

An Exploration of Indonesian Generation Z's Values Toward Cruelty-Free Cosmetics

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ABSTRACT

Despite the growing popularity of ethical consumption, limited research has examined how Indonesian Generation Z perceives cruelty-free cosmetics. This study explores the values associated with cruelty-free cosmetics among Indonesian Generation Z using the Theory of Consumption Values. An exploratory qualitative approach was employed through purposive and snowball sampling. In-depth interviews with eleven participants investigated their perceptions of cruelty-free cosmetics and related brands. The findings reveal ethical value as an important context-specific consideration extending beyond the original dimensions of the theory, particularly regarding animal welfare and responsible consumption. Emotional value reflects personal feelings and alignment with ethical beliefs, while functional value emphasizes product quality, suitability, and price. Social media plays an important role in disseminating information and raising awareness, with influencers and government initiatives complementing consumer understanding. These findings offer practical insights for marketers and policymakers promoting cruelty-free cosmetics among younger consumers in emerging markets.

Keywords: Cruelty-free Cosmetics; Generation Z; Influencer; Social Media; Theory of Consumption Values

INTRODUCTION

Cosmetics have been used by humans since the dawn of civilization. Thus far, cosmetics have successfully developed in the market and are used by people from various walks of life. Cosmetics have become a major part of the business world. Even now, cosmetic technology has advanced so much that it is a combination of cosmetics and pharmaceuticals (drugs), or what is called cosmeceuticals (medical cosmetics). [Berg et al. \(2023\)](#) stated that the cosmetic market gathered roughly USD 430 billion in revenue, making a steady bounce back after the pandemic. The growth in revenue can reach USD 83.39 per person in 2024. The market is expected to reach USD 580 billion by 2027, and it is expected to grow by 6% per year and be higher than other business sectors (apparel wear, kids' toys, food and beverages).

Europe is one of the most substantial importers of several natural preserving ingredients, which are vegetable and essential oils that can be used as natural components in making cosmetic products. In 2022, Europe accounted for 43% of the value of vegetable and essential oils around the world, surpassing other continents (Asia, America, etc.). The European cosmetics market has developed its business and maintains its business to strengthen each of its positions in terms of business strategies that can be depicted from joint ventures, research & development, global expansion, and competitive advantage to upgrade its business strategies ([Morel et al., 2024](#)).

Generation Z (Gen Z) represents both the current and future core market for the cosmetics industry. As this generation gains greater purchasing power, it is reshaping consumer behavior by demanding products that align with sustainability, ethical production, cruelty-free practices, and natural ingredients ([Dakshayani & Rajendran, 2024](#)). While prior research has extensively examined consumers' purchase intentions toward sustainable products, relatively limited attention has been paid to the values underpinning perceptions of cruelty-free cosmetics. Furthermore, existing studies have predominantly adopted quantitative approaches, including recent Indonesian research examining factors influencing buyer behavior toward cruelty-free skincare ([Prahbandani & Laksmidewi, 2026](#)), leaving consumers' subjective interpretations and value constructions underexplored.

To address these gaps, this study aims to explore how Indonesian Generation Z perceives and constructs the value of cruelty-free cosmetics by applying the Theory of Consumption Values ([Sheth et al., 1991](#)) through a qualitative inquiry. The study is significant because it provides contextual evidence on how younger Indonesian consumers interpret cruelty-free consumption beyond conventional product attributes. The novelty of this study lies in its qualitative exploration of cruelty-free cosmetics within the Indonesian context and its identification of ethical value as an emergent, context-specific consideration that broadens the application of the Theory of Consumption Values. Theoretically, the findings contribute to consumer value literature by demonstrating that ethical considerations constitute a distinct evaluative lens in the context of ethically positioned products. Practically, the study offers insights for cosmetic manufacturers, marketers, and policymakers in designing product strategies and communication that resonate with ethical consumers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cosmetics and Cruelty-Free

The word *cosmetics* originated from the Greek term, *kosmētikos*, which means to decorate or to arrange ([Blanco-Dávila, 2000](#)). Cosmetics are defined as a substance or a mixture of several substances to be rubbed, attached, poured, sprinkled, splattered, or

sprayed on, put into, or used on the body or parts of the human body for the purpose of cleaning, maintaining, enhancing attractiveness, or changing appearance. Cosmetics can be classified widely according to the function, target markets, area of applications, etc. Cosmetics contain many ingredients that help to protect the skin, while others help to protect it from external factors.

