THE STATUS OF ALCOHOL IN CONTEMPORARY PRODUCTS ACCORDING TO ISLAMIC LAW AND SCIENTIFIC ASPECT

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ABSTRACT

Alcohol, an organic solvent, provides an extensive utilization within the manufacturing sector, particularly in the production of food and beverage items. Moreover, it holds significant importance in the cosmetics industry for crafting products like perfumes, moisturizers, and various personal care items. While its widespread use is undeniable, there remains a notable lack of discourse regarding the employment of alcohol in cosmetics when considering both Shariah and scientific viewpoints. This report primarily aims to investigate the halal compliance of alcohol as an ingredient in Shariah-compliant cosmetic products. The analysis encompasses a multifaceted examination of various aspects of Shariah law and incorporates insights drawn from preceding scientific studies. Scholarly perspectives from the realms of Shariah and science are analysed in this research, and the diverse types of alcohol encountered in cosmetic products are also subject to investigation. This report also aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of alcohol in contemporary products, examining its permissibility according to Islamic law, its scientific attributes, and the potential health effects associated with its consumption.

Keywords: *Alcohol, Contemporary Products, Shariah, Science*

1. Introduction

Halal, in relation with food and product manufacturing, is commonly associated with items certified as permissible under Islamic Law (Alzeer et al., 2017). When defining halal in accordance with Islamic law and principles, any matters related to whether something is halal (permissible) or haram (forbidden) and all disputes should be referred to the primary and secondary sources of Islamic jurisprudence, namely, the Quran, Sunnah, and consensus (Ijma') among scholars. A fundamental principle accepted by Islamic scholars is that "everything is permissible except that which has been explicitly prohibited" (Ibn Taimiyah, 1997). Therefore, any food or consumer product becomes haram (forbidden by Islamic law) if it is proven, through any means, that it violates the Shariah ruling based on the sources. Consequently, an additional source, namely Fatwa (religious edicts) issued by a qualified Islamic authority, is often necessary as a supporting reference.

In Islam, there is no prohibition against men or women aspiring to look beautiful. However, such endeavours should not be excessive but rather conducted in moderation as deemed necessary. Beauty is a subjective matter, and in the modern era of globalization, many women emphasise their physical appearance more than nurturing their inner beauty. They are willing to invest significant sums in cosmetics to achieve radiant skin and an attractive appearance. Cosmetics often symbolise a woman's beauty, reflecting her personality and self-confidence in daily life. Most women prefer to use cosmetic products that enhance their appearance.

Nowadays, alcohol is frequently included in various cosmetic products that have become integral to people's daily routines. It's important to note that the term "alcohol" is sometimes mistakenly associated with "khamr," a beverage introduced during the time of

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Prophet Muhammad SAW, which is an intoxicating substance made from alcohol (Baharum, 2020). Not all types of alcohol are prohibited (haram) in Islam; there are also alcohols that are permissible for use. Specifically, alcohol is often referred to as ethanol or ethyl alcohol, and it is found in a variety of products, including cosmetics. As Mahaiyadin and Osman (2017) note, alcohol is a type of chemical compound with numerous applications. Methanol is derived from wood, while ethanol comes from grains. The alcohol commonly used in everyday life is ethanol, which is volatile, flammable, colourless, and possesses a distinct aroma (Mulaina, 2014). The status of alcohol found in cosmetics must be carefully and accurately determined by Islamic scholars and scientists. Therefore, this article offers an overview of the status of alcohol from both Shariah and scientific perspectives, as well as an exploration of the types of alcohol used in cosmetic products. Additionally, the report discusses the legal considerations of alcohol in cosmetic products according to Shariah.

2. Problem Statement

The coexistence of alcohol in modern products, whether in the realms of food, beverages, or cosmetics, has raised a multifaceted challenge that requires a nuanced examination. The presence of alcohol in these contemporary products intersects with Islamic legal principles, often referred to as Shariah and the scientific considerations underpinning the development of such consumer goods. This report delves into the intricate issue of alcohol's status in today's products, providing a comprehensive analysis that takes into account the dual perspectives of Islamic law and empirical scientific evaluation.

