Consumers' Attitude towards the Cruelty-Free Label on Cosmetic and Skincare Products and Its Influence on Purchase Intention

Elisa Christianti Wuisan[1], Agustinus Februadi[1]

[1]Department of Business Administration, Politeknik Negeri Bandung, Indonesia
Correspondence author: elisa.christianti.mpem418@polban.ac.id

ABSTRACT:

Many brands, especially in Indonesia, are starting to apply cruelty-free labels on their products currently. However, the absence of legal certainty, lack of consumers' awareness, and the number of companies who still use animal testing methods make this research important. Therefore, this study aims to determine consumers' attitudes toward cruelty-free labels on cosmetics products and their effects on purchase intention. In determining the sample, this study uses a non-probability sampling method. In addition, this study uses environmental knowledge and moral obligation variables as determinants of attitude and purchase intention in cruelty-free cosmetics products as the dependent variables. Questionnaires were distributed to 211 participants, starting from the age of 17 years old in Indonesia, specifically in DKI Jakarta and West Java areas. The results show a positive and significant influence on the determinant variable of attitude which in turn affects purchase intention. Based on the analysis that has been done, the respondents have a positive attitude toward cruelty-free cosmetics products.

1. INTRODUCTION

The cruelty-free label is a movement that international organizations continue to carry out to stop the practice of testing on animals. As a result, many brands, especially in Indonesia, are becoming aware of the importance of putting cruelty-free labels on their products. However, the lack of attention from a legal point of view causes companies not to feel obligated to use the label (Faradila, 2021). Another fact is that cosmetics brands still use the animal testing method (Wang et al., 2020). Moreover, it is supported by the low awareness of the Indonesian people about the cruelty-free label (Sinaga, 2018). Therefore, companies that still use animal testing have contributed to waste and carbon emissions to the earth (Acil, 2021).

The cruelty-free label indicates that the product is not tested on animals. Unfortunately, the cruelty-free term is different in each country as no law regulates the definition (Cadete, 2021). In addition, based on a survey conducted by CNN Indonesia to university students and college students in big cities regarding their knowledge and concern for the non-animal testing label, they do not understand and do not care about the label (Sinaga, 2018). This shows that the public are lack attention and awareness toward cruelty-free labels on products they purchase.

On the other hand, there are still brands that use the animal testing method because it can maintain the company's reputation and product safety for humans (Wang et al., 2020). The animal testing method ensures the safety of the product and does not cause allergic reactions in consumers (Sreedhar et al., 2020). Although many people think that the animal testing method is harmless, the practice of animal testing also has negative impacts, both on the environment and the animals.

The animal testing method is related to the increasing number of animal deaths resulting from these trials. The United States uses 20 million animals for research and is the country with the most animal testing in the world (Statista, 2021). Therefore, people for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) also voice their support for purchasing cruelty-free products to save animals from cruel testing, such as poisoning, purposely blinding, and being killed every year (Springirth, 2016). Furthermore, the waste generated from these trials in the form of animal carcasses, cages, and syringes has caused environmental problems because it includes the disposal of B3 waste (Ami, 2021).

Based on the previously described data regarding the negative impact of testing on animals in environmental pollution and cruel acts against animals, it is important to understand more about consumers' attitudes toward cruelty-free labels and their effects on consumers' purchase intention. Therefore, this study aims to determine the influence of the environmental knowledge and moral obligation variables on consumers' attitudes towards purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics products and the effect of attitude towards consumers' purchase intention of cruelty-free cosmetics products.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Cruelty-free

Cruelty-free labels on cosmetic and skin care products signify that the product is not using animal testing. A product is said to be cruelty-free if it contains raw materials obtained without harming animals and not tested on animals. Furthermore, these products can be registered with authorized organizations which oversee cosmetic products, particularly

cruelty-free labeling, such as PETA, Choose Cruelty-Free, Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics, and Cruelty-Free International (Paramitha, 2017).

Cosmetic products usually contain chemicals that cause the practice of animal testing is still carried out to ensure the product is safe for humans, which in turn causes air pollution due to burning animal carcasses and laboratory equipment. Therefore, the cosmetic industry must make innovations that increase sustainability by considering consumer safety and applicable regulations. If they ensure the cosmetic products are manufactured without involving any animals and using other experimental alternatives, the company has positively impacted the environment (Bom et al., 2019; Capdevila et al., 2019; Groff et al., 2014).

