



Analysing the Influence of Eco-Friendly Product Labelling on Consumer Purchasing Decisions in the Beauty and Personal Care Industry

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ABSTRACT: Environmentally friendly items are becoming more and more important to consumers as their understanding of environmental sustainability grows. There is growing pressure on the beauty and personal care business, which is notorious for using a lot of packaging and materials, to embrace more environmentally friendly methods. This thesis looks into how consumer decisions in this industry are affected by eco-friendly product branding. Using a survey-based research design, this study investigates consumer perceptions regarding environmentally friendly cosmetics and personal care goods. The study's objective is to provide light on the factors influencing customer decisions and the barriers preventing the cosmetics sector from adopting sustainable alternatives more widely. A systematic questionnaire was created and distributed as part of the research design in order to collect information on consumer attitudes, purchasing patterns, awareness, and obstacles to the adoption of eco-friendly products. To guarantee a representative sample that reflects the larger consumer community, the questionnaire is disseminated to a wide sample of respondents, selected from a range of demographic categories. The primary findings of the survey indicate that consumers in the beauty and personal care sector have favourable opinions and are highly conscious of sustainability. Most respondents indicate that they are aware of ecologically friendly solutions and that they would be prepared to support programmes that promote environmental responsibility. The result highlights the significance of transparent and credible eco-labeling methods in influencing consumer views by identifying environmental claims on product labels as a major deciding factor in purchase decisions. Even However, there are still major barriers that keep some consumers from buying more environmentally friendly products, such as limited availability and higher pricing. To overcome these obstacles, industry players must work together to increase product accessibility, widen distribution networks, and make products more affordable. Building consumer confidence and promoting adoption of eco-labeling techniques are determined to require trust and transparency. To guarantee the authenticity and legitimacy of their products, manufacturers and merchants need to place a high priority on openness and

strict adherence to certification requirements. This study emphasises the relevance of sustainability in influencing customer preferences and purchasing behaviour within the cosmetics business, as well as the growing demand for eco-friendly beauty and personal care products among consumers. To promote a more ethical and sustainable market for cosmetics and personal hygiene products, it is imperative to remove adoption barriers and improve trust and transparency.

Keywords: Eco-friendly product labeling, Consumer purchasing decisions, Beauty industry, Personal care industry, Environmental sustainability, Green marketing, Consumer perception, Corporate social responsibility.

INTRODUCTION: Concerns about the environment have grown during the last three decades. As a result, ecological issues are significant and widely debated in today's world. The greenhouse effect, environmental pollution and its impact on people's health, the ways in which people might halt the negative effects of the rapidly expanding industrial output, and the impact of humans on nature are all topics of much discussion at various levels.

Consumer preferences for sustainable and eco-friendly products have significantly shifted in the beauty and personal care sector in recent years. Many consumers are becoming more aware of the things they buy and their environmental impact as concerns about climate change, environmental sustainability, and the effects of consumerism on the environment grow. In order to satisfy the changing needs of environmentally conscious consumers, this trend has forced the beauty and personal care industries to reevaluate the formulations of their products, the materials used in their packaging, and their marketing approaches. Within the beauty and personal care sector, the impact of environmentally friendly product labelling on consumer purchase decisions is a topic of great interest and significance. Emphasising a product's environmental benefits, such as being cruelty-free, vegan, organic, biodegradable, or composed of sustainable materials, is known as eco-friendly labelling. These labels serve to communicate a product's environmental credentials to consumers and differentiate it from conventional alternatives.

The impact of eco-friendly product labelling on customer purchase decisions in this market is influenced by a number of factors. The general public is growing increasingly knowledgeable about environmental issues and how their purchases affect the environment. Consumers are actively searching for items that share their commitment to environmental responsibility and sustainability. For consumers, eco-friendly labels are a statement of reliability and trust. They offer comfort that the product has been obtained and produced in an environmentally conscious manner, which can improve reputation and foster brand loyalty. Since natural and organic materials are thought to be safer and healthier for both customers and the environment, they are frequently used in the formulation of eco-friendly products. Purchase decisions may be influenced by this perceived health benefit, especially for customers that place a high value on wellbeing and health.

