TITLE: **Factors Stimulating the Purchase of Cruelty-Free Cosmetics Among Female Consumers in China**

PROGRAMME: Msc International Business and Managment

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to identify factors stimulating female consumers' purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics in China. The author employed the survey questionnaire to collect the quantitative and objective data to determine the association between variables. The SPSS analysis enabled the generation of statistical findings and tested the impact of brand-related and consumer-related factors on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics by women in China.

From the analysis of results, it is found that brand-related factors (brand trust and certified labels) are positively associated with purchase of the cruelty-free cosmetics by women. However, it has been presented that social media does not have a significant and positive impact on the purchase behaviour of women to buy cruelty-free cosmetic products.

In the context of consumer-related factors, it has been noticed that altruism and pro-environmental behaviour positively affect women's purchase of cruelty-free products in China but the environmental knowledge does not explain the positive variation in purchase behaviour of Chinese women towards cruelty-free cosmetics. This study has concluded that consumer-related and brand-related factors can influence the purchase behaviour of women.

Hence, it has suggested certified labels, altruism and customisation of products to improve the market share and sales revenue of cosmetic brands in China.

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I would like to appreciate everyone who played a great role in making this work a success.

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Name

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction and Background

Sustainable consumption has been a mega trend among consumers in the modern era. Sustainability in the process of the product development process attracts consumers and improves the performance of organizations. It is because conscious consumption is no longer a niche market, and consumers are increasingly becoming aware of the environmental consequences of purchasing products (Grappe et al., 2021). It has led to the initiation of cruelty-free cosmetics worldwide, that is, cosmetics not tested on animals and created without animal harm (Andreena, 2021). Currently, sustainability is discussed and being applied in every sector. In the same manner, there is a buzzword in the cosmetic industry for cruelty-free cosmetics. Now, the consumer is more conscious and concerned with animal welfare and personal harm from cosmetic products (Alaouir et al., 2019). Further, government regulations and public awareness of the environment and animal testing in the cosmetic industry also compelled the industry to abandon the testing of products on animals (Sheehan and Lee 2014). Consumers also demonstrated their interest towards adopting cruelty-free cosmetics by believing that they can change and provoke people in society to avoid the use of the products of cruel cosmetic brands. Adopting cruelty-free cosmetic production will benefit companies by using less hazardous chemicals, no animal by-products, and triggering sales and developing a corporate social responsibility image. Therefore, it is paramount for brands in the cosmetic industry to find out factors affecting cruelty-free cosmetics purchase among Chinese females.

It is observed that China is one of the leading cosmetics markets in the world. The annual growth of the cosmetics industry in China was reported to be 9.1% despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic (Ma, 2022). China accounted for over a fifth of the global consumer industry. Factors such as social media influence, urbanisation, and the growing disposable income of consumers would continue to drive the growth of the Chinese cosmetics market (Ma, 2022). The positive changes in the Chinese animal testing rules have created opportunities for domestic and international cosmetic companies to sell their products without mandatory animal testing (Rigney, 2022). However, it is advantageous only when cosmetic brands acknowledge the consumer behaviour of Chinese females. Further, China has changed the regulations for testing the products by requiring no animal testing of

cosmetic products, which may improve the encouragement to brands to operate the business (Silva and Tamburic, 2022). Hence, it becomes imperative for cosmetic companies to understand the consumer behaviour of Chinese females. Because of the abolishment of several legislations and regulations, animal testing in China over the years reduced.. However, the legislation of China has a place for testing some specific products on animals' hair removal, breast enhancement, fitness and others (Silva and Tamburic, 2022)

According to Chung (2022), Chinese people have become more interested in animal welfare because they are concerned about animals and animal cruelty. More than 60% of people mentioned that they are willing to pay for the brand's care for animals and use the cruelty-free testing process of the products. However, 70% of the participants agreed that it is better to test the product on animals before serving people to improve the quality of food products (Carnovale et al., 2021). Consequently, it became necessary to view the attitude of consumers towards cosmetic brands and animal testing of cosmetic products in China. Because terms like ethical consumerism and ethical decision-making are gaining momentum, academic scholars and cosmetic companies must study the changing consumer behaviour and determine the factors that can stimulate consumers to buy cruelty-free cosmetics (Silva and Tamburic, 2022). Consequently, this research aims to determine the attitude of the female consumer towards cruelty-free cosmetic brands.

1.2 Research Problem

In spite of government regulation and changing consumer behaviour, many companies still use animal testing in the production process, ignoring the rules of the government and laws (Knight et al., 2021). Further, companies using animals in product testing are known as cruel cosmetic entities (Alaouir et al., 2019). The inclusion of animals in laboratories for product testing threatens the life of animals. According to PETA, more than 250 cosmetic brands are still using animals in the process of their product testing, causing harm to more than 27000 animals every year (Alaouir et al., 2019). This trend can be reduced, and a sustainable environment can be built if such studies highlight the significance and demand of cruelty-free cosmetics. Hence, they can improve their image if they understand the inclination of Chinese female consumers toward cruelty-free cosmetics. Hence, the research aims to understand consumer behaviour and attitudes towards cruelty-free cosmetic brands. Alaouir et al. (2019) alluded that companies in the cosmetic industry have been more conscious of sustainable

sourcing and ethical practices in the process of product development (Alaouir et al., 2019). However, many brands do not know what factors can affect the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics so that cosmetic brands can design marketing, production and customer care service strategies accordingly.

There has been good information regarding the attitude and purchase intention of the consumer about cruelty-free cosmetic products. Some previous studies included different factors (financial factors, social media, altruism, environmental knowledge and attitude) to determine the impact on the purchase intention. Few of them confirmed the positive impact of altruism, environmental knowledge and attitude on purchase intention. Some of them confirmed the impact of social media on purchase intention, but one of the studies did not show any relationship between the factors on the purchase intention. Further, the research studies, in part, included different factors, but some of them included limited variables and samples that affected their strengths.

In addition, previous studies explained that cruelty-free cosmetic and ethical consumption are growing worldwide. However, the previous studies regarding cruelty-free cosmetics lack an explanation of reliable information on the attitude of the consumer and purchase intention (Alaouir et al., 2019). Lack of sufficient information on female consumers' attitude and purchase intention towards cruelty-free cosmetics may present a research gap. In addition, a very small number of studies have been conducted in the past explaining the influence of brand-related factors (certified labels and social media marketing) and consumer-related factors on the purchase intention and attitude of female consumers in China. Therefore, it is crucial to study the attitude of consumers towards cruelty-free cosmetics from the perspective of female consumers in China (Silva and Tamburic, 2022; Wuisan and Februadi). No study also proved whether the impact of brand-related and consumer-related factors might vary the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics among age groups. Hence, this research has bridged the gaps.

1.3 Research Aims and Objectives

This research aims to identify factors stimulating female consumers' purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics in China. To accomplish the aim, the following objectives have been developed for the study:

- To determine the impact of brand-related attributes (social media marketing, brand trust, certified labels) on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics among Chinese female consumers
- To analyse the impact of consumer-related attributes (altruism, environmental knowledge, pro-environmental behaviour) on the cruelty-free cosmetics purchase decision of Chinese female consumers
- To determine whether age is associated with the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics in China

1.4 Outline of methodology

The researcher in this study has applied the survey questionnaire to collect reliable information from women consumers of cosmetic products in China. It will aid in determining and measuring the factors and their role in stimulating women's purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands in China. The survey questionnaire has been chosen because it will aid in gathering objective data to validate previous theories associated with cruelty-free cosmetics and consumers' purchase decisions.

1.5 Research Rationale

The animal testing of cosmetic products is chosen by the brands to ensure the quality of the product and to assure no harm to the people using the product. All the companies in the food sector, cosmetic sector, and other sectors use animals for product testing, which may be cruel (Silva and Tamburic, 2022). However, the changing trends in the market and government regulations for controlling the animal testing of products have influenced the operating companies and product testing process (Sheehan and Lee, 2014). The negative attitude of the consumer towards animal testing in the companies may have influenced the organisation to change the testing process (Alaouir et al., 2019). Hence, this study will enable cosmetic brands to understand the significance of cruelty-free cosmetics and the role of sustainability in this sector. This research will be beneficial for the environment, too.

It may help in designing strategies and changing the process of testing and methods of product testing to get more favourable responses from the consumers in the market (Megis et al., 2018). From the managerial point of view, this study will help in comprehending the importance of educating the consumer regarding the product development process and

transparency in operation to influence the purchase behaviour of buyers (Knight et al., 2021). Along with this, it can be useful for the policymakers to understand the views of the consumer toward cruelty-free cosmetics to create the laws and legislations to control the animal testing of the products. Overall, this study may be useful for cosmetic brands, consumers, public policymakers and others.

1.6 Dissertation Structure

The dissertation will be structured in six sections. The first section includes a discussion of the topic, background to the research problem, and purpose. The second section is the literature comprising the peer review journal articles and previous studies on cruelty-free cosmetic brands, consumers' attitudes towards animal testing and animal welfare and others. The third important section in the research methodology includes the choices of and justification of research methods and techniques in this study. The fourth section involves the analysis of findings, including results analysed with SPSS software. The fifth chapter will interpret findings in alignment with a review of the literature if any gap remains and reasons for deviation in findings or contribution. The last section is the conclusion that ends the dissertation by providing a summary of findings, limitations of the study and suggestions for future studies.

Chapter 2: Background Research and Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The literature review is a very important section of every research. It is believed that the literature provides a basic understanding of the topic, which may aid in determining the direction of the study. In this way, the literature in this study has critically discussed findings of the previous studies and journal articles related to cruelty-free brands and products, ethical consumption, attitudes towards cruelty-free cosmetics and other products, factors stimulating the purchase of cruelty-free brands and others. It determines the research gap based on the previous studies and plans the items to be researched in the current research.

2.2 Cruelty-Free Labels and Brands

According to Cheng (2019), cruelty-free informs consumers that the product is vegan and ethically produced but not tested on animals. The communication of cruelty-free labels and claims may enable the organisations to present and improve the consumers' confidence in the products and brands that avoid animal testing throughout the development process (Sheehan and Lee, 2014).

The cruelty-free labels and legislation have been changed to protect animals and ensure animal welfare (Meigs et al., 2018). Various research studies have explored the disagreement and dissatisfaction of the consumer with animal testing and cosmetic brands and other organisations that test their products on animals (Sheehan and Lee, 2014). The consumers showed positive behaviour towards the brands, improving the process of testing and avoiding animals in the product testing process. Rogiers et al. (2020) explained that the newly tested cosmetic product on animals has been prohibited in several economies, such as European countries, China, and other countries. Nonetheless, cosmetic organisations are still engaged in the animal testing of products by using animals in laboratories in other countries where animal testing is not banned. In support of this, Carnovale et al. (2021) stated that misrepresentation and misleading consumers through falsifying the communication and exaggerating the product testing process might be unethical processes of the companies.

The governments and legislation have restricted the companies from avoiding the animal testing of cosmetic products, but the companies use alternative testing methods. They get their products tested through outside firms that use animals in testing their products (Silva and Tamburic, 2022). They use animals in testing and assure no animal testing in their

product label and marketing, which may be a serious ethical issue in the marketing of the companies.

With the purpose of making consumers able to purchase cruelty-free brands and products, product labelling has been important to show and inform consumers which products were not tested on animals and which brands are more vegan (Carnovale et al., 2021). The companies have been bound by the law to take the cruelty-free certification to launch their product and to sell their products in the market, which may have implications for the operation of the companies in the market (Silva and Tamburic, 2022). PETA is the biggest and most recognised organisational body that issues certificates and labels of cruelty-free brands that may improve the trust of the consumers in the brands.

2.3 Theory of planned behaviour

To understand the behaviour of women consumers towards cruelty-free brands and ethical cosmetic brands, the author has applied the theory of planned behaviour (TPB). According to Ajzen (1991), TPB explains the factors that influence the attitudes and perceptions of individuals and its implications on the behaviour of the individuals. It may aid in determining and explaining the antecedent of human behaviour. This theory states that attitudes, subjective norms and controlled behavioural factors may affect human behaviour (Ajzen, 2011). According to TPB, the attitude of the consumer influences the behavioural intention. The experience of the consumer and their awareness change their attitude, which in turn influences their intention or decision to perform certain behaviour. Similarly, subjective norms determine the intention of the individuals to perform the behaviour. The reference group and norms of the society may influence the behaviour of the individuals. It can be applied in the context of consumer behaviour to understand the factors that affect the attitude and perception of the consumers and the impact of the attitude, subjective norms and perceived control factors on the intention or decision to purchase the product or services.

This theory has already been used in several studies to explain consumer behaviour and factors influencing the purchase decision and behaviour of the buyers in the context of cruelty-free brands (Sheehan and Lee, 2014; Kim and Chung, 2011). Subsequently, the researcher has used this theory to determine the attitude of women consumers towards cruelty-free cosmetic brands on consumer and their implications on purchase behaviour. In contrast, Montano and Kasprzyk (2015) argued that several factors other than attitudes,

subjective norms and controlled factors might influence consumers' purchase decision. It does not mention and explain the role of fear, threats, experience, moods, environmental and economic factors and other factors influencing the behaviour of consumers (Ajzen, 2011). However, the author has applied this theory to determine and measure the factors that stimulate women to purchase cruelty-free cosmetic brands. It has helped the author in determining and assessing the relationship between cruelty-free cosmetic brands and the purchase decision behaviour of female consumers in China. It has aided in ascertaining the factors that affect the perception and attitude of women towards cruelty-free cosmetic brands in the market and factors that stimulate them to perform certain behaviours in purchasing the products.

This research will study the outcome of the theory of planned behaviour, i.e. purchase decision. The purchase behaviour refers to the behaviour of the consumers during the process of the purchase of the products, such as analysis, purchase and consumption of the products. The purchase is the action of buying a product or service from the company to consume the product (Sebastiani et al., 2013). It is hypothesised that the purchase and consumption behaviour of people may be influenced by ethical codes and principles. While unethical practices generate negative attitudes towards the products. Hence, consumer generally avoids brands and companies that use unethical practices and avoid their CSR (Davies and Gutsche, 2016). The consumer considers different ethical norms and codes while deciding on the purchase of the products. Health, well-being, self-satisfaction, social guilt and other factors may morally influence consumers' purchase of the product (Davies and Gutsch, 2016). Therefore, ethical consumption provides self-satisfaction and enhances the health of the consumer, which plays a very important role in influencing the purchase of the product and the choices of brands by the consumers (Yeow et al., 2014). Hence, it is considered that cruelty-free cosmetics can affect the purchase decisions of females via subjective norms, attitudes or perceived behaviour control. However, this research will study the outcome, i.e.. Purchase.

2.4 Factors Affecting Consumers' Behaviour Towards Cruelty-Free Products

Below are some variables that relate to brand or consumers and have been used in this research.

