

Understanding the Consumers' Purchase Intention Toward Green Cosmetic Products in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the evolving landscape of consumer behaviors within Malaysia's growing market for green cosmetic products. Globally, the natural and organic cosmetics market has witnessed substantial growth, reflecting an increasing trend toward green cosmetic choices. In Malaysia, a market characterized by diverse consumer preferences and heightened environmental awareness, this study aims to unravel the intricate factors influencing consumers' intentions in adopting green cosmetic products. Despite a preference for eco-friendly items, challenges arise from the perception that green products are inherently more expensive, leading some consumers to choose more economical alternatives. Sampling methods for this study involved a combination of purposive and convenience sampling. Situated in the unique socio-economic and cultural context of Malaysia, this research employs semi-structured interviews to delve into the factors shaping consumers' purchase intentions. The findings reveal significant shifts in Malaysian consumers' purchase behavior, notably an increased inclination to choose green cosmetics when armed with more information and a growing preference for products offering promotions and discounts. The study establishes a conceptual framework, highlighting the intention-behavior gap and brand loyalty as key factors driving these changes in purchase intention among Malaysians.

Keyword: green cosmetic; purchase intention; information accessibility; intention-behavior gap; brand loyalty; perception

INTRODUCTION

A revolutionary change in consumer preferences within the cosmetics sector has been indicated by the rise in popularity of sustainable and ecologically friendly beauty products in recent years. The growing awareness among consumers of the effects of their decisions on the environment and personal health has led to a global focus on green cosmetics, which prioritize eco-friendly packaging and ethical production methods. This change is most noticeable in Malaysia, where a confluence of environmental, cultural, and religious factors influences consumer behavior. In-depth investigation of Malaysian consumers' purchase intentions for green cosmetics is the focus of this study, which also looks at the various aspects that affect consumers' choices in this developing sector.

Cosmetics are an integral part of personal grooming routines for many individuals, particularly women, who use these products to enhance their appearance and maintain hygiene. Despite their widespread use, the potential health risks and environmental consequences associated with conventional cosmetics are often overlooked in the pursuit of a flawless image. According to Malaysia's Guidelines for the Control of Cosmetic Products, cosmetics include substances applied to external body parts for purposes such as cleansing, perfuming, altering appearance, reducing odours, or providing protection. The variety of products available ranges from body soaps to facial cleansers, hair care products, and other hygiene-related items. In response to growing health concerns and heightened environmental awareness, the cosmetics industry has experienced a significant shift towards the production and consumption of organic and natural products. This transition reflects a global movement toward sustainability in the beauty and personal care sector (Allied Market Research, 2022).

Recent shifts in consumer behavior, driven by heightened environmental consciousness, have led to an augmented demand for eco-friendly goods (Ogiemwonyi & Harun, 2020). The term “green cosmetics” encompasses a spectrum of definitions, ranging from formulations aimed at protecting the environment and reducing pollution (McEachern & McClean, 2002) to natural cosmetics derived from non-chemical sources, such as fruits (Shimul et al., 2002). These products, falling under the category of “green cosmetics,” often avoid harmful chemicals and artificial preservatives, utilizing environmentally friendly packaging materials like glass or recyclable plastic (Prothero, 1992).

Globally, the natural and organic cosmetics market, valued at USD 34.5 billion in 2018 and projected to reach USD 54.5 billion by 2027 (Statista, 2020), reflects an escalating trend towards eco-conscious beauty choices. In Malaysia, unique socio-cultural factors such as religious considerations, price sensitivity, and consumer trust shape this trend, mirroring broader global patterns. Environmentally friendly items are becoming more and more popular among Malaysians, especially the younger urban populations who are becoming more aware of concerns like pollution, deforestation, and climate change. The use of social media sites like Instagram and TikTok has been essential in raising awareness of green cosmetics. Influencers, eco-aware celebrities, and beauty bloggers regularly advocate for sustainable and natural cosmetics, urging people to think about how their beauty habits affect the environment. Consumer behaviour has significantly changed as a result of this trend, with an increasing number of Malaysians choosing products that are consistent with their environmental values.

Nonetheless, there is a significant intention-behavior gap in the Malaysian market despite rising environmental consciousness. Even though many customers say they favor green cosmetics, this doesn't necessarily result in actual purchases (White et al., 2019). The idea that buying green products will cost more is one of the primary barriers. Many Malaysians think that green cosmetics are more costly than conventional substitutes, which prevents price-conscious shoppers from using them. This idea leads to a paradox: although people may respect sustainability, they are frequently put off by the higher costs associated with green products and choose less expensive alternatives that might not adhere to the same environmental standards (Clean Cult, 2019; Saylor, 2020).

Skepticism in the Malaysian market has been compounded by questions of pricing as well as issues of trust and transparency, particularly in the context of greenwashing. The practice of making misleading or overstated environmental claims, or “greenwashing,” has raised doubt on the validity of green cosmetics. The recent Innisfree controversy, for instance, in which the company was charged with deceiving customers with exaggerated environmental promises, exemplifies the difficulties in preserving consumer confidence in the eco-friendly cosmetics sector (The Korea Herald, 2021). Due to their uncertainty about whether the green cosmetics they buy actually comply with the ethical and environmental norms they affirm to uphold, many Malaysians approach the market hesitantly.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, green cosmetics offer tremendous opportunities for Malaysian producers and consumers equally. These goods promise to provide consumers with environmentally friendly and culturally relevant beauty solutions that are also healthy. Green cosmetics give manufacturers a means to stand out in an increasingly competitive marketplace by providing value through ethical, transparent, and sustainable production methods. The green cosmetics business in Malaysia is expected to continue expanding as laws supporting eco-friendly practices become more prominent and public interest in sustainability increases.

The main objective of this study is to present a thorough analysis of the variables affecting Malaysian consumers' intentions to buy green cosmetics. Through an analysis of the relationship between cultural values, environmental consciousness, and economic factors, this research aims to provide useful information to scholars, industry stakeholders, and policymakers who are involved in promoting sustainable beauty practices in Malaysia. By doing this, the study aims to advance our knowledge of how social and cultural influences affect consumer behavior in the green cosmetics industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are two theories that provide a comprehensive framework for understanding and analyzing the factors

influencing consumers' perception and behavior in the realm of green cosmetics. The TPB offers a structured approach to examining individual factors, while the Green Trust and Skepticism Model provides insights into the nuanced dynamics of trust and skepticism in the context of green cosmetic products. Together, they contribute to a holistic understanding of consumer behavior in the green cosmetics market.

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

Background

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is a well-established psychological model used to understand and predict human behavior. It posits that an individual's intention to perform a behavior is a crucial determinant of whether the behavior will be performed. TPB identifies three key factors influencing intention, which are attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control.

Application to Green Cosmetics

In the study by Zhang, Zhou, & Leite (2019), TPB is employed to explore factors affecting consumers' purchasing behavior of natural cosmetics. The study identifies factors within the themes of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Attitude factors include attitude towards using natural cosmetics, buying them, using traditional cosmetics, and a healthy lifestyle. Subjective norms encompass family, friends, professionals, social groups, and local social context. Online shopping, suggestions, a sustainable lifestyle, and a few obstacles such as cost, distance, perceived effectiveness, ignorance, and a lack of standardized certification are examples of perceived behavioral control variables.

