

Validating a Structural Model to Evaluate Purchase Intentions of Green Beauty Products in South Africa

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Abstract

In recent years, the beauty industry has witnessed a notable shift driven by the increasing environmental consciousness among consumers, impacting their purchase decisions for beauty products. Consumers now seek products that not only enhance their appearance but also align with their values of environmental responsibility and sustainability. Establishing a trustworthy brand is crucial for the success of green beauty products in this changing landscape. The specific problem addressed in this study is the extent to which factors such as materialism, self-enhancement, self-transcendence and attitude towards beauty products influence purchase intentions in the South African context. To investigate this, a descriptive research design employing a single cross-sectional sampling approach was employed. Research company IPSOS was enlisted to gather responses from 500 consumers.

The results of the study reveal that materialism and self-transcendence have a significantly positive influence on attitude. Furthermore, attitude displayed a significant positive influence towards South African consumers' purchase intention of green beauty products. Interestingly, self-enhancement showed a negative influence towards attitudes toward green beauty products. Consequently, strategies should be directed towards showcasing the aesthetic value of green beauty products as well as creating positive attitudinal perceptions in order to promote purchase intention. By doing this, organisations can achieve higher customer sales and grow their customer base.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Consumers have become more aware of the effect of their purchases on the environment. A greater knowledge base of the effects of the mass production of products has also influenced consumers' purchasing choices. Consumers are more aware of the consequences of their purchasing behaviours and are also more aware of the harmful effect that unethical purchasing behaviour causes, including pollution, deforestation, resource depletion, overfishing and animal testing. (Suphasomboon & Vassanadumrongdee, 2022; Kim, 2011). Consumers view it as their ethical duty to consume products that have minimal harmful effects on the environment (Liobikiene & Bernatoniene, 2017). This conscious effort to buy products that are focused on the conservation of the natural environment specifically applies to green beauty products (Wong, Law & Wu, 2023; Paramita & Saputri, 2022).

The extent to which consumers relate to the ethical ethos of protecting the environment and making purchasing decisions that have limited effects on the natural environment depends on their cultural and societal values (De Mooij & Beniflah, 2017; De Mooij & Hofstede, 2011). The motivations behind ethical consumption, and the extent to which a consumer associates with those motivations, will be very different within a collectivistic society than within an individualistic society (De Mooij & Beniflah, 2017; De Mooij & Hofstede, 2011). Specifically referring to green beauty products, consumers within an individualistic society will be driven by self-enhancing motivations. In other words, these consumers will be more likely to purchase beauty and skincare products that are free from harsh chemicals or synthetic fragrances that would diminish their youthful appearance (Paramita & Saputri, 2022).

Contrarily, consumers within more collectivistic societies are more likely to purchase beauty and skincare products that focus on ethical testing practices (products free from animal testing and/or animal cruelty), production processes, and recycling of packaging (Paramita & Saputri, 2022). In both individualistic and collectivistic societies there are clear markets for green beauty products. The contribution of this study is to determine the cultural and societal values that are the motivational drivers behind the purchasing of green beauty products in South Africa.

1.2. Problem Statement

There are clear differences in the motivational drives within individualistic and collectivistic societies which also becomes relevant to promoting and marketing green beauty products (Mai, 2019:247). Within the South African context, it is unclear if South Africa is an individualist or collectivistic society, and many argue that South Africa has a combination of both collectivistic and individualistic societal and cultural values (Eaton, Liberty & Louw, 2000). Moreover, there is a growing market for 'green' (or environmentally friendly) beauty products in South Africa (Shimul, Cheah & Khan, 2022). Producing green beauty products would be a competitive advantage within this emerging market (Ahmad, Omar, Amirul, & Dousin 2021). However, recent studies also indicate that although there are clear signs of an

emerging market this does not translate into effective purchasing behaviour (Shimul et al., 2022). Therefore, more research needs to be done on the emerging consumer markets for green beauty products in South Africa.

This paper hopes to contribute some insight into this gap within the research by focusing on the effects that cultural and societal value on the purchasing of green beauty products in South Africa. Specifically, this paper hopes to shed some light on the cross-cultural and societal values that might influence the attitudes and purchase intentions of green beauty products in the South African context. Therefore, this paper will investigate the constructs of materialism, self-enhancement, and self-transcendence, consumers' attitudes towards green beauty products, and consequently, how this translates into consumers' purchase intentions of these products. Understanding the cultural values that appeal to the South African green consumer could enhance consumer attitudes and purchase intentions towards green beauty products.