Alcohol, a chemical compound known for its various properties and applications, plays a pivotal role in many industries. It is commonly used to manufacture a wide range of products, including food and beverages and personal care items like cosmetics, perfumes, and even pharmaceuticals. However, these widespread applications of alcohol give rise to discussions and concerns from the standpoint of Islamic law and scientific inquiry, which have remained relatively limited and sometimes ambiguous.

The central focus of this report is to navigate the often intricate question of the halal status of alcohol as an ingredient in products governed by Shariah-based principles. The analysis will encompass various aspects of Islamic jurisprudence, referencing primary and secondary sources, including the Quran, Sunnah (prophetic tradition), and consensus (Ijma') among Islamic scholars. It is essential to remember that one of the primary principles of Islamic jurisprudence is that "everything is permissible except that which has been explicitly prohibited." Understanding whether a product is halal or haram, permissible or prohibited, is, therefore, inherently tied to these sources and their judgments. Furthermore, Islamic legal scholars' opinions and the perspectives of scientific experts will be explored in this report.

The use of alcohol in cosmetics is particularly prevalent in modern society. It is an ingredient in various daily care products, including perfumes and skin care items, which have become integral to people's daily routines. Alcohol is often mistakenly equated with *khamr*, the intoxicating substance found in alcoholic beverages, introduced during the time of Prophet Muhammad SAW. However, not all alcohols are prohibited (haram) in Islam, as there are alcohols that are permissible to use. Hence, a deep and accurate determination of the status of alcohol in cosmetics is essential.

3. Methodology

This report adopts a qualitative research approach to investigate the status of alcohol in contemporary products from both Islamic legal and scientific perspectives. Qualitative

research is an ideal method for exploring complex and nuanced issues, such as the diverse interpretations of Islamic law and the multifaceted applications of alcohol in modern products. Therefore, its structure is divided into two stages: the data collection stage and the data analysis stage.

The data collection Stage comprises a comprehensive review of relevant academic publications, religious texts, and legal documents, including the Quran, Hadith, and rulings from Islamic scholars, will be conducted. This analysis will provide a foundation for understanding the Islamic perspective on alcohol.

The Data Analysis stage will involve systematically analysing textual content from relevant religious and scientific sources. This approach will involve categorizing and identifying recurring themes and interpretations related to alcohol and its status in contemporary products. Content analysis will be particularly useful in understanding the viewpoints and arguments from both Islamic law and scientific disciplines.

4. Objectives

This paper has three objectives. First, it aims to examine the Islamic perspective on alcohol in contemporary products. This objective aims to comprehensively analyse the Islamic viewpoint on the use of alcohol in modern products, with a focus on cosmetics, foods, and beverages. The report will delve into the interpretations of Islamic scholars, Quranic verses, Hadith, and consensus (Ijma') to determine the halal (permissible) or haram (prohibited) status of alcohol-containing products in accordance with Islamic law.

The second objective is to Explore the scientific aspect of Alcohol in Modern Products. The objective is to investigate the scientific aspects of alcohol, particularly ethanol, and its applications in contemporary products. This includes an examination of the chemical properties, uses, and safety considerations of alcohol in cosmetics, food, and other consumer goods. The report will also assess the role of alcohol as a solvent, preservative, and functional ingredient in these products.

The last objective is to assess the intersection of Islamic law and scientific findings. This objective seeks to identify commonalities and differences between Islamic legal rulings and scientific understandings regarding alcohol in modern products. The report will analyse how Islamic scholars, scientists, and industry experts reconcile or conflict in their perspectives on the status of alcohol in consumer goods. It aims to provide insights into the challenges and opportunities in aligning Islamic legal requirements with scientific advancements in product development.

By achieving these three main objectives, the report will offer a comprehensive analysis of the status of alcohol in contemporary products from both Islamic and scientific angles, providing valuable insights for various stakeholders, including consumers, manufacturers, and policymakers.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Figures and Tables

Alcohol is not an uncommon name and is known to the majority of people, even to those who have not consumed it. that has always been a conversation between current and earlier scholars. The use of alcohol is not only found in certain food and beverage products but also most widely used in cosmetics such as perfume, skin care products, and others. If the use of alcohol in foods and beverages is described as not permissible, there are some disputes over

the use of alcohol in cosmetics products. Islam is expected to influence the use of alcohol for Muslim college students because of various ways of transforming through the sources of the Al-Quran and Sunnah, which specifically prohibit the use, transportation, and sale of alcohol (Abu-ras et al., 2010).

