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CONSUMER AWARENESS AND PURCHASE INTENTION TOWARDS ORGANIC COSMETICS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN TRIPURA, INDIA

ABSTRACT

The global cosmetics industry has experienced a shift from synthetic formulations towards the natural and organic products, through the growing consumer awareness of health risks and environmental concerns related to the synthetic personal care products. This study examines how consumer awareness reflects the purchase intention towards organic cosmetics in the state of Tripura, India, where consumer behavioural dynamics has received less research consideration. For the study, data were collected from 201 respondents across all the eight districts of Tripura through a structured questionnaire; data analysis was done by using chi-square, Spearman's rank correlation and multiple linear regression in IBM SPSS Version 25. The results show a positive and significant relationship between the awareness and purchase intention of consumers ($\rho = 0.574$, $p < 0.01$). Regression analysis ($R^2 = 0.50$) identified awareness ($\beta = 0.438$), chemical-free preference ($\beta = 0.339$), and purchase frequency ($\beta = 0.103$) as the strongest predictors. Demographic variables such as age, gender, income, and education did not reach statistical significance, suggesting that consumers' lifestyle values matter more than the demographic characteristics of this cosmetic market. The findings of the work support the Theory of Planned Behaviour as when consumers know more about organic cosmetics, they are more likely to buy them. The stakeholders may find these results useful for designing awareness-based marketing strategies to promote the organic cosmetics adoption in the emerging regional markets. This study examines the consumer awareness and purchase intention towards organic cosmetics in Tripura, India, where consumer behavioural dynamics has received less research consideration.

Key words: consumer awareness, green consumer behaviour, purchase intention, organic cosmetics, health consciousness, Theory of Planned Behaviour, Tripura

JEL Classification: D12, M31, Q56, D91, C12

1. INTRODUCTION

The beauty and personal care industry of India has changed significantly over the past decade. Nowadays, consumers are reading labels of products more carefully, checking the ingredients and selecting the products that are found to be natural or organic. This shift pattern is due to the health concerns and awareness of risks associated with the long-term use of synthetic chemicals used in cosmetics

(Dimitrova *et al*., 2009). Because of this trend, natural cosmetic market has become more competitive (Amberg & Fogarassy, 2019). Thirty seven per cent of all new beauty and personal care products were launched in between January and October 2012 and claimed to be botanical or herbal (Mintel, 2013). However, at the same time, consumers were facing more difficulty to identify and purchase organic cosmetic products due to the large number of products in the market that claim to be natural or organic.

In India, absence of certification standard for the organic cosmetics means that the word "organic" on label carries different meanings depending on the cosmetic manufacturer and origin. Standards for ecological products such as Cosmetics Organic and Natural Standard (COSMOS) have not been uniformly adopted, and this inconsistency triggers consumer doubt (Chen and Chang, 2013). Consumers who want to choose organic products are often facing distrust in organic product packaging.

Despite the different challenges, natural cosmetics has significantly grown in recent years. Academic research on consumer organic food consumption behaviour has been studied widely, but research on organic cosmetics has received comparatively less attention particularly in the regional markets of India. The state Tripura has unique socio-economic characteristics, like young population, growing internet access, and an expanding middle class that provide a particularly relevant scope for examining the dynamics of consumer behaviour. The study of consumer attitudes towards organic products in these growing regional markets can facilitate strategic conditions for the cosmetics sector, offering insights for marketers and policy-makers. The present study firstly examines the level of consumer awareness towards organic cosmetic products in Tripura, secondly identifies the key factors that influence purchase intention and thirdly the relationship of awareness and purchase intention.

2. STATE OF KNOWLEDGE

Consumer behaviour towards organic cosmetics was analysed by the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), developed by Ajzen (1991). The theory suggests how consumer attitude and perceived behavioural control influence the purchase intention. Ahsan and Ferdinando (2023) studied Sri Lankan female consumers and found that there are positive attitudes, and social influence collectively explained 67.3% of the variance in purchase intention. A similar study was also reported by Bhatia and Chaudhary (2022), where it was found that psychographic and demographic variables moderate these relationships in green consumer decision-making process.

