexual attractiveness of his/her own body. It is a perception of one's physical appearance.

**Risky Appearance Management Behaviour:** Any activities which if engaged in for a prolonged period of time, pose a threat to the health and well-being of the individual.

**Peer Influence:** Influence by peers in a group, which can be negative or positive.

**Self Esteem:** This is the pride that people feel in themselves and how much they value their bodies. It is one's self-worth

**Social Class:** An essential feature in people's daily activities which includes what people wear, how they act, think, or feel based on social and financial status

**ABSTRACT**

Appearance management (AM) encompasses the sum total of attention and activities that are used by an individual to control how he/she presents the body to himself/herself and to others. Appearance management comprises clothing, good grooming, dieting, body building and use of cosmetics. Clothes and physical appearance are important in non-verbal communication. Some appearance management is usually performed as a routine and carrying them out cannot result in any harmful effects on health, while some AMB, can threaten health especially if they are carried out for long period of time, and could have long-lasting effects. The study set to investigate issues on AM among students in institutions of higher learning in Meru County. The study set out to explore how knowledgeable students were about AM, establish the importance of AM, and determine what guided the students in the process of AM. Further, the study sought to investigate whether there was any relationship between personality, gender, age, self-esteem, body image and AM of the students under study. The study sought to establish the effects of peer influence on AM and establish if students engaged in risky AMB. The study utilized a descriptive cross-sectional design. The sample consisted of 373 students from technical institutes and universities in Meru County. A questionnaire with open-ended, close-ended and five-point Likert scale questions was utilized in collection of data. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analyses were conducted on the data. Majority of the study respondents agreed that financial constraints influenced both clothing preference (85.1%) and grooming activities (69.1%) whereas societal demands (61.7%) influenced only their preference for clothing. Respondents said AM is not how a person looks (80.9%) neither is it what a person wears (83.4%) nor other peoples' perception (94.9%) but it referred to actions and decisions on the way a person looks (62.6%). One in three students (36.0%) mainly bought clothes once in every three months. They felt they were not useless (62.3%), respected themselves (52.3%), neither did they think they were no good at all (59.4%) nor inclined to feelings of being failures (68.0%). They felt motivating (65.1%), efficient (64.6%), contented with themselves (61.7%), observant (64.3%), cautious (64.3%), curious (56.3%), thoughtful (60.6%), detailed (57.4%) and diplomatic (67.4%), highly sociable (59.1%), warm-hearted (53.1%) and confident (50.9%). Personality ( $r = 0.833$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), self-esteem ( $r = 0.689$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), peer influence ( $r = 0.764$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and body image ( $r = 0.764$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) were positively associated with appearance management. In conclusion, personality, gender, age, self-esteem, peer influence, and body image were significantly associated with AMB. There is a need for students to live within their means in respect to appearance management activities.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

Appearance Management (AM) can be defined to represent those activities that are taken by an individual to control how he/she presents his/her body both to him/herself and others (Johnson, Kim, Young Lee, & Kim, 2014). While ladies are bothered with weight and shape, male's issue of AM is on masculinity (Fardouly & Vartanian, 2016). Further, for one to achieve a physical appearance desirable to society, he/she may be forced to engage in unhealthy and risk-taking behaviors. In a study on social class, Manstead (2018) postulate that the conditions in terms of material in which one grows and lives, have an impact on his/her personal and social life that influences behavior. Du, King, and Chi (2017) explain that people can enhance self-esteem through personal attributes derived from a social group or personal traits which include; agreeableness, openness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and extraversion. Tiggemann and Zaccardo (2015) posit that human appearance's social ideals are developed by every culture of which are passed through cultural channels.

Cultural beauty expectations, gender socialization as well as the adherence to traditional roles related to gender influence poor body image (Timko, Juarascio, Martin, Faherty, & Kalodner, 2014). Traditionally, gender roles associate females with the desire for appealing beauty and appearance, while males are linked to control, power and force (Grogan, 2012). Wertheim & Paxton (2012) state that peer influence, which serves as social support can affect a young woman's body image. Body image has been reported to be adversely influenced by peer competition (Howlett et al., 2015). Further social

exclusion and cyber bullying, which are prevalent among females have become common explains (Grogan, 2012).

A study carried out on appearance management maintains that it can be applied in many areas and used to explain grooming activities engaged in by a person. Such grooming activities include makeup application (e.g. hairstyling and use of the mirror), body modification and shaping (e.g. use of cosmetics, dieting, body building and exercises) (Thein-Lemelson, 2015). In his research, Thein-Lemelson (2015) found that people engage in appearance management in order to enhance their physical attractiveness, especially for social media selfies.

Research Journal of Costume Culture (Choi, Dowell, & Brooks, 2011) carried out a study on female student's self-efficacy and self-esteem. Self-esteem is the respect for one's self and his/her sense of self-worth (Păunescu et al., 2014; Du et al., 2017). Lack of this respect is linked to behavioral problems (Orth, Robins, Widaman, & Conger, 2014) as well as poor performance. These studies did not view appearance management in relation to factors that affect students in appearance management, which includes gender and age, peer pressure, body image, and personality, hence the need to carry out this research.

Guantai (2014) noted that in recent times, the stripping of women in public and other forms of sexual harassment in Kenya was on the rise, as witnessed in Nairobi and its environs plus other towns like Nyeri. With the advent of social media, AM has become

fundamental for most students (Karl, Hall, & Peluchette, 2013). Sherman's (2013) survey, conducted in the USA, revealed that 1 out of 10 job seekers was rejected because of content they posted on social media which included AM provocative and inappropriate photos. Some students attempt to alter their appearance, in order to achieve the perceived physical ideal look by the society and in the process may engage in risky AMB. Examples of such behaviors include bleaching their skin color, excessive dieting, and wearing revealing clothes that indecently expose some parts of their bodies (Johnson, Lennon, & Rudd, 2014). Howlett, Pine, Orakcoiglu and Fletcher (2015) state that the way one dresses affects the way a person works hence, affecting productivity. Although these scholars studied appearance management, they failed to address how self-image is affected by ones appearance.

If the act of clothing one's body is not carefully thought out, it can lead to sending the wrong message to perceivers, (Shin, 2013), hence, the need for carrying out this study. Two studies have clearly shown that College students possess limited financial know-how while some of them have financial-related difficulties associated with physical appearance (Belley & Lochner, 2007; McPherson, 2012). The latter study states that trainees with stress related to finance have high likelihood of suffering from anxiety and depression which may have an overall effect on their appearance. American College Health Association (2011) explains that finances are ranked as the second-largest stressor for students following academics as alluded by McPherson (2012). Dorrance, Ferrara and Kopfman (2013) state that great amount of messages are communicated by the use of clothing. This study aimed to bring out the importance of AM, and how it can

be used to enlighten students on the importance of communicating effectively through their clothes.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Appearance management poses a very big challenge to many people, particularly students in institutions of higher learning (IHL) (Mlodinow, 2012). Various scholars (Howlett, et al., 2015; Johnson et al., 2014) have researched the role of appearance management on self-esteem and body image but did not address various aspects of body image and self-esteem. Additionally, these studies did not address how peer influence affected appearance management. Sherman (2014) noted that some young job applicants were rejected because of inappropriate photos they had posted in the past on social media that depicted poor AM.

However, there seems to be a lack of awareness among the youth on the importance of AM, both virtually and in their daily lives. Since adults at their early stages are more likely to conform to the beliefs, norms and culture of their fellow peers in the quest of finding intimacy, their appearance management is likely dependent on peer influence and body image impressed on them. There is scarce evidence built in the scientific knowledge exploring whether peer factors, body image, personality, gender, and self-esteem influence appearance management and, if so, to what extent. Furthermore, very little is understood with regard to what kind of challenges the students face while managing appearance. Therefore, the current study aimed to bring to light the

challenges, guidelines and determinants of appearance management among students in IHL.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

To evaluate appearance management among students in five institutions of higher learning in Meru County, Kenya.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The following specific objectives were developed to guide the study:

1. To identify challenges that affect students in the process of appearance management in five higher learning institutions in Meru County.
2. To establish appearance management knowledge levels among students in five higher learning institutions in Meru County.
3. To analyze the importance of appearance management among students in five higher learning institutions in Meru County.
4. To determine factors that are guidelines to students' appearance management process in five higher learning institutions in Meru County.
5. To establish the students' engagement in risky appearance management behaviors in five higher learning institutions in Meru County.
6. To determine the relationship between personality, gender, age, peer influence, self-esteem and body image and appearance management among students in five higher learning institutions in Meru County.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

For research guidance the following research questions were constituted:

1. What challenges affect students in the process of appearance management in five higher learning institutions in Meru County?
2. What are the appearance management knowledge levels among students in five higher learning institutions in Meru County?
3. What is the importance of appearance management among students in five higher learning institutions in Meru County?
4. Which factors guide students in the appearance management process in five higher learning institutions in Meru County?
5. Do students engage in risky appearance management behaviors in five higher learning institutions in Meru County?

