



Al-Absār (Research Journal of Fiqh & Islamic Studies)

ISSN: 2958-9150 (Print) 2958-9169 (Online)

Published by: Department of Fiqh and Shariah, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur.

Volume 04, Issue 02, July-Dec 2025, PP: 01-12

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52461/al-abr.v2i2.2581>

Open Access at: <https://journals.iub.edu.pk/index.php/al-absar/about>

## **Regulating Halal in Cosmetics Ingredients: A Comparative Study of Pakistan and International Standards**

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### **Abstract**



The global cosmetics industry has undergone rapid expansion, accompanied by increasing regulatory scrutiny and ethical concerns regarding product safety, ingredient sourcing, and consumer transparency. In Pakistan, cosmetic products are regulated under the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) Act and associated rules, while internationally, frameworks such as the European Union Cosmetics Regulation (EC No. 1223/2009), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) guidelines, and ISO standards govern formulation, labeling, and safety assessment. This study critically examines cosmetic ingredients within the context of national and international regulatory standards, with special attention to substances derived from animal, microbial, or synthetic sources that may raise concerns regarding halal status, impurity (Najāsah), and transformation. By integrating contemporary cosmetic science with classical and modern Islamic jurisprudence, the research evaluates how Sharia principles such as the prohibition of harm, the avoidance of intoxicants and impure substances, and the objectives of Islamic law (maqāṣid al-sharī'ah) can coexist with modern cosmetic regulations.

This study aims to critically evaluate the sharia permissibility of cosmetics ingredients particularly those derived from human, animals, aquatic



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*animals, insects, plants and biotechnological sources by comparing Pakistan standard and international standards. The study further highlights gaps in ingredient source disclosure and halal certification within Pakistan's cosmetic market, emphasizing the need for harmonization between regulatory compliance and religious ethics. The findings suggest that while international and Pakistani standards effectively address safety and quality, incorporating Sharia based guidelines particularly regarding ingredient sourcing and transparency can enhance consumer trust and ethical accountability. The study concludes that a multidisciplinary framework combining scientific regulation, legal governance, and Islamic ethical oversight is essential for the sustainable development of the cosmetics industry in Muslim societies.*

**Keywords:** *Halal Cosmetics, Cosmetics Regulation, Islamic Jurisprudence, Pakistan Standards, International Standards, Sharia Compliance*

## 1. Introduction

**Definition of Cosmetics:** Substance or mixture intended to be placed in contact with the external parts of the human body (epidermis, hair, nails, lips and external genital organs) or with teeth and the mucous membranes of the oral cavity with a view exclusively or mainly to cleaning them, perfuming them, changing their appearance, protecting them, keeping them in good condition or correcting the body odors.<sup>1</sup>

Cosmetic, any of several preparations that are applied to the human body for beautifying, preserving, or altering the appearance or for cleansing, coloring, conditioning, or protecting the skin, hair, nails, lips, eyes, or teeth. i.e makeup, perfume etc.<sup>2</sup>

**Halal Cosmetics:** These cosmetics comply with Halal Standards, ensuring that they are free from ingredients considered to be Haram (forbidden) or Najis in Islam.

According to USFDA (2021), some cosmetic products with two intended uses are also considered as personal care i.e hair shampoo is classified as a cosmetic product but is also regulated as a drug because it contains treatment ingredients. This also applies to make up items because some are made to enhance beauty and cure minor flaws.

**Halal Cosmetics Market Size:** The global halal cosmetics market size was valued at USD 42.22 billion in 2024 and is projected to grow from USD 47.54 billion in 2025 to reach USD 117.7 billion in 2033, growing at a CAGR of 12% during the forecast period 2025-2033.<sup>3</sup>

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**Categories of Cosmetics:**

Face and Makeup	Skincare	Nails and Hair	Fragrances
Foundation	Face Wash	Nail Paints	Perfumes
Concealer	Toner	Nail Remover	Body Mist
Lipsticks	Moisturizer	Nail Strengthener	Attar
Lip Balm	Serums	Nail Shiners/ Cutex	
Blush	Night Creams	Hair Colors	
Highlighter	Anti- Aging Creams	Hair Serums	
Eye Shadows	Face Masks/ Sheets	Hair Gel	
Eyeliner	Sunscreens	Hair Spray	
Mascara			
BB/ CC Cream			
Makeup Remover (Water, Lotion)			

