

An Exploratory Study of Factors Affecting
Sustainable Cosmetic Consumption

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Presented as part of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in Sustainable
Leisure Management within the Department of Recreation and Tourism Management at
Vancouver Island University

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DECLARATION

This thesis is a product of my own work and is not the result of anything done in collaboration.



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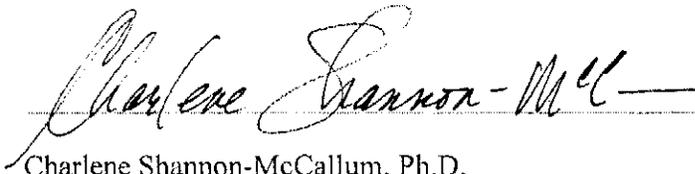
The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Department of Recreation & Tourism Management for acceptance, the thesis titled "*An Exploratory Study of Factors Affecting Sustainable Cosmetic Consumption*" submitted by *Wei (Olivia) Li* in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Sustainable Leisure Management.



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ABSTRACT

Sustainability can be thought of as having three pillars: social, economic, and environmental. Sustainable cosmetics refers to the integration of these three pillars into the whole life cycle of cosmetics, minimizing the impact of the cosmetics on the environment and society. Although several studies focus on either the consumption of cosmetics or ethical/green consumption, there is a lack of research focusing specifically on the area of sustainable cosmetic consumption. The purpose of this study was to investigate consumers' knowledge of sustainable cosmetics and their involvement in sustainable cosmetic consumption. The further purpose is to explore the factors that affect consumers' purchasing behavior of sustainable cosmetics in their everyday lives.

The researcher interviewed 8 female participants who had joined in the sustainable cosmetic workshops held by Miiko Skin Co. by asking them semi-structured questions. The researcher used the qualitative description method to guide the whole research and Nvivo was used to support the researcher in the data analysis process. The results suggest that this particular sample of participants were knowledgeable of sustainable cosmetics and have had been involved in sustainable cosmetic consumption. Several factors affecting consumers' purchasing behavior of sustainable cosmetics have been found from the data. All the factors that were discovered either motivate or hinder the consumption of sustainable cosmetics. They are summarized as follows: (a) Price; (b) Performance; (c) Availability; (d) Authenticity; (e) Values; (f) Emotions; (g) Consumer Learning Process. Based on all the results discovered in this study, this research provided several suggestions to key stakeholders for promoting sustainable cosmetic consumption in our society.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

According to the United Nations, our global population will reach 9.8 billion by 2050 (United Nations, 2017). It is widely known that humans' consumption of the Earth's natural resources is occurring faster than nature can regenerate them, especially given the growth in human population. Human beings are facing environmental damage and inadequate food supplies, and human behaviour is the major cause of "climate change, loss of biodiversity, destruction of habitat" and other environmental problems (Sahota, 2013, p. 1).

During the 1970s and 1980s, almost all developed countries came to realize that human behaviour can cause changes to the environment that threaten the future of our species on this planet. Since the 1990s, the environment has been deteriorating as a result of fast-paced development (Alsmadi, 2007). In order to make our environment and society more sustainable, consumers need to change their behaviour and consumption patterns before it is too late.

The buzz-word "sustainability" is applied in many different contexts and disciplines, and the concept has now been a focus for over four decades. The idea of sustainability originated in reference to the environment, before expanding to a wider range of movements involving social, economic, and environmental change (Farrell & Twining-Ward, 2004).

Though commonly used, the meaning of the term sustainability varies between disciplines. Although the term is now commonplace, clarity about what it means, and the pace of public acceptance, is still slow. One widely-recognized definition of sustainability was initially put forward by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987: "...development that meets the needs of the present

without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.”

(Brundtland, 1987, p. 1). This definition, which marked the emergence of sustainable development on the international policy agenda and is still used by the Brundtland Commission of the United Nations, is the definition used in this research project.

As the general population has become more familiar with the concept of sustainability, consumers have also begun to consider sustainability in their purchasing and demand more information about the products they intended to buy (Sahota, 2013). As Sahota (2013) states, consumers “are questioning product origins, production methods and ecological implications, as well as safety issues” (p. 1). Consequently, many businesses have realized the importance of the environment and sustainability to their audience, their markets, and their employees.

Thinking and acting sustainably has become a priority for many corporations. Companies began to integrate high environmental standards into their production and marketing strategies and establish environmentally friendly business models (Alsmadi, 2007). Guimarães (2014) also stressed that the increasing emphasis and popularization of the concept of sustainability have forced many companies to consider incorporating sustainability into their business goals, which means developing their business while attempting to minimize environmental impact (as cited in De Abreu Sofiatti Dalmarco, Hamza, & Aoqui, 2015). This transformation represents a sincere commitment to sustainability, because it is reflected in their business practices rather than just paying it lip service in marketing campaigns.

The rise in sustainable consumption has had a great impact on the cosmetics industry (Sahota, 2013). The industry as a whole has received some negative feedback from the public due to its questionable environmental practices (Sahota, 2013) such as

pouring polluted water into natural water resources, and using non-biodegradable packaging. From a social sustainability perspective, some cosmetics companies have created and maintained opportunities for their employees and built connections with their communities; but other aspects of social sustainability, such as human health and animal rights remain overlooked (Sahota, 2013).

The cosmetics industry plays a significant role in the economies of many countries. The profit from selling cosmetic products is substantial. Oh and Rugman (2006) state that the total global sales of the world's 100 largest cosmetic companies represent approximately \$110 billion in revenue, of which North America represents nearly half with approximately \$47 billion. In 2018, the revenue of the global cosmetics manufacturing industry reached \$330 billion (IBIS World, 2018a, July). In comparison, the dairy industry's global revenue in 2018 was \$ 38.5 billion, which means the global revenue of the cosmetics industry in 2018 was 8.5 times more than that of the dairy industry (IBIS World, 2018b, Dec).

Acting—and managing—sustainably is becoming a higher priority for cosmetics companies (Sahota, 2013). However, currently only a small portion of cosmetics companies have started to consider weaving sustainable standards into their business practices. More and more consumers realize that many cosmetic products are neither sustainable nor ethical, which have had severe impacts on the environment and society.

The impact on the environment derives from the whole industry chain: from sourcing, manufacturing, distributing, and packaging, to disposing (Sahota, 2013). The majority of cosmetics on the current market are synthetic and contain toxic ingredients, and even though some have natural attributes, most of them are gradually damaging human health and may be severely detrimental to the human body (Sahota, 2013).

Moreover, safety testing of cosmetic products may be considered unethical, as it is still being conducted mostly on animals. Consumers are aware that buying sustainable cosmetics can contribute to a healthier environment and society. However, there is a long 'green journey' ahead for both the cosmetics industry and consumers.

The purpose of this study was to develop a clearer understanding of female consumers' experience with sustainable cosmetics consumption. The factors that either motivate or impede their purchase behaviour of sustainable cosmetics were also explored. This study allowed the researcher to understand why these female consumers want to consume sustainable cosmetics. It is also important in order for cosmetic companies to recognize the importance of, and demand for, sustainable cosmetics and the urgent need to reduce barriers to purchasing sustainable cosmetics.

Although there are numerous studies in the field of the motivations for purchasing cosmetics (Cash & Cash, 1982; Hopkins, 2007; Jacob, Guéguen, Boulbry & Ardiccioni, 2010; Khraim, 2011; Kyung, 2012; Nash, Fieldman, Hussey, Lévêque & Pineau, 2006; Tajeddini & Nikdavoodi, 2014; Todd, 2004), little research has been conducted specifically on examining the factors that affect female consumers' purchasing behaviour of sustainable cosmetics. This study will contribute to the knowledge of sustainable consumption, especially in the case of sustainable cosmetics. Such knowledge can also be applied to raising consumers' awareness of sustainability and sustainable cosmetics, then encouraging consumers to participate in sustainable consumption.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The first chapter described some of the serious environmental situations society is facing, such as water pollution and resource scarcity. It also provided an introduction of the current unsustainable issues within the cosmetics industry. Finally, it presented the concept of sustainability and its development.

The first goal of this chapter is to explore concepts and theories in the consumer behaviour field in order to give readers general background knowledge (See Sections 2.1-2.6). The second goal of this chapter is to review the existing research on sustainable consumption and provide a supportive background for the current research of sustainable cosmetics consumption. Five forms of sustainable consumption will be introduced. These are: lifestyles of health and sustainability (LOHAS), green consumption, ethical consumption, anti-consumption and conscious consumption (See Section 2.7). Although this study does not focus on presenting different kinds of consumption, it is important to lay a foundation for further exploration of the motivations and barriers of sustainable cosmetics consumption. The third goal of this chapter is to present the research background on both the cosmetics industry (See Section 2.8) and the sustainability of the cosmetics industry, including environmental, social, and economic perspectives (See section 2.9).

2.1 Consumer Behaviour.

Consumption is not an individual act; it contains value, emotion, and social connection with others (Cook, 2006). The primary purpose of shopping is not only to get the things that people want, but also to build a relationship with these commodities (Miller, 1998).

Consumers are the group of people who consume, buy or use a product or service (Albert, Merunka, & Valette-Florence, 2008). The process by which a consumer chooses to purchase or use a product or service is defined as the consumer behaviour process (Horner & Swarbrooke, 2016). Consumer behaviour has been defined by Schiffman and Kanuk (2004) as “the behavior that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using and evaluating products, services and ideas which they expect will satisfy their needs” (p. 4). This definition emphasizes the importance of the psychological process which the consumer goes through during the pre-purchase and post-purchase stages. Understanding consumers’ purchasing behaviour is not only crucial for a business, whose aim is to boost profit, but also gives answers to the important questions of ‘how’ and ‘why’ customers purchase. Consumer behaviour is a behaviour which involves different stages of the purchasing process, such as searching, selecting, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of a product or service that they expect will satisfy their needs (Solomon, White & Dahl, 2015).

2.2 Consumer Decision-Making Process.

A consumer purchase may be a response to a perceived problem (Saaty, 2008). The decision-making process includes five stages, which every consumer goes through either consciously or unconsciously. An overview of this decision-making process appears in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Stages in The Consumer Decision Making Process.



Note. Figure 2.1 is adapted from *Consumer Behaviour: Buying, Having, and Being* (p. 243), by M. R. Solomon, K. White, and D.W. Dahl, 2015, Toronto, ON: Pearson Education Inc. Copyright 2015 by Pearson Education Inc.

The first step of the decision-making process is to recognize the need or the problem. Once the problem is recognized, and the desire to fix the problem is in the individual's thoughts, the second step takes place – searching for information (Bunn, 1993). This stage is described as the buyer's effort to look for sources and information about the desired product, which is the solution to the identified problem. In this stage, the consumer is likely to check different channels in order to find information about the product. The third step in the decision-making process is to evaluate the alternatives. At this stage, consumers are comparing different products and brands, assessing if those products meet their criteria. The fourth step is the purchasing decision, which may be prevented by negative feedback from another customer or due to unforeseen circumstances (Kotler, 2000). The fifth step of the decision-making process is post-purchase evaluation. This stage is critical because it determines the future purchasing

decisions made by the same customer from the same company. In this stage, the consumer compares the products' features to his/her initial expectations about it (Blythe, 2008).

If the customer is satisfied with the purchased product, the result is often brand-loyalty. In this case, after the initial purchase and decision-making process, the second and the third stages may be skipped for subsequent purchases – after recognizing the need, the customer goes straight to the purchase of the preferred product (Foxall, 2010). Moreover, if the product meets the customers' criteria, it will increase the consumers' positive purchasing experience. On the other hand, if the purchased product does not meet consumer's expectations, it is more likely that the consumer will avoid buying from the same brand next time. Also, the unsatisfactory product will incur negative feedback to his or her own shopping experience.

The described model above is applicable for the majority of consumers, but there are exceptions (Kotler, 2000). Some consumers purchasing decisions are directly informed by recognizing a need. In this case, consumers are usually familiar with the product or service. For example, the product or service is part of the consumer's daily routine, such as a cup of Starbucks coffee every morning. As a result, the act of a purchase occurs as a habit rather than as a new decision-making process.

2.3 Consumption and Self-concept.

People see themselves as they imagine others see them. This could be displayed by a person's clothing, accessories, car, house and more (Dimanche & Samdahl, 1994). Consumers use the products they own and the way they purchase them to define who they are (Veblen, 1994). Consumers use products to influence other people's perceptions

of who they are, and to determine their self-concepts and social identities (Kleine, Kleine & Kernan, 1993; Shaw & Shiu, 2002).

Symbolic self-completion theory suggests that people who have an incomplete self-definition tend to achieve this identity by attaining and presenting symbols with it, through consuming (Gollwitzer, Wicklund, & Hilton, 1982). For example, symbols like luxury brands project financial status, and help to complete ones' self-definition as being part of the affluent class. Similarly, the purchase of technical hiking gear may help move one's self-definition closer to that of outdoor or active person, whether they actually participate in hiking activities or not. Another related theory is called compensatory consumption theory, which theorizes that when consumers are threatened or lack a specific direction, they may consume towards that direction in order to manage that threat and fulfill what they lack (Rucker & Galinsky, 2009).

Consumers usually purchase products that are consistent with their values. This phenomenon could be explained by the self-image congruence model. The self-image congruence model predicts consumers will choose products whose attributes are consistent with some aspects of the consumers themselves, such as their values (Onkvisit & Shaw, 1987). Research supports the idea of congruence between product purchasing and self-image. Carey (2006) reported that observers were able to match photos of drivers to pictures of the cars they drove with an accuracy of 70 percent. There is also evidence of congruity between consumers and their preferred brands of soap, toothpaste, beer, and cigarettes, as well as their favourite stores (Kressmann, Sirgy, Herrmann, Huber, Huber, & Lee, 2006).

2.4 Women in Consumption and Cosmetics.

In 1997, Campbell compared male and female attitudes to shopping. The results showed that women prefer shopping to other forms of leisure activity (as cited in Stebbins, 2006). Conversely, men usually hate shopping, or do not see shopping as a leisure activity at all (Stebbins, 2006). Women and men go shopping with different motivations: men usually go shopping with specific goals and have a more utilitarian motivation towards shopping, whereas women are more motivated to go shopping for hedonic reasons (Hastreiter & Marchetti, 2016).

Most women view shopping as a leisure activity and enjoy the relaxation and happiness that shopping brings. Also, women pay greater attention to their bodies and physical appearance than men do, as has been identified in the fields of marketing and biology, and therefore are often willing to spend more money on health and beauty products (Paasschen, Walker, Phillips, Downing, & Tipper, 2015). In addition, the role of women in household purchases is greater than that of men, and interestingly, they also display more support for environmentally sustainable consumption than men do (Mobrezi & Khoshtinat, 2016).

Women may adopt a number of ways to manipulate their looks, such as through clothing, accessories, cosmetics and surgery (Mulhern, Fieldman, Hussey, Lévêque & Pineau, 2003). They can also use cosmetics to adjust facial symmetry, create uniform skin texture and flawless skin condition (Mulhern et al., 2003). More important, the look of symmetrical faces is considered to be healthier than less symmetrical ones (Jones, Little, Penton-Voak, Tiddeman, Burt & Perrett, 2001). Women who are dissatisfied with their physical appearance tend to use cosmetics, making a compensatory effort to increase their attractiveness (Cash & Cash, 1982). As Franzoi

(2001) said, the more women appeared to believe in the beautifying effect of cosmetics, the more makeup they tended to apply on a daily basis. Meanwhile, the ideal self-image of enhanced physical attractiveness would interactively promote and stimulate cosmetics consumption (Kyung, 2012).

Nash et al. (2006) tested two groups of participants, showing them women's facial pictures with or without makeup. The results showed that participants think that when women wear makeup, they seem much healthier, more confident, and likelier to succeed. Also it has been found that waitresses earned more tips when wearing makeup, especially when serving male guests (Jacob et al., 2010).

Cosmetics not only has a beautifying impact on physical attractiveness, but also acts as a tool of self-expression (Nash et al., 2006). When assessing their own attractiveness, women rated themselves as more attractive, and had more favourable bodily self-perceptions when wearing makeup (Cash, Dawson, Davis, Bowen, & Galumbeck, 1989). The study also shows that women are more satisfied with their appearance when they wear makeup, which makes them more confident and sociable (Nash et al., 2006). This confidence also interactively contributes to women's perceived attractiveness.

According to another experiment conducted by Nash et al. (2006), participants who were enjoying the process of having makeup applied felt a greater sense of well-being, confidence and self-worth after the makeover. It could be concluded that the application of cosmetics had a positive impact on these participants' body image and self-assessed attractiveness, which also contributed to their confidence (Nash et al., 2006).

Wearing cosmetics has also been seen to facilitate social interaction and make a good impression on others (Nash et al., 2006). This influence is particularly evident where physical appearance is valued as important (Nash et al., 2006). Women who are publicly self-conscious or body-conscious will pay high attention to how they impress others, and are more inclined to use or to increase the usage of cosmetics (Cash & Cash, 1982). It has also been found that self-conscious women take more pleasure in socializing when wearing makeup (Miller & Cox, 1982). Based on the above research, it could be seen that women play a vital role in consumption and meanwhile having a strong relationship with cosmetics and cosmetics consumption.

2.5 The Learning Process.

Learning refers to a relatively permanent behavioural change caused by experience (Mowrer, 1960). The experience does not need to affect the learner directly; people can learn vicariously. This casual, unintentional acquisition of knowledge is called incidental learning (Solomon, 2015). Learning is a continuing process. The knowledge people possess is constantly increasing because of new stimuli and constant feedback, which influences people to change their behaviours continuously (Bierley, McSweeney, & Vannieuwkerk, 1985).

Behaviour learning theory suggests that learning happens as a result of responding to external events, referring to external stimuli that directly affect an individual's behaviour (Lieberman, 2000). Solomon et al. (2015) summarizes this well:

Consumers respond to brand names, scents, jingles, and other marketing stimuli on the basis of the learned associations or connections they have formed over time.

Similarly, people also learn that actions they take result in rewards and punishments,

and this feedback influences the way they will respond in similar situations in the future.” (p. 62)

Alternatively, cognitive learning theory highlights the effects of vicarious learning, and is an internal cognitive process in which an individual stores all observations in their memory, like accumulating knowledge. This information is then used to monitor their behaviours at a later time (Shimp, 1991). Observational learning is one of the cognitive learning behaviours (Lieberman, 2000). It occurs when people watch other people’s behaviours and recognize them as new information, saving it in their memories for later use.

2.5.1 Knowledge management. Whether shopping happens as a leisure activity, an obligation, or a combination of the two, shopping requires a certain amount of knowledge regarding products and markets (Rabbiosi, 2014). A lack of education and information distribution on the part of manufacturers could explain why consumers tend not to have accurate and complete information of the products they are purchasing (Chao & Schor, 1998).

Since 2006, the cosmetics industry has diversified their managerial and marketing efforts toward customer requirements (Dimitrova, Kaneva, & Gallucci, 2009). This action is in response to a shift by consumers toward healthier lifestyles and a greater demand for natural products. Consumer knowledge regarding the natural components in cosmetics is a valuable resource for cosmetics companies. An important connection between these two stakeholders – companies and consumers – is the exchange of information between them, which helps companies manage and market products more efficiently (Dimitrova et al., 2009). Cosmetics companies should ensure that information related to any ‘undesirable effects’ or ‘composition of the product’ is accessible to

consumers (FDA, n.d., Labeling Regulations). Such information would expand consumers' knowledge and enhance their perception that they have been given all important information about the product, which might strengthen consumers' trust in the products.

Knowledge is becoming a crucial factor for explaining how consumers' demands and informed behaviours affect each other (Lin, Che, & Ting, 2012). Therefore, good management of consumer knowledge by cosmetics companies should include the creation of a valuable information exchange and channels for direct interaction with consumers (Dimitrova et al., 2009).

2.6 Social Pressure.

Social pressure theory recognizes the power of others' influence on people's behaviours (Asch, 1955). What others think people should do may be more influential than their own preferences. This effect belongs to the subjective norm (SN) influence. SN has been defined as the opinions and expectations of other people, like family members, friends, peers and social communities, on one's own behaviours (Tajeddini & Nikdavoodi, 2014). SN contains two factors: "(1) the intensity of a normative belief (NB) that others think an action should be taken or not taken, and (2) the motivation to comply (MC) with that belief" (Solomon et al., 2015, p. 200).

In feudal China, women were deeply influenced by Confucian culture. In this regard, if women wanted to wear makeup or modify their physical look, they had to ask their husbands' permission (Lee & Zhang, 2010). Another example is, in pre-reform China, people judged women by their physical appearance, such as makeup and clothing, which were considered to be a reflection of people's minds (Hopkins, 2007). Applying makeup at that time was considered evil, which contrasts with the situation in

modern times. Nowadays, many women try to change their social image through clothing and makeup, altering the stereotype that is imposed on them by society (Rabbiosi, 2014).

From Section 2.1 to Section 2.6, the researcher explored selected concepts and theories in the consumer behaviour field in order to provide readers with some general background knowledge. Now, the researcher will introduce five new forms of sustainable consumption, providing a supportive background for this study.

2.7 The Perspectives on Sustainable Consumption.

A value is a belief which shows that a person prefers some condition over others (Rokeach, 1973). A person's values may facilitate what he or she will purchase, and further shapes who a person is and how he/she behaves in society (Rokeach, 1973). A person's set of values plays an essential role in his or her consumptive behaviour, as consumers demonstrate what they value through purchasing products and services. In this section, the researcher will introduce various types of consumption under the overarching theme – sustainable consumption. The emergence of various types of consumption results from consumers pursuing different values in their purchasing.

2.7.1 LOHAS. As Duber-Smith and Rubin (2013) state, there are many marketing research companies that study the natural and organic product trends, and some of them focus on analyzing “consumer demographic, geographic location, and psychographic trends” (p. 242). LOHAS segmentation has become a new type of consumerism that has caught the attention of consumers. “LOHAS” is an abbreviation for Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability. Its primary goal is to “identify appropriate target markets for natural, organic, and environmentally friendly goods and services” (Duber-Smith & Rubin, 2013, p. 243). This tag refers to people “who worry about the environment, want

products to be produced in a sustainable way, and spend money to advance what they see as their personal development and potential” (Everage, 2002, p. 174). The term ‘Lohasians’ represents a lifestyle that includes consuming organic food, using energy-efficient applications, patronizing green hotels and ecotourism (Burg, 2007). Duber-Smith and Rubin (2013) also reported that the LOHAS segment occupies around 20% of the general population. People who value LOHAS and mindful consumption are using sustainable ways to attain self-fulfillment other than mere material accumulation. Lohasians are inclined to live a healthy lifestyle and use their purchasing power to support businesses and practices that are in accord with their concerns and standards, which is sustainability (Sahota, 2013).

LOHAS continues to develop because consumers are constantly presented with new issues. Consumers’ concerns and requirements are not only for recycled products, but also for locally produced, hormone-free, cage-free, GMO-free, and cruelty-free products. In other words, “mindful consumption is the LOHAS remedy to the critiques of consumerism” (Emerich, 2011, p. 10). The counterpart of mindful consumption is ‘mindless consumption’, which refers to purchase simply for the act of purchasing or the acquisition of something new, without consideration for the impact the product has on the environment and society. By contrast, mindful consumption means that consumers assess products’ lifecycles and their impact on the environment and society (Emerich, 2011).

In the context of a growing interest in global health, consumers are beginning to focus on personal health through their purchases, which has been termed ‘conscientious consumerism’ (Etzioni, 2001). As Burg (2007) found, 71% of consumers stated that they would purchase from companies whose business practices are consistent with their

values. Now, conscientious consumerism is spreading to the mass market. Walmart conducted a survey, the 'Live Better Index', to monitor consumers' feelings about eco-friendly products (Mahoney, 2007). 62% of 2,500 participants said that they would like to buy eco-friendly products if there were no price difference. Forty-seven percent of respondents said that buying environmentally friendly products makes them feel like clever consumers, and sixty-eight percent agreed that even the small change of recycling at home makes a difference for the environment.