### **1.6 Hypotheses**

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant association between personality, gender, age, peer influence, self-esteem, and body image and appearance management among students in the five higher learning institutions in Meru County.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The study's results could be used to help students know their knowledge levels and the importance of AM. IHL could use the results of the study to guide students in the AM process. Clothing stores, boutiques and cosmetic shops in Meru town could use the information generated from the study to understand the students' clothing choices and

the process of appearance management. This could guide the business owners to develop informed strategies on how to stock appropriately and meet the perceived needs of the students. The study could also add to the expanding literature on appearance management and could serve as a source of reference to researchers that would want to conduct further study in related fields in the future. Finally, the Ministry of Education could use the information from the study to develop policies that could guide learning institutions on how to handle appearance management issues in their training programs.

### **1.8 Delimitation of the Study**

The study covered appearance management extended to clothing, personal grooming, and dieting. It also considered the aspects of body building and cosmetics use in the five IHL under study in Meru County. The study was limited to the five institutions because of their proximity in distance to the researcher, hence helped in saving time. Also, the study did not factor the variance in appearance management practiced by the students as a result of economic status.

### **1.9 Limitations**

The study was conducted among students aged between 19 and 29 years, and therefore, the application of the study's results to population beyond this age ground should be done cautiously. Also, the study did not take care of the variations in appearance management as a result of economic status of the students.

### **1.10 Assumptions of the Study**

The study was premised on the positive attitude that the respondents co-operated with the researcher in filling out the questionnaire. This study also assumed that the students bought their own clothes and accessories. Lastly, it was assumed that the respondents were honest in their responses.

### **1.11 Theoretical Framework**

Appearance management has been defined as those activities that are used by an individual to control how he/she presents the body both to him/herself and to others (Kim et al., 2014). The role of appearance management in people's daily lives has been proposed and explained through various theoretical models (Johnson, Kim, Lee, & Kim, 2014), like the Five-factor model that covers personality and appearance emphasis and Schlenker & Leary (1982) model of self-presentation and social anxiety. The social comparison model was first proposed by Festinger (1954). It states that human beings continually compare themselves with people around them to assess their worth on various aspects of life. The theory was used by Halliwell (2012) to assess body image and self-esteem, driven by individual differences in personality factors. The theory uses upward comparison, where an individual compares him/herself with other individuals considered as a superior and downward comparison, where an individual compares him/herself with other individuals considered as inferior, on dimensions of interest. To boost or maintain self-esteem, people employ the use of social comparisons (Wanyika, Gatebe, Gitu, & Ngumba, 2010; Corcoran, Crusius, & Mussweiler, 2011; Du et al., 2017). These authors also state that people create and maintain positive self-images

through comparison with peer groups. Choi, Dowell & Brooks (2018) explain that upward or downward comparisons are more prone to attributes of gender and age. The social comparison model was chosen because the variables in the current study are either strengthened or weakened through comparison which are self-esteem, body image, social class and peer pressure.

### 1.11.1 Conceptual Framework

The social comparison theory (Halliwel 2013) is basically divided into two, the upward comparison and downward comparison Choi et al., (2018).

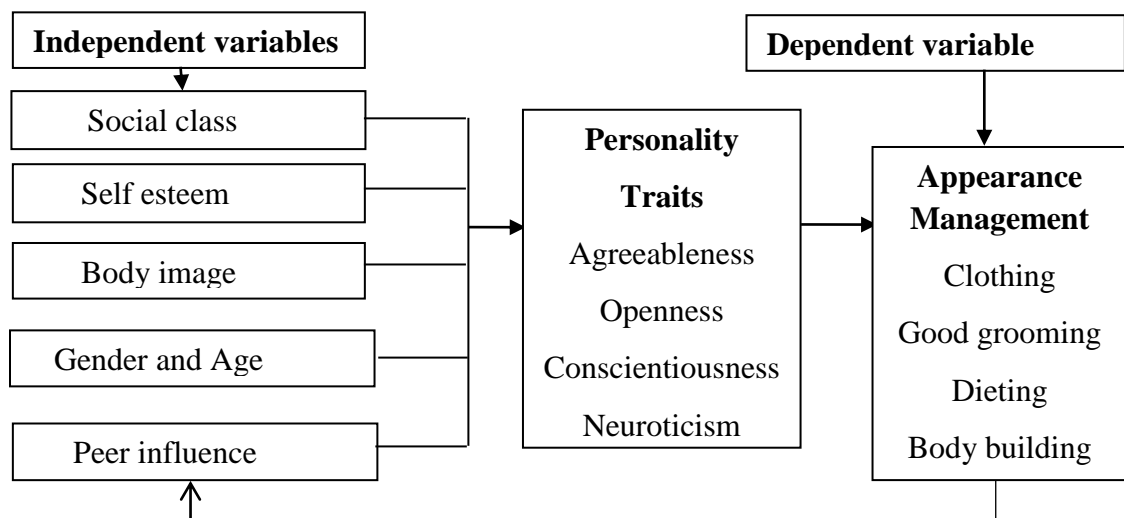


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

Source: modified from Social Comparison Theory (Halliwel, 2012)

Kendra (2018) states that “we all compare ourselves to others in our social worlds, whether it is comparing our looks to those of celebrities we see in the media or our talents to those of our peers.” This study views social class, self-esteem, body image, gender and age, and peer influence as the dimensions individuals use to evaluate themselves, through upward or downward comparison. People make use of social

comparison, not just for self-examination but also for self-strengthening and self-development (Kendra 2018). The framework shows that personality traits like agreeableness, openness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism mediate the relationship between peer influence, social class, self-esteem, body image, and gender and age influence and appearance management (Fig.1.1).

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents a review of related literature to this study. The areas covered include AM, social class, self-esteem, body image, gender and age and peer influence.

### **2.1 Issues that Surround Appearance Management**

Individuals take control of their appearance through acts and decisions concerning apparel and accessory selection, cosmetic use, procedures for grooming and body size and form Modification. Some of the issues that affect AM are discussed in sections, 2.1.1 to 2.1.5.

#### **2.1.1 Social Class**

According to Dubois, Rucker & Galinsky (2015), social class is an essential feature in people's daily activities. This is made clear by every single decision made every day. According to Valentine (2014), there is an attestation that the material situations in which an individual gets developed and stay in their daily lives have a very great impact on the way they understand themselves as well as their social environment. Easterbrook, Kuppens and Manstead (2018) noted that a person's thoughts, feelings and behavior were influenced by the socio-economic context in which he/she is brought up. Easterbrook et al., (2018) study covered social class as well as gender and age but failed to cover other aspects that can affect a person in relation to social class like peer influence which this study addressed.

### **2.1.2 Self Esteem**

Păunescu et al. (2014) and Du et al., (2017), explained that self-esteem refers to respect for one's own self and his/her sense of self-worth. According to Sharma & Agarwala (2015) a key to success is the self-esteem of an individual. In a study by Orth & Robins (2014) it was noted that self-esteem rises from puberty to middle adulthood. Poor academic performance and low self-esteem has been associated with behavioral problems (Orth, Robins, Widaman, & Conger, 2014). Two studies noted that body dissatisfaction was the main predictor of low self-esteem, however, they did not relate self-esteem with AM (Helfert & Warschburger, 2013; Wertheim & Paxton, 2012). Self-esteem and appearance satisfaction was correlated with appearance management, hair management and pursuit of clothing styles (Kim & Kim, 2018) Although these studies addressed self-esteem with regard to age and performance, they did not explore how peer pressure among young adults can affect one's self-esteem which this study sought to address.

### **2.1.3 Body Image**

Body image is a perception of one's own body. In a study conducted in the USA on body image among young women by Howlett et al. (2015), it was observed that it's only peer competition, not TV or use of social media that had negative outcomes on body image. A statistically significant association has been reported between body appreciation and age among women from their earlier to late adulthood (Swami K., Tran S., Stieger C., 2018; Tiggemann & McCourt, 2013). A study by Halliwell (2015) on body image and age suggested areas for future body image research that included social

class. This study covered social class as one of its independent variables. A study by Reel, Voelker, & Greenleaf (2015) observed that diet, exercise, beauty trends shown on TV and social media often contributed to unhealthy body perceptions. These studies did not focus on other variables that affected young adult's body image such as peer influence and age. This study, therefore, investigated how other extraneous variables affect appearance management.

#### **2.1.4 Gender and Age**

Gender is defined as socially constructed attributes of men and women that include roles, relationship between and among groups as well as the norms according to WHO (2016). Young people are very careful in their appearance management, as they get noticed and also notice their counterparts. A study conducted by Kim et al., (2014) reported that appearance management behavior and people pursuing physical ideal age was practiced by Korean students in their 20's and 30'. The study further revealed that female students wanted to remain younger and in the ideal age, through the clothing and the type of skin care they used. Kim's study covered gender and age but failed to cover other aspects like peer pressure that affect students in appearance management which was covered by the current study.