There is no official legal term for cruelty-free cosmetics; however, it can be defined as a beauty product that considers and complies with environmental and social concerns. It also promotes animal welfare and natural ecosystems (Le-Hoang & Nguyen, 2025). Thus, cruelty-free products have non-animal formulation ingredients, and the product has not been tested on animals either. Several certifications to assess cruelty-free cosmetics have been issued, such as by PETA, Cruelty Free International, and Choose Cruelty-Free (Le-Hoang & Nguyen, 2025).

Theory of Consumption Values

Sheth et al. (1991) proposed how consumption values influence consumer choice behavior, namely functional value, social value, emotional value, epistemic value, and conditional value. These value components are used as the foundation upon which consumers develop their choice behavior.

Functional Value

Functional value refers to the utility that consumers perceive from a product based on its ability to perform its intended function, utilitarian or performance effectively (Sheth et al., 1991). For example, consumers evaluate whether a tangible product delivers the expected benefits and satisfies their practical needs. In the context of cruelty-free cosmetics, functional value may be reflected in consumers' assessments of product quality, effectiveness, ingredient safety, and competitiveness.

Social Value

Sheth et al. (1991) defined social value as arising from the extent to which a product strengthens an individual's social identity with particular social groups. Within the cruelty-free cosmetics market, social group desirable values are shaped by recommendations from peers such as cultural-ethnic groups, social media influence, and word-of-mouth. All of which can influence an individual's personal decision to adopt cosmetics branding.

Emotional Value

According to Sheth et al. (1991), emotional value represents consumers' utility derived from the feelings or emotional experiences associated with a product. Emotional value is not only applied to services or aesthetics, but also to goods or tangible products (Sheth et al., 1991). In the case of cruelty-free cosmetics, consumers may experience positive or negative emotions from purchasing products that align with their ethical beliefs and concerns.

Conditional Value

Sheth et al. (1991) refer to conditional value as the benefits consumers perceive from a product under specific situations that affect their purchasing. The value of a product may increase or decrease depending on contextual factors, such as promotional campaigns, product availability, social occasions, environmental conditions, or other situational influences. For cruelty-free cosmetics, conditional value may become particularly important when consumers encounter special discounts, sustainability campaigns, certification labels, or heightened public awareness regarding animal welfare and ethical consumption.

Epistemic Value

Epistemic value refers to the perceived benefit that consumers derive from a product or service's ability to stimulate curiosity or enhance consumers' knowledge and understanding (Sheth et al., 1991). An alternative acquires epistemic value through questionnaire items referring to curiosity, novelty, and knowledge, capturing consumers' motivation to discover and experience something unfamiliar. In the context of cruelty-free cosmetics, epistemic value may arise when consumers who have no experience using cruelty-free cosmetics are interested in using them and know the similarities or differences from general cosmetic products.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

According to Lim (2025), qualitative research is a scientific inquiry methodology that emphasizes a rich understanding of social phenomena. The methodology aimed to unveil especially what occurs, why and how it occurred, when and where it took place, and who was involved (Lim, 2025). This study applied qualitative methodology as the objective is to understand the value of Gen Z towards cruelty-free cosmetics. The unit of analysis was the individual participant, as the study focused on each participant's perceptions and interpretations of cruelty-free cosmetics. The unit of analysis was the individual participant, as the study focused on each participant's perceptions and interpretations of cruelty-free cosmetics.

Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling techniques were used in this study. Purposive sampling was a non-probability sampling method in which participants were selected based on their experience and knowledge of the phenomenon of interest (Pyo et al., 2023). Most researchers use purposive sampling to obtain inaccessible participants, such as specialized populations like company employees or undergraduate students in a certain country. Snowball sampling was also used in this study to ask participants to refer their acquaintances or referrals from those who participated in the study, and they still had the same specific identification (Pyo et al., 2023; Saunders et al., 2023). In this study, the participants were selected according to these inclusion criteria: (1) Individual Indonesian female, (2) Gen Z age (18-27 years old), (3) use and familiar with cosmetic products daily, (4) aware of 'cruelty-free or non-animal-tested cosmetic logos.

Data Collection

Data collection was described as an arranged process to gather data to answer research questions and problems, as well as to measure information on variables of interest (Mwita, 2022). Data collection methods were collected through two types: primary and secondary data. Primary data was described as firsthand data gathered by the researcher directly from the sources. Secondary data was collected through academic journals, published theses, and news articles. Primary data collection may involve semi-structured interviews in which the researcher has a list of key questions to be asked, but still gives the participants leeway to answer in relation to the research topic (Saunders et al., 2023).

The data were collected through one-on-one online semi-structured interviews using open-ended questions, with each interview lasting approximately 30–45 minutes. Prior to each interview, participants were informed about the purpose and objectives of the study, as well as the recording procedure and confidentiality of the information provided. The interviews were conducted in Indonesian and English according to participant preference, and the recorded interviews were subsequently transcribed for analysis. Data saturation was reached after eleven participants, at which point no substantively new themes emerged from the interviews.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used as the data analysis method to identify and interpret patterns and themes in the interview data (Naeem et al., 2023). The interview data were reviewed repeatedly and coded mainly using in vivo and descriptive coding. The codes were then compared and organized into broader patterns, followed by theme refinement and interpretation. The principles of thematic analysis involve identifying patterns, refining themes, and reporting findings systematically (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). Through this process, three main themes were generated from the interviews: values of cruelty-free cosmetics, social media as an awareness platform, and actors supporting awareness development.

Interview Questions

Semi-structured interview questions were prepared with several predetermined questions and allowed flexibility to add some questions during the interview process to get more insight from the participants (Ruslin et al., 2022). In this study, the interview questions were divided into several sections. The first section was the introductory question asking about the participants' demographics; the second section was the motivation and values for purchasing or consuming a cosmetic brand. The third section, or the last part, was the understanding of cruelty-free cosmetics. The summary of interview questions is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Interview Question

Section	Main Questions	Sub - Questions	
1	Demographics	1	What is your name?
		2	How old are you?
		3	What is your occupation?
		4	What is your nationality?
		5	Where do you live?
2	Motivation to Purchase Cosmetics	1	How often do you use cosmetics?
		2	Which brand do you use the most?
		3	What motivates you to buy cosmetics?
		4	What are your considerations when buying cosmetics?
		5	What sort of value do you add to yourself when you want to buy cosmetics?
3	Understand Cruelty-free cosmetics	1	How much do you know about cruelty-free cosmetics?
		2	What is your general attitude towards cruelty-free products?
		3	How to develop understanding or awareness of cruelty-free cosmetics products?

RESULTS

Participants' Profile

Table 2. Profile of Participants

Participants	Age	Nationality	Location	Occupation	Use Cosmetics or Not
P1	24	Indonesian	Indonesia	Entrepreneur	Yes
P2	24	Indonesian	Netherlands	Financial Advisor	Yes
P3	23	Indonesian	Indonesia	Coffee Shop's Owner	Yes
P4	24	Indonesian	Indonesia	Employee	Yes

P5	24	Indonesian	Singapore	Senior Consultant	Yes
P6	26	Indonesian	United States of America	Public Health Consultant	Yes
P7	24	Indonesian	Indonesia	Lecturer	Yes
P8	22	Indonesian	Indonesia	Student	Yes
P9	22	Indonesian	Indonesia	Student	Yes
P10	22	Indonesian	Indonesia	Fresh Graduate	Yes
P11	24	Indonesian	Indonesia	General Practitioner	Yes

Table 2 shows that the eleven participants were Indonesian women aged 22–26 years, all of whom reported using cosmetics. Eight participants resided in Indonesia, while three were living in the Netherlands, Singapore, and the United States at the time of the study. The participants represented varied occupational backgrounds, including students, consultants, an entrepreneur, an employee, a lecturer, a financial advisor, a general practitioner, and a fresh graduate. All participants met the study's inclusion criteria, including Indonesian nationality, Generation Z status, regular cosmetic use, and awareness of cruelty-free or non-animal-tested cosmetic labels. Participant identities were replaced with codes from P1 to P11 to maintain confidentiality.