1.3. Research objectives

The following research objectives were formulated for the study:

- To examine the relationships between materialism, self-enhancement and self-transcendence on attitude towards green beauty products.
- To investigate the effect attitude towards green beauty products has on purchase intentions of green beauty products of South African consumers.

The layout of this paper is as follows, literature review, research methodology, results, findings, managerial implications, conclusions, limitations and future research.

2. Literature Review

Recent research has confirmed that consumers actively seek out environmentally friendly in favour of traditional products due to the escalating environmental crisis (Singh, Chilya Chikandiwa & Chodokufa, 2016; Amberg & Fogarassy, 2019). Until recently, the fashion and beauty industry has often as often been associated with unethical production practices (Ritch, 2023). Specifically, these industries have been associated with excessive pollution of the air and water, practices resulting in animal cruelty, and the use of toxic chemicals that are harmful to the consumer and the natural environment (Suphasomboon & Vassanadumrongdee, 2022). However, recently the emerging market for sustainable and environmentally friendly products from ethical and conscientious consumers has pressured these industries to adapt their products and production processes (Beneke, Frey, Deuchar, Jacobs & Macready, 2010). As stated in the introduction, this market for sustainably sourced beauty products is also expanding within the South African context. Thus, there is an opportunity to investigate the emerging market for green beauty products in South Africa, since this emerging market does not translate into predictable purchasing behaviour (Shimul et al., 2022). Hence, this study aims to explore

and investigate the influence that cultural and societal values (specifically the constructs of materialism, self-enhancement, and self-transcendence) have on consumers' attitudes towards green beauty products, and consumers' purchase intentions.

2.1 Materialism

Materialism, as a societal or cultural value, is a primary indicator of individualist society and consequently, has a significant effect on consumer attitudes and purchasing intentions (Belk, 2018; Richins & Dawson, 1992). Materialism is often associated with individualist societies because it reflects a society that focuses on material wealth and self-interested behaviour (Mai, 2019). According to Richind and Dawson (1992), a society that values materialism emphasises the importance of perceived affluence and wealth accumulation where individuals make decisions based on the perceived personal benefit. A society that values materialism and emphasises individual interests may not be concerned with ethical or environmentally friendly purchasing practices. Their lack of interest in responsible consumerism is due to their lack of consideration for the common good and instead, their interests focus on promoting their self-interests (Mai, 2019).

However, contrary to this, previous studies have found that there is a considerable market for environmentally friendly products within individualist societies where environmentally friendly products are marketed as economic or social status symbols (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012). For example, green beauty products might appeal to a consumer's vanity. Consumers who are focused on maintaining a youthful appearance might seek out green beauty products because they are free from harsh toxins and chemicals that might dry out the skin (Nijkamp Bokkers, Bakker, Ezendam & Delmaar, 2015). Furthermore, these products are an outward reflection of great concern for personal health and beauty (Perera, Albinsson, Nafees & Matthews, 2023; Kim & Chung 2011). Contrary to this, green beauty products that emphasise the minimal impact on the environment and the lack of animal cruelty is the main motivation driver behind consumers' purchasing intentions in collectivistic societies (Suphasomboon & Vassanadumrongdee, 2022). Likewise, materialism still plays a significant symbolic role in attitude and purchasing intention (Mai, 2019). Environmentally friendly products, including green beauty products, reflect care and consideration for the common good, which elevates the green consumer to a higher social and moral status (Mai, 2019).

This is relevant within the South African context, since as a developing country with a mixed economic approach, South Africa reflects both individualistic and collectivistic values. This is not uncommon for developing countries and previous studies indicate that materialism exists within affluent countries, which are usually identified as individualist societies, and developing countries, which are usually identified as collectivistic societies with mixed economic approaches (Segev, Shoham & Gavish, 2015). Products that explicitly showcase sustainable or ethical purchasing behaviour would still appeal in a collectivistic society, or mixed society like South Africa. Consequently, South Africa's emerging

market for green beauty products should appeal to both individualistic and collectivistic values with regard to materialism (Shimul et al., 2022).

2.2 Self-enhancement

Self-enhancement is usually associated with individualistic societies that emphasise the importance of individual benefit instead of collective benefit (Vonk & Weiper, 2023; Kim, 2011). Therefore, consumers within an individualistic society emphasise individuality (or perceived uniqueness) and self-enhancement (Vonk & Weiper, 2023; Kim, 2011). As such, these consumers highlight the importance of perceived success and are orientated towards goals that advance their interests (Vonk & Weiper, 2023; Kim, 2011). These individualistic values are focused on perceived self-enhancement that showcases prestige and affluence. However, these extravagant life goals may harm the environment, since environmentally green practices focus on collective goals and collective efforts to achieve those goals (Vonk & Weiper, 2023; Kim, 2011).