#### **2.1.5 Peer Influence**

People in all ages can be influenced by their peers negatively or positively. Havey & Casey (2015) state that good behavior from peers can spread in a group, while bad behavior can also be copied by members of the same group. Sheldon (2010) explains

that peers, who have a lot of pressure to attain the ideal body size, and have little social support, may not only engage in unhealthy appearance management behaviors but also develop dissatisfaction with their bodies and eating disorders. A study, among German students that covered appearance-related influence, gender, age, self-esteem and body image, showed that peer influence was more pronounced among females as compared with males (Helfert & Warschburger, 2013; Wertheim & Paxton, 2012).

## **2.2 Appearance Management**

Several studies have been conducted on students' AM in different parts of the world. These include Freeburg & Arnett (2010) that studied the impact of AM training and plans students had after high school. The study also sought for students' opinions concerning AM in schools and at work place. The aforementioned research is in congruent that AM is a learnable life skill that plays a key role in employability during schooling and in the future lives of college students. Choi et al., (2015) researched AM behavior of college students and its relationship with perfectionism and self-esteem. The results revealed that AMB of college students is closely related to mental health.

### **2.2.1 Types of Appearance Management**

Appearance Management is a universal concept and all individuals engage daily in some activities that relate to appearance. AM comprises of clothing, good grooming, dieting, body building, cosmetics use and any other intentional means of changing the natural appearance of the human physical form (Wolf, 1992).

### **2.2.2 Clothing and Appearance Management**

People are usually judged based on the clothes they wear which can affect their mental and physical fitness (Hutson & Rodriguez, 2016). According to Johnson and Lennon (2014), the clothes that one wears affect the behavior of the person and also the behavior of other people towards the self. Karl *et al.* (2013) posit that people are what they wear, which makes them feel more capable and self-confident when they wear formal clothing and least innovative and affectionate when they wear informal clothing. Clothing is also used to form the first impression of others and one's appearance can overshadow his/her other characteristics and attributes (Mahajan, 2007). The above scholars studied clothing and appearance but failed to link the studies to other types of appearance management which the current study covered.

### **2.2.3 Good Grooming and Appearance Management**

Adam & Galinsky (2012), states that our appearance is a statement of who we are and grooming helps us take care of our appearance. Their study further expounded that grooming is important because it helps create a lasting impression, which is essential, since it makes us feel good and confident about ourselves, hence, making everything better. Their Lemelson (2015) explained that good grooming comprises several activities that are concerned with taking care of oneself and manage his/her appearance. These activities include health, hygiene and cleanliness which, a good number of people carry out on daily basis. Grooming activities and the factors surrounding them are shaped to a greater extent by culture (Sarcu & Adamson, 2017). These studies focused

on grooming and appearance and did not cover how clothing affects appearance management which is covered in the current study.

#### **2.2.4 Dieting and Appearance Management**

In a study on Korean and US female students by (Johnson et al., 2014), it was noted that students engaged in extreme dieting and used diet aids in order to boost their appearance. Further, it was observed from the study that, if one had a good body image, it could be a source of satisfaction to the individual. Jones & Crawford (2005) posited that obsessions like looking slim, use of fad diets, youths frequenting fast-food chains, and excessive exercising could affect an individual's AM. The above studies did not address health risks that can be posed by excessive dieting which is addressed in the current study.

#### **2.2.5 Cosmetic Use and Appearance Management**

According to Kaličanin & Velimirović (2016) cosmetics use is an essential component of the ever-changing beauty standards for thousands of years and has been used as a symbol for shaping oneself, self-presentation and impression management. Most women have used cosmetics in their lives and buy them regularly. For thousands of years, the use of cosmetics for face and hair has taken place among both men and women (Jones & Kramer, 2016). In the world over, attractiveness standards are normally learned through exposure to culturally imposed ideals (Abbas, Kurkcuoglu, Aytop, Uysal, & Pelin, 2017). In their study, the authors noted that these ideals create a lot of pressure to conform to prevailing beauty standards and insecurities of perception of self and body

image. Jones et al., (2016) study found that women engage in risky appearance management behaviours which include cosmetic procedures and extreme dieting. However, the studies above did not relate cosmetics use to self-esteem, body image and risky appearance management behavior which the current study focused on.

### **2.2.6 Body Building and Appearance management**

Body building is a sport as well as a recreation. Sastre (2014) posited that the body of a human being is physical and it is constructed socially. Further, body building instills discipline, being mentally tough, helps to maintain good health, and increases one's confidence. Body building dependence is common among people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, who tend to have aggressive personalities and vulnerable levels of self-esteem (Smith & Hale, 2005). Sastre's observations suggest the value of examining further body building, self-esteem and appearance management which was carried out in this study.

### **2.2.7 Summary Literature Review**

Literature reviewed exposed various gaps which this study set out to address. These studies (Easterbook et al., 2014; Valentine, 2014; Du et al., 2017) covered social class, gender age and self-esteem. Howlett et al., (2013); Halliwell (2015) studies documented that body image and age were closely related, and identified that social class required further research. However, the above studies failed to relate and incorporate all the important factors that can affect appearance management. These include social class,

self-esteem, body image, peer pressure, gender and age which are all covered in this study.

Subsequently, appearance management covers all actions taken to enhance the physical being and this includes clothing, good grooming, dieting, body building and cosmetic use., Sarcu et al., (2017); Johnson et al., (2014) & Jones et al., (2016) covered grooming, dieting, body building and cosmetic use. However, these studies did not address the health risk associated with overdoing these activities that could pose health risks to the user which were addressed in this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter describes the research methodology that was used to carry out the study. It focuses on the research design, measurement of variables, study area, target population, sample size, sampling techniques, research instruments, pre-testing, reliability and validity, data collection techniques, data analysis, logistical and ethical considerations.

### **3.1 Research Design**

The study used a descriptive cross-sectional study to investigate Appearance Management issues among students in IHL. Further, it explored students' knowledge levels on appearance management. The research design was selected because of its suitability in gathering data on the perception of the population in addressing research questions and test hypotheses (Ponto, 2015).

### **3.2 Measurement of Variables**

Demographic characteristics were measured using descriptive analysis. These included gender, age and social class. Likert scale was used to measure attitudinal aspects of self-esteem, peer influence, personality, and body image and also to establish whether students engaged in risky Appearance Management. The likert scale used was a 5 point because other scholars like McKay, Boduszek, & Harvey (2014) Schlenker & Leary, (1982) and Kraus & Park (2014) used the same successfully, in studies on self-esteem, social class and body image, among college students.

### **3.3 Study Area**

The study area entailed the five IHL in Meru County. Meru county's headquarter is Meru Town. The area is cosmopolitan serving the chosen five IHL and therefore represented diverse students' characteristics as you would find in major cities and towns. The targeted institutions were Meru Technical, Nkabune Technical, Meru University, Kenya Methodist University, and African Nazarene University. The colleges and Universities were chosen instead of high schools because students' appearance management in secondary was under influence of school management. The total number of Technical Institutions in Meru County was six while the Universities were five. A proportionate random sampling technique was utilized to choose the institutions, to allow picking representative samples for the study. The proximity of the institutions to the research base was also considered, in relation to saving time for the researcher. Another consideration in the choice of the selected institutions was that they offered full-time courses, which made the collection of data easy, during the official working hours, starting from 8.00 am to 5.00 pm.

### **3.4 Target Population**

All students from two Technical Training Institutes, and three Universities in Meru County constituted the study population. The total number of students was 3,685 broken down per Institution.

### 3.4.1 Inclusion Criteria

Students who were in their first year to the fourth year, aged between 18-29 years attending studies in the five IHL. The students aged between 18 and 29 were chosen because they constituted a population that was prone to peer influence and therefore affect their appearance management.

### 3.4.2 Exclusion Criteria

Students who were visually, physically and mentally challenged, part-timers, chronic absentees were excluded from participating as they could have a unique factor confounding their appearance management.

### 3.5 Sample size Determination

The sample size of the students in five IHL was 373; which was computed following the Fisher's formula (1992).

$$N = Z^2 pq/e^2 = 1.96^2(0.5)(0.5)/(0.05^2) = 384$$

Where: "N = sample size before finite population correction; Z = the standard normal deviate at 95% confidence level (1.96); P = estimated proportion of students' perception on appearance management was 50% (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003); q = 1-p; and e = desired level of precision (0.05)." To get a sample size that was proportional to the current study population which was below 10,000, a finite population correction was carried out (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Therefore, the sample size for learners was calculated as:

$$no = N/(1 + \frac{N-1}{n}) = 384/(1 + \frac{384-1}{3,685}) = 348 \text{ learners}$$

Where:  $n_0$  = desired sample size;  $n$  = the estimate of the learners (3,685). Then, 10% was added to take care of incomplete or missing cases (Weldekidan, Kote, Girma, Boti, & Gultie, 2018) to make a sample of 373 learners.

