



**Research Paper**

**Unveiling the Drivers of Female Consumers' Purchase Intentions for Vegan Cosmetics:  
An Empirical Study in Kolkata, West Bengal**

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**Abstract**

The rising demand for sustainable and cruelty-free products has propelled vegan cosmetics to the forefront of the beauty industry, driven by growing ethical and environmental awareness. This study investigates the purchase intentions of female consumers toward vegan cosmetics, focusing on the roles of ethical consumption, price sensitivity, and attitudes as a mediating variable. Based on a survey of 120 respondents in Kolkata, the findings reveal that ethical consumption significantly fosters positive attitudes, with ecological branding and ethical practices serving as key drivers. Price sensitivity demonstrates a dual effect, where affordability enhances attitudes, but high costs pose challenges. Attitudes emerge as a crucial mediator, bridging ethical and pricing factors to purchase intentions. These results underscore the importance of ethical branding, affordability strategies, and consumer-focused marketing in enhancing the appeal of vegan cosmetics within competitive markets. By addressing a significant gap in the literature, this research advances understanding of ethical consumerism and behavioural dynamics while providing actionable insights for marketers and policymakers to promote sustainable consumption in the beauty sector.

**Keywords:** Vegan cosmetics, ethical consumption, price sensitivity, consumer attitudes, purchase intention, cruelty-free products, green consumer behaviour.

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**Introduction**

Environmental awareness has significantly increased among consumers over the last four decades (Konuk et al., 2015). This heightened awareness is driven by extensive media coverage, growing pressures from environmental organizations, and the social impact of major environmental disasters (McIntosh, 1991). As a result, individual consumption patterns have shifted considerably, particularly concerning issues like pollution from industrial activities and meat production (Krause, 1993; Chang and Chen, 2013). Consequently, the ability of companies to promote environmentally friendly products and services and effectively communicate the sustainability of their production processes has become essential (Raggiotto et al., 2024). The concept of sustainability is no longer niche, as consumers are increasingly focusing on adopting clean, oriented, and sustainable products (Magano et al., 2022).

In light of these market changes and the rise of more sustainable markets, the concept of veganism and the development of the vegan industry have gained prominence. According to

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the Vegan Society, "Veganism is a way of living which seeks to exclude, as far as is possible and practicable, all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing, or any other purpose." Adopting a vegan lifestyle goes beyond dietary choices; it also involves steering clear of products made from animals, including items like leather shoes or cosmetics that have been tested on animals. It represents a lifestyle that has been growing each year (Miguel et al., 2020). Statista (2024) reports that India leads globally in the share of vegans, with eleven percent of the population identifying as vegan, and one-quarter following a vegetarian diet, compared to seven percent in the United Kingdom. The global vegan cosmetics market is projected to grow by 6.3 percent annually, reaching 20.8 billion U.S. dollars by 2025. Consistent with this trend, there has been a major shift towards consuming sustainable products, with many consumers demanding green, biological, ecological, and sustainable products in the food, clothing, and apparel industries (Aschemann-Witzel and Zielke, 2017). For instance, consumers are increasingly choosing organizations that avoid animal testing, are labeled as cruelty-free, and adopt sustainable sourcing practices (Grappe et al., 2021). This shift makes it evident that the vegan cosmetics market is gaining popularity in today's competitive market, with consumers ready to switch from traditional products to vegan alternatives, supporting the need for sustainable living.

Despite extensive literature on the formation of intentions to purchase vegan cosmetics products, several research gaps persist. While numerous studies have examined veganism and consumer behaviour towards vegan products in various industries, such as food (Miguel et al., 2020; Ma and Chang, 2022), clothing (Seo and Suh, 2019; Choi and Lee, 2021), and hospitality (Yu et al., 2024; Yu et al., 2023), few have focused specifically on the vegan cosmetic industry, particularly regarding the attitudes and purchase intentions of female consumers. Thereby, the study aims to address this gap by investigating the relationship between i) ethical consumption (EC), price sensitivity (PS) and purchase intention (PI) of female consumers toward vegan cosmetics, thereby filling the gap identified by Miguel et al. (2020). Additionally, ii) to explore the role of attitude toward the consumption of vegan cosmetics as a mediator. Previous studies have treated attitude as an independent variable (IV) (Miguel et al., 2020; Brouwer et al., 2022; Ma and Chang, 2022), but its mediating role between the IVs and the dependent variable (DV) has not been examined. Thus, this study aims to investigate the mediating role of attitude in this context.

Considering these identified gaps, the novelty of this study lies in examining the influence of EC, PS on PI towards female consumers of vegan cosmetics. Additionally, the study incorporates the mediating role of attitude between the IVs and DV.