2.7.2 Green consumption. Green consumption is another type of sustainable consumption that originates from a realization of, and concern for, the negative impacts of unsustainable consumption on the environment and society (Joshi & Rahman, 2015). Consumers often associate green consumption with other concepts, such as sustainable, ethical, responsible, and conscious consumption (Peattie, 2010). Various definitions of green consumption can be found in previous studies. However, there is no clarified and unified definition for green consumption (Peattie, 2010). Most studies connect green consumption with environmentally-friendly consumption behaviours (Tanner & Wölfling Kast, 2003), where consumers purchase products while considering the impact on the environment and society (Moisander, 2007). Other studies associated green consumption with consuming less in overall consumption (Huttunen & Autio, 2010).

Green products are products that “consumers perceive to be environmentally-friendly, whether it is due to the production process, the types of materials or ingredients used to manufacture the product, packaging, marketing communications, and so on” (Tan, Johnstone & Yang, 2016, p. 312). In addition, as Palevich (2011) emphasized, the concept of green has been extended to the whole life cycle of a product, which includes sourcing of raw materials, producing, storing, packaging, and distributing.

Consumers have become the most important driver in sustainable production as they account for over 60% of overall purchases in the Organizations for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries – an intergovernmental economic organization that aims to promote policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world (OECD, 2016). Hence, they would make a great impact on green consumption if they chose to purchase environmentally-friendly products (OECD, 2016). In addition, given that 40% of environmental damage is caused by household consumption, consumers could help decrease environmental damage by purchasing green products (Grunert & Juhl, 1995). Consumers have shown increasingly positive attitudes towards environmental protection and expressed demand for green products (Liu, Wang, Shishime & Fujitsuka, 2012). Kotler (2000) stated that over 40% of US consumers are ready to pay extra for green products. However, the actual purchase of green products has not yet increased accordingly (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Carrington, Neville & Whitwell, 2010; Gupta & Ogden, 2009; Pickett-Baker & Ozaki, 2008).

Although scholars have tried to establish a connection between consumers' socio-demographic characteristics and green consumption behaviours (Chen & Chang, 2013; Peattie, 2010), results have been inconsistent (Tan et al., 2016), indicating consumers' socio-demographic features only partially affect their green purchasing behaviours. A number of factors affecting consumers' attitudes and green purchasing behaviours have been identified in previous studies. For instance, price, perceived uncertain performance, quality, and availability are some common reasons why consumers choose not to purchase green products even they care about the environment (Chen & Chang, 2013; Gleim, Smith, Andrews & Cronin, 2013; Gupta & Ogden, 2009; Pickett-Baker & Ozaki,

2008; Tanner & Wölfling Kast, 2003). Other influencing factors include personal habits and past purchasing experiences (Padel & Foster, 2005); values (Padel & Foster, 2005); social norms (Rettie, Burchell, & Barnham, 2014); consumer preferences and reference groups (He, Cai, Deng & Li, 2016; Liu et al., 2012;); social status (Chen & Chang, 2013); risk (Eggert, 2006); and sales promotion (Lowe & Barnes, 2012).

In addition, consumers may hold a certain perception towards green products before actually purchasing them. Consumer perceptions result from the “interpretation and perceptual judgement of stimuli that they are presented with”, which has a certain impact on their attitudes and behaviours (Tan et al., 2016, p. 289). For instance, if consumers perceive green products are more expensive than regular products (price), require more effort (e.g. knowledge), are hard to get (availability/accessibility), or perform inferiorly, then consumers are unlikely to purchase them (Tan et al., 2016). It is the same result when consumers hold negative opinions toward green marketing, such as cynicism (Zabkar & Hosta, 2013) or distrust (Gupta & Ogden, 2009). Conversely, if consumers who are stereotyped by others or themselves as ‘greenies’ (e.g. self-identity), they are more likely to proceed with the purchasing of green products (Tan et al., 2016). Previous studies have also found other ‘perception-related’ factors that are influential to consumers’ purchasing behaviours of green products. For example, perceived consumer effectiveness, which refers to consumers’ assessment of the extent to which their consumption could make a difference on the overall environmental problem (Follows & Jobber, 2000; Gupta & Ogden, 2009;), and perceived behavioural control (Wang, Liu & Qi, 2014), which refers to the ability of an individual to perform a given behaviour (Ajzen, 2005).

One article needs to be highlighted among green consumption studies, which was written by Joshi and Rahman (2015). Fifty-three empirical studies regarding green consumer behaviour written between 2000 and 2014 were reviewed in this article. “This is one of the first study that reviewed articles related to attitude – behaviour inconsistencies in the context of green purchasing” (Joshi & Rahman, 2015, p. 1). By reviewing these 53 articles, Joshi and Rahman (2015) highlighted various motives and barriers affecting consumers’ attitudes and behaviours toward green products, and grouped these factors into individual and situational categories. For example, Joshi and Rahman (2015) put emotions (Chan, Wong & Leung, 2008), guilt (Young, Hwang, McDonald & Oates, 2010), and generativity (Paço, Alves & Shiel, 2013) under the individual factors category. The term generativity merits further explanation. The word ‘generativity,’ which was coined by Erikson and Erikson (1998), means “a concern for people besides self and family that usually develops during middle age; especially a need to nurture and guide younger people and contribute to the next generation” (p. 37). The situational factors that have been categorized by Joshi and Ramen (2015) are, for example, knowledge and information (Connell, 2010; Padel & Foster, 2005); store-related attributes (Connell, 2010; Tanner & Wölfling Kast, 2003); brand image (Young et al., 2010); eco-labelling (Young et al., 2010) and regulatory laws (Chen & Chang, 2012).

2.7.3 Ethical consumption. Although there has been a considerable increase of studies in the area of ethical consumption since the 1990s (Chatzidakis, 2015), it has been difficult to define ethical behaviour and ethical consumption (Bray, Johns, & Kilburn, 2011). As Barnett, Cloke, Clarke and Malpass (2005) claim, the definition of ethical consumption might be connected with a particular object of ethical concern, such

as health and safety threats, animal rights or working conditions. One common definition of ethical consumption behaviour concluded by Cooper-Martin and Holbrook (1993) is, “decision-making, purchases and other consumption experiences that are affected by the consumers’ ethical concerns” (p.113).

The previous research mainly focused on exploring consumers’ decision making process of purchasing ethical products, but based on the socio-cognitive models, such as Ajzen’s model of planned behaviour developed in 1988, and Hunt and Vitell’s theory of marketing ethics developed in 1986. However, these models were created on the assumption that consumers’ attitudes were consistent with their actual behaviours (Chatzidakis, 2015). When there is a gap between consumers’ attitudes and behaviour, the effectiveness of these models in understanding consumers’ decision-making process will be weakened (Bray et al., 2011; Carrington et al, 2011; Follows & Jobber, 2000).

A number of ethical movements have emerged over the past several decades, such as fair trade and corporate social responsibility (Barnett et al., 2005). These issues have been reflected in the increasing ethical considerations and the movements of changing consumer behaviours (Newholm, 2017). Creyer and Ross (1997) found that an increasing number of American consumers are willing to pay a premium for ethical products and expect ethical practices from companies. It also has been reported that over 30% of UK consumers are seriously concerned about ethical issues (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). However, Cowe and Williams (2000) coined the term ‘30:3 phenomenon’, which means that about 30% of consumers expressed a commitment to care about ethical practices, but only 3% of their purchases actually comply with ethical standards. This phenomenon has also been identified by other studies and termed ‘Ethical Purchasing Gap’ or ‘Attitude–Behaviour Gap’ (Bray et al., 2011). It has also been identified that

cooperate social responsibility or good reputation were not the most important criteria in consumers' purchase decision-making process (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000). For many consumers, personal needs are more important than ethics when making purchasing decisions (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). Additionally, correlational relationships have been found between consumers' values and attitudes and their purchase behaviours (Follows & Jobber, 2000). If consumers' values is consistent with the products' ethical standards, or if consumers hold positive attitudes towards ethical products, they might be motivated to proceed their purchasing behaviours, vice versa.

Furthermore, some situational factors that have been ignored by past studies might be more critical to consumers than just ethical considerations (Bray et al., 2011; Diamantopoulos, Schlegelmilch, Sinkovics & Bohlen, 2003). These factors either motivate or impede consumers' willingness or ability to purchase sustainable cosmetics. For example, when buying fashion items, consumers prioritize trend and style over the working conditions in which the garments were made.

Those situational factors relating to or dependent on a set of circumstances that affect participants' purchase behaviours of sustainable cosmetics, such as price, availability, convenience, quality, value, and brand familiarity (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000; Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Tregear & Ness, 2005). The gap between consumers' attitudes and behaviour may also be a reflection of the lack of availability: Cowe and Williams (2000) found that qualified ethical products represent only 1–3% of the overall consumer market. A products' ethical information, such as condition of production, method of distribution, has also been identified to help consumers make informed decisions and then influence consumers' purchasing behaviours (Barnett et al., 2005).

These studies above show that the decision-making process in ethical consumption is complex, and various factors interact with each other to affect the outcome of consumers' ethical decisions.

2.7.4 Anti-consumption. The phenomenon of anti-consumption is becoming a heated topic recently, not only in the academic arena, but also as a potential market trend (Iyer & Muncy, 2009). The concept of anti-consumption should not be understood literally as the movement against consumption, and it is not identical to conscientious or green consumption (Cherrier, 2009). Rather, anti-consumption includes ethics, sustainability and public policy (Cherrier, 2009). Generally speaking, anti-consumption is more like a lifestyle that aims to minimize consumptive behaviour and avoids certain standards for consumption (Lee, Fernandez & Hyman, 2009).

Researchers have tended to focus on consumers' attitudes and motivations for certain purchasing behaviours; however, anti-consumption studies highlight the reasons for why consumers avoid buying certain products or brands (Lee, Motion & Conroy, 2009). Anti-consumption is not resistance to business success or societal progress. Rather, anti-consumption is a type of sustainable and pro-social consumption, which suggests consumers purchase wisely and usefully to enhance the quality of their lives and build a more sustainable society (Lee, Fernandez, et al., 2009).

2.7.5 Conscious consumption. Conscious consumption can be seen as a remedy to overconsumption and competitive consumption (Carr, Gotlieb, Lee & Shah, 2012), and it has been defined as:

Any choice about products or services made as a way to express values sustainability, social justice, corporate responsibility, or workers' rights and into account the larger context of production, distribution, or impacts and services.

Conscious consumption choices may include forgoing consumption or choosing products that are organic, eco-friendly, fair trade, or cruelty-free (Willis & Schor, 2012, p. 4).

Conscious consumption is more focused on participating in thoughtful purchasing instead of decreasing the amount of consumption, which indicates that consumers are conscious about their purchases by considering the impact their actions have on the environment and society (Carr et al., 2012). Studies show that conscious consumers are willing to pay a premium and join in the boycott of products when it is consistent with their values and point of views (Willis & Schor, 2012). In essence, consumers' daily purchase decisions could be described as a self-identity building exercise that connects their desire for materialism with taking responsibility for their impact on the world (Schudson, 2007). Conscious consumption could also act as another aspect of status consumption by displaying products that are green, cruelty-free, fair trade, and connected to certain social standards which reflect the need for specific status, such as green consumers or ethical consumers (Carr et al., 2012).

Instituto Akatu (2005) emphasizes that conscious consumption is “a process that seeks to achieve balance among the needs of the individual, environmental possibilities, and the needs of society across three different phases of a product's life: purchase, use, and disposal” (as cited in De Abreu Sofiatti Dalmarco et al., 2015, p. 2). In 2002, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development extended the phases of product's life to production, maintenance and repair (De Abreu Sofiatti Dalmarco et al., 2015).

A critical point is that conscious consumption must consider the whole life-cycle of the product being purchased. The United Nations Environmental Programme (2008) has

stated that the goal of sustainable or conscious consumption is to unite all parties, including government, manufacturers and individuals, to work together to find and adopt alternative consuming practices that would decrease the use of raw materials and energy, and reduce waste.

De Abreu Sofiatti Dalmarco et al. (2015) conducted a survey to investigate how knowledgeable consumers were about conscious consumption. They found out that of 950 participants, 88% thought conscious consumption meant reducing consumption and 82% of the respondents inferred that this term implied the recycling and re-use of materials. Moreover, participants thought of sustainable products primarily in terms of its packaging. The most frequent three answers are recyclable (60%), reusable (47%), and recycled (35%) packaging. This result indicates that participants are not very aware of what conscious consumption actually means, but they can still associate this concept with environmental sustainability. Next, the survey extended to the term 'sustainable buying behaviours' in order to evaluate participants' purchasing habits. Over 50% of the respondents reported that they 'always' or 'almost always' purchase products with less packaging, which means that respondents generally have positive attitudes towards environmentally sustainable products.

2.8 Research Environment – The Cosmetics Industry.

Now, the researcher is going to give more information of the research background - the cosmetics industry. It starts from introducing some cosmetics-related concepts, and then the situation and trend in the cosmetic industry.

2.8.1 The definition of cosmetics and the global beauty industry. The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) defines cosmetics as products would be applied to consumers' bodies for the purposes of hygiene, beautifying, enhancing or

modifying the physical looking but without causing negative impacts on the bodies' physical structure or performance (Khraim, 2011).

A cosmetic product is defined as any substance or preparation intended to be placed in contact with the various parts of the human body (epidermis, hair system, nails, lips and external genital organs) or with the teeth and the mucous membranes of the oral cavity with a view exclusively or mainly to cleaning them, perfuming them, changing their appearance and/or correcting body odours and/or protecting them or keeping them in good condition" (European Union, 1993, p.1).

Typical cosmetic products are skin creams, lotions, perfumes, lipsticks, polishes, make-up products, soaps, shampoos, hair colours, toothpastes, and deodorants (Pauwels & Rogiers, 2010).

In addition to contributing to people's beauty regimes, cosmetics products also satisfy consumers' basic needs for cleanliness and hygiene (Heerink, 2013). In order to thoroughly investigate the factors that affect consumers' purchasing behaviours of sustainable cosmetics, this study will adopt a broad definition of cosmetics, defining it as skin care cosmetics, colour makeup cosmetics and hygiene cosmetics.

In the past two decades, the Global Beauty Market (GBM) has averagely increased 4.5% a year and the annual increasing rate is between 3% to 5.5% (Łopaciuk & Łoboda, 2013). Skincare, haircare, colour (make-up), fragrances and toiletries are five primary categories of the global beauty industry. The beauty industry was also affected by the economic recession in 2009, but it recovered in 2010, faster than other industries. This economic recession influenced consumers' purchasing behaviours of cosmetics (In-cosmetics, 2010). Consumers started to think of the acquisition of cosmetics as an investment, rather than indulgent buying (Łopaciuk & Łoboda, 2013). Money spent on

cosmetics after the recession not only bounced back to pre-recession levels, but surpassed it by 5% in 2010. Consumers began to realize the existence of premium cosmetics and luxury brands, and in 2010, the GBM was a \$382.3 billion dollar industry (Łopaciuk & Łoboda, 2013).

2.8.2 The sustainable beauty market. Consumers' demand for organic and natural products is no longer limited to the food industry. Today, consumers are looking for cosmetic products that are made from natural ingredients and are ethically produced. According to Organic Monitor (2010), consumers' demand for natural and organic cosmetics grew quickly during the past two decades with global sales growing to \$9.1 billion from \$1 billion between the mid-1990s and 2011 (as cited in Sahota, 2013).

Grand View Research, an American market research and consulting company, declared that the global organic beauty market will probably reach \$25.11 billion by 2025, as consumers demand more organic cosmetics (Grand View Research, 2016). Persistence Market Research, a global market research firm, also projects that the organic beauty industry will be valued at around \$22 billion by 2024. These numbers suggest that the organic beauty industry will grow nearly 8-10% per year. The natural and organic beauty market was worth \$11 billion in 2016, which means that if these projections are accurate, the market will double in value by 2022 (Persistence Market Research, 2016). As per regional segmentation analysis, North America is the most important market, accounting for a 33.5% share of the whole market by the end of 2016, followed by Europe and the Asia Pacific (Persistence Market Research, 2016).

As Schneiders and Anklin (2013) reported, although the primary purpose of using cosmetics is to meet personal requirements for beauty and cleanliness, sustainability and ethics are becoming increasingly important in consumers' purchasing decisions.

Consumers have started to check the ingredients labels and ethical symbols on cosmetics packaging. Also, more and more consumers are realizing the direct impacts their purchases could have on the environment and society. These shifts in consumer behaviour can be attributed in part to increasing popular awareness of the environmental devastation and social damage caused by irresponsible consuming. Consumers are becoming more educated and informed about sustainability issues from social media and other channels (Sahota, 2013). This information and knowledge helps to raise consumers' awareness of sustainability and influences their purchasing behaviours. No doubt, these changes in consumers' awareness and behaviours will affect the cosmetics industry directly.

Cosmetics are not just ordinary commodities for consumers. As Heerink (2013) notes, consumers build special relationships with their cosmetics through everyday use, because some cosmetics literally become part of the face (skincare & make-up) or are applied on the most intimate part of the body. Therefore, it is time for cosmetics companies to take responsibility for incorporating sustainable and ethical practices into the whole life cycle of their products.

2.8.3 Sustainable cosmetic products. Natural cosmetics, green cosmetics, eco-friendly and organic cosmetics are terms widely used on cosmetics labels. For the purposes of this study, the researcher has collectively titled these cosmetics as sustainable cosmetics products. The researcher will choose 'organic' and 'organic cosmetics' as examples to illustrate the real situation of sustainable cosmetics in our society.

When it comes to food, the word 'organic' as defined by the National Organic Program standards (NOP), a part of the United States Department of Agriculture

(USDA), is extremely clear (Dickson, 2010). United States federal regulations determine “how organic food is grown, raised, processed and sold” (Dickson, 2010, p. 1).

However, when it comes to cosmetics, the definition of organic is less clear, since the USDA does not have the same supervision over the cosmetics industry as it does over the food industry (Dickson, 2010). While many personal care products are certified by USDA and many of them present the USDA Organic Seal on their packaging, the USDA does not have the authority to regulate the organic claims that are not certified by USDA on cosmetics (Dickson, 2010).

The United States Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FD&C Act) and the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act (FPLA) have the authority to regulate cosmetics in the United States. However, the term ‘organic’ and ‘organic cosmetics’ are not defined in either of these laws or any regulations under their authority (USDA Organic Skin Care, 2010). Following are examples of the definitions of ‘organic’ products enacted by the USDA:

Organic is a labeling term that indicates that the food or other agricultural product has been produced through approved methods. These methods integrate cultural, biological, and mechanical practices that foster cycling of resources, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity. Synthetic fertilizers, sewage sludge, irradiation, and genetic engineering may not be used. (USDA National Organic Program, 2013)

USDA certified Organic products are produced without the use of synthetic preservatives, petrochemicals, ionizing radiation or pesticides. The USDA has established a national standard for organic labeling. (USDA Organic Skin Care, 2013)

Three classifications based on the percentage of organic ingredients contained in the food products are listed here:

100 % Organic: Must contain only organically produced ingredients. (The USDA seal may appear on the package.)

Organic: Must contain 95% minimum organically produced ingredients. Products cannot be produced using synthetic preservatives, petrochemicals, ionizing radiation or any other excluded methods. (The USDA seal may appear on the package.)

Made with Organic Ingredients: Contain at least 70 percent organic ingredients. (The USDA seal cannot be used anywhere on the package.) (USDA Organic Skin Care, 2013)

The definitions of ‘organic’ and ‘organic products’ enacted by USDA are the most widely accepted in the north American organic market. However, these definitions are effective only in the food industry because of the USDA’s limited authority over other sectors. In other words, any food products with ‘organic’ seals on the labels must follow strict standards and enforcement by the Federal government of the United States. This is not the case for cosmetics products. As stated by Dickson (2010), if regulation of the ‘organic’ label were consistent across all products categories, it would increase consumers’ confidence in organic products, improve product reliability, reduce greenwashing label claims, and substantially expand the use of USDA organic ingredients in cosmetic products.

2.9 Sustainability and Ethics in the Cosmetics Industry.

In this section, the researcher will explore sustainability issues within the cosmetics industry, from environmental, social, and economic perspectives sequentially.

Sustainability can be thought of as having three pillars: social, economic, and environmental. These three pillars normally comprise the ‘triple bottom line’ that forms the foundation of many sustainability standards and certification systems, such as “the Rainforest Alliance, Fairtrade and UTZ Certified standards” (Sahota, 2013, p. 1). In order to live up to sustainability claims, these three pillars should be integrated into the entire life cycle of cosmetic products.

Although the concept of sustainability has become increasingly important in recent years, many consumers do not know actually what ‘sustainability’ means. In research conducted by the Hartman Group in 2010, 1606 Americans were polled to investigate their understanding of the concept of sustainability. The results showed that more than half of the participants were familiar with the term ‘sustainability’, but only 5% of participants could name companies with sustainable practices, while 12% reported that they knew where to buy sustainable products (Sahota, 2013).

As Vital (2013) noted, sustainable thinking and practices have been incorporated in many cosmetics companies’ strategic plans for almost three decades. Many companies have started to publish annual sustainability reports, which represents how companies think about their environmental and social impact and how they address sustainability throughout their products’ life cycles. Life cycle assessment (LCA) is “a method to assess environmental impacts associated with all the stages of a product’s life from cradle to grave (i.e., from raw material extraction through materials processing, manufacture, distribution, use, and disposal or recycling),” which should be considered in every phase of a product’s life (Vital, 2013, p. 20).

In addition to the environmental damage caused by the cosmetic industry’s unsustainable harvesting practices of raw ingredients, other ethical issues have drawn

public attention, such as animal testing and the safety of cosmetics use. These issues will be explored in the following sections, starting with the environmental sustainability, followed by social sustainability and finally economic sustainability perspectives.

2.9.1 Environmental sustainability. Many cosmetics companies are giving thought to reducing their products' environmental impact throughout the product's life cycles, from the sourcing of raw materials, producing, packaging, and transporting, to consuming and disposal. An increasing number of companies have begun using biodegradable packaging materials, as can be seen in the market. Production lines are also being upgraded to use renewable energy sources and energy-efficient systems (Sahota, 2013).

As Campion, Barre, and Gilbert (2013) stated, most cosmetics companies are aware that they should reduce their carbon footprint, which is only one of their environmental responsibilities. To better understand the environmental impact of cosmetics, it is necessary to investigate the products' supply chain, then follow through to the consumption process, and finally, to examine the disposal phase.

2.9.1.1 Sourcing. Cosmetics companies are scrutinized by the public with regard to natural ingredients harvesting practices. Some raw ingredients only grow in certain areas, many of which are located in developing countries, so the companies have to source the ingredients there. In addition, as Pulverail (2013) stated, most cosmetics companies prefer to source and produce their products in developing countries as a means of reducing costs. However, excessive exploitation or sourcing without sustainable practices lead directly to natural habitat devastation.

For example, palm oil, which is a vegetable oil grown mainly in Indonesia and Malaysia, is one of the natural resources most often used by cosmetics companies.

Excessive exploitation of palm oil has caused great devastation to tropical rainforests and threatened orangutans' habitat which is an endangered species in the world (Sahota, 2013). Unilever, which is a major leader in the cosmetics industry, was exposed for unethical sourcing of palm oil in 2009. This incident forced Unilever to give up its palm oil supplier in Indonesia and make a commitment to the public that it will only source sustainable palm oil in the future (Sahota, 2013).

