



## MASTER'S DISSERTATION

# EXPLORING GENERATION Y'S ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS CRUELTY-FREE COSMETICS

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BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS CRUELTY-FREE COSMETICS

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## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation focuses on Generation Y's attitudes and behaviours towards cruelty-free cosmetics. The main purpose of this study is to explore Generation Y's attitude and behaviour towards cruelty-free cosmetics. The following are the research questions: (1) How do Generation Y consumers regard cruelty-free in terms of products?; (2) What attitudes Generation Y consumers do take before cruelty-free cosmetics?; and (3) What influences Gen Y consumers' purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics?

The methodology used to achieve the main purpose of this dissertation was a qualitative approach and the research methods selected were a focus group discussion with 8 participants and interviews with 12 participants. All participants are from Gen Y and frequently purchase cosmetic products.

With this study was possible to understand Generation Y regards of cruelty-free cosmetics and what are the attitudes taken by this group of consumers before purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics. The findings in this study point to both barriers and motivations in Gen Y's cruelty-free cosmetics purchases and identifies those barriers and motivations. This study can help cruelty-free cosmetic brands, cruelty-free organizations and social media pages dedicated to spreading information to create a marketing strategy surrounding cruelty-free cosmetics, targeted to Gen Y.



## RESUMO

Esta dissertação foca-se nas atitudes e comportamentos da Geração Y em relação a cosméticos cruelty-free. O objetivo principal deste estudo é explorar as atitudes e os comportamentos da Geração Y em relação a cosméticos cruelty-free. As questões de pesquisa deste estudo são: (1) Como os consumidores da Geração Y consideram os produtos cruelty-free?; (2) Que atitudes os consumidores da Geração Y tomam antes de comprarem cosméticos cruelty-free?; e (3) O que influencia as compras dos consumidores da Geração Y de cosméticos cruelty-free?

A metodologia nesta dissertação foi uma abordagem qualitativa e os métodos de pesquisa selecionados foram o focus group com 8 participantes e entrevistas com 12 participantes. Todos os participantes são da Geração Y e compram frequentemente produtos cosméticos.

Com este estudo foi possível entender a Geração Y no que diz respeito aos cosméticos cruelty-free e quais são as atitudes tomadas por este grupo de consumidores antes da compra de cosméticos cruelty-free. As descobertas neste estudo apontam para as barreiras e motivações na compra de cosméticos cruelty-free da Geração Y e identifica essas barreiras e motivações. Este estudo pode ajudar marcas de cosméticos cruelty-free, organizações cruelty-free e páginas de redes sociais dedicadas a divulgar informações para criar uma estratégia de marketing em torno de cosméticos cruelty-free, direcionados à Geração Y.



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## INTRODUCTION

Society has become more aware of the environmental risks and consumerism excesses of its collective contemporary lifestyle which has consequently increased the ethical concerns around consumption (Lewis & Potter, 2011). Social causes, environmentally friendly companies or products, are now having more impact in the consumers' choices (Hostaa & Žabkarb, 2016).

The history of movements towards ethical consumption has a being growing for a long time and its historical evolution attests to its endurance over time (Lekakis, 2014). However, there's still much to explore about the subject of ethical consumption (Gregory-Smith, Smith, & Winklhofer, 2013). Describing the ethical consumer and its motivations is difficult since there is a noticeable gap between their explicit attitudes towards ethical consumption and their actual purchasing behaviour. This behaviour is a manifestation of the attitude-behaviour gap (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013). Most consumers can be placed in the grey area of ethical consumption, as they manifest both ethical and unethical choices (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013). The attitude-behaviour gap has not been studied enough and needs empirical evidence (Alaouir, Gustavsson, & Schmidt, 2019).

Consumers are increasingly looking for alternatives that do not violate their ethical and moral principles (Silva, 2020). These principles can be related to the nature and composition of the product, as well as their concerns with animal welfare (Silva, 2020). The concern for animal safety has been growing since the 1980's (European Commission, n.d.). People look for and demand products that do not involve animal cruelty and the market is changing to meet these demands (European Commission, n.d.). Although the term cruelty-free does not have any legal meaning (U.S. Food & Drug Administration, 2020), consumers typically consider cruelty-free any product that is produced without animal testing throughout the supply chain (Cruelty-free International, 2021a). Animal testing is a scientific experiment that is carried out on a living animal, in order to test products' effects and safety, causing distress or pain to the animals in question (Cruelty-free International, 2021b). (Cruelty-free International, 2021b). Animal testing causes a strong emotional reaction in the consumers and we see more cruelty-free consumers every day (Alaouir et al., 2019).