The subsequent sections of this paper are organized as follows: a review of the relevant literature and development of the hypotheses, a detailed description of the research methodology, presentation and analysis of the findings, a conclusion summarizing the key insights, recommendations for future research, implications for policy, and a comprehensive bibliography.

## **Literature Review**

Numerous studies have explored various dimensions of green products, vegan cosmetic products, and consumer behaviour, with a particular focus on attitudes and purchase intentions. A plethora of research has been conducted in these fields by authors across the globe. To establish the foundation for the present study, some of the most relevant studies are reviewed and presented below to build the research framework.

*Ethical consumption, attitude towards consumption of vegan cosmetics and purchase intention of vegan cosmetics*

The marketing literature has provided numerous definitions of “ethical consumption.” For instance, Cronish (2013) defined it as consumption driven by values, norms, and ethics. Similarly, Davies & Gutshe (2015) and Guid et al. (2010) described ethical consumption as a conscious and deliberate decision-making process based on personal beliefs and values related to issues such as child labour, employee mistreatment, animal experimentation, and environmental degradation during the production and distribution of goods and services. Previous studies have categorized ethical consumption into three main dimensions: political, social, and environmental (Toti and Moulins, 2016). The social dimension focuses on solidarity, sharing, and the interests of others, exemplified through fair trade, the use of shared products, and purchases from small and local farmers. The political dimension emphasizes equality and fairness among all human beings, expressed through active consumer participation in public affairs. Finally, the environmental/ecological dimension reflects consumers' concerns for the environment and uncertainties about the future of human life on the planet, manifesting in preferences for simplicity, renewable energy, green products, and organic agriculture (Ghali, 2021).

Recent research has examined the impact of ethical consumption on consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions toward cruelty-free vegan products. For instance, Amalia and Darmawan (2023) demonstrated a significant connection between ethical considerations, attitudes, and purchase intentions for cruelty-free personal care products in Indonesia, with attitude emerging as a key predictor of purchase intent. Similarly, Djafarova et al. (2022) studied Generation Z's attitudes and behaviors through the lens of the Theory of Planned Behaviour, revealing that their ethical and environmental concerns are largely influenced by information from online and social media platforms. In another study, Miguel et al. (2020) found that consumers prioritize ethical issues such as animal welfare when considering vegan products, strongly opposing animal testing and cruelty. These studies collectively highlight the pivotal role of ethical considerations in guiding consumer behavior toward vegan products, aligning their purchasing decisions with deeply held values and moral beliefs. Building on this, the present study seeks to explore how ethical consumption impacts attitudes and purchase intentions toward vegan cosmetics, guiding marketers to create strategies that resonate with consumers' ethical and sustainability values.

*Price sensitivity, attitude towards consumption of vegan cosmetics and purchase intention of vegan cosmetics*

Price sensitivity, defined by Monroe (1973) as the degree to which price fluctuations influence consumers' perceptions and behaviors, and by Tellis (1988) as the responsiveness of demand to price changes, plays a pivotal role in shaping purchasing decisions. Marketers need to understand this concept to anticipate and influence consumer behavior effectively. For example, higher-income consumers generally exhibit lower price sensitivity, prioritizing quality over cost (Dodds et al., 1991), while lower-income consumers are more sensitive to price, often seeking discounts (Lichtenstein et al., 1993). Products perceived as unique or high-quality tend to show lower price sensitivity compared to generic items (Rao and Monroe, 1989). Numerous studies have examined the influence of price on consumer attitudes and behavior towards green products. Bahl and Chandra (2018) found that price sensitivity significantly impacts the attitude towards purchase intention of environmentally friendly goods more than other marketing mix variables. Drozdenko et al. (2011) revealed that consumers are willing to pay a premium for green products like MP3 players, solar panels, and water heaters. Similarly, Patnaik et al. (2021) demonstrated that green cosmetics' pricing positively influences

consumer attitudes, with many willing to pay more for assured quality. However, not all consumers are willing to pay a premium. Joung et al. (2014) noted that some consumers prefer lower-priced options, even for eco-friendly cosmetics, while Yadav and Pathak (2016) found that young consumers in a developing nation often hesitate to purchase green cosmetics due to their higher costs.

Building on the preceding discussion, this study seeks to explore how price sensitivity affects consumers' attitudes towards consumption of vegan cosmetics. By understanding this relationship, businesses can better grasp consumer behavior, refine their pricing strategies, and enhance the promotion of sustainable products. Addressing price sensitivity is essential for achieving greater market penetration, competitive advantage, and consumer support.