### 3.6 Sampling Techniques

Proportionate sampling was done at the institutional level as shown in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Sample size from each institution**

Name of Institution	Population	Sample size
Meru Technical	1,400	141
Nkabune Technical	500	51
Meru University	450	46
Kenya Methodist University	985	100
African Nazarene University	350	35
Total	3,685	373

The class lists were obtained from the registrar of students' office in the selected institutions that constituted the sampling frame. Then, simple random sampling was used to get the sample from all levels of the study by using class lists. The sampling of students was based on random numbers.

### 3.7 Research Instruments

A questionnaire (self-administered) was employed during data collection. The questionnaires were prepared and distributed to secure responses from the respondents selected in the sample size. A questionnaire was found to be a suitable data collection tool in this study because it can successfully be employed to get important information concerning a population. Close-ended, matrix and open-ended questions on likert scale of one to five were used in data collection, from which the respondents were asked to

choose from. To allow for individual opinions where needed, four research assistants were trained and helped the researcher administer the questionnaires in each of the institutions.

The instrument was divided into six sections. Section A solicited for demographic characteristics of the respondent and information like gender, age, the institution of learning, and year of study. Section B gathered information on appearance management challenges such as financial constraints, family restrictions, societal demands, religious restrictions and limited variety influence on both clothing preference and grooming activities. Section C solicited for information on appearance management knowledge levels that looked for information on appearance management definition as well as attendance of workshop on appearance management. Section D gathered data on the importance of appearance management, how applicable it was to the life of students, the kind, frequency, and perceived importance of appearance enhancement products they used. Section E collected data on guidelines for the appearance management process of the students. Lastly, section F solicited data on the relationship between personality, gender, age, peer influence, self-esteem, and body image and the students' appearance management.

### **3.8 Pre-Testing**

Instrument piloting was conducted at Kiiirua Technical and Mount Kenya University (Meru Campus) to evaluate for the validity and reliability of the research instruments. The instrument was piloted among 37 students of a selected sample from Kiiirua

Technical and Mount Kenya University, representing 10% of the sample (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The 50 students from these two institutions were not part of the sample used in the study. From the results of the pre-testing, questions 3, 6 and 8 were found to be inconsistent. Therefore, they were revised to increased clarity.

### **3.9 Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument**

Validity was determined by asking respondents to comment on any questions they thought were unclear or ambiguous. Questions that were unclear, ambiguous, redundant, impartial, and biased were corrected appropriately. A Cronbach's Alpha coefficient obtained of 0.75 was more than 0.7, which showed "that there was a strong internal consistency in the questionnaire items" (Mugenda, 2009).

### **3.10 Data Collection Techniques**

The data was collected from the primary source, which was the students, through the use of self-administered questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered by the research assistants under the guidance and supervision of the principal investigator on different days of the week at each institution. This strategy ensured a high response rate, hence enhanced the credibility of the results of the study.

### **3.11 Data Analysis and Presentation**

After cleaning and coding, the collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, which included frequencies, means, the standard deviation for univariate data, and inferential statistics for hypothesis analysis. Pearson correlation analyses was utilized

for data analysis. Descriptive statistics, which included frequencies and means were used to describe the demographic details of the respondents. Gender and age were analyzed quantitatively, where percentages were used to present the results. A five-point likert scale was used to determine the respondents' views on personality, peer influence, self-esteem, body image, social class, the importance of Appearance management and whether they engaged in risky Appearance Management Behaviour. The likert scale categorical data were transformed into continuous data by summing up the responses across a set of questions (Lani, 2019; Norman, 2010; Sullivan & Artino, 2013), thus meeting the assumptions to conduct Pearson correlation. A p-value of 0.05 was considered acceptable for a strong relationship linking the dependent and the independent variables. Order, structure and meaningfulness to collected data was achieved in the data analysis process, as noted by Mugenda (2011). Data analyzed was presented using tables, frequencies, and means.

### **3.12 Logistical and Ethical Considerations**

The researcher acquired permits for data collection before going to the field as per the government regulations from National Commission for Science and Innovation (NACOSTI), and KU Graduate School. Respondents were requested to voluntarily participate in the study without coercion. They were assured that any information given would be kept strictly confidential, anonymous, and utilized only for academic purposes.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the findings on the relationship between personality, gender, age, peer influence, self-esteem and body image and appearance management among the study respondents.

### 4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Study Respondents

The response rate was 93.8% (350 out of 373 respondents completely responded to the questionnaire). Over half of the respondents (51.7%) aged between 22 and 25 years consisted of males. Similarly, over half of the respondents (58.3%) were third-year students (Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of study respondents**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>(n=350) n (%)</b>
<b>Age</b>	
Up to 21 years	100 (28.6%)
22 to 25 years	181 (51.7%)
26 to 29 years	69 (19.7%)
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	181 (51.7%)
Female	169 (48.3%)
<b>Year of study</b>	
First year	55 (15.7%)
Second year	73 (20.9%)
Third year	204 (58.3%)
Fourth year	18 (5.1%)

### 4.3 Challenges Affecting the Process of Appearance Management among the Study Respondents

Table 4.2 shows the issues affecting the preference of clothing among the study respondents. The responses are collapsed from 5-Likert scale to dichotomous to give a concise summary (Jae Jeong, 2016). Strongly disagree, disagree and neutral were collapsed as disagree while agree and strongly agree were compressed as agree. Most of the study respondents agreed that financial constraints (85.1%) and societal demands (61.7%) influenced their preference for clothing. However, most of the respondents disagreed whether their peers (72.9%), limited clothing variety (70.0%), family constraints (64.6%) and religious restrictions (51.1%) influenced their preference of clothing.

**Table 4.2: Challenge Influencing Preference of Clothing**

Characteristics	(n=350) n (%)
<b>Financial constraints</b>	
Disagree	52 (14.9%)
Agree	298 (85.1%)
<b>Family constraints</b>	
Disagree	226 (64.6%)
Agree	124 (35.4%)
<b>Peers influence</b>	
Disagree	225 (72.9%)
Agree	95 (27.1%)
<b>Social demands</b>	
Disagree	134 (38.3%)
Agree	216 (61.7%)
<b>Religious restrictions</b>	
Disagree	179 (51.1%)
Agree	171 (48.9%)
<b>Limited clothing variety</b>	
Disagree	245 (70.0%)
Agree	105 (30.0%)

The study respondents disagreed on whether family constraints (61.4%), peers (66.6%), societal demands (50.3%) and religious restrictions (52.3%) influenced their grooming activities. However, they only maintained that financial constraints (69.1%) influenced their grooming activities (Table 4.3).

**Table 4.3: Challenges influencing grooming activities among the study respondents**

Characteristic	(n=350) n (%)
<b>Financial constraints</b>	
Disagree	108 (30.9%)
Agree	242 (69.1%)
<b>Family constraints</b>	
Disagree	215 (61.4%)
Agree	135 (38.6%)
<b>Peers influence</b>	
Disagree	233 (66.6%)
Agree	117 (33.4%)
<b>Societal demands</b>	
Disagree	176 (50.3%)
Agree	174 (49.7%)
<b>Religious restrictions</b>	
Disagree	183 (52.3%)
Agree	167 (47.7%)

#### 4.4 Appearance Management Knowledge Levels

Table 4.4 presents results on appearance management knowledge levels. According to the respondents, appearance management is not how a person looks (80.9%) neither is it what a person wears (83.4%) nor other peoples' perception (94.9%).

**Table 4.4: Appearance Management Knowledge Levels among Study Respondents**

Characteristics	n= 350 n (%)
Appearance management refers to how a person looks	
Agree	67 (19.1%)
Disagree	283 (80.9%)
Appearance management refers to what a person wears	
Agree	58 (16.6%)
Disagree	292 (83.4%)
Appearance management refers to actions and decisions on the way a person looks	
Agree	219 (62.6%)
Disagree	131 (37.4%)
Appearance management refers to what other people's perception	
Agree	18 (5.1%)
Disagree	332 (94.9%)
Have you attended appearance management workshop?	
Yes	212 (60.6%)
No	138 (39.4%)

However, majority of the respondents agreed that appearance management refers to actions and decisions on the way a person looks (62.6%). Most of the respondents (60.6%) had participated in an appearance management workshop before (Table 4.4).

#### **4.5 Importance of Appearance Management**

Majority of the study respondents maintained that appearance management communicates who a person is (63.7%), however it is neither non-verbal communication (79.1%) nor paramount for first impression (81.1%) (Table 4.5).

**Table 4.5: Importance of Appearance Management of the study respondents**

Characteristic	n=350 n (%)
Appearance management is a form of non-verbal communication	
Agree	73 (20.9%)
Disagree	277 (79.1%)
Appearance management communicates who a person is	
Agree	223 (63.7%)
Disagree	127 (36.3%)
Appearance management is paramount for first impression	
Agree	66 (18.9%)
Disagree	284 (81.1%)
Appearance management is important in daily life	
Less important	12 (3.4%)
Important	72 (20.6%)
Very important	266 (76.0%)
Do you use appearance management products?	
Yes	130 (37.1%)
No	220 (62.9%)
Frequency of using appearance management products	
Rarely	75 (57.7%)
Sometimes	37 (28.5%)
Frequently	18 (13.8%)
How important is enhancement products in daily life?	
Not important	192 (54.8%)
Important	158 (45.2%)

Most of the respondents said that appearance management was very important (76.0%) whereas 20.6% of them said it was just important in life. However, majority of them (62.9%) rarely applied appearance management enhancement products and maintained (54.8%) that these products were not important in their daily life.

