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Research Article

# Motives and Stimuli in Organic Cosmetics Purchases: Understanding the Consumer Behaviour Drivers

Reshma Patnam[1] and Prof. T. Narayana Reddy[2]
[1]Research Scholar, Department of Management Studies, JNTUA, Ananthapuramu
[2]Co-ordinator IQAC, Head of department of Humanities, JNTUA college of Engineering, Ananthapuramu, Andhrapradesh-515002

***Corresponding Author**
Ishmeet Kaur Taluja

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**Abstract:** The global shift toward sustainable and health-conscious consumption has propelled organic cosmetics from a niche category into a mainstream segment of the beauty and personal care industry. Yet the behavioural mechanisms that translate consumer attitudes into actual purchase intention remain incompletely understood, particularly in emerging markets where organic cosmetics compete with well-established conventional brands on price, availability, and perceived efficacy. This study empirically examines the internal motives and external marketing stimuli that drive consumer purchase intention toward organic cosmetics, adopting a Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework. Primary data were collected from 200 respondents using a structured questionnaire measuring five motivational constructs (health consciousness, environmental concern, social influence, price sensitivity, and product quality perception) and four stimulus constructs (advertising exposure, packaging appeal, word of mouth, and in-store availability), together with purchase intention as the outcome variable. Reliability of the instrument was confirmed through Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.785 to 0.843, with an overall alpha of 0.906. Multiple regression analysis revealed that the combined set of motives and stimuli explained 59.7 per cent of the variance in purchase intention ($R^2 = 0.597$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.578$, $F(9, 190) = 31.32$, $p < .001$). Health consciousness, product quality perception, packaging appeal, word of mouth, environmental concern, and social influence emerged as significant positive predictors, while price sensitivity was a significant negative predictor of purchase intention. Independent samples t-test and one-way ANOVA indicated no statistically significant differences in purchase intention across gender or age groups. The findings offer actionable insights for organic cosmetics marketers on prioritising product quality communication, packaging design, and referral-based promotion over price-led strategies, and contribute to the growing body of literature on green and ethical consumption behaviour.

**Keywords**: organic cosmetics, consumer behaviour, purchase intention, green marketing, motives, stimuli, Stimulus-Organism-Response model.



## INTRODUCTION

The cosmetics and personal care industry has witnessed a profound transformation over the past decade, driven by rising consumer awareness of the ingredients used in everyday beauty products and their cumulative effects on human health and the environment. Organic cosmetics, formulated with naturally derived and chemical-free ingredients and typically certified by recognised organic standards, have emerged as a preferred alternative for consumers who associate synthetic chemicals, parabens, and sulphates with long-term skin and health risks. This shift is not merely a passing trend but reflects a deeper realignment of consumer values toward sustainability, wellness, and ethical consumption.

Understanding why consumers choose organic cosmetics over conventional alternatives requires moving beyond simple attitude-behaviour models to examine the interplay between internal psychological motives and external marketing stimuli. Motives such as health consciousness, environmental concern, and the desire for social approval operate alongside stimuli such as advertising, packaging aesthetics, word-of-mouth recommendations, and product availability to shape the

consumer's overall purchase decision. The Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework, originally proposed by Mehrabian and Russell and widely applied in consumer behaviour research, provides a useful lens through which to examine how external stimuli and internal states jointly influence behavioural outcomes such as purchase intention.

Despite the growing academic and commercial interest in green and organic consumption, empirical evidence on the relative strength of specific motives and stimuli in the organic cosmetics category remains fragmented, with much of the existing literature focused on food products or apparel rather than personal care items. Moreover, price sensitivity, an important barrier given the premium pricing typically associated with organic cosmetics, has received comparatively limited attention in empirical models that simultaneously account for motivational and situational drivers. This study addresses this gap by empirically testing a comprehensive model of motives and stimuli using primary survey data collected from 200 respondents, thereby offering both theoretical contribution and practical guidance to marketers operating in the organic personal care segment.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.1 Green and Organic Consumer Behaviour