Social Media Marketing: Social media sites and channels have gained rapid growth because of people's increased interest in using social sites to improve their network and access the new world (Gunawan and Huarng, 2015). Social media usage has increased across the world, and the young generation is more addicted to using social media than the older generation for entertainment, information access and others (Min et al., 2018). Social media networks and platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other channels improve the social integration and transparency of the product or services, which in turn affects the behaviour of the consumers (Gunawan and Huarng, 2015). Concerning the cosmetic industry, the organisations benefited from social networks and sites by connecting with consumers. However, Kudeshia and Kumar (2017) stated that YouTube and Instagram might not influence consumers of all age groups, but they can positively influence the demand for beauty products. In this way, Shen and Bissell (2013) stated that social media publicity and marketing of the cruelty-free cosmetic product development process might improve the knowledge of the consumer and awareness of the actions of the brands and products that may affect the attitude of buyers positively (Abzari et al., 2014). Zahid et al. (2018) argue that social media acts as an activator in increasing environmental awareness and making people aware consumers more about animal welfare and cruelty-free products, thereby affecting purchase intentions. Similarly, Silva et al. (2021) added to the context by stating that animal welfare and the planet's sustainability are some of the causes that are getting increasing support from consumers and businesses. The study highlighted the significance of social media marketing and the favourable attitudes of consumers towards cruelty-free cosmetics in positively influencing consumers' purchase decisions. However, it also identified that financial sensitivity plays no significant role in this direction. In support of this, Park and Jeon (2018) stated that social media marketing enables brands to communicate with the consumer and improve transparency in operation, which may play important roles in influencing the purchase behaviour of the buyers in the market (Shen and Bissell, 2013). However, this study was conducted in a fashion that cannot measure the attitude towards cruelty-free cosmetic products and brands. Thus, the researcher in this study has focused on validating the following hypothesis.

H1: Social Media Marketing has a positive impact on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China

Brand Trust: The trust of the consumer in the brands may also play a very important role in influencing the purchase decision (Sheehan and Lee, 2014). The degree of trust in the brands may determine the degree of the positive attitude towards the products of the brand. Brand trust should be improved to get a favourable response from the consumer (Fornari et al., 2016). The cruelty-free labelling and process of the product development may increase the trust of the consumer in the brand that the company avoid animal testing, which in turn may improve the positive perception of the buyers of the brand (Shimul et al., 2021). The reduced perceived risk and satisfaction of the consumers may enhance the trust level in brands, which may influence purchase behaviour positively (Sheehan and Lee, 2014). Considering the relationship between brand trust and the purchase of products by consumers, the author has developed the following hypothesis.

H2: Brand Trust has a positive impact on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China

Certified Labels: In the words of Sheehan and Lee (2014), a certified cruelty-free label is the labelling strategy of the organisation in which the companies have to ensure that they are not using animals in their product testing. However, the certified label companies may have to renew their certificate of the no animal testing of the products (Annunziata et al., 2011). This may affect the operation and performance of the companies in the market. In the words of Cheng (2019), certified labels of cruelty-free brands may affect the attitude of the consumer towards the product and brands. The label works as the marketing strategy, which helps in communicating the information of products to consumers to enhance transparency in operation. Most consumers are very well aware of the product testing process that animals are used in the laboratory for testing of cosmetic products, and they boycott such products and brands (Sheehan and Lee, 2014).

According to Chitrakorn (2016), the certified label may enhance the credibility of the brands in the market, which may have a positive effect on the attitude and purchase behaviour of the consumers. However, there are insignificant research studies on the relationship between the

certified label of cruelty-free cosmetic brands and the purchase behaviour of women in China. Therefore, the researcher has focused on assessing the hypothesis developed as given below.

H3: Cruelty-free labels positively affect the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women consumers in China.

Altruism: In the words of Batson (2011), altruism refers to the desire to benefit someone else rather than one's own. This is the people's pro-social behaviour that may have implications on the green purchasing behaviour and decisions of the buyers in the market. Altruism theory explains that people can be more pro-social when they perceive harm in the process and harmful outcomes of their acts (Oh and Yoon, 2014). This encourages them to be responsible for their action and conducts. In this way, Kaufmann et al. (2012) stated that altruism influences the expectations and desires of consumers, which may have implications for their actions and their purchases. Carrigan and Attalla (2001) investigated that more altruistic consumers are likely to support companies offering ethical products, and thus, it is a strong predictor of consumer behaviour. As per Sheehan and Lee (2014), animal-friendly labels and claims lift brands' perceptions by calling on emotional pondering and influencing purchase intentions. On the other hand, the findings of the study conducted by Dasunika and Gunathilake (2020) in the Sri Lankan cosmetic market contradict the above findings. The quantitative study indicated that none of the factors- social media, altruism, financial factors, attitude or environmental knowledge- impact consumers' purchase intention. The literature highlights that these factors do not have any influence on the buying intentions of cruelty-free cosmetic products among Colombian female consumers (Dasunika and Gunathilake, 2020). In support of this, Davies and Gutsche (2016) explained that altruism positively impacts the attitude towards ethical brands and the purchase of ethical brands. Social guilt and self-satisfaction are the important factors that motivate people to behave in an altruistic manner (Davies and Gutsche, 2016). However, this factor has not been searched more in the context of the behaviour and attitude of women towards cruelty-free cosmetic companies and brands in China. Therefore, the researcher has developed the following hypothesis from previous studies.

H4: Altruism has a positive implication on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China

Environmental Knowledge: As per Shimul et al. (2021), knowledge of environmental issues like climate change, pollution, animal welfare, and biodiversity loss develops an ecological movement and affects consumers' behaviour towards cruelty-free products. It was evidenced in another study that some personal factors can impede ethical consumption, while knowledge of the consumer regarding environmental issues and people discouraged by cynicism affect ethical purchases (Bray et al., 2011). It was also explored that the education of people and their knowledge of environmental issues may change people's decisions and behaviour (Kaufmann et al., 2012). The process of product testing on animals may be more toxic to the environment because this activity may require large space and energy greater than one square meter of offices. Further, animal research and testing laboratories may emit more carbon emissions and pollution that may influence the environment (Groff et al., 2014). Therefore, the knowledge of such facts and environmental issues out of the product testing process causes a negative attitude of the consumer towards the product and brands. In support of this, Malik and Singhal (2017) stated that consumers are more interested in environmentally sustainable products and may show a more positive attitude towards cruelty-free products (Sebastiani et al., 2013). Green product improves the interest of environmentally concerned products in ethical consumption and cruelty-free products that influence their purchase decision and behaviour. Wuisan and Februadi (2022) conducted a quantitative study in Indonesia to study consumers' attitude towards cruelty-free labels and identified a positive influence on consumers' purchase intention. The literature emphasises that a cruelty-free label, environmental knowledge, and moral obligations positively influence consumers' attitudes, which in turn brings positive purchase behaviour. In another study conducted by Silva et al. (2021), environmental knowledge and altruism play a significant role in positively influencing the purchasing intentions of Portuguese consumers while making a decision about cruelty-free cosmetics products. The literature further emphasised that the external factor- environmental knowledge has a higher value and holds a higher power compared to altruism in influencing consumer purchasing intentions. In contrast, Deng (2013) explained that excess knowledge and environmental consciousness might lead consumers to create unfavourable attitudes towards ethical and environmentally sustainable products (Deng, 2013). It has empirically tested and proved that environmental knowledge might have implications on attitude and purchase intention (Redondo Palomo et al., 2015). However, limited research has been conducted on the attitude of consumers towards cruelty-

free brands and the implication of environmental knowledge on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics by women in China. Thus, this study has generated the following hypothesis;

H5: Environmental knowledge positively affects the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China

Pro-environmental behaviour: In the words of Zollo et al. (2018), pro-environmental behaviour refers to the behaviour and extra efforts of companies and individuals towards environmental sustainability and to enhance environmental conditions by reducing the negative impact on the environment (Ko and Jin, 2017). The reduction in greenhouse gases, carbon emissions, and other factors may have implications on the decision of consumers. The pro-environmental behaviour and attitude of the consumer towards cruelty-free brands may positively impact buyers' purchase behaviour (Moser, 2015). However, this factor has been searched to the limit, showing less explanation and evidence of the impact of pro-environmental factors on purchasing cruelty-free cosmetic products and brands in China. Hence, the author of this study has developed the hypothesis given below.

H6: Pro-environmental behaviour positively affects the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China

2.5 Previous Studies on Factors Stimulate Purchase of Cruelty-Free Products:

According to Alaouir et al. (2019), ethical consumerism has increased over the years, influencing consumers' purchase behaviour. This study aimed to determine the factors that simulate ethical consumerism and consumers buying cruelty-free cosmetic products. This study has applied a survey of 108 female millennials in Sweden. It has revealed that the attitude of female consumers (B= .581, P=0.000>0.05) and their environmental knowledge ((B=-0.292, P=0.000>0.05) have implications on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics (Alaouir et al., 2019). Altruism has a direct effect on the attitude of millennial women consumers, which in turn positively affects the purchase decision of the consumer to buy cosmetic products. However, it does not have a direct effect on the purchase intention (B= 0.038, P=0.668>0.05) of the female consumer because of the high P-value of the variable (Alaouir et al., 2019). Social media with (B=-0.099, P=0.151>0.05) has been presented in this study, which means that social media is not able to explain positive variation in the purchase intention of millennial women consumers in Sweden (Alaouir et al., 2019). However, this study has targeted only millennial women and determined no age variation regarding the

purchase behaviour of women in different age groups. In addition to this, it was conducted in Sweden, which cannot predict the attitude and decision of the women in China on how they like to buy cruelty-free cosmetic products.

In addition, Dasunika and Gunathilake (2020) have identified and investigated the purchase intention of women consumers for cruelty-free cosmetics. It has been conducted on the topic and used variables similar to variables in the research of Alaouir et al. (2019). However, this study contradicted the results and ensured no impact of any of the variables on the purchase intention of women in Sri Lanka. It has provided statistical evidence based on the survey of 202 women participants (Dasunika and Gunathilake, 2020). Considering the results of the two studies, it can be said that the consumer's behaviour and attitude towards cruelty-free cosmetics may differ (Dasunika and Gunathilake, 2020; Alaouir et al., 2019). Therefore, the lack of research on Chinese women consumers and how they perceive cruelty-free products and the factors that influence their purchase of cosmetic products has encouraged the author to choose to research and address this gap.

Further, Grappe et al. (2021) aimed to reveal how the claim of "not tested on Animals" has an impact on the attitude and behavioural intention of consumers towards cosmetic products. This research included 450 participants in the survey for collecting the data and responses to assess how credibility, attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, concern for animal welfare, and concern for personal appearance affect their intention to cruelty-free cosmetic products (Grappe et al., 2021). This study has revealed that the credibility of the marketing claims and the consumer's attitude towards the claim of the cosmetic brands (not tested on animals) may be positively associated with the consumer's purchase intention. They can explain the variation in the purchase of cosmetic products by consumers. In addition to this, it was noticed by the author that subjective norms and altruistic concern for the welfare of the animals stimulate consumers to intend to buy cosmetic products through the marketing and claim on cruelty-free testing of products (Grappe et al., 2021). The strength of this study is that it invested the difference in the consumer attitude formation towards cruelty-free cosmetic products as compared to general and conventional brands offering cosmetic products. However, this research scrutinized only the consumers' behavioural intention and did not show the purchase behaviour of women consumers (Grappe et al., 2021). The intention to purchase and adoption or purchase of the products has provided the scope for

future studies. Thus, the current research has planned to evaluate the factors that stimulate women to purchase sustainable or cruelty-free cosmetics in China.

Taking the discussion of literature further, Pulm (2021) stated that ethical consumption has increased with the improvement in the awareness and attention to the welfare of animals. The researcher used the cross-sectional design and online survey questionnaire to determine and validate the consumer's purchase intention for cruelty-free cosmetics (Pulm, 2021). It has determined types of brands and cruelty-free labels to assess their effects on the attitude and purchase intention of buyers. It has been determined that there is a great difference in the consumer's purchase intention between private-label products and national brands (Pulm, 2021). It has shown high purchase intention of the consumers to buy the shampoo of the national brands rather than privately labelled shampoo. Further, this study confirmed that certified label on cosmetic items influences the purchase intention of the consumer, but uncertified labels does not improve the trust of the consumer in the brand, whether it is a cruelty-free cosmetic brand (Pulm, 2021). Nevertheless, the author of this study has just focused on a single product, which may confine the use of the study to cosmetic brands producing personal care products. Thus, the current study has not specified the product but used the general cosmetic brand to make the research results useful across almost all the companies in the industry.

Moreover, Wuisan and Februadi (2022) explained the attitude of the Indonesian consumer towards cruelty-free skincare products. This study involved 211 research participants over 17 years, which aided in determining the behaviour and attitude of people in different age groups (Wuisan and Februadi, 2022). Attitude, environmental knowledge and moral obligation have been considered as the independent variables to determine their role in influencing consumers' purchase intention. This study has determined that attitude (B =0.408, P=000<.05) has significant positive implications on the purchase intention of buyers to adopt cruelty-free body shops (Wuisan and Februadi, 2022). The attitude positively mediates the relationship between environmental knowledge ($\beta = 0.213$; $p < 0.05$) and moral obligation ($\beta = 0.578$; $p < 0.05$) with the purchase intention for cruelty-free body shops. However, only two independent variables were considered in this study alongside the single product category of cosmetics (Wuisan and Februadi, 2022). Therefore, the present study has emphasized almost six factors in two different categories to improve the value of the research and present more effective

outcomes. It can have implications for the outcomes of the study on the decision of the companies by providing insight into different factors that may stimulate women consumers to buy cruelty-free cosmetic items in China.

2.6 Research Gap

From the above literature, it is propelled that this research will be based on the theory of planned behaviour that helps in determining antecedents of human behaviour. It will help in explaining buying cruelty-free cosmetics. Different studies have indicated different factors affecting attitudes towards cruelty-free products, but very little research focuses on factors chosen for this research, indicating a research gap (Wuisan and Februadi, 2022; Ko and Jin, 2017). Hence, the consistency of findings suggests the development of a research model that should be tested in the context of China.