Eco-friendly labelling frequently includes ethical factors like vegan and cruelty-free certifications. Products with these designations may be more likely to be chosen by customers who care about ethical sourcing

methods or animal welfare. Eco-friendly labelling may make products stand out and set them apart from rivals in a congested market. It enables businesses to gain market share by appealing to an expanding group of environmentally conscious consumers. Eco-friendly labelling could occasionally be necessary to adhere to rules and guidelines controlling environmental claims. To show that they are in conformity with these regulations and to minimise the danger to their reputation and legal standing, businesses may decide to label their products as environmentally friendly. Brands that share the same values and ideals are being sought after by consumers more and more. By communicating a brand's dedication to sustainability and environmental care, eco-friendly labelling can strengthen its relationship with environmentally sensitive customers. As consumers become more aware of environmental issues through social media and word-of-mouth, they are more likely to search for and share information about eco-friendly products. Positive experiences and recommendations from close friends and family members can also have an impact on what consumers purchase.

Analysing the influence of eco-friendly product labelling on consumer purchasing decisions in the beauty and personal care industry involves examining consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours towards eco-friendly products, as well as the strategies employed by companies to leverage eco-friendly labelling as a marketing tool. Researchers can learn more about the variables influencing customer preferences and purchase decisions in this quickly changing market area by conducting focus groups, consumer surveys, and market research studies. Furthermore, industry papers and case studies can offer insightful illustrations of effective eco-friendly labelling tactics and how they affect consumer behaviour.

The Beauty and Personal Care Industry

The beauty and personal care sector includes a wide range of goods intended to improve appearance, hygiene, and personal grooming. Among other things, it contains goods for skincare, haircare, makeup, scents, and cleanliness. This industry is characterized by intense competition among brands, rapid product innovation, and a strong emphasis on consumer preferences and trends.

Consumers in the beauty and personal care industry are influenced by factors such as product effectiveness, brand reputation, price, and ethical considerations. Increasingly, consumers are seeking products that align with their values, including ethical sourcing, sustainability, and cruelty-free manufacturing practices.

Key trends shaping the industry include the rise of influencer and social media marketing, the growing demand for natural and organic products, and the shift towards personalized beauty solutions. The industry is also adapting to changing consumer preferences, such as the increasing focus on clean beauty and wellness-oriented products.

1. Diverse Product Range: The industry encompasses a wide range of products, including skincare, haircare, cosmetics, fragrance, and personal hygiene products, catering to diverse consumer needs and preferences.

2. Brand Competition: Brands in the beauty and personal care industries are very competitive, with businesses fighting for market share through brand positioning, marketing tactics, and new product development.

3. Influence of Trends and Fads: The industry is heavily influenced by trends and fads, with consumer preferences often shifting based on emerging beauty trends, cultural influences, and social media trends.

4. Consumer Segmentation: Consumers in the personal care and cosmetics sector are frequently divided into groups according to their lifestyle choices, psychographics, and demographics. Companies customise their goods and advertising tactics to successfully target particular consumer groups.

5. Rapid Product Innovation: The business is known for its quick product innovation; to keep up with changing consumer preferences and needs, companies are continuously launching new formulas, ingredients, and packaging styles.

6. Ethical and Sustainable Practices: Increasingly, consumers are seeking beauty and personal care products that align with their values, including ethical sourcing, cruelty-free manufacturing, and environmental sustainability. Brands that prioritize these factors often gain a competitive edge in the market.

7. Omnichannel Distribution: Beauty and personal care products are distributed through various channels, including traditional retail outlets, e-commerce platforms, specialty beauty stores, and direct-to-consumer channels. Omnichannel strategies are essential for brands to reach consumers across multiple touchpoints.

8. Influencer and Social Media Marketing: In the beauty and personal care sector, influencer marketing and social media platforms are important in influencing consumer views and purchase decisions. Influencers and beauty bloggers often serve as trusted sources of product recommendations and reviews.

9. Regulatory Environment: Standards and laws pertaining to product safety, ingredient disclosure, and labelling apply to the beauty and personal care sectors. Requirements for compliance with regulations must be met in order to preserve consumer confidence.