Consumer behaviour scholars have long examined the antecedents of environmentally and health-conscious purchasing. Early work grounded in the Theory of Planned Behaviour established that attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control jointly predict green purchase intention, with attitude typically emerging as the strongest predictor (Ajzen, 1991). Subsequent studies extended this framework to organic products specifically, demonstrating that health consciousness and environmental concern operate as complementary but distinct motivational drivers rather than a single unified construct (Chen, 2007; Kim & Chung, 2011). Within the organic cosmetics category, researchers have consistently found that consumers frame their purchase decisions around perceived personal benefit (skin safety, absence of harmful chemicals) as much as around collective environmental benefit, suggesting a dual-motive structure that this study seeks to test empirically.

### 2.2 Health Consciousness as a Purchase Motive

Health consciousness reflects the degree to which an individual is concerned about their wellbeing and is motivated to take actions that preserve or enhance it. In the cosmetics context, health-conscious consumers are more likely to scrutinise ingredient lists, avoid products containing parabens and synthetic fragrances, and gravitate toward certified organic alternatives (Kim & Chung, 2011). Several studies report health consciousness as the single strongest predictor of organic cosmetics purchase intention, outperforming even environmental concern, particularly among urban, educated consumer segments (Ghazali et al., 2017).

### 2.3 Environmental Concern and Ethical Consumption

Environmental concern captures the consumer's awareness of, and emotional response to, ecological degradation and their willingness to alter consumption patterns accordingly. Research on ethical and sustainable consumption suggests that environmentally concerned consumers are more likely to pay a price premium for products perceived as cruelty-free, biodegradable, or produced through sustainable sourcing practices (Chen, 2007; Nguyen et al., 2019). However, the well-documented attitude-behaviour gap in green consumption research indicates that stated environmental concern does not always translate into actual purchase, underscoring the importance of examining environmental concern alongside other situational and motivational variables rather than in isolation.

### 2.4 Social Influence and Word of Mouth

Social influence, encompassing the normative pressure exerted by family, peers, and social media communities, has been shown to significantly shape green purchase decisions, particularly among younger consumers who are more exposed to influencer marketing and peer recommendations (Kong et al., 2020). Word-of-mouth communication, both offline and through online reviews, functions as a particularly credible stimulus in categories such as cosmetics where product performance is difficult to verify prior to use, and has been found in several studies to exert a stronger influence on purchase intention than traditional advertising (Cheung & Thadani, 2012; Sun et al., 2021).

### 2.5 Product Quality Perception

Perceived product quality, encompassing efficacy, ingredient purity, and brand credibility, is a recurring predictor of purchase intention across the organic products literature. Consumers who perceive organic cosmetics as delivering comparable or superior performance to conventional alternatives are significantly more likely to form positive purchase intentions, whereas scepticism about efficacy remains one of the most cited barriers to organic cosmetics adoption (Ghazali et al., 2017; Suki, 2016).

### 2.6 Price Sensitivity as a Barrier

Price is consistently identified as a key barrier to organic cosmetics adoption, given that certified organic formulations typically command a premium of twenty to fifty per cent over conventional equivalents. Price-sensitive consumers have

been found to discount their environmental or health concerns when faced with a substantial price differential, resulting in a negative relationship between price sensitivity and green purchase intention in several empirical studies (Nguyen et al., 2019; Suki, 2016). This study incorporates price sensitivity as a distinct motivational construct to empirically quantify its dampening effect within the broader model.

### 2.7 Marketing Stimuli: Advertising, Packaging, and Availability

Beyond internal motives, situational marketing stimuli play a substantial role in shaping purchase intention. Advertising exposure builds awareness and shapes brand associations, though its persuasive effect in the cosmetics category is often secondary to experiential and social stimuli (Kong et al., 2020). Packaging, encompassing visual design, labelling clarity, and perceived eco-friendliness of packaging material, has emerged as an increasingly important stimulus, functioning as a proxy signal for product authenticity and quality in the absence of pre-purchase trial (Rundh, 2016). In-store and online availability further moderates the conversion of purchase intention into actual purchase, with limited distribution channels frequently cited as a structural barrier to organic cosmetics adoption in emerging markets (Ghazali et al., 2017).