Relevance to Study

TPB offers a systematic framework for analyzing consumer attitudes, perceived behavioral control, and social influences in the context of green cosmetics, all of which are vital for comprehending the intention-behavior gap. By addressing aspects influencing consumer attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control in the green cosmetics market, the findings can assist businesses in customizing their marketing strategies.

Green Trust and Skepticism Model

Background

Building on the broader concept of consumer trust, the Green Trust and Skepticism Model addresses the specific dynamics in the context of green products. It recognises that consumers may approach green claims with skepticism, influenced by factors such as green washing. This model emphasizes the role of trust in mitigating skepticism and facilitating positive perceptions and purchasing intentions toward green products.

Application to Green Cosmetics

In Kahraman & Kazancoglu's (2019) study, the Green Trust and Skepticism Model are implicitly reflected. The study explores the impact of green washing on consumer perceptions, trust, perceived risk, skepticism, and purchasing intention in the context of natural cosmetics. Factors like perceived reliability of the brand, previous experiences, and environmental concern are integral in shaping green trust and reducing skepticism.

Relevance to Study

For the exploration of consumers' perspectives toward naturalness claims in cosmetics, this model helps elucidate the intricate interplay between trust, skepticism, and perceived risk. It sheds light on how consumers navigate the landscape of green marketing strategies and how businesses can strategically build trust to enhance purchasing intentions. Addressing skepticism through transparent communication and aligning with consumers' values becomes pivotal in green cosmetics marketing.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Paradigm

The research paradigm employed for this study is interpretivism. Interpretivism aligns with the qualitative nature of the research, emphasizing an in-depth understanding of consumers' purchase intention toward green cosmetic products in Malaysia (Dudovskiy, 2019). This paradigm recognises the uniqueness of individuals and focusses on interpreting the meaning embedded in their experiences. The interpretivist approach, utilized by the researcher, emphasizes qualitative analysis to explore the complexities of the phenomenon (Stainton, 2020). It acknowledges that knowledge is meaningful in its own terms and can be understood through interpretive procedures, reflecting the focus on participants' real-life experiences. In this case, the research seeks to uncover how consumers perceive green cosmetics, their motivations, and the barriers they face in making purchasing decisions.

Ontologically, the study acknowledges the diversity of individual realities and perceptions, with each participant contributing a unique perspective on green cosmetic products (Dudovskiy, 2019). Epistemologically, the research aims to uncover truths through the open-ended questionnaires and interviews, allowing the researcher to explore the various perceptions held by participants. Ideologically, the study recognizes the importance of individual judgements and values, especially in assessing the influence of participants' intentions toward green cosmetics. The focus on individuals who have purchased green cosmetic products as well as potential customers who are interested in purchasing green cosmetic products in Malaysia aligns with the research's purpose of understanding the consumers' purchase intentions toward green cosmetic products in Malaysia within this specific context.

Research Design

The study used a qualitative exploratory research approach with the goal of identifying the fundamental variables affecting the willingness of consumers to purchase green cosmetics. Since there is little knowledge on how cultural, environmental, and economic issues affect consumer behavior and the market for green cosmetics in Malaysia is still in its infancy, the research approach is exploratory. This study explores participant attitudes, beliefs, and motivations through semi-structured interviews, providing an extensive, multifaceted understanding of the phenomenon (Schreier, 2012).

In order to analyze qualitative data, the research uses an inductive approach that lets themes naturally arise from the data. Rather than evaluating pre-existing ideas, this approach is suitable for developing a theoretical understanding based on participants' lived experiences. By using a cross-sectional design, opinions of consumers are captured at a particular moment in time, which is helpful in understanding how socio-cultural elements and current market trends are influencing purchase intentions. Previous research, like that of Zhang, Zhou, and Leite (2019) and Kahraman & Kazancoglu (2019), highlights the importance of exploratory research in identifying consumer behaviors, especially in rapidly evolving markets like Malaysia.

Data Collection

The primary data collection approach utilized in the study to investigate the gaps in consumer knowledge and behaviors correlated to green cosmetic products in Malaysia is semi-structured interviews. This method allows for flexibility, allowing the researcher to make adjustments to the interview questions to address emerging subjects and make sure that the main themes are covered (Saunders, 2011). The open-ended nature of the interview, as recommended by Yin (2015), aims to avoid limiting respondents to the researcher's understanding of the topic. Semi-structured interviews are the best method for this kind of research because they allow participants to talk about their own experiences, which facilitates a deeper exploration of their opinions, barriers, and motives. The intention-behavior gap, in which participants indicated a wish to buy green cosmetics but did not because of factors like cost, convenience, or doubts about the effectiveness of the products, was one of the major issues that this method helped to better understand. Participants' in-depth responses were used to strengthen the relationship between the factors and customer behavior. A participant noted, "I want to buy green cosmetics, but they're always so expensive, and I'm not sure they actually work better than regular products."

Questions were created to find out how customers felt about product availability, cost, and trust in order to investigate participants' emotional reactions. The participants were asked to share any pleasant or frustrating experiences they had when buying green cosmetics. This made the psychological and emotional elements of their behavior more apparent. "I feel good when I buy green products because I know they're better for the environment, but sometimes I doubt if they're really worth the extra money," said one participant. Understanding the obstacles customers encounter while selecting green cosmetics was another goal of the interviews. Participants talked about issues such as product availability and accessibility. One said, "It's hard to find genuine green cosmetics in my area, and online shopping isn't always reliable." These real-world examples shed more light on the barriers that discourage people from using green cosmetics.

The method employed for this study involved conducting five semi-structured virtual interviews in January 2024, utilizing Microsoft Teams and Google Meet platforms. This supported by Iuliana (2022), the decision to use five participants in a preliminary qualitative study as the purpose to confirm key variables for further investigation, especially in the quantitative study in the future, not to generalize findings. These virtual interviews facilitated the gathering of information by posing relevant questions to participants. The choice of virtual interviews was guided by the rationale of minimizing face-to-face interaction, ensuring time and cost efficiency (Deakin & Wakefield, 2013; Saarijarvi & Bratt, 2021). However, potential limitations included the observer's reliance on camera positioning, stable internet connections, and the quality of the microphone and camera (Saarijarvi & Bratt, 2021). To address these limitations, participants were informed of the necessary technological setup requirements before scheduled interviews.

The sampling methods for this study involved a combination of purposive and convenience sampling. Purposive sampling targeted individuals in Malaysia who have purchased or expressed interest in purchasing green cosmetic products, aligning with the study's phenomenon of interest (Tie et al., 2019). Convenience sampling was employed due to time and cost constraints, drawing participants from family, friends, and colleagues. The inclusion criteria encompassed individuals who have either purchased green cosmetic products or indicated an interest in doing so. Table 1 displays the profiles of the five participants, including gender, age, and usage status, and we hide their names because of confidentiality. In this study, we focus on exploring the factors that affect consumer purchasing intention without considering demographic factors.

