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(IJEMP)**www.ijemp.com**FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER PURCHASE
INTENTION TOWARDS GREEN COSMETICS PRODUCTS
AMONG YOUNG CONSUMERS IN MALAYSIA**Nur Shahila Aimi Sapri¹, Mohd Rosli Abdul Ghani^{2*}, Dayang Hasliza Muhd Yusuf³¹ Faculty of Business & Communication, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Malaysia
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The purpose of this study is to investigate the intentions of young customers to purchase green cosmetics. The recent environmental challenges on a global scale which increase consumer awareness of the significance of an eco-friendly consumption pattern for the preservation of the natural environment become the motivation for this study. Based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour, subjective norm, attitude, environmental knowledge and altruism were assumed to have influence on purchasing intention. Data was collected using online survey and to test the hypotheses, the multiple regression technique was applied. Subjective norm, attitude, and altruism are found to have positive influence on purchase intention of ecological friendly cosmetics. While environmental knowledge has a negligible effect on the intention to purchase ecological friendly cosmetics. The study's findings are based on responses to a questionnaire among students at a university. There is limitation on generalization on its findings as the sample may not reflect the general population of young consumers. The study provides a new insight into young consumer purchase intention towards green cosmetics. Cosmetic manufacturers can increase green cosmetics utilisation by enhancing the overall quality of the product and focusing on responding to consumer environmental concerns.

Keywords:

Altruism, Environmental Knowledge, Subjective Norm, Attitude, Green Cosmetics, Purchase Intention, Theory Of Planned Behavior

Introduction

In the globalization nowadays, there is a growing recognition of the profound impact on individuals' lifestyles, accompanied by the emergence of novel industries that engage in fierce competition to drive product innovation and augment production levels to satisfy consumer demands and preferences. The rapid expansion of the economy has resulted in an ecological imbalance and excessive utilization of natural resources. Ozone depletion, pollution of water and air, and climate change are all major threats to the environment (Afrifa et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020). The release of emissions stemming from waste by-products generated by industrial activities has adverse consequences on both the environment and the well-being of the neighboring community. The overconsumption of fossil fuels is known to contribute to the greenhouse gas effect, which in turn leads to the ozone layer's depletion and a subsequent rise in global temperatures. This observation signifies the manifestation of global warming. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) continually emphasizes the importance of taking swift and significant action to decrease the gas emissions of greenhouse for keeping global warming to be lower than 1.5 degrees Celsius (Dwivedi et al., 2022). Previous research has demonstrated that the prevailing environmental and ecological challenges have been exacerbated by the growth in population and the excessive consumption level (Chen & Hung, 2016).

Organizations should bear responsibility for climate change due to their ongoing emissions of toxic substances and carbon dioxide into water bodies and atmosphere. Environmental activists and scientists anticipate that both organizations and individuals will embrace and implement environmentally friendly and sustainable consumption practices. The adoption of sustainable consumption practices, which involve the purchase and consumption of products in an environmentally conscious manner, is a crucial element in the pursuit of sustainable development (Nekmahmud et al., 2022). It has created an emergence in cosmetics industry where they also create a sustainable beauty where it goes beyond just eco-friendly packaging that are recyclable, offer toxin-free, chemical-free excellence, and promote natural, vegan-free, and cruelty-free, sustainable skincare.

Consumer demand for cosmetics items continued to grow, resulting in strong sales growth that reached US\$500 billion in 2017 and is expected to exceed US\$800 billion by 2023 (Liu, 2022). Meanwhile, Malaysia cosmetic market was rising consistently year by year, it shown by the total revenue of US\$2.68 billion in 2022 and the rate of annual growth of 4.07% (dhl.com, 2022). Moreover, under the impact of marketing and social media influencers, demand for Malaysian cosmetic companies is rising. Social media influencers and fashion industry advice are fueling the demand for cosmetics and toiletries as the outcome of Malaysia's e-commerce sector's growth, which has expected to generate US\$13.8 billion in revenue by 2025 (dhl.com, 2022). The expansion of the market and the growing consumer demand for cosmetic products justifies the investigation of this consumer segment on green cosmetics.