Thematic analysis generated three main themes from the interviews: (1) values of cruelty-free cosmetics, (2) social media as an awareness platform, and (3) actors supporting awareness development.

Theme 1: Values of Cruelty- Free Cosmetics

Ethical Value

Participant 5, or P5, explained that sometimes she checked on the brand's background to make sure the brand is not involved with any kind of cruelty, whereas P7 stated that it was good if the brand prioritized environmental issues such as bottle recycling campaigns. Participant 8 also added a statement that she had several considerations before buying cosmetics that applied social responsibilities, which are vegan, cruelty-free, eco-friendly, and halal.

"... Sometimes, not every time, I will actually look into their backgrounds, so let's say that they actually are not involved in any kinds of crimes or cruelty, then I would be more likely to purchase their products." (P5, 2025)

"... but these days, I have also seen the educational background, from an environmental perspective issue and all that. So, I'm quite absorbed in it. If cosmetics can give opportunities, such as plastic bottle recycling, there's even one that can collect points, so it's pretty beneficial with the environmentally friendly concept, I'll search about it." (P7, 2025)

"Actually, there are several things that are additional concerns; such as, it has to be vegan, has to be cruelty-free, has to be eco-friendly and has to be halal." (P8, 2025)

Emotional Values

Of the eleven participants, six agreed and even more supported cruelty-free cosmetics. Most participants stated that they were animal lovers; they loved animals and were attentive towards them.

"I personally agree with it, because I'm an animal lover as well. And actually, from what I said, the value of the brand will be increased from an environmentally friendly concept; an even more loving and preserving animal brand will be highly rated for branding, because before I see good quality of Body Shop and applying these values, so it is a plus point for the brands that have been purchased." (P7, 2025)

"Really pro because, in my opinion, if the cruelty-free brand is already cruelty-free, it's very considerate and compassionate. They really consider a lot, and they love all living things and like the smallest things, even though people might think they're small, they're very big for the brand so that I really appreciate." (P8, 2025)

"I, in fact, agree with it because I am also focused on CSR. In CSR itself there is a sustainability aspect, and I think because there is sustainability such as the 3Ps, which are "Profit, People and Planet". I do agree 100% because I do also pay attention to animals, because I am an animal lover. So, I don't want such animals treated poorly." (P9, 2025)

"For me, I do agree because ethically I respect cruelty-free products, because as time progresses, I believe product testing should not use living creatures anymore. It can be used in other ways that don't include living creatures, which I think these animals, I think, is still being considered as an 'underestimated' creature because they can't 'decide' to agree or not as a medium to be tested in product testing. Other than that, there's a connection with embodiment of moral action with great values that affect the sustainable environment." (P10, 2025)

Functional Values

Most of the participants agreed that it was important to add cruelty-free as one of the important values. However, two of eleven participants were neutral towards cruelty-free cosmetics because they were not familiar with the products and had less information about them. Participants bought cosmetic products based on functional values.

"I think I'm kinda neutral, because the campaign and socialization are not that popular, I guess, like people in Indonesia especially is not quite familiar with cruelty-free and stuffs, not like the western culture, so I'm kinda neutral. I support it, if I knew it, I support it but because I'm not really familiar with it so I'm just neutral." (P1, 2025)

"I would say I'm neutral, I don't really know a lot of information about it, so I think I would need a lot more information and knowledge before I can judge more." (P6, 2025)

"I don't really buy cosmetics that much, but when I do really buy it, I think I will base my decision on the quality of the product, as well as whether the product will suit me or not. " (P4, 2025)