Table 1: Details of participants' profiles

Participant ID	Gender	Age	Green Cosmetic User
Participant 1	Female	41	Yes
Participant 2	Male	29	Yes
Participant 3	Female	38	Yes
Participant 4	Female	29	Yes
Participant 5	Female	30	No

Demographic data of age and gender are collected just for the convenience of identifying individual respondents. Green cosmetic usage is collected for identifying the potential variables. The interview sessions were directed by open-ended questions aimed at exploring shifts in purchase intentions regarding green cosmetic products and the associated reasons. Probing questions were deployed when initial responses proved inadequate for a thorough comprehension of the participants' perspectives. All interviews were recorded and supplemented with brief field notes. Transcription software in Microsoft Teams and Google Meet were initially employed for automated transcript generation, followed by manual verification, and editing to ensure accuracy and completeness. Participants were informed of the study's purpose, and their informed consent was obtained, ensuring confidentiality of their identities and responses with secure data storage. The average interview time per person ranged from 30 to 45 minutes. English was the chosen language of communication for all participants. This

research methodology ensures a robust and comprehensive exploration of consumers' purchase intentions toward green cosmetic products in Malaysia (Please refer to Appendix 1: Interview Question).

Data Analysis

This qualitative design of grounded theory was focused on this study along with the discussion of the constant comparative method in understanding consumer purchasing intention in green product cosmetics. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2005), the major difference between grounded theory and other designs is the emphasis on theory development. Strauss & Corbin (1998) stated in the grounded theory the researcher uses multiple stages of collecting, refining, and categorizing the data. As recognized in the literature, continual comparisons and theoretical sampling are crucial tactics for constructing grounded theory (Cresswell, 2007; Locke, 1996; Strauss & Corbin; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). The study also deploys thematic analysis as a technique for data extraction, defined as "a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Based on a thematic framework, the analysis aims to uncover potential variables from interview records. Thematic analysis involves decomposing text into small content units and categorizing them inductively and deductively.

The researcher uses the constant comparative method to build concepts from data simultaneously coding and analyzing (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). The consistent comparative method "combines systematic data collection, coding and analysis with theoretical sampling in order to generate theory that is integrated, close to the data and expresses in a form clear enough for further testing" (Conrad, Neumann, Haworth & Scott, 1993). According to Glaser & Strauss (1967), the constant comparative method consists of four stages: "(1) comparing incidents applicable to each category, (2) integrating categories and their properties, (3) delimiting the theory, and (4) writing the theory". Throughout the four stages of the constant comparative method, the researchers sort through the data, analyze and code the information and encourage theory production through theoretical sampling. The advantage of employing this method is that the investigation begins with raw data; through continual comparisons, a meaningful theory emerges (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Sharon Kalb (2012) stated grounded theory is a labor-intensive undertaking that requires the researcher to devote time to analysis and data collection.

For this study, below were the discussions on each of the stages taken by the researchers.

i. Comparing incidents applicable to each category

In this independent coding stage, the researcher codes the transcripts independently. There were huge discrepancies between the codes due to misunderstanding on the process of coding, some of the codes were phrases taken literally from the transcripts and there were some very similar codes referring to the same items. The researcher went through all the five transcripts together to rectify the coding and all disagreements were ironed out.

As a result of open coding, 40 codes were identified. By following the constant comparative method, the overall codes were then reviewed and further refined. The reiterative refinement was carried out continuously throughout the data analysis process.

In the refined open coding stage, several codes were too specific and were renamed. For instance, 'Complex website' renamed to "Website inconvenient" and 'Expensive' renamed to 'High Price'. Several codes were grouped together and renamed. For instance, 'Bad Experience', 'Good Experience' and 'Worth to buy' rename 'Experiences'. After that, 24 final codes were identified.

ii. Integrating categories and their properties

In this axial coding to integrate the categories stage, the open codes were grouped into six categories or axial codes: Relationship with brands, perception of green cosmetic products, awareness about green cosmetic products, recommendation from others, online and in-store purchasing and barriers.

Finally, in the selective coding the six axial codes were grouped into two selective codes such as brand loyalty

(relationship with brands) and intention-behavior gap which consists of attitudes (perception of green cosmetic products, awareness about green cosmetic products), subjective norms (recommendation from others) and perceived behavioral control (online and in store purchasing and barriers).

iii. Delimiting the theory

This study adopts a theoretical framework primarily grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) and extends its application to include the concept of brand loyalty and the intention-behavior gap. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, individual behavior is influenced by three key constructs which are attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In the context of green cosmetic purchasing, attitudes are defined as a single person's psychological habits that evaluate the perceived benefits or disadvantages of choosing eco-friendly cosmetic products (Bonne et al., 2007). This includes an individual's cognitive and emotional of the environmental and personal advantages associated with green cosmetic consumption.

Building on Ajzen's (1991) definition, subjective norms in this study refer to the perceived social pressures on individuals to align their attitudes and behaviors with what is deemed acceptable by their reference groups. The study acknowledges the influence of social norms and external pressures in shaping consumers' intentions and actions regarding green cosmetic products. Consistent with Ajzen's (1991) conceptualization, perceived behavioral control encompasses an individual's perception of the ease or difficulty in performing a specific behavior. This includes factors such as the accessibility, convenience, and perceived effort associated with purchasing and using green cosmetic products.

In addition to the core constructs of the Theory of Planned Behavior, this study integrates the concept of brand loyalty. Brand loyalty, as a selective code, is defined as a profound commitment to consistently purchasing favorable products from the same brand in the future (Wachtel, 2020). It emphasizes the enduring relationship consumers may have with specific cosmetic brands. This loyalty is considered a potential influential factor affecting purchasing decisions, even in the context of environmentally conscious choices. Recognizing the complexity of translating positive attitudes into actual behaviors, the study addresses the intention-behavior gap.

This acknowledges that while individuals may hold favorable attitudes towards green cosmetics, various factors, including brand loyalty, may influence the manifestation of these attitudes into actual purchasing behavior. By delimiting the theory to include brand loyalty and the intention-behavior gap, the study aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of the factors influencing consumers' intentions and actions in the green cosmetic market. This approach integrates established theories with contemporary insights to enrich the explanatory power of the theoretical framework.

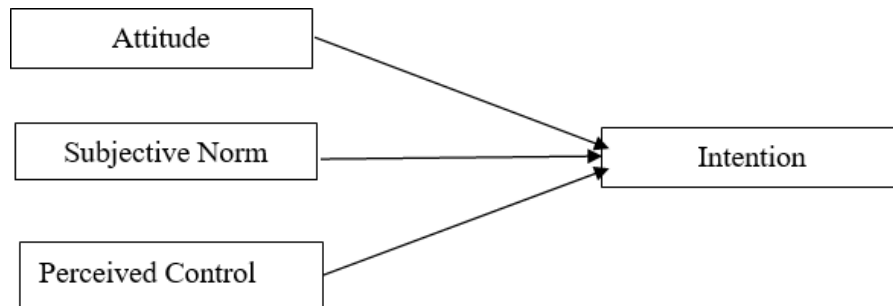
iv. Writing the theory

In understanding the behavioral intentions of consumers in the green cosmetics market, the axial codes related to "Attitude", "Subjective Norms", and "Perceived Behavioral Control" align with the Theory of Planned Behavior proposed by Ajzen (1991), as illustrated in Figure 1. This theory posits that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control collectively shape individuals' intentions, subsequently influencing their actual behaviors. Relevant studies such as the one conducted by Shafiq Al Hadad et al. (2020) on the purchase intentions of female consumers in Jordan towards eco-friendly products, and Thwea, Nezakatib & Lafontaine's (2021) analysis of factors influencing green cosmetic purchase intentions, resonate with the constructs of the TPB.