The values of self-enhancement within individualistic societies also increase the production of goods and promote pollution since it promotes material excess and affluence. However, studies have also indicated that environmentally friendly products, such as green beauty products, enhance social, economic, and moral status which might appeal to a consumer who highly values self-enhancement (Sesay & Gau, 2022; Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012). This perceived advance in social, economic, and moral status would play a significant role to indicate a consumer's attitude towards green beauty products and would prove a positive correlation for their purchase intention (Sesay & Gau, 2022; Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012). For example, consumers within an individualistic society would seek out green beauty products that emphasise a youthful appearance, personal health, and longevity (Nijkamp et al., 2015).

The findings show that South Africans do not identify with these self-enhancing factors which focus on the advancement of social, economic, and moral status within society. Therefore, focusing on these values would have a negative effect on consumer attitude and purchase intention. Understanding the values that South Africans affiliate with the most would be valuable for marketing strategies in the emerging market for green beauty products. Abstaining from using these self-enhancing values might play a pivotal role in increasing consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions toward green beauty products.

2.3 Self-transcendence

Self-transcendence is usually associated with collectivistic societies that focus on making a collective effort to achieve collective goals (Qotrunnada, Toiba, Laili, Andriani & Setiawan, 2023; Kim, 2011). Self-transcendence emphasises the importance of transcending (or overcoming) individual interests and instead focuses on the interests of the collective (a.k.a. the common good) (Chairy, 2012; Kim, 2011). Values of self-enhancement may appeal to environmentally conscious consumers within collective

societies since overcoming the climate crisis is a collective interest that would benefit everyone, and it requires a collective effort. Products that highlight recyclability, ethical and environmentally friendly production processes, and no harm to animals would appeal to these consumers (Qotrunnada et al., 2023; Kim, 2011).

As mentioned in the introduction, the fashion and beauty industry has had a troubled past which includes poor-quality controls (Edwards, 2023), greenwashing and animal cruelty (Edwards, 2023; Suphasomboon & Vassanadumrongdee, 2022). However, recently, these industries have placed control checks that prevent or dramatically limit these examples of poor conduct (Edwards, 2023). If consumer trust is rebuilt, individuals with self-transcendent values would be more receptive to environmentally friendly products that promote transparency in the production process (Suphasomboon & Vassanadumrongdee, 2022). Furthermore, consumers that express self-transcendent value relationships and would make most of their purchasing decisions based on the positive recommendation of friends and family members (Chan & Lau, 2002). The assumption can be made that these consumers would react more positively to companies that emphasise relationship-building and community engagement (Lavuri, Jabbour, Grebinevych & Roubaud, 2023; De Mooij & Hofstede, 2011).

Consumers that emphasise self-transcendent values are also more concerned with how their choice and behaviours influence the community and other people around them. Consequently, to appeal to these consumers green beauty products should avoid excessive environmental harm, avoid animal testing and animal cruelty (Grappe, Lombart, Louis, & Durif, 2021). South Africa's emerging market for green beauty products should highlight collective goals and minimal damaging effects on the natural environment to appeal to these consumers (Shimul et al., 2022). Moreover, these self-transcending values could play a pivotal role in consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions for products within the emerging South African consumer market.

2.4 Green beauty product attitude

According to Padel and Foster (2005) attitude is the main factor when predicting purchasing behaviours concerning environmentally friendly products. Consumer attitude also has a direct correlation to purchasing intention of environmentally friendly products (Moslehpour, Yin Chau, Qiu, Lin & Batbayar, 2023; Baker & Ozaki, 2008). According to Paul, Modi, and Patel (2016), this is also applicable to green beauty products and attitude towards green beauty products is the best predictor of purchasing intentions. This study aims to uncover the effect of self-enhancement values (usually associated with an individualistic society) and self-transcendent values (usually associated with a collectivistic society) on consumer attitudes towards green beauty products, and consequently, the effect on purchase intention.

Supporting this notion, previous studies show the country of origin has a great influence on a consumer's attitude and purchasing intention (Hien, Phuong, Tran & Thang, 2020; Hsu, Chang &

Yansritakul, 2017). Moreover, some studies argue that there is a positive correlation between attitude and purchase intention for emerging markets of green beauty products within societies that reflect both individualistic and collectivistic traits (Mostafa 2006; Nguyen, Lobo & Greenland, 2016).