2.2 Environmental Knowledge

Environmental issues such as climate change, animal welfare, pollution, deforestation, and biodiversity loss are now widely discussed, thus it creates an ecological movement. It also influences consumers' behavior and their awareness of the environment (Rawof, 2021). Previous studies show that environmental knowledge significantly affects consumers' attitudes in purchasing behavior toward green cosmetics products (Malik & Singhal, 2017; Shimul et al., 2021). Therefore, this hypothesis is made:

H_1: Environmental knowledge significantly influences attitude towards purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics products.

2.3   Moral Obligation

Ethical consumption is generally defined as consumers' behavior in making purchases and using products that are not only based on value, but also moral factors. Moral factors relate to what is good and bad by considering other things, such as production conditions and how they feel after using the product (Andreevna, 2021). For this reason, cruelty-free products are deemed to be able to increase product sales because they can trigger consumers' morale (Sheehan & Lee, 2014). Furthermore, previous research shows a significant and positive relationship between moral obligation and attitude (Barbarossa et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2015). Therefore, hypothesis 2 is developed:

H_2: Moral obligation significantly influences attitude towards purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics products.

2.4 Attitude towards purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics products.

Understanding consumers' attitudes and behavior has a very important role in providing better handling of the market and consumers (Miguel et al., 2020). Attitude formation results from the attributes associated with behavior and how a person evaluates how positive or negative these attributes are (Çoker & Linden, 2020). Previous studies said there was a positive influence between Attitude and Purchase Intention on green cosmetics products (Askadilla & Krisjanti, 2017; Hsu et al., 2017; Pop et al., 2020). Thus, consumers' attitude is assumed to influence consumers' purchase intention for cruelty-free products. Therefore, this hypothesis is made:

H_2: Attitude significantly influences Purchase Intention.

3.   METHODS

The sampling technique in this study used judgment sampling to distribute online questionnaires. This technique is included in the category of non-probability sampling. Questionnaires were distributed to 211 participants starting from the age of 17 years old in

Indonesia, specifically in DKI Jakarta and West Java areas. In addition, the questionnaire in this study was made based on indicators of each variable adopted from previous studies (Alaouir et al., 2019; Cadete, 2021; Pülm, 2021). Online questionnaires were distributed using Google Forms from January 2022 until March 2022. The data were analyzed using SPSS and SMART PLS software.

Furthermore, the model below shows the relationship between environmental knowledge and moral obligation on attitude, and the effect of attitude on purchase Intention.
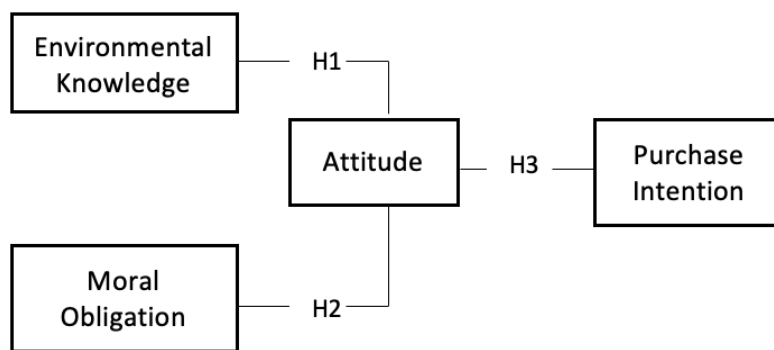

Figure 1. Conceptual Model

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
4.1. Respondent Characteristics

The demographic information from this study is displayed in Table 1. Five demographic information includes gender, age, education level, occupation, and income.

Table 1. Respondents' Profile

Characteristic	Customer The Body Shop	
	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	12	5,7%
Female	199	94,3%
Age		
17-25 years old	177	83,9%
25-30 years old	28	13,3%
30-35 years old	5	2,4%
>35 years old	1	0,5%
Level of Education		
Senior High School	95	45,0%
Diploma	29	13,7%
Bachelor	82	38,9%
Master	5	2,4%

Table 1. Respondents' Profile (continue)

Characteristic	Customer The Body Shop	
	Frequency	%
Occupation		
Student	131	62,1%
Entrepreneur	20	9,5%
Government Employees	51	24,2%
Housewife	4	1,9%
Other	5	2,4%
Income		
< IDR. 1.000.000	76	36,0%
IDR. 1.000.000 - IDR. 3.500.000	67	31,8%
IDR. 3.500.000 - IDR. 6.000.000	49	23,2%
> IDR. 6.000.000	19	9,0%

4.1. Validity and Reliability

The questionnaires that have been distributed are then processed and analyzed using validity and reliability. The result of validity and reliability is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Validity and Reliability Result