#### *Attitude towards consumption of vegan cosmetics and purchase intention of vegan cosmetics*

Attitude, a central psychological construct, represents an individual's preference or aversion toward a particular object, person, or idea. Ajzen (2014) defines it as a consistent predisposition to react favorably or unfavorably to a given object, while Eagly and Chaiken (1993) describe it as a psychological tendency reflected through evaluative responses. Allport (1935) emphasizes its influence on how individuals respond to related objects and situations. In consumer behavior, attitude plays a significant role in shaping purchase intentions, guiding decisions by directing consumers toward or away from specific products based on their evaluations. For instance, a positive attitude toward environmentally friendly products often results in stronger purchase intentions, as consumers' actions align with their values and beliefs about sustainability. Numerous studies have confirmed the link between attitude and purchase intention, consistently demonstrating that a favorable attitude toward a product or brand is a strong predictor of purchase intent (Ajzen, 1991; Paul et al., 2016; Yadav & Pathak, 2016). For example, Walia et al. (2019) found a significant relationship between consumer attitudes and purchase intentions for FMCG green products. This finding is consistent with Gadenne et al. (2011), who found a positive correlation between environmental attitudes and the intention to purchase energy-efficient products. However, Vermeir & Verbeke (2006) noted that while consumers expressed positive attitudes toward sustainability, these did not always translate into purchase intentions due to barriers such as price, availability, and trust issues.

Building on these insights, the present study investigates the role of attitude in influencing the consumption and purchase intention of vegan cosmetics. As a key factor, attitude shapes consumer intentions by aligning with personal values and ethical considerations, making it a critical driver of both purchase behavior and the acceptance of green products. Understanding this relationship provides valuable insights into how attitudes impact consumer decision-making, offering marketers a strategic advantage to effectively target the growing segment of conscious consumers. This approach can enhance product positioning and expand market share in the competitive beauty industry. Furthermore, the mediating role of attitude in the relationship between ethical consumption and price sensitivity remains underexplored. Addressing this gap, the study also aims to analyze attitude's mediating effect on these variables.

#### *Purchase intention of vegan cosmetics*

Purchase intention is a key concept in consumer behavior that reflects a consumer's likelihood or willingness to purchase a specific product or service. Ajzen (1991) defines it as "the individual's conscious plan to make an effort to purchase a brand," highlighting its deliberate nature. Similarly, Dodds et al. (1991) describes purchase intention as "the probability that a consumer will purchase a product," emphasizing its role in predicting consumer behavior.

Numerous studies have explored consumer behavior, underscoring its importance in understanding purchase intentions. For instance, Limbu and Ahamed (2023) identified price sensitivity, price consciousness, product sensory appeal, and product sensorial expectations as strong predictors of purchase intention for green cosmetics. Additionally, Dos et al. (2023) found that social media use and source credibility influenced the purchase intention of vegan cosmetic products. However, Gupta and Ogden (2009) observed that positive attitudes toward sustainability do not always lead to actual purchases, often due to concerns about product performance and skepticism regarding green claims. These findings indicate a gap between attitudes and purchase behavior, making it essential to study consumer habits that influence purchase intentions. Based on these insights, the present study aims to explore the factors influencing consumers' purchase intention of vegan cosmetics, which will help organizations better understand consumer behavior and tailor their marketing strategies accordingly.

### Research Methodology

This study employed an empirical approach, utilizing a quantitative survey to examine the purchasing intentions of Indian female consumers toward vegan cosmetics. Data were gathered between May and August 2024 using a convenience sampling method. A self-administered questionnaire, developed in English and based on a five-point Likert scale derived from established literature, was disseminated both online via Gmail and social media, as well as offline through personal interviews. The questionnaire was organized into three sections: the first section included screening questions to assess respondents' eligibility based on their awareness of vegan cosmetics and prior purchasing experience, excluding those who did not meet these criteria. The second section focused on the latent variables outlined in the study's conceptual framework, while the final section collected demographic information from the respondents.

### Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework as represented in fig 1. explores the interplay between ethical consumption, price sensitivity, attitudes, and purchase intentions in the context of vegan cosmetics. Ethical consumption, which reflects consumers' commitment to cruelty-free, sustainable, and eco-friendly practices, is proposed to positively influence attitudes toward vegan cosmetics. Price sensitivity, defined as consumers' responsiveness to product costs,