Traditional skincare products containing harsh inorganic ingredients pose a significant threat to the climate (Ghazali et al., 2017). These readily accessible conventional products are known to have detrimental effects on the environment. On the other hand, green skincare products exhibit characteristics that appeal to a distinct demographic, primarily due to their utilization of naturally sourced components (Dhanwani, Jainani, & Ojha, 2020). Regrettably, there exists a lack of awareness within the broader community regarding the advantages associated with

green cosmetics utilization. The environmentally friendly cosmetics adoption has exhibited limited growth, as customers exhibit reduced concern for ecological welfare and lack enthusiasm for personal well-being (Al Mamun et al, 2020). While numerous countries actively advocate for environmentally friendly production and consumption, existing literature primarily concentrates on the organic food adoption (Nguyen et al, 2019; Rana, & Paul, 2017), green hotel stays (Rahman, 2018), and bio-fuel purchases (Sinha et al, 2019). However, there is a distinct dearth of empirical studies looking at how people really shop for green cosmetics. There is a large population of wealthy young people who are committed to buying green services and products (Wang et al., 2019). A significant number of adolescent female consumers exhibit strong motivation to acquire cosmetic products that are free from chemicals, as these products are perceived to safeguard human skin while minimizing or eliminating adverse environmental impacts. Similarly, there has been a significant expansion in the development of environmentally friendly products within the Malaysian cosmetic industry, accompanied by a heightened level of acceptance among the younger demographic of Malaysian consumers (Tan, Ojo, & Thurasamy, 2019).

This further research highlights the existing gap in the field by studying the consumers' altruistic behavior, environmental knowledge, subjective norms, and attitude on green cosmetics purchase intents. The novelty of this research lies in its investigation of the various factors that influence purchasing intentions, specifically through the lenses of altruism, environmental knowledge, subjective norms, and attitude.

Literature Review

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

The TPB uses perceived behavioral control, subjective norms, and attitude as the bases for predicting behavior, has received widespread recognition and application (Ajzen, 1991). It is a theoretical framework for understanding and determining the behavioral intentions of consumers. Existing research has demonstrated the applicability and robustness of the TPB framework by using it to discuss and envision consumer intentions in a bigger range of green areas, including green products (Paul, Modi, & Patel, 2016), sustainable food (Azizan, & Suki, 2017), organic personal care products (Ghazali et al., 2017), and green hotels (Rahman, 2018). TPB has also been utilized in this study to investigate the influence of altruism, environmental knowledge, subjective norms, and attitude on purchase intention. TPB has also applied in research on organic food goods to see what characteristics prompt Belgian young adults to choose healthy, environmentally friendly options. Vermeir and Verbeke (2006) found that the TPB explained nearly half of the variation in consumers' propensity to buy. Further studies examining consumers' intentions to purchase organic food also employed the TPB framework and concluded that individual differences in subjective norms and attitude accounted for these differences. Ajzen (1991) stated that the TPB model can still be changed and that new variables can be added to it. As a result, many studies on green buyer behavior have expanded the model to include studies on a wide range of topics, such as broad green products (Yadav, & Pathak, 2016), organic food products (Azizan, & Suki, 2017), and green skincare products (Hsu, Chang, & Yansritakul, 2017).

Green Purchase Intention

Purchase intention, which closely represents consumer brand or product preference, is the result of interest on customers in specific products and their prospect of making a purchase.

It also shows the willingness and financial capacity of consumers to buy a specific good specifically connected one's intention to buy to their propensity for a brand (Chen, Lu, & Wang, 2017). Purchase intention gauges' customers' potential future support for a specific brand or product. The willingness to go green includes significant elements like consumers' attitudes, meticulousness, extraversion, and accessibility, all of which influence the customers' tendency to purchase green products (Sun et al., 2018). According to the findings of an abundance of studies, using eco-friendly beauty products is a lifestyle choice that demonstrates respect for both the individual and the natural world (Paul, Modi, & Patel, 2016). Purchase intention's study to buy green products such as organic skincare industry is many, but for the cosmetics industry is still remained low in Malaysia compared to another developed country like Italy and Spain (Zollo et al., 2021). Hence, this research intended to fill this gap to find more antecedent that related to the influencing factors of green cosmetics purchase intents.