2.9.1.2 Packaging. The waste of cosmetics' packaging is now under the spotlight. The use of unnecessary packaging has been questioned not only because it raises the product's price, but also for wasting resources and adding to environmental load. As Narayan (2013) stated, plastic is the most commonly used material for packing cosmetics products due to its low cost, flexibility, and light weight. However, plastics is not biodegradable in landfills, and also causes ocean pollution.

Victor Papanek coined the term 'eco-design' in 1971 to describe an approach that aims to make our economy 'lighter' on the planet (Papanek, 2009). Eco-design refers to reducing the useless and unnecessary functions of a product, while retaining its usefulness. It is an approach that aims to minimize negative impacts on the environment and help to improve consumers' quality of life. Borchardt, Poltosi, Sellitto, and Pereira (2009) also introduced eco-design as "a concept that integrates multifaceted aspects of design and environmental considerations", which aims to offer sustainable solutions to the society meanwhile satisfying consumers' needs and desires (p. 2).

The eco-design approach is a practical choice for cosmetics companies, especially for small and medium-sized sustainable cosmetics companies, which will increase the competitive advantages for them. For instance, the eco-design approach will enhance brand's reputation, minimize environmental impacts, reduce unnecessary costs, and

develop innovative features of its products (Borchardt et al., 2009). Cosmetics companies who follow this approach value the environment and society as much as their profits.

To solve the packaging issue in the cosmetics industry, the producer should consider the ‘eco-design’ concept throughout a product’s life cycle and articulate the environmental impact it generates; the product’s designer should select utilitarian and biodegradable packaging; the cosmetics companies should reach an agreement on sustainability with all the stakeholders involved, including suppliers, engineers, researchers, producers, retailers and other organizations (De Abreu Sofiatti Dalmarco et al., 2015).

2.9.1.3 Post-use. The use and post-use phases of cosmetic products also give rise to environmental and social damage. Researchers from Arizona State University and the federal authorities reported that they found the waterways in Minnesota were contaminated with cosmetics ingredients (Sahota, 2013). However, it is just an example of a much larger issue and the issue goes beyond Minnesota.

Anti-microbial ingredients, such as triclocarban and triclosan, are largely contained in soaps, sanitisers and other similar products, which are poisonous to marine organisms (Sahota, 2013). As Escobedo and Lojenga (2013) reported, triclosan interferes with photosynthesis in diatom algae, which is responsible for a large part of photosynthesis on Earth. The interference can cause tremendous damage on the eco-system. If algae stops photosynthesizing, the Earth’s whole eco-system would be disrupted and ultimately destroyed. Microplastic, a material much used in cosmetics products, is rapidly accumulating in the oceans and disrupting marine ecosystems. Consumers could

easily find microbeads in the cosmetics products, such as soaps, scrubs and shower gels (Arena, Ardolino, Di Gregorio, 2016).

A large part of the anti-microbial ingredients come from consumer households after using cosmetics. They enter the sewers and are ultimately discharged into natural water channels (Escobedo & Lojenga, 2013). None of the chemicals mentioned above is biodegradable and they are ingested by marine organisms when released into the water, which affects the normal operation of the whole ecosystem.

It is worth mentioning that the basic hygiene products create no less of an environmental burden than any other makeup products. For example, around 23,000 tonnes of toothbrushes and 2 billion disposable razors are buried in landfills every year in America. Such products and its components are not biodegradable in landfills, which becomes a serious concern for human beings (Sahota, 2013).

2.9.2 Social sustainability. “Ethics is a set of principles of right human conduct. It deals with moral values such as good or bad, right or wrong, appropriate or inappropriate” (Dobrev, 2011, p. 16). Ethical concerns about human safety and health, as well as animal testing issues, have existed in the cosmetics industry for a long time (Sahota, 2013). At the end of this section, the researcher will provide information regarding regulations of the cosmetics industry.

2.9.2.1 Human safety and health. The safety of cosmetics ingredients has been raised as the top concern for many consumers. The ingredients used in the cosmetics products has a direct relation with consumers’ safety and health (Dayan & Kromidas, 2011).

Beerling (2013) reported that the cosmetics industry has long been criticized for collusion with the chemical industry as some ingredients must be mixed with chemicals

for certain textures and performance. For instance, emulsifier is one of these chemicals. Indeed, many giant chemical companies, such as BASF, Dow Chemical, Evonik, and Eastman Chemical, have been loyal suppliers to the cosmetics industry for decades.

Beerling (2013) also described several synthetic ingredients, which are harmful to human health, but have been much used in cosmetics. Phthalate, which is identified as a potential endocrine disruptor, has been widely used in general cosmetic products, such as hairsprays, nail polishes and perfumes, functioning as a convenient solvent for better texture. Parabens, one of the most common chemicals used in thousands of cosmetics products, has been recognized as an imitator of estrogen and can trigger breast cancer. Anti-microbial ingredients, such as triclocarban and triclosan, can cause endocrine disorders as well. Many chemicals used in cosmetics products are damaging human health, such as aluminum salts, petrochemicals oils, formaldehyde, mercury, and other heavy metals.

Because the supply of petrochemical feedstock is declining, cosmetics companies and ingredients suppliers have to create green formulas and find alternative resources to replace petroleum-based raw materials (Sahota, 2013). As Beerling (2013) stated, this development of ‘green ingredients recipe’ begins with using plant-based materials. Some large cosmetics companies and suppliers are trying to build connections with agricultural companies for green ingredients sourcing. For example, The Body Shop signed a contract with a shea butter company in Ghana for its sustainable and ethical shea butter. Rhodia, a chemical company, released a series of new hair-care polymer products in 2010, which were extracted from vegetables (Sahota, 2013).

Suppliers, corporations, retailers, and consumers are all bound together in this complex cosmetics chain. Social media has opened consumers’ minds and raised their

awareness of sustainability; now consumers' expectations and demands are changing from traditional cosmetics to sustainable cosmetics. As Alexander (2013) stated, this transformation is forcing cosmetics retailers to look for sustainable ingredients suppliers, whose practices of sourcing and producing are consistent with the principle of sustainability, and adherence to labour laws. For example, in 2005, the UK retailer Marks & Spencer requested its suppliers to upgrade their palm oil to 100% sustainable.

2.9.2.2 Animal testing. The cosmetics industry has been highly scrutinized, due to its bad reputation for conducting tests on animals (Sahota, 2013). Helsinki Declaration and Good Clinical Practice required the cosmetics companies to test the ingredients of finished cosmetics for products' safety level, which is an essential procedure for cosmetics companies before selling the products on the market (Dobrev, 2011). Also, according to European Union (EU) Cosmetics Directive 76/768/EEC, "the cosmetic product must not cause damage to human health when applied under normal or reasonably foreseeable conditions of use" (Dobrev, 2011, p. 5). In order to achieve these requirements, cosmetics ingredients and finished products must be tested for evaluating their safety, compatibility and effectiveness. However, cosmetics companies need to find alternative testing methods for the safety examination, instead of conducting tests on humans or animals.

Animal testing has historically been an issue in the cosmetics industry. Dating back to 1959, William Russell and Rex Burch published a book, *Principles of Humane Experimental Technique*, and initiated a campaign opposing animal testing. They announced the concept of three 'R's, which are "reduce the number of animals; refine or limit the pain and distress caused; and replace animal testing with non-animal alternatives" (as cited in Bauer, 2014, p. 1). The European Centre for the Validation of

Alternative Methods (ECVAM) adopted the three ‘R’s and modified them as “reducing, refining, or replacing the use of laboratory animals”, which became the main goal of ECVAM (Dobrev, 2011, p. 1).

Since the bans of animal testing and marketing were implemented by the Europe Union in 2004, the bans outside of the EU came into force in 2013 (Hinson, 2013). The sales of any cosmetics products tested on animals are not legal in the EU, regardless of where those tests are conducted. Animal testing has been resisted by many consumers; however, most of the cosmetics companies are still doing so. For example, scientists use clamps to keep the rabbit’s eyes open, then dropping cosmetics ingredients into their eyes for testing the safety of the products (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals - PETA). In addition, more than 80% of the world still allows animal testing for cosmetics. For example, the law of China regulates that cosmetics must be tested on animals before selling or imported into China. But many of other countries which continue to conduct animal testing are not even forced by such laws.

Although it is hard for the whole industry to become sustainable and ethical in a short time, there has been distinct progress on testing safety of cosmetics products. Advanced technologies that have been used in the skin bioengineering pushed cruelty-free expectations come true. For example, using artificial skin or human cell-based texture could replace animal testing. “Ethical aspects of noninvasive skin measurements” have recently been a significant concern (Dobrev, 2011, p. 19). “Noninvasive” means “a procedure or instrument causing minimal and only temporary changes to structure or function. And in particular, not involving pain, incision, or loss of blood” (Dobrev, 2011, p. 19). In the words of Hinson (2013), it will be more accurate to use artificial human skin than the real one, the reaction of both type of skins is

identical. However, the reaction of animal's cells will be different.

Furthermore, consumers play vital role in accelerating this process by putting pressure on the cosmetics companies, same as what they did for achieving EU ban on animal testing (Hinson, 2013). Many organizations are fighting for animal rights and ethical practices worldwide. For example, Cruelty-Free International is a UK organization which leads global campaigns to stop animal testing. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), is another animal rights group that keeps fighting to end animal testing. Cosmetics products can be certified by PETA as ethical products by carrying the Leaping Bunny logo, indicating that these products have not been tested on animals. The American online retailer Vitacost.com conducted a survey in 2012, which found that 75% of female consumers have the preference of purchasing cruelty-free products (Sahota, 2013). Without a doubt, consumers' purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics has made a difference for the cosmetics industry.

It is difficult to find a proper alternative method to entirely eliminate animal testing in the cosmetics industry. It is realistic to accept that it will probably take decades before 'no animal testing' truly becomes an internationally accepted rule.

2.9.2.3 Cosmetics regulations. In 1938, the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (FD&C Act) was revised by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and, for the first time, regulations for the cosmetics industry and the ingredients that manufacturers use in their products were established (Geffken, 2001).

According to the FDA (n.d.), "labeling refers to all labels and other written, printed, or graphic matter on or accompanying a product" (Labeling Regulations, para. 9). The information panel on a product is where the product information is listed. Since this panel holds the most important information about the product, placing obligatory

information, such as the cosmetic ingredients declaration, on the bottom of the package is usually not acceptable.

According to the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FD&C Act) and the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act (FPLA), the manufacturer must provide consumers with information on the ingredients, the name and the place of the manufacturer, packer or distributor, the true quantity of the contents in the product, and instructions for safe use, and warnings if needed (Foulke, 1992). The ingredients declaration can be considered the most important information on a product's packaging, which is a list of all the ingredients used in a product. The FDA requires this labeling under the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act (FPLA). This law intends to make sure that consumers have enough information to make informed choices (FDA, n.d., The Legal Background, para. 1).

All the labelling information that is required by law or regulation must be written in English (FDA, n.d., Labeling Regulations, para. 15). The only exception to this rule is for products distributed in an area where a different language is dominant.

Understanding ingredients that have been used in a product is challenging for the average consumer. To help with this, the ingredients must be listed at the information panel of the product's package, where the consumer can easily find it. However, complicating this issue, is the practice of dual declaration of ingredients' names on the cosmetics' ingredients labels. Cosmetics companies sometimes request to identify botanicals only by their Latin names, color additives only by their 'CI' (colour index) numbers, or use terms from other languages, such 'Aqua' instead of 'Water' and 'Parfum' instead of 'Fragrance' (FDA, n.d., Ingredient Names, para. 4). Under the FPLA, however, ingredients must be listed by their common or usual names and FDA does not accept these alternatives as substitutes. However, the FDA does not object to

the use of common or usual names in English (or Spanish, in Puerto Rico) followed by other names in parentheses. Here are some examples that FPLA and FDA approved:

Water (Aqua); Fragrance (Parfum); Honey (Mel); Sweet Almond Oil (Prunus Amygdalus Dulcis); FD&C Yellow No. 5 (CI 19140).

Another common phenomenon on the ingredients label is that one chemical ingredient may have various names. For instance, Mineral Oil is usually listed on labels as 'White Oil', 'Paraffin', 'Oil Mist', 'Vaseline', 'Petrolatum', and other forms; however, all these names refer to the same chemical (Vance, 1999). Dr. John Bailey, the director of the Food and Drug Administration's Office of Cosmetics and Colors, admitted that most consumers cannot understand the ingredients listed on the products' packaging, but there is no way to change it and still accurately identify the ingredients (Foulke, 1992).

Furthermore, many manufacturers simply list 'trade secret' or 'and also other ingredients' in order to protect their patented formula. For example, fragrance and flavor ingredients do not need to be listed individually on the cosmetics labels as they can be listed as 'trade secret' (FDA, n.d., The Legal Background, para. 3). In reality, the average consumers may simply look for the key words displayed on the products' packaging, such as 'natural', 'organic', or 'dermatologist-tested' (Foulke, 1992). Instead of doing their own research, consumers are more likely to believe that these words suggest their cosmetics are safe to use, even though the opposite may be true.

Another phenomenon in the cosmetics industry is that cosmetics regulations vary in different continents and countries. As Beerling and Sahota (2013) stated, Europe is regarded as the leader with respect to addressing cosmetics safety issues. For example, Europe was the first to ban the use of phthalates in 2003. Phthalates are esters of phthalic

acid and they have been mostly used as plasticizers, which means that phthalates can increase plastics' flexibility, transparency, durability, and longevity. However, the use of phthalate is still allowed in many other countries. Asia and South America have a relatively lax implementation of regulations, which can trigger severe incidents involving human safety and health (Beerling & Sahota, 2013). For instance, the Philippine government has banned the sale of mercury-laden products, but few retailers follow the rules—cosmetic products containing mercury were still found for sale on the market in 2012. Because of these loopholes in cosmetics regulations, including poor definitions, lax oversight and a lack of unified rules, consumers may lose trust for the cosmetics industry.

2.9.3 Economic sustainability. The cosmetics industry plays a vital role in developing the economy. The cosmetics industry offers numerous job opportunities to the society. In addition, this industry is continuously creating innovative products to attract consumers. Growth, competitiveness, and employment play fundamental roles in keeping the economy healthy and active (Sahota, 2013). Small and medium-sized cosmetics enterprises (SMEs), in particular, deliver a great deal of innovation and creativity, which generates considerable value for the economic sustainability (Sahota, 2013).

As Duber-Smith and Rubin (2013) stated, the term 'doing more with less' sums up the fact that sustainability and profitability can co-exist in the cosmetics business. The cosmetics companies begin to realize that sustainability can generate more value than conventional methods. In the words of Bennett and Brown (2013), cosmetics corporations should look for new approaches to increase the efficiencies in energy and resource consumption to increase sustainable levels of production meanwhile reducing

waste and pollution. Consuming less raw materials and energy by adopting high efficient equipment and advanced techniques, cosmetic companies will not only lower their costs, but also reach the goal of sustainability.

Sahota (2013) also pointed that from a management perspective, adopting sustainability as a main principle can enhance a company's reputation. In addition, sustainability can improve company's business performance and encourage employees. People who work in sustainable cosmetic companies will feel honoured to do the right things and contribute to the sustainable results, which helps to reduce staff turnover and increase the job satisfaction. Sheehan (2013) claimed that from a marketing perspective, sustainability could improve customer loyalty and brand image. For these reasons, some companies have started to assess the benefits of adopting sustainable business practices.

2.10 Summary.

Previous studies have explored theories and concepts regarding consumer behaviour, including theories around self-concept, learning, and social pressure influence. Consumption acts as a medium to display consumers' values, status, identities and lifestyles. Therefore, various types of consumption are associated with the differing values of consumer groups, such as LOHAS, green consumption, ethical consumption, anti-consumption and conscious consumption.

In many cases, cosmetics companies and consumers understand the importance of sustainability and try to integrate this concept into their business and consumption behaviours. Ethical and green consumption are two types of sustainable consumption where consumers have sustainable considerations in mind when purchasing. Extant studies have explored the factors that influence consumers' purchasing behaviour in ethical and green consumption. These studies have laid the foundation for further

investigation into the factors that influence consumers' purchasing behaviours with regard to sustainable cosmetics.

Cosmetics (skin care, colour makeup and hygiene products) are essential to people's daily lives, not only for aesthetic purposes, but for hygiene demands as well. Although the cosmetics industry creates substantial profits worldwide, the industry faces several issues regarding sustainability that cannot be overlooked, especially the environmental and social aspects. The life cycle of an unsustainable cosmetic product, from sourcing, producing, and distributing, to usage and disposal, has detrimental impacts on the environment and society. Consumers across the globe have begun to realize that depleting natural resources, water pollution, and the extinction of flora and fauna are the result of irresponsible consumption, including that of unsustainable cosmetics. Furthermore, consuming unsustainable cosmetics poses a threat to human health and often violates animal rights. An emerging responsibility and concern for environmental and societal sustainability, along with the ongoing demand for cosmetics, have led to the emergence of a new economy: sustainable cosmetic consumption. This development underpins the rise of cosmetics companies that aim to minimize the negative impacts on the environment and society through sustainable and ethical practices.

Although scholars have conducted studies in the areas of cosmetics and sustainable consumption separately, little research has combined these fields, with very few studies focused on sustainable cosmetic consumption specifically. Studies that explore factors affecting female consumers' purchasing behaviours of sustainable cosmetics are even fewer. Therefore, the goal of this research is to fill this gap by exploring the motivations and barriers to female consumption of sustainable cosmetics. This study will be useful for cosmetics entrepreneurs, practitioners, and policy makers, as it will better inform

them of the importance of, and demand for, sustainable cosmetics and the urgent need to reduce barriers to purchasing sustainable cosmetics. Furthermore, this study will contribute to the current literature by qualitatively exploring the factors that influence sustainable cosmetics consumption.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter introduces the methodology and procedures that were employed in this study. First, there will be a description of the research instrument (the researcher) and the research context (Miiko Skin Co.), followed by an overview of the research design, the narrative of the sample chosen, ethics application, pilot tests, data collection, and lastly, data analysis. The purpose of this study was to gain a clearer understanding of the participants' experience with sustainable cosmetic consumption, and the factors that either motivate or impede their sustainable cosmetics purchases. This study was guided by the following research questions:

3.1 Research Questions.

1. How knowledgeable are the participants regarding sustainable cosmetics?
2. To what extent are participants involved in sustainable cosmetics?
3. What are the motivations for consuming sustainable cosmetics?
4. What are the barriers to consuming sustainable cosmetics?

3.2 Research Instrument: The Researcher.

The researcher worked as a research instrument in this study. Her experience with cosmetics and sustainable cosmetics consumption merit further introduction as follows. Cosmetics and cosmetic products are my favourite hobby. I have been interested in cosmetics, including skin care products, colour makeup products, and hygiene products for more than 10 years. I like to follow new trends in the cosmetic industry, and I like shopping for new and creative products to keep my cosmetics collection up-to-date. I love reading reports by beauty gurus on the use of new and classic cosmetic products. Knowing how each cosmetic product performs really helps me avoid the financial risk of buying the wrong products, and saves me the time it would take to study every single

product myself. I love to see how other cosmetics' lovers create various beautiful looks by using all different color makeup products, and I enjoy trying out these products and the makeup techniques to recreate these looks myself. Through social media, people around me and my personal experience, I have learned that cosmetic products can help people build confidence and increase joy in their lives, which raises my enthusiasm to study cosmetics even more. I have also seen how cosmetic products can help consumers recognize their self-identities and develop certain lifestyles. For example, some consumers purchase only cruelty-free cosmetics to recognize themselves as an ethical consumer, while others purchase only products that use organic ingredients or are made in certain areas to develop a healthy and sustainable lifestyle. I am always surprised by how these tiny products can create such a different look in a short time, and I believe the power of colour, light and shade can empower people. However, I started to ponder the reasons why consumers prefer to use their purchasing power in certain ways (to purchase or not to purchase certain products), and I wanted to explain this with academic evidence.

Since enrolling in the Master of Arts in Sustainable Leisure Management program at Vancouver Island University, I have been exposed to the topic of sustainability more than ever. The devastating effects of irresponsible behaviour on the environment and society truly make me believe that human behaviour is a primary cause, including purchasing behaviour. At the same time as my Master's program, I participated in Miiko Skin Co.'s sustainable cosmetic workshops and learned a lot about the impact of consuming unsustainable cosmetics could have on the environment and society. These workshops opened up a new world to me, and I was inspired by these healthy and sustainable cosmetics and the consumers who are loving them. Upon reflection, I

realized that of all the cosmetics I have purchased, most of them are unsustainable. It got me wondering how much of a negative impact I have had on the planet and how many toxic chemicals I have absorbed into my body by using all these unsustainable cosmetic products. I started to do some research, but the more I learned on the subject, the scarier the reality became. I started to read the ingredients labels on cosmetics' packaging, and to explore the impact of these ingredients on the environment and society. Then, I realized that sustainable cosmetic consumption would be an optimal choice for my thesis research, and it connects with the themes of 'leisure' and 'sustainability'. I thought that I could really make full use of the opportunity to investigate consumers' motivations and barriers to purchasing sustainable cosmetics, and make a contribution to the academic field on the topic of the sustainable cosmetic industry.

3.3 Research Context: Miiko Skin Co., Victoria, BC, Canada.

Miiko Skin Co., a cosmetics company located in Victoria, BC, Canada, is a practical example of a sustainable cosmetics company, aiming to offer consumers sustainable personal skin care products at an affordable price. This particular company made a sustainable commitment to its community and customers that it is making full use of British Columbia's biodiversity in a sustainable manner, and it is reaching a full understanding that developing the business and contributing to sustainable environment and society, can happen at the same time. As the description on its official website says, "Miiko Skin Co. is a natural skincare product line that is focused on using simple ingredients that are sourced from local suppliers in British Columbia." (Miiko Skin Co., n.d.). They are building their clientele mainly on the west coast of British Columbia, Canada. Miiko's mission is to be recognized as the local voice of sustainable cosmetics.

Miiko's background is perfectly suited to this study. Although Miiko is not a leader among all cosmetic companies in the area of sustainability, it is becoming a leader locally (in Victoria, BC, Canada), working to create sustainable cosmetics.

Sustainability has been integral to its core business strategy since the company started. Miiko increasingly uses natural ingredients in its entire production line (no animal materials or tests are used), and all raw materials are sourced from local communities, which is a win-win for both the company and local suppliers. Instead of using plastic packaging, Miiko is committed to using recyclable, renewable, and reusable packages, such as biodegradable glass and paper; in addition, it provides refills for many of its products.

Miiko is dedicated to building sustainable consumption habits, even though it is difficult. This practice confirms the belief that reducing consumption is not the only (or most effective) way to realize sustainability—consuming consciously and sustainably is the right choice. The best way to deal with sustainability is to solve the problem of how companies produce their products and how people consume them (De Abreu Sofiatti Dalmarco et al., 2015).

Consumers who are concerned about the impact of their consumption on the environment should adopt sustainable purchasing behaviour, which will reward and promote good practices by the sustainable cosmetics companies. This optimum cycle will cause companies and consumers to always keep sustainability, environment, and society in mind when they shop.

Miiko seeks to reach consumers who care about sustainability, and also value a good cost/benefit ratio when purchasing products. Therefore, their focus is on those who

consume sustainably and consciously, causing minimum environmental impact, while paying attention to product quality (as well as shopping pleasure).

Furthermore, Miiko intends to stimulate a creative economy to achieve the goal of economic sustainability. This brand is ready for consumers who are in the process of transforming their consuming behaviours towards sustainability. Miiko was selected as a 2016 finalist for Ecostar “Eco-preneur of the Year,” a provincial award for a cosmetic company that is just one year old (Miiko Skin Co., n.d.).