Initially, alcohol is one of the constituents found in wine, known as "*khamr*." *Khamr*, an alcoholic beverage, is deemed as haram, or forbidden, in Islam. In Surah Al-Maidah, verse 90, it is explicitly stated that Allah Almighty prohibits Muslims from consuming *khamr* due to its reprehensible nature and association with sinful behaviour. Consequently, alcohol, or *khamr*, is considered "il'lah" due to the clear prohibition on Muslims to partake in it. Prophet Muhammad SAW further affirmed this stance in his hadith, asserting that "Every intoxicant is khamr, and every khamr is haram." As elucidated by Azahari (2010), the issue of alcohol content is a matter of concern in Malaysia. Thus, the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) has stipulated that alcohol in perfumes, cosmetics, medications, and beverages is permissible (harus) and acceptable as long as the alcohol content meets the specified criteria. Additionally, according to Usmani (2017), Shariah does not explicitly define the term "alcohol" except in the context of the prohibition of wine made from grapes, date palms, and other materials. Moreover, the Quran specifically mentions "khamr," referring to alcoholic beverages made from grapes, date palms, wheat, barley, and honey during the time of Prophet Muhammad SAW. Even though alcohol may originate from other sources, it is still considered prohibited due to its intoxicating effects on Muslims. Notably, some Western scholars argue that alcohol is permissible for use in cosmetics (Michalak & Katz, 2010). They contend that Fatwa and Mufti rulings indicate that alcohol in cosmetics is not forbidden because it is intended solely for external application and not for consumption.

Afifi et al. (2014) elaborates that alcohol is a clear and colourless liquid that can be produced through two distinct processes. Firstly, it can be generated through fermentation, the primary method for producing alcoholic beverages, and secondly, it can be synthesized from chemical substances, a process often employed to derive alcohol from petroleum. The product resulting from this process is commonly referred to as ethanol or ethyl alcohol. However, it is essential to note that scholars from various schools of Islamic jurisprudence, including Mazhab Hanafi, Mazhab Maliki, Mazhab Shafie, and Mazhab Hambali, unanimously concur that alcohol is classified as "*najs*" because of its potential to induce intoxication. Therefore, as explained by Hashim et al. (2009), the determination of a cosmetic product's halal status hinges on the absence of any ingredients or by-products derived from alcoholic beverages, particularly "*khamr*."

Abdul (2014) highlights the distinction between alcohol and khamr, defining the latter as anything capable of causing intoxication, stemming from fruit juices, whereas Ibn Saiyidah specifies that khamr originates from grapes and other substances with intoxicating properties. Conversely, Imam Hanafi stipulates that khamr is exclusively derived from grape juice. It is important to recognize that, from a chemical perspective, the term "alcohol" encompasses a broader range of compounds beyond ethanol. Furthermore, it is imperative to note that while ethanol is a component of khamr and is associated with its intoxicating effects, not all ethanol is synonymous with khamr.

According to Dr. Erwandi Tarmizi (2013), there exist three distinct opinions from Islamic scholars concerning the legal ruling on alcohol and khamr. The first opinion, which is widely accepted among contemporary ulama and is supported by the fatwa of the Council of Ulama of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, maintains that alcohol is, in fact, khamr. It defines khamr as any substance that, when consumed, can lead to drunkenness, irrespective of the quantity or nomenclature. The second opinion, advocated by Sheikh Muhammad Rasyid Ridha and certain modern ulama, conjectures that alcohol is not synonymous with khamr. They argue that khamr results from the fermentation of specific fruits like grapes, dates, wheat, and cereals, whereas alcohol can be derived from a broader range of sources, including wood, roots, and various fruits. However, it is essential to consider that Prophet Muhammad SAW stated in a hadith, "everything that is intoxicating is khamr, and everything that is intoxicating is prohibited," implying that alcohol, too, should be regarded as khamr in accordance with Islamic law since it is the primary intoxicating element in numerous beverages classified as khamr.