Moreover, this study also delves into the concept of brand loyalty, which is defined by Claudon & Sophie (2021) as a profound commitment to consistently purchasing favorable products from the same brand in the future (Wachtel, 2020). Brand loyalty is crucial in bridging the intention-behavior gap within the green beauty care market. Despite consumers expressing a desire for greener and more natural products, the market remains niche. This study seeks to uncover the underlying factors contributing to this gap.

The intention-behavior gap is a phenomenon acknowledged in behavioral theories, indicating that behavioral intentions might not comprehensively explain individuals' actual behaviors (Triandis, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010; Schwarzer & Luszczynska, 2015). Understanding why consumers, despite expressing positive intentions, may not translate those intentions into actual behavior is pivotal. Expectations of beauty care products, relationships with brands, concerns about the environment, preconceptions of green products, and perceptions of green beauty care products, as identified by Merwe et al. (2020) are all factors that contribute to the intention-behavior gap in the context of green cosmetics consumption.

Figure 1. Research Model Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991)



In summary, this study aims to synthesize the TPB, brand loyalty, and the intention- behavior gap to unravel the complexities of consumer behavior in the green cosmetic market. By doing so, it strives to provide valuable insights into why consumers may exhibit intention-behavior gaps and how brand loyalty plays a role in shaping purchasing behavior.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The data analysis conducted to explore factors influencing consumers' purchase intention toward green cosmetic products in Malaysia has revealed two prominent trends that signify a shift in purchasing behavior. These trends offer valuable insights into the evolving dynamics of consumer decision-making in the context of green cosmetics. One of the significant shifts identified in the purchasing decision of Malaysian consumers is the increasing inclination to purchase green cosmetics when armed with more information. Participants emphasized the importance of information accessibility from various sources, such as Watson, Guardian, and Tik Tok. While some participants acknowledged obtaining basic information from physical stores, others highlighted the effectiveness of Tik Tok as a medium for in-depth product information. This trend suggests a growing consumer demand for transparency and awareness regarding product attributes, ingredients, and overall efficacy. The role of social media, particularly Tik Tok, in providing detailed information and creating awareness about green cosmetics is a noteworthy finding.

“Basically, actually I can get the information from Watson and Guardian but not really deep on that kind of product, just want to buy, as long as okay, then just purchase, just buy the product.” [Participant 1]

“Umm, because personally I think they think Tik Tok is one of the mediums that is very effective in giving the information about the product, especially in terms of the ingredient, the effect of the product and also it's easier to get or to buy from the platform.” [Participant 2]

“Very little compared to other products of such as the real head and shoulders, but this one is I get from the store and also I tried to Google it for the website only” [Participant 3]

“Yeah, in Malaysia, you can buy at Sephora. At Sephora's website, you can see it's a green product. They have a green label for every green cosmetic product.” [Participant 4]

“Give awareness the importance of supporting green cosmetics because I think most of us aren't aware about green cosmetics. People may consider buying green cosmetics...” [Participant 5]

This trend aligns with existing research indicating that social media serves as a crucial information source for

green cosmetics, contributing to heightened consumer awareness and willingness to purchase (Pop et al., 2020; Sharma, Trivedi & Deka, 2021). The study by Munerah, Koay & Thambiah (2021) illuminates a pivotal aspect shaping consumers' inclination towards green beauty products, revealing that heightened awareness of the adverse effects associated with non-green alternatives propels consumers towards eco-friendly options. This awareness reflects a broader societal shift towards prioritizing sustainability and health considerations in consumer choices. Additionally, Hong et al.'s (2020) study underscores the strategic role of packaging as a communication tool, visually conveying the eco-friendliness and sustainability of green cosmetic products. Integrating these insights into marketing strategies empowers brands to leverage heightened awareness, address information gaps, and use packaging effectively, fostering a consumer landscape where informed choices align with preferences for environmentally friendly and sustainable beauty options.

The second notable trend in Malaysian consumers' purchasing behavior revolves around an increased inclination to purchase products that offer promotions and discounts. As highlighted by Participant 4, *"I think since the original price is 100 plus, but I don't think I paid that amount. Because I'll get a 25% discount during the sales. It might be around RM80. So yeah, it's worth it to buy that product."* Participant 5 also agrees, *"Sometimes I want like a voucher or what in Shopee, so that's why I prefer Shopee compared to the official website, I think the website is user friendly, it's just that I prefer shopping because of uh, I have a lot of vouchers, promotion and all that."* Participants explicitly mentioned their preference for platforms like Shopee due to the availability of vouchers and promotions. Economic considerations, such as discounts during sales events, significantly influence consumer's decisions. This trend underscores the importance of pricing strategies and promotional campaigns in shaping consumer choices. It also highlights the impact of marketing initiatives, with marketing managers employing various campaigns and sale promotion techniques to motivate consumers to choose their products. The influence of promotions and discounts on consumer behavior is well-established in marketing literature, with such strategies being effective in motivating purchases (Amin, Manzoor & Farid, 2020).

Moreover, the insights into the prevalence of illegal cosmetics sales through social media highlight the need for stringent regulations and effective communication campaigns to educate consumers about the risk associated with unverified products. Relying on electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) communication can be a strategic move for marketers to counterbalance the impact of illegal sales and promote the benefits of green cosmetics (Jaini, Quoquab, Mohammad & Hussin, 2019). The data analysis shed light on the factors influencing consumers' purchase intention toward green cosmetic products in Malaysia, namely intention-behavior gap, and brand loyalty. The selective codes and their subcategories are discussed further in the following section.

Selective Code 1- Intention Behavior Gap

The first selective code focusing on the intention-behavior gap, reveals critical insights into the factors influencing Malaysian consumers' purchase intentions regarding green cosmetic products. This code draws from theories proposed by Ajzen (1991) and Rogers (1983), emphasizing the central role of behavioral intention in various behavior theories.

Attitude

The first sub-category, "Attitude" explores consumers' psychological evaluations of the benefits or disadvantages of green cosmetic products. Two axial codes were identified which are "Perceptions of Green Cosmetic Products" and "Awareness about Green Cosmetic Products".

Perceptions of Green Cosmetic Products

The participants' perceptions of green cosmetic products are shaped by their personal experiences, emphasizing the positive impacts on their skin and hair. This aligns with a broader consumer trend highlighted by Statista (2020). Amberg et al. (2019) and Claudon & Sophie (2021), indicating a rising concern among consumers regarding the harmful side effects of chemical and synthetic ingredients in beauty care products. Participants express heightened consciousness about environmental protection, sustainability, and a greater focus on scrutinizing the ingredients they apply to their skin.