#### **4.6 Guidelines for Appearance Management among the Study Respondents**

The study respondents said that neither their peers (66.3%) nor their need for the attraction (64.9%) influenced their appearance management activities (Table 4.6).

**Table 4.6: Factors guiding Appearance Management among the Study Respondents**

Factor	n=350 n (%)
My peers significantly influence my appearance management activities	
Disagree	232 (66.3%)
Agree	118 (33.7%)
Need for attraction influences my appearance management activities	
Disagree	227 (64.9%)
Agree	123 (35.1%)
Need to be healthy attitude influences my appearance management activities	
Disagree	115 (32.9%)
Agree	235 (67.1%)
Desire for improved body image influences my appearance management activities	
Disagree	114 (32.4%)
Agree	236 (67.4%)
Need for enhanced self-esteem influences my appearance management activities	
Disagree	130 (37.1%)
Agree	220 (62.9%)

However, they agreed that the need for a healthy attitude (67.1%), desire for improved body image (67.4%) as well as the need for enhanced self-esteem influenced their appearance management activities.

Table 4.7 shows the factors that guide the process of buying clothes. Majority of the respondents (36.0%) mainly bought clothes once every three months. Most of the respondents disagreed whether their process of buying clothes was informed by peers (100%), family (96.6%), occasion (88.0%), or fashion (58.9%). However, over half of the respondents (57.1%) maintained that amount of money at their disposal influenced their habit of buying clothes.

**Table 4.7: Factors Guiding Process of Buying Clothes of study respondents**

Characteristics	n=350 n (%)
Frequency of buying clothes	
At most once a year	36 (10.3%)
Twice a year	59 (16.9%)
Quarterly	126 (36.0%)
Monthly	68 (19.4%)
> once/month	61 (17.4%)
Amount of money available guided process of buying clothes	200 (57.1%)
Agree	150 (42.9%)
Disagree	
Fashion guided process of buying clothes	
Agree	144 (41.1%)
Disagree	206 (58.9%)
Peers guided process of buying clothes	
Agree	350
Disagree	(100.0%)
	0
Occasion guided process of buying clothes	
Agree	42 (12.0%)
Disagree	308 (88.0%)
Family guided process of buying clothes	
Agree	12 (3.4%)
Disagree	338 (96.6%)

#### **4.7 Engagement of Respondents in Risky Appearance Management Behavior**

Over three-quarters of the respondents did not diet excessively (76.0%) to enhance their appearance, neither utilized products for bleaching their skin (88.6%) nor underwent a cosmetic procedure (99.1%) (Table 4.8). Furthermore, more than two-thirds of respondents were not wearing revealing clothes (69.1%) or indecently exposing some parts of their body (73.1%).

**Table 4.8: Engagement of Respondents in Risk Appearance Management Behavior**

Characteristic	n=350 n (%)
At times I diet excessively to enhance my appearance	
Yes	84 (24.0%)
No	266 (76.0%)
At times I wear revealing clothes to enhance my appearance	
Yes	108 (30.9%)
No	242 (69.1%)
At times I indecently expose some parts of my body	
Yes	94 (26.9%)
No	256 (73.1%)
I have ever utilized products for bleaching my skin color	
Yes	40 (11.4%)
No	310 (88.6%)
I have undergone a cosmetic procedure	
Yes	3 (0.9%)
No	347 (99.1%)

#### **4.8 Relationship between Personality, Gender, Age, Peer Influence, Self-Esteem and Body Image and Students' Appearance Management Behaviors**

The study respondents did not incline to feelings of being failures (68.0%), they did not feel useless at times (62.3%), neither did they think they were no good at all (59.4%) nor respected themselves (52.3%). However, most of the respondents were not able to do things as most other people (69.4%), were not satisfied with themselves (68.6%), did not feel to have a number of good qualities (68.0%), neither felt they were of equal worth as other people (66.9%), nor did they have much to be proud of (59.4%) (Table 4.9).

**Table 4.9: Perception of Self among the study respondents**

Characteristics	n=350 n (%)
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	
Agree	110 (31.4%)
Disagree	240 (68.6%)
I feel that I have a number of good qualities	
Agree	112 (32.0%)
Disagree	238 (68.0%)
I am able to do things as well as most other people	
Agree	107 (10.8%)
Disagree	243 (69.4%)
I feel that I'm a person of equal worth, like others	
Agree	116 (33.1%)
Disagree	234 (66.9%)
I take a positive attitude towards myself	
Agree	99 (28.3%)
Disagree	251 (71.7%)
At times I think I am no good at all	
Agree	142 (40.6%)
Disagree	208 (59.4%)
I feel I do have much to be proud of	
Agree	167 (47.7%)
Disagree	183 (52.3%)
I certainly feel useless at times	
Agree	132 (37.7%)
Disagree	218 (62.3%)
I wish I could have more respect for myself	
Agree	167 (47.7%)
Disagree	183 (52.3%)
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure	
Agree	112 (32.0%)
Disagree	238 (68.0%)

Most of the respondents felt they were diplomatic (67.4%), motivating (65.1%), efficient (64.6%), cautious (64.3%), observant (64.3%), contented with themselves (61.7%), thoughtful (60.6%), detailed (57.4%), and curious (56.3%). However, the majority of the respondents felt they were not outgoing (62.0%), highly sociable (59.1%), warm-hearted (53.1%) and confident (50.9%) (Table 4.10).

**Table 4.10: Personality temperament of the study Respondents**

Characteristics	n=350 n (%)
I am confident	
Agree	172 (49.1%)
Disagree	178 (50.9%)
I am outgoing	
Agree	133 (38.0%)
Disagree	217 (62.0%)
I am highly sociable	
Agree	143 (40.9%)
Disagree	207 (59.1%)
I am warm-hearted	
Agree	164 (46.9%)
Disagree	186 (53.1%)
I am a risk-taker	
Agree	175 (50.0%)
Disagree	175 (50.0%)
I am motivating	
Agree	228 (65.1%)
Disagree	122 (34.9%)
I am efficient	
Agree	226 (64.6%)
Disagree	124 (35.4%)
I am content with myself	
Agree	216 (61.7%)
Disagree	134 (38.3%)
I am observant	
Agree	225 (64.3%)
Disagree	125 (35.7%)
I am cautious	
Agree	222 (63.4%)
Disagree	128 (36.6%)
I am curious	
Agree	197 (56.3%)
Disagree	153 (43.7%)
I am thoughtful	
Agree	212 (60.6%)
Disagree	138 (39.4%)
I am detailed	
Agree	201 (57.4%)
Disagree	149 (42.6%)
I am diplomatic	
Agree	236 (67.4%)
Disagree	114 (32.6%)

Most of the respondents were satisfied with various parts of their bodies (Table 4.11);

**Table 4.11: Satisfaction/dissatisfaction of the respondents with their body parts**

Characteristics	n= 350 n (%)
Facial features	
Satisfied	200 (57.1%)
Dissatisfied	150 (42.9%)
Facial complexion	
Satisfied	204 (58.3%)
Dissatisfied	146 (41.7%)
Eyes	
Satisfied	228 (65.1%)
Dissatisfied	122 (34.9%)
Lips	
Satisfied	228 (65.1%)
Dissatisfied	122 (34.9%)
Natural hair color	
Satisfied	226 (64.6%)
Dissatisfied	124 (35.6%)
Chest/breast	
Satisfied	228 (65.1%)
Dissatisfied	122 (34.9%)
Shoulders	
Satisfied	208 (59.4%)
Dissatisfied	142 (40.6%)
Arms	
Satisfied	221 (63.1%)
Dissatisfied	129 (36.9%)
Waist	
Satisfied	213 (60.9%)
Dissatisfied	137 (39.1%)
Stomach	
Satisfied	195 (55.7%)
Dissatisfied	155 (44.3%)
Hips	
Satisfied	192 (54.9%)
Dissatisfied	158 (45.1%)
Thighs and legs	
Satisfied	197 (56.3%)
Dissatisfied	153 (43.7%)
Weight	
Satisfied	191 (54.6%)
Dissatisfied	159 (45.4%)
Overall appearance	
Satisfied	163 (46.6%)
Dissatisfied	187 (53.4%)

chest or breast (65.1%), lips (65.1%), eyes (65.1%), natural hair color (64.6%), arms (63.1%), waist (60.9%), shoulders (59.4%), facial complexion (58.3%), facial features (57.1%), stomach (55.7%), thighs and legs (56.3%), hips (54.9%), and weight (54.6%). However, over half of the respondents (53.4%) were dissatisfied with their overall appearance (Table 4.10).