Additionally, Rodrigues (2013) emphasized that the best way to change how people consume is to “involve them in the process of creating the brand rather than creating distance between consumers and the brand” or making them feel guilty for consuming (as cited in De Abreu Sofiatti Dalmarco et al., 2015, p. 10). Miiko is responding precisely to this idea. The brand is striving for dialogue with consumers, rather than merely making a statement. Recently, Miiko invited its consumers to write a story about Miiko and themselves, editing them for a weekly magazine, then sharing them with other consumers. They are using five ‘faces’ each week; one story will be posted on Facebook and Instagram every weekday. This creative campaign is not only building the business on the recommendations of previous consumers, but also generating the integrity of an interactive community. Miiko is stimulating more meaningful consumption to balance the pleasure of shopping and the goal of sustainability, while inspiring a sustainable lifestyle within the community.

The company usually holds sustainable cosmetic themed events twice per month. At the site of different events, consumers can learn to make their own sustainable cosmetics, while gaining knowledge about sustainable cosmetics, tasting and touching all the raw materials, and communicating with other participants and stakeholders.

Moreover, they can try the finished cosmetic products and bring their own products home. At this point, Miiko is not only offering sustainable cosmetics, but also creating an innovative and sustainable consuming pattern, which helps to build a healthier community than in the recent past.

Miiko is a brand that positions itself as an intermediate priced product range in the category of skin care. Miiko hand crafted their products with better quality and personalized/customized attributes, rather than a factory production-line. In this way, it can avoid unnecessary waste of energy and raw materials generated by factory machines, while also increasing the level of customer involvement—which has become an outstanding advantage for Miiko Skin Co.

Certainly, Miiko faces difficulties in the cosmetic market. Price competition with other similar brands, a low level of popularity and limited access to the products (since the brand is only sold via company headquarters, several distributors, online, and via workshop sites). All these difficulties are encountered by this young and small cosmetics company. Daily-use products, such as facial skin care products and body moisturizers, face the strongest competition among hundreds of competing brands, most of them sold in retail stores (pharmacies, supermarkets, and beauty shops; Rabbiosi, 2014). Retail shops provide easier and quicker access for consumers to buy products—even to touch and to try them before purchasing. Although retail outlets have the highest sales potential in the personal care product category (Rabbiosi, 2014), most Miiko buyers need to wait a few days until their order has been delivered.

The most difficult challenge that Miiko faces is how to weave such intangible ideas as “sustainability” into its products without compromising the quality and performance of its products. To achieve sustainability in all products, Miiko conforms to the

principles of sustainability and eco-design, starting with the first procedure—sourcing—then proceeding through production, packing, distribution, and consumption, until the post-use phase. In each phase, Miiko aims to cause less waste, use less energy, reduce pollution, and increase the level of biodegradability. Miiko also names all the local suppliers on its product labels and posts their profiles on Miiko’s official website for consumers to track. One important step that Miiko needs to take is to get more on-going support from local communities, and to increase its visibility and recognition.

3.4 Research Design and Approach.

To address the research questions, a qualitative approach was used to get a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of sustainable cosmetics consumption.

Qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to examining subject matter, and researchers who choose this approach tend to examine things in a natural setting. This is done in an attempt to make sense of and interpret an issue through the participants own meaning of it. A naturalistic approach allows the researcher to study how people's experiences and perspectives influence their interpretations of their behaviour. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 13).

A qualitative approach was selected for this research for a variety of reasons. First, a qualitative approach generally deals with words, which can generate a great deal of information, most of it rich in detail (Creswell, 2014). This approach became popular and was widely accepted in the leisure and tourism industry from the mid-1990s (Creswell, 2014). The results of qualitative research are easy to understand even for readers who are not statistically trained. Moreover, according to Woodside (2010), closed-ended questions and responses from other methodologies cannot fully

cover the details and the “dynamic interactions between thoughts and actions within and between individuals” (p. 3).

Furthermore, if a concept or phenomenon has not been explored enough, then a qualitative research would advance it (Creswell, 2014). Since few studies have been conducted on the topic of sustainable cosmetics, the researcher wanted to listen to the participants themselves, and to gain a deep understanding from their own words. Therefore, a qualitative approach was suitable for this study instead of merely interpreting raw data from a quantitative standpoint.

The following sections will provide readers with more and detailed information of the research design, such as the justification of adopting the qualitative description method, semi-structured interview, and the narrative of the sample chosen. The narratives of the ethics application, pilot tests, data collection, and lastly, data analysis.

3.4.1 Qualitative description method. A qualitative description method was used in this study. This method is appropriate for small interview studies where the researcher wants to gain preliminary insight into a specific topic (Neergaard, Olesen, Andersen & Sondergaard, 2009), and when a straightforward description of a phenomenon is desired (Sandelowski, 2000). It is also appropriate when the researcher desires to employ a method with a relatively low level of interpretation (Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas, 2013).

“Qualitative descriptive designs typically are an eclectic but reasonable combination of sampling, and data collection, analysis, and re-presentation techniques” (Sandelowski, 2000, p. 1). Qualitative description follows the tradition of qualitative research; but it

differs from other qualitative methods. The aim of the qualitative description method is to convey the person's experience richly and directly, trying to stay close to the first-hand data (Neergaard et al., 2009; Sandelowski, 2000). In the words of Lambert and Lambert (2012), the qualitative description method commits to studying something "in its natural state" (p. 1). "Qualitative description is grounded in the general principles of naturalistic inquiry" (Sandelowski, 2000, p. 2), which means this method leads to "true understanding" and "ultimate truth" (p. 3). Naturalistic inquiry also explores "forms of behavioural research involving humans and animals" (Sandelowski, 2000, p. 4), which is consistent with the present study of "sustainable cosmetics consumption" and exploring human consuming behaviours.

Instead of developing concepts from the data or interpreting data via existing theories, the findings will reflect a comprehensive summary of participants' experiences and opinions in everyday language (Colorafi & Evans, 2016; Lambert & Lambert, 2012; Neergaard, et al., 2009; Sandelowski, 2000); also it will be a complete "end-product in itself, rather than an entry point" (Sandelowski, 2000, p. 2). The qualitative description method is a low-inference approach which does not "require researchers to move as far from or into their data" (Sandelowski, 2000, p. 2).

The strength of using the qualitative description method is that no theoretical strings were attached to the data analysis, which kept the findings much closer to the data and the participants' points of view than other qualitative methods might have. However, this strength made the data analysis process subjective at some level. The data analysis process depended on the researcher's perceptions (Neergaard, et al., 2009) which may have caused bias in the final results. The qualitative description method acted as "a

vehicle for presenting and treating research methods as living entities” (Vaismoradi, et al., 2013, p. 2), which can still contribute to “establishing meaning and solid findings” (p. 2).

As Sandelowski (2000) proposed, the qualitative description method “already exists but is relatively unacknowledged, as opposed to being a new method” (p. 2). It has been re-evaluated due to the growth in qualitative health-science research and the consequent phenomenon of methodological acrobatics. This means that researchers sometimes feel obliged to designate his/her work as one kind of methodology, whereas in fact it is not (Neergaard, et al., 2009; Sandelowski, 2000).

Although the qualitative description method has mostly been employed in the area of health sciences, one study showed this method has also been used in the arts study domain. Spencer (2012) employed qualitative description method in her study exploring the experience of peer monitoring among grade 4, 5, and 6 students from the Heart Healthy Kids program. As Spencer (2012) stated, by using the qualitative description method, participants’ experiences from different perspectives could be heard and understood, especially the child participants’ experiences in he/her study. This advantage has not been valued by the previous literatures.

This example shows that the qualitative description method can be used to study domains other than the health sciences, although it does not appear much in the extant literature. This suggests that the qualitative description method should, in future, also be valued as a distinctive component of qualitative research by researchers outside of the health sciences domain.

3.4.2 Semi-structured interview. “Interviewing is one of the most common and powerful ways we use to try to understand our fellow human beings” (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 361). Interviews provide more detailed information for analysis than other methods. Semi-structured interviews were used in this study because it is consistent with the qualitative description method. The interviews of this study were conversation-based with a semi-structured format, supported by the use of an interview guide. The semi-structured interview is a research approach that has a guideline to steer the direction of the questions, meanwhile new questions may rise from interviewees’ responses (Duignan, 2016).

Semi-structured interviews comprise open-ended and guiding questions. The researcher obtains data either from participants’ own experience or from within the specific area with existing constructs where the research is conducted (Galletta, 2013).

The merits of semi-structured interviews include:

- The researcher can identify the credibility of participants’ responses directly and explore more potential answers (Humphrey & Lee, 2004);
- Interviewees have more freedom to express their own thoughts and emphasize the areas which are interesting or important to them, as long as these answers are related to the topic (Duignan, 2016);
- The questions that interviewees will be asked are only guidelines; the interviewees do not need to follow a specific sequence (Galletta, 2013);

- Based on interviewees' answers, the interviewer can dig more deeply by asking follow-up questions and seeking specific explanations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).
- In each face-to-face interview, all the participants have opportunities to ask for clarification or examples in order to avoid misunderstandings (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).
- In a semi-structured interview, it is easy for the researcher to keep the whole interview on-topic by asking the guideline questions (Creswell, 2013).
- By using this method, interviewees' real needs and thinking will be expressed in great detail, instead of as superficial data (Fontana & Frey, 1994).

Although a semi-structured interviews method was applicable to this research, it has some potential limitations. In this study, the researcher is a novice with limited experience steering interview dialogues. In addition, since interviewees were given a lot of freedom, they may lead the interviews in the wrong direction and provide irrelevant information. Furthermore, the researcher of this study may have her own biases, attitudes and expectations regarding this topic and the results, and she may lead interviewees in a direction that she desires by using influential words and over-emphasizing certain aspects (Schoenberger, 1991). In order to minimize these limitations, the researcher ran three pilot tests before conducting the actual interviews to get extra training in steering interview dialogues. Then, the researcher was cognizant to remain neutral and open-minded, and planned to read through the data several times before carrying out analysis in order to maintain an objective

perspective of it. A more detailed explanation of how the researcher remained neutral will be given in the following section (3.7 Data Analysis).

The purpose of the interviews was to collect descriptive information related to sustainable cosmetics consumption, and to explore factors that motivate or impede participants from purchasing sustainable cosmetics. In this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 48 open-ended questions as guidelines. In the first segment, general questions were asked. These questions (Q.1 to Q. 9) were used only as a means of building rapport with interviewees, and to make the environment more comfortable. They were not used in the analysis. Participants were then asked to describe their knowledge of sustainable cosmetics, and the extent to which they use them. Finally, study subjects were asked to discuss the incentives and disincentives that affect their purchasing behaviours of sustainable cosmetics (See Appendix A for the interview questions). Although this sample group does not represent all consumers, it creates an understanding of sustainable cosmetics consumption by women and the factors affecting their purchase.

Generally, each interview was not to last more than 90 minutes and was digital-audio recorded, which created a generous time atmosphere for the interviewees to express themselves and produced more accurate recollection. Audio recording can also help the researcher focus on interacting with the interviewees instead of being distracted by writing notes (Whiting, 2008).

3.4.3 Participants. The goal of qualitative research is to get rich information from participants' own perspectives in order to understand a phenomenon (Merriam, 2002). Patton (1987) noted that these participants are taking on the role of 'key informants'. In

this study, the researcher utilized a purposeful sampling method to select the participants as it was also consistent with the qualitative description method. Compared to other qualitative designs, the qualitative description method often requires a smaller, but accessible and purposeful sample of participants (Magilvy & Thomas, 2009). Practically, the qualitative description method may employ any purposeful sampling method (Lambert & Lambert, 2012).

There are other reasons for choosing purposeful sampling in this study.

Participants are non-randomly chosen for purposive sampling because they partly belong to the culture or phenomenon to be studied (Speziale, Streubert, & Carpenter, 1995). Purposeful sampling is regularly adopted in the qualitative study as the goal of the research is to share participants' experience and knowledge of the particular subject and the sampling participants are selected also due to this reason (Streubert & Carpenter, 1995). The purposeful sampling method involves the selection of participants who are known to be connected to the subject being studied. Doing so allows for richer and more meaningful findings (Patton, 2002). Therefore, the researcher thought that the most effective way to locate participants who were involved in the phenomena and the research subject (sustainable cosmetic consumption) was to recruit them via the sustainable cosmetic workshop venues.

The qualitative descriptive research method imposes some requirements on study participants. For example, they must have a certain level of experience or knowledge about the phenomenon being studied. Participants must also have the capability to communicate with the researcher, and be willing to share their stories (commonly audio recorded) with the researcher (Magilvy & Thomas, 2009).

The reasons for choosing female consumers as interview samples was twofold. First, female consumers occupy an important and primary position in the area of cosmetics consumption (Cash & Cash, 1982). Second, female consumers more accurately represent mainstream consumers (Rabbiosi, 2014) and are willing to invest more time and money on their physical appearance compared to male consumers (Stebbins, 2006). Female consumers with these attributes may make a significant contribution in the effort to pressure cosmetics companies and retailers to move toward sustainability by using their purchasing power.

Based on the criteria above, the researcher chose female consumers (over 18 years old) who had participated in sustainable cosmetic workshops held by Miiko Skin Co. as the purposeful sample of this study. Before the interviews started, all the participants signed the consent forms and acknowledged that they were going to be audio recorded during the interviews (for details, see Appendix C). The selection of such an explicit group of consumers was intentional, as the purpose was to focus on female consumers whose sustainable attitudes were emphasized, rather than being too subtle to detect in other mainstream consumer groups. Thus, all the findings in the Discussion chapter were interpreted in the light of this special circumstance.

As mentioned above, the semi-structured interviews were conducted with female consumers (over 18 years old) who had attended the Miiko Skin Co. workshops on sustainable cosmetics. The researcher went to the workshops, introduced this study to all participants and recruited the interviewees on-site (at the workshops) between July and August, 2017. According to Miiko Skin Co., they usually kept the number of workshop participants to between 6 and 12, depending on the different themes of the workshops. As the company usually holds two workshops per month, the researcher

planned to target the first two workshops in July, meanwhile trying to balance the numbers of attendees between two workshops. Recruitment stopped once there was enough information for the study (Malterud, Siersma & Guassora, 2016).

Malterud et al.'s (2016) study states that the common practice of determining sample size by information saturation is flawed and 'inconsistently applied'. Rather, they propose an appropriate sample size should be determined by the amount of relevant information held by the sample, which they call 'Information Power' (Malterud et al., 2016). Therefore, an information-rich sample allows for smaller sample sizes (Malterud et al., 2016).

Using this concept, Malterud et al.'s study (2016) included 10 study participants, which was deemed adequate based on factors informing adequate sample size: the study's aim, sample specificity, theoretical background, quality of dialogue, and strategy for analysis (Malterud et al., 2016). In their case, the researcher was a novice researcher and shy, which may have affected the quality of the interview dialogue. She was also doing a cross-case analysis which requires more participants. Further, her supervisor conducted a similar study in the previous year, with sufficient data from just six interviewees.

With regards to the present study, the researcher is also a novice and although the study is not supported by established theory, the researcher is not shy and the study is not intended to be a cross-case analysis. This justifies the need for a smaller sample size. Furthermore, the aim of the study was relatively narrow and the sample of participants was relatively specific for the study aim. Finally, because the sample size was very targeted (to participants of a sustainable cosmetics workshop), the information power of the sample was very high. Based on these factors, as well as the

advice of the researcher's experienced supervisors, 8 participants were chosen for this exploratory study. The time and location of each interview was scheduled with participants individually, based on mutual agreement, and each interview was conducted with one participant at a time.

3.5 Ethical Issues.

All the participants were informed that this thesis would be published publically, but that participants' identifying information would not be passed to any person or organization without the interviewee's permission (Levine, 1986). Before conducting the interviews, a consent form was distributed to all participants that was also used as a guide to introduce them to this research (Creswell, 2013).

"Pseudonym systems were introduced by Chaum in 1985, as a way of allowing a user to work efficiently, but anonymously" (Lysyanskaya, Rivest, Sahai, & Wolf, 1999, p. 1). The purpose of the pseudonym is to ensure participant anonymity while allowing the researcher to be able to distinguish between interviewees. The pseudonyms used were chosen by the participants themselves, and do not reflect their real names.

In this research, participants picked their pseudonyms themselves, rather than being assigned by the researcher. Having participants choose their own pseudonyms may be a beneficial and respectful way of encouraging a degree of ownership and input into research (Allen & Wiles, 2016). "The care and thought with which many participants chose their names, and the meaning or links associated with those names, illustrated the importance to the participants of the process of naming" (Allen & Wiles, 2016, p. 7).

In Allen and Wiles' (2016) study, one participant chose 'Nissan' as his pseudonym because this name captured both his main hobby in life, and the story behind it

connected to the research topic. Other participants chose names like ‘Bee’ or the name of neighbor’s dog because these are non-gendered, non-culturally specific names.

In some cases, the researcher may feel it is appropriate to ask participants why they chose their pseudonym, as the pseudonyms may connect with participants’ previous experiences, society’s perception of these names, or the loss of a name’s cultural context (Lahman et al., 2015). By allowing participants to justify their choice of pseudonym, the researcher may be able to get a deeper understanding of the participant themselves (Lahman et al., 2015).

The first interviewee chose a fruit name as her pseudonym. After being asked why, she justified her choice, explain she thought the fruit name would be unique for her as a young woman. Interestingly, as the research topic is sustainable cosmetics and fruit is an important natural resources for making sustainable cosmetics, she thought the fruit name connects to the topic of this study while also protecting her real identity.

Subsequently, in the pseudonym selection process of the second interviewee, the participant asked the researcher about the pseudonyms that other interviewees had chosen. After hearing the choice, she also chose a fruit name as her pseudonym. This process was repeated with each interviewee, all of whom subsequently chose a fruit name as their pseudonym. The rest of the interviewees also thought it was reasonable to choose fruit names as their pseudonyms and were agreeable to signed their consent forms with both their real names and self-selected pseudonyms.

After data collection, the researcher hired a transcribing service to transcribe all digital records into text. The researcher’s supervisors, the transcribing service, and the researcher had access to the data; but only the supervisors and the researcher were aware of interviewees’ real identities. Therefore, the confidentiality and the anonymity

of the participants were protected before, during, and after the research process (DeVault, 1990).

During the interview, no questions were asked about private matters; all interview questions were related to the research topic. A pseudonym approach was used in the final paper. All the participants had the right to refuse to answer any question, and to stop the interview at any time.

3.6 Pilot Test.

A pilot test was conducted in advance to ensure that the semi-structured interview covered all the content the researcher wanted to investigate. The purpose of the pilot was to maintain reliability from the beginning until the end of the research and to check if any problems would arise during the interview. For example, the participant may have felt confused about the purpose of the study, or the interview questions may not have been clearly stated. If such situations happened, the researcher made changes to the guidelines and interview questions.

The pilot interview was first conducted with an individual who had previous experience of attending a sustainable cosmetics workshop. The researcher then followed the procedures as planned for the real interview. The interview sequence was as follows: distributing the consent form, introducing the study, asking the interviewee the research questions while recording the interview audio-digitally, and taking notes if necessary. After the first pilot test, the researcher asked for feedback, comments, and appropriate changes that the participant wanted to make, such as rephrasing confusing questions, or adding follow-up questions to gain a deeper understanding. The researcher could make some adjustments based on the pilot test, revising some parts as required (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2002). Subsequently, the researcher conducted another two pilot

interviews after all the adjustments were made on the original draft. The researcher took all recommendations and feedback of the pilot interviews into consideration before conducting the real interviews (Creswell, 2014).

The purpose of the pilot test was to familiarize the researcher with the interview guide and questions, and gave the researcher more opportunities to practice interview skills. Further, the pilot test training helped the researcher to steer the dialogue better than without and to explore more information from participants who had knowledge and experiences of sustainable cosmetic consumption (Malterud et al., 2016). This pilot test proved an invaluable resource in regard to the types of questions being asked.

3.7 Data Analysis.

Data analysis is the phase of extracting important information from the data, which is fundamental for interpreting the research. According to Marshall and Rossman (1999), five procedures usually occur during the data analysis process: "organizing the data; generating categories, themes, and patterns; testing the emergent hypotheses against the data; searching for alternative explanations of the data; and writing the final results" (p. 113). The researcher will dip into the information, living with the data, identifying different themes and categorizing them (Streubert & Carpenter, 1995). The data analysis process of the qualitative description method is a purely data-derived process, in which codes are generated directly from data, rather than determined by pre-set rules (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). As mentioned above and in Appendix A, questions one through nine were general questions. These questions were used only as a tool for building rapport with interviewees, making the interview environment more comfortable. They were not used in the research content analysis.

In this study, the data analysis process was conducted through a series of five steps. First, a transcribing service was used to transcribe all the audio recordings into text. The transcriptions were then used, along with the recordings, to ensure that all the data had been transcribed accurately. Following this, the researcher input all the data into NVivo, a qualitative data management software program, which helped the researcher organize and manage the data in a relatively short period of time.

The researcher then went through the data a second time, identifying the ideas and coding all the data for the first time by using NVivo. Codes are the gathering of repeated words and phrases coming from participants' individual text (Magilvy & Thomas, 2009). The researcher considered what would be the definitive list of ideas and topics mentioned, then gave each distinct topic a code, such as a letter and a number, so this topic or idea could be identified at a later date. Some examples of codes that the researcher created from within the data include S1 for the idea of consuming safe and healthy cosmetics, L1 for the idea of consuming locally produced cosmetics, and A1 for the topic of protesting animal testing or consuming cruelty-free cosmetics. The overall aim was to end up with the format marked up with different letters and numbers, with each code representing a separate topic.

The researcher then went through the data a third time, this time analyzing it by using Nvivo to group and synthesize the data into categories. The researcher synthesized these "rich" data, choosing, combining, or deleting them based on the research questions (Wolcott, 2002). By analyzing data a second time, some primary categories emerged. Categories are similar codes and phrases that have been grouped and regrouped together (Magilvy & Thomas, 2009). Following is an example of how codes became categories:

the codes ‘consuming cruelty-free cosmetics’ and ‘locally produced cosmetics’ were classified under the same category as ‘ethical purchasing behaviours’.

The researcher went through multiple stages of analysis to make sure that all the codes were clearly and logically grouped into categories. The researcher started to re-review all the data within categories and tried to identify some common topics among these categories (Magilvy & Thomas, 2009). This process showed how the initial themes appeared. For instance, the category ‘education’ and the category ‘peer influence’ should be classified under the same theme ‘consumer learning process’, because education is a well-known format of learning, while peer influence is one type of observational learning, which accounts for vicarious learning effects (Solomon et al., 2015).

Finally, the researcher went through all the data again word-by-word, listened to all the audio recordings again and re-checked the accuracy of the transcription in order to improve the credibility of the data, while looking for themes that the researcher had not found previously. In this way, all the data were categorized under various themes.

After confirming that all the data were accurate, the researcher did a final analysis of the data by coding themes using the transcript papers. These were then cross-checked with the themes identified through analysis in NVivo to ensure they matched. This process involved writing initial coding notes in the margins of the transcripts, and then drawing a theme map. As Magilvy and Thomas (2009) stated, “over time, by reading, re-reading, listening to audio recordings... the analysis and findings reveals themselves to us in the form of categories, patterns and themes” (p. 2). Such is the journey of qualitative research—to explore rich description and produce new understandings by going through the data numerous times.