Chau and Lau (2000) argue that once consumers in individualistic cultures become aware of the personal benefits of using green beauty products, the more positive their attitudes will become towards these beauty products. This notion is supported by a study done on corporate social responsibility and a cross-cultural analysis of the cosmetic industry (Kolling, Ribeiro, Morea & Iazzolino, 2023). Thus, the more aware they are of the self-enhancement that green beauty products provide the more favourable they will be towards green beauty products and the greater the purchase intention. Contrarily, for consumers that affiliate more with self-transcendent values, beauty products that emphasise environmental awareness and animal protection will have a greater positive attitude towards green beauty products when compared to traditional products (Shimul et al., 2022). In other words, the more informed these consumers become about the need for environmentally green products the more likely they are to develop a positive attitude towards those products (Shimul et al., 2022). This study hopes to highlight the effect that societal values, such as materialism, self-enhancement and self-transcendence, on consumer attitudes towards green beauty products within South Africa.

2.5 Purchase Intentions

The term ‘purchase intentions’ refers to the likelihood that a consumer might purchase a product or service and there are many factors that have an influence on a consumer’s intent to purchase said product or service (Alzubaidi, Slade & Dwivedi, 2021). One such factor that might play a role in a consumer’s purchase intention includes the perceived consequences that are linked to the purchase of the product. These perceived consequences are derived from a risk and benefit analysis of the consumer (Erdil, 2015). Within the context of green beauty products, the perceived consequences, specifically the consumer’s level of environmental concern, would significantly affect purchase intention.

A consumer’s level of environmental concern could also determine whether they are willing to switch to green beauty products in the future (Leonidou, Eteokleous, Christofi & Korfiatis, 2022). As discussed in the previous sections, the societal and cultural values of a consumer have a significant influence on the perceived risk, benefits and consequences associated with green consumerism (Yang, Jiang, & Wang, 2023; Chan & Lau, 2002). Within an individualistic society, the perceived personal benefit would be the main persuader to purchase green beauty products. In contrast, the perceived collective benefits of ethical purchasing behaviour would be the main persuader within collectivistic societies (Gani, Roy, Rahman, Faroque, Gupta, & Prova, 2023; Kim & Chung, 2011). Therefore, to attract consumers with self-enhancing tendencies, the marketing of green beauty products should focus on the perceived long-term benefits of using said product resulting in an increase in positive consumer attitude and purchase intention (Gani, et al., 2023; Kim & Chung, 2011). However, to attract consumers with self-transcending tendencies, the marketing of green beauty products should focus on minimal harmful

effects on the environment and natural life to increase positive consumer attitudes and purchase intentions (Indriani, Rahayu, & Hadiwidjojo, 2019). This study aims to gain more insight into the societal and cultural values of consumers within South Africa and what effect it has on the attitudes and purchase intentions for the emerging market of green beauty products.

Based on the literature above the following model is proposed:

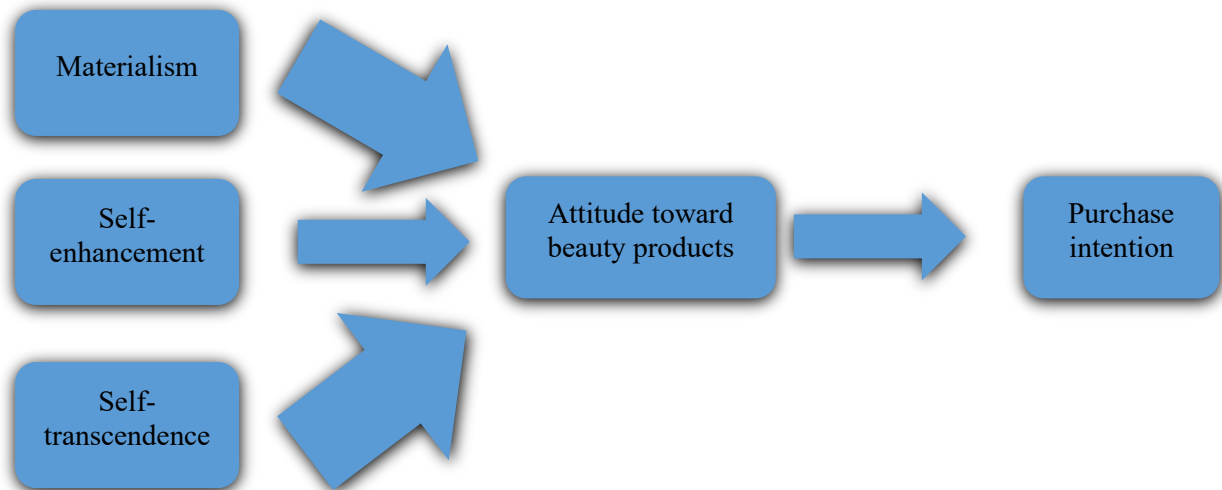


Figure 1: Proposed theoretical model

Source: Authors own construction.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research design

A descriptive research design using a positivism, single-cross section approach was employed to the necessary data. This method entails collecting data from responses at one singular point in time (Malhotra, Nunan & Birks, 2017).