**Categories of Personal Care Products:**

Hair Care	Oral/ Dental Care	Body Care	Men's Grooming	Baby and Mother Care	Feminine Care
Shampoo	Toothpaste	Body Wash	Shaving Gel	Baby Shampoo	Intimate Creams
Conditioner	Mouthwash	Shower Gel	Shaving Creams	Baby Lotion	
Hair Oils	Miswak	Soap Bar	Beard Oil	Baby Soaps	
Anti-Dandruff Treatments		Deodorant	Aftershave Cream/ Gel	Baby Oils	
		Body Lotion		Rash off Creams	
		Talcum Powder			

**Adornment and Sharia Rulings:**

﴿قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ ۖ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ ۗ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ

الدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ﴾<sup>4</sup> . ان الله جميل و يحب الجمال-<sup>5</sup>

**Why Halal Cosmetics:**

- i. A Muslim's duty (Sharia requirements)
  - No Pig or Porcine derived ingredients
  - No Najis (Impure/ Napaak) material included
  - No Human derived ingredients
  - Halal ingredients are mandatory if mouth contact may occur

- ii. Safe for Health
- Safe ( free from harmful chemicals)
  - Transparent ingredients disclosure

#### Requirements of Sharia according to National and International Standards:

- **OIC/ SMIC 4: 2018**

Halal Cosmetics General Requirements

- **PS 5319- 2014** (Pakistan Standard)

General Guidelines for Halal Cosmetics and Personal Care Products

- **MS 2634- 2019** (Malaysian Standard)

Halal Cosmetics General Requirements

#### Types of Ingredients in Cosmetics:

- Human Parts
- Animal Based
- Aquatic Animal Based
- Plant Based
- Insects Based
- Synthetically Produced
- Biomimetic Products

1. **Human Parts:** It is not allowed to use any human based ingredients.

- a. They do not comprise and contain any human parts or ingredients derived there from;<sup>6</sup>

#### Human based ingredients and products:

Ingredient	Source	Products
L- Cysteine	Human Hair	Hair strengthening treatments
Foreskin Fibroblast Extract	Infant Foreskin Tissue	Anti-Aging Creams
Placenta Extract	Placenta	Anti-Aging Creams and Serums

**Sharia Perspective:** Respect for humanity refers to human dignity, and the use of any part of the human body is forbidden out of respect for humanity.<sup>7</sup> This criterion of ‘karamat’ applies to any part of the human body, other than impure or evil fluids that emanate from the human body, whether separated from the human body during life or after death. For example, hair and nails also fall under this criterion.

The jurists have written,

(وشعر الانسان والانتفاع به) أي لم يجز بيعه والانتفاع به لان الأدمي مكرم غير مبتذل فلا يجوز أن

يكون شيء من أجزائه مهانا مبتذلا.<sup>8</sup>

**2. Animal Based :** Animals must be halal and must be slaughtered by Muslim and according to sharia rules. Some parts of non-halal animal are Tahir and can be used externally (Fur, Hair, Nail).

- a) Animal based ingredients do not comprise or contain any parts or substances derived from animals forbidden by the Sharia to use or to consume, or from those Halal animals which have not been according to Sharia.<sup>9</sup> Najis: Pigs, dogs and all their derivatives, carrion or halal animals that are not slaughtered according to Islamic rules.<sup>10</sup> Land and Aquatic animals: Sources derived from those halal land animals which have been slaughtered according to the sharia are halal. Sources derived from land animals' fur, hair, and nail harvested whilst the animals are still alive are halal i.e Taahir.<sup>11</sup>

**Animal based ingredients and products:**

Ingredient	Source	Products
Gelatin	Bones/Skin of animals (esp. pigs, cows)	Capsules, Face Masks
Collagen	Fish Scales, bovine tissues, pig skin	Anti-aging creams, Lip products
Lanolin	Sheep wool secretions	Creams, Lip Balms
Keratin	Animal hooves, Horns, Feathers	Hair Treatments
Tallow	Fat from cows/sheep (sometimes Pig)	Soaps, Creams
Casein	Milk Protein (Cow)	Hair and Skin Conditioners

**Sharia Perspective:** Even if an animal is actually halal, but has not been slaughtered according to Sharia, its meat, blood, or any body part is no longer fit for consumption. The same rule applies to ingredients in cosmetics, medicines, and other industrial products, especially when they contain ingredients from non-halal animals, such as gelatin, collagen etc.