As noted in the previous section, the qualitative description method made the data analysis process subjective at some level. The data analysis process depends on the researcher's perceptions (Neergaard et al., 2009), which may cause bias in the final results, though the use of qualitative data analysis software can aid in this regard. Neergaard et al. (2009) offered several suggested strategies for enhancing the rigour of qualitative description studies. These are authenticity, credibility, criticality, and integrity. To ensure this study was rigorous, the researcher used the authenticity and integrity strategies to keep the data collection and analysis process objective. To maintain data authenticity, participants were free to speak and their voices were heard (including positive and negative), a purposeful sampling method was adopted, rich data were promoted rather than superficiality, participants' voices were transcribed accurately and their perception were presented correctly, and coding and categorizing were done through the data-driven method. By using the integrity strategy, the researcher reflected on her bias in a dual role (sustainable cosmetic supporter and interviewer) during the interviews, and in the process of data analysis her supervisors peer-reviewed the data. Based on the strategies and techniques used above, the rigour of this study could be ensured.

The writing segment is the presentation stage of all the results. Since this study adopted the qualitative description method, the results were written in a straight forward descriptive summary, but in a logical way (Lambert, & Lambert, 2012; Sandelowski, 2000). To better illustrate the interviewees' real opinions and experiences, direct quotes from each participant under different themes were presented in each section of the findings chapter. Direct quotes not only present evidence of the findings, but also allow readers to easily follow and understand the results (Corden & Sainsbury, 2006).

3.8 Summary.

In this chapter, the researcher has given an introduction of herself as the research instrument and described the sustainable cosmetic company (Miiko Skin Co.) as the research context. Miiko Skin Co. is also the host of the sustainable cosmetic workshops from which the researcher recruited all study participants.

Second, the researcher has provided an overview of the research design used, and justified the use of a qualitative description method. The researcher has also provided a justification for the choice of the particular sample group for this study, as well as the procedure for ethics submission, details of the pilot test, data collection and data analysis. The researcher used the semi-structured interview to collect data, and then adopted the NVivo software program to support the data analysis process.

Chapter 4: Findings

The purpose of this study was to discover a clearer understanding of women's experience with sustainable cosmetic consumption. The factors that either motivate or impede their sustainable cosmetics purchases will be highlighted in this section.

Participant Profiles

This section will display the participants' socio-demographic information, which will give readers a general background of participants. Please note that all the participants' names provided here are pseudonyms, and that although responses may not necessarily pertain to an interview question, they were all extracted from the participants' answers during the interviews. This information will help readers to get a better understanding of the results.

Participant Avocado

Age 20-30, Canadian, just graduated from UVIC (University of Victoria), major in Marketing. She comes from a family of four including her parents and her sister. She was born in South Africa, and raised in Alberta, Canada. She came to the Miiko Skin Co's workshop twice, once with her sister and the other occasion was with her classmates since they were doing a marketing project for Miiko Skin Co. She is very interested in cosmetics and now she is working at a green cosmetics company in Calgary. She became a vegetarian as she realized the impact of eating meat on the environment, which was also influenced by her sister.

Participant Mango

Age 20-30, Canadian, lives in Victoria, BC, Canada. She heard about Miiko Skin Co through her boyfriend. She originally came from Ontario, and changed her lifestyle when she moved to the West Coast. She was always passionate about skin care and

body care fields, but since she moved to Victoria, she started caring more about the ingredients. She is an animal lover.

Participant Raspberry

Age 20-30, Canadian, a clinical practicing herbalist who knows many natural plant-based ingredients. She can read ingredients' Latin terms and botanical names. Now, she lives in Victoria, BC, Canada. She is a strong supporter of sustainability and sustainable cosmetics. She was introduced to Miiko Skin Co. by her friend. Feeling healthy motivates her to do anything she can in a sustainable way.

Participant Strawberry

Age 20-30, Canadian, vegetarian, a salon business owner, located in Victoria, BC, Canada. She is a sustainability supporter. Instead of driving, she bikes (weather permitting). She purchases large quantities of sustainable cosmetic products, then resells them in her salon to support these sustainable but small and local businesses. The products she purchases include skincare products, such as Miiko Skin Co; colour make-up products, such as Elate; and hygiene products. She was introduced to Miiko Skin Co. by her friend.

Participant Guava

Age 20-30, Canadian, vegetarian, has a family of four including her husband and two children, and lives in Victoria, BC, Canada. She is a cancer survivor and works as a full-time mom taking care of her family. She likes to make all her skincare and hygiene cosmetic products at home except for toothpaste and deodorant. A strong supporter of sustainability and sustainable cosmetics. She was introduced to Miiko's workshop by her husband.

Participant Peach

Age 20-30, Canadian, vegetarian, graduated from Vancouver Island University, and now lives in Port Alberni with her mother. She works as an assistant to her mother to take care of individuals with disabilities and she is a strong supporter of sustainability and sustainable cosmetics. She was connected to Miiko Skin Co. through an annual event in Vancouver for young entrepreneurs.

Participant Passionfruit

Age 20-30, Vietnamese, just graduated from Vancouver Island University studying in a sustainability-related program. She comes from a family of four including her parents and her sister who is studying in the United States. She used to always buy high-end cosmetic products from Sephora because her mom and sister buy high-end cosmetics from Sephora and she kind of learned/copied their purchasing behaviour. However, she only uses sustainable cosmetics nowadays. Now, she lives in Europe with her husband. She was connected to Miiko Skin Co through an event specialized for young entrepreneurs that happens every November in Vancouver.

Participant Coconut

Age 20-30, Canadian, she found Miiko Skin Co. through magazines. She used to work in retail shops. Now she has a part-time job while being a college student in Victoria, majoring in marketing.

After introducing the participants' profiles, the results of this study will be displayed in the following content. Sustainable consumption is a complex phenomenon that arises from, and is influenced by, multiple factors. To understand women's sustainable consuming behaviours in a specified area—cosmetics—while considering situational and individual factors, the researcher should first have a picture of what these influential

factors are. The researcher should also understand how these factors influenced participants' sustainable cosmetics purchase behaviours. This chapter will offer a clear and detailed presentation of each primary theme and its sub-themes as follows.

4.1 Situational Factors.

Under this category are those factors relating to or dependent on a set of circumstances that affect participants' purchase behaviours of sustainable cosmetics, such as price, performance and availability. These factors either motivate or impede consumers' willingness or ability to purchase sustainable cosmetics.

4.1.1 Price. Price was seen as the most prominent factor, being brought up a number of times during the interviews. Participants expressed the various aspects of their sensitivity to price. Several interviewees felt that they were on a budget and did not have spare money to spend on purchasing cosmetics with sustainable claims or switching to a sustainable lifestyle, which tends to cost more than mainstream alternatives. As Raspberry said, "If I had all the money, I would buy everything as sustainable as possible." As Mango said "there are some stuff [sustainable cosmetics] that I don't have money to buy. So I will have to buy a cheaper alternative that isn't necessarily sustainable." Then, she also said, "It costs a lot of money to switch over, so it's definitely slow moving in the beginning." Coconut stated, "Right now in this point of my life, I can't afford the extra dollars, just to say that it's ethical."

Some respondents said they cared more about money, which plays a critical role in their purchase-decisions making. Strawberry said, "I would say that price does make a difference for me." Mango expressed, "I think price has always been and always will be a big influence for me." Avocado said, "I think price...plays a big part for me."

Furthermore, several participants said that, on balance, they did care about sustainable issues and were willing to pay a little more for sustainable cosmetics; however, they were reluctant to pay considerably more just for the sake of sustainability. In these situations, the higher price outweighed sustainable considerations. As Avocado expressed it, “If something is super expensive, just because it’s natural, doesn’t mean I am going to necessarily buy it.” Strawberry said, “I think if something was like a skin care of over \$80, I don’t think I would buy it. It’s just not worthy to me. I would rather just not use it.”

I am someone who believes that I would be happy to pay a bit more for food and like healthcare products than paying for medicine, and hospital bills later on. But if it is like \$200 per bottle, it is just crazy for me. (Passionfruit)

In summary, price has shown to be a strong barrier for participants when purchasing sustainable cosmetics and it seems participants have thought about the cost versus benefit and have limitations on what benefits they can afford.

4.1.2 Performance. The performance of sustainable cosmetic products is an important attribute that participants are concerned about. Under this primary theme, four sub-themes were found: preconceived poor performance of sustainable cosmetics; experienced poor performance of sustainable cosmetics; scent; and personalized sustainable cosmetics.

4.1.2.1 Preconceived poor performance. Some participants held preconceived beliefs that products categorized as ‘sustainable’ or ‘natural’ would perform poorly. As Avocado said, “I had the misconception that because it was natural and all that stuff, it wouldn’t work as well as the products that I was using from Sephora or drugstore or whatever.” Passionfruit said, “I didn’t believe that anything that is not international brand name [commercial brands] would work...”

4.1.2.2 Experienced poor performance. The poor performance of sustainable cosmetics experienced by interviewees was identified as a common barrier for their commitment to consistently purchasing them. However, as mentioned during the interviews, the performance issue existed mainly among the sustainable colour makeup and hygiene product categories. Participants shared their experiences of using poorly performing sustainable cosmetics. As Coconut said “I find that sustainable makeup, it just has a different consistency and I think I don’t enjoy it as much.” Mango expressed, “Performance can be a tough issue. For some sustainable makeup, I found that it doesn’t always work well. I went through like, eight or nine different brands until I found one that actually works.” Also Raspberry said, “I bought a natural mascara...my lashes didn’t look as nice as if I am [*sic*] wearing Revlon. I also bought a [natural] lipstick and it just smudges off very easily.” Passionfruit also commented on the performance issue: “The thing is that they [sustainable colour makeup cosmetics] are very natural...so after just a few hours, or you just sweat a little bit, everything is like gone!” Avocado said, “With deodorant for example I have tried natural deodorants. But I find it doesn't work as well for me or I haven’t found a product [sustainable deodorant] that I really can compare [the performance] just normal deodorant to.” Participants said they would not prioritize sustainability over performance. As Guava said, “...but it has to work. If it doesn’t work, there is no point in getting it.”

4.1.2.3 Scent. Scent was found to be another important issue of sustainable cosmetics’ performance. When the word ‘fragrance’ appears on an ingredients label, it means an aggregation of chemical elements has been used. It is common to see the word ‘fragrance’ listed on the ingredient’s labels of unsustainable cosmetics. By contrast, sustainable cosmetics generally do not contain synthetic or artificial fragrances, and

therefore the product's scent is that of the combination of all the original scents of the natural ingredients it contains. Some of these 'real' scents gave participants unsatisfactory user experiences, and may have stopped them from purchasing sustainable cosmetics again. As Strawberry said, "Scent, I guess, it would prevent me from purchasing sustainable cosmetics. I don't like the smell of some of the essential oils just in general. I am very sensitive to all smells." Mango also said, "I tried natural scents a few years ago and it smelled so heavily of zinc. So I was like, 'nope, not that one'." Coconut expressed directly, "Smell, like if it smells awful... if it sticks around then I am a little turned off." Avocado said, "One thing that I don't like is it [sustainable detergent] doesn't smell like fresh laundry."

4.1.2.4 Personalized sustainable cosmetics. Miiko Skin Co. offers opportunities for participants and consumers to design their own personalized products, either at the workshops or through online orders. Thus, consumers can make or order customized products according to their own skin types and conditions for better product performance.

I think it's very flexible...because I understand almost inside out of what I put in my face, so I can actually say, "*Oh, yeah, I like this. But I don't like the scent,*" or, "*Yeah, maybe I need something a little bit lighter, for example.*" (Passionfruit)

In addition, some participants mentioned that they were either allergic to certain natural ingredients or did not like certain scents of the ingredients. Therefore, participants can use this as an opportunity to personalize their cosmetics, avoiding certain ingredients they are allergic to, taking out ingredients that contain a scent they do not like, or adding more ingredients which work better for their skin conditions.

For example, I have a friend, who really wants to try the [Miiko Skin Co.] products...but she's allergic to citrus, and a lot of their products have orange olive oil or they have grapefruit essential oil and she can't handle it on her skin. So being

able to make it unique for every customer. Make sure that it's not about them making the sale. It's about making sure that the customer is happy and can use products that they can trust, right? (Coconut)

Offering such opportunities for consumers to make personalized products increased participants' involvement and active participation in sustainable cosmetics consumption. As Mango said, "It is really cool that they care so much about everyone as an individual. It is nice to be able to buy stuff that is a bit more customizable." Passionfruit also said, "So yeah, I think it's [the chance of making personalized products at the workshop] really big [*sic*], because I got the chance to learn about how product is made, I can actually have a voice in it..."

I think it's [the opportunity to design personalized products] awesome because everyone is so different...So, having just the opportunity to maybe even get it on, knows essential oils was a nice change. Or if I did like it, I can add it in. It's just catering to the individual. We are all different. My skin right now is so dry, so I could probably use something different than someone whose skin is oily all the time. (Strawberry)

4.1.3 Availability. The availability of sustainable cosmetics is one of the barriers preventing participants from purchasing them. Availability have been described as "purchasing on the basis of accessing a reliable supply" (Gilmore & Pine, 2007, p. 5). There are two sub-themes that will be explained in this section: geographical inaccessibility and low production levels.

4.1.3.1 Geographical inaccessibility. Some participants said they had limited access to sustainable cosmetics because they lived in small cities, far from where their current sustainable cosmetics brands were geographically available. Coconut said, "There is an essential oil store in Vancouver that I love. But I can't buy them because I don't go to Vancouver every day."

We have up and coming stores in Port Alberni [small-sized city on the Vancouver Island], but that's probably just my location, to be completely honest. But there's

the health food store that has great options, but Kimiko is in Victoria [two hours driving from where she lived] and Elate is in Victoria. So, that's just those two products are still the only thing that would be my barrier to get. (Peach)

Some participants even mentioned that the availability of sustainable cosmetics on the west coast of Canada differed from that of eastern Canada. As Strawberry commented, "So lucky in Vancouver Island, it is very accessible [to sustainable cosmetics]. But travelling out east or something you will not find [sustainable cosmetics]." And Avocado shared the same thought, "The city [Victoria] is focused on sustainability...people [who live there] are more geared towards a sustainable lifestyle." It could be argued that local interest in sustainability and geographical differences affected participants' attitudes toward sustainability and influenced their purchasing behaviours.

4.1.3.2 Small production levels of sustainable cosmetics. Participants stated that it took more effort for them to choose suitable sustainable cosmetics from such a limited range. Even though there are many sustainable products on the market, they are still not as plentiful as unsustainable ones, and production of sustainable cosmetics is much lower than mainstream cosmetics. As Strawberry said, "mostly because the other places don't offer [sustainable products]. I am guaranteed when I go there [healthy stores] that I can find something that I am looking for. Sort of, like organic or more natural products." Also, Passionfruit commented, "I wish that sustainable cosmetics are just as massively produced as the commercial products."

4.1.4 Authenticity (Trust). There is a great deal of information about ethical and green consumption in the public domain; however, not too much has focused on sustainable consumption specifically in the area of cosmetics. Participants believed that information played a key role in building trust between consumers and cosmetics

companies, in verifying the credibility of sustainability claims, and further, helping consumers to make informed purchasing decisions. Four sub-themes related to the authenticity of the cosmetics industry, cosmetics companies, their sustainability claims, their products and the information they released to the public are explained below.

4.1.4.1 Integral and transparent information is needed. Participants found that they had very little information about the certain stages of a finished cosmetic product, such as how it was produced and distributed. All the information that participants had attained was originally from cosmetics companies. Peach stated, “I love knowing where my stuff is coming from. I love knowing there is no child labor.” As Avocado said, “Sometimes with certain products you don't want to know that it's being made in a small factory with – by people who are not being treated well because you never know the reality.”

I think myself included a lot of consumers don't really think about that part [the impact of transporting commodities] of the purchase...Because a lot of companies don't advertise that part, they don't advertise how they're going to ship it to you and how they're going to get it to you. (Coconut)

It is difficult for average consumers to be informed about key information related to cosmetic products, such as where the raw materials have been sourced from, because it is rarely displayed on the packaging. Strawberry said, “So, I think if you don't know the sourcing which is very hard to find. You don't know what is being done with it, is it being tested on animals, who knows what's happening there.” Coconut commented that “So where's the transparency, right? It's hard to find on your own, well you have to find on your own because they're not going to tell you.” Also Guava reported, “More transparency [is needed] because there is not a lot out there.”

Many of their [Lush] products, they're really proud that they are ethical, because they do not test on animals, and they always have these campaigns on YouTube. You can

see their videos etc, or you see the branded logo that's ethical on animals. But they use that ethical marked brand to cover the fact that from what I discover that they're still not that healthy for human consumption, because many of their products do contain paraben... And I found it very ironic, but the thing is they never talked about that. It's just trying to highlight the fact that everything is handmade, and none – like, not harmful to anybody. But that doesn't make a 100% sustainable. (Passionfruit)

Some participants thought that cosmetics companies deliberately concealed parts of products' information. As Passionfruit said, "Because usually in business what people usually do which is normal is they try to hide their secret ingredients. They get competitive, whatever." As another example, several sustainable cosmetics companies were bought out by unsustainable commercial cosmetics companies, after which the original sustainable cosmetics were reformulated with some unsustainable ingredients; but the average consumers (who did not do their own research) may assume that the products still follow the same sustainable standards as before.

A big company buys them out and the ingredients change, but you don't know. Like Toms, that toothpaste used to be really good, but then it gets bought out, ingredients change, they don't tell you or it's like a tiny spot... You find something that you love, but then it gets bought out by a big cooperation and then the ingredients totally change. Then it's not what you thought it was. (Strawberry)

Many participants pointed out another transparency problem of the cosmetics industry: the true proportion of the sustainable component of a so-called 'sustainable cosmetic.' For example, only a small part of the ingredients in the sustainable cosmetics purchased by participants was actually sustainable; whereas most were not. As Guava said, "For other products maybe not necessarily [tell consumers] where they come from but tell me like what percentage of it is organic? What percentage of it is sustainable?" Passionfruit also said, "So far there are not that many sustainable cosmetics affordable and actually truly if they call it sustainable. So if I am asking for 100 percent sustainable products, I would end up having nothing." Coconut stated that "Sometimes they

[cosmetics companies] can say that they're ethical, but they don't specify what parts of the company or what parts of the product are actually ethical. Maybe it's only the ingredients, but the packaging is not ethical.”

Thus, it could be said that transparent information about sustainable cosmetics may motivate participants' purchasing behaviours. Conversely, lack of transparency may prevent participants from purchasing sustainable cosmetics.

4.1.4.2 Understandable information is needed (Ingredients labeling and ethical symbols). In this study, interviewees stated that lack of understandable information on the cosmetics' packaging, especially the ingredients labels and ethical symbols, prevented them from making informed purchasing decisions. The understandability of ingredients labels was mentioned many times during the interviews. Most participants said that they were not satisfied with most of the ingredients' labels on the current market, which were filled with Latin words and chemical terms without English explanations in parentheses. Participants found that it was difficult for them to understand, and to make informed purchase decisions even though some of them were educated and conscious consumers. Raspberry said, “It should be transparent and straight forward and everyone even [the] average consumer should be able to understand what they are putting on their bodies. I think that is important.”

I guess I don't really know exactly what their label puts in their stuff. It looks like really good things because the ingredient list is short which is always nice... I can read it [the ingredients label], but a lot of stuff they have a Latin term for things. I have no idea what that is and like, “Well, it's just like zinc.” It's something is really simple, but they have to put a fancy name on that. (Mango)

I find I understand like the first two words [of the ingredients label]. Then after that, it's in Latin... because they don't give it to you in English. So I don't understand it unless I have done my extra research to be aware of what the word means. (Coconut)

I think the labels are just gibberish, most of the time for the majority of them, so like again, you said ‘do you understand the ingredient labels?’ Most of the times, no. It’s all these chemical terms... And then some of them it could just be something like coconut oil, but they have the chemical term. So, I don’t think it’s very helpful to any consumer. (Strawberry)

The understandability of the ethical symbols on the cosmetics’ packaging is another concern that participants brought up during the interviews. Participants had little knowledge about what the symbols look like for certain standards. As Avocado said, “I’m not sure what like the verified sign is for that [cruelty-free].”

Furthermore, participants described their uncertainty of the meanings over different ethical symbols, and wished there was a universal ethical symbol that signified certain ethical standards that a product has met. They also wished cosmetics companies would list all relevant ethical information on the products’ packaging, rather than just symbols. In this way, consumers could easily understand what the ethical symbols mean.

Again, if it was standardized... here is the seal and this means like, not tested on animals whatsoever, or if they had things that were universal, that would be great. Because everyone and everything is so different. The only one that’s really recognized is USDA certified organics. Most people can see that, but they don’t really have a sustainable sticker that says, ‘*We have achieved these practices*’. (Strawberry)

I guess just saying it rather than having like certain symbol for it is more effective, and then maybe having the symbol next to it or something. I don’t think companies should rely just on, like a symbol because a lot of people who don’t have the education yet don’t know. (Avocado)

Thus, the lack of understandable information on cosmetics packaging, especially ingredients’ labels and ethical symbols, may negatively affect participants’ participation in sustainable cosmetics consumption.

4.1.4.3 Credible information is needed. Most participants expressed skepticism about cosmetics companies’ claims of sustainability to justify their concerns and doubts about purchasing more so-called ‘sustainable cosmetics’. Mango said, “But I also know

that there's a lot of non-regulated things, that a lot, but products can claim to be all natural in there." Mango said, "A lot of the things I think I feel like Green Wash, they seem like they're sustainable, but then when you actually kind of look more into it, they're like, 'Oh, no.'" Peach said, "But you have to be careful of who you trust, so it is definitely smart if you look into it yourself." Guava said, "We can't always necessarily trust what they say on the front. You have to like, look at the ingredients carefully." Raspberry said, "I don't know [if all the sustainable claims of the products from health stores are reliable] ... I don't know if I totally trust it."

Many felt that sustainability claims were just another marketing ploy, because cosmetic companies had noticed that becoming sustainable was trendy and more and more consumers were pursuing sustainable lifestyles. Respondents somewhat believed that companies were taking advantage of consumers' goodwill by asking for a premium just for a sustainable title or claim. As Coconut said, "It is a trend right now to be sustainable, so it is a concern that a lot of companies that aren't sustainable are going to try and say that they are, because they want to make the sales." Avocado said, "I think companies are starting realize the effect of, like, sustainability, and now they might be saying their product is sustainable even if they aren't."

Furthermore, participants felt that the premiums they were paying for sustainable cosmetics were not reaching the people and places they were supposed to, and that corporations simply misappropriate the money. As Mango said, "you hear about the controversies with like people...lying on their ingredients labels, or not paying employees and stuff..." This was also one of the reasons why participants were more inclined to purchase locally produced sustainable cosmetics, as they felt that it was easy to track where the money went and how the cosmetics had been produced.

A couple of participants expressed pessimism towards the credibility of the cosmetics industry. Strawberry said, “Unfortunately, you just have to go by what people say. If I have asked the company and they have told me this, you have to believe that they can’t lie it here.”

I think just whatever comes out in the media is more of my understanding and what the company chooses to on their website when they choose to disclaim, like ‘*Oh, yes. This is where we get this ingredient from, this is who we work with, and this is what they do for us*’ Then that’s my understanding as well. So, whatever the company tells us, tells the consumer and then the media. (Mango)

A majority of participants believed that providing transparent, understandable and reliable product information to consumers could help build trust and, further, to form attachment with the brand (based on the illustration of Section 4.1.4.1/ 4.1.4.2/ 4.1.4.3). For example, all the participants thought that the information they received at Miiko’s workshops and the information listed on the products’ packaging was transparent, understandable and reliable. This improved their attachment with Miiko Skin Co., and enhanced their loyalty to the brand. As Passionfruit said, “I understand the label then I know, oh, they have nothing to hide...It makes me even more belonged to the brand.” Also Peach said, “She [the operator of Miiko Skin Co.] is so open about all the information. I think it’s just more of trusting [*sic*].” Guava commented, “Because of knowing how she [the operator of Miiko Skin Co.] sources things [that] has made me a little bit more aware and trust her more.”