Moreover, while there have been works of literature that have studied the factors stimulating consumers' purchasing intention of cruelty-free cosmetics products, the research in the Chinese cosmetic industry was limited (Sheehan and Lee, 2014). Efforts have been made to study the purchase behaviour of Indonesian, Portuguese, Colombian and other country-specific consumers; such a study in the context of China was not found, which indicates a research gap (Wuisan and Februadi, 2022; Dasunika and Gunathilake, 2020; Silva et al, 2021). This study is thus an attempt to fill this gap and explore consumer behaviour in one of the leading cosmetics industries in the world- China. Hence, the research model will be:
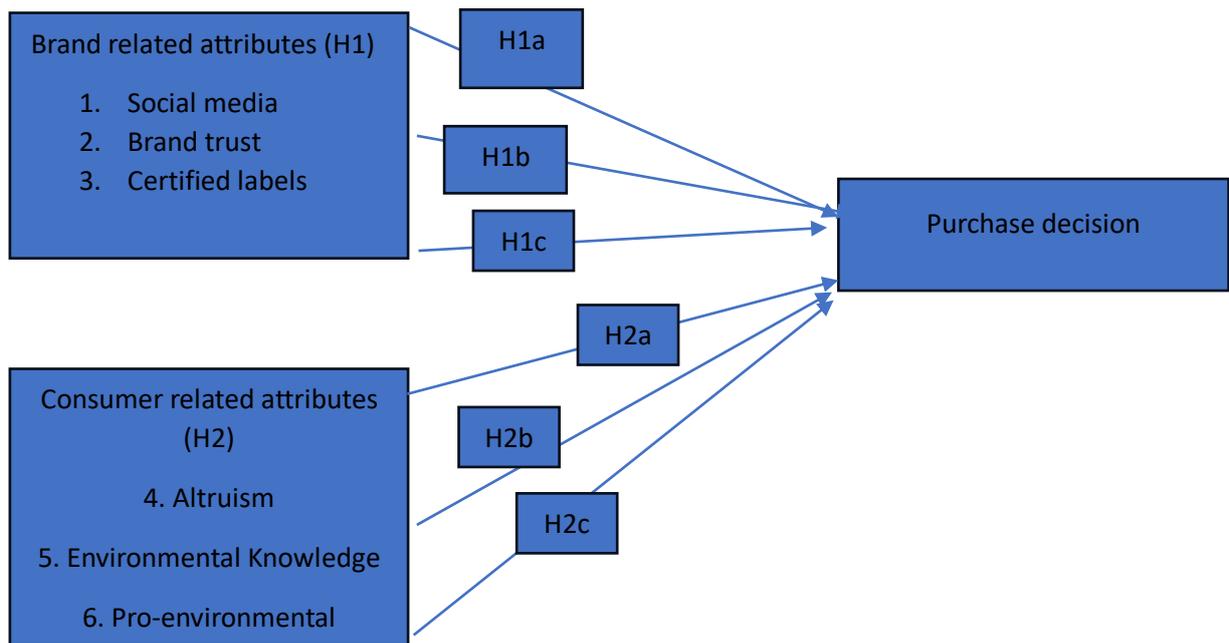
Figure 1 Research Framework

H1: Brand-related attributes have a positive impact on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China

- *H1a: Social Media Marketing has a positive impact on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China*
- *H1b: Brand Trust has a positive impact on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China*
- *H1c: Certified labels positively affect the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women consumers in China.*

H2: Consumer-related attributes have a positive impact on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China

- *H2a: Altruism has a positive implication on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China*
- *H2b: Environmental knowledge positively affects the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China*
- *H2c: Pro-environmental behaviour positively affects the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China*

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This section defines and justifies the selected research philosophies, approaches, strategies, techniques, sampling methods, data collection tools, data analysis and ethical compliance. The author used the research onion framework to determine and select the right research methods and tools. This framework includes several layers that aid in improving the effectiveness of the research process (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). Considering the framework, the authors have justified the research philosophy, approach, design, methods, strategy, data collection, sampling, time horizon, and data analysis technique.

3.2 Research Philosophy

The research philosophy is the way to gain knowledge of the topic and research aspects. Two types of philosophies are discussed in a major number of research studies: positivism and interpretivism (Bell et al., 2018). The author of this study has chosen the positivism philosophy, which is suitable for research focused on the assessment of the hypothesis of reality in society and testing theories developed in previous studies (Flick, 2015). On the other side, interpretivism philosophy improves the knowledge of the research topic and aspects by exploring the facts and delving deep into the topic (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). However, the interpretivism philosophy lacks the evidence and objectivity to prove the relationship between variables (Bell et al., 2018). Thus, interpretivism philosophy is considered unsuitable for determining and confirming what has been discussed and determined in previous studies (Saunders, 2011). Taking into account the pros and cons of philosophies, the author of this study has justified that the objectives of the current study seem quantitative but can be achieved through an objective approach. Thus, positivist philosophy revolves around scientific and statistics that have aided in determining and describing the correlation between variables (Bell et al., 2018). The researcher has further explained that the objectivity of this philosophy has aided in proving the hypothesis related to the impact of the brand-related and consumer-related attributes on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by Chinese female consumers. Apart from this, the author explained that the study's objectives require objective and numerical data for testing the association between variables under positivist research using statistical and mathematical techniques (Martens, 2014).

3.3 Research Approach

The research has used the deductive approach in this study. The deductive approach makes the research specific by focusing on the validation of the hypothesis by using objective data (Bryman, 2016). This approach may create the evidence to judge the hypothesis's acceptance or rejection. It can improve the usefulness of the results to make the users believe in the judgment and results, but this study may not explore more about the topic and can keep the information limited (Elias, 2012). On the other side, the inductive approach leads the research studies from specific to general to develop more theories (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The inductive approach of the research causes the beginning of a study based on an idea extracted from the collected ideas about the topic and research problem. It may aid in discovering more about the topic and building theories regarding the research phenomena. Nevertheless, it makes the study general and causes no evidence of the effects of one factor on another, limiting the generalizability of the research (Saunders and Lewis, 2017).

However, the researcher has justified that there is a good theoretical background regarding the impact of sustainable cosmetics and the consumer's purchase decisions. The author has included several existing research studies regarding the perception and views of consumers towards sustainable and cruelty-free brands and their intention to buy such products. However, the author found less evidence regarding the effect of cruelty-free cosmetics on women's purchase decisions in China. That is why the deductive approach is suitable for testing hypotheses by using scientific and statistical methods (Saunders and Lewis, 2017).

Another important reason for choosing the deductive approach is the connection with the positivism philosophy (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). This is because the deductive approach makes the research specific and allows the usage of numerical or objective data for assessing the attitude and perception of female consumers towards cruelty-free cosmetics. In this way, the deductive approach has assisted the researcher in making the correlation between the social media campaigns of charities and donations and the forwarding intentions of young Chinese users.

3.4 Research Design

The research design may be exploratory, explanatory or experimental. The exploratory design ascertains insight into the research topic and generates theories regarding the research topic (Saunders and Lewis, 2017). The exploratory design aids in improving the knowledge of the

research problem and topic. On the other side, the explanatory design enables the proper description of the issue and relationship between the variables by using objective and quantitative data (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The experimental design can be useful in assessing and determining the cause-and-effect relationship based on the assumed data and variables (Matthews and Ross, 2010).

Considering the objective of the study and chosen positivist philosophy, the author has adopted an explanatory research design (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). This design has helped the researcher in investigating the impact of cruelty-free cosmetics on the consumers' purchase decisions in China. From the brief literature review, it is identified that the positive attitude, environmental concern and awareness of female consumers influence their decision to purchase cruelty-free cosmetic brands. As the information available is limited, applying this research design has aided the researcher in determining the link between variables to a great extent (Edmonds and Kennedy, 2016). The author has explained and justified that the positivism philosophy and deductive approach require objective data for determining the cause and effective relationship between cruelty-free cosmetics and the purchase decisions of Chinese females.

3.5 Research Method

Research choice implies selecting and using quantitative or qualitative research methods in a study. Qualitative research methods are appropriate for studies that emphasise discovering the factors (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). It means qualitative methods allow the researcher to gain a deeper insight into the subject matter. However, these methods are unsuitable for studies requiring any form of mathematical temperament. On the contrary, quantitative methods help the researcher narrow down a study and help in developing a framework that limits the search within (Saunders and Lewis, 2017). Instead of a broad investigation, the search is narrowed down to a defined parameter. Quantitative methods use a numerical approach to answering research questions and involve the statistical judgement of the researcher (Matthews and Ross, 2010). With the presence of several statistical variables and techniques, this method increases the validity and generalisability of the research findings. However, as the data gathered from these methods are more constructive and mainly derived from mathematical formulas, it poses a limitation to the researcher (Saunders and Lewis, 2017).

Considering the nature of the study, the researcher has used quantitative research to pile up the objective data from the respondents to achieve the purpose of this study. The author has enlightened the importance of the quantitative method in this research, which has assisted in quantifying the data and statistical investigation of data to determine the association between cruelty-free cosmetics and the purchase decisions of female consumers in China. Along with this, the author has justified that the positivist philosophy requires objective and numerical data that supports the decision to use quantitative research to validate the relationship between variables (Saunders and Lewis, 2017).

3.6 Research Strategy

This research has executed the online survey questionnaire for accessing the participants and collecting the data. The online survey saves time in collecting the data and the cost of travelling and stationary (Hair, 2015). This is because a physical survey causes the author to travel to different locations to approach the participants and collect the data, which consumes too much time and cost of the research (Matthews and Ross, 2010). That is why the author said that an online survey was suitable for accessing the participants and collecting the information with less effort (Taylor, 2013).

In addition to this, the researcher has neglected interviews, observation and focused groups. The researcher put light on the drawbacks of these methods that they cannot help in quantifying the responses of survey participants, but the questionnaire aids in piling up the objective data to assess the relationship between variables (Saunders and Lewis, 2017). Along with this, the author justified that the positivist philosophy requires numerical data, and the deductive approach requires focus on certain items and variables to make research specific, which can be achieved by the questionnaire (Hair, 2015). The self-administered questionnaire has aided in collecting objective information to test and validate the factors stimulating women to purchase cruelty-free and sustainable cosmetic brands and products.

For the survey questionnaire, the research question and formation of questions play a very important role. The questions in the questionnaire can be close-ended or open-ended. The researcher has used close-ended questions as they can only make the participants' responses objective and quantified (Bell et al., 2018). On the other hand, open-ended questions may be suitable in qualitative research, which aids in exploring more about the research topic and aspects. Considering the benefit of the close-ended questions, the author determined the right

items and variables and raised the quality of wording and direction of questions to get the right answer as per the knowledge of respondents rather than leading them to answer according to the expectation of the researcher (Saunders and Lewis, 2017). Therefore, the researcher has applied the Likert scale questions that have helped in determining the scale for each item and question in the questionnaire. It aided the participant to just tick on the scale for each question, helped in measuring the responses, and processed the data in statistical methods to measure the relationship between variables. The scales may be 5 or 7, but this study just employed five scales (strongly agree (1), agree (2), neutral (3), disagree (4), and strongly disagree (5)) (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). The measure and items of research questions are extracted from the literature and quantitative research studies showing factors that affect the behaviour of the consumer to buy cosmetic products (Zahid et al., 2018; Grappe et al., 2020; Davies and Gutsche, 2016; Lavelle et al., 2015).

Sl. No	Statement
	Social media (Zahid et al., 2018)
	I use social media and see ads of cruelty related cosmetics
	From social media only, I became aware of this concept
	I am aware of some cruelty-free cosmetics now
	Social media influences me to buy cruelty-free cosmetics
	Brand trust (Munuera-Alemán, 2003)
	With Cruelty-free Cosmetics, I get what I am looking for
	They will never disappoint me for the reasons I purchase them
	Cruelty-free cosmetics give me certainty about the quality
	If Cruelty-free cosmetics are not available at one store, I will try other sources
	Certified labels (Grappe et al., 2020)
	Certified labels on Cruelty-free cosmetics suggest no harmful chemicals
	Certified labels on Cruelty-free cosmetics suggest no controversial chemicals
	Certified labels generate credibility that information on Cruelty-free cosmetics can be trusted.
	Labels on Cruelty-free cosmetics make the perception that animals are not harmed while

	making this cosmetic
	Altruism (Davies and Gutsche, 2016)
	The environment of present times attracts me towards cruelty-free cosmetic
	Animal welfare is important to me
	Cruelty-free cosmetic gives me self-satisfaction
	I feel social guilt if I buy the usual cosmetics
	Quality of Cruelty-free cosmetics is higher
	Environmental knowledge (Groff et al., 2014)
	I am aware of the animal testing process to produce cosmetic
	I am aware of the negative effects of animal testing on the environment
	I know how to select products that do not harm the environment
	Pro-environmental behaviour (Lavelle et al., 2015)
	I can accept cutting my standards of living if it can protect the environment
	I can pay a higher price for cruelty-free cosmetics if they protect the environment
	I can support higher taxes if it can protect the environment
	I can sacrifice some personal comforts for such cruelty-free things
	I feel my behaviour can bring about positive environmental change
	Purchase decision
	I will buy cruelty-free cosmetics only
	I will suggest my friends and relatives also
	I will always buy cruelty-free cosmetics despite the high prices

3.7 Data Collection

Data is an important element in the research because the data's type and nature influence the results' quality and reliability (Matthews and Ross, 2010). The data may be primary and secondary. The primary research may aid in gathering new and fresh data that may be applicable for exploring the facts and validating the association between the research variables (Bell et al., 2018). Thus, the researcher has used primary research to collect novel information and data to make the research findings unique and add value to the findings

(Saunders and Lewis, 2017). The primary research has enabled the author to review the opinions of women consumers in China on how they perceive cruelty-free products and brands. The preferences and decisions of consumers change over the years because of changes in the market and innovation in the products or services. The secondary research could help in assessing and describing the behaviour of people towards sustainable and cruelty-free cosmetic brands, but it cannot help in validating the association of the factors with the purchase decision of women. Therefore, the research has used the survey questionnaire to gather new and fresh objective data from women consumers of cosmetic brands in China. (See section 3.6)

The Process of the Survey:

The author accessed the participants online on WeChat and asked them to read the information about the study and fill in the consent form. It helped collect the respondent's informed consent to improve ethical compliance (Saunders and Lewis, 2017). After collecting consent from the author, the researcher shared the link to Wenjuanxing, the survey website. The questionnaire was translated by the participants in the language (Chinese and English) so that they could better be understood. The author followed the participants and collected the questionnaire within 15 days, which aided in expediting the research. However, only 129 questionnaires were filled out by the respondents that were only considered for the determination of the results and association between the variables.

3.8 Sampling

Sampling is essentially required in research to accomplish the research purpose within the budget and time. It is not possible to include every variable from the population in the research because the target population is very large and spread across geographical areas (Saunders and Lewis, 2017). Therefore, the researcher in this study has withdrawn a sample of 145 women from China. This study focused on the women's decision for cruelty-free cosmetic products, which is why the author believed that only the women's response can aid in measuring the impact of the factors on the purchase behaviour of female consumers.

The sampling techniques may be probability and non-probability sampling. The probability sampling method may allow people an equal chance to participate in the research. It may save the time of the researcher in sampling and may help in complying with equality laws. It may

remove the issue of researcher bias (Saunders and Lewis, 2017). On the other side, non-probability sampling may allow the author to deliberate on the target population to find the best participant who can answer the questions in the survey (Saunders and Lewis, 2012). The author chose a convenience sampling technique that helped in finding the population of women consumers who like to purchase and consume the product of cruelty-free cosmetic brands in China. This method aided in applying criteria such as age, preference for cruelty-free products, geography and others to find the right participants. Even though this method increased the risk of researcher error and bias in sampling, this method improved the value of the research by hiring the right person to get answers to the questions in the questionnaire (Lim and Ting, 2013).

However, the author faced challenges in accessing the participants because of China's large population. The author then started surfing on social media platforms and applied the filters to find the respondents. The respondents included 200 participants, but the criteria of the experience of the cruelty-free cosmetic product and active user of WeChat helped in selecting 148 respondents. The author sent the questionnaire to all 148 respondents, but only 129 filled out the questionnaire, which the researcher considered generating the results and interpreting.

The following formula has been applied in sampling.

Formula:

N> 100+8m

N= Participants Number

M Number of IVs (**Lim and Ting, 2013**)

There are 3 independent variables in this research:

N > 100+8*6

N> 100+48

N > 148

So, the selected sample size was 148 Chinese female consumers.

3.9 Reliability and Validity

The assessment of the reliability and validity of the study may aid in ensuring the consistency of the items and instruments and the accuracy of the questions (Bell et al., 2018). In this way, the author has ensured the right participants in the study by using convenience sampling and assured the effectiveness of the research instrument and questions for each variable to enhance the quality of outcomes. The reliability shows the internal consistency in the research questionnaire that has been analysed by using Cronbach's α test. The effective and high consistency may improve the quality of the outcomes and their usefulness for the stakeholders of the report (Saunders and Lewis, 2017).