It is relevant to identify if there is a gap between the purchase intentions and the attitudes of cruelty-free cosmetic consumers and their current purchasing behaviour (Alaouir et al., 2019). The attitude-behaviour gap has been considered in other areas of consumerism, but it has not been studied within the field of cruelty-free cosmetics (Alaouir et al., 2019). The study of this phenomenon can lead to a better understanding of what influences consumers' cruelty-free cosmetics purchases (Alaouir et al., 2019).

This study will be focusing on the Generation Y, people who were born between the early 1980s and early 2000s ((Muskat, Muskat, Zehrer, & Johns, 2013). This generation is a powerful group of consumers (Arli, Tjiptono, Lasmono, & Anandya, 2017) and has been responsible for changes in regards to more conscientious, sustainable and pro environmental consumption (Marton, Ernszt, Rodek, & Máhr, 2020). Studies prove that Gen Y is the most conscious with their purchasing decisions (Marton et al., 2020) and is responsible for the growth in demand for ethical cosmetics (Alaouir et al., 2019). This generation tends to be mindful of ethical issues and is also responsible for the growth in demand of ethical cosmetics (Alaouir et al., 2019). In a study in Bogotá, millennials showed reflection on their consumption habits, rejecting animal tested cosmetic products in order to protect the wellbeing of animals (Guerrero, 2019), however, there is still a pending need of studying this segment's intentions towards these issues, making them an interesting focus for this particular study. They are also a generation of people presently comprehended between 40 and 24 years old, allowing for deeper and more thoughtful conversations about the topic (Gummerus, Liljander, & Sihlman, 2017).

The main purpose of this study is to explore Generation Y's attitude and behaviour towards cruelty-free cosmetics.

The following are the research questions:

1. How do Generation Y consumers regard cruelty-free in terms of products?
2. What attitudes Generation Y consumers do take before cruelty-free cosmetics?
3. What influences Gen Y consumers' purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics?

The qualitative methodology was considered to be the best approach since it is intended to study a specific phenomenon in order to understand the general phenomenon. The primary data collection methods to be used are focus group discussions and interviews.

The participants of this study are people from the Generation Y that purchase cosmetic products.

This thesis will be composed of the following chapters.

Chapter 1 will present the literature review. This chapter intends to summarize the state of art of the subject of this paper, understanding gen y's motivations for cruelty-free cosmetics purchasing.

Chapter 2 is where the methodology will be defined. In this chapter will be exposed the research objectives, the approach, empirical setting and the process of research.

Chapter 3 is the findings chapter. Here will be presented the data results collected from the interviews and focus groups.

Chapter 4 is where the findings of this study will be discussed and compared with the literature review.

Chapter 5 is composed by the conclusions reached with the research, presenting the contributions of this study.

Chapter 6 presents the limitations of the study and the researcher's suggestion for future research.



## **1. LITERATURE REVIEW**

In order to contextualize the subject of study, ethical consumption, the following main themes were chosen: the consumer behaviour in ethical consumption and cruelty-free consumption. The characteristics of Gen Y as ethical consumers will also be addressed in the course of this literature review. This approach is necessary for a better understanding of the chosen topic. Thus, this literature review intends to create a better understanding on the current state of art of cruelty-free consumption.

### **1.1. CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN ETHICAL CONSUMPTION**

Consumers are growing more aware of the impact that their consumption has, they now believe that they can impact ethical dilemmas by changing their purchasing behaviour and consequently drive the market to become more ethical (Kutaula & Gillani, 2018). Although ethical consumerism is an old phenomenon, it has gained strength in the past decade, revealing itself to be one of the main concerns for both consumers and corporations (Kutaula & Gillani, 2018; Silva, 2020).

Ethical consumption can be broadly defined as conscient consumer acts that take into account the wellbeing of other humans not directly related to the ethical consumer (Fuentes & Sörum, 2019). Another way to look at it is by

considering it as an ethical/moral dimension, in which a product's functionality or production are not considered to have bad consequences and fit the right side of morality (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013). Environmental protection, sustainability and conscious consumption are key terms used to refer to ethical consumption and attract consumers (Marton et al., 2020). The term ethical consumption is used to influence conscious consumer behaviour that focus on social goals, morals and ideologies (Shaw, McMaster, & Newholm, 2015).

When talking about the theory behind responsible consumption as a moralistic identity project the processes should never be taken for granted and the reason for that is because each consumer has its subjectivities. Which are created and shaped according to the historical condition at the time, conditions that are always changing. Other element to be taken in consideration is the material strategies of intervention that involve the customer so much that he's no longer a free rational being, but a moral market actor (Giesler & Veresiu, 2014).