Awareness plays an important role in the literature of organic cosmetics. Malik and Sharma (2020) highlighted that the more Indian consumers know about the product safety and environmental benefits, the more positively they feel to

choose the organic options. This appears natural, but the relationship between awareness and purchase intention is not always straightforward. Barros and Barros (2020) and Franca and Ueno (2020) studies noted that well-aware consumers can be still confused by the large number of products claiming to be organic and particularly because of the inconsistent certification system in the market. Moreover, Amberg & Fogarassy (2019) found that health-conscious consumers become more motivated to purchase natural cosmetics once they trust that these products actually work.

What motivates consumer to choose organic cosmetics has also been examined by different authors. Both Kapogianni (2011) and Shakeel and Karim (2019) found that consumers' knowledge of the product safety and environmental benefits strongly influence their attitudes towards organic cosmetics. Several other factors also influence consumer attitudes like age, gender, income, and environmental values. Marangon *et al*., (2015) and Tewary *et al*. (2021) noticed that consumers will pay a premium for organic cosmetics when they found the products both safe and environmentally sound. Sharma *et al*. (2021) also confirmed that awareness and health consciousness significantly influence the decisions to purchase organic products in the Indian market.

The relation between awareness and purchase intention was observed and also documented across multiple studies. Santos *et al*. (2015) and Malik and Sharma (2020) reported that consumers knowledgeable of the health and environmental benefits of organic cosmetics are more likely to buy them. Digital exposure like social media and online information can meaningfully strengthen the purchase intention, especially in younger consumers (Tang *et al*., 2023; Nagvanshi *et al*., 2023). Under this circumstance, Tripura's growing youth population and digital connectivity suggests particularly relevance of the present study.

Based on the above literature, the following **hypotheses** were formulated for testing:

H_1: There is a significant association between consumer awareness and purchase intention towards organic cosmetics.

H_2: Selected demographic and psychographic factors (age, gender, income, health consciousness, and chemical free preference) significantly influence consumer purchase intention towards organic cosmetics.

H_3: Consumer awareness has a significant positive relationship with the purchase intention towards organic cosmetics in Tripura.

3. MATERIAL AND METHOD

Research Design. A descriptive research design was adopted for the present study. This approach was used because it allows for the systematic description of the population characteristics, behavioural patterns, and relationships between the key attributes (Kothari, 2014). The study is mainly cross sectional and quantitative in nature, with the statistical analysis carried out on primary survey data.

Study Area and Population. The present study was conducted across Tripura as a north-eastern state of India. Tripura was selected based on the representation of underexplored consumer market in the organic cosmetics segment. The study was mainly focused on the young and digitally connected population. All eight districts of Tripura were covered namely, West Tripura, Dhalai, Khowai, South Tripura, North Tripura, Gomati, Unakoti, and Sepahijala to capture the variation in demographic status. The target population comprised residents aged from 15 to 59 years, *i.e.* 2,364,766 individuals (Census of India, 2011).

Sampling. The study adopted non-probability convenience sampling method. This technique was found to be appropriate due to logistic limitations, population distribution, and the exploratory nature of the research and aimed to examine the relationships between variables rather than produce population level estimates (Malhotra & Dash, 2016). The sample size was determined by using Yamane's (1967) formula, *i.e.*:

$$n = N / [1 + N(e)^2] \quad (1)$$

where, n = sample size, N = population (2,364,766), and e = margin of error (0.07, corresponding to the 93% confidence level). By using this formula, for the present study the required sample size was determined as 201 respondents.

Data Collection. Primary data were collected by using a structured questionnaire through both online and offline method between August-December 2024. Data were collected through individual surveys, telephonic interviews, and email-based forms. Participants were also briefed about the academic purpose of the study and assured of confidentiality, and invited to participate on a voluntary basis. Secondary data were gathered from different published journals accessed through Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and Elsevier, Census of India from 2011 and the trade association reports etc. were used to conceptualise the primary findings (Creswell, 2014).