“Oh, of course the first one has to be from whether it suits my skin or not. Because if I choose the wrong one, it will cause acne all over or dry my skin. Then, the second one is related to price.” (P9, 2025)

Whereas the participants who thought about the opposite of it expressed that lack of awareness had less impact as well, and lack of trust in the brand, because brands tend to overclaim their formulas, ingredients, and others, so it would make the consumers hesitate whether it was just selling or real. The statements were expressed below:

“...from the sales’ point of view, I think right now there is not much awareness to the cruelty-free, and I think for those who advocate of the cruelty-free brands, it would help boost the sales, but since the awareness it’s not there yet so I don’t think that it will impact the brand significantly; any kind of impact.” (P4, 2025)

“...I mean I do understand a lot of people are more aware right now about the health effects, human, from the things we consume, the things that we use, so, of course, a part of me wants to trust them that they are real cruelty-free but like, who really know what’s happening behind that, who really knows what’s actually compromising, a lot of used of emit chemicals, a lot of use of other chemicals that was not researched before, but actually being cruelty-free, so it’s kind of like a polarizing between those two, and a lot of unknown.” (P6, 2025)

Theme 2: Social Media as a Platform to Develop Understanding of Cruelty-Free

P3 and P5 stated that if brands were more willing to show more exposure through current trends or simply visualization, such as writings or pictures in content about cruelty-free knowledge, it would help them imagine and put it into thoughts about animal testing in the cosmetic industry.

“It’s very effective through social media campaigns, and other offline marketing devices, but it’s preferable for the campaigns to not just simply be short information saying ‘Oh, hey, our products are cruelty-free!’ but it will be so much better and interesting also intriguing for a lot of people if it’s made to like a series of campaigns like you’re not just saying that our products are cruelty-free but they also help explain what cruelty-free is, what does it do, what’s the benefit of it, because it may raise awareness on the cruelty-free issue in particular and it may lit the flame for other brands to develop the sign of cruelty-free campaigns.” (P3, 2025)

“Use a little bit of social media more, especially when it comes to Gen Z, we are very attached to social media, but at least for what I’ve experienced, looking at my social media right now, maybe there are some awareness about it, but it’s not well-developed. Not many people actually post how it actually looks like behind the lab, how they actually they treat these animals, so making people realize for on how they do it behind, or maybe they can skip the disgusting contents, even though writings, through pictures, to basically visualize the people and then eventually raise the people’s awareness, that’s just the ideas that come to mind.” (P5, 2025)

P7 expressed that real-life/offline campaigns could still work as well, when people were also gathering in one place with the same interest, such as an event or exhibition, but still fun and educational; it would draw more attention to the people who are still unaware of it. These statements were exemplary:

“If they want to have movement, like bicycle sort of movement on Car-Free Day, and if it's cruelty-free, there has to be a day to raise this campaign, such as Earth Day or World Cleanup Day; it can be implemented from a very young age; it's very important. I think this campaign is very close to education as cruelty-free is not being highlighted and displayed to sustain our environment. But if it's included in the campaign, it can be a part of education too, that can later be synchronized.” (P7, 2025)

Theme 3: Actors to Develop Understanding of Cruelty-Free

Influencers played an important role in developing understanding of cruelty-free cosmetics. P6 and P7 made a statement that the influencers themselves should be trustworthy enough to be able to spread educational information, or that their content aligned with the information that they're sharing, so audiences could find it more appealing and related to the content.

“Actually to recruit influencers to develop a good messaging and a good call to action regarding cruelty-free products. Then we got to do it because, you know, I mean, we live to help each other, right? But I think you need to really stay to your core values regarding that as well.” (P6, 2025)

“Talking about influencer, I believe that everyone has an influencer that they trust, but of course I would prefer an influencer who is very honest since there are influencers who may be endorsed and they cover up some of the things, but I also have to select it, we as the audience have to sort out whether this influencer is honest enough in their product review itself. So actually, if you ask, do influencers influence? Yes, but what kind of influencers actually have to be curated again?” (P7, 2025)