3.2. Target population

The population for this study was described as any South African consumer aged between 18 and 65 years. The target population parameters were as follows:

- Element: South African consumers;
- Sampling unit: IPSOS panel;
- Extent: South Africa; and
- Period: 2022.

3.3. Sampling technique and data collection

The research data collection involved a convenience sampling method facilitated by the internationally renowned research company IPSOS. IPSOS South Africa possesses a comprehensive dataset of

approximately 40,000 consumers from various regions across the country. Due to the substantial size of the participant pool, it is not uncommon to achieve a 100 percent response rate, meeting the researchers' desired sample size. The researchers set specific data collection parameters for IPSOS to implement. These parameters included selecting South African citizens between the ages of 18 and 65 and set a three-day collection timeframe in 2022. To ensure unbiased results, IPSOS adhered to ethical research practices and complied with the POPI Act of South Africa. As an added incentive, participants were offered shopping vouchers to complete the questionnaire.

3.4. Sample Size

In determining an appropriate sample size for the study, previous studies similar in nature were examined. Notable examples include Lavuri et al. (2022) with a sample size of 398, Shimul et al. (2022) with a sample size of 408, and Yang (2017) with a sample size of 568. Taking these studies into account, a sample size of 500 was considered appropriate to conduct structural equation modelling to achieve the objectives of this study.

3.5. Measuring instrument and data collection technique

IPSOS, the data collecting research company, made use of their FastFacts analysis to gather the necessary data for this study. The FastFacts program utilises an online self-administered structured questionnaire, which is given to each respondent. The questionnaire's design draws on constructs from previously validated research that align with the objectives of this study. It consists of two sections: Section A focuses on recording respondents' demographic data, while Section B measures intention factors related to beauty products among South African consumers.

To assess the level of materialism, self-enhancement, self-transcendence, attitude towards beauty products, and purchase intentions of South African consumers, the questionnaire employs validated scales from Richins (2004), Kim (2011), Urieen and Kilbourne (2010), Kim (2011), Song, You, Reisinger, Lee and Lee., (2014), and Mostafa (2007) respectively. Participant responses were collected using a six-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). Prior to answering any questions, each participant was presented with a cover letter that explained the study's nature, ensures that no personal information is required, guarantees anonymity, and provides the researchers' contact details. Additionally, participants are informed that their responses will be used solely for statistical purposes.

The FastFacts program is designed to prevent respondents from moving between or advancing to the next section until all questions within the current section have been answered. The data collection process had two parameters: first, the questionnaire was available to respondents for a three-day period, and second, a maximum of 500 questionnaires were allowed. If either the 500-response limit was reached before the three-day period or the three-day limit expired without reaching the 500-response mark, the questionnaire was closed. Due to the structured design and restrictions in place for answering

the questionnaire, response rates often reach 100 percent as requested by the researchers, as was the case in this study.

3.6. Data analysis

The data collected for this study were captured and analysed using IBM's Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS), Version 28.0. The statistical analysis for the study encompassed outlier statistics descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation analysis and structural path analysis.

3.7. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

- H₁: Materialism has a significant positive influence on consumers' attitudes towards green beauty products.
- H₂: Self-enhancement has a significant positive influence on consumers' attitudes towards green beauty products.
- H₃: Self-transcendence has a significant positive influence on consumers' attitudes towards green beauty products.
- H₄: Attitude towards green products has a significant positive influence on consumers' green beauty product purchase intention.

3.8. Ethics

Prior to initiating data collection, ethical clearance was obtained from the Economics and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee at North-West University. The study was conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines and was assigned the ethics number NWU-01875-22-A4.

4. Results and Findings

The response rate for the questionnaire reached the 500-questionnaire limit well before the three-day time limit, resulting in a 100 percent response rate. To ensure the quality of the data set, outlier detection statistics were employed. This statistical technique aims to identify cases (responses) that deviate significantly from the general opinion of the population (Pallant, 2016; Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2014). The Mahalanobis statistic was selected as the method for outlier detection in this study. With five variable constructs in this study, any Mahalanobis statistic exceeding 20.515 (chi-square value for $\alpha=0.01$ at 5 degrees of freedom) was considered an outlier. The case numbers in the data set were treated as a dummy dependent variable, while the measuring constructs were regarded as independent variables. Table 1 displays the highest Mahalanobis statistics observed.