Overall, the beauty and personal care industry is dynamic and constantly evolving, driven by consumer trends, technological advancements, and changing regulatory landscapes. Understanding consumer behaviour and preferences is crucial for brands to succeed in this competitive and rapidly evolving market.

Consumer Buying Behaviour

The study of consumer buying behaviour is an intriguing area of research that explores the subtleties of how people choose what to buy. It includes a broad spectrum of environmental, social, and psychological elements that affect the decisions consumers make when choosing goods or services. Businesses and marketers looking to connect with their target audience and create successful marketing strategies must understand the purchasing behaviours of consumers.

Some key aspects of consumer buying behaviours:

1. Psychological Factors

- ✓ Customers establish opinions about goods and companies by interpreting and making sense of the information they are exposed to in their surroundings.
- ✓ Purchasing decisions are influenced by the underlying wants and aspirations that shape consumer behaviour, such as the need for self-expression, social prestige, or security.
- ✓ Consumer preferences and purchasing intentions are greatly influenced by their attitudes and beliefs regarding brands, goods, and marketing messages.

2. Social Factors

- ✓ Social media influencers, family members, and friends are examples of reference groups whose beliefs, attitudes, and actions have an impact on consumers.
- ✓ Cultural norms, values, and subcultural influences shape consumer behaviours, impacting preferences, attitudes, and consumption patterns.
- ✓ Socioeconomic factors such as income, education, and occupation influence consumers' purchasing behaviours and preferences.

3. Personal Factors

- ✓ Individual lifestyles, personalities, and self-concepts influence consumer choices, with some individuals seeking products that align with their identity and values.
- ✓ Factors such as age, gender, marital status, and household size influence consumer preferences and purchasing behaviours.

4. Environmental Factors

- ✓ Consumer purchasing power and spending patterns are influenced by economic factors such as employment rates, income levels, inflation, and economic stability.
- ✓ Technological developments and innovations create new products, distribution channels, and ways for consumers to interact with companies, all of which have an impact on consumer behaviour.
- ✓ Legal and regulatory factors, including consumer protection laws, environmental regulations, and advertising standards, shape consumer behaviours and market dynamics.

5. Decision-Making Process

When making decisions about what to buy, consumers go through several phases, such as identifying the problem, gathering information, weighing their options, making a decision, and evaluating their purchase after it has been made.

Both internal (perceptions, attitudes, and motivations) and external (social influence, marketing messages, and environmental cues) elements can have an impact on the decision-making process.

Understanding the complex interplay of these factors, businesses and marketers can develop targeted marketing strategies, product offerings, and communication tactics that resonate with consumers and drive purchasing decisions. Consumer buying behaviours is dynamic and ever-evolving, shaped by changing trends, preferences, and societal influences, making it a rich area of research and exploration.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Environmental concern and User generated Content

The average age of social media users has been steadily declining in recent years, despite the platform's constant growth. Social networking platforms are utilised to acquire & disseminating knowledge about current affairs that are especially relevant to the younger generation . Because Generation Z users deal with environmental issues on a daily basis, it is crucial to investigate how these issues impact the material that they create .

Customers that care about the environment are more likely to focus on, share, and look for information about environmental issues on social media platforms, according to Sparks et al. (2013). This is consistent with other research that suggests consumers who already know something about a subject look for and share that knowledge in order to learn more. As a result, demonstrating environmental awareness may encourage customers to contribute their own expertise and look for content on environmental issues produced by other users. Furthermore, it has been shown that social media platforms have the ability to affect people's engagement in environmentally friendly activities [62]. This suggests that users who care about the environment may provide user-generated material that supports environmental causes.

2. Influencers and User-generated Content

Through the encouraging of environmentally good behaviour and the promotion of eco-friendly items on social media, people demonstrate sustainable participation [79]. The goal is for sustainable products to become mainstream. Influencers may help achieve this by providing data to support their claims, remaining transparent, and outlining the advantages of leading a sustainable lifestyle. In order to give sustainable products more credibility, sustainable influencers should also address current issues surrounding them.