### 2.8 The Stimulus-Organism-Response Framework

The S-O-R framework conceptualises consumer behaviour as a sequential process in which external stimuli (marketing cues) act upon the internal organism (cognitive and affective states, including motives) to produce a behavioural response (purchase intention or actual purchase) (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). This framework has been productively applied to online and offline retail contexts to explain how environmental and marketing cues translate into consumer responses (Kamboj et al., 2018), and provides the theoretical scaffolding for the present study's integration of motives (organism-level constructs) and stimuli (external cues) as joint predictors of purchase intention.

### 2.9 Research Gap

While the reviewed literature establishes the individual relevance of health consciousness, environmental concern, social influence, price sensitivity, product quality perception, and marketing stimuli to green and organic purchase behaviour, few studies have simultaneously tested these constructs within a single empirical model specific to the organic cosmetics category, and fewer still have used primary data from emerging-market consumers to quantify the relative predictive strength of each driver. This study addresses this gap by empirically testing a nine-predictor model of purchase intention using structured survey data from 200 respondents.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To identify and measure the key psychological motives (health consciousness, environmental concern, social influence, price sensitivity, and product quality perception) that influence consumer purchase intention toward organic cosmetics.
2. To identify and measure the key external marketing stimuli (advertising exposure, packaging appeal, word of mouth, and in-store availability) that influence consumer purchase intention toward organic cosmetics.
3. To examine the relative predictive strength of the identified motives and stimuli on purchase intention through multiple regression analysis.
4. To examine whether purchase intention toward organic cosmetics differs significantly across gender and age groups.

### Hypotheses of the Study

**Based on the objectives and the reviewed literature, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested:**

- H1: Health consciousness has a significant positive influence on purchase intention toward organic cosmetics.
- H2: Environmental concern has a significant positive influence on purchase intention toward organic cosmetics.
- H3: Social influence has a significant positive influence on purchase intention toward organic cosmetics.
- H4: Price sensitivity has a significant negative influence on purchase intention toward organic cosmetics.
- H5: Product quality perception has a significant positive influence on purchase intention toward organic cosmetics.
- H6: Advertising exposure has a significant positive influence on purchase intention toward organic cosmetics.
- H7: Packaging appeal has a significant positive influence on purchase intention toward organic cosmetics.
- H8: Word of mouth has a significant positive influence on purchase intention toward organic cosmetics.
- H9: In-store availability has a significant positive influence on purchase intention toward organic cosmetics.
- H10: There is no significant difference in purchase intention toward organic cosmetics across gender and age groups.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive, cross-sectional research design employing a quantitative survey method to empirically examine the relationship between selected motives, stimuli, and purchase intention toward organic cosmetics.

### 5.2 Population and Sample

The target population comprised adult consumers who had purchased or considered purchasing organic or natural cosmetic products within the twelve months preceding the survey. A sample of 200 respondents was drawn using a combination of convenience and snowball sampling, administered through both online and offline structured questionnaires. The sample size of 200 was considered adequate for multiple regression analysis involving nine predictor variables, exceeding the commonly cited minimum threshold of 50 + 8k (where k is the number of predictors) recommended for regression-based research.

### 5.3 Data Collection Instrument

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising two sections. Section A captured respondent demographic information (gender, age group, education, occupation, monthly income, marital status, and purchase frequency). Section B measured the ten study constructs, each operationalised through four items adapted from established scales in the green consumption and consumer behaviour literature, and rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

### 5.4 Variables and Measurement

The independent variables comprised five motivational constructs, namely Health Consciousness (HC), Environmental Concern (EC), Social Influence (SI), Price Sensitivity (PS), and Product Quality Perception (PQ), and four stimulus constructs, namely Advertising Exposure (AD), Packaging Appeal (PK), Word of Mouth (WOM), and In-store Availability (AV). Purchase Intention (PI) toward organic cosmetics served as the dependent variable.

### 5.5 Statistical Tools

The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha for reliability testing, Pearson product-moment correlation, multiple linear regression, independent samples t-test, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). All statistical tests were evaluated at the 5 per cent ($p < .05$) level of significance.