Altruistic Motivation

Batson (2011) describes that altruism is the focus on serving the needs of another individual rather than one's own. It is a subtype of pro-social behavior that has a considerable impact on customers' green purchasing behavior including choices made during travels (Kiatkawsin, & Han, 2017). Additionally, the research report demonstrated that altruism had a favorable impact towards attitudes on moral buying intentions as well as a straight impact on intent to purchase. Altruism significantly influences a person's green consumption and has significant impact on the preservation of biodiversity (Cheng, Chang, & Lee, 2020). Prakash et al. (2019) described altruistic values are those that priorities safeguarding the environment without considering one's own interests. As a result, it proves that people with strong altruistic beliefs are more likely to be more concerned about environmental issues, so they will participate more in social activities. By purchasing environmentally friendly goods like green cosmetics products, consumers demonstrate their concern and pro-environmental attitudes for the environment. However, there is still do not have a conclusive result due to some negative and positive result of the altruism influences the purchasing behavior due to lack of studies made on green marketing industry done in Malaysia (Azila et al., 2021). This research tries to fill the gap which requires more studies in Malaysia in the field of green cosmetics products. It is hypothesized that altruistic motivation has a positive effect on green purchase intention.

Environmental Knowledge

A person's environmental knowledge and education level have an important impact of their buying intention for ecological goods (Malik, & Singhal, 2017). Environmental knowledge entails how individuals understand the environment, the fundamental links between environmental aspects or impacts, the acceptance of the entire systems, and the common obligations necessary for equitable growth. Environmental information has been proven to significantly and favorably influence both purchase intention and attitude (Wang et al, 2019). Higher levels of environmental consciousness are associated with a greater propensity to acquire environmentally friendly products and services. Perceived financial, social influence, product attitude, and environmental attitude advantage all had favorable effects on the desire to purchase a green product (Chen, Chen, & Tung; 2018). However, there is a severe lack of environmental research in Malaysia compared to both developed and developing nations (Alaouir et al, 2019; Shimul et al, 2022). Therefore, this study hypothesized that a consumer's pro-environmental outlook may have a positive influence on preference for a green product (Wu, & Yang, 2018).

Subjective Norms

Subjective norm is a crucial element of the TPB. It refers to the level of social or peer pressure someone thinks they are under to do or not do something. It explains how individuals imagine their contemporaries would rate a certain behavior, is central to the TPB model (Hameed, Waris, & Amin, 2019). Social influence has been shown to alter people's consumption patterns (Joshi, & Srivastava, 2019). Peer pressure and the need to be liked by others are major motivators in the decision to buy organic, green, paraben-free, and conventional cosmetic products (Photcharoen, Chung, & Sann, 2020). Subjective norm in the broader setting of green cosmetics is the social pressure that people feel from close relationships to buy green cosmetics. Nguyen et al. (2019) stated that the young consumers in Vietnam who live in urbanization believe that the subjective norm is the most significant element of their desire to buy green cosmetics. Malaysia, however, has had fewer studies done on it than any other country in terms of subjective norm. Therefore, this study hypothesized that subjective norms have a significant influence on green purchase intention.

Attitude

The level of an individual has an unfavorable or favorable judgement or appraisal of a certain behavior has been described as attitude (Ajzen, 1991). Attitude is essential in influencing how someone will feel, and the likelihood of someone responding in each way. Many researchers have found a "intention-behavior gap" or "attitude-behavior gap" within the intentions of consumers to make ethical purchases and their actual behavior (Shaw, McMaster, & Newholm, 2016). Attitude towards green cosmetics is hypothesized to have a positive influence on green purchase intention.

Methodology

Study Framework and Hypotheses

Based on the analysis of past research and TPB as the underpinning theory, the following research framework and hypotheses were developed for this study:

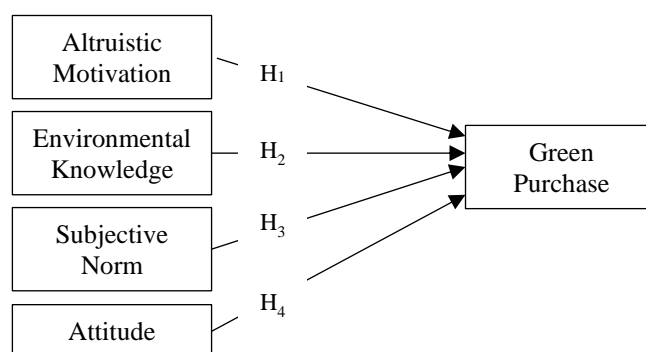


Figure 1: Research Framework

- H₁: Altruism positively influences customer purchase intention towards green cosmetics products.
- H₂: Environmental knowledge positively influences customer purchase intention towards green cosmetics products.

H₃: Subjective norms positively influence consumers purchasing intention towards green cosmetics products.

H₄: Attitude positively influences consumers purchasing intention towards green cosmetics products.