The appearance management of the respondents is presented in Table 4.12.

**Table 4.12: Appearance Management of study respondents**

Characteristics	n=350 n (%)
I take care of my appearance as a healthy attitude towards life	350 (100%)
Agree	0
Disagree	
I dress in order to look attractive	
Agree	203 (58.0%)
Disagree	147 (42.0%)
My appearance is important to me	
Agree	318 (90.9%)
Disagree	32 (9.1%)
I invest time on my appearance	
Agree	156 (44.6%)
Disagree	194 (55.4%)
I invest resources on my appearance	
Agree	153 (43.5%)
Disagree	197 (56.3%)
I dress in order to be recognized by others	
Agree	304 (86.9%)
Disagree	46 (13.1%)
I dress the way I want and I don't care	
Agree	220 (62.9%)
Disagree	130 (37.1%)
I don't pay attention to the way I look	
Agree	303 (86.6%)
Disagree	47 (13.4%)

All of the respondents cared about their appearance as a healthy attitude towards life (100%). Majority felt their appearance was important (90.9%) and dressed in order to be recognized by others (86.9%). However, most of them maintained that they did not care how they looked (86.6%), dress the way they wanted (62.9%). Furthermore, over an average of the respondents felt that neither resources (56.3%) nor invested time (55.4%) in their appearance.

#### **4.13 Correlation between Self-Esteem, Personality, Peer Influence, Appearance Management Knowledge, and Body Image and Appearance Management**

A bivariate correlation was conducted to explore factors that relate with appearance management and results are presented in Table 4.13.

**Table 4.43: Correlation between self-esteem, personality, peer influence, appearance management knowledge and body image and appearance management among respondents**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Pearson correlation coefficient (r)</b>	<b>P value</b>
Self-esteem	0.689	<0.001
Personality	0.833	<0.001
Peer influence	0.764	<0.001
Appearance management knowledge	0.280	<0.001
Body image	0.764	<0.001
Age	0.160	0.003
Gender	0.305	<0.001
Year of study	-0.048	0.369

There was a very strong correlation between personality ( $r = 0.833$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and appearance management of the respondents. A significant strong relationship was noted among self-esteem ( $r = 0.689$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), peer influence ( $r = 0.764$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), body

image ( $r = 0.764$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and appearance management. Furthermore, a weak relationship existed between gender ( $r = 0.305$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and age ( $r = 0.160$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and appearance management (Table 4.13).

## **CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION**

### **5.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

The study was conducted among students attending five higher learning Institutions. The study population entailed both males and females for year one to year four of their studies. Majority of the respondents had ages between 22 years to 25 years and were in their third year of study.

### **5.2 Challenges Affecting the Process of Appearance Management among Study Respondents**

The current study found that financial constraints and societal demands influenced the respondents' clothing preferences. According to the study respondents, the main issue that influenced their grooming activities was financial constraints. However, their peers, societal demands and religious restrictions did not influence the grooming activities. The finding of the current study is consistent with the establishment of McPherson (2012), who associated financial status with appearance management. Similarly, Belley & Lochner (2007) argued that financial difficulties negatively affected self-esteem and subsequently impacted adversely on appearance management.

Similarly, Fardouly and Vartanian (2016) observed that in an attempt to achieve a physical appearance desirable to society, a person may at times be forced to engage in unhealthy and risk-taking behaviors. Moreover, Kim et al. (2014) posited that some students attempt to alter their appearance, in order to achieve the ideal look accepted by society. In the process, they may engage in risky appearance management behaviors

such as bleaching their skin color, excessive dieting, and the wearing of revealing clothes that indecently expose some parts of their bodies.

However, the respondents disagreed on whether limited clothing variety, religious restrictions, peers and family constraints influenced their preference of clothing. This establishment is incongruent with the findings of many studies. Likewise, Sheldon (2010) alluded, that, peers who have a lot of pressure to attain the ideal body size, and have little social support, may not only engage in unhealthy appearance management behaviors, but also develop dissatisfaction with their bodies and eating disorders. Equally, Havey & Casey (2015) argued that good behavior from peers can spread in a group, but also, bad behavior can be copied by members of the same group.

### **5.3 Appearance Management Knowledge Levels of the Study Respondents**

According to the study respondents, appearance management is not how a person looks neither is it what a person wears nor other peoples' perception. Majority of the respondents agreed that appearance management refers to actions and decisions on the way a person looks. The result of the study suggests that most respondents were not aware that appearance management refers to how a person looks. Only less than a fifth of the respondents indicated that appearance management refers to how a person looks. According to Adam & Galinsky (2012), appearance is a statement of who a person is, and as such, the respondents were not aware of appearance management. The aforementioned authors maintain that appearance is a statement of who a person is and grooming helps a person to take care of his appearance. According to Karl *et al* (2013),

a person could be defined by the type of clothing he/she wears. The aforementioned authors indicated that people are usually judged based on their clothes and that what they wear can affect their mental and physical performance.

#### **5.4 The Importance of Appearance Management among the Study Respondents**

The study sought to examine the importance of appearance management among students attending IHL in Meru County. The respondents were asked to state the extent to which appearance management was important in their daily lives. Majority of them maintained that appearance management communicates who a person is, however it is neither non-verbal communication nor paramount for the first impression. Most of the respondents said that appearance management was very important. However, majority of them rarely applied appearance management enhancement products and maintained that these products were not important in their daily lives.

According to a study conducted by Johnson & Lennon (2014), it observed that the clothes that one wears affect one's behavior and other people's behavior. Similarly, Freeburg (2010) observed that AM is a learnable life skill that is key in employability, schooling and the future lives of college students. Women have been shown to use and buy cosmetics regularly (Kalicanin et al., 2016). Contrary, the current study established that the majority of them rarely applied appearance management enhancement products.

### **5.5 Factors that Guide Respondents in the Appearance Management Process**

The study sought to determine factors that guide students in the appearance management process which involves the dressing process and the social consequences of one's appearance in IHL in Meru County. The respondents were asked whether their appearance management activities were significantly influenced by their peers.

The study respondents said neither their peers nor their need for attraction influenced their appearance management activities. In contrast, Sheldon (2015) found that peers who get a lot of pressure to attain the ideal body size and have little social support, may not only engage in unhealthy appearance management behaviors, but also develop dissatisfaction with their bodies and eating disorders. Kendra (2018) argues that people compare themselves with others in the social worlds, and especially tend to compare their appearance with those of celebrities aired by media. Adam & Galinsky (2012) argued that grooming helps people to take care of their appearance.

Majority of the respondents mainly bought clothes once in every three months. Most of the respondents disagreed whether their process of buying clothes was informed by peers, family, occasion and fashion. However, over half of the respondents maintained that the amount of money at their disposal influenced their habit of buying clothes. Swami et al., (2014) found out that a good body image can be a source of satisfaction to an individual and as such, people engage in appearance management activities. Clothing is used to form the first impression to others and one's appearance can overshadow their other characteristics and attributes (Mahajan, 2007).

The result is also in harmony with the finding of Thein-Lemelson (2015) who established that people engage in appearance management activities in order to enhance their attractiveness physically. Similarly, WHO (2016) established that female students wanted to remain younger and in the ideal age through the clothing and type of skincare they use. This means that the students who viewed themselves positively took good care of their bodies and clothing; by grooming appropriately, dressing properly and carrying out assorted activities geared towards a good appearance. Likewise, students who engaged in appropriate appearance management activities felt good about their outlook which boosted their self-esteem. Hence, appearance management impacted on a student's self-esteem; and a student's self-esteem as well as propelled good appearance management. Johnson and Lennon (2014) asserted that the clothes that an individual wears affect the way one sees himself/herself and also the behavior of other people towards him/her.

#### **5.6 Relationship between Personality, Gender, Age, Peer Influence, Self-Esteem and Body Image and Appearance Management among Study Respondents**

A bivariate correlation was conducted to explore factors that relate to appearance management and results were presented. The current study established a positive association between self-esteem, personality, peer influence, body image and appearance management. Previous studies have found similar results. Jones and Swami et al., (2014) associated clothing with improved body image. Congruently, Howlett *et al* (2013) associated body image with grooming activities. Consequently, as a result of

taking care of themselves in terms of proper grooming and appropriate dressing, the students who perceived their bodies as attractive saw themselves even more attractive. Hence, a student who believed that his/her body was attractive engaged in numerous appearance management activities making them look much more attractive.

Also, the current study established a strong correlation between gender and appearance management. Similarly, a study by Kim (2014) revealed that female students wanted to remain younger, through the clothing and type of skincare they use. The fact that most female students in IHL endeavor to look more attractive as they move closer towards engaging in serious relationships that could result in marriage could explain the latter behavior. Clothing is used to form the first impression on others and one's appearance can overshadow their other characteristics and attributes (Mahajan, 2015). Furthermore, the current study established a weak correlation between age and appearance management. In agreement, a study conducted by Kim (2014) revealed that appearance management and people pursuing physical ideal age was practiced by Korean students in their 20's and 30'. Similarly, age has been closely linked to influence one's body image (Halliwel, 2015).