Construct	Loading	Cronbach Alpha
Attitude		**0,874**
ATT1	0,840	
ATT2	0,887	
ATT3	0,788	
ATT4	0,893	
Environmental Knowledge		**0,736**
EK2	0,571	
EK3	0,843	
EK4	0,652	
EK5	0,666	
EK6	0,716	
Moral Obligation		**0,764**
MO1	0,897	
MO2	0,656	
MO3	0,902	
Purchase Intention		**0,912**
PI1	0,842	
PI2	0,886	
PI3	0,887	
PI4	0,834	
PI5	0,847	

There are test results on Loading and Cronbach's Alpha, which were conducted to determine the quality of constructs and items in the study (Ab Hamid et al., 2017). Loading with a low but significant value below 0.5 indicates that the item should be considered for deletion unless there is another firm support (Hair et al., 2016). All items in this study have met the requirements and have good results. Furthermore, Cronbach's Alpha value on all constructs is >0.60.

Furthermore, the heterotrait monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) test must have a value below 0.90 (Henseler et al., 2015). Following the table below, the results of HTMT in this study have met the established criteria. Therefore, it can be concluded that all constructs have valid results. The results of HTMT can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. HTMT Result

Construct	ATT	EK	MO	PBC	PI	SN
ATT						
EK	0,647					
MO	0,849	0,781				
PBC	0,620	0,512	0,567			
PI	0,748	0,582	0,733	0,686		
SN	0,477	0,535	0,543	0,366	0,532	

4.3. Path Coefficients

In evaluating the Path Coefficients, an analysis was carried out, taking into account the strength and significance of the hypothesized relationships in each construct (Sarstedt et al., 2021). Each hypothesis is tested using the calculation of p-values associated with path coefficients. If the p-values are below a predetermined threshold, it can be said that the hypothesis is accepted (Kock, 2018). In addition, a negative path coefficient means that the hypothesis is rejected or not significant (Hair et al., 2016). Then, each hypothesis is tested using p-values related to the path coefficient, which can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. Path Coefficients

Path	ß	T-Value	P Values
ATT -> PI	0,408	6,240	0,000
EK -> ATT	0,213	3,590	0,000
MO -> ATT	0,578	8,963	0,000

* All significant at p < ,000

According to Table 3, all variables have a positive and significant direct influence. The direct effect of attitude on purchase intention (β = 0.408; p < 0.05) produced positive and significant results. Furthermore, there was a direct influence of environmental knowledge on attitude (β = 0.213; p < 0.05), moral obligation on attitude (β = 0.578; p < 0.05).

The indirect effect of environmental knowledge and moral obligations variables on purchase intention is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Indirect Effect

	ß of Indirect Effect		
Construct	**Effect**	**ATT**	**PI**
Environmental Knowledge	Direct	0,213	
	Indirect		0,087
	Total		0,300
Moral Obligation	Direct	0,578	
	Indirect		0,236
	Total		0,814
All significant at p < ,000			

Based on the results obtained, the indirect effect of moral obligation on purchase intention has the highest coefficient (β = 0.236). Another consequence of the indirect effect is shown in environmental knowledge on purchase intention with a coefficient value (β = 0.087). Meanwhile, the smallest total influence value is found in the relationship between environmental knowledge and purchase intention (β = 0.300).

5. DISCUSSION

This research involves the variables of environmental knowledge, moral obligation, and attitude to the purchase intention of The Body Shop consumers on cruelty-free cosmetics products. In addition, this study provides cruelty-free cosmetics industries about consumers' behavior in recognizing cruelty-free labels to increase awareness of the importance of these labels.

Based on the first research question, the analysis results of the effect of environmental knowledge on consumers' attitudes toward cruelty-free cosmetics products show positive and significant results. Previous research from Shimul et al. (2021) confirmed a positive impact on the relationship between consumers' environmental knowledge and their attitudes. This result is supported by previous research, which ensures that the public is aware of the impact of animal testing practices on the environment and their attitude toward animal testing in general (Alaouir et al., 2019). In addition, based on research conducted by Malik & Singhal (2017), public attitude on matters related to environmental issues is the main factor in why they buy environmentally friendly products. This research contradicts the analysis results in this study, where the main factor is that consumers of The Body Shop buy cruelty-free cosmetics products based on their moral feelings towards animals because they have experienced cruelty. Therefore, companies are advised to create and build information about the importance of these products related to environmental issues to generate consumers' knowledge (Alaouir et al., 2019).