When it comes to ethically correct marks these represent those whose manufacturing/building process of their products or services do not affect in a negative way, form or shape the environment or disrespects animal rights (Silva, 2020).

A growing concern for the environment has led to a bigger awareness of global consumption consequences, encouraging consumers to rethink their role and attitude towards these matters, marking the emergence of the ethical consumer (Gouveia, 2018).

The ethical consumer's purchasing intention originates from a set of different motivations (Marton et al., 2020). In order to understand these motivations, it is important to study the consumers' behaviour, especially because the ethical consumer offers evidence for dissonant behaviour, also known as the attitude-behaviour gap (Govind, Singh, Garg, & D'Silva, 2019; Gregory-Smith et al., 2013; Hiller & Woodall, 2019).

### 1.1.1. The ethical consumer

Webster Jr. (1975 cit in Hostaa & Žabkarb, 2016), defined the socially conscious consumer as someone that takes into account the public consequences of their private consumption or attempts to achieve social change through their purchasing power, thus acknowledging the importance and responsibility of consumers for general well-being. Later, in 1995 Roberts (cit in Hostaa & Žabkarb, 2016) developed a clearer distinction between environmental and social causes and proposed a two-dimensional scale for measuring responsible consumer behaviour.

An ethical consumer, as defined by Hostaa and Žabkarb (2016), is someone motivated by one or more of the following causes: human health, social justice, environmental concerns and animal welfare. As so, ethical consumers end up choosing products and services in the realm of fair-trade goods, organic foods, cruelty-free cosmetics and 'sweat-free' products.

As a way to tackle environmental concerns, as well as other problems descendant from the current consumption scenario, consumers have begun to purchase more ecological and Fairtrade-certified products, shopping at second-hand stores, and making an effort to lower their overall consumption levels (Fuentes & Sörum, 2019). Ethical consumers are aware of the public consequences that private consumption can have and comprehend that their purchasing power can bring social change (Silva, 2020; Zollo, Yoon, Rialti, & Ciappei, 2018). In order to push companies to produce ethically, consumers boycott unethical companies, putting their money towards socially responsible companies (Giesler & Veresiu, 2014).

However, in order to make the right, most ethical, purchasing decisions, ethical consumers need to be knowledgeable about the topic (Fuentes & Sörum, 2019; Fux & Čater, 2018). People with more ecological knowledge are perceived to be more supportive of green ethical consumption, having stronger intentions to become involved in purchasing green products (Kanchanapibul, Lacka, Wang, & Chan, 2014). Content with an informative component receives,

on average, the highest engagement and supportive comments prevail. Informative content is perceived as especially valuable when there is a lack of knowledge on the subject and, therefore, this content is extremely valuable in the context of ethical consumption. When used by non-profit organizations, it can raise awareness, create new ones and strengthen relationships with existing supporters. This only reinforces the importance that the knowledge factor has in the intention to purchase ethical products (Fux & Čater, 2018). Hostaa & Žabkarb (2016) have supported this idea with their qualitative study results, their paper stated that consumers were more concerned with environmental issues than other ethical topics, which the authors attribute to the greater information availability on the subject and more perceived control connected with the natural environment. It was also clear in their study that fair trade products were more overlooked than other ethical products because they are most commonly unknown or are not as frequently seen in the shelves. This thus suggests that, for making an ethical decision, not only knowledge is required, as is availability and practicality.

The decision-making process of purchase of ethical products can also be influenced by other different factors. For instance, Hungarian consumers consider quality to be the most important factor when purchasing a product, followed by good value for money and the labelling referring to bio or environmentally friendly products (Marton et al., 2020).

The ethical consumer can have many different faces and circumstances. A study developed by Morgan, Croney and Widmar (2016) about the relationships between ethical consumption, lifestyle choices, and social responsibility demonstrate that:

- People who travel, are charity donors or volunteer are more likely to value the environmental, animal welfare, corporate responsibility and philanthropic dimensions of social responsibility.
- Women, younger respondents, and more educated people are also more likely to value environmental causes in their consumption.
- All demographics of consumers report to avoid companies that were deceptive in their ethical intentions or actions or depicted minorities negatively.