Table 1: Outlier statistics

	Case Number		Statistic		Case Number		Statistic	
Mahal. Distance	1	473	54.94	7	352	25.83		
	2	452	53.34	8	156	23.65		
	3	238	39.84	9	59	23.01		
	4	412	36.80	10	477	22.76		
	5	98	36.14	11	57	21.91		
	6	472	29.80	12	102	19.52		

Note: Bold cases were deleted

Source: Own compilation

Among the top 12 Mahalanobis statistics listed in Table 1, it was observed that 11 of them exceeded the threshold value of 20.515 (chi-square value for $\alpha=0.001$ at 5 degrees of freedom). Consequently, these 11 cases were considered as outliers and were removed from the data set. Following the removal of these cases, the remaining data set consisted of 489 valid case responses, which were considered suitable for subsequent statistical analysis.

4.1 Descriptive statistics and Internal-consistency reliability

Descriptive statistics were utilised to outline the characteristics of the data set. The responses were collected using a six-point Likert scale, where values above 3.0 indicate a positive association with the measured constructs. The internal-consistency reliability of the measuring scale was assessed using the Cronbach's alpha statistic, which provides an indication of the scale's reliability. Cronbach's alpha values typically ranging from 0.70 to 0.80, indicate good reliability, and from 0.80 to 0.99, represent excellent reliability. Values below 0.50 are considered unacceptable (Malhotra, 2020). Table 2 presents the results of both the descriptive statistics and the internal-consistency reliability analysis:

Table 2: Reliability and descriptive statistics

	n	Means	SD	Items (n)	Cronbach alpha
Materialism	489	4.48	1.04	5	0.89
Self-enhancement	489	4.21	1.21	4	0.86
Self-transcendence	489	5.33	0.72	4	0.84
Attitude towards beauty products	489	4.69	0.97	4	0.90
Purchase intention	489	4.79	0.97	4	0.92

Source: Own compilation

The descriptive analysis reveals that the mean scores for each construct are above 4.00. These findings suggest that South African consumers exhibit positive inclinations towards adopting green beauty products. Furthermore, the internal-consistency reliability analysis indicates that all the measuring constructs achieved Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.80. This indicates that the measuring scale used in the study is highly reliable. Thus, it can be concluded that the proposed measuring instrument's constructs demonstrate excellent internal-consistency reliability.

4.2 Correlations analysis

To assess the presence of multicollinearity among the measuring constructs and examine the nomological validity of the data set, the Pearson product-moment correlation was calculated. The results of the correlation analysis are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Correlation matrix

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5
Materialism	1				
Self-enhancement	.524**	1			
Self-transcendence	.357**	.204**	1		
Attitude towards beauty products	.754**	.302**	.457**	1	
Purchase intention	.726**	.341**	.501**	.826**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Source: Own compilation

The correlation analysis revealed statistically significant positive correlations between each of the measuring constructs at the $p = 0.01$ level. These findings support the presence of nomological validity in the data set, indicating that the relationships between the constructs align with theoretical

expectations (Malhotra, 2020). Additionally, since none of the correlation coefficients exceed 0.90, it can be concluded that there is no evidence of multicollinearity between the measuring variables in the data set.

Given the absence of multicollinearity, along with the demonstrated internal-consistency reliability and nomological validity, it is reasonable to proceed with testing the proposed model of beauty product intention adoption using structural equation modelling.

4.3 Structural equation modelling

As this study is the validation of the structural model it is imperative to note the measurement models values.

4.3.1 Measurement model analysis

To assess the composite reliability (CR) of the previously validated measurement model, the CR values were examined, all constructs surpassed the threshold of 0.70 (Malhotra, 2020). Construct and convergent validity were concluded by evaluating the measurement models standardised loading estimates and average variance extracted (AVE) values, which all exceeded the required 0.50 mark (Malhotra, 2020). To assess discriminant validity, heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio values were computed.

All the HTMT ratio values were below 0.85, indicating acceptable discriminant validity (Voorhees, Brady, Calantone & Ramirez, 2016; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Furthermore, the validated measurement model demonstrated satisfactory model fit. The model fit indices were as follows: normed fit index (NFI) of 0.91, tucker-lewis index (TLI) of 0.92, incremental fit index (IFI) of 0.93, comparative fit index (CFI) of 0.93, standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) of 0.065, and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) of 0.076 (Synodinos & Fourie, 2023). Based on these findings, the current study's structural model was green lighted for analysis.

4.3.2 Structural model

The structural model, as depicted in Figure 2, aims to examine the effects of several independent variables on the purchase intentions of South African consumers. The independent variables include materialism (F1), self-enhancement (F2) and self-transcendence (F3). The model also explores the impact that attitude towards green products (F4) have on purchase intentions (F5).