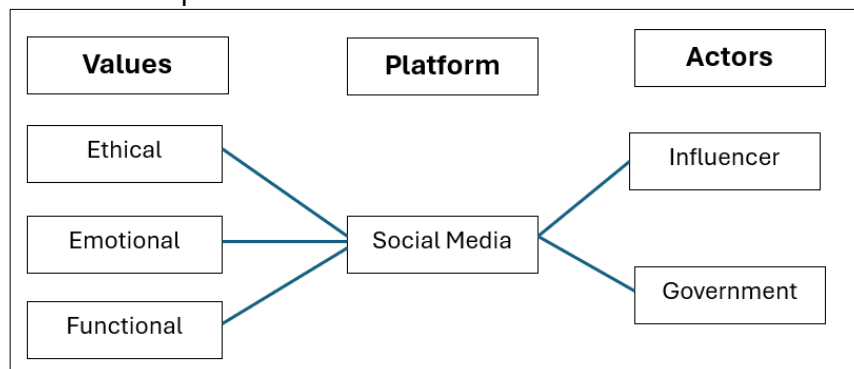
In addition to influencers as one of the actors, there were governments that enforce regulations or a banning system. Other than media campaigns or influencers, setting regulations was important for how to arrange the brands' work procurement. Most participants agreed that the government's involvement is important to promote cruelty-free. As Participant 4 stated, if the government could work on this with brands or companies, such as making a big discount or fun event to promote cruelty-free, the audience will slowly get curious and encourage the behavior of consumers.

“Yeah, I think the government's rules are definitely, it would be the biggest role so for example, big discounts for cruelty-free products, and there is like a penalty or a higher price point for those non-cruelty-free products, I think it would definitely encourage the behavior of the consumer.” (P4, 2025)

“Right now, I'm not sure if Indonesia has a regulation that fines brands that do not cruelty-free products, but I think rather than giving penalty or fine to the brands, it would be so much better if the government provides incentives, for brands that are willing to develop cruelty-free products and research on cruelty-free products, because it will be so much better in a form of incentives.” (P3, 2025)

From the results, it can be derived that there are three main themes that influence the development of cruelty-free cosmetics products: values, platforms, and actors. The model development is proposed in [Figure 1](#). The connecting lines indicate thematic analysis findings rather than causal or directional relationships.

Figure 1. Model Development



DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to explore the what values and how to develop values of cruelty-free cosmetic products. The results identified three sub-values, one platform, and two actors related to understanding and developing cruelty-free cosmetics. The findings can be interpreted through the Theory of Consumption Values (Sheth et al., 1991), with ethical value emerging as a context-specific consideration alongside the original functional and emotional values identified in the data.

Values of Cruelty-Free Cosmetics

The first sub-value expressed by the participants was ethical value, which aligns with ethical and moral aspects that are being valued by socially responsible consumers (Enginkaya & Sağlam, 2026; Prayoga et al., 2026; Suphasomboon & Vassanadumrongdee, 2022). Participants think thoroughly about the ethical consumption value, whether the product they purchase complies with their ethical consumption value or not. It can be about environmental pollution or about animal welfare that is being highlighted in this study. The triple bottom line, which is “People, Planet, Profit,” has a relational influence in terms of ethical considerations that lead to the welfare of animals. This aspect highlights the importance of nature and living creatures that can be depicted as highly rated companies because these values align with a sense of moral and high consideration for the environment as well as animals (Amalia & Darmawan, 2023).

In addition, emotional value, as the second sub-value, displays the feeling of pleasantness and satisfaction that aligns with the positive connection with consumers when buying cruelty-free cosmetics to comply with their agreements on supporting cruelty-free cosmetics (Sun et al., 2022; Suphasomboon & Vassanadumrongdee, 2022). Carroza (2024) indicated that Gen Z and Millennials are the driving force behind pet ownership, as people now consider pets to be members of their family, and their daily needs are necessarily more fit. So, being close to a pet can result in having an emotional, deep connection even when they can’t communicate directly. They can also create companionship through interacting and taking good care, so that is why most participants fully support the brands that are cruelty-free.