For validity, the measure of accuracy needs to be improved to enhance its usage and value (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Therefore, the author considered the standard studies and literature to prepare the research questions to improve the items' accuracy in assessing women's views toward cruelty-free brands. Further, the author used the pilot survey of 10 participants who have provided advice on the items. It aided in improving the selection of words in phrasing the questions and removing the jargon (Bell et al., 2018). Besides this, the pilot survey has helped in determining the effectiveness of items and questions in collecting the answers required to achieve the research objective.

3.10 Time Horizon

The time horizons in the research influence the data collection and interval of the time for collecting the data. Therefore, cross-sectional and longitude are two types of horizons where cross-sectional research studies focus on the short-term period, but it collects the views of different people to generate the results in a specific time and compare the results between different categories (Bell et al., 2018). On the other side, longitudinal studies consider the data over different points of time over a long time to provide the findings and interpret the results at different points of time. Due to insufficient time and budget for research, the author has employed a cross-sectional study to collect the information from the different participants simultaneously (Saunders and Lewis, 2017). It has aided the researcher in selecting different variables to determine the impact of each factor and variable on the purchase behaviour of the women and how the brand-related and consumer-related factors affect the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China. Thus, the cross-sectional horizon has aided in attaining the purpose of this research.

3.11 Data Analysis

The data collected in the study influenced the choice of data analysis method. The quantitative and numerical data collected through the survey questionnaire has encouraged the author to use the quantitative data analysis method to investigate the consumer's views on cruelty-free cosmetics. The qualitative technique cannot statistically investigate the numerical information, but it can be useful for the qualitative and subjective data in research (Smith, 2015). Thus, the author has applied the statistical technique to generate the findings and results. The author has applied methods such as descriptive statistics, regression analysis and Post Hoc Tests to achieve the research purpose (Treiman, 2014). The regression analysis has been used to determine the factors that mostly stimulate women in China to buy cruelty-free cosmetics and how they cause a change in the perception and attitude of women. The descriptive statistics have helped the author in determining the effectiveness in the data distribution and applicability of the data sets for applying statistical techniques to prove the impact of factors on the purchase decisions of women consumers. In addition, the Post Hoc Test is used for multiple comparisons, which has enabled the author to determine and measure the age difference in the purchase of women towards cosmetic brands, ensuring no animal testing.

The statistical investigation is very complex and time-consuming. To resolve this issue, the author has employed SPSS analysis for easy investigation and analysis of the data in this research (Mishra et al., 2019). This software saved the time and effort of the author in the analysis and presentation of the results because it helped to create the findings by just putting the value and data in the formula and spreadsheet (Treiman, 2014). It automatically tested and presented the results in the tables that helped the author in easy interpretation of the data.

3.12 Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations refer to the set of principles that guide a researcher while conducting research in terms of research practices and designs. These principles are- informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity of participants, voluntary participation, results communication, plagiarism, and potential for harm (Miller et al., 2012).

- Informed consent is an important requirement for ethical research. Therefore, the author provided proper information to each respondent on social media and distributed the questionnaire after the arrival of the consent of the respondents. It

aided in improving the voluntary participation of the respondents in the survey (Pimple, 2017).

- The data in the form of hardcopies are kept safely in locked cabinets, and softcopies are kept as encrypted files in the computer (Tripathy, 2013). To prevent the potential for loss, the researcher ensured that a backup of the dissertation and data was taken at regular intervals.

- The work of different scholars and authors that have been used in the research is properly referenced, and in-text citations have been provided in the research to avoid the risk of plagiarism (Pimple, 2017).

3.13 Summary

This chapter has described and justified the research methods and instruments used in this study. It has defined that the author has employed positivism philosophy, deductive approach, quantitative method, descriptive design, survey questionnaire, primary research, cross-sectional horizon, and SPSS data analysis.

Chapter 4: Results and Findings

4.1. Introduction

This section of the research report examines the survey data of about 129 research respondents. The survey respondents' responses have been analysed using SPSS analysis that helped in applying regression, correlation analysis, descriptive statistics and reliability tests.

4.2 Reliability Analysis

Name of variable	Item	Value
Brand trust	.908	4
Certified labels	.920	4
Environmental knowledge	.981	5
Pro-environmental behaviour	.972	4
Social media	.986	3
Purchase decision	.985	5

Table 1 Reliability Test

Cronbach alpha is applied for testing and evaluating the reliability of instruments and measures in quantitative research. This technique aids in assessing the link between the variables and items included in the questionnaire (Holcomb, 2016). The values of Cronbach alpha should be 0.50 for all the items, which shows that the questionnaire has high dependability and is suitable for conducting further full-scale investigation. All the items, such as brand trust, certified label, environmental knowledge, pro-environmental behaviour, social media, and purchase decision, have a Cronbach alpha value of more than 0.900, which indicates all the items and questions in the questionnaire are very consistent.

4.3 Demographic Information of Participants

1. Age:					
		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-25	24	18.6	18.6	18.6
	26-35	30	23.3	23.3	41.9
	36-45	14	10.9	10.9	52.7
	46-55	33	25.6	25.6	78.3

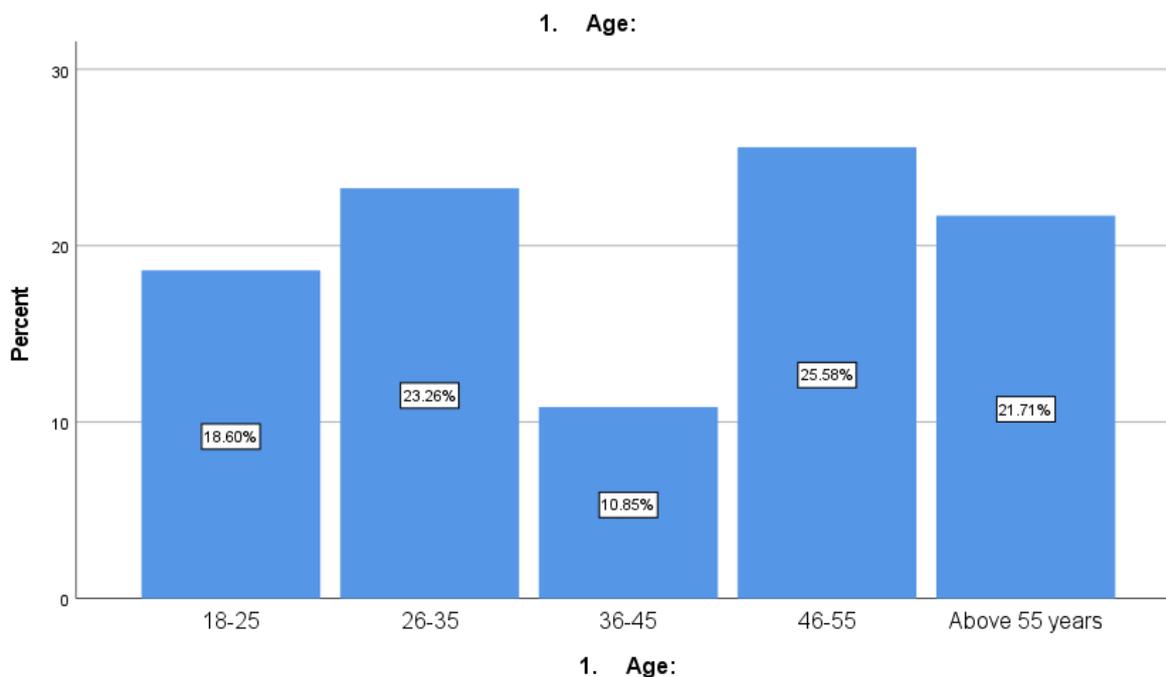|					
	Above 55 years	28	21.7	21.7	100.0
	Total	129	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 Age Group

Figure 2 Age Group

From the analysis of the above Figure 1, it is found that this study has included consumers of different age groups in this study to make it comprehensive. However, the participants in the age group of 36-45 indicate that consumers of this category are less oriented towards cruelty-free and sustainable cosmetic brands. Considering all the age groups, it is found that 18.60% of participants in the 18-25, 23.26% of participants in the 26-35 age group, 10.85% of participants in the 36-45 age group, 25.58% of consumers in 46-55 age group and 21.71% participant above 55 years contributed in collecting the data and completing the survey. Consequently, it is found that people above 45 years are more aware and inclined towards sustainable cosmetic brands that offer cruelty-free cosmetic products.

2. Education					
		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Primary Education	30	23.3	23.3	23.3
	Secondary Education	28	21.7	21.7	45.0

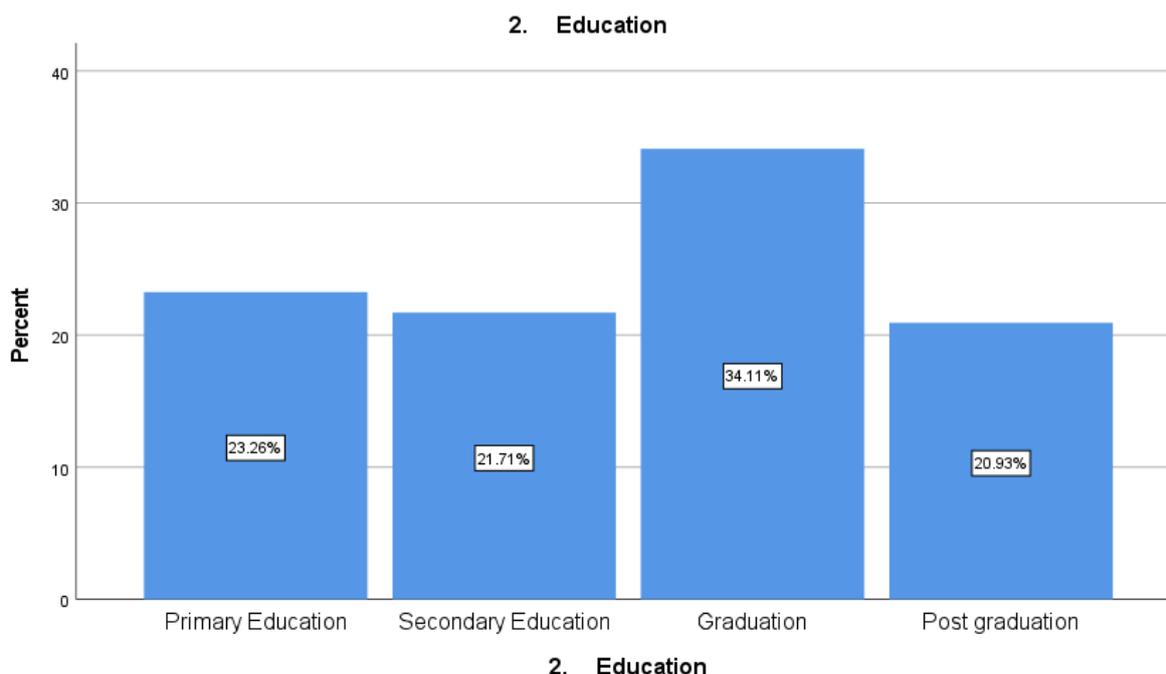|				
Graduation	44	34.1	34.1	79.1
Post Graduation	27	20.9	20.9	100.0
Total	129	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 Education

Figure 3 Education

From Figure 2, education has been included in the questionnaire for determining the literacy and education level of the participants. It was found that 23.26% of participants completed their primary education, 21.71% completed secondary education, 34.11% were graduates, and 20.93% were post-graduates. In a nutshell, most of the participants were graduates, which means most people in China are graduates and post-graduates, which may have implications for their purchase decision.

3. Occupation					
		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Employed fulltime	26	20.2	20.2	20.2
	Part-time	21	16.3	16.3	36.4
	Unemployed	27	20.9	20.9	57.4

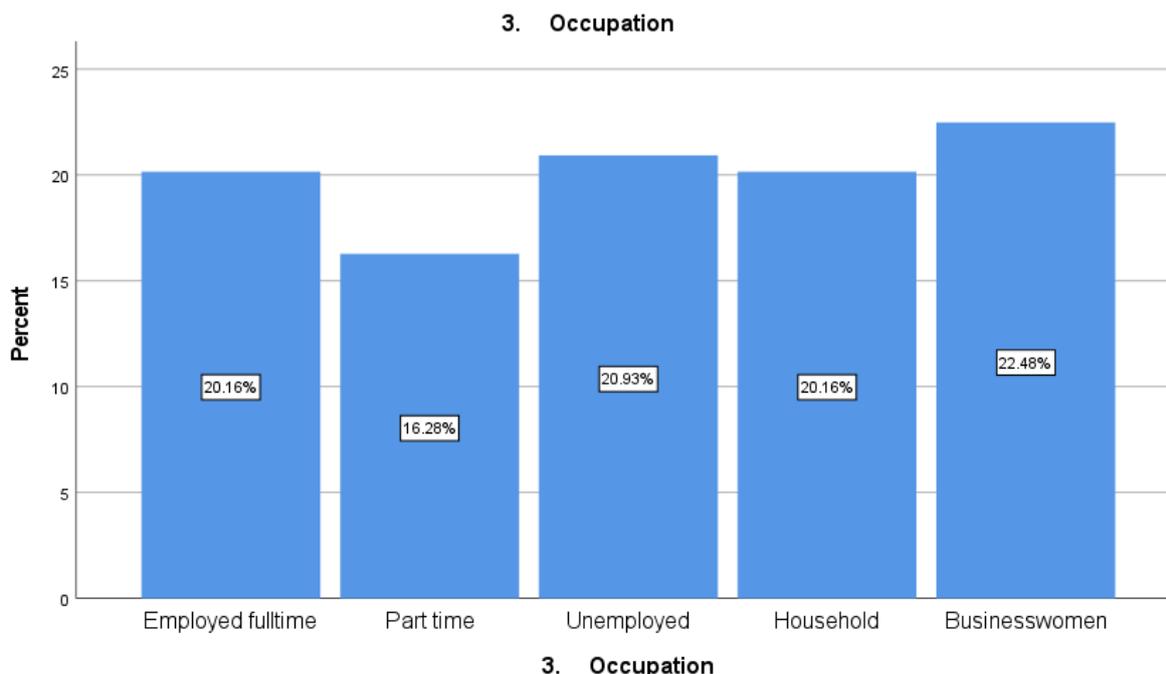|				
Household	26	20.2	20.2	77.5
Businesswomen	29	22.5	22.5	100.0
Total	129	100.0	100.0	

Table 4 Occupation

Figure 4 Occupation

Based on the chart (Figure 3), it can be inferred that employment plays an important role in the decision of the consumer. The researcher in this study included participants from different occupations. This research has included 20.16% full-time employed, 16.28% part-time employed, 20.93% unemployed, 20.16% household and 22.48% businesswomen in the survey. However, most of the women participants in this study were businesswomen.

4. Have you ever purchased and used cruelty-free cosmetics?				
		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	129	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 5 Usage of Cruelty-Free Cosmetic Products

4. Have you ever purchased and used cruelty free cosmetics?

Figure 5 Usage of Cruelty-Free Cosmetic Product

The researcher has included the women in the survey who have ever used cruelty-free cosmetic brands. From Figure 4, it is found that all the participants in the survey ever used cruelty-free brands. It has contributed to improving the reliability and effectiveness of the study because users of the cruelty-free brands may provide true information on the research question in the survey.