“Everyday experience you said just now you are seeing that the products you feel like more moisturize your skin is better and improving.” [Participant 1]

“So currently I’m using a hair care product which is consists of the green ingredients as much as the serum and also the uh I’m using the face cleanser as well as my daily routine because of the green for the ingredients is basically from the nature and then my face wash also I think cosmetic product as well as the moisturizer.” [Participant 2]

“So, I use the organic conditioner and it turns out that my hair looks smoother and I'm more comfortable with the product.” [Participant 3]

“Yes, I look at it, but let’s say I have an acne problem and I have two options. One is a green product and the other one is conventional. If both products work to fix my acne problem, I’ll choose the green one. But if it’s not, I’ll choose the one that works for me.” [Participant 4]

“Because I’ve used a mixture of brands. I mean, skin care, skin care is cosmetic. Uh, same goes to makeup, makeup, also cosmetic. Uh, I’m not sure I need to see. I need to check because I’m not someone who’s very, I mean really concerned about this. But one of mine, I think my product that I think I use which is it is green cosmetic is from Kiehls.” [Participant 5]

The participants’ individual experiences underscore a shift towards green cosmetic products, driven by a desire for natural ingredients and a growing awareness of the potential drawbacks associated with synthetic components. This reflects a broader trend where consumers increasingly prioritize products that align with the environmental and personal well-being values.

Awareness about Green Cosmetic Products

Participants demonstrate varied levels of awareness about green cosmetic products, highlighting the impact of information sources, personal beliefs, and perceptions on their purchasing decisions. This aligns with the findings that awareness of consequences, efficacy, and social norms significantly influences the purchase intention of green cosmetics (Munerah et al.,2021; Limbu et.al,2022). Therefore, towards the participants feedback as follows.

“Another one is the during the explanation from the owner of the founder at the product scene such as live Tik Tok, Dr Anne” [Participant 1]

“I mean the nature is come from plant...aloe vera, yellow leaf juice and then tea tree oil, so that tea tree oil is compliant with the hair serum from the argan oil, so on the plant, I think maybe one of the main ingredients that I’m looking for is from the plant itself, which is it’s good for our skins, for example, this one the Korean product, it already mentioned here (the participant demonstrates the product) [Participant 2]

“Yeah, I think that right now people may change their biggest guide, which is that they must buy something that can be sustainable which is green... Searches are debatable with green somewhere something like green energy, green cosmetic and be sustained that can bring benefit to our society.” [Participant 3]

“Oh, in Sephora, Yes, but when you go to the shop, it's very hard to know if it’s green. But unless you must look, read the bottle. However, if you go to the Sephora application, you can see the logo Green Product. So that’s how I know.” [Participant 4]

“It’s kind of expensive, so that’s why I have the idea that green cosmetics are expensive. It is costly because I have one Kiehls which is very expensive for me, and it is a green cosmetic. It’s organic skin care. And then I think it’s a recyclable.” [Participant 5]

Participants’ feedback indicates a multifaceted approach to awareness, incorporating online platforms, product information, societal values, cost considerations, and the role of retail spaces in influencing perceptions and purchase decisions. These insights can guide marketing strategies to effectively communicate the benefits and

attributes of green cosmetic products to the Malaysian consumer market.

Subjective norm

Subjective norm, as defined by Ajzen (1991), constitutes perceived social pressures aligning with attitudes and behaviors deemed acceptable by an individuals' reference groups. This sub-category encompasses the influence of societal expectations and interpersonal relationships on consumers' decisions regarding green cosmetic products. The axial code 'subjective norms' emerges from the coding process and is discussed in detail below:

Recommendation From Others

One prominent aspect of subjective norms identified in the data is influenced by recommendations from social circles and reference groups. The participants express how these recommendations serve as crucial facilitators in shaping their purchasing intentions for green cosmetic products. This aligns with global studies highlighting the impact of social media, expert bloggers, and peer recommendations on consumers' beauty brand discovery and preferences (Zhang, Zhou & Leite, 2019; Statista, 2020; Pop, Saplacean & Anetta, 2020). There are several participants' proof towards this recommendation from others to purchase the green cosmetic products.

"The recommendation started by my sister to use these green cosmetic products." [Participant 1]

"So, for the hair serum, usually I will search it on the desktop and then we get the information from there. For the face wash, I will tell my family members or my friend that they are also the users of the products." [Participant 2]

"The staff asked me whether to use the shampoo or the organic shampoo and conditioner...and gave me some samples of the products to try." [Participant 3]

"Ah. Depends. Sometimes if I want to buy something, I will browse online and then go to the shop to buy because it's easy. It can save my time as I can search everything from my phone." [Participant 4]

"It's actually uh suggestion from my friends and then also they have a lot of good reviews. So, I tend to be influenced by all this." [Participant 5]

These instances underscore the social dynamics surrounding green cosmetic purchases, emphasizing the need for marketers to leverage interpersonal connections and online platforms effectively. Crafting strategies that amplify positive user experiences and encourage user-generated content could further enhance the influence of subjective norms on the Malaysian consumer's green cosmetic product choices.

Perceived Behavioral Control

Perceived behavioral control, as defined by Ajzen (1991), represents an individual's perception of the ease or difficulty in performing a particular behavior. In the context of purchasing green cosmetic products, two axial codes were identified under the category of perceived control, focusing on online and in-store purchasing. The participants' perceptions of control in these contexts are discussed below:

Online and In-Store Purchasing

The participants' perceived control in the purchasing process is intricately linked to their preferences for online and in-store shopping when it comes to green cosmetic products. Drawing on insights from Zhang, Zhou & Leite (2019), consumers who seek information and possess internet-surfing abilities tend to favor online platforms. Here are the key themes emerging from participants' perspectives:

"From Tik Tok...is cheaper than other platform. Yes, another thing is the thought that one of the platforms that we can watch the video and then hearing the session and direct information from the owner... Uh, wait, I can get information from the Watsons and Guardian, but not really did on that kind of product." [Participant 1]

“So, for a physical store, usually I will go to Watsons to get some more. But for the local product, usually I will use the Tik Tok, yeah.” [Participant 2]

“So, I buy the conditioners from one of my salons that I used to cut my hair.” [Participant 3]

“Oh, in Sephora. Yes, but when you go to the shop, it’s very hard to know if it’s green. But unless you must look, read the bottle. However, if you go to the Sephora application, you can see the logo green product. So, that’s how I know.” [Participant 4]

“Uh, online shopping. I buy from Shopee. Sometimes I want a voucher or what in Shopee, so that’s why I prefer Shopee compared to the official website. I think the website is user friendly, it’s just that I prefer shopping because uh, I have a lot of vouchers, promotions and all that.” [Participant 5]

These diverse preferences underline the multifaceted nature of consumers’ perceived control, influenced by factors such as information accessibility, promotional incentives, and the type of retail environment. Marketers and retailers can leverage these insights to tailor their strategies, providing a seamless and satisfying experience for consumers navigating the landscape of green cosmetic product purchasing.