Ethical consumers can also have different behaviours depending on their age (Potts, White, & Hons, 2007):

- Teenagers and consumers in their early 20s find that their stance on animal welfare is not taken serious by their family and friends, complicating their access to cruelty-free and/or vegan products

- Consumers in their 20s and 30s view their choice of being vegan or vegetarian as part of their wider social acceptance for alternative lifestyle choices
- Consumers over 40 defend that their convictions have increased with age
- Older consumers are less inclined to care about the opinions of others and follow their convictions now that they are older
- Baby-boomer consumers consider that their ethical behaviours have been influenced by the political movements and countercultures of the 60s and 70s

Different generations have different stances and behaviours when it comes to ethical consumption (Kanchanapibul et al., 2014; Potts et al., 2007). The younger generations tend to search for and utilize green products (Kanchanapibul et al., 2014; Marton et al., 2020). It is believed that the younger consumers' motivation to purchase ethical products will boost the next generation's participation in ethical consumption and therefore generate more revenue for this market. When it comes to environmental issues the younger generation appears to be more proactive due to their access to borderless technology to communicate and exchange information. Since the social network of young people has been determined to influence their perception, reinforcing their personal affective response, it is clear that there is an opportunity to reach younger generations (Kanchanapibul et al., 2014).

### 1.1.2. Motivations for ethical consumption

The product choice of consumers depends on many factors (Marton et al., 2020). As previously mentioned, the ethical consumer needs to be knowledgeable about ethical matters in order to be able to take the right decisions (Fuentes & Sörum, 2019; Fux & Čater, 2018; Tran & Paparoidamis, 2019). Fuentes and Sörum (2019) defend that in order to reflect and adapt broad social and environmental responsibilities to their own personal life and experiences, consumers need to be equipped with information. It is hard to make informed choices in the complex consumer society we live in today. However, Tran and Paparoidamis (2019) show us that awareness and information are big motivators for behaviour change towards ethical consumption, since they can lead consumers to an epiphany, and in such cases, willingness to change is attained.

In a study developed by Fux and Čater (2018), it was pointed out that lack of awareness and knowledge is one of the main reasons why people do not behave ethically. Nevertheless, once individuals gained awareness and information there's a chance, they'll reach epiphany and willingness to change behaviour was observed. Fux and Čater's (2018) research demonstrates that is crucial to provide valuable information to the consumer, in order to spark engagement and gain more supporters to the ethical causes.

There are ethical consumption apps that advise and inform consumers about ethical, socially and environmentally conscious choices. Fuentes and Sörum (2019) verified that, by using these apps on a daily basis, consumers are more equipped and prone to problematize consumption in various ways, while also receiving the skills required to solve these problematics of consumption. These apps can produce capable and self-reflective ethical consumer hybrids, since they both motivate and enable ethical consumption. The recurrent pressure these apps put on consumers motivates them to pursue more ethical choices. Contrary to what critics argue, ethical consumer apps are not just promoters of ethical consumerism, nor are they radical consumer tools. In reality, its impact on consumers and consumption is more varied and more limited than is normally supposed. They may, in fact, shape ethical consumption, but they do so in a number of different ways and with varying degrees of success (Fuentes & Sörum, 2019).

Gregory-Smith et al. (2013) explain that consumers are not always motivated to make ethical purchasing choices simply because they are motivated by moral values. Sometimes these choices come from a need to compensate their unethical behaviours with ethical ones (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013) or a mean of self-restoration (Trudel, Klein, Sen, & Dawar, 2020). These compensatory actions may occur in different stages of consumption and disposal or even across completely different categories of consumption (Costa Pinto, Borges, Maurer Herter, & Boto Ferreira, 2020; Gregory-Smith et al., 2013). Emotions are both important outcomes and generators of

ethical/unethical behaviour (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013). Triggering self-threat in consumers encourages them to choose an ethical product, even if its competitor is a better choice from an economic stance (Trudel et al., 2020). It is determined that positive emotions encourage future ethical consumption (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013) while negative emotions delay or restrain consumers from unethical choices (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013; Trudel et al., 2020). This leads to an individualization of the benefits for yourself, above and beyond any own benefits embedded in the products (Davies & Gutsche, 2016).

It is clear that consumers also make ethical choices for personal gains (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013; Hostaa & Žabkarb, 2016). Ethically influenced consumers are open to alternative ethical products and are willing to integrate them into their usual consumption. Consumers are unlikely to go out of their way to buy them, but they are happy to see retailers restrict their choice to the ethical alternative, as long as they can see benefits for themselves through the esteem of colleagues, achievements and perceptions of superior quality (Davies & Gutsche, 2016).