According to Izhar et al. (2017), alcohol is inherently impure and haram, but it can undergo a transformation through the process of *istihalah*, where it evolves into a clean and pure substance resembling common vinegar. Consequently, the permissibility of alcohol is determined by examining the final product. If the end product aligns with the requirements of cleanliness, purity, and goodness, it is considered halal. Conversely, if the final product is deemed unclean and impure, it is haram.

Panggabean (2013) explains that khamr is a subject of debate regarding its purity or impurity. Two conflicting views exist among the Jumhur ulama (the majority of scholars). The first group posits that khamr is impure, citing Surah Al-Maidah (50), where the term 'rijs' is interpreted as najs (impure). Therefore, they contend that wine is impure and can be sensed as such. The second view, held by Rabi'ah, al-laits, al-Muzani, and other scholars from the Salaf, maintains that khamr is pure and not najs, as they believe najs pertains to matters derived from scholarly interpretation rather than direct revelation from Allah and Rasulullah SAW, whose law is considered qat'I (certain).

In a broader context, khamr encompasses any substance that intoxicates the mind, leading to a loss of control over one's thoughts and actions. The Mazhab Maliki, Shafie, and Hanbali schools consider khamr to be any intoxicating drink produced from grapes, dates, or raisins. According to Hadith Bukhari and Muslim, khamr is comprised of five key components: grapes, dates, wheat, barley, and honey. The prohibition of khamr is explicitly stated in the Quran in Surah Al-Baqarah (verse 219), which reads, "they ask thee concerning wine and gambling, say: in them is great sin, and some profit, for men; but the sin is greater than the profit" (Ramli, 2018). Contrarily, according to the Malaysian Fatwa Committee of the National Council for Islamic Affairs, the use of alcohol in any food products not originating from alcoholic beverages (arak) would be considered halal if the alcohol content does not exceed 0.01% (Community, 2012).

Moreover, the prohibition extends beyond khamr (wine or alcohol) to encompass any substance capable of inducing intoxication, regardless of its form or designation, rendering it haram. Nonetheless, there are no prohibitions against using alcohol for scientific, medical, industrial, or automotive purposes, such as biofuels, solvents, or coolants (Rassool, 2014). In Islam, the prohibition of khamr has been in place for 1400 years, stemming from its

intoxicating nature. However, Islamic law allows for alcohol consumption if it undergoes natural fermentation processes such as *takhammur*, *takhallul*, and *istihalah* (Syed, 2018).

Additionally, there are several articles emphasizing the benefits of alcohol to health, which are grounded in the Quran's mention of khamr and gambling, stating, "In them there is a great sin, and some of its benefits to humans, but their sin is greater than its benefits" (Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 219). Alcohol and other ingredients are employed in various cosmetics as humectants, emollients, and cleansing agents. Topical use of alcohol is generally permissible in Islam, while food and beverages containing alcohol are prohibited as stated in the Quran and Sunnah. Consequently, some scholars regard alcohol as najs when it comes into contact with the human body or clothing, requiring immediate cleansing (Majid, Sabir, & Ashraf, 2015).

Many cosmetics contain alcohols serving as humectants to facilitate the delivery of ingredients into the skin, as emollients, or as cleansing agents. Moreover, the cosmetics and pharmaceutical sectors have come under increased scrutiny by Muslim scholars due to concerns that certain international brands may be using enzymes derived from pork meat or alcohol as preservatives, generating skepticism among Muslim consumers (Ahmad, Rahman, & Rahman, 2015).

5.2. Alcohol from a Scientific Perspective

Each of Allah's commands has a specific rationale, with everything either prohibited or permitted holding great significance for Muslims. Alcohol, in particular, has become a contentious issue within the realm of industrial products, encompassing food, beverages, and notably cosmetics. The topic of alcohol in cosmetics has sparked numerous discussions among Muslims, and it is an issue that has increasingly come to the attention of scientists. According to research by Jamaludin, Ramli, Hashim, and Rahman (2014), alcohol is derived from the fermentation of fruits or grains in the presence of yeast, sugar, or starch. It is a colourless, flammable substance and is widely recognized as one of the most popular beverages globally. Alcohol is also used in its pure form or as a solvent in medicine, perfumes, cleaning products, baked goods, and more.