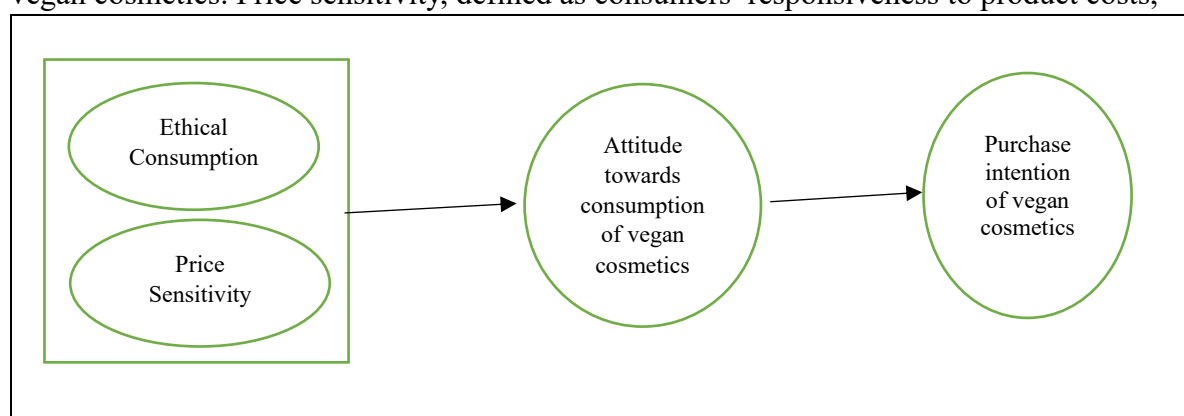


Fig 1. Conceptual Framework (Prepared by authors)

exerts a dual effect: perceived affordability fosters positive attitudes, whereas high costs may hinder them. Attitudes toward vegan cosmetics act as a critical mediating variable, connecting ethical values and price-related concerns to purchase intentions. Ultimately, purchase intention,

defined as the likelihood of purchasing vegan cosmetics, is shaped by the combined influence of these factors. This framework underscores the importance of aligning ethical branding with affordability to cultivate favorable attitudes and drive consumer behavior in the growing market for vegan cosmetics.

### **Hypothesis Development**

The hypothesis developed for the present study are as follows:

H1: Ethical consumption positively influences attitude towards consumption of vegan cosmetics

H2: Price sensitivity positively influences attitude towards consumption of vegan cosmetics

H3: Attitude towards consumption of vegan cosmetics positively affects purchase intention of vegan cosmetics

H4: Attitude mediates the relationship between ethical consumption and purchase intention of vegan cosmetics

H5: Attitude mediates the relationship between price sensitivity and purchase intention of vegan cosmetics.

### **Sample and Data Collection**

The present study employed a convenience sampling method to gather data from women with prior experience using vegan cosmetics. A structured questionnaire was designed to ensure consistency in responses and distributed among women in Kolkata. Out of the 180 questionnaires distributed, 143 were returned, yielding a response rate of approximately 79.4%. However, after thorough screening for accuracy and completeness, only 120 responses were deemed valid and suitable for analysis. The remaining 23 responses were excluded due to inconsistencies or missing data, ensuring the integrity and reliability of the dataset.

### **Measurement**

The questionnaire was developed using validated scales, translated and adapted from relevant literature (as detailed in Table 2), with all items measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The EC variable was assessed using scales from Toti and Moulins (2016) and Oe and Yamaoka (2022). The PS scale was adapted from Stock (2005), while the PT scale was sourced from Soto and John (2012) and Zarei and Mirzaei (2022). To measure attitudes toward vegan cosmetics consumption (AT), scales from Magano et al. (2022), Grappe et al. (2021), and Alaouir et al. (2019) were used. The purchase intention (PI) scale was adapted from Miguel et al. (2020) and Teng and Lu (2016), and the moderating variable brand trust (BT) was measured using scales from Delgado-Ballester et al. (2003) and Gozukara and Colakoglu (2016).

**Table 1. Summary of constructs, items, codes and sources**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Source</b>
<b>Ethical Consumption (EC)</b>	I buy fair trade vegan cosmetic products	EC1	Toti and Moulins, 2016
	I prefer buying vegan cosmetic products with an eco-label	EC2	
	I prefer to buy vegan cosmetic brands that highlight ecological or organic product	EC3	
	I buy vegan cosmetic products sold through social actions	EC4	
	I choose vegan cosmetic brands which look after the earth	EC5	Oe and Yamaoka, 2022
	I choose vegan cosmetic brands which behave and act ethically	EC6	
<b>Price Sensitivity (PS)</b>	I am price sensitive	PS1	Stock, 2005
	A minor price increase typically reduces my purchase volume for vegan cosmetics products	PS2	
	The price level of vegan cosmetics products is very important for me	PS3	
	I regularly compare the prices with the prices of alternative vegan cosmetics brands	PS4	
	I care a lot for low prices	PS5	
<b>Attitude towards consumption of vegan cosmetics (AT)</b>	I find cosmetic products interesting	AT1	Grappe et al., 2021; Magano et al., 2022
	I appreciate cosmetic products	AT2	
	I have a favorable attitude towards cosmetic products	AT3	
	I have a favorable attitude towards cosmetic products	AT4	
	I think it is important to buy cruelty-free cosmetic products	AT5	Alaouir et al., 2019; Magano et al., 2022
	I intentionally look for cruelty-free cosmetic products	AT6	
<b>Purchase intention of vegan cosmetics (PI)</b>	Purchasing cruelty-free cosmetic products to me is pleasant		
	I am happy to buy vegan cosmetic products	PT1	Teng and lu 2016; Miguel et al., 2020
	I hope to consume vegan cosmetic products	PT2	
	I would buy vegan cosmetic products	PT3	
	I plan to consume vegan cosmetic product	PT4	
	I intend to buy vegan cosmetic products in the next few days	PT5	