5. From where did you purchase cruelty-free cosmetics?					
		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Shops	57	44.2	44.2	44.2
	Online website	72	55.8	55.8	100.0
	Total	129	100.0	100.0	

Table 6 Purchase Method

Figure 6 Purchase Method

Based on the above chart, it can be said that the consumer purchases cosmetic products from different online websites and shops. It is found that 44.19% of women purchase cruelty-free cosmetic products from Shops, and 55.81% of consumers purchase cruelty-free cosmetic products from online websites. This means most women purchase cosmetic products from online websites, which shows that online shopping is more common among Chinese women.

4.4. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
SM	129	1.00	5.00	3.6783	.69189	-.890	.213	1.862	.423
BT	129	1.25	5.00	3.6027	.65447	-.852	.213	.836	.423
CL	129	1.50	5.00	3.6880	.67679	-.834	.213	1.020	.423

A	129	1.80	5.00	3.9225	.59703	-.721	.213	.647	.423
EK	129	1.67	5.00	3.8916	.73995	-.585	.213	-.039	.423
PB	129	2.60	5.00	3.9845	.52058	-.446	.213	.197	.423
PD	129	1.00	5.00	3.8010	.74235	-1.076	.213	1.815	.423
Valid N (listwise)	129								

Table 7 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics have been applied for assessing and measuring the responses of the participants to the research items. The descriptive statistics table has included 7 constructs. It is found that Pro-environmental behaviour (M= 3.98, SD= .520) has gained the highest favourable responses from the consumers that are pursued by Altruism (M= 3.92, SD= .597), environmental knowledge (M= 3.89, SD= .739), certified label (M= 3.68, SD= .676), social media (M= 3.67, SD= .691), and brand trust (M= 3.66, SD= .654). It can be said that all the constructs gained responses from the participants above the average. They agreed on the average score that all the included constructs affect the purchase decision of women in China for cruelty-free cosmetic brands.

Kurtosis and Skewness are two important measures to assess the data distribution. The Skewness should fall in the range between -2 and +2, while the Kurtosis should fall between -10 and +10. Thus, skewness and Kurtosis for all the variables fall in the range, which shows that the distribution of the data is normal.
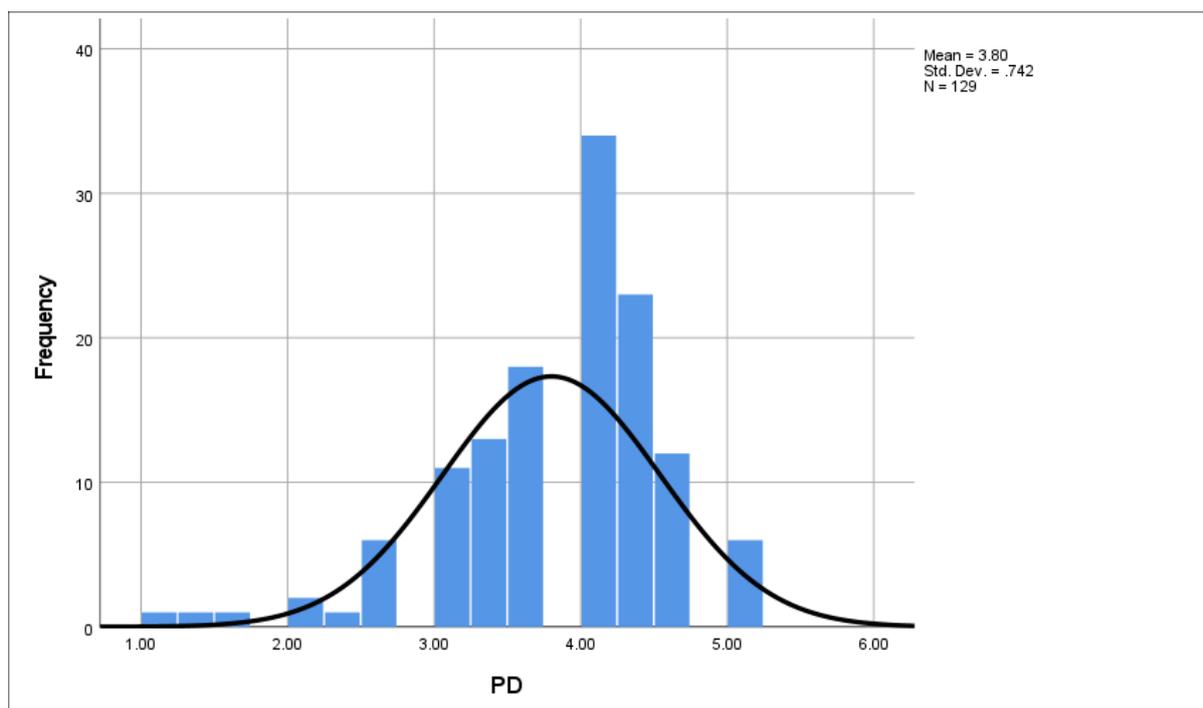
Figure 7 Histogram

From the histogram, it is found that the curve line in the diagram goes up and comes down. The upscale of the curve line is balanced in the chart, which indicates the normal distribution of the data. Consequently, the scales can be further tested in the regression analysis.

4.5 Regression Analysis (Brand-Related Attributes and Purchase Decision)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.572[a]	.327	.311	.61619
a. Predictors: (Constant), CL, SM, BT				

Table 8 Model Summary

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	23.078	3	7.693	20.260	.000[b]
	Residual	47.462	125	.380		

	Total	70.539	128			
a. Dependent Variable: PD						
b. Predictors: (Constant), CL, SM, BT						

Table 9 ANOVA Table

Coefficients								
		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.091	.357		3.059	.003		
	SM	.117	.104	.109	1.129	.261	.572	1.747
	BT	.373	.115	.329	3.232	.002	.519	1.926
	CL	.253	.099	.231	2.566	.011	.666	1.500
a. Dependent Variable: PD								

Table 10 Coefficient Table

The model summary presents the r square 0.327 that indicates that consumer brand-related attributes factors (social media, brand trust and certified label) trigger a variation of 32% in the purchase decision for cruelty-free cosmetic brands. Along with this, the ANOVA table demonstrates (3, 125) = 20.260, P<.05 indicates that the regression model is fit and may help in determining the antecedents for affecting the purchase decision of women. Apart from this, the coefficient table explains social media with (B= 0.109, P= 0.261, P>0.05), brand trust with (B= 0.329, P= .002, P<0.05) and certified label with (B= 0.231, P= .011, P<0.05). It indicates that the p-value for social media is more than 0.05, which shows no impact of social media on the purchase decision of women for cruelty-free cosmetic products. However, brand trust and certified labels play an important role in motivating women to purchase cruelty-free cosmetic products. It means Chinese women believe that certified label indicates the quality of the product and cruelty-free testing of the product quality. It improves their attitude

towards cosmetic brands and affects their decision to buy cruelty-free products from sustainable cosmetic brands.

4.6 Regression Analysis (Consumer-Related Factors and Purchase Decision)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.622[a]	.387	.372	.58825
a. Predictors: (Constant), PB, A, EK				

Table 11 Model Summary

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	27.285	3	9.095	26.284	.000[b]
	Residual	43.254	125	.346		
	Total	70.539	128			
a. Dependent Variable: PD						
b. Predictors: (Constant), PB, A, EK						

Table 12 ANOVA table

Coefficients								
		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-.144	.475		-.302	.763		
	A	.192	.093	.154	2.068	.041	.883	1.133
	EK	.011	.077	.011	.146	.884	.843	1.187

	PB	.790	.110	.554	7.206	.000	.829	1.206
a. Dependent Variable: PD								

Table 13 Coefficient Table

The regression analysis has been applied to determine the antecedents of cruelty-free cosmetic brands. The regression analysis has included the assessment of altruism, environmental knowledge and pro-environmental behaviour. The model summary (table) presents R Square 0.387, which indicates that the consumer-related attributes in this study explain 38% variation in the purchase decision of women consumers in China. In addition to this, the ANOVA model determines and shows that (3, 125) = 26.284, P<.05. Thus, the p-value is less than the significance level of 0.05, indicating that the regression model is fit for analysing the antecedents of the purchase decision of the cruelty-free among the women consumers.

Further, the coefficient table shows that altruism with (B= 0.154, P= 0.041, P<0.05), environmental knowledge with (B= 0.011, P= .884, P>0.05) and pro-environmental behaviour with (B= 0.554, P= .000, P<0.05). It means the P-value of the environmental knowledge is more than 0.05, which means this factor is not significant in stimulating the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic products by women in China. However, altruism and pro-environmental behaviour significantly stimulate women to purchase cruelty-free cosmetic products. This is because the p-values of these factors are less than 0.05.

4.7 Age Wise Variation

Descriptives								
PD								
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
18-25	24	3.0279	.98680	.20143	2.6112	3.4446	1.00	4.33
26-35	30	3.7560	.34909	.06374	3.6256	3.8864	3.00	4.33
36-45	14	3.7621	.35629	.09522	3.5564	3.9679	3.00	4.33
46-55	33	4.3230	.55612	.09681	4.1258	4.5202	2.67	5.00

Above 55 years	28	3.9161	.58601	.11074	3.6888	4.1433	3.00	4.67
Total	129	3.8010	.74235	.06536	3.6717	3.9303	1.00	5.00

Table 14 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistic table shows the response rate of the consumers in different age groups. It means the mean for the response of the participants from the 46–55-year group is more than other age groups, which shows that consumers in this age group prefer to buy products from sustainable cosmetic brands. However, the mean score for other consumers or participants in other age groups is more than 3.0. That is why it is necessary to test whether women's purchase decision varies age-wise.

ANOVA					
PD					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	23.789	4	5.947	15.775	.000
Within Groups	46.750	124	.377		
Total	70.539	128			

Table 15 ANOVA

The ANOVA table shows that (4, 128) = 15.775, P<.05. It means the regression model is fit and significant to test how the decision of the women in different age groups to purchase for cruelty-free cosmetic products vary.

4.8 Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons					
Dependent Variable: PD					
LSD					
(I) 1. Age:	(J) 1. Age:	Mean	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval

		Difference (I-J)			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
18-25	26-35	-.72808[*]	.16816	.000	-1.0609	-.3953
	36-45	-.73423[*]	.20649	.001	-1.1429	-.3255
	46-55	1.29511[*]	.16472	.000	-1.6211	-.9691
	Above 55 years	-.88815[*]	.17080	.000	-1.2262	-.5501
26-35	18-25	.72808[*]	.16816	.000	.3953	1.0609
	36-45	-.00614	.19874	.975	-.3995	.3872
	46-55	-.56703[*]	.15489	.000	-.8736	-.2605
	Above 55 years	-.16007	.16134	.323	-.4794	.1593
36-45	18-25	.73423[*]	.20649	.001	.3255	1.1429
	26-35	.00614	.19874	.975	-.3872	.3995
	46-55	-.56089[*]	.19584	.005	-.9485	-.1733
	Above 55 years	-.15393	.20098	.445	-.5517	.2439
46-55	18-25	1.29511[*]	.16472	.000	.9691	1.6211
	26-35	.56703[*]	.15489	.000	.2605	.8736
	36-45	.56089[*]	.19584	.005	.1733	.9485
	Above 55 years	.40696[*]	.15776	.011	.0947	.7192
Above 55 years	18-25	.88815[*]	.17080	.000	.5501	1.2262
	26-35	.16007	.16134	.323	-.1593	.4794
	36-45	.15393	.20098	.445	-.2439	.5517
	46-55	-.40696[*]	.15776	.011	-.7192	-.0947
*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.						

Table 16 Multiple Comparison
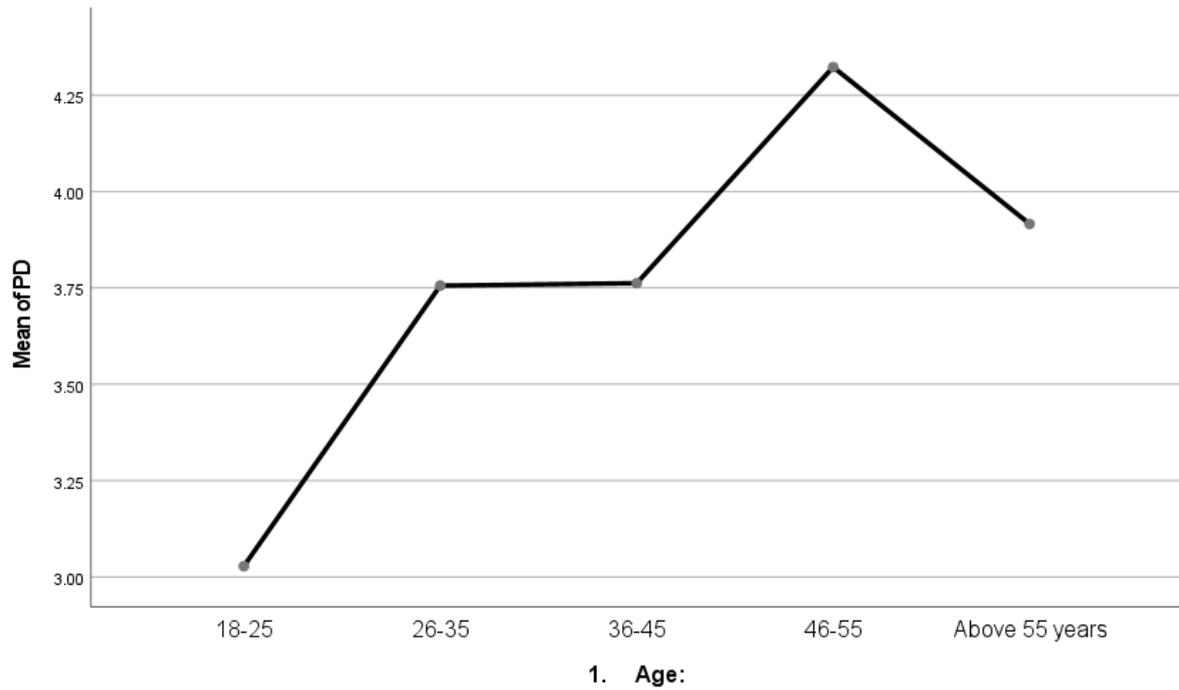
The analysis found that there is a significant difference between values in the purchase decisions of Chinese women in different age groups. The mean value for women in the 46-55 age group is the highest and most significant, which means women of this age group are more environmentally concerned and believe in sustainable cosmetic brands.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Discussion is the critical section of the research report. This is because the discussion provides the summary of findings and compares them with previous studies to determine whether it is similar or different from previous studies.

From the analysis, it has been determined that brand-related attributes of cruelty-free cosmetic brands influence the purchase intention of female consumers in China. Women in China have been conscious of environmental protection and the impact of animal product testing on the lives of animals and the environment. Thus, this study has revealed the insignificant impact of social media on the purchase intention of women to buy cruelty-free cosmetic products. It means the social media marketing of the brands may not cause a change in the behaviour of consumers. In the context of social media marketing, it has contrasted previous studies that mentioned that social media acts as an activator in increasing environmental awareness by providing significant information regarding the companies' activities to positively influence buyers' intention to buy cruelty-free products (Shen and Bissell, 2013; Abzari et al., 2014). However, its results are somewhat similar to studies that explained that social media such as YouTube and Instagram are not effective in causing a change in the purchase intention of consumers of all ages (Kudeshia and Kumar, 2017). This means this study has not determined the impact of social media marketing of cruelty-free brands on the purchase intention of consumers of different ages and genders. It can influence the comparability of the findings of previous studies, including age and gender-wise differences of individual factors of brands on the purchase intention of the consumers. Accordingly, future studies can be planned on this factor to measure how social media marketing may cause a change in the purchase intention and behaviour of Chinese consumers in different age categories and gender groups.