From a scientific perspective, as described by Mohammad Aizat Jamaludin (2015), alcohol constitutes a group of volatile, odourless chemical compounds that generally do not exist in liquid or solid form. These compounds are naturally produced through the fermentation of agricultural materials such as grapes, wheat, seeds, and honey. Furthermore, according to Afifi (2014), alcohol is an organic substance comprising carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen elements. It is a hydrocarbon compound characterized by covalently bonded hydroxyl groups (OH).

Sawari et al. (2015) note that, scientifically, alcohol refers to a group of chemicals featuring saturated hydroxyl derivatives, where the hydroxyl group (OH) is attached to saturated carbon atoms. Rahim (2016) emphasizes that alcohol is a chemically prevalent compound found in nature with various uses and applications. Chemically, alcohol refers to a class of organic compounds containing hydroxyl (OH) groups. As Jamaludin et al. (2014) point out, the process of alcohol preparation can involve both internal uses, as in carbonated

beverages or food ingredients, and external use, where denatured alcohol (dehydrated) is employed in fragrances like perfume, deodorant, and sprays.

In another scientific context, Noor (2018) defines alcohol as an organic compound composed of carbon (C), hydrogen (H), and oxygen (O), with a general formula of CnH2n+1OH for aliphatic alcohols and C6H5OH for aromatic alcohols, also known as phenol. Suryatin (2004) characterizes alcohol as cereal alcohol, a chemical compound with a molecular formula of C2H5OH or ethanol. This substance exhibits distinct physical properties, including being colorless, highly volatile, and soluble in water due to its fermentation process.

In an examination of alcohol content in beverage products on the market, as per Ruskam's research, alcohol is considered as a chemical compound with a hydroxyl functional group (-OH), encompassing varieties like methanol, ethanol, butanol, and others. These compounds serve as solvents, fuel, and starting materials for the production of other organic compounds within the industrial field. Furthermore, as explained by Alkohol & Disinfekta, alcohol serves as a highly effective bactericidal disinfectant with a broad spectrum and minimal chemical waste. Therefore, its effective concentration typically ranges from 60% to 90%. According to Label & Cashion (1990), one of the objectives in developing alcohol-containing gel compositions is to provide an antimicrobial product, thanks to the presence of alcohol, while also offering skin conditioning and moisturization akin to a hand and body lotion.

Moreover, Newman (1999) elucidates the advantages of alcohol, particularly in cosmetics, as it offers an effective antimicrobial composition that retains the feel and moisturizing attributes of hand cream and lotion. This dual functionality aims to address the perceived drying effects of topical alcohol-containing formulations. Furthermore, Duhigg (2011) mentions that in Egypt, they produced various essences used by French perfumes, selling them by ounce and diluting them, typically at a 1:9 ratio in alcohol for perfume production.

5.2.1 Types of Alcohol

Various types of alcohol are used in cosmetics, including ethanol, acetyl alcohol, isopropyl alcohol, and more. Ethanol is the most common type of alcohol found in cosmetics. It is included due to its antimicrobial properties, acting as a topical penetration enhancer, and serving as a solvent, viscosity-reducing agent, and antifoam agent. Consequently, many cosmetic products contain traces of ethanol in their formulations (Cabaleiro, Calle, Bendicho, & Lavilla, 2012).

Ethanol is also frequently used as a solvent in various products, including personal care items, pharmaceuticals, and perfumes, where it typically comprises 50% to 80% of the content. Its quick drying rate and strong fragrance upon application make it a preferred choice (Syariena et al., 2014). In some cosmetics, methyl alcohol is used as a solvent and denaturing agent. Methyl alcohol can be readily absorbed through the skin and into various bodily tissues and organs. Raw ethanol with 70%-95% ethanol content is used in pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and disinfectants (Joseph, 2013).

Acetyl alcohol is another common ingredient in cosmetics, appreciated for its emollient properties. It functions as a surfactant in shampoos, an emulsifying agent, a thickening agent in creams, and adds texture to various wood-based makeup products (Cirillo et al., 2018). Acetyl alcohol is used in cosmetic formulations to control viscosity, and it can be challenging in skin care product formulation. Advances in the manufacturing process have allowed for the production of new formulations with controlled acetyl alcohol content.