### Analysis And Findings

The reliability of the 22-item scale was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, a widely used measure of internal consistency. The analysis yielded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.856, which exceeds the threshold of 0.7 commonly considered acceptable for reliable scales (George & Mallery, 2003). This indicates that the items within the scale are highly consistent and collectively measure the intended constructs effectively. Additionally, the Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items was 0.878, further reinforcing the robustness of the scale. According to George and Mallery's guidelines, a Cronbach's Alpha value between 0.8 and 0.9 is considered "good," supporting the scale's validity for analyzing ethical consumption, price sensitivity, attitudes, and purchase intentions. These results demonstrate the suitability of the scale for further statistical analyses, ensuring reliability in capturing the constructs under investigation.

**Table 2.** Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.856	.878	22

To solve the hypothesis of the study, regression analysis was performed, the results of which are mentioned below:

H1: Ethical consumption positively influences attitude towards consumption of vegan cosmetics.

We have performed the regression analysis the results are presented in table 3 and 4. The results of the regression analysis for H1 reveals that ethical consumption significantly influences attitudes towards vegan cosmetics, with an  $R^2$  value of 0.774 (table 4), indicating that 77.4% of the variance in attitude is explained by the six ethical consumption factors. Among these, EC3 ( $\beta=0.707$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), EC5 ( $\beta=0.270$ ,  $p=0.001$ ), and EC6 ( $\beta=0.389$ ,  $p=0.001$ ) emerge as strong positive predictors, suggesting these aspects of ethical consumption resonate well with consumers and enhance their attitudes. Conversely, EC1 ( $\beta=-0.228$ ,  $p=0.001$ ) and EC4 ( $\beta=-0.216$ ,  $p=0.002$ ) show significant negative effects, possibly indicating concerns or barriers associated with these factors. EC2 ( $\beta=-0.026$ ,  $p=0.814$ ) has no significant influence. These findings highlight the complexity of ethical consumption's impact on attitudes, underscoring the need for marketers to emphasize positively perceived aspects while addressing potential concerns linked to negatively associated factors.

**Table 3.** Model summary of ethical consumption and attitude

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.886 <sup>a</sup>	.785	.774	1.82959	1.583
a. Predictors: (Constant), EC6, EC1, EC3, EC4, EC5, EC2					
b. Dependent Variable: Attitude					



**Table 4. Coefficient Table of Ethical Consumption and Attitude**

Coefficients								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3.097	0.846		3.660	0.000		
	EC1	-1.216	0.356	-0.228	-3.419	0.001	0.427	2.343
	EC2	-0.126	0.533	-0.026	-0.236	0.814	0.153	6.526
	EC3	3.276	0.301	0.707	10.891	0.000	0.451	2.216
	EC4	-1.167	0.365	-0.216	-3.201	0.002	0.417	2.397
	EC5	1.729	0.512	0.270	3.379	0.001	0.297	3.364
	EC6	2.001	0.572	0.389	3.499	0.001	0.154	6.483

a. Dependent Variable: Attitude

H2: Price sensitivity positively influences attitude towards consumption of vegan cosmetics

The model in Table 5 explains 54.5% of the variance in attitude ( $R^2 = 0.545$ ), reflecting moderate explanatory power. This suggests that the model captures a significant portion of the variability in consumer attitudes toward vegan cosmetics. In Table 6, the regression analysis shows mixed support for hypothesis H2, which suggests that price sensitivity positively influences attitudes toward the consumption of vegan cosmetics. Specifically, PS1 ( $\beta = 0.963$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and PS2 ( $\beta = 0.397$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) exhibit significant positive effects on attitudes, indicating that consumers who view vegan cosmetics as offering value for money or affordability are more likely to form favorable attitudes. In contrast, PS3 ( $\beta = -0.180$ ,  $p = 0.275$ ) and PS4 ( $\beta = 0.090$ ,  $p = 0.339$ ) do not have significant relationships with attitudes. Additionally, PS5 ( $\beta = -0.836$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) shows a significant negative effect, suggesting that concerns about perceived price premiums may reduce positive attitudes. These results highlight the nuanced role of price sensitivity, where some factors enhance attitudes while others may hinder them.