Allah Almighty says:

" حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالِدَّمُّ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنزِيرِ... " <sup>12</sup>

Imam Nawvi says:

" وكلُّ ما كان من الميتة فهو نجس سواء لحمها أو شعرها أو عظمها. " <sup>13</sup>

Imam Ibn Qudamah (may Allah have mercy on him) says: If a halal animal dies without being slaughtered, it is unlawful to use its fat or parts, because it is in the category of dead animals.<sup>14</sup>

- 3. Plant based Ingredients:** ingredients derived from plants are considered Tahir (pure/ paak). Their use only becomes impermissible if they are harmful/ hazardous or used for intoxication. Sources derived from plants and micro-organisms an land, air and water are all Halal for use except those that are hazardous or mixed or contaminated with something Najis.<sup>15</sup>

**Plant based ingredients and products:**

Ingredient	Source	Products
Aloe vera	Aloe barbadense plant	Face creams, gels, shampoo
Argan oil	Argan tree	Hair oils, skin serums
Coconut oil	Coconut tree	Hair masks, moisturizers

**Sharia Perspective:** The use of plants (plants and vegetables and seeds obtained from them) is permissible as long as they are not harmful to health or intoxicating.<sup>16</sup>

- 4. Insects Based Ingredients:** Insects that do not have flowing blood are considered Tahir (pure/ paak). But insects and their parts are not halal.<sup>17</sup> Insects based ingredients are permitted in external use only.
- Things abominable to human beings, for example, nasal secretion, insects, pests, etc.<sup>18</sup>
  - All materials, derived from insects are allowed to be used externally, except those naturally live in dirty, unclean conditions, such as garbage and sewage.<sup>19</sup>

**Insects based ingredients and products:**

Ingredient	Source	Products
Carmine (E 120)	Cochineal insect (red pigment)	Lipsticks, blushes, eyeshadows
Shellac	Lac Bug secretion	Nail polish, mascara, hair sprays
Beeswax (Cera Alba)	Bees	Lip balms, creams, mascaras
Propolis (Bee Glue)	Bees (collected plant resin by bees)	Toothpaste, lip balm, creams
Royal Jelly	Bees secretion (queen bee)	Anti-aging creams, serums
Cantharidin	Blister Beetles	Wart removers, hair growth

		oils
Snail Mucin	Snails	Skincare products

**Sharia Perspective:** Hanafī school of thought: Considers land insects generally ḥarām for consumption due to repugnance, though they are not all considered najis in themselves. Maliki school of thought: Permits many insects unless explicitly harmful. Shafī‘ī and Hanbali school of thought: Generally prohibit insects except locusts, with differing views on their impurity.<sup>20</sup>

Importantly, prohibition for consumption does not automatically extend to external use, such as cosmetics. European Council for Fatwa and Research: Permits insect-derived pigments in cosmetics under istiḥālah. Malaysia’s JAKIM: Generally classifies carmine as non-halal, reflecting a stricter regulatory approach.<sup>21</sup>

5. **Aquatic Animals Based Ingredients:** Aquatic animals are considered Tahir (pure/ paak). All aquatic animals except fish are not halal. <sup>22</sup> Ingredients obtained from other than fish are acceptable for external use. (but not for internal use under hanafī rulings).