## Data Analysis and Results

### 6.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the 200 respondents surveyed.

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 200)**

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Female | 143 | 71.5% |
| Male | 57 | 28.5% |

| Age Group | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 18-25 | 43 | 21.5% |
| 26-35 | 81 | 40.5% |
| 36-45 | 41 | 20.5% |
| 46-55 | 27 | 13.5% |
| Above 55 | 8 | 4.0% |

| Education | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Doctorate/Professional | 15 | 7.5% |
| Graduate | 96 | 48.0% |
| Higher Secondary | 19 | 9.5% |
| Post Graduate | 70 | 35.0% |

| Occupation | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Government Employee | 28 | 14.0% |
| Homemaker | 28 | 14.0% |
| Salaried/Private Employee | 72 | 36.0% |
| Self-Employed/Business | 39 | 19.5% |
| Student | 33 | 16.5% |

| Monthly Income | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Above Rs.75,000 | 37 | 18.5% |
| Below Rs.25,000 | 50 | 25.0% |
| Rs.25,001-50,000 | 66 | 33.0% |
| Rs.50,001-75,000 | 47 | 23.5% |

| Monthly Income | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Marital Status | Frequency | Percentage |
| Married | 123 | 61.5% |
| Unmarried | 77 | 38.5% |

| Purchase Frequency of Organic Cosmetics | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Fortnightly/Weekly | 44 | 22.0% |
| Monthly | 54 | 27.0% |
| Occasionally | 74 | 37.0% |
| Rarely | 28 | 14.0% |

The sample was predominantly female (143 respondents, 71.5%), consistent with the higher engagement of female consumers with cosmetics categories reported in prior literature. The largest age cohort was 26-35 years (81 respondents, 40.5%), and a majority of respondents held a graduate or postgraduate qualification, suggesting a reasonably well-educated sample consistent with the urban, health- and environment-conscious consumer profile typically associated with organic product adoption.

### 6.2 Reliability Analysis

The internal consistency of the measurement instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. As shown in Table 2, all ten constructs recorded alpha values above the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, indicating good to very good internal reliability. The overall scale reliability across all 40 items was 0.906.

**Table 2: Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's Alpha)**

| Construct | No. of Items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|---|---|---|
| Health Consciousness | 4 | 0.816 |
| Environmental Concern | 4 | 0.832 |
| Social Influence | 4 | 0.843 |
| Price Sensitivity | 4 | 0.821 |
| Product Quality Perception | 4 | 0.835 |
| Advertising Exposure | 4 | 0.785 |
| Packaging Appeal | 4 | 0.817 |
| Word of Mouth | 4 | 0.840 |
| In-store Availability | 4 | 0.816 |
| Purchase Intention | 4 | 0.811 |

### 6.3 Descriptive Statistics

Table 3 presents the mean, standard deviation, and range of responses for each construct. Mean scores across all constructs clustered around the midpoint of the five-point scale (2.89 to 3.16), with Purchase Intention recording the highest mean (M = 3.16, SD = 0.65), suggesting a moderately positive overall disposition toward organic cosmetics among the sampled respondents.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Study Constructs**

| Construct | Mean | SD | Min | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Health Consciousness | 3.06 | 0.67 | 1.50 | 5.00 |
| Environmental Concern | 3.13 | 0.73 | 1.50 | 5.00 |
| Social Influence | 2.98 | 0.72 | 1.25 | 4.75 |
| Price Sensitivity | 3.05 | 0.67 | 1.00 | 4.75 |
| Product Quality Perception | 2.98 | 0.69 | 1.25 | 4.75 |
| Advertising Exposure | 3.00 | 0.62 | 1.25 | 4.25 |
| Packaging Appeal | 3.00 | 0.68 | 1.25 | 5.00 |
| Word of Mouth | 2.98 | 0.74 | 1.25 | 4.75 |
| In-store Availability | 2.89 | 0.67 | 1.00 | 4.50 |
| Purchase Intention | 3.16 | 0.65 | 1.50 | 4.75 |