**Table 5. Model summary of price sensitivity and attitude**

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.738 <sup>a</sup>	.545	.525	2.65166	1.479
a. Predictors: (Constant), PS5, PS4, PS2, PS1, PS3					
b. Dependent Variable: Attitude					

**Table 6. Coefficient Table of Price Sensitivity and Attitude**

Coefficients								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	4.338	1.291		3.360	.001		
	PS1	4.660	.767	.963	6.078	.000	.159	6.281
	PS2	1.756	.427	.397	4.109	.000	.428	2.337
	PS3	-1.006	.917	-.180	-1.096	.275	.148	6.748
	PS4	.239	.249	.090	.961	.339	.451	2.219
	PS5	-2.831	.512	-.836	-5.533	.000	.175	5.709
a. Dependent Variable: Attitude								

H3: Attitude towards consumption of vegan cosmetics positively affects purchase intention of vegan cosmetics

The descriptive statistics revealed a moderate level of purchase intention ( $M = 8.18$ ,  $SD = 2.88$ ) among participants, with variation in the mean scores for the attitude variables (AT1 to AT6), ranging from 1.66 (AT5) to 2.59 (AT6). Correlation analysis identified significant positive relationships between purchase intention and the attitude variables AT5 ( $r = 0.83$ ) and AT3 ( $r = 0.77$ ), indicating that these attitude dimensions are strong predictors of purchase intention. The regression model (table 7) was highly significant ( $F(6, 113) = 73.573$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and explained 79.6% of the variance in purchase intention ( $R^2 = 0.796$ ). Among the predictors, as shown in table 8, AT5 ( $B = 2.724$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and AT3 ( $B = 1.369$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) emerged as the most significant, while AT1, AT4, and AT6 exhibited weaker or non-significant effects. Additionally, multicollinearity diagnostics indicated high Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for AT1 (VIF = 14.932) and AT4 (VIF = 15.738), suggesting potential collinearity issues. However, residual analysis showed no significant bias, confirming that the model's assumptions were met and the results remain reliable.

**Table 7. Model Summary of Attitude and Purchase Intention**

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.892 <sup>a</sup>	.796	.785	1.33294	1.376
a. Predictors: (Constant), AT6, AT5, AT3, AT1, AT2, AT4					
b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention					

**Table 8. Coefficient Table of Attitude and Purchase Intention**

Coefficients								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.504	.595		.848	.398		
	AT1	-.523	.449	-.191	-1.164	.247	.067	14.932
	AT2	.573	.350	.229	1.638	.104	.092	10.866
	AT3	1.369	.356	.328	3.851	.000	.248	4.033
	AT4	.003	.471	.001	.006	.995	.064	15.738
	AT5	2.724	.318	.643	8.567	.000	.320	3.128
	AT6	-.113	.291	-.030	-.390	.697	.295	3.385

a. Dependent Variable: PurchaseIntention

H4: Attitude mediates the relationship between ethical consumption and purchase intention of vegan cosmetics and,

H5: Attitude mediates the relationship between price sensitivity and purchase intention of vegan cosmetics

To test the fourth and fifth objectives, we applied Baron and Kenny's mediation framework, which involves three key steps of regression analysis to examine the mediating role of Attitude towards consumption in the relationships between Ethical Consumption and Purchase Intention (H4), and Price Sensitivity and Purchase Intention (H5).

**Step 1** tested the direct effects of Ethical Consumption and Price Sensitivity on Purchase Intention. The results showed significant positive relationships, with Ethical Consumption explaining  $R^2 = 0.869$  ( $p < 0.05$ ) and Price Sensitivity explaining  $R^2 = 0.723$  ( $p < 0.05$ ), confirming that both factors directly influence purchase intentions. Moreover, Table 9 displayed below, shows the coefficients for the ethical consumption and purchase intention.

**Table 9. Coefficient table of ethical consumption and purchase intention**

Coefficients								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-.611	.494		-1.238	.218		
	EC1	-.394	.208	-.099	-1.896	.060	.427	2.343
	EC2	2.198	.311	.614	7.071	.000	.153	6.526
	EC3	-1.189	.175	-.343	-6.773	.000	.451	2.216
	EC4	.827	.213	.205	3.888	.000	.417	2.397
	EC5	1.472	.299	.308	4.931	.000	.297	3.364
	EC6	1.446	.334	.375	4.334	.000	.154	6.483

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

In terms of beta values, specific components of Ethical Consumption demonstrated varying effects: EC2 (preference for eco-labeled products) had a strong positive effect ( $\beta = 0.614$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), while EC5 (choosing brands that care for the Earth) also significantly influenced Purchase Intention ( $\beta = 0.308$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Conversely, EC3 (highlighting ecological or organic aspects) showed a significant negative effect ( $\beta = -0.343$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and EC1 (buying fair trade vegan products) was not significant ( $\beta = -0.099$ ,  $p = 0.060$ ).