Sampling and Data Collection

This study utilized the quantitative approach method to test the hypothesized relationship between the TPB constructs and purchase intention. A set of questionnaires was prepared based on the adoption and adaptation of the existing instrument. The first part of the questionnaire used nominal and ordinal scales to collect demographic information from the respondents. The second through sixth portions of the questionnaire applied the 5-point Likert Scale (1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree) as an interval evaluation of purchasing intent, altruistic motivation, environmental knowledge, subjective norm and attitude.

The target population of young consumers for this research is university students. The appropriate sample size as proposed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) is 375. Convenience sampling, a type of non-probability approach, is adopted for this study. Identified respondents were contacted via their student emails and the survey questions were done using Google Form. A total of 450 students were shortlisted and contacted and 384 responses were received, giving a response rate of 85.3%.

Data Analysis

Internal Reliability & Consistency

The survey instrument was analyzed for its reliability and consistency. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient (α) ranges from 0 to 1, with the greatest alpha value denoting good reliability. The Cronbach's alpha values for all the variables are as per Table 1. As the Cronbach's alpha for all constructs are above 0.8, the items are all good and suitable for further assessment.

Table 1: Internal Reliability & Consistency Analysis

Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Remarks
Purchase Intention	4	0.873	Good
Altruistic Motivation	4	0.854	Good
Environmental Knowledge	4	0.832	Good
Subjective Norm	4	0.879	Good
Attitude	4	0.869	Good

Pearson Correlation Coefficient Analysis

Correlation analysis has been carried out in evaluating the degree of relationship between all study's variables. The higher the correlation coefficient, the more accurate the prediction and the stronger the link between correlated variables. Based on Table 2, altruistic motivation has the highest correlation with the DV of purchase intention. All variables have positive and significant correlation with the purchase intention.

Table 2: Summary of Pearson Correlation Coefficient Analysis

Variables	Purchase Intention	Altruistic Motivation	Environmental Knowledge	Subjective Norm	Attitude
Purchase Intention	1				
Altruistic Motivation	.699**	1			
Environmental Knowledge	.484**	.510**	1		
Subjective Norm	.613**	.534**	.609**	1	
Attitude	.605**	.687**	.460**	.539**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Multiple Regression

The multiple regression analysis is also conducted to test if the independent components can predict the variation in dependent variable. Table 3 shows the multiple regression analysis results of four determinants of purchase intention (altruism, environmental knowledge, subjective norm, and attitude). The R^2 value for the model is 0.579 or 57.9% which means that the independent variables are able to explain 57.9% of the variation in the dependent variable namely purchase intention on green cosmetic products. While the F value of 130.065 indicated that the model is considered good and well fit. Altruistic motivation has the biggest influence on green purchase intention a beta of 0.485. a one unit of increase in altruistic motivation will lead to a 0.485 unit increase in green purchase intention. This is followed by subjective norm and attitude. While environmental knowledge is not a significant predictor of green purchase intentions.

Table 3: Results of Regression Analysis

Variables	β	t	p	R^2	F
Purchase intention				0.579	130.065
Altruistic Motivation	0.485	9.014	<0.001		
Environmental knowledge	0.018	0.404	0.686		
Subjective norm	0.283	6.427	<0.001		
Attitude	0.160	2.883	0.004		

*p<0.05

Results of Hypotheses Testing

The summary of results for hypothesis testing is shown in Table 4. All of the study hypotheses, with the exception of H2, are accepted.

Table 4: Summary of Hypothesis Result

	Hypothesis	Decision
H₁	There is a positive relationship between altruistic motivation and purchase intention.	Accepted
H₂	There is a positive relationship between environmental knowledge and purchase intention.	Rejected
H₃	There is a positive relationship between subjective norm and purchase intention.	Accepted
H₄	There is a positive relationship between attitude and purchase intention.	Accepted

Conclusion

An individual's environmental consciousness is more likely to be reflected in their desire to buy green skincare products. One's knowledge about buying environmentally friendly products is enhanced by this discovery. Young customers' buying intentions towards green items were found to be most affected by their altruistic motivation and their sentiments towards such products. Young customers are aware of and worried about environmental issues, and they are inclined to make future purchases of environmentally friendly goods (Yadav, & Pathak, 2016). Customers are prone to apply environmentally friendly services and goods if they are concerned about the effect on the environment. This is similar to studies by (examples of past studies).