Questionnaire Design. The questionnaire for the present study covered three areas, *i.e.* (i) demographic information like age, gender, family type, education, occupation, and annual income; (ii) awareness and attitude measures like familiarity with the organic labels, certifications, and product attributes; and (iii) purchase intention and influencing factors like willingness to buy, frequency to purchase, reasons of motivation and health consciousness. A five-point Likert scale range from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree was adopted to capture attitudinal data to identify the standard practice of consumer behaviour (Joshi *et al*., 2015).

Reliability and Validity. Cronbach's Alpha was assessed to check the internal consistency and found the calculated value of 0.701 for 21 items. According to Nunnally (1978), a value of Cronbach's Alpha above 0.70 is considered acceptable in social science research. The content validity was established through the expert review by two faculty members of ICFAI University, Tripura. This construct validity was confirmed by examining item under each construct correlations and

through a pilot test with 25 respondents, after which no substantive modifications were needed.

Data Analysis Techniques. For the present study data were processed and analysed using the IBM SPSS Statistics Version 25. The following statistical tools were used for the study *i.e.* (i) descriptive statistics to summarise the response; (ii) chi-square tests to examine categorical associations between the awareness level and purchase intention; (iii) Spearman's rank correlation to measure the strength of the awareness and purchase intention; and (iv) multiple linear regression to identify which variables predict the purchase intention for organic cosmetics. The regression equation was:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + ... + \beta_n X_n + \varepsilon \quad (2)$$

where, Y represents the purchase intention, X_1 to X_n are the independent variables, and ε is the error term. The independent variables were included – age, gender, education, income, awareness, purchase frequency, motivating factors, health consciousness, and chemical-free preference.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

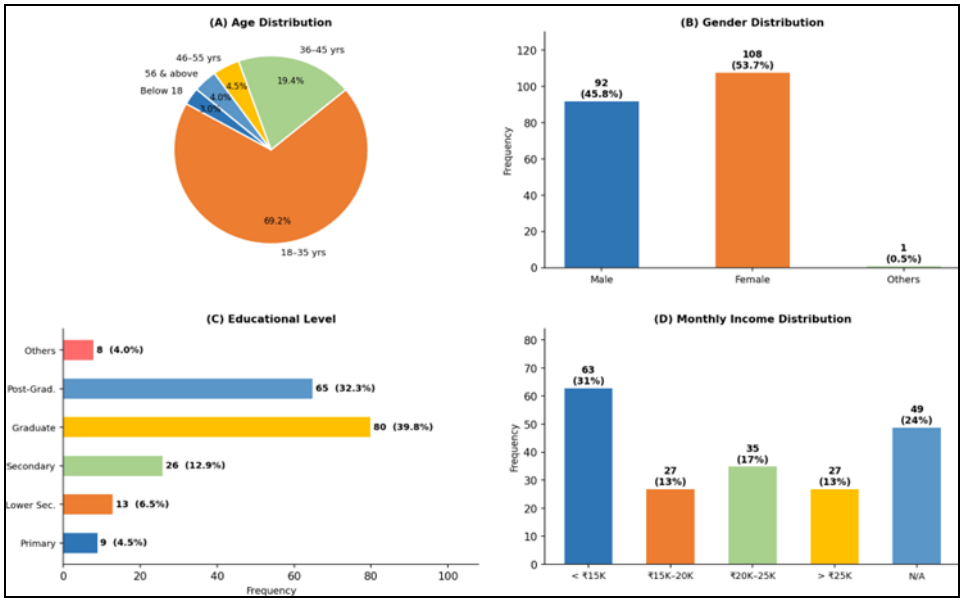
4.1. RESULTS

This section represents the statistical results related to the different objectives of the present study. The primary objectives were to determine the consumer awareness levels, examine the purchase intentions, and identify the factors influencing the purchase of organic cosmetic product in Tripura.