Nevertheless, it has been presented that brand trust and certified label plays an important role in motivating women to purchase cruelty-free cosmetic products. It can be said that women in China believe that certified labels on products by cruelty-free brands may improve the attitude of women towards the brands. It may significantly positively impact the purchase intention of the females. Similarly, the author has explained that the trust level of female consumers in the brands showing their products are cruelty-free and tested without using animals can positively affect the consumers' purchase intention. With respect to brand trust, it

has supported the previous studies that explained that a high degree of brand trust among the consumers in cruelty-free cosmetic brands and products has a strong positive impact on the attitude and purchase intention of the consumers (Sheehan and Lee, 2014; Fornari et al., 2016). However, the current study has only focused on women consumers in China, which makes it different and unique from the previous studies. In the context of the certified label, it has been in line with secondary research studies included in the literature that certified label on cruelty-free cosmetic product improves the credibility of items and brands that positively influence consumers' purchase behaviour. The confirmation with previous studies has improved the value of the results and insights for the businesses to improve brand trust and certification of products to get a positive response from female consumers (Cheng, 2019; Sheehan and Lee, 2014). However, this study has just focused on women consumers, which can have implications for the validity and quality of the information. It is needed to be addressed by including men and women in future research studies.

With respect to the second objective, this study has analysed and presented the effects of consumer-related factors on the purchase intention of women in China to buy cruelty-free cosmetics. So, it has been ascertained and confirmed that consumer-related factors affect the behaviour of women and their intention towards cruelty-free cosmetics. However, not all the included factors significantly influence the perception and intention of consumers (Malik and Singhal, 2017; Alaouir et al., 2019). It has revealed that environmental knowledge is not a significant factor in triggering the variation in the intention of female consumers in China to purchase cruelty-free and eco-friendly cosmetics. Knowledge of the environment and concern are not important for women in making decisions. The results of this research are opposite to previous studies, which argued that consumers are more inclined to purchase sustainable products as their awareness of the environment and the impact of animal testing of the product on the environment influence their attitude toward the brands (Bray et al., 2011; Shimul et al., 2021). This study is not supported by the secondary research in the literature review that has raised the question of the effectiveness of consideration of this factor in the marketing of cruelty-free products. Hence, these factors need to be tested based on different age groups and gender groups in China to evaluate whether they cause a difference in the purchase intention of consumers from different gender groups and age categories.

On the other side, it has confirmed the significant positive effect of altruism and pro-environmental behaviour on the purchase intention of female consumers. The author has assumed and described that women are more sensitive and emotional, which makes them inclined to care for others, animals and the environment. It positively impacts their intention to purchase only cruelty-free and sustainable cosmetic products or brands. This means this study's results align with previous studies that investigated that more altruistic consumers are likely to support companies offering ethical products (Alaouir et al., 2019). It contradicted one of the studies in the literature that explained that altruism does not have implications on the purchase decision of Colombian women consumers for cosmetic products (Dasunika and Gunathilake, 2020). In the context of pro-environmental behaviour, it has confirmed the hypothesis and supported previous studies explaining that pro-environmental behaviour determines the attitude of the consumer towards cruelty-free brands, and it causes a change in the purchase decision and behaviour of the consumers.

It means that altruism and pro-environmental behaviour influence the expectations and desires of consumers, and they are more likely to purchase the products of companies that use ethical practices and avoid testing products on animals. The social guilt and bad feelings towards animal-based product testing affect people's concerns, and women are more emotional and sensitive, which affects their decisions positively if the brands ensure sustainability in product testing and production (Dasunika and Gunathilake, 2020).

Regarding the third objective, the research has determined and explained the significant difference between women in different age groups. It means that women in different age groups may have different attitudes towards cruelty-free cosmetics that cause a change in their purchase intention accordingly. This study has enlightened that women in the 46-55 age group consider the cruelty-free approach of the brands, and it creates change and variation in the purchase intention of women of this age group more than women from other age groups included in the survey. This is an interesting and unique revelation of the research because it has explored the age-wise difference in the consumer's decision on how women in different age groups perceive cruelty-free brands. It would contribute to improving the value of the study to the user and cosmetic brands to improve the marketing strategies and positioning of their brands. It would impact the performance of the brands in the market and their strength to compete in the market by attracting maximum consumers.

Hypothesis	Accept or Reject
H1: Brand-related attributes have a positive impact on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China	Accept
• H1a: Social Media Marketing has a positive impact on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China	Reject
• H1b: Brand Trust has a positive impact on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China	Accept
• H1c: Cruelty-free (certified) labels positively affect the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women consumers in China.	Accept
H2: Consumer-related factors have a positive implication on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China	Accept
• H2a: Altruism has a positive implication on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China	Accept
• H2b: Environmental knowledge positively affects the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China	Reject
• H2c: Pro-environmental behaviour positively affects the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands by women in China	Accept
H3: The age of women consumers in China is positively associated with the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics	Accept

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Limitations
6.1 Conclusion

This study aims to identify factors stimulating female consumers' purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics in China. It has evaluated and investigated the brand-related factors and consume-related factors and how they influence the purchase decisions of women consumers. The author employed the survey questionnaire to collect the quantitative and objective data to determine the association between variables. The SPSS analysis enabled the generation of the statistical findings and tested the hypothesis for investigating the factors that stimulate the positive behaviour of women towards cruelty-free brands.

From the analysis of results, it is found that brand-related factors (brand trust and certified labels) play an important role in women consumers' decision to purchase. The trust of the women consumer in the products with certified label and brand of the company improve the positive attitude of consumers. It has been confirmed that the social media marketing of cosmetic brands in China does not impact the purchase behaviour of women to buy cruelty-free cosmetic products. The evaluation of the social media and its effect on the purchase behaviour of the consumers. Social media provide information to improve the awareness of the consumer, but less activeness of the women on social media causes less variation in their purchase decision for cruelty-free products and brands.

Further, it has revealed that altruism and pro-environmental behaviour positively affect women's purchase of cruelty-free products in China. The animal-friendly labels and claims lift brands' perceptions by improving the emotional attachment of the women to the brands. It has described the concern of the consumer regarding the bad impact of the animal testing of cosmetic products on their perception towards the brands. Hence, companies following the sustainable and cruelty-free process of testing products can enhance their reputation in the Chinese market and may improve their sales and market share. Further, it has been determined that the environmental knowledge of women consumers in China is not able to explain the variation in their purchase decisions. The knowledge of buyers regarding the environmental impact of animal testing products affects the perception of consumers, but this study has shown that women do not have the environmental concern and knowledge that limits the stimulation to women for buying cruelty-free products.

Eventually, it can be summarised that the age group of women may affect the decision of women to buy cruelty-free products. The purchase of sustainable and cruelty-free cosmetic vary among women from different age groups. This study has explored that women between 46 and 55 years are more inclined to buy the currently free cosmetics as they are more concerned about animal welfare in China. People in this age group are less fashionable, but they prefer to get quality and sustainable products to be healthy and to avoid the adverse implications on their health. Conversely, young age women are more inclined to purchase conventional cosmetic products to look better and more beautiful. It influences their attitude and purchase of cruelty-free brands in cosmetic items.

6.2 Limitations

This study has mentioned some limitations that can affect the value of the research findings. This study has targeted only women and consumers to assess the response of consumers regarding cruelty-free brands. It may limit the depth of the results and their usage for businesses to make effective decisions because the behaviour of the consumer toward the cruelty-free product may vary gender-wise (Alaouir et al., 2019). In addition to this, it was conducted in China only, which cannot predict the attitudes and decisions of women in other countries regarding how they like to buy cruelty-free cosmetic products. It may not provide comparative results, but the behaviour and attitude of the consumer toward cruelty-free cosmetic brands may differ geography-wise (Dasunika and Gunathilake, 2020).

Along with this, this study has been based on limited factors, but several factors may play an important role in affecting the purchase of the product by the consumer. It can affect the usage of the outcomes of this study in the companies because it explores and confirms limited factors. Further, the researcher used the quantitative approach and method to determine and validate the factors, but it has confined the ability of the study to explore more about the factors that influence women in China to buy cruelty-free products (Grappe et al., 2021). Lastly, the sample size in this research study is limited, which may constrain the generalizability of the research results. Even though the outcomes are effective and useful, the lack of generalizability of the study may influence the usage of the results and information by the companies in making decisions about the process for testing products and improving cruelty-free testing methods and techniques.

6.3 Future Scope of Studies

Additional research can be conducted on the topic in different geographies and economies to improve the depth of the study and generalizability. Future researchers can choose to examine the behaviour and attitudes of women towards cruelty-free brands in different nations that may compare their attitudes. It may provide effective outcomes to raise the value of studies. In addition, the author may consider involving men and women in the research to get their views and assess the variation in the purchase of the decision of male and female consumers regarding cruelty-free cosmetic products. It would provide better outcomes and information to organisations for making important decisions on how to influence male and female consumers to make them inclined to purchase cosmetic products.

Along with this, the researcher may consider the external factors in future research, such as price, atmosphere, experience and other factors, to measure their impact on the purchase of cruelty-free and sustainable cosmetic products. It may improve the value of the research by helping the relevant and concerned organisation improve the strategies as per the findings to raise the audience's satisfaction and increase the market share and sales revenue in the firm. Lastly, the authors may use qualitative research methods to explore more about the topic and factors because the interview methods may aid in getting open answers from respondents. It would provide detailed information on different factors that may help in finding the relevant and almost all the stimuli that cause a positive impact on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics.

6.4 Implications

This research study may have theoretical and managerial implications.

Theoretical Implication:

This study has highlighted the impact of the different brand-related and consumer-related factors on women's purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic brands. This study has confirmed the theory of planned behaviour that certified labels, brand trust, pro-environmental behaviour, and altruism influence the consumer's attitude and positively affect women's purchase behaviour towards cruelty-free cosmetic products. It means the altruistic attitude towards animal welfare, trust in the certified label of the cosmetic items, and concern for animal welfare improve the positive attitude of consumers towards the brands that ensure no product testing on animals. It means the altruistic consumer can be influenced by the social pressure

in the society and community to avoid the purchase of the products that have been tested on the animals. Therefore, it can be said that this study may be useful from an academic point of view in understanding consumer behaviour. It may have an implication for the researcher's inn future to determine the research gap and comprehend the factors that may be responsible for changing the behaviour towards cruelty-free cosmetic products. It may aid the researcher in identifying more factors and using the results for comparing and validating in future.

Managerial Implication:

The findings of this research have managerial implications. Most of the research studies have focused on ethical consumerism and the purchase of cruelty-free products. The literature has examined the consumer's willingness and intention to buy cruelty-free and environmentally friendly products. Taking the research on the topic further, this study may aid the companies in comprehending the behaviour of the consumers. It may have proposed insight into different brand-related and consumer-related factors that influence women's purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics in China.

On the basis of the results, managers in cosmetic brands may comprehend the perception of women consumers about the cosmetic brand's claims of cruelty-free testing. It may aid the organisation in developing actions and policies to strictly comply with cruelty-free testing of the products, which may improve the company's performance in the market. This report has noted that brand-related factors stimulate women positively and may increase the confidence of the manager to ensure certified labels and quality in the product to improve the trust of the consumers in the brands. They may improve the marketing strategies for communicating the organisations' claims to achieve women's trust in the products. It will aid the manufacturers and marketers to be innovative by being responsive to the voices and expectations of the consumers. It would have implications for the company's performance in attracting new consumers. However, it may provide insight into the views of the women consumer, but the men also use cosmetic products. Thus, the findings of this study may limit the implication on the planning and decision of the manager in cosmetic companies.

Chapter 7: Recommendations
Based on the analysis of the results, some recommendations can be provided to the cosmetic brands in China to improve their market share and sales revenue.

- It can be suggested that cosmetic brands in China should use certified labels on their products to improve the positive attitude of women consumers. It would aid the companies in raising their market share and sales revenue. As identified in the current research, the certified label of cruelty-free testing on cosmetic items may affect the consumers' purchase decisions. In support of this, Cheng (2019) stated that certified labels of cruelty-free brands work as a marketing strategy, which helps communicate product information to consumers to enhance transparency in operation. It may improve the credibility of the brands in the market, which can trigger positive attitudes and purchases of cosmetic items by women.

- Cosmetic brands in China should take into account the adverse implications of the animal testing of products on the environment and animal lives. In this way, Kaufmann et al. (2012) mentioned that altruism influences the expectations and desires of consumers, which may positively affect the purchase behaviour of consumers. The animal-friendly products and brands may lift the perception of the targeted audience, which may affect the action of the buyer in the expected manner of the companies. The current study has confirmed that the altruism of the consumer may improve their pro-social behaviour that positively affects the decision of the consumer to adopt and buy cruelty-free cosmetic products. This strategy would aid the cosmetic companies to gain a good reputation in the market and earn the audience's trust. It would enhance the market share and sales revenue of the organisation.

- The organisation that is focusing on cruelty-free products should target women over 45 years old in China to improve the market share and sales revenue. As per the results of the current study, young age women do not show a positive response and attitude to cruelty-free cosmetic products, which may limit their purchase of these products. Targeting this age segment may not generate an attractive result for the organisation. Accordingly, cosmetic brands in China should customise their marketing strategies according to the market segments to keep the women consumers (46-55 years) loyal and improve the awareness of young women in the market.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Meeting Log

The Newcastle Business School Masters Dissertation

LOGBOOK

Student Name	Zheng xie
Student ID Number	22069870
Programme	Master dissertation
Email address	Zheng.xie@northumbria.ac.uk

The logbook is to record your progress through the Masters Dissertation. It is evidence that you have met various criteria associated with the dissertation.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This is regarded as an <u>exceptional procedure</u> and must be agreed with the Dissertation Supervisor and declared on submission.

The Supervisor must confirm & agree that the dissertation contains commercially sensitive information. This is the only basis upon which a dissertation may be regarded as confidential.

AGREEMENT OF SUPERVISOR: ___EC_____ DATE: _06/09/2023_____

MASTERS DISSERTATION SUPERVISION LOGBOOK – A BRIEF GUIDE

This Logbook is used to record your progress on the Dissertation and to provide a record of the discussions you have had with your Supervisor and the action points that have been agreed.

Contact and/or meetings with your Supervisor should be on a regular basis. Meetings are important for you to obtain advice and guidance from your Supervisor.

Prior to each meeting, you should complete the first two sections of the meeting record form, the other parts should be completed at the end of the meeting by the student and signed by both you and your Supervisor.

The Logbook will NOT be assessed. It is designed solely as a mechanism to help you progress your Dissertation.

Please note – the effective and successful management of the Masters Dissertation is ultimately the student's own responsibility and the ability to do so is part of the learning requirement of the Newcastle Business School Masters Programmes.

Masters Dissertation Supervisor

For all matters in connection with the process and research issues of your dissertation

(eg subject related advice, methodologies, content and structure of dissertation) or remote supervision please contact your personal Masters Dissertation Supervisor.

Postgraduate Academic Facilitators

For all matters regarding late submission of your dissertation and deferment or clarification of any aspect of the administrative arrangements you should see staff in the administrative office.