Also, the current study found a positive relationship between peer influence and appearance management. Good behavior from peers can spread in a group, while bad behavior can also be copied by members of the same group (Havey & Casey, 2015). Congruently, peers who have a lot of pressure to attain the perceived physical ideal body size, and have little social support, may not only engage in unhealthy appearance

management but also develop dissatisfaction with their bodies and eating disorders (Sheldon, 2010).

### **5.7 Engagement of Respondents in Risky Appearance Management Behavior**

Majority of the respondents did not undergo a cosmetic procedure (99.1%), neither utilized products for bleaching their skin (88.6%) nor diet excessively (76.0%) to enhance their appearance. Furthermore, most of them did not indecently expose some parts of their body (73.1%) or wear revealing clothes (69.1%) to enhance their appearance.

The current study's findings are contrary to what has been asserted in most studies. Jones et al., (2016) posited that women engage in risky appearance management behaviors which include cosmetic procedures and extreme dieting. Similarly, Kim et al. (2014) asserted that some students attempt to alter their appearance, in order to achieve the perceived physical ideal look by the society, and in the process, may engage in risky appearance management behaviors, such as excessive dieting. The aforementioned authors likewise established that some students practiced the habit of wearing revealing clothes, in order to fit in their peer groups and subsequently, enhance their appearance. The study also found that some students bleached their skin color to enhance their appearances (Kim et al., 2014). Recently, the stripping of women in public and other forms of sexual harassment in Kenya was on the rise, as witnessed in Nairobi and its environs for what was cited as indecent dressing (Guantai, 2014).

It is noted that people engage in appearance management in order to enhance their physical attractiveness especially for social media selfies (Jones & Kramer, 2016). Kalicanin & Velimirovic (2016) opined that cosmetics use is an essential component of the ever-changing beauty standards for thousands of years and has been used as a symbol for shaping oneself, self-presentation and impression management.

## **CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a summary of key findings, conclusions and recommendations. The summary, conclusions and recommendations are aligned to the specific objectives of the study.

### **6.2 Summary of the Findings**

Majority of the study respondents agreed that financial constraints influenced both clothing preference (85.1%) and grooming activities (69.1%) whereas societal demands (61.7%) influenced only their preference for clothing. However, most of the respondents disagreed whether their peers (72.9%), limited clothing variety (70.0%), family constraints (64.6%) and religious restrictions (51.1%) influenced their preference of clothing. Similarly, they disagreed on whether family constraints (61.4%), peers (66.6%), societal demands (50.3%) and religious restrictions (52.3%) influenced their grooming activities. Majority of the study respondents maintained that appearance management communicates who a person is (63.7%), however it is neither a non-verbal communication (79.1%) nor paramount for first impression (81.1%). Most of the respondents said that appearance management was very important (76.0%). However, majority of them (62.9%) rarely applied the appearance management enhancement products and maintained (54.8%) that these products were not important in their daily lives.

According to the respondents, appearance management is not how a person looks (80.9%) neither is it what a person wears (83.4%) nor other peoples' perception (94.9%). However, majority of the respondents agreed that appearance management refers to actions and decisions on the way a person looks (62.6%). A third of the respondents (36.0%) mainly bought clothes once every three months. Most of the respondents disagreed whether the process of buying clothes was informed by their peers (100%), family (96.6%), occasion (88.0%) and fashion (58.9%). However, over half of the respondents (57.1%) maintained that the amount of money at their disposal influenced their habit of buying clothes

The study respondents felt they were not useless at times (62.3%), respected themselves (52.3%), neither did they think they were no good at all (59.4%) nor inclined to feelings of being failures (68.0%). However, most of the respondents were not satisfied with themselves (68.6%), did not feel to have a number of good qualities (68.0%), were not able to do things as most other people (69.4%), neither felt they were of equal worth as other people (66.9%) nor did they have much to be proud of (59.4%). Most of the respondents felt they were motivating (65.1%), efficient (64.6%), contented with themselves (61.7%), observant (64.3%), cautious (64.3%), curious (56.3%), thoughtful (60.6%), detailed (57.4%) and diplomatic (67.4%). However, the majority of the respondents felt they were not outgoing (62.0%), highly sociable (59.1%), warm-hearted (53.1%) and confident (50.9%). Majority of the respondents did not diet excessively (76.0%), neither utilized products for bleaching their skin (88.6%) nor underwent a cosmetic procedure (99.1%) to enhance their appearance. Furthermore, most of them did

not wear revealing clothes (69.1%) or indecently exposing some parts of their body (73.1%) to enhance their appearance. The study established a strong correlation between personality ( $r = 0.833, p < 0.001$ ), self-esteem ( $r = 0.689, p < 0.001$ ), peer influence ( $r = 0.764, p < 0.001$ ) and body image ( $r = 0.764, p < 0.001$ ) and appearance management behavior.

### **6.3 Conclusions**

The study investigated whether personality, gender, age, peer influence, self-esteem and body image had a relationship with appearance management among the students in five higher learning institutions in Meru County. The study established a strong correlation between personality, self-esteem, peer influence and body image and appearance management. Therefore, the study rejected the null hypothesis stating that there is no relationship between personality, gender, age, peer influence, self-esteem, and body image and appearance management among students in the five IHL in Meru County.

Financial constraints inform both clothing preference and grooming activities whereas societal demands influence students' preference for clothing. However, peers, limited clothing variety, family constraints and religious restrictions influence students' preference for clothing. Similarly, family constraints, peers, societal demands and religious restrictions inform the students' grooming activities.

Students perceive appearance management as not how people look neither is it what they wear nor other peoples' perception but it is the actions and decisions on the way a

person looks. One in three students mainly buy clothes once every three months, however, the process of buying clothes is informed by their peers, family, occasion, and prevailing fashion.

The students feel that they are not useless, neither not good at all nor incline to feelings of being failures. However, they feel to be motivating, respecting themselves, efficient, contented with themselves, observant, cautious, curious, thoughtful, detailed, diplomatic, highly sociable, warm-hearted and confident. Personality, self-esteem, peer influence and body image positively correlate with appearance management.

## **6.4 Recommendations**

### **6.4.1 Recommendation for practice**

Following the findings of the study, for practice, it's recommended that:

- i. The deans of students in the respective IHL should enlighten students on the need to live within their means, and how appearance management activities could be used to boost self-esteem and body image.
- ii. The student leadership bodies in the respective IHL should organize appropriate workshops and open forums aimed at enhancing the students' knowledge of appearance management.
- iii. The management of the various IHL should invite human resource managers from reputable firms, image consultants, and appearance management consultants to enlighten the students on the importance of appearance management and the dangers of risky appearance management behaviors.

#### **6.4.2 Recommendations for Further Research**

For further research, the study recommends:

- i. A similar study to be done in other Counties, to assess whether different findings may be reached, regarding appearance management, among students attending IHL.
- ii. A study could also be done on a gender perspective of appearance management, among students attending IHL in Kenya”.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Letter of Introduction and Consent

#### KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

#### DEPARTMENT FASHION DESIGN AND MARKETING

**Dear participants,**

My name is Alice Ngunu, MSc. Student at Kenyatta University in the Department of Fashion Design and Marketing. I am carrying out a study on evaluation of Appearance Management among students in IHL in Meru County, and will greatly appreciate your response to the questions below. This research is purely academic and will not be used for any other purpose. The results of this survey will be used to identify important concerns affecting students on Appearance Management. Kindly take note that your participation in this study is voluntary and information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality and no payment of any kind shall be involved.

**Aim:** To evaluate appearance management among students in IHL in Meru County, Kenya.

**Process:** The study involves representatives of the whole population, therefore, an explanation shall be given to those individuals who would have been left out during sampling to take note of this and to know that if there will be any intervention that will ever come as a result of this study, they will also be considered as beneficiaries.

Answer all questions in the questionnaire which involves demographic and socio-economic characteristics section, appearance management issues, and appearance management knowledge levels, importance of appearance management, and factors that guide students in appearance management process.

**Time length:** The interview will require approximately 20-30 minutes of your time. In addition, if you decide to stop participating in the interview it will be respected.

**Confidentiality:** Privacy is guaranteed since there will be no personal information recorded during the interview, which will be conducted in a private area and the principal investigator will use a locked cabinet to store the questionnaire.

**Voluntarism:** The findings of this study will be of utmost importance, therefore, I urge you to participate. However, if at any point you change your mind and quit to answer, you are free to do so since your participation is voluntary.

**Benefits:** Kindly, take note that no payment of any kind will be involved by your participation in the study, however, you will be aware of your appearance management behaviours.