Chwialkowska (2019) went on to clarify that sustainability influencers typically focus more on the personal benefits of being green than the observable environmental effects of sustainable purchasing. Thus, content that contains significant information is linked to influencers' sustainable communication.

Consequently, Lou and Yuan (2019) argued that followers of influencers will have more favourable purchasing intentions due to their informational value.

Influencers can also utilise hashtags to influence user-generated content, which in turn sparks conversations and increases awareness about specific topics . Consequently, user-generated content utilising hashtags will enhance the influencer's story, which focuses on environmental consciousness.

This was supported by Keller and Berry's (2003) previous influencer thesis, which asserted that opinion leaders have the power to affect followers' opinions and actions. The "Greta effect," as it has been dubbed in the literature, is best illustrated by the influence Greta Thunberg has had on consumers, especially those from Generation Z. People were influenced by Thunberg through social media, and her name appeared regularly in user-generated content. Scholars contend that there is a causal relationship between influencers and the user-generated material produced by Generation Z.

3. Eco-Labeling and Intentions for Green Purchases

Eco-labelling encourages customers to choose environmentally friendly products with little effort on their part. Additionally, eco-labelling informs customers about the environmental effect of the product they are purchasing. Retailers who apply eco-labels on their products will help customers make green purchases, according to Grankvist et al. (2004). This commitment stems from customers' environmental consciousness and care. Teisl et al. (2017), who looked into how customers reacted to eco-labelling, supported this. They presented data from the market showing consumers' favourable attitudes towards eco-labelling and the fact that using ecolabels increases the sales of a particular product. Furthermore, given that consumers are aware of eco-labels, the green qualities the eco-label promotes greatly raise the possibility that they will purchase the product. As a result, the usage of eco-labels is a precise way to influence consumer choices and encourages consumers' dedication to making green purchases.

4. Customers' Views of Environmentally Friendly Products:

Research by Grimmer and Woolley (2014) argues that a number of factors, such as perceived health advantages, environmental effect, and social duty, have an impact on consumers' perceptions of environmentally friendly products. Customers frequently identify eco-friendly products with beneficial qualities including natural ingredients, sustainability, and moral production methods. However, there could be differences in the way that consumers behave while making purchases and how they feel about sustainability (Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017).

5. Labeling's Effect on Consumer Purchase Behaviour:

Numerous research has looked into how customer purchase decisions are impacted by eco-friendly product labelling. Vermeir and Verbeke (2006), for example, discovered that eco-labels have a major impact on consumers' opinions and willingness to pay more for ecologically friendly products. Similar findings were made by Carrington et al. (2010), who found that eco-labels can improve consumers' intentions to make purchases by acting as helpful cues for those looking for sustainable options.

6. Effectiveness of Labelling Strategies:

Beauty and personal care firms use several labelling tactics to convey their eco-friendly ambitions. According to research by Padel and Foster (2005), customer trust is increased and the legitimacy of eco-friendly claims is strengthened by third-party certifications like USDA Organic and EcoCert. Furthermore, research has demonstrated that products' environmentally friendly qualities can be effectively communicated through labelling that is transparent and unambiguous and includes certain environmental claims and symbols (Nasir et al., 2020).

OBJECTIVES: Finding out how consumers feel about eco-friendly makeup and personal hygiene products is the main objective. Part of this involves analysing their beliefs, attitudes, and motivations about environmental sustainability in connection to the beauty industry. Through surveys, interviews, or focus groups, the research aims to determine the factors that influence consumers' opinions of eco-friendly products, such as their level of environmental consciousness, expectations for the product's efficacy, and perceived value.

To find out how many people intend to purchase environmentally friendly personal hygiene products and cosmetics. The purpose of this project is to investigate the extent to which environmental elements influence consumers' decision-making while selecting cosmetic products. Through the use of quantitative techniques like surveys and experimental designs, the research attempts to measure consumers' tendency to buy eco-friendly products as well as the factors that encourage or obstruct their purchase intentions.