LOG OF FIRST MEETING

Date and time of meeting	2023/7/1		Duration	30mins
First meeting				
Discussion regarding Chapter 1				
Any issues, concerns, problems that have arisen of which you wish to discuss:				
Feedback from the tutor during the discussion regarding chapter 1				
Supervisor's comments:				
1. Correcting the words 2. Refine for Research Topic and Research objectives.				
Agreed tasks or action plan for next meeting:				
Completion of Chapter 1, and working on chapter 2 for discussion in next meeting				
Date & time of next meeting	2023/7/10			
Student signature	Zheng Xie			
Supervisor signature				

LOG OF SECOND MEETING/SUPERVISION

Date and time of meeting	2023/7/10		Duration	30mins
Brief description of work done since last meeting:				

1. Finished draft of literature Review

2. Revision of Research Topic and Questions

3. Correction of sentences

Any issues, concerns, problems that have arisen of which you wish to discuss:

If the LR headings are appropriate

Supervisor's comments:

1. Add theoretical framework in the literature review

2. Expanding the discussion on theory of planned behaviour

3. Finish Literature review.

Agreed tasks or action plan for next meeting:
1. Revise the work as tutor suggestions.

Date & time of next meeting	2023/7/20
Student signature	Zheng Xie
Supervisor signature	

LOG OF THIRD MEETING/SUPERVISION

Date and time of meeting	2023/7/20		Duration	30mins
Brief description of work done since last meeting:				
Chapter 3 Research methodology				
Any issues, concerns, problems that have arisen of which you wish to discuss:				
No				
Supervisor's comments:				
Tutor told to add justification and table showing items of questionnaire and their sources				
Agreed tasks or action plan for next meeting:				
Start data collection after checking of questionnaire				
Date & time of next meeting	2023/8/5			
Student signature	Zheng Xie			
Supervisor signature				

LOG OF FOURTH MEETING/SUPERVISION

Date and time of meeting	2023/8/5		Duration	30mins

Brief description of work done since last meeting:

.Discussion on chapter 4

Any issues, concerns, problems that have arisen of which you wish to discuss:

If the tests performed are correctly performed

Supervisor's comments:

Tutor asked to align the tables properly and add captions

Agreed tasks or action plan for next meeting:

Chapter 5 should be done

Date & time of next meeting	2023/8/15
Student signature	Zheng Xie
Supervisor signature	

LOG OF FIFTH MEETING/SUPERVISION

Date and time of meeting	2023/8/15		Duration	30mins

Brief description of work done since last meeting:

Chapter five was discussed

Any issues, concerns, problems that have arisen of which you wish to discuss:

I was not aware what to write in this chapter

Supervisor's comments:

Tutor explained that I should compare the findings of survey from literature, write contribution, implications of the study.

Agreed tasks or action plan for next meeting:

Finish Conclusion

Date & time of next meeting	2023/8/20
Student signature	Zheng Xie
Supervisor signature	

LOG OF 6th MEETING/SUPERVISION

Date and time of meeting	2023/8/20		Duration	30mins

Brief description of work done since last meeting:

.Overview of all chapter including conclusion

Any issues, concerns, problems that have arisen of which you wish to discuss:

No

Supervisor's comments:

1. Improve references
2. Add citations with justification
3. Increase recommendations in conclusion
4. Write reflection in appendix

Agreed tasks or action plan for next meeting:

Complete all dissertation

Date & time of next meeting	No
Student signature	Zheng Xie
Supervisor signature	

ETHICAL CLEARANCE - All relevant links are on the Blackboard site

It is ESSENTIAL that ALL STUDENTS complete this 15 point checklist in consultation with their supervisor. The completed checklist MUST BE SUBMITTED with a Snippet of the approved online ethical form along with the dissertation.

All relevant links are on the Blackboard site

	ACTION	Date Completed
1	Consider ethical issues in the design of your research and discuss with your supervisor how you propose to deal with them. Record the outcome of this discussion in your logbook.	2023/6/25
2	Consider whether there is a need for formal Risk Assessment for your research.	2023/6/25
3	Submit the Faculty Student Ethical Issues Form (available from the eLP) to your supervisor for approval by an independent reviewer. Record the date that you receive approval.	2023/7/10
4	If necessary, obtain Organization Consent (using the Faculty Organisational Informed Consent Form) before beginning any primary research in an organizational setting.	2023/7/10
5	Show your supervisor the signed Organisational Consent Form	2023/7/12
6	If necessary, obtain Individual Consent (using the Faculty Individual Informed Consent Form) before beginning any qualitative primary research in an organizational setting.	2023/7/12
7	Show your supervisor all signed Individual Informed Consent Forms.	2023/7/12
8	If conducting primary qualitative research establish participant codes for your subjects and store these codes manually in a secure place.	No need
9	If conducting primary qualitative research and you decide to transcribe the data then transcribe the data you have collected using participant codes for subjects.	No need
10	Use encryption software to protect files in which you store your research data.	2023/8/1
11	When writing up, ensure that anonymity and confidentiality are respected if requested by research subjects.	2023/8/1
12	Include appropriate ethical declaration in Dissertation.	2023/8/15
13	Discuss Ethical issues in your Methods chapter including measures taken to secure ethical approval, consent(s), data collection, storage and destruction and whether there was any need for formal risk assessment.	2023/8/15

14	Include the signed Faculty Student Ethical Issues Form in an Appendix to your dissertation. Include unsigned ethics forms (Individual Informed Consent & Organisational Informed Consent) in an Appendix to your dissertation and state that your Supervisor has seen the original signed forms. Keep the original, signed forms with your Working Papers.	2023/8/25
15	Confirm that all data collected for the purposes of the dissertation will be destroyed after the completion of assessment, unless otherwise agreed with your supervisor and research subjects (state reasons for this in your Methods chapter).	2023/8/25

Appendix 2: Ethic Form

Student Project Approval Ethical Form

You should complete this document and then discuss the approval form with your supervisor before commencing any form of primary data collection. *Failure to complete this document and to have all aspects signed off approved by your supervisor risks a notable deduction in your grade and may risk a case of Academic Misconduct. Please see the module Guidelines for detailed information on Ethical Approval*

Tutor sign off	
Ethics form complete	
Ethical concerns acknowledged	
Research tool checked	
Organisation consent	
Participant consent	
It is not high risk	

Please ensure that your project meets the conditions of the existing ethics application (available on Blackboard). If it does not, then you will need to submit a full ethics application instead.	
Student name:	**Zheng Xie**
Module and Module code	**LD0480**
Project title:	**Factors Stimulating the Purchase of Cruelty-Free Cosmetics in China Among Female Consumers**
Supervisor name:	EMRE CINAR
Project Aim or question	This research aims to identify factors stimulating female consumers' purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics in China.
Ethics application you are amending (check box):	☒ Questionnaire Study ☐ Interview Study ☐ Low Risk Secondary Data /SLR Study

ETHICAL REVIEW CATEGORIES AND CHECKLIST

Checklist -Does your study involve any of the following?	No/Yes)	Ethical Form
i. Gathering data or information from human participants (e.g. via questionnaire / interview/survey/experiment/ VR)	Yes	MLA – MS word file to your supervisor
ii. Collecting personal data, i.e. name, email, home address, computer IP address, phone number etc.	No	MLA – MS word file to your supervisor
iii. Analysis of secondary data not in the public domain (e.g. archive material that require organisational membership)	NO	MLA – MS word file to your supervisor
iv. Gathering data/information at a physical location external to Northumbria University campuses, franchised locations, and not your normal place of work	NO	MLA – MS word file to your supervisor
v. The collection or use of information which is 'commercially sensitive'	NO	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
vi. Financial inducements other than expenses and compensation for time	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
vii. Collection of samples such as plants, soils etc, that might disturb the environment or archaeological remains	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
viii. Individuals or groups where permission of a gatekeeper is normally required for initial or continued access to participants (e.g. NGOs, community leaders)	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
ix. Research with potentially vulnerable participants or groups, including people under 18 (which may require DBS clearance)	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
x. Discussion (e.g. interviews) of highly sensitive topics that may cause undue stress to participants, and researchers, including, but not exclusively: sexual behaviour, drug use; abuse or exploitation; trauma; pornography.	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
xi. Funding from a source that may be controversial (e.g. due to the nature of the funder, or a conflict of interest).	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
xii. Covert methods of investigation or deception.	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
xiii. Research with international partners, or research undertaken outside of the UK where there may be issues of local practice and political sensitivities.	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
xiv. Access to records of personal or sensitive confidential information, including genetic or other biological information concerning identifiable individuals	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
xv. Intrusive interventions including the use of drugs or other substances (e.g. food, drink, placebos or drugs); and, or, procedures involving physical distress (e.g. prolonged testing) or emotional distress (e.g. stress or anxiety), that are greater than those you would encounter in everyday life.	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
xvi. Work that involves direct observation of, or participation in, activities during which it is anticipated that illegal activity, or regulatory breach is likely to occur (e.g. hunting, drug dealing, accessing the dark web, hacking).	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
xvii. Access to or collection of data, information, materials (e.g. magazines, publications, websites, and social media) relating to extremism, radicalisation or terrorism (including extreme or terror groups).	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
xviii. Funding/ sponsorship from, or the involvement of, the UK Ministry of Defence, Military (UK and International), and or, EU Security funding call.	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
xix. The collection of data/information that might be confidential or classified (e.g. protected by the Official Secrets Act) .	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
xx. The funding body e.g. ESRC funded projects require REC review.	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
xxi. The collection of bodily tissue e.g. blood, saliva, urine samples from living persons (which may require licence under the HTA and additional training).	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
xxii. Culturally sensitive art, artefacts or monuments, or sites.	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
xxiii. Research with animal subjects	No	If yes, Apply online via https://ethicsapplication.northumbria.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index

| What is your study and why is it important?. Why is your proposed study important? What has already been done on the topic? How does your proposed study 'fit' with the current literature and what does it add? What is the aim of the proposed study? Make reference to appropriate studies. (max 150 words) | This research explores factors stimulating female consumers' purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics in China. The objectives are
• To determine brand-related attributes (social media marketing, brand trust, certified labels) influence Chinese female consumers.
• To analyse the impact of external factors (altruism, environmental knowledge, pro-environmental behaviour) on the purchase decision of Chinese female consumers
• Whether age is associated with the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics in China
Moreover, while there have been works of literature that have studied the factors stimulating consumers' purchasing intention of cruelty-free cosmetics products, such as Wuisan and Februadi (2022) found in Indonesia that the cruelty-free label, along with environmental knowledge and moral obligations, positively influences consumers' attitudes which in turn leads to positive purchase behaviour. Silva et al. (2021) found that animal welfare and the planet's sustainability consciousness lead among Portuguese consumers, But still, there is a dearth of studies in China among females. Silva et al. (2021), environmental knowledge and altruism play a significant role in positively influencing the purchasing intentions of Portuguese consumers. In contrast, Dasunika and Gunathilake (2020) in the Sri Lankan cosmetic market contradict that social media, altruism, financial factor, attitude or environmental knowledge impact consumers' purchase intention. Contradictory findings and less research in the Chinese cosmetic industry motivate the researcher to continue this topic. Efforts have been made to study the purchase behaviour of Indonesian, Portuguese, Colombian and other country-specific consumers; such a study in the context of China was not found, which indicates a research gap. This study is thus an attempt to fill this gap and explore consumer behaviour in one of the leading cosmetics industries in the world- China. |
| | Dasunika, T. and Gunathilake, L. 2020. Factors Affecting the Purchase Intention of Cruelty-Free Cosmetics: with special reference to Women Consumers in Colombo District, Sri Lanka. *International Conference on Business Management*, pp. 490-508.
Silva, A., Fonseca, M.J., Cardoso, P.R., Fonseca, M.C. and Teixeira, A. 2021. *Factors influencing the purchase* |

intention of cruelty-free cosmetics in Portuguese consumers–an exploratory approach. In Information Technology and Systems. Berlin: Springer International Publishing.

Wuisan, E.C. and Februadi, A. 2022. Consumers' Attitude Towards the Cruelty-Free Label on Cosmetic and Skincare Products and Its Influence on Purchase Intention. *Journal of Marketing Innovation* 2(2), pp. 33-43.

Description of the research sample or population
We would like to know here from whom and how you intend to collect your data. Somebody should be able to read this and replicate the process you will follow. Please write this in the future tense

| Is your research being undertaken within an organisation or using an organisation's data? That is, do you need Organisational consent? [please tick as appropriate] | Yes | |
| | No | No |

If you are researching in an organisation or using their data, who has provided the consent?	No
Research design POEM: Philosophy/ Ontology/ Epistemology/Methodology	Ontology deals with the study of existence itself. It focuses on identifying the world's real components and is open to human perception and comprehension. We may explore the idea of epistemology and how it affects study design by looking at the relationship between a subject and an object. According to objectivist epistemology, reality exists apart from a person's thoughts. Hence, with the epistemology position, the research will use a positivist paradigm to allow an objective investigation into the subject matter. Further, the deductive approach best fits to this research for evaluating and confirming the association between the variables in the study by using measurable and quantitative data.
Who are your participants and what is the inclusion criteria?	Female consumers in China are the participants of the study. The inclusion criteria comprise Chinese female consumers who have ever used cruelty-free cosmetic products. The author will consider women above the age group of 18 years.
How specifically will you collect / generate data? What **method/s** are you intending to use?	I will use the self-administered questionnaire to generate primary data. It will have close-ended questions to collect objective data through a survey questionnaire. This method will aid in gathering objective information for assessing the participants' responses to confirm what factors stimulate female consumers to purchase cruelty-free cosmetics.

Describe the **participants/sample** that you will recruit.	The author will recruit female consumers of China in the survey because they can provide good answers to the questions that will help in determining the attitude of the consumer towards Cruelty-free cosmetics. Convenience sampling will be used because it is faster and easier.
What is your anticipated sample **size**?How many will you recruit, and from where?	The researcher in this study will recruit 150 participants from China using convenience sampling. Sample size has been calculated considering that there would be 7 independent variables. Hence, formula by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) has been applied.

$N> 50+8m$
N= Number of participants
m= number of independent variables

Hence, the minimum sample should be 106, but to improve validity of the result, 150 sample size has been decided.

I will recruit the participant from social media. There are many female followers of Cruelty-free cosmetics on social media, so I will post on public groups with my research topic and request them to participate in my study after filling out the consent form. |
| **How** will you recruit? Are there any exclusion criteria (reasons why people should not participate)? | I will first post the link generated via wenjuanxing on my WeChat account and fashion groups which are open, and invite women participants who have purchased cruelty-free cosmetics in the past.**Wenjuanxing** is website that is used for professional services such as questionnaire, voting and survey etc. It is quite popular in China and hence it will be used by researcher. I will ask participants, friends, and social circle members to pass this link on to their friends. I will also post the link on public groups for cosmetics brands. |
| Procedures (describe what you will do to collect data, include all equipment/methods you plan to | The author will share the questionnaire link of wenjuanxing with each participant on social media platforms. The |

use).	author will follow the participants to ensure the questionnaire recollection within 15 days.
Briefly, how will you a**nalyse** your data? (e.g. *quantitative t-tests,correlation etc.; qualitative thematic analysis etc.*)	The author will use SPSS for statistical analysis of the quantitative data to be gathered in the research. I will use frequency analysis for demographic profile, normality tests like histograms for finding the normal distribution of data, and multiple regression to analyse the impact of factors on the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics
Additional information:	

Health and Safety: *Relevant risk assessments are listed in the ethics application. You must submit a new ethics application if your project needs additional risk assessments. Please identify the elements of the listed risk assessment that are relevant for your study and the risk assessment(s) you are working with.*

Please check the relevant boxes*

• ☒HL_RISK Testing in an external environment if location is away from University	<mark>No risk</mark>/Low/Med/High
• ☐HL_RISK_722 face to face interview	No risk/Low/Med/High
• ☐HL_RISK_727 Group interview	No risk/Low/Med/High

Data Management P*lease describe below. How date will be safely, anonymised, stored, retrieved, used, and destroyed etc (GDPR and data protection and laws) ?*

The author will use Student *one drive first and well-password protected laptop**. It will improve the confidentiality of data and compliance with GDPR. The researcher will ensure the destruction of the data after the submission of the research report in the University.*

Please check this box after you have read and understood ethics and health and safety information.