Similarly, Table 10 shows the components of Price Sensitivity demonstrated mixed effects. PS2 (importance of price level) positively influenced Purchase Intention ( $\beta = 0.433$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), while PS1 (price sensitivity) and PS5 (concern for high prices) had negative effects, with  $\beta = -0.788$  and  $\beta = -1.321$  ( $p < 0.001$ ), respectively.

**Table 10. Coefficient table of price sensitivity and purchase intention**

Coefficients								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Toleranc e	VIF
1	(Constant)	5.324	.753		7.071	.000		
	PS1	-2.855	.447	-.788	-6.384	.000	.159	6.281
	PS2	1.431	.249	.433	5.743	.000	.428	2.337
	PS3	6.243	.535	1.493	11.667	.000	.148	6.748
	PS4	.268	.145	.135	1.845	.068	.451	2.219
	PS5	-3.350	.298	-1.321	-11.224	.000	.175	5.709

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

**Step 2** tested whether Ethical Consumption and Price Sensitivity significantly predict Attitude towards consumption. The results revealed that both variables had a significant effect: Ethical Consumption predicted Attitude with  $R^2 = 0.785$  ( $p < 0.05$ ), and Price Sensitivity predicted Attitude with  $R^2 = 0.545$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). Regarding beta values, as shown previously in table 4, EC3 (highlighting ecological or organic aspects) was the strongest positive predictor of Attitude ( $\beta = 0.707$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), followed by EC6 (brands behaving ethically,  $\beta = 0.389$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and EC5 (brands caring for the Earth,  $\beta = 0.270$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). However, EC2 (preference for eco-labeled products) did not significantly influence Attitude ( $\beta = -0.026$ ,  $p = 0.814$ ).

For Price Sensitivity, as shown previously in table 6, PS1 (price sensitivity) had the strongest positive effect on Attitude ( $\beta = 0.963$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), while PS5 (concern for high prices) had a significant negative effect ( $\beta = -0.836$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). PS3 (importance of price) did not significantly influence Attitude ( $\beta = -0.180$ ,  $p = 0.275$ ).

**Step 3** assessed the combined effect of Ethical Consumption and Price Sensitivity along with Attitude on Purchase Intention. When Attitude was included, it remained a significant predictor of Purchase Intention ( $p < 0.05$ ), while the direct effects of both Ethical Consumption and Price Sensitivity were reduced, indicating partial mediation. For Ethical Consumption, the inclusion of Attitude reduced the effects of EC5 ( $\beta = 0.308$ ) and EC6 ( $\beta = 0.375$ ), but Attitude remained significant in predicting Purchase Intention ( $p < 0.05$ ). Similarly, for Price Sensitivity, the inclusion of Attitude reduced the effects of PS2 ( $\beta = 0.433$ ) and PS3 ( $\beta = 1.493$ ), confirming partial mediation.

In conclusion, the results support partial mediation, with Attitude towards consumption mediating the relationships between both Ethical Consumption and Price Sensitivity on

Purchase Intention. However, some factors, such as EC2 (preference for eco-labeled products) and PS3 (importance of price), did not significantly influence Attitude, suggesting these aspects are less critical in shaping consumer attitudes towards vegan cosmetics.

**Key findings of the study are as follows:**

H1 is accepted, as Ethical Consumption is found to significantly predict Attitude ( $R^2 = 0.785$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), with EC3 ( $\beta = 0.707$ ), EC5 ( $\beta = 0.270$ ), and EC6 ( $\beta = 0.389$ ) serving as positive predictors, while EC1 ( $\beta = -0.228$ ) and EC4 ( $\beta = -0.216$ ) exhibit negative effects. EC2 ( $\beta = -0.026$ ) does not have a significant influence. Previous research has consistently recognized ethical consumption as a crucial predictor of attitudes toward green products, with factors such as environmental awareness and ecological branding positively influencing consumer attitudes (Joshi & Rahman, 2015). Conversely, studies have also shown that negative perceptions or misalignments with ethical values can weaken positive attitudes toward these products (Carrington et al., 2010).