Barriers

Ajzen’s theory of planned behavior suggests that the behavior of purchasing green cosmetic products becomes evident when individuals have control over various factors influencing their choices. These factors can be internal, such as income, time availability, and competence, or

external, including the availability of tools or resources necessary for the behavior (Ajzen, 2005). Building upon this, Kushwah, Dhir & Sagar (2019) have adapted Innovation Resistance Theory to identify barriers hindering consumers from buying green products. The study identifies key barriers, including usage barriers, value barriers, risk barriers, tradition barriers, and image barriers, all of which can significantly impact consumers’ purchasing decisions. Several participants in the study provided evidence supporting the existence of these barriers to purchasing green cosmetic products:

“It is very difficult to find if the product is really 100% green cosmetic...and the challenges because of sometimes too many products in the market and we don’t know actually which one is the best...whereas every brand will claim that they are the best”. [Participant 1]

“So, the effect of green cosmetic products might be slower, but slowly the effect we show you how good the green part that is That’s what I’m using it for almost one year right now, and then one of the moisturizer Aloe Vera one is I’m using it since 2008, but die to some the company issue which is the product is not produce for quite long” [Participant 2]

“I didn't find it online.... I think the changes that for this green cosmetic product in term of the pricing is too high I think and if compared with other brands which is not the cosmetic and organic product, the price is much lower rather than the organic product” [Participant 3]

“So, for that, yeah, I think watching a second do the same in Watson online, if they can put that green thing because like now, now you show me that Garnier micellar water now only I know it's green, but if it's if on the on the Watson shelf, I don't know it's green because I don't think there is any.” [Participant 4]

“Not really. When I think about it, I might use green cosmetics. I'm just not aware of it. I think in Malaysia we have a lack of awareness. So, I think if the brand itself wants to promote green cosmetics, they need to spend more. I mean in the advertisement, so that we know.” [Participant 5]

These participant insights align with theoretical frameworks, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of barriers to green cosmetic product purchases. Recognizing and addressing these barriers will be crucial for marketers and policymakers to enhance consumer awareness, manage expectations, and foster a more conducive environment for the adoption of green cosmetic products.

Selective Code 2- Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is characterized as a profound commitment to consistently purchasing favorable products from the same brand in the future (Wachtel, 2020). Consumers are highly willing to buy if they perceive the brand as reliable, potentially strengthening their loyalty and devotion (Qiu & Chen, 2020). One axial code was grouped from the coding to form 'brand loyalty' which can be discussed as follows.

Relationship with brands

Consumer-brand relationships are formed when individuals perceive the benefits of their transactions to outweigh the potential costs (Copeland & Bhaduri, 2020; Claudon & Sophie, 2021). Participant responses illustrate this relationship:

"I am using Simple and Dr Anne brand, the blue bottle from Dr Anne which is Micellar". [Participant 1]

"I am using a Hairos brand from one of the influencers and then for the moisturizer which is the Aloe Vera gel from Debella. Debella products can be used for my face wash. I'm using the cost model which consists of the tree oil and for my face serum is from Axis-Y which is the product from Korea". [Participant 2]

"I currently use one of the products that I bought for my hair treatment called the brand Naturals organic". [Participant 3]

"Yeah, in Malaysia you can buy at Sephora. At the Sephora website, you see it's a green product. They have a green mark label for every green cosmetic product". [Participant 4]

"I need to check because I'm not someone who's very. I mean really concerned about this. But one of mine, I think my product which I use for green cosmetics is Kiehls". [Participant 5]

Participants' statements underscore the importance of trust and reliability in their choice of brands. A positive consumer-brand relationship is built on the perceived benefits of the products, and these relationships contribute to brand loyalty. Brands that prioritize transparency, reliability, and high-quality products are likely to foster stronger connections with consumers, encouraging loyalty and repeated purchases.

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, AND RECOMMENDATION

The exploration of consumer behaviors in the Malaysian green cosmetic products market has uncovered significant insights that contribute to a deeper understanding of evolving dynamics in purchasing decisions. Two prominent trends have emerged, highlighting shifts in consumer preferences, and shedding light on factors influencing purchase intentions. These trends, namely Information Accessibility and social media, and Promotions and Discount, offer valuable implications for marketing strategies in the green cosmetics industry. Additionally, the findings explore the role of cultural influences and provide recommendations for future research, particularly the need for quantitative studies to validate and extend the findings.

One of the key findings is that **information accessibility** significantly influences the purchase decisions of Malaysian consumers regarding green cosmetics. Social media platforms, particularly **TikTok**, play an essential role in disseminating information about product ingredients, effects, and overall efficacy. While some consumers obtain basic information from stores like Watsons and Guardian, many participants emphasized TikTok as a primary source of in-depth product knowledge. This reflects a growing demand for transparency and easily accessible information, particularly regarding the environmental and ethical attributes of green cosmetics.

"TikTok is one of the mediums that is very effective in giving information about the product, especially in terms of the ingredients and the effect of the product." [Participant 2]

This finding aligns with Pop et al. (2020) and Sharma, Trivedi, & Deka (2021), who highlight the role of social media in raising consumer awareness about green cosmetics. Munerah, Koay, & Thambiah (2021) also found that increased awareness of the harmful effects of non-green products drives consumers towards sustainable

alternatives. Thus, social media, especially TikTok, has emerged as a vital tool for shaping consumer preferences and

Intention - Behavior Gap and Brand Loyalty, provides critical insights into the factors influencing promoting green products.

Economic factors, specifically the availability of promotions and discounts, emerged as a critical influence on consumers' purchase intentions. Several participants mentioned platforms like Shopee, where promotions and vouchers significantly impacted their purchasing behavior.

"I don't think I paid that amount. I got a 25% discount during the sales. So yeah, it's worth it to buy that product." [Participant 4]

This aligns with Amin, Manzoor, & Farid (2020), who demonstrated that promotional pricing strategies effectively motivate purchases. In a price-sensitive market like Malaysia, offering discounts and vouchers can increase accessibility to green products, particularly among consumers who may perceive them as more expensive than conventional alternatives.

The findings further indicate that cultural norms and social recommendations play a significant role in influencing green cosmetic purchases. Participants frequently cited recommendations from family and friends as key motivators.

"The recommendation started by my sister to use these green cosmetic products." [Participant 1]

This reflects the collectivist culture of Malaysia, where group dynamics and word-of-mouth recommendations heavily influence consumer behavior. This finding is consistent with Zhang, Zhou & Leite (2019), who found that peer recommendations and social media influencers significantly affect consumer choices for beauty products. In Malaysia, these cultural and social factors align with a broader trend of eco-consciousness, where consumers look to their peers for guidance on sustainable choices.