Meanwhile, the moral obligation has a positive and significant influence on the attitudes of The Body Shop consumers and non-consumers of The Body Shop in purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics products. As explained in the previous paragraph, the moral obligation has the most significant influence on buying cruelty-free cosmetic products. (Barbarossa et al., 2015) found a positive effect on the relationship between moral obligation and consumer attitudes. The findings obtained by Zhang et al. (2015) stated that moral obligation positively affects attitudes. In addition, the moral obligation of consumers plays the most significant role in determining their attitude towards certain products. In this case, companies are advised to

emphasize the moral motivation of individuals in promoting products that have environmentally friendly characteristics.

The study results show that attitude has a positive and significant influence on the consumers' purchase intention of The Body Shop in purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics products. The results of this study support previous research, which showed a significant and positive relationship between attitudes and consumers' purchase intentions (Askadilla & Krisjanti, 2017). This variable was found to be the variable that has the most significant influence on Purchase Intention. In line with research from Hsu et al. (2017), which also confirms that consumers' attitudes have a significant and positive effect on their purchase intentions. To increase positive attitudes towards consumers' purchase intentions, marketers can use communication channels, such as the internet, television, broadcasting, magazines, or leaflets, as a medium to send messages about the products offered. Based on Pop et al. (2020), attitudes have a positive effect on consumers' purchase intentions for green cosmetic products. It means that consumers' positive attitudes toward green cosmetic products will generate their purchase intention in buying these products. Companies are advised to develop their messages on social media platforms regarding the environmental benefits they get to increase consumers' positive attitudes toward buying green cosmetic products.

In conclusion, there are three research questions from this study. To answer the first research question, the study indicates that environmental knowledge positively influences consumer attitudes toward cruelty-free cosmetics products. Based on the second research question, it can be said that moral obligation positively significantly affects consumers' attitude regarding cruelty-free cosmetics products. Third, attitude positively and significantly influences consumers' purchase intentions. It means that if consumers' environmental knowledge and moral obligation increase, their attitudes towards cruelty-free cosmetics products will also increase, affecting their purchase intention.

This study has several limitations that need to be improved and is expected to continue to be developed in further research in the future. First, this research is only limited by the variables of environmental knowledge and moral obligation variables as determinants of attitude and purchase intention in cruelty-free cosmetics as the dependent variables. Therefore, further research is suggested to expand other variables to measure consumers' purchase intention in cruelty-free cosmetics products, such as price considerations, customer trust in labels, and others. Second, most of the respondents have an income of fewer than one million rupiahs. However, this is inversely proportional to The Body Shop as a cosmetic brand with premium prices. Therefore, further research is expected to focus on consumers who are the brand's target market.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

7. REFERENCES

Ab Hamid, M. R., Sami, W., & Mohmad Sidek, M. H. (2017). Discriminant Validity Assessment: Use of Fornell & Larcker Criterion versus HTMT Criterion. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, *890*(1). https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/890/1/012163

Acil, D. (2021). *Inilah Pentingnya Memiliki Produk Kecantikan Cruelty-Free!* Female Daily. https://editorial.femaledaily.com/blog/2021/04/23/inilah-pentingnya-memiliki-

produk-kecantikan-cruelty-free

Alaouir, T., Gustavsson, R., & Schmidt, N. (2019). Factors Driving Purchase Intention for Cruelty-free Cosmetics : a Study of Female Millennials in Jönköping, Sweden. In *Jonkoping University*. http://hj.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1320983/FULLTEXT01.pdf%0Ahttp://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:hj:diva-44134

Ami, E. (2021). *5 Alasan Penting Memilih Produk Berlabel Cruelty-free*. IDN Times.

Andreevna, K. V. (2021). *Influence of Sociocultural Factors on Cruelty-free Consumption in the Russian Beauty Market*. St. Petersburg University.

Askadilla, W. L., & Krisjanti, M. N. (2017). Understanding Indonesian Green Consumer Behavior on Cosmetic Products: Theory of Planned Behavior Model. *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, *15*(2).

Barbarossa, C., Beckmann, S. C., De Pelsmacker, P., Moons, I., & Gwozdz, W. (2015). a Self-identity based Model of Electric Car Adoption Intention: Across-cultural Comparative Study. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *42*, 149–160. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2015.04.001

Bom, S., Jorge, J., Ribeiro, H. M., & Marto, J. (2019). A step forward on sustainability in the cosmetics industry: A review. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *225*, 270–290. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2019.03.255

Cadete, B. (2021). *How Cruelty-free Logos Influence Consumers' Purchase Intention: the Effects of Brand Image Logo Awareness and Moral Obligation* [Universidade Católica Portuguesa]. https://repositorio.ucp.pt/handle/10400.14/34753

Capdevila, T., Lahr, F., Lukačević, L., Marčetić, N., & Spinu, N. (2019). *Do We Really Need Animal Testing to Keep Us Safe ?*

Çoker, E. N., & Linden, S. van der. (2020). Fleshing out the Theory of Planned of Behavior: Meat Consumption as an Environmentally significant Behavior. *Current Psychology*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-019-00593-3

Faradila, S. N. (2021). *Produk Skincare Aman Gak Sih Tanpa Diuji ke Hewan?* Zenius.Net. https://www.zenius.net/blog/produk-skincare-aman

Groff, K., Bachli, E., Lansdowne, M., & Capaldo, T. (2014). Review of Evidence of Environmental Impacts of Animal Research and Testing. *Environments*, *1*(1), 14–30. https://doi.org/10.3390/environments1010014

Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2016). *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)* (2nd ed). Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks.

Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). a New Criterion for Assessing Discriminant Validity in Variance-based Structural Equation Modeling. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-014-0403-8

Hsu, C. L., Chang, C. Y., & Yansritakul, C. (2017). Exploring Purchase Intention of Green Skincare Products Using the Theory of Planned Behavior: Testing the Moderating Effects of Country of Origin and Price Sensitivity. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *34*, 145–152. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2016.10.006

Kock, N. (2018). Should Bootstrapping Be Used in Pls-sem? Toward Stable P-value Calculation Methods. *Journal of Applied Structural Equation Modeling*, *2*(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.47263/JASEM.2(1)02

Malik, C., & Singhal, N. (2017). Consumer Environmental Attitude and Willingness to Purchase Environmentally Friendly Products: An SEM Approach. *Vision: The Journal of Business Perspective*, *21*(2), 152–161. https://doi.org/10.1177/0972262917700991

Miguel, I., Coelho, A., & Bairrada, C. M. (2020). Modelling Attitude towards Consumption of Vegan Products. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, *13*(1), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.3390/su13010009

Paramitha, N. (2017). *Apa beda Label Cruelty Free dan No Animal Testing? Kalau Leaping Bunny dan Vegan? Yuk, cari tahu di sini*. Beauty Journal by Sociolla. https://www.soco.id/post/beauty/5c1bc2203ad3fa7d5e608705/label-cruelty-free-no-animal-testing

Pop, R. A., Saplacan, Z., & Alt, M. A. (2020). Social Media Goes Green-The Impact of Social Media on Green Cosmetics Purchase Motivation and Intention. *Information*, *11*(9). https://doi.org/10.3390/INFO11090447

Pülm, C. (2021). *Purchase intention of cruelty-free cosmetics: The effects of brand type and cruelty-free labels* (Issue June). Universidade Católica Portuguesa.

Rawof, W. (2021). *Ethical and Sustainable Cosmetics and Their Importance on Consumer Purchase Behavior*.

Sarstedt, M., Ringle, C. M., & Hair, J. F. (2021). Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling. In *Handbook of Market Research*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-57413-4_15

Sheehan, K. B., & Lee, J. (2014). What's Cruel about Cruelty Free: an Exploration of Consumers, Moral Heuristics, and Public Policy. *Journal of Animal Ethics*, *4*(2), 1. https://doi.org/10.5406/janimalethics.4.2.0001

Shimul, A. S., Cheah, I., & Khan, B. B. (2021). Investigating Female Shoppers' Attitude and Purchase Intention toward Green Cosmetics in South Africa. *Journal of Global Marketing*. https://doi.org/10.1080/08911762.2021.1934770

Sinaga, D. (2018). *Ketika Label No Animal Tested Tidak Memiliki Arti*. CNN Indonesia. https://www.cnnindonesia.com/edukasi/20180111135124-445-268139/ketika-label-no-animal-tested-tidak-memiliki-arti

Springirth, A. (2016). *Discourses of " Cruelty-Free " Consumerism : PETA , The Vegan Society and Examples of Contemporary Activism*. City University of New York.

Sreedhar, D., Manjula, N., Pise, A., Pise, S., & Ligade, V. S. (2020). Ban of Cosmetic Testing on Animals: A Brief Overview. *International Journal of Current Research and Review*, *12*(14), 113–116. https://doi.org/10.31782/IJCRR.2020.121424

Statista. (2021). *Annual number of animals used in research and testing in selected countries worldwide as of 2020*.

Wang, Y., Zhao, Y., & Song, F. (2020). The Ethical Issues of Animal Testing in Cosmetics Industry. *Humanities and Social Sciences*, *8*(4), 112–116. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.hss.20200804.12

Zhang, D., Huang, G., Yin, X., & Gong, Q. (2015). Residents' waste separation Behaviors at the source: Using SEM with the Theory of Planned Behavior in Guangzhou, China. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *12*, 9475–9491. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph120809475