4.1.1. Demographic Profile

A total number of 201 respondents participated in the survey from all eight districts of Tripura. As revealed in Figure 1, the sample mainly consisted of young persons, *i.e.* 69.15% in the age group of 18–35, followed by 19.40% aged 36–45. In terms of gender distribution, 53.73% of respondents were female, 45.77% male, and 0.49% identified as other. Most participants had graduate (39.80%) or post-graduate (32.33%) qualifications, reflecting the relatively high educational attainment in the urban and semi-urban Tripura. The majority of respondents (52.73%) lived in joint families. West Tripura district contributed the largest share of respondents *i.e.* 32.33%, which was expected, as the state capital is located there. It was reported a monthly income below 15,000 INR[1] by 31.34% of respondents, mainly students and self-employed persons. These demographic features also align with Malik and Sharma's (2020) observation that young, educated consumers form the present organic cosmetic market of India.

[1] INR = Indian Rupee. 1000 INR = 92 EUR (01.04.2026 exchange rate).



Source: Authors' findings based on the questionnaire.

Figure 1. Socio-demographic profile of respondents (N = 201) – (A) Age, (B) Gender, (C) Education, (D) Monthly income.

4.1.2. Consumer Awareness and Purchase Behaviour

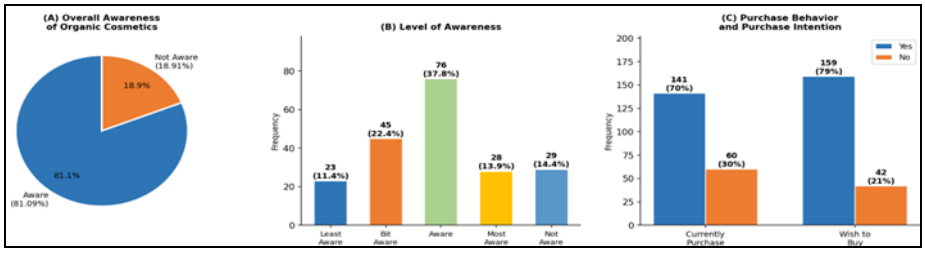
The findings indicate that overall, 81.09% of respondents were aware of organic cosmetics, and 70.14% of respondents had purchased organic cosmetics at some point. Moreover, 79.10% of respondents expressed a wish to buy natural cosmetics in the future. The study suggest that the awareness has already reached a broad base in the organic cosmetic market of Tripura. The results are presented in Table 1 and Figure 2.

Table 1

Consumer Awareness and Purchase Behaviour (N = 201)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Awareness of organic cosmetics	Aware	163	81.09
	Not Aware	38	18.91
Purchase of organic cosmetics	Yes	141	70.14
	No	60	29.85
Wish to buy natural cosmetics	Yes	159	79.10
	No	42	20.90

Source: Primary survey data, August–December 2024.



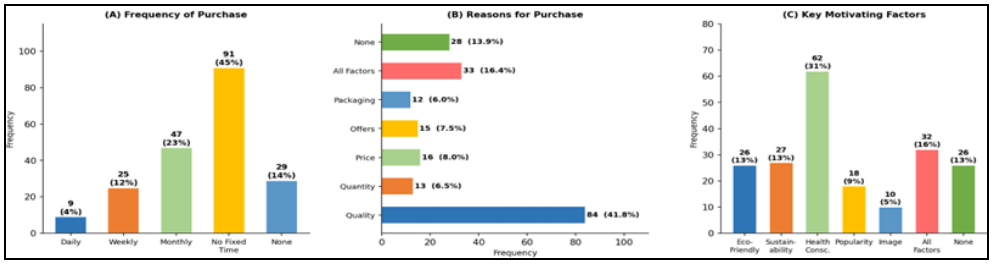
Source: Authors' findings based on the questionnaire.

Figure 2. Consumer awareness and purchase behaviour – (A) Overall awareness, (B) Level of awareness, (C) Purchase behaviour and future intention.