### 6.4 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis (Table 4) was conducted to examine the bivariate relationships among the study constructs prior to regression analysis. Purchase Intention exhibited significant positive correlations with all constructs except Price Sensitivity, which showed a significant negative correlation (r = -0.104). The strongest positive correlate of purchase

intention was Word of Mouth (r = 0.487), followed by Product Quality Perception (r = 0.480) and Packaging Appeal (r = 0.478). Inter-construct correlations among the independent variables remained moderate (below 0.45 in all cases), indicating no serious multicollinearity concern, a conclusion further supported by the variance inflation factor (VIF) values reported in Table 5, all of which remained below the conventional threshold of 5.

**Table 4: Pearson Correlation Matrix**

| Construct | HC | EC | SI | PS | PQ | AD | PK | WOM | AV | PI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Health Consciousness | 1.00 | 0.29** | 0.12 | 0.15* | 0.26** | 0.19* | 0.16* | 0.18* | 0.17* | 0.40** |
| Environmental Concern | 0.29** | 1.00 | 0.33** | 0.09 | 0.27** | 0.24** | 0.15* | 0.29** | 0.18* | 0.41** |
| Social Influence | 0.12 | 0.33** | 1.00 | 0.22* | 0.19* | 0.26** | 0.25** | 0.35** | 0.20* | 0.35** |
| Price Sensitivity | 0.15* | 0.09 | 0.22* | 1.00 | 0.16* | 0.20* | 0.18* | 0.13 | 0.22* | -0.10 |
| Product Quality Perception | 0.26** | 0.27** | 0.19* | 0.16* | 1.00 | 0.28** | 0.34** | 0.28** | 0.24** | 0.48** |
| Advertising Exposure | 0.19* | 0.24** | 0.26** | 0.20* | 0.28** | 1.00 | 0.28** | 0.30** | 0.10 | 0.34** |
| Packaging Appeal | 0.16* | 0.15* | 0.25** | 0.18* | 0.34** | 0.28** | 1.00 | 0.42** | 0.34** | 0.48** |
| Word of Mouth | 0.18* | 0.29** | 0.35** | 0.13 | 0.28** | 0.30** | 0.42** | 1.00 | 0.26** | 0.49** |
| In-store Availability | 0.17* | 0.18* | 0.20* | 0.22* | 0.24** | 0.10 | 0.34** | 0.26** | 1.00 | 0.25** |
| Purchase Intention | 0.40** | 0.41** | 0.35** | -0.10 | 0.48** | 0.34** | 0.48** | 0.49** | 0.25** | 1.00 |

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .001. HC = Health Consciousness; EC = Environmental Concern; SI = Social Influence; PS = Price Sensitivity; PQ = Product Quality Perception; AD = Advertising Exposure; PK = Packaging Appeal; WOM = Word of Mouth; AV = In-store Availability; PI = Purchase Intention.

### 6.5 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression was performed to examine the combined and individual predictive effect of the five motivational constructs and four stimulus constructs on purchase intention. The overall model was statistically significant, $F(9, 190) = 31.32$, $p < .001$, explaining 59.7 per cent of the variance in purchase intention ($R^2 = 0.597$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.578$).

**Table 6: Multiple Regression Results (Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention)**

| Predictor | B | SE | Beta (β) | t | p-value | Result |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constant | 0.410 | 0.240 | - | 1.709 | 0.0890 | - |
| Health Consciousness | 0.231 | 0.048 | 0.240 | 4.838 | <.001 | Significant |
| Environmental Concern | 0.122 | 0.046 | 0.137 | 2.632 | 0.0092 | Significant |
| Social Influence | 0.136 | 0.047 | 0.151 | 2.893 | 0.0043 | Significant |
| Price Sensitivity | -0.303 | 0.047 | -0.316 | -6.457 | <.001 | Significant |
| Product Quality Perception | 0.220 | 0.049 | 0.235 | 4.517 | <.001 | Significant |
| Advertising Exposure | 0.087 | 0.054 | 0.083 | 1.619 | 0.1072 | Not Significant |
| Packaging Appeal | 0.237 | 0.052 | 0.250 | 4.580 | <.001 | Significant |
| Word of Mouth | 0.167 | 0.048 | 0.190 | 3.476 | <.001 | Significant |
| In-store Availability | 0.021 | 0.049 | 0.021 | 0.419 | 0.6754 | Not Significant |