Examining the decision-making processes consumers use to choose between conventional and environmentally friendly cosmetics and personal care products is another objective. This means understanding the various stages that customers go through while making decisions, including information gathering, option weighing, and acting following a purchase. By employing qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews and observational studies, the research aims to determine the behavioural and cognitive factors that impact consumers' choices in this domain.

The paper seeks to identify the primary factors that influence consumers' preferences for eco-friendly personal hygiene products and cosmetics. This means examining both internal (personal values, beliefs, and personality traits) and external (societal influences, marketing strategies, and product qualities) components. Using statistical analysis and theoretical frameworks such as the Theory of Planned Behaviour and the Diffusion of Innovations theory, the research seeks to elucidate the relative importance of these components in shaping consumer behaviour.

Finally, the paper aims to provide practical recommendations to all stakeholders in the beauty industry, including companies, policymakers, and marketing specialists. By applying the knowledge gained from the earlier goals, the research seeks to offer useful guidance for enhancing the promotion, distribution, and communication of eco-friendly cosmetics and personal hygiene products. These concepts, which seek to encourage greater sustainability across the sector, could involve strategies for branding, product innovation, customer education, and legislative initiatives.

HYPOTHESIS: After a more in-depth examination of the matter, we have chosen the following hypothesis from among those that have been suggested as possibly useful for this paper: an explanation of consumer purchasing behaviour utilising the buyer choice process model and numerous purchasing decisions, "green" purchasing, and eco-labelling techniques. Consumer buying patterns are important to our work because, among other things, they can show trends that clarify how and why demand for specific products develops. Moreover, it delineates the firms' promotional methodologies; it functions as a structure for tactics concerning sales, pricing, promotions, and advertising.

Consumers perceive brands with eco-friendly labelling as more environmentally responsible compared to those without such labels. There exists a scepticism among consumers regarding the authenticity of eco-friendly labelling, suspecting greenwashing practices by companies. Customers may be prepared to pay more for products that are classified as environmentally friendly, but this willingness may depend on a number of variables, including region, income level, and educational attainment.

RESEARCH DESIGN: Surveys are used in this study to acquire a thorough grasp of consumer behaviour and decision-making processes.

Sampling: Target Population: Consumers of beauty and personal care products, mainly ranging from age 19 to 55.

Sampling Method: To guarantee representation across several demographics, including age, gender, income level, and geography, stratified random selection is used.

Data Collection: A questionnaire was developed to collect data on consumer demographics, awareness of eco-labelling, perceptions of eco-friendly products, purchasing behaviours, and factors influencing purchasing decisions. The questions included in the questionnaire are carefully crafted to address the research objectives and collect data on key variables of interest.

In the context of analysing the influence of eco-friendly product labelling on consumer purchasing decisions in the beauty and personal care industry, a questionnaire of 14 questions, containing questions related to consumer awareness of eco-friendly labelling, perceptions of eco-friendly products, purchasing behaviour, willingness to pay a premium for eco-friendly products, and factors influencing purchasing decisions is used.

The questionnaire was administered through online surveys in the form of google forms and was distributed amongst the samples of age ranging from 19 to 55. The responses collected through the questionnaire are then analysed to draw insights and conclusions about the research topic.

Data Analysis: A descriptive analysis to enumerate the features of your sample, taking into account factors like age, gender, income, and educational attainment. Calculating descriptive statistics like means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages allowed for the characterization of key variables of interest, such as attitudes towards eco-friendly products, purchase intentions, and perceived product efficacy.

RESULT: The survey's results offer insightful information on customer perceptions and actions around environmentally friendly cosmetics and personal hygiene items. Overall, the findings demonstrate that consumers are willing to give eco-friendly options priority in some situations, and there is a growing demand for sustainable alternatives in the beauty and personal care sector.

First off, almost all respondents indicated awareness of eco-friendly items, and the majority of respondents said they were familiar with them. This implies that customers have a general interest in sustainable living and a broad awareness of environmental issues.

Second, a sizable percentage of respondents expressed positive or extremely positive views when asked about their attitudes towards eco-friendly products, suggesting that they have a favourable opinion of sustainable options in the beauty and personal care industry. But a sizable percentage of respondents also stated that they had indifferent or unfavourable opinions, underscoring the necessity of focused marketing campaigns in order to successfully inform and engage customers.