4.1.4.4 Unified cosmetics regulations are needed. Regulation is an interesting theme that emerged from the interviews. Many participants admitted that they did not pay much attention to cosmetics regulations; however, a few noticed that cosmetics regulations varied across different continents and countries. For instance, some chemical ingredients in Europe have been banned from use in cosmetics; however, the situation in

North America is different. Participants expressed concerns and confusion about this phenomenon. As Peach stated, “Over a thousand things are banned in Europe for cosmetics and there’s like 20 banned in the US, so all those thousand things are still allowed to be used in the Canada and the US.” Mango said, “At least over here in North America, the standards are really low. I feel like Europe is very progressive and way further ahead.” Avocado also said, “I know that there are more regulations in Europe than there is in North America. It is more limited in Europe from my understanding.” It could be argued that participants may lose trust in the cosmetics industry due to the lack of unified cosmetics regulations.

4.2 Individual Factors.

This category includes factors specifically related to the individual decision maker, such as their values and knowledge. These factors generally resulted from an individual’s life experiences, and affected their purchasing choices. The primary themes and the sub-themes were discussed below.

4.2.1 Values. Participants’ personal values were revealed through sustainable cosmetics consumption, such as individual values (pursuing health and safety) and ethical values (supporting cruelty-free cosmetics and local cosmetics businesses). Participants achieved self-satisfaction through the purchasing of value-related products.

4.2.1.1 Individual values (health & safety). In this study, pursuing health and safety was identified as participants’ initial motivation for purchasing sustainable cosmetics. All participants were aware that harmful ingredients exist in unsustainable cosmetics and were concerned about their negative effects on human health. To avoid toxic ingredients, participants were motivated to purchase sustainable cosmetics, which caused them to also become conscious about purchasing other sustainable products. Strawberry

expressed, “I think health actually was the initial [motivation for purchasing sustainable cosmetics].” Passionfruit also shared the same thoughts, “So for me first and foremost is to take care of my health.” Mango said, “Because your skin is the largest organ that you should really care about what you are putting on it.” Also, Raspberry said, “I just started being healthier and health conscious...I started using natural products and now my face is way better and my body is better.” Avocado stated “Knowing all the bad things that go into your products, being able to avoid that is a big motivator for me.”

Because what you put on your body doesn't just sit on the surface but it also goes into, because your skin is the largest organ. So, I don't want to put stuff on me or in me that's bad for me. (Guava)

I mean, it takes your skin 26 seconds to absorb anything, so when you look at the ingredients of none regulated or just regular products that you get from Shoppers drug mart...and that's in your blood stream, that's in all of your organs. (Peach)

Participants' responses indicated that they were very knowledgeable about the impact that cosmetics could have on their bodies and so this knowledge, combined with their value influenced their decisions. Thus, it could be concluded that participants' individual values—health and safety—motivated them to purchase sustainable cosmetics.

4.2.1.2 Ethical values. According to Solomon et al. (2015), an ethical consumer is “a shopper who likes to help out the underdog and will support locally owned against big chains” (p. 286). Without a doubt, these ethical consumers preferred to attain value-related products. Two sub-themes, benevolence to animal and locally-produced cosmetics, will be introduced in the following content.

4.2.1.2.1 Benevolence to animals (cruelty-free cosmetics). From the respondents' words, a primary ethical concern regarding the cosmetics industry was animal testing. Some participants said that cruelty-free was the minimum standard that a cosmetic

product must meet. Strawberry said, “Well, there is the thing like testing on animals is a huge one...that is a big thing to me.” Peach expressed, “I have such sympathy [for animals] ...it is incredible how much animal by-product is in products like makeup and lipstick and all that.”

If I do buy stuff that is not natural, I at least make sure it is cruelty free ... Well, I think it was just I want to use companies that don't test on animals, that was always my biggest driving force. (Mango)

It is still a lot of the bigger companies like L'Oreal and MAC still do animal testing. And so, for me trying to lead a more sustainable lifestyle that also is compassionate towards animals. I don't try and buy their products anymore. (Avocado)

It could be said that participants' ethical values, such as benevolence to animals, may motivate them to purchase sustainable cosmetics.

4.2.1.2.2 Locally produced cosmetics. Participants' ethical values were also expressed through their preference for locally produced sustainable cosmetics. Avocado shared her opinion, “I really value, like, local businesses.” As Raspberry said, “In the last couple of years, I think I just buy locally made stuff...I am also supporting local companies rather than these giant corporations.” Also, Mango said, “I am trying to support local companies now.” Most participants thought that supporting local businesses was a way to keep the local economy sustainable.

Miiko Skin Co. and Elate are two main cosmetics brands from which participants usually purchase their skin care and makeup cosmetics. This is because participants were sure that these two companies sourced and produced their products locally and using ethical practices. Participants seemed to be able to justify the premium they were asked to pay, and felt they were able to track how and where these extra dollars were being used. As Peach said, “If you are spending money in this community, making a product,

and the same economy are purchasing your product, so the money is staying within the economy.”

The ingredients [in my current cosmetics] are all local. I would love to know where it is from, the sourcing place...I guess by choosing to support those [local sustainable cosmetics] brands as opposed to other big companies. I am not saying that all big companies are bad, but just get tainted after a while. (Strawberry)

4.2.1.3 Self-satisfaction. Purchasing sustainable cosmetics may be a path through which participants can achieve self-satisfaction, as they can actualize their values through purchasing these products. As Mango said, “I usually feel good about that [purchasing sustainable cosmetics] and I feel good about myself, making the right choice and I can give my money to a company that supports my ethics which is nice.” Coconut expressed, “Purchasing it [sustainable cosmetics] also makes me feel good because I feel like I can pat myself on the back and be like, good job. Like you bought something that’s not hurting the environment and it’s all ethical and fair-trade.” Strawberry also commented, “It is a good feeling from purchasing something that you know is well made or sustainably made, etc.” Raspberry said, “I feel satisfied [with buying sustainable cosmetics].” It could be argued that participants may be motivated to purchase sustainable cosmetics as a way to affirm a positive self-identity and get self-satisfaction.

4.2.2 Emotional Decision Making. Under the individual factors category, emotion was identified as an influential factor affecting participants’ purchase behaviour of sustainable cosmetics. Guilt and fear were two kinds of emotions that were brought up by participants during the interviews. These emotions either compelled or motivated participants to purchase sustainable cosmetics.

4.2.2.1 Guilt. Some participants’ ethical obligations were motivated by a need to suppress anxiety or feelings of guilt. As Strawberry said, “I think we sub-consciously

know when we are doing something that is really great for the environment or what not. I think that it is like a real, good reassuring feeling.” And Coconut said, “I know that if I want to spend a little bit more money to get the products [sustainable cosmetics] that I feel like I can feel good using them, and not feel guilty.” Mango shared the same thought, “It is just nice the peace of mind was mainly why I did it for [sic]. Making sure that I knew, okay, I don’t have that little back on [sic] my mind, guilt every time.”

However, some participants mentioned that they did not feel guilty when special colour makeup products were needed for an occasion, and no such sustainable ones were available under the circumstances. As Mango said, “I went to a music festival...so I was buying a makeup for that. It was finely sparkly stuff, it is hard to find natural versions of that, so sometimes I’ll make an exception.” In such special circumstances, participants chose products that satisfied their primary need for the cosmetics, despite sustainability considerations. These unsustainable makeup products were only used for these special occasions, so participants did not feel guilty for doing so. This result also indicates that there may be a gap in the market for sustainable colour makeup products intended for special occasions.

4.2.2.2 Fear. Some participants expressed their fear of knowing about unsustainable issues within the cosmetics industry, and the damaging consequences of consuming unsustainable cosmetics on the environment and society, such as causing water pollution, harming animals and human health. As Passionfruit said, “It’s kind of scary, because sometimes you can’t even find it [the ingredients used in the unsustainable cosmetics] online.”

Participants were more likely to feel fearful when hearing stories of real people within their own social networks, which may force them to think about themselves and

then change their purchasing behaviours. For participants, stories seemed to be more reliable and influential than rigid statistics.

I heard stories where old women who have been using a foundation a popular one called Estee Lauder double wear and they have been using that for years and years, and one day they wake up and they have an allergic reaction on their face because of using like these products for a long period of time with these toxic ingredients in them. Your body, it builds up and then your body realizes like, no, this is bad. And then it reacts. (Avocado)

Moreover, participants seem to be more influenced by negative news than positive news. As Coconut said, “Just staying up-to-date news. Like if a brand or a company gets highlighted for being negatively or positively unsustainable, that would influence me.” Thus, it could be said that the emotions of guilt and fear may motivate interviewee’s participation in sustainable cosmetics consumption.

4.2.3 Consumer Learning Process. Learning is an ongoing and complex process. Consumers could learn purposefully from classical environments, such as the classroom (education); however, consumers could also learn vicariously and cognitively, such as learning from observing and modeling other people (as introduced in Chapter 2). This is why the researcher grouped the sub-theme ‘knowledge and education’ and ‘peer and reference group’ under the category of ‘consumer learning process’. Following these findings, the researcher will introduce an unexpected result that has been identified from this study of ‘self-identity’.

4.2.3.1 Knowledge and education. Participants identified education and knowledge as important factors influencing their purchasing behaviours of sustainable cosmetics. It could be observed from this study that adequate knowledge of sustainability and sustainable cosmetics raised participants’ awareness and drew their attention to their consuming behaviours.

Participants acquired sustainability-related education from different sources, including school, social media, Miiko's workshops, and word-of-mouth. Participants all believed that education was essential to raising consumers' awareness of sustainable cosmetics. As Mango said, "...when people become more educated, then they become more aware." Avocado stated, "It [sustainability course] was kind of eye opening for me." Also, Passionfruit shared her thought, "I was pursuing a Masters Degree in Sustainability. So it makes me more aware of it." Raspberry said, "I think I didn't really know anything before that [the workshop held by Miiko Skin Co.]... she [the founder of Miiko Skin Co. and the presenter of the workshop] kind of open [*sic*] my eyes...I think she like kick started all of that for me."

Having awareness and knowledge of sustainable cosmetics were considered prerequisites for consuming sustainably. After attaining the related knowledge, participants' attitudes towards cosmetics changed, and their purchasing behaviours, even lifestyles, were shifted in a more sustainable direction. As Guava said, "It [education] is pretty important because if I didn't know how to do that [my own cosmetics], I would still be buying shampoo."

[Knowledge of sustainability is] Very important, I think that the more you have, the easier it is to go shopping, to live your life in general, to eat, buy certain clothing and certain cosmetics as well...and hence you want to change your lifestyle, the more information you have, the more confident you can feel, and sharing with others that why you're changing your lifestyle is one. (Coconut)

I didn't really care about what was in it [the cosmetic product], I didn't know that like most of the ingredients that regular companies use was toxic. So, I gained deeper appreciation for reading the ingredients and just caring about what goes into your skin. (Mango)

Due to a lack of awareness and knowledge of sustainable cosmetics before attending the workshops, participants stated that they did not know where to purchase sustainable

cosmetics, or what sustainable cosmetics were, and were not sure whether they had previously purchased sustainable cosmetics or not. Guava said, “I didn’t know where to find good [sustainable] makeup.” Passionfruit expressed, “I had no idea what sustainable cosmetics are like, so after that [the workshop] I looked back.” Raspberry expressed uncertainty as to whether she had purchased sustainable cosmetics prior to the workshop, saying “I think maybe [I purchased sustainable cosmetics but] unknowingly.” As Mango mentioned, “I didn’t know [sustainable cosmetics] until I started doing these workshops.”

Participants’ opinion of sustainability and sustainable cosmetics were variable due to their different levels of knowledge. For instance, Guava said, “I see it [sustainable cosmetics] as something I am buying that’s higher quality. So it is going to be worth what I spend on it and often lasts a long time.” Passionfruit expressed her idea of sustainable cosmetic as, “It means that I one hundred percent understand everything and their inside out is totally sustainable.” Peach stated, “When I think of sustainable, I think of what goes around, comes around and like the sense of economy.” It also could be suggested that the poor definition of sustainable cosmetics and lack of education and knowledge of sustainability and sustainable cosmetics may prevent participants from purchasing them.

4.2.3.2 Peer and reference groups. Some participants mentioned that they were more or less influenced by their acquaintances, such as family members and friends. Raspberry expressed, “I think if a friend of mine uses something and she loves it, I am definitely persuaded.” As Coconut said, “I think because you listen and you relate a lot more in people who are your age or doing the same things as you, right?”

My friends have a big influence, my friends and my family and my boyfriend and everything. They have big influences because if they have a product that they love, for example, I have a friend that works at Lush. So she can only say positive things about Lush and for the most part Lush is a really good company... There's enough influence if she gave me something and she gave me enough reasons to try it, I would, so yeah. (Coconut)

Some participants thought that social influencers had a strong impact on consumers' purchasing choices. Although participants did not list social influencers as their reference group or note having been influenced by them, they did realize the significant influence that social influencers have on the average consumer. They believed that most consumers considered social influencers, such as celebrities and public figures, as their peers and reference groups, and these consumers were more likely to follow the reference groups' purchasing behaviours or recommendations.

Like YouTube, and like big bloggers, and bloggers, and stuff just raising awareness because they have a huge following. With the stuff would like, "Oh, I like this product." I'm like, "Too many people are going to buy it." They have an incredible pull with people. (Mango)

I think the show business has a really large role to play. Most of the time, people try to look pretty and everything, because they see themselves in the image of these models, and singers, and actors, actresses, and all that... And because people somehow always listen to celebrities, and not necessarily the doctors, or scientist. So... (Passionfruit)

However, some participants' sustainable purchasing behaviours received negative feedback from family members or the public. Coconut said, "She [her mom] kind of laughs at me because I'm trying to be all sustainable and everything."

I think the stigma comes with people who buy organic and sustainable. I think it is looked down upon by a lot of people... If I am putting stuff in my car, that's like more natural, organic and stuff like that, then I feel like if people see it there, like '*oh, look, just another loser buying organic or whatever.*' There is just like preconceived notions about it, like people think you are a certain way just because you buy natural, sustainable, organic, whatever. As humans, we still care about what people think. (Avocado)

It can be observed from the data that acquaintances/peers and reference groups (social influencers) can have either positive or negative influences on consumers purchasing behaviours of sustainable cosmetics.

4.2.3.3 Self-identity. Learning about sustainability and sustainable cosmetics also helped some participants develop their self-identities. As Peach said, “It [knowledge of sustainability] makes you really think about...like why am I - why do I think the way that I think.” When asked about the importance of the knowledge gained from the workshop, Raspberry had this response, “Very [important], it opened my eyes to a whole new side of things that I had no idea about, that is extremely important. It’s totally shaping who I am today.” Mango said, “It [knowledge] completely changes the way I shop and the way that I choose my cosmetics. It has been a life-changing.” Thus, learning could be regarded an important contribution for participants to achieve self-identities.

Some participants have already lived a sustainable lifestyle or consumed with conscience, and continuously confirm their identities as sustainable consumers through sustainable cosmetics consumption. As Peach said, “It is not a bad thing to consume. You can be a consumer; you just have to be an aware consumer.” Other participants thought that consuming sustainable cosmetics helps them to identify themselves as sustainable consumers, such as Mango who stated, “Now that [purchasing sustainable cosmetics]’s my ethics. That’s what I believe in.” Peach also expressed, “I love the idea of just being really raw and basic, like you don’t need fifteen hundred ingredients and something [in your cosmetics].”

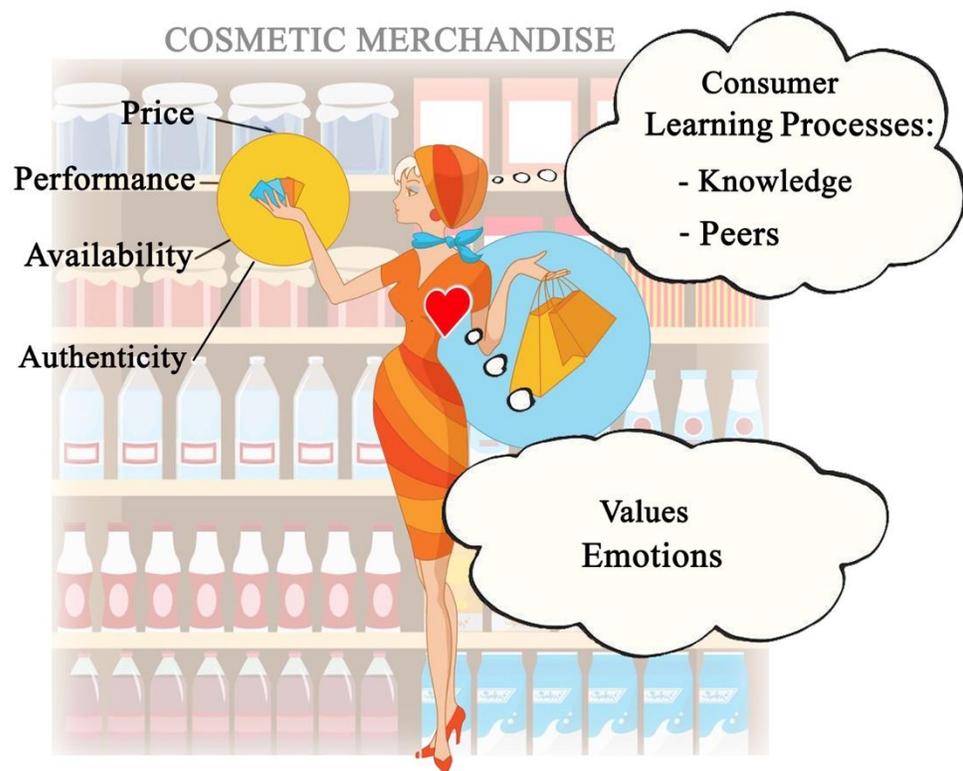
On the other hand, some participants said they consume sustainable cosmetics to achieve self-identity as a sustainable consumer. Coconut expressed this well by saying,

“I am buying this because now, in my mind, it makes me feel like I’m eco-friendly and like I am being sustainable, because of it.” The fulfillment of a preconceived identity, or effort to develop a self-identity are interacting with each other during the consumption process.

4.3 Summary.

The researcher has created a diagram (Figure 4.1) based on the findings described above. The diagram has been placed here because it summarizes the results of this study and provides readers with a clear and thorough understanding of how these influential factors (primary themes) affect female consumers’ purchasing behaviours where sustainable cosmetics are concerned.

Figure 4.1 Diagram of Factors Affecting Women’s Sustainable Cosmetic consumption



In the diagram, a female consumer is standing in front of a cosmetics shelf, while her hand is holding a cosmetic product and she is pondering whether she ought to purchase this sustainable cosmetic. Then, several factors that influence the outcome of her purchasing decision are raised. With the product in her hand, she is considering the product's labeled price, performance, and future availability. Also, she is considering the authenticity of all the information she has regarding the product, such as the product's sustainable claims and its ingredients label. Meanwhile, she is recalling the education and knowledge regarding sustainability she previously acquired, and if her peers or reference groups has recommended this product before. At the same time, her heart is measuring the product's sustainable standards, to see if these standards are consistent with her values (personal and ethical) and emotions. After comprehensive consideration though her hand, head, and heart, the female consumer will evaluate all the benefits and dis-benefits involved in purchasing a sustainable cosmetic product, then further decide whether to proceed with the actual purchase behaviour or not.

This chapter displayed primary themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data. It gave a picture of the factors that influence female consumers' purchasing behaviours in the case of sustainable cosmetics. The details of how these factors either motivated or impeded participants' purchasing behaviours of sustainable cosmetics was described. Next, the discussion will turn to interpreting the meaning and importance of those influential factors that have been identified in this study as well as linking these results back to the extant literatures. Further, the following section will present the implications of this research and offer recommendations for future practices.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

The aim of this study was to contribute to a better understanding of sustainable cosmetics consumption. The qualitative description method was used in this study to guide the research design. The researcher interviewed eight female participants who had joined in the sustainable cosmetics workshops held by Miiko Skin Co. between June and August, 2017. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data, and NVivo software was used to support the data analysis process. Several factors affecting female consumers' purchasing behaviour of sustainable cosmetics were found. All the factors were identified as either motivating or hindering the female consumers' purchase of sustainable cosmetics.

Few previous studies have focused on sustainable cosmetics consumption specifically, so the findings will be discussed based on studies of green consumption, ethical consumption and sustainable consumption within all product categories, and not limited to the field of cosmetics. Makatouni (2002) states that findings concerning green and ethical products may justifiably work as a backdrop for studies on sustainable cosmetics consumption, since consumers often associate a product's green attributes with environmental sustainability and ethical attributes with social sustainability.

As noted in the Methodology chapter, the interviewees of this study were an explicit group, as they were recruited directly from the Miiko Skin Co.'s sustainable cosmetics workshops, rather than selected at random from mass consumer groups. The selection of such a group of consumers was purposeful, as the purpose was to focus on female consumers whose sustainable attitudes were emphasized, rather than being too subtle to detect in other mainstream consumer groups. Thus, all findings were interpreted in light of this special circumstance.

The sequence of this chapter is as follows. First, each major theme will be interpreted. Then within each corresponding section, the researcher will demonstrate how these factors are connected to the existing literature, and how each factor acts either as a motivator or barrier to affect consumers purchase behaviour of sustainable cosmetics. Finally, the limitations and implications of this study will be discussed. At the end of this chapter, recommendations will be made for future studies.

5.1 Authenticity (Trust).

Sproles, Geistfeld, and Badenhop (1978) argued that efficient decision making requires consumers to be fully informed. Bray et al. (2011) identified that consumers' ethical decisions would be affected by not having enough information on select products. In this study, participants were informed to some extent on sustainability and sustainable cosmetics matters, but felt they were not fully informed. It was clear from this study that participants needed to be fully informed to make purchase decisions of sustainable cosmetics. This result is not consistent with what Boulstridge and Carrigan (2000) found. In their studies, lack of products' information had not been brought up by participants as a barrier affecting their purchasing decisions. This situation might be explained by the fact that the focus of this study was specifically on sustainable cosmetics and not sustainable products in general, and the information about sustainable cosmetics are not sufficient in the marketing domain. Also, the study sample was an explicit group of sustainability supporters (which has been discussed in the Methodology Chapter), who were inclined to require more information about the desired products.

In addition, the participants identified several transparency issues in the cosmetics industry. For example, low understandability of the ingredients labels on the cosmetics packages, and a lack of unified regulations as well as vague definitions of key terms,

such as ‘sustainable’, ‘organic’, and ‘green.’ As a result, participants expressed confusion and cynicism about the authenticity of cosmetics companies’ sustainable conduct. As Carrigan & Attalla (2001) report, most consumers do not have the information needed to distinguish whether a company has or has not behaved ethically. It could be said that lack of information may cause confusion over what makes a product sustainable. Thus, if consumers had clearer and more reliable information on the issues mentioned above, it might be easier for them to distinguish sustainable cosmetics in their purchasing and to feel more confident about their sustainable purchases.

Study participants were aware of sustainable practices conducted by some cosmetics companies, but appeared to doubt whether the company or product was authentically sustainable or not, and retained cynicism about companies’ sustainability claims. This result is consistent with what Carrigan and Attalla (2001) identified – that cynicism usually results from uncertainty about a companies’ ethical claims. Also, as Bray et al. (2011) discovered, cynicism is a key factor making consumers neglect ethical products. Consumers’ skepticism towards ethical claims influences their purchasing decisions, which has also been suggested by Nicholls and Lee (2006). It could be said that cynicism toward the authenticity of sustainability claims prevent consumers from purchasing sustainable cosmetics. Consumers may refuse to purchase sustainable cosmetics if they doubt the credibility of sustainability claims, or if they are not satisfied with the transparency of a product’s information.