Polyvinyl alcohol (PVA) is used in cosmetic formulations, particularly in products like facial masks, eye shadows, lip liners, and skin care products, where it provides an occlusive and tensile effect. Adding active substances to PVA formulations can enhance their action (Vieira et al., 2009). Ethanol is employed in perfumes for its qualities as a solvent, allowing precise ingredient concentration and transparent solutions.

Oil-in-water (O/W) creams and milky lotions, which are used in skincare products, are typically composed of water, oils, surfactants, and fatty alcohols. They are used to improve skin appearance and condition (Okamoto, Tomomasa, & Nakajima, 2016).

Fatty alcohols are versatile chemical raw materials due to their amphiphilic nature and are used in detergents, skin care products, cosmetics, medicines, and have potential applications in fuel (Liu et al., 2014). Long-chain aliphatic alcohols, typically ranging from 12 to 18 carbons in length, are widely used in skin lotions and creams to prevent skin drying and tightening. Simple esters with lower-chain alcohols like methyl, ethyl, n-propyl, isopropyl, and butyl esters are employed as emollients in cosmetics, personal care products, and lubricants (Bhatia, 2004).

Benzyl alcohol (BA) is used as a fragrance ingredient in perfumes but can penetrate the skin, potentially causing contact allergies due to its widespread use in fragrance and preservative systems for cosmetic products (Saiyasombati & Kasting, 2003). To produce perfume, the fragrance oil is added to a solution of alcohol and water, with commercial alcohol typically containing ethanol, water, and a denaturant. Some compounds from this group serve as masking agents to reduce or inhibit a product's basic odour or taste. They are added to cosmetics containing ethyl alcohol to make them unpalatable (A. Gunia Krzyzak, 2018).

In emulsified compositions, a water and polyhydric alcohol-in-oil type formulation can be used as a cosmetic or ointment base. Acetyl alcohol and octyl dimethyl para-aminobenzoic acid (PABA) in w/o microemulsions can permeate the skin more effectively than in creams and lotions, making them suitable for cosmetic products (Boonme, 2007).

5.3 The Law of Alcohol in Cosmetics Product According to Shariah

In medieval times, one of the most crucial chemical discoveries was attributed to the Arabs and their development and control of the distillation process. Distillation played a pivotal role in Islamic chemical technology, serving not only in the preparation of medicinal compounds but also various technological and industrial applications. These applications

included the production of acids and the distillation of substances like perfume, rosewater, and essential oils.

M. Hashim (2013) highlights that the sources of ingredients in halal cosmetics can encompass halal animals (both terrestrial and aquatic), plants, microorganisms, alcohol, chemicals, soil, and water, provided they are neither hazardous nor *najs* (impure). However, the presence of alcohol, particularly ethanol, in cosmetics raises significant concerns among Muslim consumers.

Abdullah Swidi's study in 2010 underscores the importance of global Muslim consumers being informed about the ingredients in cosmetics and personal care products, as well as the products' halal status. This awareness helps them avoid using products containing alcohol, pork fat, or non-halal animal ingredients.

According to Kamaljeet Kaur (2014), halal cosmetics are products that must not contain human parts or ingredients, animals prohibited in Islam or animals not slaughtered in accordance with Shariah law, genetically modified organisms (GMOs) considered najs, alcohol drinks (khamr), contamination from najs during preparation, processing, manufacturing, and storage, and should be safe for consumers. Ethical cosmetics products that meet these criteria are challenging to find (Nor, Ahmad, Yunus, & Rose, 2015.).

Azmi explains that the usage of alcohol in food, drinks, perfume, and medicine was deliberated by the Special Fatwa Committee of the National Council for Islamic Religious Affairs Malaysia in 2011. They decided that alcohol derived from the brewing process is haram and considered filth, but alcohol not obtained through liquor production processes is not filth. It is, however, haram to drink because it is considered poisonous and harmful. Additionally, the type of alcohol used in various forms, whether for machinery maintenance or in the products themselves, varies in Halal standard guidelines between countries (Elasrag, 2016).