These results also broadly match with the findings of Amberg and Fogarassy (2019) and Sharma *et al*. (2021), who reported increasing organic cosmetics awareness in younger consumers in developing markets. There is a gap between awareness (81.09%) and actual purchase (70.14%), meaning that one in ten aware consumers has not yet been converted to buying due to price sensitivity and limited product availability.

4.1.3. Purchasing Patterns and Motivational Factors

Figure 3 represents the key patterns in the purchasing behaviour for organic cosmetics. It was observed that 45.27% of respondents had no fixed purchase schedule as they bought when there was an occasion rather than on a regular basis. Monthly purchase was reported as next most common pattern by 23.38% of respondents, while daily and weekly purchase occurrence together accounted under 17%. The study also confirms that organic cosmetic product quality was by far the most cited reason for buying (41.79%), ahead of price and promotional offers. Health consciousness was the largest motivating factor (30.84%), followed by sustainability (13.43%) and eco-friendly nature (12.93%). Online platforms were used as the most common purchase channel (38.30%), representing the role of digital retail which plays an important role in connecting consumers with organic brands that may not be available in local shops.



Source: Authors' findings based on the questionnaire.

Figure 3. Purchasing patterns and motivational factors – (A) Purchase frequency, (B) Reasons for purchase, (C) Key motivating factors.

4.1.4. Association Between Awareness and Purchase Intention (Testing H_1)

A chi-square test was applied to investigate the relationship between the level of consumer awareness and the purchase intention. The chi-square test results were presented in Table 2 and represents the Pearson chi-square value of 51.502 (df = 4, $p < 0.001$) and the likelihood ratio (49.932, $p < 0.001$), both pointing in the same direction. The p-value of the test confirms a significant association between the awareness level and purchase intention, which supports H_1. This result is also consistent with Ahsan and Ferdinando (2023), who reported that increased consumer awareness positively influences the purchase intention for green cosmetic products.

Table 2

Association Between Awareness Level and Purchase Intention

Test	Value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pearson Chi-square	51.502	4	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	49.932	4	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.149	1	0.001
N of Valid Cases	201		

Note. No cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. Minimum expected count = 6.87. N = 201.
Source: Authors' findings based on the questionnaire.

4.1.5. Correlation Analysis (Testing H_3)

The Spearman's rank correlation was obtained in between awareness and purchase intention. The coefficient value was $\rho = 0.574$ ($p < 0.01$), and presented in Table 3. The result supports H_3 as there is a strong positive relationship between awareness and purchase intention. Consumers reports higher awareness that is meaningfully more likely to express the intention to purchase the organic cosmetic product. The result is also consistent with Tang *et al*. (2023) and Souza *et al*. (2023), who reported that awareness and environmental engagement go hand in hand with stronger purchase intentions.

Table 3

Spearman's Rank Correlation – Awareness and Purchase Intention

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (ρ)	Sig. (2-tailed)
Awareness & Purchase intention	0.574**	0.000

Note. ** Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). N = 201.
Source: Authors' findings based on the questionnaire.

4.1.6. Attitudinal Profile: Likert-Scale Responses

Table 4 and Figure 4 (A) represent the mean scores for the six attitudinal statements. The highest mean score was observed for chemical free lifestyle preference (M = 3.51, SD = 0.99), followed by healthy living inclination (M = 3.40, SD = 1.06).

These two items are pushing above the scale midpoint and suggests that health and lifestyle are genuinely present in this consumer purchase intention.

Table 4

Likert-Scale Attitudinal Items: Descriptive Statistics (N = 201)

Statement	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Environmental awareness influences product choice (Q16)	3.12	1.30	Moderate
Inclination to try new organic brands (Q17)	3.26	0.98	Moderate
Willingness to pay extra for natural ingredients (Q18)	3.10	1.00	Moderate
Inclination toward healthy living practices (Q19)	3.40	1.06	Moderate–High
Preference for chemical-free lifestyle (Q20)	3.51	0.99	Moderate–High
Concern that organic products are less effective (Q21)	2.91	0.99	Below neutral

Note. Scale: 1 = Strongly disagree to 5 = Strongly agree.
Source: Authors' findings based on the questionnaire.