**Discomforts/Risks:** there is not risk associated whatsoever with this study.

**Contact information**

In case you have any questions concerning the study that you feel are not addressed you may enquire from

Alice Ngunu

0722691102

Kenyatta University Ethical Review Committee on

[chairman.kuerc@ku.ac.ke](mailto:chairman.kuerc@ku.ac.ke)

**Participant’s statement**

I acknowledge that the information given above concerning my involvement in the study is clear. An opportunity to enquire more has been granted and all my queries attended to satisfactorily. My involvement in this study is not by coercion but voluntary. Feedback from this research will also be shared with me whether I decide to continue participating or quit.

Code of participant.....

.....

.....

Signature or thumb print

Date

**Investigator`s statement**

I, the interviewer, therefore declare that the procedures to be adhered to in the study, risks and benefits involved have been explained to the respondent in a clear language that they understand.

Name of interviewer.....

Interviewer signature .....

Date.....

## Appendix B: Consolidated Questionnaire

### SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Age in years
  - a. Up to -21
  - b. 22-25
  - c. 26-29
  - d. Over 30
2. Gender
  - a. M
  - b. F
3. Institution \_\_\_\_\_
4. Year of study. (Please tick (√) appropriately)
  - a. First Year
  - b. Second Year
  - c. Third Year
  - d. Fourth Year

### SECTION B: APPEARANCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES

5. Indicate the level of agreement or disagreement in respect to the statement provided below in regard to issues that affect students in the process of appearance management

(Where; SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree)

S/N	Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
i.	Financial constraints influence my clothing preferences					
ii.	Family restrictions influence my clothing preferences					
iii.	My peers have a significant influence on my clothing preference					
iv.	Societal demands influence my clothing preferences					

v.	Religious restrictions influence my clothing preferences					
vi.	Limited variety of clothing influences my preferences					
vii.	Financial constraints influence my grooming activities					
viii.	Family restrictions influence my grooming activities					
ix.	My peers have a significant influence on my grooming activities					
x.	Societal demands influence my grooming activities					
xi.	Religious restrictions influence my grooming activities					

### SECTION C: APPEARANCE MANAGEMENT KNOWLEDGE LEVELS

6. What is appearance management? (Please tick (√) as appropriate)

- a. How you look
- b. What you wear
- c. Actions and decisions on the way you look
- d. What other people say about how you look
- e. Other (Please specify)

---



---

7. Have you ever had any training in form of a talk/workshop on appearance management? (Please tick (√) as appropriate)

- a. Yes
- b. No

### SECTION D: IMPORTANCE OF APPEARANCE MANAGEMENT

8. What is the importance of appearance management?

- a. It is a form of non-verbal communication
- b. It communicates who you are
- c. It is paramount for first impression

d. Other (Please specify)

---

9. How important is appearance management in your daily life? (Please tick (√) one)

- a. Very Important
- b. Important
- c. Moderately Important
- d. Less Important
- e. Not Important at all

10. Do you apply any products to enhance your appearance? (Please (√) tick one)

- a. Yes
- b. No

11. How often do you apply products that enhance your appearance?

- a. Always
- b. Frequent
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

12. How important are the products that you apply to enhance your appearance to you in your everyday life? (Please (√) tick one)

- a. Very Important
- b. Important
- c. Moderately Important
- d. Less Important
- e. Not Important at all

SECTION E: FACTORS THAT GUIDE STUDENTS IN APPEARANCE  
MANAGEMENT PROCESS

13. Indicate the level of agreement or disagreement in respect to the statement provided below in regard to factors that guide students in appearance management process (Where; SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree)

S/N	Item	SD	D	N	A	SA
i.	My appearance management activities are significantly influenced by my peers					
ii.	Need for attraction influences my appearance management activities					
iii.	Need for healthy attitude influences my appearance management activities					
iv.	Desire for improved body image influences my appearance management activities					
v.	Need for enhanced self-esteem influences my appearance management activities					

14. How often do you buy clothes? (Please (√) tick one)

- a. At most once a year
- b. 2 to 4 times a year
- c. 5 to 11 times a year
- d. Monthly
- e. More than once a month

15. What are some of the factors that guide you in the process of buying clothes?

- a. Amount of money available
- b. Current fashion trends
- c. Peer influence
- d. Type of occasion
- e. Family influence
- f. Other (Please specify)
-

SECTION F: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONALITY, GENDER, AGE, PEER INFLUENCE, SELF-ESTEEM AND BODY IMAGE WITH STUDENTS' APPEARANCE MANAGEMENT

16. Indicate the level of agreement or disagreement in respect to the statement provided below in regard to how you look at yourself (Where; SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree)

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD
i.	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself				
ii.	I feel that I have a number of good qualities				
iii.	I am able to do things as well as most other people				
iv.	I feel that I'm a person of equal worth, like others				
v.	I take a positive attitude towards myself				
vi.	At times, I think I am no good at all				
vii.	I feel I do not have much to be proud of				
viii.	I certainly feel useless at times				
ix.	I wish I could have more respect for myself				
x.	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure				

17. Indicate the level of agreement or disagreement in respect to the statement provided below in regard to your personality temperament (Where; SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree)

	SA	A	N	D	SA
I am confident					
I am out going					

I am highly sociable					
I am warm hearted					
I am a risk taker					
I am motivating					
I am efficient					
I am content with myself					
I am observant					
I am cautious					
I am curious					
I am thoughtful					
I am detailed					
I am diplomatic					

18. How would you assess satisfaction / dissatisfaction with each of the following areas of your body on a scale of 1 to 5?

Where 1 is very dissatisfied, 2 dissatisfied, 3 moderately satisfied, 4 satisfied and 5 Very satisfied. (Please tick (√) one for each area.)

1	2	3	4	5
Very	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very
Dissatisfied				Satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Facial features

Facial complexion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eyes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lips	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Natural hair color	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chest/breast	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shoulders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Waist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stomach	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hips	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thighs and legs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weight	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall appearance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. To what extent does age influence your appearance management behavior

- a. Very large extent
- b. Large extent
- c. Moderate extent
- d. Little extent
- e. No extent

20. To what extent does gender influence your appearance management behavior

- a. Very large extent
- b. Large extent
- c. Moderate extent

d. Little extent

e. No extent

21. Indicate the level of agreement or disagreement in respect to the statement provided below in regard to your appearance management behavior (Where; SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree)

S/N	Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	I take care of my appearance as a healthy attitude towards life					
2	I dress in order to look attractive					
3	My appearance is important to me					
4	I invest time on my appearance					
5	I invest resources on my appearance					
6	I dress in order to be recognized by others					
7	I dress the way I want and I don't care					
8	I don't pay attention to the way I look					

#### SECTION G: ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENTS IN RISKY APPEARANCE MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOUR

22. Indicate the level of agreement or disagreement in respect to the statement provided below

S/N	Item	Yes	No
1	At times I diet excessively to enhance my appearance		
2	At times I wear revealing clothes to enhance my appearance		
3	At times I indecently expose some parts of my body		
4	I have ever utilized products for bleaching my skin color		
5	I have undergone a cosmetic procedure		

## Appendix C: Kenyatta University Graduate School Approval



### KENYATTA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: [dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke](mailto:dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke)

P.O. Box 43844, 00100

NAIROBI, KENYA

Website: [www.ku.ac.ke](http://www.ku.ac.ke)

Tel. 810901 Ext. 57530

#### Internal Memo

**FROM:** Dean, Graduate School **DATE:** 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2018

**TO:** Alice Njeri Ngunu **REF:** H60/20590/2010  
C/o Fashion Design & Marketing  
Department

**SUBJECT:** APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL  
=====

This is to inform you that Graduate School Board, at its meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 approved your Research Proposal for the M.Sc Degree Entitled, "Evaluation of Appearance Management among Students in Institutions of Higher Learning in Meru County, Kenya".

You may now proceed with data collection, subject to clearance with the Director General, Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation.

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed Supervision Tracking forms per semester. The form has been developed to replace the progress report forms. The supervision Tracking Forms are available at the University's website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

Thank you.

**JULIA GITU**  
**FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL**

c.c. Chairman, Department of Fashion Design and Marketing

#### Supervisors:

1. Dr. Jacqueline Kisato  
Department of Fashion Design and Marketing  
Management  
Kenyatta University
2. Prof. Isabella Waruinu Wandaka  
Textile Engineering  
Bahir Dar University  
Ethiopian Institute of Textiles and Fashion Technology  
Ethiopia  
C/o Department of Fashion Design and Marketing  
Kenyatta University

## Appendix D: Research Permit from NACOSTI



### NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,  
2241349, 3310571, 2219420  
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249  
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke  
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When replying please quote

NACOSTI, Upper Kabete  
Off Waiyaki Way  
P.O. Box 30623-00100  
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/19/15122/29078**

**3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019**

Alice Njeri Ngunu  
Kenyatta University  
P.O. Box 43844-00100  
**NAIROBI.**

#### **RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“Evaluation of appearance management among students in institutions of higher learning in Meru County, Kenya.”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Meru County** for the period ending **1<sup>st</sup> April, 2020.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Meru County** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit a **copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.

**BONFACE WANYAMA**  
**FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:

The County Commissioner  
Meru County.

The County Director of Education  
Meru County.