All aquatic animals are Taahir and can be the sources for cosmetic and personal care products.<sup>23</sup>

**Aquatic animals based ingredients and products:**

Ingredient	Source	Products
Fish Oil (Omega-3)	Fish liver or flesh	Lotions, facial oils, suppliments
Chitosan	Shrimp or crab shells	Hair products, moisturizers
Pearl extract/ powder	Oster/shellfish	Whitening creams, serums
Caviar extract	Fish eggs (e.g sturgeon)	Luxurious creams, eye serums
Algae and marine bio extracts		

**Sharia Perspective:** There is near consensus on the permissibility of ingredients derived from fish, such as fish collagen and gelatin, as fish are halal without slaughter requirements. These ingredients are considered pure and permissible for cosmetic use. Non-Fish Aquatic Animals: According to the majority, they are permissible due to the general permissibility of sea creatures. According to the Ḥanafī school, their consumption is impermissible, but external cosmetic use may still be allowed, particularly when: the ingredient undergoes chemical transformation (istiḥālah), it is not harmful and it is not used for consumption. The majority of jurists (Mālikī, Shāfī‘ī, Ḥanbalī) hold that all aquatic animals are permissible (ḥalāl), regardless of whether they resemble fish, provided they live exclusively in water. This permissibility extends beyond consumption to derivative uses, including medicinal and cosmetic applications. The Ḥanafī school restricts permissibility for consumption to fish only, excluding other aquatic creatures (e.g., frogs, crocodiles, turtles). However, even within the Ḥanafī framework: Prohibition

primarily concerns eating, not external use. Many non-fish aquatic animals are not considered najis (impure) in substance. Non-consumptive uses may be permitted, particularly where public need (hājah) or transformation exists.<sup>24</sup>

- 6. Synthetically Produced:** When the source is clearly microbial and no impurities or prohibited substances have been used. This is considered the source with the least Sharia problem. For this reason, Microbial cosmetic is being preferred in the halal market at the industrial level.

Materials produced synthetically are permissible except those that are hazardous and/or mixed or contaminated with something Najis.<sup>25</sup>

All the sources from the soil and the water and their by-products (including minerals) are halal for use except those that are hazardous or mixed or contaminated with Najis.<sup>26</sup>

**Synthetic products:**

Ingredient	Source	Products
Synthetic Fragrances	Artificial aroma chemicals	Perfumes, creams, shampoo
Synthetic Colors	Coal tar or petroleum based	Lipsticks, eyeshadows
Mineral oil	Purified petroleum	Baby oil, lotions

- 7. Biomimetic Ingredients:** Biomimetic ingredients are lab-created compounds designed to mimic the structure or function of natural biological substances found in the human body or nature. The key features are scientifically engineered to imitate natural molecules. High skin compatibility and targeted actions. They often used in anti-aging hydration and healing formulations.

**Biomimetic ingredient products:**

Ingredient	Source	Products
Palmitoyl Tripeptide-1	Stimulates collagen production (anti-aging, skin repair)	Snail serum (intoxicated cosmetics)
XEP <sup>TM-018</sup>	Mimics cone snail venom to smooth wrinkles (Botox like effect)	Snail serum (intoxicated cosmetics)
Royal Epigen P5	Lab-made royal jelly mimic; promotes skin regeneration and healing	Bee serum (intoxicated cosmetics)
SYN- AKE	Mimics snake venom to relax facial muscles, reduce expression lines	Snake serum (intoxicated cosmetics)

**Ethyl Alcohol (Ethanol) :** Ethyl alcohol, commonly known as ethanol, is a colorless, volatile, flammable organic compound with the chemical formula  $C_2H_5OH$ . It is a low-molecular-weight alcohol that is fully miscible with water and many organic solvents. Ethanol is primarily produced either by fermentation of sugars using yeast or through synthetic chemical processes such as ethylene hydration. In scientific and industrial contexts, ethyl alcohol is widely used as a solvent, preservative, antiseptic, and carrier agent, particularly in pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, perfumes, disinfectants, and food processing. From a regulatory and academic perspective, ethyl alcohol is classified as denatured or non-denatured depending on its intended use, with denatured forms rendered unsuitable for consumption through the addition of specific agents. It uses in cosmetics like mouthwashes, perfumes, deodorants, toners, hair sprays and styling gels, hand sanitizers, aftershaves and shaving gels and cleaners etc.<sup>27</sup>

**Sharia Status of Ethyl Alcohol:** Some scholars allow it only in medicine. Some allow it in all externally applied products. Some generally permit it in all items, provided that the alcohol is not added for the purpose of intoxication but for other functional reasons (solvent or preservatives).<sup>28</sup>

**Majma' al-Fiqh al-Islami (OIC):** The International Islamic Fiqh Academy ruled that: Alcohol used in medicine, perfumes, and external products is permissible when not intended for intoxication and when no suitable alternative exists.<sup>29</sup>