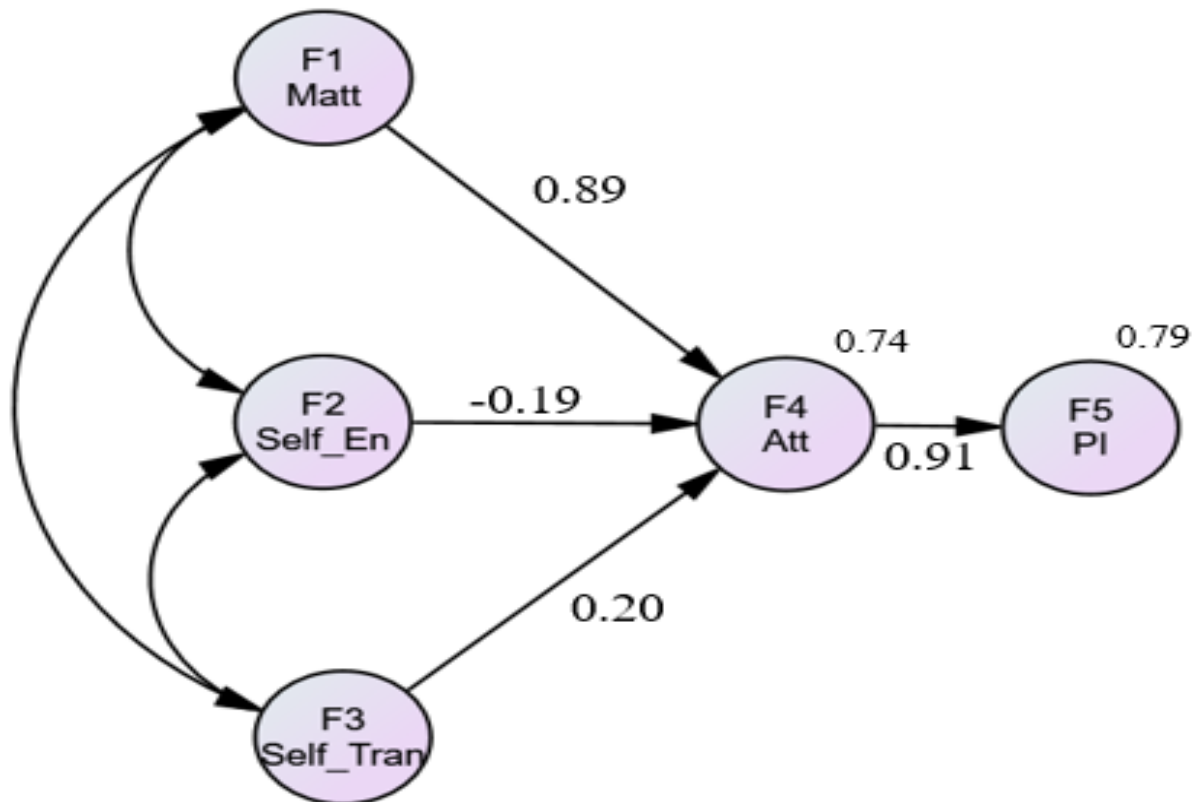


Figure 2: Structural model

Note: Matt = materialism, Self_En = self-enhancement, Self_Tran = self-transcendence, Att = attitude towards green products, PI = purchase intention.

Source: Own compilation

The identified structural model yielded a significant chi-square value of 701,768 ($p=0.000$) with 231 sample moments and 182 degrees of freedom. However, it's important to note that chi-square values tend to be sensitive to sample size, and significant values are often observed in large samples as was the case in this study. Therefore, additional incremental fit indices were considered to assess the overall fit of the structural model. The incremental fit indices were all above the recommended cut off level of 0.90. The recorded fit indices were as follows: CFI = 0.93, NFI = 0.91, IFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.076 and SRMR = 0.067. These values indicate that the structural model has adequate model fit. With the satisfactory model fit, the next step is to examine the path coefficients (β) of the model.