Another key finding relates to the barriers consumers face in purchasing green cosmetics, particularly the perception of higher costs and the lack of product availability. Participants expressed concerns about the pricing of green products, with Participant 3 stating:

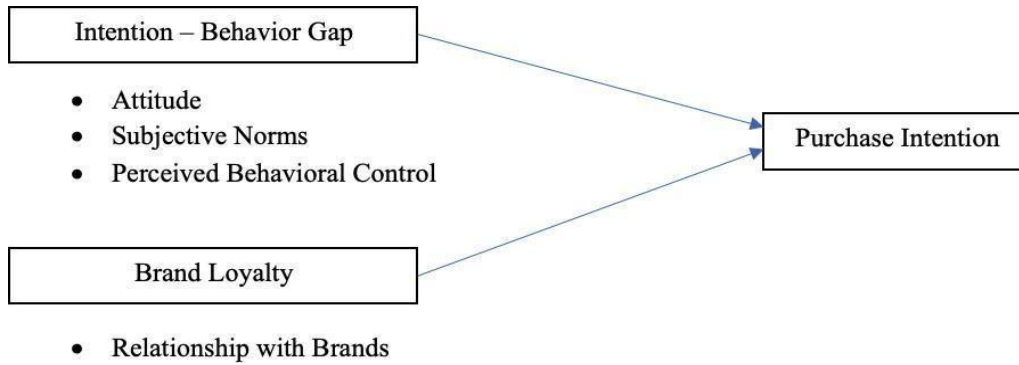
"The price is much higher compared to non-organic products."

Additionally, some participants found it challenging to identify authentic green products in stores, which can hinder their willingness to make a purchase. This finding is aligned with Kushwah, Dhir & Sagar (2019), who identified price and availability as significant barriers to the adoption of green products. To address these concerns, marketers must improve product visibility in physical stores and ensure that pricing strategies make green cosmetics more accessible to a wider audience.

More importantly, the study also established a conceptual framework for Malaysian purchase intentions toward green cosmetics. The selective codes, namely the Malaysian consumers' purchase intentions. The framework is depicted in more detail in Figure 2. The intention-behavior gap, shaped by attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, emphasizes the need for marketers to align strategies with these factors to bridge the gap and encourage positive consumer behaviors. On the other hand, brand loyalty, built on trust and reliability, signifies the importance of transparent, reliable, and high-quality products in fostering strong connections with consumers.

However, it's essential to acknowledge the limitations of this study. The qualitative nature of the research, while providing in-depth insights, may not capture the breadth of perspectives that a quantitative study could offer. The sample size, though carefully selected, might not fully represent the diverse demographics and preferences within the entire Malaysian population. Additionally, the study's focus on green cosmetics might not encompass the entirety of the broader beauty and cosmetic market, potentially limiting the generalizability of findings.

Figure 2. Conceptual Framework of Malaysian purchase intention



While this study provides valuable insights into consumer behavior in Malaysia, further quantitative research is needed to validate these findings and provide a more generalized understanding of the factors influencing green cosmetic purchases. A quantitative study could explore the intention-behavior gap and investigate how cultural, economic, and informational factors quantitatively impact purchase decisions. Such research would offer more robust conclusions and provide marketers with data-driven strategies to increase consumer engagement with green cosmetics. Broadening the scope of investigation to include a diverse range of cosmetic products, encompassing both green and non-green alternatives, would provide a more holistic understanding of consumer preferences and the dynamic between different product categories. Conducting longitudinal studies is recommended to track the evolution of consumer behaviors over time, offering a dynamic perspective on the shifts and trends within the green cosmetics market and contributing to a deeper understanding of sustainability- related consumer choices.

Exploring cross-cultural perspectives within Malaysia is essential for understanding regional and demographic variations in consumer behaviors toward green cosmetics, providing valuable insights for targeted marketing strategies and product development. Future research endeavors should consider incorporating perspectives from key industry stakeholders, including cosmetic brands, retailers, and policymakers. This holistic approach would offer a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities within the green cosmetics market, facilitating collaborative efforts to promote sustainable practices and consumer education.

In conclusion, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the Malaysian green cosmetic market, offering actionable insights for marketers, industry stakeholders, and policymakers. The identified trends and factors influencing purchase intentions can guide strategic decision-making, enabling brands to navigate the complexities of the evolving consumer landscape in the realm of sustainable and eco-friendly beauty products. As the beauty industry continues to witness a global shift towards sustainability, the study's findings, addressing the study's limitations and pursuing further research avenues will contribute valuable knowledge to support informed decision-making and drive positive changes in consumer behaviors in Malaysia's green cosmetic market.

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APPENDIX 1

Good morning / afternoon. I, Nur Ain Shakila / Noorsyalina, DBA students at Arshad Ayub Graduate Business School (AAGBS), UiTM Shah Alam.

I am currently conducting a study to **better understand the consumers' purchase intention toward green cosmetic products in Malaysia.**

There are no right and wrong answers. I will not disclose your details to any third parties. I am committed to ensuring your data privacy. The result of the study is purely for educational purposes.

The interview will last approximately 30 minutes.

CONSUMER CONSENT FORM INFORMATION

Introduction, Terms & Conditions and Consent:

Thank you for your interest in our study on **green cosmetic products in Malaysia.** This form constitutes a privacy notice explaining how I will process your personal data for purposes of the Study and a consent declaration form for you to give your consent to this use, should you so choose.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you choose to participate in the Study, you will need to read the following information carefully and provide your consent at the end of this form. The granting of your consent is voluntary and may be revoked at any time without any detrimental effect to you. You will suffer any detriment should you choose not to participate in the Study.

Description of Involvement

If you decide to participate, we will conduct an interview with you. The interview will take 30 minutes at the place and time of your convenience and will be conducted by me.

Purpose of Personal Data Processing:

I will serve as the Controller of personal data collected, and processing of such personal data will relate to conducting the Study and any follow-up contact that you have consented to.

Your responses and any personal contact information you provide in participating in the Study (i.e. name, business address, email address, and phone number) will be processed on a strictly need-to-know basis, for the following purposes:

- (i) to enable you to participate in the study;
- (ii) to manage the conduct of the study;
- (iii) to determine your suitability and/or eligibility for the participation in the study;
- (iv) for compliance with legal and regulatory requirements and;
- (v) for storage in databases to facilitate the study.

Your responses may also be used to create non-identifiable information that I may use alone or in aggregate with information obtained from other sources, to gain greater insights in this area.

APPENDIX 2

How we store your information and your rights

We retain your data for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which your personal data is collected. Your responses in the Study and your associated personal data will be maintained for **12 months** except to the extent required to comply with a legal obligation.

You may contact us to request access to your personal data or to be provided with information on your personal data stored by us, object to the processing of it and request that we correct or delete it. If you have any queries or wish to know more about the information we hold, you can call me on +60148432634/+60126325410 or email us on nurainshakilnazri@gmail.com/noorsyalina.nordin@gmail.com, mentioning the name of the Study and we will be happy to assist.

Confidentiality Agreement:

You acknowledge that during the Study, proprietary information regarding products and product development, and other trade secrets and know-how may be disclosed, and by participating in the Study you agree to hold all such information confidential and to not disclose it to any third party or use it for any other purpose whatsoever. You are required to accept the above confidentiality agreement to participate in this survey.

Please select:

- YES**, I want to take part in the Study and confirm my consent to the collection, storage and use of my personal data as outlined above.
- NO**, I do not want to take part in this Study.

Consent to be re-contacted

I may wish to re-contact you after the interview to clarify any follow-up queries related to this study. Please confirm if you agree to be re-contacted on this basis.

- I consent to be re-contacted for follow-up queries on this study**
- I do not wish to be re-contacted for follow-up queries on this study**

CONSENT OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I consent to participate in this study on [DD/MM/YY]. I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. My signature below indicates my full informed consent to my participation in this study.