Environmental awareness (Q16: M = 3.12) and willingness to pay extra amount (Q18: M = 3.10) for natural product, indicate moderate attitude toward more payment. One of the important items *i.e.* concern that organic cosmetics are less effective than chemical product, which scored 2.91 just below neutral. This means that respondents did not strongly agree that organic products are inferior, which eliminates the common barrier to purchase.

4.1.7. Predictors of Purchase Intention: Regression Analysis (Testing H_2)

Multiple linear regression was run with the purchase intention as the dependent variable and the result was represents in the Table 5 and Figure 4(B). The model was found significant ($F = 12.340$, $p < 0.01$) and explained 50% of variance in the purchase intention ($R^2 = 0.500$ adjusted $R^2 = 0.460$).

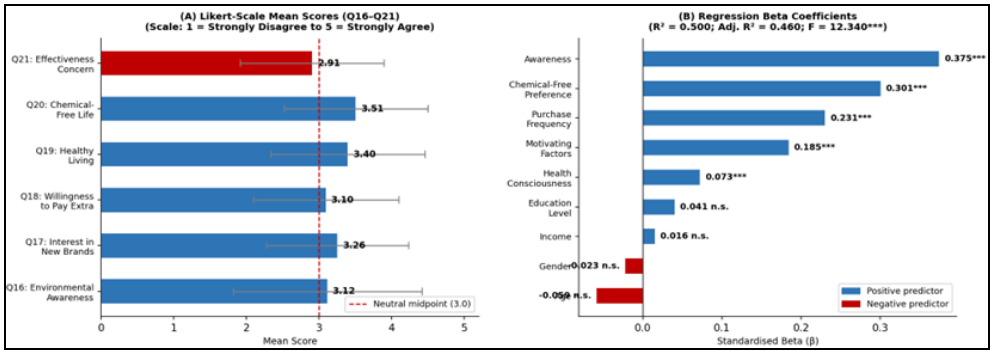
Among the psychographic predictors, the awareness had the strongest effect ($\beta = 0.438$, $t = 5.830$, $p < 0.001$), followed by the chemical free preference ($\beta = 0.339$, $t = 5.170$, $p < 0.001$), purchase frequency ($\beta = 0.103$, $t = 3.518$, $p < 0.001$), motivating factors ($\beta = 0.043$, $t = 2.842$, $p < 0.01$), and health consciousness ($\beta = 0.031$, $t = 3.060$, $p < 0.01$). Interestingly, none of the demographic variables like age, gender, income, and education reached as significant. The result suggests that H_2 is only partially supported as the psychographic predictors significantly influence the purchase intention as expected. Similar pattern was matched with Tewary *et al*. (2021) and Sharma *et al*. (2021) and mentioned that lifestyle values tend to outweigh background characteristics when it comes to organic product choices by the Indian organic cosmetic user.

Table 5

Multiple Linear Regression — Predictors of Purchase Intention (N = 201)

Variable	Beta (β)	Std. Error	t-value	Sig.	Remark
(Constant)	0.101	0.238	0.425	0.671	–
Age	-0.034	0.032	-1.061	0.290	Not significant
Gender	-0.020	0.049	-0.415	0.679	Not significant
Education Level	0.016	0.023	0.705	0.482	Not significant
Income	0.005	0.016	0.304	0.761	Not significant
Awareness	0.438	0.075	5.830	0.000	Significant ***
Purchase Frequency	0.103	0.029	3.518	0.001	Significant ***
Motivating Factors	0.043	0.015	2.842	0.005	Significant **
Health Consciousness	0.031	0.033	3.060[a]	0.003	Significant **
Chemical-Free Preference	0.339	0.065	5.170	0.000	Significant ***

Note. [a] The t-value for Health Consciousness was corrected from a transcription error in the original SPSS output (previously recorded as 0.962; the correct value corresponding to p = 0.003 at df = 190 is t = 3.060). ***p < 0.001; **p < 0.01; n.s. = not significant. Dependent variable: Purchase Intention.
Source: Authors' findings based on the questionnaire.