Table 4: Standardised regression estimates and p-values

	Standardised β	SE	p	Hypothesis
Materialism → Attitude towards beauty products	0.889	0.051	0.000**	H1: Supported
Self-enhancement → Attitude towards beauty products	-0.189	0.036	0.000**	H2: Not supported
Self-transcendence → Attitude towards beauty products	0.204	0.051	0.000**	H3: Supported
Attitude towards beauty products → purchase intention	0.913	0.055	0.000**	H4: Supported
β : beta coefficient; SE: standardised error; **Significant at the $p < 0.01$ level				

Source: Own compilation

Based on the results presented in Table 4, all the hypothesised regression paths were found to be positive and statistically significant except for self-enhancement towards attitude ($\beta = -0.189$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). As a result, three of the four proposed hypotheses are supported. These findings indicate that materialism ($\beta = 0.889$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) and self-transcendence ($\beta = 0.204$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) have a statistically significant positive influence on the attitudes of green products South African consumers. Furthermore, attitudes towards beauty products ($\beta = -0.189$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) showed a positive influence towards purchase intentions of green beauty products. Despite showing a negative relationship between self-enhancement and attitude the relationship was still statistically significant, implying a negative relationship between the variables. Among the independent factors examined, materialism was found to have the strongest impact on consumers' attitude. The strongest coefficient path was that of attitude towards purchase intentions.

The squared multiple correlation coefficient for attitude towards green beauty products and purchase intentions were 0.74 and 0.79 respectively. Consequently, the three factors collectively account for 74 percent of the variance for attitude towards beauty products whilst 79 percent of the variance for purchase intentions of South African consumers is explained by attitudes towards beauty products. These findings suggest that consumers' perceptions of materialism, self-transcendence and attitudes play pivotal roles in shaping their purchase intention towards green beauty products in the South African market.

5. Managerial Implications

The findings of this study have important implications for managers in the beauty industry. It is important to understand that some consumers may prioritise materialistic values over others, and as such, managers should tailor marketing strategies to highlight the luxury and exclusivity aspects that

green beauty products showcase. By positioning these products as premium and status-enhancing products, managers can appeal to materialistic consumers to increase their purchase intentions. Consumers who seek self-enhancement through beauty products may be motivated by personal growth, self-improvement, and individual expression. The results of this study suggest that managers should not focus on self-enhancement strategies to influence consumer attitudes towards green beauty products. Managers can highlight the eco-friendly and sustainable aspects of their products, emphasising the positive impact on the environment and society. By aligning the brand with values of social responsibility and environmental consciousness, managers can appeal to consumers who prioritise self-transcendence.

Finally, attitude towards green beauty products is a critical factor influencing purchase intentions. Managers should focus on shaping positive attitudes by providing relevant information or educating consumers about the benefits of green beauty products. Promoting the use of natural ingredients, ethical sourcing, and environmental benefits of these products can help cultivate a favourable attitude and ultimately increase purchase intentions. Managers can enhance purchase intentions and drive the success of their brands in the competitive beauty industry by appealing to consumers' values and motivations.

6. Conclusions, Limitations and Future Research

This study aimed to examine the influence of materialism, self-enhancement, self-transcendence and attitude towards beauty products on the purchase intentions of South African consumers. The research was motivated by the ever-increasing environmental concerns of consumers and the need to understand their purchasing behaviours in the context of green beauty products. The findings of this study hold valuable implications for retailers, marketing practitioners, and brand managers operating in the green beauty product industry.

The results of this study indicate that materialism and self-transcendence significantly impact the attitudes of South African consumers towards green beauty products. In addition, favourable attitudes towards green beauty products play a profound role in the purchase intent of these consumers', providing support for three of the four proposed hypotheses. These findings align with previous studies conducted by Wong et al. (2023), Paramita and Saputri (2022), Chhetri, Fernandes and Baby (2021), and Amberg and Fogarassy (2019). The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by filling a research gap in understanding South African consumers' green beauty product purchase intent.

The theoretical contributions of this study are significant as it sheds light on factors that influence green beauty product purchase intent in a specific context. Retailers, marketing practitioners, and brand managers can leverage these findings to enhance customer stimulation and sales within the green beauty product industry. By focusing on improving promotion strategies and shaping positive attitudes, these

parties can effectively gain sales and potentially increase new customers. The implications of this study can thus contribute to the profitability and sustainability of green beauty product retailers and brands.

It is important to acknowledge that this study only examined four factors (materialism, self-enhancement, self-transcendence and attitude towards beauty products) that may influence green beauty product purchase intent. Other factors such as price, quality, trust among others might also play a role and should be explored in future research. Additionally, the study followed a single cross-sectional sampling approach, providing insights based on a snapshot at one point in time. Conducting a longitudinal study would offer a more comprehensive understanding of consumers' green beauty product purchase intent over time. Furthermore, future research could explore potential differences in green beauty product purchase intent based on consumers' gender. By addressing these limitations and conducting further research, a deeper understanding of consumers' green beauty product purchase intent can be gained, facilitating more targeted and effective strategies for retailers, marketing practitioners, and brand managers in the green beauty industry.

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