Respondent name

Signature of Respondent

Date

APPENDIX 3

Good morning / afternoon / evening!

We are currently conducting a study to **better understand the consumers' purchase intention toward green cosmetic products in Malaysia.**

The study comprises an interview that will last approximately 30 minutes.

Your involvement in this study would be very much appreciated. The project is purely concerned with research, and there will be no attempt to sell you anything or influence your use of products.

The identifying of the respondents is confidential and none of the details will be passed on to any 3rd party. The results of the research will be aggregated to provide an overall picture of attitudes to the area, and no answers will be attributable to an individual. There are no right or wrong answers. Any information you provide to us is very important for analyses.

We just have a few questions to check if this study will be relevant to you.

CONSUMER SCREENER

To Focus on Malaysian Consumer Who Is the User or Non-User of Green Cosmetic Products

Terminating Criteria:

S1. Please indicate your Nationality

Nationality	Please select applicable [SA]	Remark
Malaysian	1	CONTINUE
Non-Malaysian	2	TERMINATE

Profiling Criteria:

S2. Please indicate your gender

Gender	Please select applicable [SA]	Remark
Female	1	[TO ENSURE GOOD MIX]
Male	2	

S3. Please indicate your age

Age	Please select applicable [SA]	Remark
# years old		CONTINUE

S4. Please indicate your education level

Education Level	Please select applicable [SA]	Remark
Primary / High School	1	[TO ENSURE GOOD MIX]
Diploma / Professional Certificate	2	
Bachelor's Degree	3	
Master's Degree / PhD	4	
Prefer not to say	5	

S5. Please indicate your employment status

APPENDIX 4

Employment Status	Please select applicable [SA]	Remark
Self-employed	1	[TO ENSURE GOOD MIX]
Full-time employee	2	
Part-time employee	3	
Unemployed / Home maker	4	
Prefer not to say	5	

S6. [IF CURRENTLY EMPLOYED (CODE 1, 2 OR 3 SELECTED IN S6), ASK] Please indicate your designation in your employment

Designation	Please select applicable [SA]	Remark
Junior Executive	1	[TO ENSURE GOOD MIX]
Middle Management	2	
Upper Management	3	
Prefer not to say	4	

S7. What is your monthly income?

Monthly Income	Please select applicable [SA]	Remark
Less than MYR3,000	1	[TO ENSURE GOOD MIX]
MYR3,000 to MYR5,000	2	
MYR5,001 to MYR8,000	3	
MYR8,001 to MYR12,000	4	
MYR12,000+	5	

S8. Please indicate your ethnicity

Ethnicity	Please select applicable [SA]	Remark
Malay	1	[TO ENSURE GOOD MIX]
Chinese	2	
Indian	3	
Others, specify	4	
Prefer not to say	5	

S9. Are you using green cosmetic products?

Using green cosmetic	Please select applicable [SA]	Remark
Yes	1	CONT. AT MOD. A
No	2	CONT. AT MOD. B

[IF RESPONDENT HAS BEEN TERMINATED AT S1, READ OUT]

Thank you for your willingness to participate. Due to the specific criteria, we have been given for this study, we are unable to schedule you today. We value your opinion and look forward to getting your feedback for future research studies.

[IF QUALIFIED AND QUOTA OPEN, RECRUIT RESPONDENT AND INVITE FOR INTERVIEW, READ OUT]:

Thank you for answering these questions. We would like to invite you to participate in our study to **better understand the consumers' purchase intention toward green cosmetic products in Malaysia.**

APPENDIX 5

Should you agree to participate, we will visit you to conduct a face-to-face or online interview or share you a link of the survey which would take: **30 minutes.**

Would you be interested in participating?

Interest to Participate	Please select applicable [SA]	Remark
Yes	1	[CONTINUE]
No	2	[TERMINATE]

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Please be assured that all your responses will be kept in strict confidence. We will ensure that the strictest standards of privacy are maintained with the content of your responses during the discussion. Rest assured that no identifying information will be collected, and all responses will remain anonymous.

THANK AND END SCREENING

Discussion Guide

Objectives:

- To explore the factors of consumers' intention to purchase green cosmetic products in Malaysia

APPENDIX 6

MODULE A FOR CONSUMER WHO USE GREEN COSMETIC PRODUCTS

1. Let us start with introducing yourself. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?
2. For green cosmetic products that you have been using, would you like to share more about it? (prompt if not yet answered)
 - a. What kind of product is it?
 - b. What brand is it?

- c. Where did you buy it?
 - d. Is it easy to buy?
 - e. How long do you use green cosmetics?
3. Do you consider yourself a frequent purchaser of green cosmetic products?

Probes: More than most people or less than most people or about the same?

4. How do you get information about green cosmetics?
5. What motivated you to get them?
6. Have you encountered any specific challenges or concerns when buying green cosmetics in Malaysia?
7. What factors did you consider in purchasing green cosmetics? (prompt if not yet answered)
 - a. Ingredients, composition
 - b. Brand's name
 - c. Brand's image
 - d. Country of origin/production of the product
 - e. Recommendation by family, friends, close relations
 - f. User-friendly purchasing process (e.g. website design)
 - g. Price (+ does price indicate quality to the user?)
 - h. Product: packaging, association with other labels (vegan, organic, cruelty-free)
 - i. Place / Distribution channels: website, drugstores, multi brands makeup stores, brand's store
 - j. Communication: celebrity endorsement, publicity (TV, magazines, etc), digital (influencers, online reviews)
8. How does the perceived pricing of green cosmetic products influence your willingness to purchase them in Malaysia?
 - a. Could you specify the price range that you consider as 'expensive' or 'affordable' for these products?
 - b. What factors contribute to this perception?
9. How much does brand reputation or trust influence your decision to purchase green cosmetic products?

APPENDIX 7

We believe the time for our session is almost up, we wish we do have more time as we still have a lot more questions under my sleeve. Before we end our interview, one more question to understand your willingness to use green cosmetic products.

10. If you run out of green cosmetic product brands that you are using now, will you be considering buying another brand?

Module B For Consumer Who Does Not Use Green Cosmetic Products

1. Let us start with introducing yourself. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?
2. Allow me to explain what green cosmetics are all about. Show slide 1 - 3 to explain the green cosmetics
3. Image

If the person never consumed or seen green cosmetics:

Show slide 4 to give examples of green cosmetics. Then ask below questions:

- a. What is your opinion on these green cosmetic products?
 - b. Does it match with the idea you had of green cosmetics? Why?
4. Now that you know what green cosmetics are, would you consider purchasing green cosmetics?
 - a. Have you contemplated trying specific green cosmetic products for skincare, makeup, or haircare, even if you haven't delved into them yet?
 - b. Are there any specific types of green cosmetic products you want to use?
 - c. Are there any misconceptions or myths you've heard about green cosmetics that affect your decision-making process?
 5. How much would you be ready to spend on green cosmetic products?
 - a. What is the price range that is deemed affordable to you?
 6. What the manufacturer / marketers can do for you to choose and use green cosmetic products?
 7. Does it change your (non) purchase intention towards these cosmetics? Why?

We believe the time for our session is almost up, we wish we do have more time as we still have a lot more questions under my sleeve. Thank you for your time.