H2 is partially accepted, as Price Sensitivity is found to influence Attitude ( $R^2 = 0.545$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), with PS1 ( $\beta = 0.963$ ) and PS2 ( $\beta = 0.397$ ) serving as positive predictors, while PS5 ( $\beta = -0.836$ ) shows a negative impact, and PS3 ( $\beta = -0.180$ ) and PS4 ( $\beta = 0.090$ ) are not significant. Price sensitivity has long been identified as a key factor in shaping consumer attitudes, where affordability tends to foster more positive attitudes, while higher prices present barriers to adoption (Schuitema & De Groot, 2015). However, the role of perceived value is crucial, as it can sometimes mitigate the negative effects of price, demonstrating that consumers weigh both cost and value when forming their attitudes (Campbell, 1999).

H3 is accepted, as Attitude is found to significantly predict Purchase Intention ( $R^2 = 0.796$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), with AT5 ( $\beta = 0.643$ ) and AT3 ( $\beta = 0.328$ ) identified as the strongest predictors. This result aligns with previous research, which consistently demonstrates that attitudes play a crucial role in influencing purchase intentions for green products. Positive attitudes help bridge the gap between ethical values and consumer purchasing decisions, driving individuals toward sustainable choices (Chan & Lau, 2001).

H4 and H5 are partially supported, as Attitude acts as a mediator in the relationships between Ethical Consumption and Purchase Intention ( $R^2 = 0.869$ ) and Price Sensitivity and Purchase Intention ( $R^2 = 0.723$ ). The inclusion of Attitude diminishes the direct effects of EC5 ( $\beta = 0.308$ ) and PS2 ( $\beta = 0.433$ ), providing evidence of partial mediation, while EC2 and PS3 remain statistically non-significant. This finding aligns with previous research, which highlights the mediating role of attitudes in linking ethical consumption, price sensitivity, and purchase intentions (Paul et al., 2016). By mitigating direct effects, attitudes offer a more comprehensive perspective on consumer decision-making, underscoring their critical influence in the behavioral process.

**Conclusion**

This study contributes to the understanding of the factors influencing female consumers' purchase intentions for vegan cosmetics, focusing on the roles of ethical consumption, price sensitivity, and attitudes as mediators. The findings reveal that ethical consumption significantly shapes attitudes, with factors like ecological branding and brand ethics serving as positive predictors of consumer perceptions (Gupta & Ogden, 2009). Price sensitivity, however, displayed mixed effects; perceived value enhanced attitudes, while high costs deterred positive perceptions, highlighting the importance of pricing strategies in the decision-making process for sustainable products. Furthermore, attitudes emerged as a critical mediator,

bridging the relationship between ethical consumption, price-related concerns, and purchase intentions (Schlegelmilch et al., 1996; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). This underscores the growing demand for cruelty-free, eco-conscious products driven by consumers' ethical values and affordability perceptions. These findings align with previous research that emphasizes the role of ethical consumption in shaping purchase behavior (Gupta & Ogden, 2009), as well as the impact of price sensitivity on sustainable purchasing decisions. Additionally, the mediating role of attitudes in the consumer decision-making process is consistent with studies on green products and consumer behavior (Schlegelmilch et al., 1996; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). This highlights the need for brands to align their strategies with consumers' ethical values, ensuring affordability and building trust to meet the rising demand for environmentally friendly and cruelty-free products.

### **Limitations and Future Scope of The Study**

While this research provides valuable insights, it opens avenues for further exploration:

**Diverse Demographics:** Extending the study to different demographic groups, including male consumers and varied income segments, can provide a holistic understanding of the market.

**Cross-Cultural Analysis:** Investigating purchase intentions across different countries will highlight cultural variations in ethical consumption and price sensitivity.

**Longitudinal Studies:** Assessing changes in consumer attitudes and behaviors over time can help understand the evolving dynamics of the vegan cosmetics market.

**Impact of Marketing Strategies:** Exploring the effectiveness of targeted marketing campaigns, such as eco-labeling or influencer endorsements, on consumer behavior.

**Barriers to Adoption:** Further study on why positive attitudes may not always translate into purchase intentions, focusing on trust and product availability.

### **Policy Implications**

The study offers several implications for policymakers and marketers:

**Regulatory Frameworks:** Governments should introduce and enforce stricter regulations for eco-labeling, ensuring transparency and trust among consumers regarding cruelty-free and vegan claims.

**Subsidies and Incentives:** To reduce price sensitivity barriers, subsidies for sustainable production and tax benefits for cruelty-free brands can promote affordability and market growth.

**Consumer Education:** Awareness campaigns emphasizing the ethical and environmental benefits of vegan cosmetics can align consumer values with purchase behavior.

**Support for Startups:** Financial and logistical support for emerging cruelty-free brands can foster innovation and competition in the market.

**Green Certifications:** Introducing globally recognized certifications can boost consumer confidence and facilitate cross-border trade of vegan cosmetics.

By addressing these areas, the industry and policymakers can collaboratively foster a more sustainable and inclusive market for vegan cosmetics.

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