☒   I confirm I have read the University's health and safety policy and ethics policy. I have read and understood the requirement for the mandatory completion of risk assessments and that my study does not deviate from the module level approval ethics forms on Blackboard.

FURTHER INFORMATION (ADD/APPEND BELOW, IF APPLICABLE)

1. Participant information sheet
2. Debrief form
3. Recruitment materials
4. Consent forms
5. Permission letters
6. Data collection tools (quetionaiaire/ interview etc)

Part Two: Ethical risk

Areas of potential risk		
Please indicate how you will eliminate, or as a minimum ameliorate, the following areas of potential risks throughout *generation, data analysis and dissemination*		
Area of risk	**Questions relating to this risk**	**How will you mitigate against**
Avoiding harm to all involved in or potentially affected by the research	How will you ensure that your participants/respondents come to no harm (psychological; emotional; physical). e.g. not subjecting them to questioning about sensitive issues without advance agreement?	The author will properly provi induce force to involve them i
	How will you ensure your own safety (beyond just physical) in undertaking the Enquiry?	I will conduct an online surve details with participants.
Ensuring the anonymity of all participants/respondents	How will you ensure anonymity in collecting/generating data	I will not collect the person address, name, contact detail
	How will you ensure anonymity in reporting the data?	I will use the codes of the par
Gaining informed consent from all participants/respondents	How will you ensure respondent/participant consent in advance? You should provide a copy of the necessary consent form/s with this document	I will provide copy of consent make them informed regardir
	(How) might participants/respondents be able to withdraw their data?	The participant may choose t monty of the submission of th
Avoiding deception	How will you how you promote accuracy in recording, analysis, reporting of the data/findings?	The author will use the surve that will be processed in SPSS
Data storage and destruction	How will you transport and store your data securely (e.g. password protected; cloud storage)	*The author will use the well-p* *secured through a strong pass* *ensure the destruction of the* *research report in the Univers*
	How will you destroy the data and when?	The data will be destroyed a research.
I confirm that I have read and understood the University's Health and Safety Policy. I confirm that I have *requirements for the mandatory completion of risk assessments in advance of any activity involving potential phys* *physical risks associated with this project and so no risk assessments are required* [Yes]		

Student's Name and sign	Name Zheng Xie	Sign Zheng Xie	Date 25.06.2023
Supervisor's name and sign	EMRE CINAR	EC	11/07/2023

FURTHER INFORMATION (ADD/APPEND BELOW, IF APPLICABLE)

1. Participant information sheet
2. Debrief form
3. Recruitment materials
4. Consent forms
5. Permission letters
6. Data collection tools (quetionaiaire/ interview etc)

Northumbria University
NEWCASTLE
Newcastle · London · Amsterdam

FOR USE ONLY IN ONLINE SURVEYS

If you do an online survey, you must supply an explanation to inform participants of the purpose of the study, who is carrying out the study, and who will eventually have access to the results. You should also explain how participants can find out the results. Your research statement should explain how you ensure the anonymity of all participants/respondents, you avoid deception and comply with Data security requirements.

Researcher's Name:___ **Zheng Xie**_____

Student ID No. (if applicable):__**22069870**_____

Researcher's Statement:

I invite you to participate in my dissertation titled "Factors Stimulating the Purchase of Cruelty-Free Cosmetics in China Among Female Consumers". After gathering the data, I will be able to analyse them and include them into my final dissertation. Your consent is needed to ensure you understand the purpose and objectives of the dissertation. As per the researcher's title, the study's main purpose is to identify factors stimulating female consumers' purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics in China. I

make sure that your identity will be kept anonymous and data will be fully confidentially by restraining unauthentic access to the data by using highly strong passwords to folders where the data will be stored.

PARTICIPANT DEBRIEF

Name of Researcher: Zheng Xie
Name of Supervisor (if relevant): EMRE CINAR

Project Title: Factors Stimulating the Purchase of Cruelty-Free Cosmetics in China Among Female Consumers

---

1. What was the purpose of the project?
This study aims to identify factors stimulating female consumers' purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics in China. It will aid in measuring the consumers' attitude towards cruelty-free cosmetics that may improve the effectiveness of strategies and decisions of the companies in this sector.

---

2. How will I find out about the results?
I will create the results after ten days of the collection of the questionnaires and then will prepare the report on the data. I will send a copy of the report, including the study results.

---

3. Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential and anonymous?
The author will use the well-protected folder on the desktop that will be secured through a strong password system. It will improve the confidentiality of data and compliance with GDPR. The researcher will assure the destruction of the data after the submission of the research report to the University. At the same time, the author will use the participant's codes rather than the participants' names and personal details to improve the participants' anonymity and privacy.

---

4. How will my data be stored, and how long will it be stored?

The researcher will store and protect the data <mark>in One Drive, which can aid in improving access to data at any time</mark>. It will improve the confidentiality of data and compliance with the GDPR Act 2018. The researcher will ensure the destruction of the data after six months of submission of the research report in the University.

5. If I change my mind and wish to withdraw the information I have provided, how do I do this?

<mark>It is up to you whether you want to continue participating or withdraw from the research.</mark> If you wish to withdraw your data, then email me within one month of taking part, alongside your code number and details. After this time, withdrawing your data might not be possible as it could already have been analysed.

The data collected in this study may also be published in scientific journals or presented at conferences. Information gathered during this research study will only be available to the research team identified in the information sheet. Should the research be presented or published in any form, all data will be anonymous (i.e. your personal information or data will not be identifiable).

All information and data gathered during this research will be stored in line with the Data Protection Act and will be destroyed following the conclusion of the study. If the research is published in a scientific journal it may be kept for longer before being destroyed. During that time the data may be used by members of the research team only for purposes appropriate to the research question, but at no point will your personal information or data be revealed. Insurance companies and employers will not be given any individual's personal information, nor any data provided by them, and nor will we allow access to the police, security services, social services, relatives or lawyers, unless forced to do so by the courts.

If you wish to receive feedback about the findings of this research study then please contact the researcher atw22069870@northumbria.ac.uk.

This study and its protocol have received full ethical approval from Newcastle Business School at Northumbria University. If you require confirmation of this, or if you have any concerns or worries concerning this research, or if you wish to register a complaint, please contact the Chair of this Committee at Russell.warhurst@northumbria.ac.uk stating the title of the research project and the name of the researcher: Zheng Xie.

I understand the nature of the study, and what is required from me. I understand how I can find out about the results of this research. I agree to provide information to the investigator and understand that my contribution will remain confidential.   I also consent to the retention of this data under the condition that any subsequent use also be restricted to research projects that have gained ethical approval from Northumbria University.I confirm that in responding to this survey that I am happy for my data to be used in the research project

I agree   ☐ ✓

Appendix 3: Questionnaire

1. Age:
   ☐ 18-25
   ☐ 26-35
   ☐ 36-45
   ☐ 46-55
   ☐ 55 and above

2. Education
   ☐ Primary education
   ☐ Secondary Education
   ☐ Graduation
   ☐ Post graduation
   ☐ Others
3. Occupation

   ☐ Employed fulltime
   ☐ Part time
   ☐ Unemployed
   ☐ Household
   ☐ Businesswomen
   ☐ Student

4. Have you ever purchased and used cruelty free cosmetics?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

Notes: Please do not continue, if answer is no

5. From where, did you purchase cruelty free cosmetics?

   o Shops

   o Online website

Please let us know your opinion regarding the following statements using the following scale:
  ❖ 1 = Strongly disagree
  ❖ 2 = Somewhat disagree
  ❖ 3 = Neutral
  ❖ 4 = Somewhat agree
  ❖ 5 = Strongly agree

Sl. No	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
	Social media (Zahid et al., 2018)					
	I use social media and saw ads of cruelty related cosmetics					
	From social media only, I got aware with this concept					
	I am aware with some cruelty free cosmetics now					
	Social media influences me to buy cruelty free cosmetics					
	Brand trust (Munuera-Alemán, 2003)					
	With Cruelty free cosmetic, I get what I am looking for					
	They will never disappoint me for the reasons, I purchase them					
	Cruelty free cosmetics give me certainty about quality					
	If Cruelty free cosmetics are not available at one store, I will try other sources					
	Certified labels (Grappe et al, 2020)					
	Certified labels on Cruelty free cosmetic suggest no harmful chemicals					
	Certified labels on Cruelty free cosmetic suggest no controversial chemicals					
	Certified labels generate credibility that information on Cruelty free cosmetic can be trusted.					
	Labels on Cruelty free cosmetic make perception that animals are					

not harmed while making this cosmetic					
Altruism (Davies and Gutsche, 2016)					
The environment of present times attract me towards cruelty free cosmetic					
Animal welfare is important to me					
Cruelty free cosmetic gives me self-satisfaction					
I feel social guilt if I buy usual cosmetics					
Quality of Cruelty free cosmetic is higher					
Environmental knowledge (Groff et al., 2014)					
I am aware regarding animal testing process to produce cosmetic					
I am aware of the negative effects of animal testing on the environment					
I know how to select products that does not harm the environment					
Pro-environmental behaviour (Lavelle, et al, 2015)					
I can accept cutting my standards of living if it can protect the environment					
I can pay higher price for cruelty free cosmetics if it protects the environment					
I can support higher taxes, if it can protect the environment					
I can sacrifice some personal comforts for such cruelty free things					
I feel my own personal behaviour can bring about positive environmental change					
Purchase decision					
I will buy cruelty free cosmetics only					
I will suggest my friends and relatives also					
I will always buy cruelty free cosmetics inspite of high prices					

Appendix 4: Reflection

Reflection is an important tool of learning because it aids in determining and pondering the opportunities and challenges that I have faced in the accomplishment of my dissertation. I have used Gibbs's reflective cycle which recommends six stages for reflective learning.

Description:

I was given a project to prepare the dissertation. I did not make such an assignment and did not research in past. It was very new to me and I was afraid of whether I could do it. Then, I searched for topics and I decided to investigate the factors that stimulate the women in China to buy cruelty-free cosmetics. Sustainable consumption is increasing in the global market which encouraged me to choose this topic. I decided on a unique and different topic to make my research unique but I had less knowledge of the research methods and techniques that barricaded my research dissertation. However, I read the module and took the help of my mentor to gain knowledge of different elements of the research methodology such as philosophy, approach, design, methods, techniques, data collection, data analysis and others. I wanted to make my research effective to get good marks but it was not so easy. I prepared the literature in the study and then prepared the research methodology because I learned from the muddle that the methodology section comes after the literature. The literature review section helps in identifying the gap in research that aids in making the research question and determining the variable in the questionnaire.

Feeling

During the process of the data collection, I felt less confident because of no experience in communicating with the participants and convincing them to provide answers to questions in the questionnaire. It means a lack of confidence and lack of communication skills I felt while I was distributing the questionnaire and collecting the answers and data from the respondents. Further, I felt that I have the strength of managing time which is very essential quality and skill for attaining goals and accomplishing tasks on time. I managed the time by using the Gannt Chart that aided in tracking the time of each task and stage. It means I learned the strengths of time management and weaknesses of communication skills, attention to detail, lack of knowledge of elements of research framework and confidence.

Evaluation:

I have learned several things and elements of the research framework that aided in making and designing the study effectively. The project was accomplished on time and within the budget which contributed to improving the effectiveness of research design and planning. However, I interpreted the results wrongly and used the wrong methodology in this dissertation which affected the effectiveness of this study. Later on, I got feedback from a mentor who helped me to revise and improve the research methods and data analysis and interpretation.

Analysis:

My ability to learn and support from the mentor contributed to completing the research effectively. In addition to this, timely feedback and support from the tutors helped in accomplishing the research on time and to submit the dissertation before the deadline. However, lack of confidence and communication skills challenged me to disseminate the information to the participant and ask the potential participant to take part in the survey and assist in accomplishing the research outcomes. In addition to this, a lack of attention to the details and a lack of knowledge of SPSS analysis and interpretation may affect the quality of the study. Even though I got help from my mentor in applying SPSS and interpreting the results I was less confident in my work.

Conclusion:

I learned a lot from this dissertation. I learned that the uniqueness of the research topic is very important for enhancing the value of the study and setting it apart from other studies. I also gained knowledge regarding the research philosophies, paradigms, approaches, quantitative and qualitative research methods, designs, research instruments and strategies, sampling techniques, data collection, and other elements. It would help me to complete the research in future. This dissertation aided me in enhancing my writing skills, cognitive skills, analysis quality, professional presentation and other skills that may be useful in conducting research in future. However, I realized the weaknesses such as communication skills, persuasive skills, self-confidence, attention to detail, and analysis skills that I need to improve.

Action Plan:

I need to enhance my strengths and skills. I will apply all the learning in future when I will research to improve the effectiveness of the study and mitigate the issues. I will communicate with friends and attend conferences to improve my communication quality and skills. I will

solve more and more case studies and simulations to enhance my analysis skills and self-confidence. I will read previous research studies to improve my analytical quality and skills.

Appendix 5: Data Set

	SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	BT1	BT2	BT3	BT4	CL1	CL2	CL3	CL4	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5
1	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
2	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00
3	5.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
4	5.00	5.00	5.00	1.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
5	5.00	1.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00
6	2.00	5.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	1.00	2.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
7	5.00	4.00	5.00	1.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	4.00	5.00	5.00
8	3.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	4.00
9	2.00	4.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00
10	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00
11	4.00	5.00	5.00	1.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
12	5.00	2.00	5.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00
13	2.00	4.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00
14	4.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00
15	2.00	1.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00
16	2.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00
17	5.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	4.00
18	4.00	5.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00
19	5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00
20	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00
21	1.00	1.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	2.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00
22	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00
23	2.00	2.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	5.00
24	4.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	5.00
25	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00
26	4.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	2.00	1.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	5.00

	SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	BT1	BT2	BT3	BT4	CL1	CL2	CL3	CL4	A1	A2	A3	A4	
104	4.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	4.00	
105	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	
106	5.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	
107	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	2.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	3.00	3.00	
108	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	
109	1.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	
110	1.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	1.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	
111	2.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	
112	3.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	2.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	
113	5.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	
114	2.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	
115	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	1.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	
116	2.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	1.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	
117	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	2.00	
118	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	
119	5.00	4.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	
120	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	4.00	
121	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	4.00	
122	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	
123	2.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	
124	1.00	2.00	4.00	5.00	1.00	2.00	4.00	1.00	4.00	1.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	
125	5.00	5.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	1.00	4.00	1.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	
126	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	
127	2.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	1.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	
128	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	