**European Council for Fatwa and Research:** Allows non-consumptive use of ethanol, especially when synthetically produced.<sup>30</sup>

Alcohol derived from sources other than those declared prohibited by the sharia is permissible for external use (Alcohol derived from grapes or dates is absolutely Najis and Haram).<sup>31</sup> Ethanol is allowed to use externally, if it is properly labeled. All alcoholic beverages are not allowed for any external use.<sup>32</sup>

**Globally Cosmetic Brands/ Key Industry Players:**

- Ivy Beauty corporation (Malaysia)
- Iba Cosmetics (India)
- Talent Cosmetics (South Korea)
- Clara International Beauty Group (Malaysia)
- Kao corporation (Japan)
- Amara Halal Cosmetics (US)
- Zahara (Singapore)
- INIKA Organic (Australia)

- Martha Tilaar Group (Indonesia)
- Pure Halal Beauty (UK)
- Safi Cosmetics (Kuwait)

#### **Why Halal Certification (Importance and Benefits):**

- **Sharia Compliance:** Ensures the product is free from haram or najis (pig, haram animals by products)
- **Consumer Trust:** Build credibility and confidence among Muslim consumers.
- **Safety and Hygiene Assurance:** Due to high standards of cleanliness, hygiene and quality.
- **Global Market Access:** Enables entry into fast growing halal markets, especially in Muslim countries.
- **Regulatory Recognition:** Helps comply with import/ export regulations in halal conscious markets like Malaysia, Indonesia and GCC countries.

#### **Conclusion:**

This study demonstrates that while modern cosmetic regulations in Pakistan and at the international level such as those enforced by DRAP, the European Union, and the FDA provide robust frameworks for ensuring product safety, quality control, and consumer protection, they remain largely silent on the ethical and religious dimensions that are critically important in Muslim-majority societies. The Islamic legal tradition, grounded in the principles of purity (ṭahārah), prevention of harm (ḍarar), lawful consumption (ḥalāl), and the higher objectives of Islamic law (maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah), offers a complementary evaluative framework capable of addressing these ethical gaps. The analysis reveals that many cosmetic ingredients, though scientifically approved and legally permitted, require further scrutiny regarding their sources, methods of production, and potential transformation (istiḥālah) to determine their Shariah compliance. Contemporary juristic discourse shows a growing willingness among scholars to engage with scientific realities, permitting the use of certain substances particularly those that are synthetic, microbially derived, or chemically transformed provided they do not involve intoxication, impurity, or harm, and are not intended for consumption. This reflects the dynamic and adaptive nature of Islamic jurisprudence in responding to technological advancements.

The study concludes that a meaningful integration of Islamic ethical considerations into cosmetic regulation through mandatory source disclosure, credible halal certification, and collaboration between scientists, regulators, and jurists can

significantly enhance consumer trust and moral accountability. Such an integrative approach not only aligns cosmetic practices with religious values but also contributes to the development of a globally competitive halal cosmetic industry, positioning Pakistan and other Muslim-majority countries at the forefront of ethically grounded innovation.

**Recommendations:**

- Pakistan’s cosmetic regulatory framework should be expanded to require explicit source declaration of all critical ingredients, particularly those of animal, microbial, or biotechnological origin.
- International models such as the EU Cosmetics Regulation (EC No. 1223/2009) emphasize transparency; adopting similar disclosure practices would enable informed consumer choice and facilitate Sharia compliance.
- The absence of a unified halal cosmetic standard has led to inconsistent certification practices. A national halal cosmetic standard, harmonized with international halal frameworks (such as SMIIC/OIC standards), should be developed to ensure consistency, credibility, and international acceptance of Pakistani cosmetic products.
- While international standards focus primarily on safety and efficacy, Pakistan being a Muslim-majority country should formally integrate halal criteria into its cosmetic regulations under DRAP. This integration would ensure that compliance extends beyond chemical safety to include ethical and religious legitimacy, thereby strengthening consumer trust.
- Regulatory authorities and halal certification bodies should invest in public education initiatives to improve consumer understanding of cosmetic ingredient labeling, halal certification, and international standards. Educated consumers are essential for market accountability and ethical compliance.

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