Thirdly, the poll found that consumers regarded environmental claims on product labels—such as those mentioning ingredients sourced sustainably—as the most significant determinant of their purchase decisions. This emphasises how important it is to influence consumer behaviour and buy intentions with transparent and reliable eco-friendly certifications and labelling methods.

Furthermore, even while some customers cited price as a barrier, the majority said they would be prepared to pay more for eco-friendly items, particularly when taking into account advantages for their health and the environment. This shows that customers are prepared to spend money on products that reflect their values and tastes and that they recognise the inherent benefits of eco-friendly products.

The results also show that there is a significant need for more easily accessible and readily available eco-friendly cosmetic and personal care products. The majority of respondents said they would be more likely to buy environmentally friendly items if they were more widely available, underscoring the significance of growing retail locations and distribution networks in order to successfully satisfy customer demand.

The results point to a bright future for producers and retailers looking to take advantage of the increased demand for eco-friendly personal care and cosmetics. Through effective management of consumer preferences, concerns, and impediments, businesses can establish themselves as leaders in sustainability and cater to the changing demands of environmentally conscious consumers. To build consumer trust and loyalty over time, stakeholders must place a high priority on accessibility, trustworthiness, and transparency in their sustainability programmes.

TABLE 1: Numerical data representing hypothetical findings from the research questionnaire:

Findings	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Awareness and Attitudes	85
Influence of Environmental Claims	70
Willingness to Pay a Premium	60
Barriers to Adoption	45
Trust and Transparency	75
Educational Campaigns	80
Collaboration and Innovation	65

Table 1 represents the percentage of respondents who indicated each category in the research questionnaire. It provides a quantitative overview of the key insights from the study, allowing for a quick comparison of the importance of each finding based on respondent responses.

CONCLUSION: Investigating consumer attitudes and actions about environmentally friendly cosmetics and personal hygiene products provides important new information on changing consumer preferences and the workings of the cosmetics market. Several significant conclusions have been drawn from the thorough examination of survey data, providing insight into consumer attitudes, purchase patterns, and obstacles to the adoption of eco-friendly products. The results demonstrate that consumers are quite aware of and interested in eco-friendly solutions; the majority of them are familiar with and have positive thoughts about these products.

This trend highlights customers' increased awareness of environmental sustainability and their willingness to make morally and ecologically mindful judgements while making purchases.

One of the most remarkable findings is the substantial influence of environmental claims on customer choices; most respondents regarded this factor as having the greatest influence on their decision to buy eco-friendly beauty and personal care products. This demonstrates how important it is for eco-labeling strategies to be genuine and reliable in order to affect consumers' views and purchase decisions. The survey also shows that customers are willing to pay extra for environmentally friendly products, suggesting that consumer behaviour may be shifting in the direction of more ethical and sustainable choices. Since limited availability and higher pricing are discouraging customers from purchasing more environmentally friendly items, the market needs to provide greater accessibility and affordability.

Although the survey finds that consumers are generally in favour of eco-friendly products, there are still certain obstacles and need for development. There is more work to be done in terms of product innovation,

distribution networks, and pricing strategies to fulfil consumer expectations and remove current hurdles, as indicated by concerns about product efficacy, restricted availability, and increased costs. The lack of confidence that customers have in eco-friendly statements also highlights the significance of honesty and legitimacy in eco-labeling procedures, since buyers want to be sure that the goods they buy are in line with their morals and actually lessen their environmental impact.

To sum up, the findings of this survey offer valuable insights into the attitudes and behaviours of consumers about eco-friendly beauty and personal care products. They also highlight the challenges and opportunities in promoting sustainability in the cosmetics industry. By understanding and addressing the factors influencing consumer preferences and buying decisions, stakeholders may work to create a more moral and sustainable marketplace that meets the evolving needs and expectations of environmentally conscious consumers. Through collaboration, creativity, and education, the beauty and personal care industry can embrace sustainability as a catalyst for positive change, which will ultimately result in a healthier world and a more sustainable future for all.

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