YarKhan (2008) clarifies that products with names ending in alcohol are not intended for oral consumption. They are unrelated to khamr, the common intoxicating alcoholic beverage, and are deemed halal for use in skincare products. Mohezar (2016) distinguishes halal cosmetics brands from conventional ones by their exclusion of porcine by-products, alcohol, and adherence to Islamic teachings. Halal beauty products are recognized for their cleanliness, safety, and high quality.

In 1984, the Fatwa Committee National Council for Islamic Religious Affairs Malaysia issued several decisions regarding the status of alcohol from an Islamic viewpoint. They clarified that not all alcohol contains khamr. Alcohol derived from the wine-making process is haram and najs (impure), while alcohol not produced through winemaking is not najs but is still prohibited for consumption. Soft drinks made in a manner similar to alcoholic beverages, whether containing alcohol or distilled alcohol, are also prohibited for drinking. Tapai, however, is considered halal for consumption. Alcohol byproducts from food processing are not najs and can be consumed. Medicine and fragrances containing alcohol are considered halal and permissible (Noor, 2017).

Dr. Baker Alserhan (2015) highlights that the type of alcohol used in cosmetic products is ethyl alcohol. It is found in many cosmetic products for both men, such as aftershave lotion, and women in perfumes. Ethyl alcohol can be absorbed through the skin into the

bloodstream, making cosmetics containing it prohibited (haram). Islam (2013) emphasizes that cosmetics are considered halal only when all ingredients comply with halal and Shariah requirements, and haram ingredients like alcohol and pig-derived ingredients are forbidden in cosmetic products.

Teng (2013) asserts that halal products must not contain ingredients that are impermissible or questionable, including alcohol, toxic chemicals, fats, placenta, gelatine from swine, or animals that were not slaughtered in accordance with Islamic rules. Most cosmetics and personal care products are manufactured in non-Muslim countries, which can raise suspicion among Muslim consumers who are seeking halal products, as many international brands may use enzymes extracted from pork or alcohol as preservatives (Briliana & Mursito, 2017).

6. Conclusion

In recent times, an increasing number of women have turned to branded cosmetics available in the market, seeking the benefits of enhancing beauty, achieving skin whitening, bolstering bone health, and combatting signs of aging. However, a significant portion of these cosmetic products lacks halal certification, raising concerns among individuals who prioritize the halal status of the beauty products they use in their daily routines. It is well-established that alcohol is a ubiquitous ingredient with multifaceted applications, making it challenging to completely avoid in the realm of cosmetics. Alcohol is commonly utilized in skincare products, perfumes, and various other items, each serving specific purposes aimed at improving skin health and enhancing personal well-being.

Moreover, within the domain of cosmetic formulations, a diverse array of alcohols finds application, including ethanol, acetyl alcohol, isopropyl alcohol, and methanol, each contributing distinct properties to these products. Furthermore, some cosmetics incorporate alcohol variants that can be absorbed through the skin, which gives rise to a critical consideration for Muslim consumers who wish to be discerning about the products they use. In addressing this issue, it becomes imperative for Muslim consumers to be informed about the various types of alcohol employed in cosmetic products and to make selections guided by the principles and guidance found in Al-Quran and As-Sunnah.

To this end, it is essential to scrutinize both the source and status of alcohol used in cosmetic products, ensuring that they are not only inoffensive but also align with halal requirements. The Islamic community is thus urged to exercise diligence when choosing cosmetics that incorporate alcohol, seeking those that are guaranteed to be halal, in the interest of their overall well-being. It is important to note that the determination of the halal status of alcohol in cosmetic products is contingent on a multitude of factors, and therefore, a heightened degree of scholarly exploration and scientific examination is indispensable to definitively verify the halal compliance of these products.

In conclusion, the intersection of Islamic law and scientific understandings is pivotal in addressing the concerns and uncertainties surrounding alcohol in contemporary cosmetic products. Through continued research and discussions from both Shariah and scientific perspectives, we can pave the way for more transparent and comprehensive guidelines for the halal certification of cosmetic products, ensuring that the well-being and religious considerations of consumers are duly respected and upheld.

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