Functional value was also evident in participants’ evaluations of product quality, skin suitability, and price. Several participants indicated that cruelty-free considerations would not replace conventional product-performance criteria; rather, cruelty-free status was considered an additional value when the product remained effective and suitable for personal needs. This finding indicates that ethical positioning may complement rather than substitute functional evaluation in cosmetic purchasing decisions.

Social Media as Awareness Platform

Referring to the platform for understanding cruelty-free cosmetics, social media is one of the conventional platforms of communication that brands start to apply their marketing promotion activities. People in general can utilize social media as a platform that offers connecting and communicating with people, accessing news, sharing daily lives, multimedia, and personal branding. The study conducted by [Zahro et al. \(2025\)](#) found that social media marketing had a significant positive impact on green purchase intention. Because social media marketing can affect people by making more socially responsible purchases in the future, this is a sign for brands to take a step forward towards the cruelty-free logo and promote it so more people would be more aware of cruelty-free ([Grappe et al., 2021](#)).

Actors Supporting Awareness

Developing understanding can be done by hiring influencers and involving government in cruelty campaigns. The impact of social media on consumer behavior spans a wide spectrum of activities ranging from informing, exchanging ideas and attitudes to acquire awareness and understanding, and visualizing post-purchase behavior without purchasing. Since social media is a platform that can be used in every aspect of life, most participants stated that it's best if awareness spreads through the most-used platform as of now. Gen Z has adapted successfully to an environment that has more adaptive, engaging, intimate, visualized pictures and information that shaped them to react to the platform ([Atay & Ashlock, 2022](#); [Khurana et al., 2025](#); [Magano et al., 2022](#); [Ray et al., 2026](#)). All participants agreed that the best way to develop awareness is on social media.

CONCLUSION

This study explored how Indonesian Generation Z women perceive the values associated with cruelty-free cosmetics through the Theory of Consumption Values. The findings identified ethical, emotional, and functional values. Ethical value emerged as an important context-specific consideration, particularly in relation to animal welfare and responsible consumption, while emotional value reflected feelings and alignment with personal beliefs. Functional value was also evident in participants' consideration of product quality, suitability, and price. Beyond these consumption values, social media emerged as the main platform for developing awareness, while influencers and government initiatives were identified as supporting actors in communicating and strengthening understanding of cruelty-free practices.

The findings suggest that cruelty-free positioning is more meaningful when ethical considerations are communicated together with credible information about product performance and consumer needs. Cosmetic marketers can use social media to provide accessible educational content and work with credible influencers to strengthen awareness, while policymakers can support clearer consumer education and regulatory guidance. Overall, the study indicates that understanding cruelty-free cosmetics among Indonesian Generation Z involves both value-based considerations and the communication mechanisms through which those values become more visible and understandable.

LIMITATION

There are several limitations in this study. First, the findings were based on in-depth interviews with only eleven women Indonesian Generation Z with the age range from aged 22-26 years old. The participants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling. Three participants were residing outside Indonesia at the time of the

interviews; however, all participants met the Indonesian nationality criterion. Therefore, the results have limited transferability to other populations, including different age groups and genders.

Second, this study focused on Generation Z. To enrich future research, other generations, such as Millennials, younger or older consumers, could also be examined to explore the similarities and differences in how consumption values shape perceptions of cruelty-free cosmetics.

Third, the analysis of this study was guided by the Theory of Consumption Values, but was still open to new themes, such as ethical value, that emerged from the coding process. Future studies may therefore adopt different theoretical lenses or more inductive approaches to examine whether additional value dimensions, such as technological, economic, environmental, or identity-related values, emerge in different contexts.

Considering these limitations, several recommendations for future research can be proposed. First, future studies should expand the participants by involving respondents from a wider range of countries across different demographics and cultures to improve the transferability of the findings. Second, further research is encouraged to explore other sustainable product categories, such as green, eco-friendly, or halal cosmetics, to determine whether similar value patterns are observed. Finally, future studies may include other generation cohorts that may result in comparable behaviors, decision-making processes, and similar lifestyles, thereby providing a broader understanding of consumer behavior across generational cohorts.

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