It is difficult for sustainable cosmetics companies to change consumers’ perceptions about the authenticity issue. Nash (1990) points out that products with ethical attributes may have conflict with their marketing strategy, which means that because the companies want to sell the product, they may market its ethical attributes

exaggeratedly or untruthfully, even though the product does have some ethical attribute. So there is a conflict behind the ethical products and the company's marketing strategy. Also, Bray et al. (2011) note, consumers are more likely to question ethical claims in the marketing context. However, Carrigan and Attalla (2001) hold the opposite opinion. They state that consumers who are skeptical and uncertain about the authenticity of sustainability claims would benefit from the increased information in the marketing domain, which could help to expand their knowledge of ethical practices in order to make informed purchasing decisions.

Having more information does not seem to be the sole determining factor when consumers are making a thorough judgement on a product's sustainability. Boulstridge and Carrigan (2000) found that consumers were bombarded with information and messages, indicating there may be too much unreliable information and not enough credible information to persuade and convince consumers that sustainable purchase decisions could make a difference to the environment and society. However, this point of view was not detected in the current study. It might be explained by the fact that the focus of this study was specifically on sustainable cosmetics and not sustainable products in general, and the information about sustainable cosmetics are not sufficient in the marketing domain. Also, the study sample was an explicit group of sustainability supporters (which has been discussed in the Methodology Chapter), who were inclined to require more information about the desired products.

It could be seen from this study that transparent and reliable information of sustainable cosmetics could help to build trust and brand attachment with consumers, and vice versa, which may encourage purchasing decisions. This result is consistent with Gupta and Ogden's study (2009), in which trust was been found to motivate consumers

to buy green products. In addition, cynicism on green claims has also been identified by Zabkar and Hosta (2013) as a key barrier to purchasing green products.

5.1.1 Labelling and ethical symbols. Mondelaers, Verbeke and Van Huylenbroeck (2009) found that consumers look for simple and understandable information when purchasing green products. Label information has also been identified by Shaw and Clarke (1999) as an influential factor affecting consumers' ethical behaviours. Information on cosmetic products is usually presented through ingredients labels, ethical symbols, or other descriptions on the product's packaging, which provide consumers with details of the product's components and sustainable attributes. The ingredients label may be the first and most convenient tool for consumers to learn the components of a cosmetic product; however, participants in this study said that the majority of the ingredients labels were written in Latin and chemistry terms, without an English explanation next to it. Participants admitted that they could not understand the ingredients labels most of the time, which reduced their trust with the cosmetic brand and prevented them from purchasing the product. This result resonates with what Carrigan and Attalla (2001) found, which is that understandability of a product's information may negatively influence average consumers to purchase sustainable products.

As participants stated, they did not have the understandability issue of the ingredients labels of sustainable food. This may be because cosmetics have a more complex composition than food products, such as their synthetic and chemical ingredients. It may also be due to the fact that the cosmetics industry has less strict regulations regarding the ingredients label than the food industry. For example, the dual declaration of some ingredient names occurs often on cosmetics' ingredients labels.

Cosmetics companies have requested the FDA allow them to identify botanicals only by their Latin names, and color additives only by the 'CI' (Colour Index) numbers or words from other languages, such as using 'Aqua' and 'Parfum' instead of 'Water' and 'Fragrance' (FDA, n.d., Ingredient Names, para. 4). As Foulke (1992) argues, most consumers do not recognize the ingredients listed on product packaging, and there is no other solution to change the way of presenting it while also accurately identifying these ingredients. This justification explains why participants complained about the understandability of the ingredients labels. Figure 5.1 is an example of the packaging of a sustainable cosmetic product, with informative ethical symbols and a label that is understandable. Since there are English explanations beside some ingredients terminologies, all the ingredients listed on this package are easy for average consumers to understand.

Figure 5.1 The Representative Packaging of a Sustainable Cosmetic Product.





5.2 Price, Performance and Availability.

It appears from this study that the purchase of sustainable cosmetics is more likely to take place if there is no considerable increase in price for sustainability, no loss of performance for the sake of sustainability, and no limited availability of qualified products. Concern about the price and the quality of goods is also highlighted by Carrigan and Attalla (2001), which is consistent with the result of this study. In addition, as Bray et al. (2011) reported, the common perception is that if a company is primarily focusing on ethical standards, then the quality of its products is likely to be lower. The performance of sustainable cosmetics has been highlighted in the findings, instead of the product's quality. However, according to Gilmore and Pine (2007), consumer sensibilities regarding purchasing are described as follows:

1. "Availability: purchasing on the basis of accessing a reliable supply"
2. "Cost: purchasing on the basis of obtaining an affordable price"
3. "Quality: purchasing on the basis of excelling in product performance" (p. 5)

Thus, it could be argued that the 'quality' issue identified by other studies may be consistent with the performance issue found in this study.

The higher price of sustainable cosmetics was reported by participants as a barrier that deters them from purchasing sustainable cosmetics. Price has also been identified by this study, as well as several previous studies as a key factor influencing consumers' purchasing behaviour (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000; Chen & Chang, 2013; Gleim et al, 2013; Gupta & Ogden, 2009; Pickett-Baker & Ozaki, 2008; Tanner & Wölfling Kast, 2003). Eze and Ndubisi (2013) also found that consumers prefer low-priced green products and attach more importance to price than to green claims.

This study found that participants have experienced poor performance in sustainable cosmetics, in comparing with using unsustainable cosmetics, which deters them from purchasing similar products again. The same result has also been identified by past studies (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Gleim et al., 2013; Tsakiridou, Boutsouki, Zotos & Mattas, 2008; Young et al., 2010). These studies suggested that a product's functional and green attributes would influence consumers' green purchase behaviour. For instance, Gleim et al. (2013) said a products' poor performance is a critical barrier that affects consumers' green purchase decisions. Also, as Carrigan and Attalla (2001) stated, it became clear that the importance of the products' performance took precedence over the sustainable criteria. The result is also similar to what Tsakiridou et al. (2008) found, which is that the inferior performance of green products, despite their sustainable attributes, may result in a conflict between consumers' personal preferences and their sustainable responsibilities, which may further prevent them from purchasing green products. Thus, it could be argued that cosmetics consumers prioritize performance over sustainability, and unless a product meets these two conditions simultaneously, they may not purchase them. However, sustainable cosmetics with superior performance may motivate consumers' participation in sustainable cosmetic consumption.

Participants in this study also reported that the availability of sustainable cosmetics is lower than unsustainable ones, deterring them from purchasing sustainable cosmetics. Limited availability has also been identified in other studies as an impediment of consuming environmentally sustainable and ethical products (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001; Nicholls & Lee, 2006; Padel & Foster, 2005; Tanner & Wölfling Kast, 2003; Young et al., 2010). In contrast, Bray et al.'s study (2011), respondents did not think the availability of ethical alternatives was a barrier for them to pursue ethical purchasing. They believed that ethical products had become increasingly popular, and they could find many options on the market. However, the result of this study showed that the availability of sustainable cosmetics is still a hurdle for many consumers, particularly considering that sustainable cosmetic consumption is not as popularized as ethical consumption.

5.3 Emotional Decision Making.

In this study, participants were more likely to be convinced by the negative consequences of unsustainable consumption, experiencing negative emotions such as fear and guilt. As Steenhaut and Van Kenhove (2006) discovered, “thinking about the negative consequences may trigger negative anticipated emotions, which in turn refrain the consumer from performing the unethical act” (p. 2).

What emerges from this study is also consistent with the following two studies. Bray et al.'s (2011) study found that consumers responded stronger to negative news than positive, and Herr, Kardes and Kim (1991) found that negative information influences participants' attitudes more than positive information. Participants said they would avoid purchasing cosmetic products that are associated with negative information. The result suggests that monitoring sales of products or brands that have been negatively

viewed by the public may give important insights into how negative emotions influence consumer behaviours. It also could be assumed that average consumers - who do not have strong sustainable values and beliefs - may need constant negative reminders, such as negative personal stories, to warn them of the negative consequences of consuming unsustainable cosmetics.

Guilt is defined as “an individual’s unpleasant emotional state associated with possible objections to his or her actions, inactions, circumstances, or intentions” (Basil, Ridgway & Basil, 2006, p. 2). Bray et al. (2011) report that guilt acted as an influential factor in consumers’ decision making process. Hiller (2008) found that guilt may occur after purchase as consumers may feel guilty for not buying the right product (as cited in Bray et al., 2011). However, Steenhaut and Van Kenhove (2006) established “the anticipation of guilt feelings as a partial mediator between a consumer’s ethical beliefs (antecedent by idealism) and ethical intentions” (p. 11), which is consistent with the findings of this study. Some participants admitted that they would purchase sustainable cosmetics to avoid feeling guilty afterwards, which means that they anticipated the appearance of guilt. Young et al. (2010) acknowledges that consumers are concerned about how guilty they might feel in the future if they do not choose green alternatives. Thus, it could be argued that consumers’ sustainable purchasing behaviours may arise more out of a need to suppress feelings of guilt.

5.4 Values.

This study shows that participants’ personal and ethical values inform their purchase of sustainable cosmetics. It could also be concluded that participants prefer to consume sustainable cosmetics because this behaviour aligns with their personal or ethical values. This finding is consistent with what Padel and Foster (2005) found who found that

consumers' environmental and ethical values (benevolence) motivate consumers to purchase sustainable products.

Participants in this study said their initial motive for purchasing sustainable cosmetics was a concern for their own health and safety, which is similar with the results of Padel and Foster's study (2005). They found that consumers' personal values, such as health and safety, or their ethical values, such as benevolence toward animals, drove them to purchase green products. Most participants thought that cruelty-free was the minimum ethical standard that a cosmetic product should meet. In addition, they agreed that benevolence toward animals was what drove them to purchase sustainable cosmetics, which is consistent with Carrigan and Attalla's (2001) study in which young consumers seem to feel sympathetic toward animals.

The results of this study also suggest that participants are more inclined to purchase locally produced sustainable cosmetics. Participants felt that local businesses were more reliable than non-local ones as it was easier for them to track where their money went. Also, they were willing to pay a premium to support their local economy. One possible explanation for this phenomenon might be that consumers may find it easier to justify money spent in a relatively familiar setting. Furthermore, geographical closeness may strengthen consumers' attachment and commitment to their sustainable beliefs and promote their participation in sustainable consumption, which resonates with Bray et al.'s (2011) study. Bray et al. (2011) also found that price appeared to be less problematic when it comes to locally produced products.

However, participants had concerns about how to define a 'local' cosmetic product. As in, should it be defined by where the product is made? Should it be defined by the location of the brand headquarters? Or should it be defined by where the ingredients are

sourced? Several participants also doubted whether outsourced ingredients (or products that are not made locally) could really have a negative impact on sustainability. This opinion has also been reported by KPMG and Synovate (2007), who state that “ethical considerations may also be contradictory, for example, the desire to reduce food miles and support developing countries” (as cited in Bray et al., 2011, p. 2)

It could be argued that some consumers are simply not engaged in issues that are not consistent with their values or that do not affect them directly. As Carrigan and Attalla (2001) stated, many unethical practices are continually carried out without any influence on consumers’ purchasing behaviours. Boulstridge and Carrigan (2000) shared the notion that although consumers might highly respect companies with ethical practices, they may not necessarily feel compelled to buy ethical products as the problems might not directly affect them, feeling instead that the ethical issues are irrelevant to them.

5.4.1 Self-identity. Self-identity was an unexpected theme that emerged from the data. There are a few studies that explore the relationship between consumption and self-concept (Kleine et al., 1993; Shaw & Shiu, 2002); however, the relationship between self-identity and sustainable cosmetics consumption has not been explored by previous research. Some participants reported that consuming sustainable cosmetics helped them to develop their self-identities as sustainable consumers. It could be argued that this result has relation with self-completion theory and compensatory consumption (Gollwitzer, Wicklund, & Hilton, 1982; Rucker & Galinsky, 2009). Participants pursued sustainable cosmetic consumption to complete their self-definition as sustainable consumers to manage a perceived threat to their health and safety, or to fulfill what they lack in their lives. This result could also be explained with the self-image congruence

model, which assumes that consumers prefer the products whose attributes are consistent with aspects of themselves, such as their values (Onkvisit & Shaw, 1987).

Previous studies have explained the relationship between self-identity and leisure behaviours in two ways. One indicates that people commit to a self-identity which motivates them to be involved in specific leisure behaviours and “motivates participants to engage in self-referent behaviors” (Kuentzel, 2000, p. 3). The second perspective suggests that “the self is a constantly developing process” and people use the free space of leisure to create desired self-definitions (Kelly, 1983, as cited in Kuentzel, 2000, p. 3).

The results of this study also could be explained by the statement above from both perspectives. From one perspective, participants who consider or have committed themselves to sustainable consumerism might feel compelled to participate in sustainable cosmetics consumption. By such self-referent behaviour, participants may further reinforce their identities as sustainable consumers. From another perspective, participants who did not regard themselves as sustainable consumers may develop this identity after purchasing sustainable cosmetics.

5.5 Consumer Learning Processes.

5.5.1 Knowledge. Results of this study imply that a lack of awareness and knowledge of sustainable cosmetics negatively affects consumers’ purchasing behaviours. This result is consistent with what Rabbiosi (2014) concluded, which is that shopping requires a certain amount of knowledge regarding products and markets. Also, as Chao and Schor (1998) found, a lack of education and knowledge distribution is the reason why consumers are not able to obtain complete information on products. Dimitrova et al. (2009) found that customer knowledge management is an innovative

approach to create a valuable influence and direct interaction with consumers, which could be adopted by sustainable cosmetics companies and social media for building information interaction with consumers.

Participants from this study said that the knowledge of sustainability and sustainable cosmetics that they gained from various channels has raised their awareness of the negative consequences of consuming unsustainable cosmetics, and changed their purchasing behaviours as a result. This outcome resonates with Connell (2010), who finds that consumer knowledge of social and environmental issues positively affects their attitudes and actual purchasing behaviours toward green products. As Joshi and Ramen (2015) concluded, being knowledgeable about green products may boost consumers' trust in them and lead to actual purchase behaviours. Conversely, lack of knowledge has been identified as a barrier that "prevents consumers from translating their concerns into the actual purchases of green products" (Joshi & Ramen, 2015, p. 10).

Some researchers argue that there is only a weak relationship between consumer knowledge and actual green purchasing behaviour (Bang, Ellinger, Hadjimarcou & Traichal, 2000). These researchers argue that only a basic understanding of environmental and social issues may not be sufficient for consumers to purchase sustainable products; a comprehensive understanding of the effects of consuming unsustainably might be more effective in motivating consumers to change their purchasing behaviours towards a more sustainable direction.

As Carrigan and Attalla (2001) state, information and knowledge are key for raising consumers' awareness and leading them to purchase ethically. The number of consumers who would prefer to consume ethically is unknown, but a lack of knowledge on ethical

issue indicates that purchasing ethically has not yet been a part of their consumption patterns (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). Thus, it could be said that expanding consumers' knowledge about sustainable consumption and raising awareness of sustainable and ethical issues, could increase their willingness to consume more sustainably.

5.5.2 Reference groups and social norms. Social norms and reference groups have been identified by Connell (2010) as essential motives for consumers to purchase green products. This is consistent with the results of this study. The findings showed that social norms and reference groups have an impact on participants' purchase behaviours of sustainable cosmetics.

To illustrate, one participant said she felt pressured from the public to purchase sustainable products. This could be explained by social pressure theory, which theorizes that other people's opinions can be more influential than people's own preferences (Solomon et al., 2015). Gupta and Ogden (2009) also found that subjective norms may also apply pressure on people, forcing them to behave in certain ways. Subjective norms may have a negative relationship with sustainable purchase behaviours since sustainable consumption has not yet been popularized and accepted by mainstream consumers.

Participants indicated that consumers may nowadays prefer to include celebrities or public figures in their reference groups, and buy what these people purchase or recommend. This phenomenon did not directly affect the study participants themselves, but they were aware of it. This phenomenon can be explained by the modelling theory, which was put forward by Shimp (1991). Modelling theory describes the process of imitating others' behaviours, and it could also be regarded as cognitive learning process (Solomon et al., 2015). This phenomenon could also be explained by what Schor (1999) coined 'new consumerism'. In Schor's study, Americans paid more attention to social

status and spent more money if their purchases were resulting from diversification of their references groups, and these people no longer tried to acquire what their neighbours or coworkers owned (Schor, 1999). Instead, they attempted to copy what their favourite TV characters and celebrities had (Schor, 1999). The acquisition of celebrities' products could be seen as evidence of an effort to project an affluent or glamorous lifestyle, similarly to that of the wealthy and famous (Schor, 2000). This point of view has also been proposed by Giddens (1991), who expressed that mass media presents the affluent lifestyle to everyone, which opens a new world of opulence to them, encouraging consumers to obtain beautiful and famous items in order to live the lives they aspire to through media. It could be argued that consumers' purchasing of sustainable cosmetics is influenced by subjective norms or reference groups—either positively or negatively.

5.6 Implications.

5.6.1 Theoretical implications. This study is one of a few to explore influential factors in the context of sustainable cosmetics consumption. It identifies several motives and barriers that may affect consumers' sustainable purchasing behaviour, and also offers possible explanations for the results. The factors that were identified in this study could be considered independent variables for future studies to further investigate their influence on sustainable cosmetics consumption in other contexts.

Previous research has focused on ethical and green product consumption; however, few studies have focused specifically on sustainable cosmetics consumption. Most studies in the cosmetics area are concentrated on the environmental sustainability aspect—such as using new, efficient energy sources to produce cosmetics—rather than studying them from the consumer behaviour perspective. Therefore, this study could be

a starting point for further in-depth research, investigating incentives and disincentives for sustainable cosmetics consumption. Researchers may plan to use different theoretical frameworks based on their own research questions, taking the findings from this study as their base.

5.6.2 Stakeholder implications. While this is an exploratory study, it may prove valuable for all stakeholders in the cosmetics industry. This study explores female consumers' knowledge of sustainable cosmetics consumption, and factors that influence their purchasing behaviour. It also offers several suggestions on how to improve the likelihood that female consumers will support sustainable cosmetics with their purchasing power in the future.

5.6.2.1 Cosmetic companies. Sustainable cosmetics companies should make full use of these drivers to mitigate the impact of barriers, and tailor their products to encourage consumers' active participation in sustainable cosmetic consumption. Findings indicate that consumers prioritize performance over sustainability. Thus, companies should not only focus on a product's sustainable attributes, but also on its functional characteristics, especially on improving the performance of sustainable colour makeup and hygiene products, such as mascara and deodorant.

Increasing the availability of sustainable cosmetics in small cities may increase the opportunity for average consumers to purchase sustainable cosmetics and help cosmetics companies to popularize their sustainable products. However, it might be hard for cosmetic companies to balance the cost of bringing these products to small cities. Solutions to this issue could include supplying products in pop-up shops, and distributing them through established prolific retailers. Once a consumer has tried the products on site, they could order them online later when the pop-up shops are gone. In

addition, sustainable cosmetics companies should provide more opportunities for consumers to try out sustainable cosmetics, such as offering free samples, setting up trial stations, holding campaigns or workshops, and promoting sales. Once consumers have had the opportunity to try the products (assuming they are satisfied with them), they may consider changing their purchasing habits from unsustainable cosmetics to sustainable ones.

Further, sustainable cosmetic companies should make an effort to build consumer trust by offering reliable and transparent product information on the packaging. For instance, by listing straightforward and easy-to-understand ingredients information and ethical attributes on packaging. Also, showing scientific proof of a product's performance, or providing customer testimonies, may be effective ways to improve consumer trust in sustainable cosmetics. Companies should also offer more relevant product information to consumers, such as what the existing sustainable cosmetics brands are and where to buy them, so that consumers do not need to make extra effort to look for sustainable cosmetics and their related information.

Cosmetic companies should also use the power of stories to connect their products with consumers. This information could be posted on a brand's website, and include information about where the ingredients come from (i.e., a map of suppliers), what the farms look like, and who the manufacturers are. For example, Lush brand puts personalized emojis of the employee who manufactured the product, along with the precise date the product was made, directly on each product label. Presenting the faces behind the products and providing transparent information about the product's manufacturing process, help develop a trustworthy brand image and improve consumers' brand loyalty. Sustainable cosmetic companies should also engage in sharing content

that aims to continually raise awareness about sustainability issues in the cosmetics industry, disseminating information about sustainable cosmetics and the benefits of consuming them. Also, providing visual cues of the negative consequences of consuming unsustainable cosmetics (same as on tobacco packages) may be an influential way to prevent consumers from purchasing them. For example, it would be an option of showing consumers the picture of what the skin would look like after continuously using unsustainable cosmetics.

Furthermore, sustainable cosmetic companies should manage their marketing strategies to dispel consumers' preconceptions about the high price of sustainable cosmetics. Instead, they should inform consumers that sustainable cosmetics are available in a wide price range, including both high- and low-end products. Companies should find channels to explain to consumers why these sustainable cosmetics are more expensive than mainstream cosmetics (opposite of the luxury cosmetics). This could be achieved by listing relevant information on the products' packaging or company's website. In doing so, consumers may better understand the justification for the premium they are asked to pay and may also be further motivated to purchase sustainable cosmetics.

Small, medium, and large sized cosmetic companies are all essential parts of the cosmetic industry. Large cosmetics companies are more likely to have an umbrella effect on other cosmetics companies and their sustainable practices may trickle down to society as a whole. Small and medium-sized cosmetic companies (SMEs) may initiate a primary change in the pattern of consumption. In addition, the results show that participants prefer to purchase locally produced sustainable cosmetics. Thus, SMEs should take advantage of this to attract local consumers, raising their awareness of

sustainable cosmetics by holding educational workshops and campaigns, which would encourage participation in sustainable cosmetics consumption. Miiko Skin Co. is one of these small sized sustainable cosmetic company, who is giving participants opportunities for education on sustainability and sustainable cosmetics by continuously holding workshops.

5.6.2.2 Policy-makers. Findings revealed that consumers were concerned about their health and safety when using harmful, unsustainable cosmetics, which was also a primary motive for purchasing sustainable cosmetics. Policymakers should enact strict cosmetic regulations similar to that of the food industry, including clear definitions of certain terms, such as ‘sustainable cosmetics’, ‘organic cosmetics’, ‘green cosmetics’, ‘ethical cosmetics.’ This should include an explicit list of what the qualified standards for ‘organic’, ‘green’ and ‘ethical’ are, what ingredients have been banned in the use of cosmetics, and disseminate this information widely. Also, the regulation of ingredient labels and ethical symbols should be clearer and stricter, and the use of dual ingredients’ names should be reduced. For instance, using ‘water’ instead of ‘aqua’, or use the chemical term and English name at the same time. If possible, the ingredients label would be better written in two categories – one with all the natural ingredients and the other with all the synthetic and chemical ingredients – so consumers could easily identify how much of the ingredients is natural and how much is not. In addition, the government should offer more support to sustainable practices in the cosmetics industry, such as regulating minimum wages and safe working conditions.

The lack of awareness and knowledge of sustainable cosmetics acts as a barrier for consumers to purchase sustainable cosmetics. Governments and policy makers should consider adding ‘sustainability-related’ programs into the high school or elementary

school curriculums, and educate consumers from an early age. This would raise their awareness early and cultivate early values of sustainability, helping them develop their self-identities as sustainable consumers. The government should also keep monitoring the credibility of corporations' sustainability claims and ensure that consumers are protected.

5.6.2.3 Cosmetic retailers. The results also indicate that consumers prefer to purchase sustainable cosmetics if the products are available in a wide variety and at convenient locations. Therefore, sustainable cosmetics retailers should ensure that a variety of sustainable cosmetics are in their stores, as well as being displayed in advantageous viewing locations.