Subjective norm also has a strong influence on green purchase intention. This is similar to other studies that have included subjective norm in green consumption studies (Ghazali et al., 2017) found a strong and significant link between subjective norm and purchase intention on green cosmetics. Subjective norm contains a positive influence on customer's intentions in buying environmentally friendly goods (Ghazali et al., 2017). Earlier research by Hansen et al. (2018) stated that knowing how social influence increases interest in and demand for environmentally friendly products has important business and academic implications. While other sources by Persaud and Schillo (2017) imply it can help readers get insight into green purchasing practices.

In addition, attitude is also an effective indicator of purchase intention towards green cosmetics, which is in agreement with other cross-cultural studies undertaken across developing and developed nations (Ghazali et al., 2017). For instance, Paul et al. (2016) looked into the factors that determine whether or not people will buy green products, and they found that consumers' attitudes were the most significant predictor of their intentions to do so.

On the other hand, the study found no significant association between environmental knowledge and green purchase intention. This is against the findings made in another nations which demonstrate that the environmental knowledge significantly affects the attitude of consumer and purchase intention about green cosmetics. This contradicting finding rejects the significance of consumer environmental knowledge as a motivator for modifying attitude and purchasing intent regarding green cosmetics and that customers with environmental awareness are more responsible for preserving the natural balance (Cheng, & Wu, 2015). This can be explained by the potentially lower awareness on issues pertaining to the environment, such as eco-friendly products or ways of production among young consumers in Malaysia. Increased environmental awareness is not necessarily associated with increased purchasing intentions for

green items, since the link of environmental knowledge and attitude has been shifting (Kumar et al., 2017).

Implication of The Study

The current research's purpose is to add to the body of information concerning the factors influencing young consumers' purchase intentions of green cosmetics goods.

There are theoretical and practical implications from this study. Theoretically, this study provides empirical evidence for factors influencing young consumers' green purchase intention. It provides an insight into the influence of altruistic motivation on green purchase intention among young buyers of cosmetic products. This can also be translated into potential application in consumption intention of other green products and services. Millennials and also Gen Z are concerned about the impact of their choices on the welfare of others, as well as the social or peer pressure, hence the inclination for green products and services. In addition, the study findings corroborate the viability of using the TPB model to foretell interest in purchasing green cosmetics, suggesting the model can serve as a basis for future efforts to educate young customers about the benefits of using such products.

As for the practical implications of the study findings, provides an insight into the purchase intention among millennials and Gen Z consumers. This is of high importance as they will be the major consumers, therefore it is important for green products manufacturers and marketers to understand the factors underlying their purchase decisions. The results of this study have significant ramifications for green cosmetics social marketers, marketers or retailers, as well as stakeholders since they shed light on the influencing factors of young buyers' decisions to acquire green cosmetics. Young customers believe their capability to afford green cosmetics is influenced by their compassion, environmental awareness, subjective norm, and attitude, as shown by the results. Thus, efforts promoting green cosmetics should educate customers about the products and aim to increase their extrinsic and intrinsic motives to use them. Promoters of eco-friendly cosmetics should work to boost customers' sense of competence regarding those items. Marketers should think about hiring spokespeople, including opinion leaders with knowledge in green cosmetics, to improve the general views of young customers (Gen Z and millennials) towards purchasing green cosmetics. To be most effective, a celebrity endorsement strategy for green cosmetics should highlight the celebrity's credibility, experience, and affinity for the product (Lili et al., 2022).

Furthermore, social marketers and green cosmetics sellers must think about interacting to young buyers through social media that is more prevalent amongst the aforementioned age, to raise awareness of natural and organic cosmetics. Using social media as a source of knowledge might sway consumers' attitudes and ultimately their purchases of green beauty products (Pop et al., 2020). Companies selling eco-friendly cosmetics would be wise to promote their commitment to environmental responsibility through various environmentally friendly efforts and communication techniques (Chin et al., 2018). Marketing efforts on green cosmetics may stress product safety, ecological beauty, green cosmetics positive consequences towards environment, and green cosmetic purchase as the acceptable social standard (Munerah, Koay, & Thambiah, 2021).

Study Limitation and Recommendation

This study has its limitations. The study's findings are based on responses to a questionnaire among university students. There is limitation on generalization on its findings since the demographic of the respondents may not represent the total population of the Millennials and Gen Z. Future studies may be extended to include respondents among Millennials and Gen Z who are already working. This could lead to more comprehensive understanding of the profile of green consumers among Millennials and Gen Z.

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