**Table 5: Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) — Multicollinearity Diagnostics**

| Predictor | VIF |
|---|---|
| Health Consciousness | 1.16 |
| Environmental Concern | 1.29 |
| Social Influence | 1.29 |
| Price Sensitivity | 1.13 |
| Product Quality Perception | 1.28 |
| Advertising Exposure | 1.24 |
| Packaging Appeal | 1.41 |
| Word of Mouth | 1.41 |
| In-store Availability | 1.22 |

As shown in Table 6, seven of the nine predictors emerged as statistically significant ($p < .05$). Price Sensitivity recorded the strongest standardised effect on purchase intention ($\beta = -0.316$, $p < .001$), but in the negative direction, confirming that consumers who are more price-sensitive report lower purchase intention toward organic cosmetics, consistent with the

premium pricing typically associated with this category. Among the positive predictors, Packaging Appeal (β = 0.250), Health Consciousness (β = 0.240), and Product Quality Perception (β = 0.235) emerged as the strongest drivers, followed by Word of Mouth, Social Influence, and Environmental Concern. Advertising Exposure and In-store Availability did not emerge as statistically significant predictors once the other variables were accounted for, suggesting that their influence on purchase intention may be indirect or mediated through other constructs such as packaging appeal and word of mouth.

**Table 7: Summary of Hypothesis Testing**

| Hypothesis | Path | Result |
|---|---|---|
| H1 | Health Consciousness → Purchase Intention | Supported |
| H2 | Environmental Concern → Purchase Intention | Supported |
| H3 | Social Influence → Purchase Intention | Supported |
| H4 | Price Sensitivity → Purchase Intention | Supported (negative, as hypothesised) |
| H5 | Product Quality Perception → Purchase Intention | Supported |
| H6 | Advertising Exposure → Purchase Intention | Not Supported |
| H7 | Packaging Appeal → Purchase Intention | Supported |
| H8 | Word of Mouth → Purchase Intention | Supported |
| H9 | In-store Availability → Purchase Intention | Not Supported |

### 6.6 Gender-wise and Age-wise Comparison of Purchase Intention

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare purchase intention scores between male and female respondents. Results indicated no statistically significant difference in purchase intention between female (M = 3.18, SD = 0.68) and male respondents (M = 3.14, SD = 0.56), t = 0.434, p = 0.665 (p > .05).

Similarly, a one-way ANOVA conducted to examine differences in purchase intention across five age groups (18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, and above 55 years) revealed no statistically significant difference, F = 1.260, p = 0.287 (p > .05). These results support Hypothesis H10, indicating that the motivational and stimulus-driven model of purchase intention operates comparably across gender and age segments in this sample, and that demographic segmentation alone may be insufficient for targeting organic cosmetics marketing communication.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study reinforce and extend the existing literature on green and organic consumption by empirically demonstrating that purchase intention toward organic cosmetics is shaped jointly by internal psychological motives and external marketing stimuli, consistent with the Stimulus-Organism-Response framework adopted in this study. The strong explanatory power of the regression model (Adjusted $R^2$ = 0.578) indicates that the nine-construct model captures a substantial share of the variance in purchase intention, well above what is typically reported in single-theory models of green purchase behaviour.

The emergence of health consciousness and product quality perception as strong positive predictors aligns with prior findings (Kim & Chung, 2011; Ghazali et al., 2017) that personal, self-interested motives often outweigh purely altruistic environmental concern in shaping cosmetics purchase decisions. Notably, environmental concern and social influence also retained significant, if comparatively smaller, positive effects, suggesting that ethical and normative considerations continue to play a meaningful, complementary role alongside self-interested health motives.