5.6.2.4 Consumers. Consumers' purchasing power may decide if the sustainable cosmetics industry will continue to exist. Cosmetics companies and governments should show the consumers ~~that~~ the difference their purchases could make by purchasing sustainable cosmetics. They can publish some credible data through various channels, such as advertisements on social media.

Sustainable cosmetics companies should attach more importance to the power of social influencers, using them as a medium to publicize sustainable cosmetics. For instance, offer famous bloggers and vloggers rewards for sharing their experiences with sustainable cosmetics on social media (assuming the experience is positive), then consumers may tend to follow these influencers' purchasing behaviours (Schor, 1999).

It may be hoped from the study that the average consumer's awareness of sustainability could be raised and translated into larger consumer demand for sustainable cosmetics. These sustainable cosmetics should contain healthy ingredients that have

been sourced and produced with ethical practices, and have minimal impacts on the environment and society.

The researcher suggests that a system-wide approach is needed to address the factors that influence sustainable cosmetics consumption. This is a collective effort that should involve consumers, cosmetics practitioners (companies, suppliers, producers, retailers), governments, and social media.

5.7 Research Limitations and Future Research.

Despite the information generated by this study, some research limitations cannot be ignored. First, this study was conducted in a relatively narrow context and cultural background. The relevance of the identified factors should be empirically examined in various contexts and cultures in the future. Also, the demographics of the research participants are limited. All the participants were recruited from the Miiko Skin Co.'s workshops and they are all female, which limits the scope of the findings to this particular demographic. Perhaps due to this fact, all the interviewees have strong concerns, feel responsible for sustainability, and are conscious of their cosmetics consumption behaviours. Therefore, all of their answers are relatively positive and supportive of sustainable cosmetics. In addition, the inconsistency between their attitude and behaviour is small. Thus, the results can hardly be generalized to the real opinions of average consumers regarding sustainable cosmetics consumption.

Second, there are limitations due to my personal characteristics as the researcher of this study. I have very little experience in conducting semi-structured interviews, and I may lack some of the relevant skills required to obtain optimal data from the interviewees. I tried to minimize this limitation by performing a pilot test with both my professors and classmates. Also, although I practiced the interview skills before applying

them, I still could not make the interview techniques flexible according to the actual interview situations. The regret is that I did not ask certain follow-up questions based on several participants' answers, which I realized after the interviews were completed.

Furthermore, some respondents answered several unasked questions ahead of time. Instead of omitting from the interview schedule those questions that had already been answered, I asked the questions again as planned. These repetitive questions prolonged the length of the whole interview and appeared to make some interviewees impatient and tired by the end of their interview. This may have limited their initiative and active participation in this study. Finally, I have my own biases, attitudes and expectations regarding this topic and the results, which also have been discussed in the methods section. In order to minimize the effect of this bias, I tried to remain neutral with an open mind, and went through the data four times to ensure that the themes from the data were not subjective.

Based on the limitations of this study, future studies may employ a larger and wider sample to acquire diverse opinions about sustainable cosmetic consumption, and if applicable, conduct a mixed-method investigation with both quantitative and qualitative methods to get a deeper understanding of different perspectives. It would be interesting to gather data from different genders, countries, and cultural backgrounds. Comparing and contrasting different levels of knowledge of sustainable cosmetics and consumers' involvement would also be interesting topics.

Based on the researcher's own experiences, the Internet and mass media have a significant influence on people's perceptions. The speed and manner in which media and the Internet reach their audiences are remarkable and widely acknowledged. Thus, if media choose to make full use of their influence to help raise consumers' awareness of

sustainable cosmetics, the average consumer may become more knowledgeable and informed in a relative short period. Future research could focus on the influence of social media on sustainable cosmetics consumption.

The goal of this study was to explore the factors that affect consumer purchasing behaviour in the case of sustainable cosmetics consumption. Future studies could change the angle to investigate the challenges that sustainable cosmetics companies face in sustainable cosmetic consumption. Involving local sustainable cosmetics companies in the research and hearing their voices may also be beneficial in promoting sustainable cosmetics consumption.

5.8 Conclusion.

As sustainable development becomes more important and popular, consumers are starting to pay attention to their consumption behaviours and are realizing the impact of their purchases on the environment and society. Cosmetics play an essential role in consumer's lives in terms of both hygiene and beauty demands. Consumers are beginning to purchase sustainable cosmetics because they want to minimize the impacts of consumption. However, changing purchasing behaviours is not an easy task as there are many influencing factors. As Cook (2006) states, consumption is not an individual act—it contains value, emotion, and social connection.

There are previous studies focusing on female motivations for purchasing cosmetics, and research on exploring the factors that influence consumers' behaviour of ethical and green consumption. However, there is little research on consumer behaviour of sustainable cosmetics consumption specifically. This study aimed to address this gap, by exploring the factors affecting female consumers' purchasing behaviour of sustainable cosmetics.

The findings of this study show that female consumers' purchasing decisions of sustainable cosmetics are influenced by the authenticity of the products' information and sustainability claims, as well the product's price, performance and availability. Although the latter three factors have been found in previous studies, the authenticity of sustainable cosmetics was found to be a critical factor influencing female consumption of sustainable cosmetic. Further, consumers' values (personal and ethical values), emotions, self-concepts (self-identity and self-satisfaction), knowledge of sustainable cosmetics and reference groups have been identified as influential factors affecting their purchasing behaviours of sustainable cosmetics.

In contrast to other studies, this research found that the authenticity issues in the cosmetic area are more complex. These issues are generally resulted from the following aspects: authenticity in the information about the products, the sustainability claims revealed from the cosmetics companies, as well as the less strict regulation and standards compared to the food industry and the vague requirements for the ingredients labels. Combined, these problems increase distrust of cosmetics companies by consumers. Personal values, emotions, and self-identity have all been addressed by previous studies on consumer behaviour; however, it could be argued that this study is the first in which self-satisfaction has emerged as a factor affecting the motivations of female consumers toward the purchase of sustainable cosmetics. In addition, peers (reference groups) were shown to act as observational learning models in this study, instead of acting merely as social influencers, as in other studies.

Many of the results of this study are consistent with previous research on ethical and green consumption; however, the key factors that emerged from this study provide a new understanding of what influences consumer purchasing of sustainable cosmetics, as

opposed to ethical and green products in general. As a result, this study provides a useful step forward in understanding sustainable consumption. This study represents only a starting point for research in this area. Each individual factor identified in this study deserves further examination, and other studies may find other factors that will improve the understanding of sustainable cosmetics consumption.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Research and Interview Questions

Research Questions:

1. How knowledgeable are the participants regarding sustainable cosmetics?
2. To what extent are participants involved in sustainable cosmetics?
3. What are the motivations for consuming sustainable cosmetics?
4. What are the barriers to consuming sustainable cosmetics?

Interview Questions:

Description of The Study:

First of all, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Wei Li; you can call me Olivia for your convenience. I am a graduate student studying in the Master of Arts in Sustainable Leisure Management program at Vancouver Island University, working with my faculty supervisors Dr. Tom Delamere and Jonelle Knowles. I would like to thank you for your valuable time and for your participation for my research.

The reason why you are here because your participation for the workshop held by Miiko Skin Co., an individual cosmetic company. The purpose of this study was to discover a clearer understanding of the participants' experience with sustainable cosmetic consumption. The factors that either motivate or impede their sustainable cosmetics purchases will be further explored.

You will be asked to respond to a series of semi-structured interview questions regarding sustainable cosmetic consumption. If you feel the questions are duplicated, the only reason is that I worded them in different ways. Please feel free to say that I have answered the same questions before. It is anticipated that participation in the interview will not last more than 90 minutes. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded and later transcribed. Some hand-written notes may also be taken during the interview. The recording is to make sure that the information is represented accurately in the transcription and will be replayed only for transcribing by the researcher and

transcription service. Permission to use direct quotations from the transcriptions is requested.

There will be no monetary benefit for you, but your contribution to this study will help us expand our knowledge in this field and help to create a better environment for the future study.

The information you provided during the interview will be handled with strict confidentiality. Individual's personal information will not be disclosed upon publication and presentation. All participants will be identified as a pseudonym. You can pick out a pseudonym as you like before the interview starts. My supervisors, the transcribing service and I will have access to the data, but only my supervisors and I will be aware of your real identity. Data will be stored on password protected hard drives stored at Vancouver Island University. Upon completion of the research, presentation and publication of the research findings, the data will be destroyed. The data will not be available to other researchers for examination.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decline to participate in this study. Some research questions may be asked to reflect upon your consuming behaviors and ethical positions regarding these behaviors. You have the right to stop the interview or to refuse to answer any interview questions at any time for any reason. There is no penalty or loss of benefit to you whether you choose to participate in this research or not.

If you have any questions about this research project, before or after the interview, or would like more information, please feel free to contact with me directly. All my contact information is listed on the consent form which you have the copy of.

If you have any concerns about ethics or your treatment as a participant in this study, please contact the VIU Research Ethics Officer. All the contact information is listed on the consent form as well.

I will start the interview with some general questions (Q.1 to Q. 9). These general questions will be asked below will be only used for building rapport with interviewees, making the interview environment more comfortable, which will not use it for the research content.

General Questions:

Shopping as a leisure activity

1. How do you define “leisure” in your own life?
2. Within a one-month period, what are the leisure activities you normally engage in, and how frequently?

[If they mention shopping, go to Q.4; If they don't mention shopping, continue with Q.3, then go to Q.5:]

3. Consumers have different opinions about shopping. Some people think shopping is a leisure activity, which can bring happiness, relaxation, and satisfaction. However, others think shopping is a task-oriented activity: people can only get necessities from shopping. What do you think about that idea of shopping?
4. What do you think is the most important characteristic of shopping as a leisure activity?

Now, I am going to ask a couple of questions about the availability of your leisure time:

5. Are you currently employed? If yes, how many hours per week do you work?
6. Using a percentage, approximately how much of your time is spent on leisure activities?

Different people have different definitions of cosmetics. Typical examples of cosmetics are skin creams, lotions, perfumes, lipsticks, fingernail polishes, eye and facial make-up preparations, soap products, shampoos, permanent waves, hair colours, toothpastes, and deodorants. According to the European Union (EU) “a cosmetic product is defined as any substance or preparation intended to be placed in contact with the various parts of the human body (epidermis, hair system, nails, lips and external genital organs) or with the teeth and the mucous membranes of the oral cavity with a view exclusively or mainly to cleaning them, perfuming them, changing their appearance and/or correcting body odors and/or protecting them or keeping them in good condition.” In this study, we will use this broad definition of cosmetics, which includes skin care products, colour makeup products, and personal hygiene products.

Consumers have different motivations for cosmetics and cosmetics are valued differently in people's life. Let's talk about cosmetics in your life.

Cosmetics and Cosmetic Consumption Habits

7. Are cosmetics important in your life? If so, in what way?
8. What motivates you to go cosmetic shopping?
9. [If the interviewee only goes cosmetic shopping for necessities, skip this question then go to Q.10] How often do you go cosmetic shopping for leisure?

Research Questions:

Sustainable Cosmetics Consumption

RQ1: How knowledgeable are the participants regarding sustainable cosmetics?

Let's move to the next part: Sustainable Cosmetic Consumption. The buzz-word "sustainability" occurs in many different contexts and disciplines, and the concept has now been a focus for over four decades. This concept was starting from the environment, and then expanded to social and economic area. Just as the general population has become more familiar with the concept of sustainability, consumers have begun to consider sustainability in their purchasing. Sustainable consumption is also becoming more and more prevalent in the cosmetic industry. Some consumers are realizing that the cosmetic products they bought are causing many issues to the whole society, both environmentally and socially. In this study, the ethical, organic, and plant-based natural cosmetic products are all included in the sustainable cosmetics category.

10. Are you familiar with the word sustainability?
 - If yes, what are some of your immediate thoughts when you hear this word?
What brands or products does this word remind you of?
 - If no, I will give them some probes: green, ecological, environmentally friendly, recyclable, biodegradable . . . - "What do you think about these words in relation to sustainability?"
11. Are you familiar with the term sustainable cosmetics?
 - If yes, what are some of your immediate thoughts when you hear this term? -
Please

list the brand names you think offer sustainable cosmetics.

- If no/short answers, I will give them some probes: healthy to human body, minimum harm to environment, less packaging, biodegradable . . . - What do you think about these words in relation to sustainable cosmetics?”
12. Could you explain why you were unfamiliar with sustainable cosmetics? What impact do you think that regular cosmetic products have on the environment and society?
- If the interviewees have not been aware of these impacts, I will give them these probes: sourcing, producing, packing, distributing (online shop or retail shop - Q.14-15), disposing, and ethical issues - What do you think about these aspects in relation to their (unsustainable cosmetics) impact?”
13. What impact do you think that sustainable cosmetic products have on the environment and society?
- If the interviewees have not been aware of these impacts, I will give them these probes: sourcing, producing, packing, distributing (online shop or retail shop - Q.14-15), disposing, and ethical issues - What do you think about these aspects in relation to their (sustainable cosmetics) impact?”
14. Where do you usually go shopping for cosmetic products (skin care, colour makeup products and hygiene products)? Why do you go to these places?
[If the answer doesn't include on-line cosmetic shopping, go to Q.15; if the answer
- mentions on-line cosmetic shopping, then go to Q. 16]
15. Have you ever considered buying cosmetics online? Why, or why not?
- 16.** Have you heard about any regulations of sustainable cosmetics?
- If yes, please give the name of the regulation or describe it generally.
 - If no, will you want to check it out afterwards? Why?

Motivation for Consuming Sustainable Cosmetics

I am so happy to meet you at the Miiko's cosmetic workshop. And I am surprised that more and more people would like to join and make their own sustainable cosmetics.

RQ2: To what extent are participants involved in sustainable cosmetics?

RQ3: What are the motivations for consuming sustainable cosmetics?

17. To what extent do you pay attention to sustainable cosmetics when you go cosmetic shopping?
 - If the participant answers “never paid attention to sustainable cosmetics”? Ask why.
18. Do you know any of the ingredients used to make your current cosmetics?
 - If yes, please share the ones you know.
 - Have you ever read the ingredients label? What percentage of the content can you understand?
19. When deciding which cosmetics to purchase, how much of a factor are the ingredients?
20. Where do the ingredients in your cosmetics come from? (Sourcing of raw materials)
 - If the participant knows some information, then ask “have you ever looked for the sourcing location on the package when you go cosmetic shopping?”
21. How much does the sourcing matter when you purchase cosmetics?
22. What is your understanding of ethical issues behind cosmetic products?
 - Have you ever looked for the ethical signs/stamps on the package when you go cosmetic shopping?
23. Do these ethical issues matter when you are cosmetic shopping?
24. Why did you join in Miiko’s cosmetic workshop? Ask follow up questions according to their answers.
25. What knowledge did you gain from attending this workshop?
 - Did you benefit in any other way?
26. How important do you think this knowledge is for you?
 - Does it change your previous opinion of sustainable cosmetics? If yes, could you describe the difference? If no, why not?

27. What do you think of the opportunity that Miiko offers to you to design your personalized sustainable skin care products at the workshop or to request your customized products with your online purchase from Miiko Skin. Co?
28. Do you feel more assured in your purchase having had an opportunity to try these products in advance? (You have tried the products themselves with the attendance of the workshop before purchasing, then you can decide whether to purchase them or not in the future)
29. Will this workshop make you pay more attention to sustainable cosmetics in the future? How so?
30. What do you think of the idea that the workshop is using a combination of education with shopping and leisure?
31. Before the workshop, had you ever purchased sustainable (ethical/organic/plan-based natural) cosmetics?
 - If yes, please list the brand names you have purchased before - go to the next question
 - If no, please explain why do you think you never purchased it? i.e. no knowledge/awareness or didn't recognized them as sustainable cosmetics. Go to Question 41.
32. Describe your motivations to purchase sustainable cosmetics.
33. What kind of things bother you about sustainable cosmetics? What attract you to sustainable cosmetics?
34. In terms of sustainable cosmetics, what mix do you have of sustainable cosmetics and unsustainable cosmetics? If you know the ratio, you can answer it with a number. Otherwise, you can choose to use a general word like "almost none/some/most/all" to describe it.
35. Are you satisfied with the amount of the sustainable cosmetics you have now?
 - Are you going to change this amount? Why or why not?
36. How do sustainable cosmetics make you feel when purchasing them, using them, or disposing of them? (Discuss any positive or negative emotions that you might have)
 - Why do you feel this way?

37. What, if any, impact do these emotions have on continuing or stopping purchasing sustainable cosmetics?
38. When and where did you start purchasing sustainable cosmetics? What motivated you to start purchasing sustainable cosmetics?
39. What do others close to you (i.e. family members or friends) think of your consumption of sustainable cosmetics?
 - Does their opinion influence your consuming behavior?
40. Have you ever heard anyone who is close to you introduce or talk to you about sustainable cosmetics?
 - If yes, does their opinion influence you about your consuming behavior (positive or negative)?
41. Other than the sustainable cosmetic products themselves, is there anything else that influences you to purchase or not to purchase sustainable cosmetics?

Barriers to Sustainable Cosmetic Consumption

Some consumers are realizing that they can make our society more sustainable by changing their consuming behaviors, for example purchasing sustainable products in their daily life. However, there are some barriers that consumers encountered when they are doing it.

RQ4: What are the barriers to consuming sustainable cosmetics?

42. What factors prevent you from purchasing sustainable cosmetics in your daily life?
43. What do you think about the current (ingredients/ethical) labeling on cosmetic packaging? Do you have any suggestions for how to improve it?
44. [If they have purchased sustainable cosmetics before, ask this question]; [If not, go to Q. 45]. Are there any aspects of sustainable cosmetics that make you feel uncomfortable or might stop you from purchasing sustainable cosmetics again? If yes, what are they?
45. Do you have any other concerns or confusion about sustainable cosmetics (composition, sourcing, producing, using or disposing)?

46. What could sustainable cosmetic producers do to increase the likelihood that you will purchase sustainable cosmetics?
47. What do you think should be done to promote sustainable cosmetics in our society? Who are the stakeholders or who plays the key roles? (I will give these probes if the participants didn't mention any of the items listed here; and I will ask "what do you think the role for retailers. Government, etc.?.")
48. What do you think you could do in the future to support sustainable cosmetics?

Appendix B: Script Interview Introduction

First of all, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Wei Li; you can call me Olivia for your convenience. I am a graduate student studying in the Master of Arts in Sustainable Leisure Management program at Vancouver Island University, working with my faculty supervisors Dr. Tom Delamere and Jonelle Knowles. I would like to thank you for your valuable time and for your participation for my research.

The reason why you are here because your participation for the workshop held by Miiko Skin Co., an individual cosmetic company. The purpose of this study was to discover a clearer understanding of the participants' experience with sustainable cosmetic consumption. The factors that either motivate or impede their sustainable cosmetics purchases will be further explored.

You will be asked to respond to a series of semi-structured interview questions regarding sustainable cosmetic consumption. If you feel the questions are duplicated, the only reason is that I worded them in different ways. Please feel free to say that I have answered the same questions before. It is anticipated that participation in the interview will not last more than 90 minutes. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded and later transcribed. Some hand-written notes may also be taken during the interview. The recording is to make sure that the information is represented accurately in the transcription and will be replayed only for transcribing by the researcher and transcription service. Permission to use direct quotations from the transcriptions is requested.

There will be no monetary benefit for you, but your contribution to this study will help us expand our knowledge in this field and help to create a better environment for the future study.

The information you provided during the interview will be handled with strict confidentiality. Individual's personal information will not be disclosed upon publication and presentation. All participants will be identified as a pseudonym. You can pick out a pseudonym as you like before the interview starts. My supervisors, the transcribing service and I will have access to the data, but only my supervisors and I will be aware of your real identity. Data will be stored on password protected hard drives stored at Vancouver Island University. Upon completion of the research, presentation and publication of the research findings, the data will be destroyed. The data will not be available to other researchers for examination.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decline to participate in this study. Some research questions may be asked to reflect upon your consuming behaviors and ethical positions regarding these behaviors. You have the right to stop the interview or to refuse to answer any interview questions at any time for any reason. There is no penalty or loss of benefit to you whether you choose to participate in this research or not.

If you have any questions about this research project, before or after the interview, or would like more information, please feel free to contact with me directly. All my contact information is listed on the consent form which you have the copy of.

If you have any concerns about ethics or your treatment as a participant in this study, please contact the VIU Research Ethics Officer. All the contact information is listed on the consent form as well.

Appendix C: Research Consent Letter



VANCOUVER ISLAND UNIVERSITY
EXPLORE. DISCOVER. EXCEL.

An Exploratory Study of Factors Affecting Sustainable Cosmetic Consumption

Wei Li, Graduate Student of Sustainable Leisure Management, Vancouver Island University
vivianli_wei@126.com phone: 250-802-8086

Dr. Tom Delamere, Faculty of Management, Vancouver Island University
Tom.Delamere@viu.ca phone: 250-753-3245 ex.2488

Introduction and Purpose

I am a graduate student studying in the Master of Arts in Sustainable Leisure Management program at Vancouver Island University, working with my faculty supervisor Dr. Tom Delamere. I would like to invite you to participate in my research. The purpose of this study was to discover a clearer understanding of the participants' experience with sustainable cosmetic consumption. The factors that either motivate or impede their sustainable cosmetics purchases will be further explored.

Procedures

You will be asked to respond to a series of semi-structured interview questions regarding sustainable cosmetic consumption. If you feel the questions are duplicated, the only reason is that I worded them in different ways. Please feel free to say that I have answered the same questions before. It is anticipated that participation in the interview will not last more than 90 minutes. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded and later transcribed. Some hand-written notes may also be taken during the interview. The recording is to make sure that the information is represented accurately in the transcription and will be replayed only for transcribing by the researcher and

transcription service. Permission to use direct quotations from the transcriptions is requested.

Benefits

There will be no monetary benefit for you, but your contribution to this study will help us expand our knowledge in this field and help to create a better environment and healthier society for the future study.

Risks and Discomforts

Some research questions may be asked to reflect upon your consumer behaviors and ethical positions regarding these behaviors. However, you have the right to stop the interview or to refuse to answer any interview questions at any time.

Confidentiality

The information you provided during the interview will be handled with strict confidentiality. Individual's personal information will not be disclosed upon publication and presentation. All participants will be identified as a pseudonym. You can pick out a pseudonym as you like before the interview starts. And please write your pseudonym name on the consent form as well. My supervisors, the transcribing service and I will have access to the data, but only my supervisors and I will be aware of your real identity. Data will be stored on password protected hard drives stored at Vancouver Island University. Upon completion of the research, presentation and publication of the research findings, the data will be destroyed. The data will not be available to other researchers for examination.

Rights

Participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to decline to participate in this study. Some research questions may be asked to reflect upon your consuming behaviors and ethical positions regarding these behaviors. You have the right to stop the interview or to refuse to answer any interview questions at any time for any reason. There is no penalty or loss of benefit to you whether you choose to participate in this research or not.

Questions

If you have any questions about this research project, before or after the interview, or would like more information, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached either by cell phone at 250-802-8086 or by email vivianli_wei@126.com.

If you have any concerns about ethics or your treatment as a participant in this study, please contact the VIU Research Ethics Officer, by telephone at 250-753-3245 (ext. 2665) or by email reb@viu.ca.

You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep your own records. If you would like to participate in this research, please sign your name and date below.

I have read and understand this research consent form, specifically noting that the interview will be recorded and that some of my words may be quoted directly. I also understand that I can ask questions during the interview or withdraw at any time. I consent to participate in today's research study.

Participant's Signature

Date

Witness's Signature

Date