Source: Authors' findings based on the questionnaire.

Figure 4. Statistical results – (A) Likert-scale mean scores with SD (Q16–Q21); (B) Standardised regression beta coefficients.

4.2. DISCUSSION

The empirical analysis of the study confirmed that consumer awareness significantly influences the purchase intention for organic cosmetics among the consumers in Tripura. The correlation coefficient ($\rho = 0.574$, $p < 0.01$) and regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.438$, $p < 0.001$) suggest a strong positive relationship between awareness and purchase intention. The study result validates H_1 and H_3, and determines that as consumers become more knowledgeable and aware of organic ingredients and eco-friendly products, their willingness to purchase will also increase correspondingly.

This finding is also consistent with the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), which emphasises that attitudes towards purchase of organic product are shaped by the awareness and belief systems that strongly predict behavioural intentions. Awareness acts as a cognitive background of promising attitudes which influence the consumer's intention to purchase organic cosmetics. Similar patterns of study were also documented by Ahsan and Ferdinando (2023) in Sri Lanka and Malik and Sharma (2020) in India. They reported that awareness, environmental concern, and perceived product safety together enhance the intention to purchase organic beauty products. The study also observed that demographic variables like age, gender, income, and education are non-significant, which means that consumers purchase intention in Tripura is not predicted by how old they are, what they earn, or how much schooling they have. The important matter is only whether they care about their health and the environment (Amberg and Fogarassy, 2019).

These findings also point out the measurable shift in consumer priorities, individuals are guided more by basic motivations such as personal safety, health, and environmental ethics compared to the socio-economic class or demographic attributes. The significance of chemical free preference ($\beta = 0.339$) reflects the growing consumers caution and carefulness towards synthetic cosmetic ingredients (Barros and Barros, 2020; Franca and Ueno,2020).

In regional context, Tripura's youth-dominated market reflects the national trend of digital engagement and eco-consciousness, which is also noted by Tang *et al*. (2023) and Nagvanshi *et al*. (2023). The social media platforms are increasingly functioning as a primary channel through which consumers obtain awareness about the product composition, certification and lifestyle position. These similar findings were also found in Amberg and Fogarassy (2019), who mentioned that online visibility and information availability are vital to stimulating purchase intention in young green consumers.

These findings support the proposition that awareness functions as a mediator between attitude and behavioural intention, as the TPB framework predicts. Awareness also enhances consumers' perceived behavioural control allowing to access, and select organic products with greater confidence (Ajzen, 1991). Furthermore, the results indicate that Tripura's consumers are open to the organic product expansion which indicates that marketers emphasise clear labelling, ingredient transparency, and affordability. Persistent concerns about the authenticity of organic claims, regulatory inconsistencies point to the need for certification frameworks (Franca and Ueno, 2020).

5. CONCLUSIONS

The present study concludes that consumer awareness is the key determinant of purchase intention for organic cosmetics in Tripura. High awareness levels and statistically significant correlation between awareness and intention validate the

argument that informed consumers more consistently purchase the organic products by understanding their environmental and health values.

The regression model identified awareness, chemical free preference, health consciousness, and frequency of purchase as the most significant factors of purchase intention. These findings also confirm that consumers in Tripura use organic cosmetics not only as lifestyle products but as personal well-being and ethical responsibility. The psychographic factors significantly predict the purchase intention, while demographic variables do not influence the purchase intention for organic cosmetics.

The application of the Theory of Planned Behaviour in this study empirically demonstrates that cognitive awareness, favourable attitudinal orientation, and perceived accessibility jointly shape the behavioural intention to purchase organic cosmetics. From a marketing perspective, these results indicate that campaigns emphasising ingredient transparency, eco-labelling credibility, and health effectiveness are likely to be more effective in converting awareness into purchase behaviour in this segment. From a policy-maker perspective, the development of a standardised national certification framework for organic cosmetics would significantly reduce consumer uncertainty and build a sustainable market environment.

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