The significant negative effect of price sensitivity corroborates the well-documented price barrier to organic product adoption (Nguyen et al., 2019; Suki, 2016) and underscores those tension between stated pro-environmental or pro-health attitudes and actual willingness to pay a premium. This finding has important implications for pricing and value-communication strategies, discussed further in the following section.

Among the stimulus variables, packaging appeal and word of mouth exerted the strongest and most consistent positive effects, while advertising exposure and in-store availability did not achieve statistical significance in the multivariate model. This pattern suggests that, in the organic cosmetics category, experiential and socially mediated cues (packaging as a tangible quality signal, and word of mouth as a trust-building mechanism) may carry greater persuasive weight than mass-media advertising or mere physical availability, echoing similar findings in the online review and social commerce literature (Cheung & Thadani, 2012; Sun et al., 2021).

The absence of significant gender or age differences in purchase intention suggests that the underlying psychological and situational drivers of organic cosmetics adoption operate relatively uniformly across demographic segments in this sample, implying that marketers may derive greater value from psychographic and behavioural segmentation (based on health consciousness, price sensitivity, or quality orientation) than from demographic segmentation alone.

**Implications**

**8.1 Theoretical Implications**

This study contributes to the consumer behaviour literature by empirically validating an integrated motive-stimulus model of organic cosmetics purchase intention within the Stimulus-Organism-Response framework, extending prior single-construct or attitude-based models. It further contributes by explicitly quantifying the countervailing negative role of price sensitivity alongside positive motivational and stimulus effects, offering a more complete picture of the trade-offs consumers navigate in this category.

**8.2 Managerial Implications**

For practitioners, the findings suggest that marketing communication for organic cosmetics should prioritise credible product quality claims (certifications, ingredient transparency, dermatological endorsements) and invest in packaging design that visually signals purity and premium positioning, given their strong association with purchase intention. Brands should also actively cultivate word-of-mouth and peer-review ecosystems, including influencer partnerships and verified customer review programmes, rather than relying primarily on traditional advertising. Given the significant negative effect of price sensitivity, value-based pricing communication (for example, emphasising cost-per-use, concentration, or multi-functional benefits) may help offset price resistance more effectively than price discounting alone, which risks undermining the premium positioning that organic cosmetics rely upon.

**Limitations and Scope for Future Research**

This study is subject to several limitations that offer avenues for future research. First, the use of convenience and snowball sampling limits the generalisability of findings to the broader population of organic cosmetics consumers; future studies could employ probability sampling across a wider geographic and demographic base. Second, the cross-sectional design captures purchase intention at a single point in time and cannot establish causal relationships or account for post-purchase satisfaction and repurchase behaviour; longitudinal designs would strengthen causal inference. Third, the study relies on self-reported survey data, which may be subject to social desirability bias, particularly for environmentally and health-conscious response categories. Future research could incorporate actual purchase or behavioural intention-to-behaviour conversion data, examine mediating mechanisms (such as brand trust or perceived risk) between stimuli and purchase intention, and extend the model to cross-cultural comparisons between emerging and developed cosmetics markets.

# CONCLUSION

This study set out to empirically examine the motives and stimuli that drive consumer purchase intention toward organic cosmetics, using primary data collected from 200 respondents and analysed through reliability testing, correlation, and multiple regression within a Stimulus-Organism-Response framework. The results demonstrate that health consciousness, product quality perception, packaging appeal, and word of mouth are the strongest positive drivers of purchase intention, while price sensitivity exerts a significant negative influence, and that these effects operate consistently across gender and age groups. The findings offer organic cosmetics marketers a clear, empirically grounded set of priorities: lead with credible quality and health messaging, invest in packaging as a trust signal, harness word-of-mouth and peer-review mechanisms, and address price sensitivity through value communication rather than price competition alone. As consumer demand for sustainable and health-oriented personal care products continues to grow, an integrated understanding of both internal motives and external marketing stimuli will remain essential for brands seeking to convert positive attitudes into sustained purchase behaviour in the organic cosmetics category.

**Declarations**

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**Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declare that there is no conflict of interest associated with this study.

**Data Availability Statement**

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

**Ethical Approval**

Participation in the survey was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents prior to data collection. Respondent anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the study.

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