One of the focal motivations behind ethical consumption is the association of fair trade with health benefits (Davies & Gutsche, 2016). A study conducted by Hostaa and Žabkarb (2016) shows that, although buying from a farmers' market is perceived as having a positive social impact, consumers' main reasons for buying there are self-centred. They would buy in such markets in

order to attain health benefits, since those products are perceived as fresher and safer. For consumers who are concerned about their health, the consumption of fair trade is strongly related to the intention to improve health and well-being, as these products are perceived to be of high quality (Davies & Gutsche, 2016). Trudel et al. (2020) theorized that, when faced with a threat to their self-esteem, consumers might choose to self-restore through the avoidance of unhealthy eating, signalling self-control. Besides concern and altruism, there are other important criteria that motivates ethical purchases, such as health, quality, status seeking (Hostaa & Žabkarb, 2016), emotional rewards (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013; Trudel et al., 2020) and ingroup biases (Costa Pinto et al., 2020).

Costa Pinto et al. (2020) determined that ingroup biases stems from consumers using concrete construal focus on social contextual cues and, therefore, being more influenced by ingroups (us) rather than outgroups (them). This ultimately means that consumer tend to be influenced by concrete social cues provided by their ingroups, leading to more ethical behaviours. Conversely, abstract construal reduces ingroup bias in order to allow consumers to dictate their behaviours with their inner beliefs and goals. Therefore, ingroups and outgroups equally influence ethical consumption. The authors propose that social goodwill can encourage ethical behaviour, however, construal level is a boundary that can alter that influence.

Some motivating factors for ethical purchase behaviour are environmental concerns, product attributes, environmental knowledge, subjective/social norm and reference groups. On the other side there are a lot of limiting factors for ethical purchase behaviour, such as high prices, low availability and difficulty in accessing green products, lack of consumer trust in green products, consumer habits, neutralization techniques, denial of responsibility, denials of benefits (consumers do not believe they can make a difference as individuals), appeal to higher loyalties, protecting one's self of self (perceived sacrifice, avoiding a negative self-concept) and consumer attachment to the brand (Marton et al., 2020).

Young consumers have a strong personal responsibility to the environment, despite their lower degree of knowledge on the topic. The personal affective response is a crucial motivation for them to get involved in green issues. The attitude of young people towards green environmental products is extremely positive. In addition, their future repurchasing activities will be driven by their personal affective response and knowledge. The experience of their surroundings enhances this and, eventually, such actions will reflect the belief among the younger generation (Kanchanapibul et al., 2014).

Although price is a primary concern for consumers purchasing decision (Marton et al., 2020), it seems that they can feel encouraged to pay more for a product in an unusual situation such as a celebration, or if it is a special product

itself (Davies & Gutsche, 2016). This means there are moments where the benefits of and ethical purchase can outweigh the price. For instance, when it comes to fair-trade, consumers link premium prices and fair-trade standards with high quality and better ingredients. This association covers a wide range of perceptions, including reduced use of chemicals and natural cultivation. It seems that the assumptions related to ingredient choices come from a more emotional point of view, whereas the expectation of high standards stems from a more rational place. Consumers assume that an independent body is responsible for controlling and assuring that buyers and producers meet predefined quality standards, therefore being more willing to pay a premium price for the product. In the consumers mind, a product with premium pricing is perceived to have ethical integrity and higher quality (Davies & Gutsche, 2016).

**Table 1.** Motivations and outcomes for cruelty-free cosmetic purchases

**Source:** Own elaboration with data from the authors mentioned in the table

<b>Motivations</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Authors/references</b>
Knowledge on the topic	Encourage ethical consumption	Fuentes and Sörum (2019) Fux and Čater (2018) Tran and Papparoidami (2019)

Pressure from ethical apps		Encourage ethical consumption	Fuentes and Sörum (2019)
Need to compensate unethical behaviours/Self-restoration		Encourage ethical consumption	Gregory-Smith et al. (2013) Trudel et al. (2020)
Self-threat		Encourage ethical consumption	Trudel et al. (2020)
Individualization of the benefits for self	Esteem of colleagues, achievements and perceptions of superior quality	Encourage ethical consumption	Davies and Gutsche (2016) Hostaa and Žabkarb (2016)
	Perceived health benefits	Encourage ethical consumption	
Emotions	Positive emotions	Encourage future ethical consumption	Gregory-Smith et al. (2013)
	Negative emotions	Delay/restrain unethical choices	Gregory-Smith et al. (2013) Trudel et al. (2020)

Ingroup biases	Ingroups	Encourage ethical consumption	Costa Pinto et al. (2020)
	Outgroups	Leave more room for the consumer to follow their own beliefs	
Altruism/Concern	Environmental concerns	Encourage ethical consumption	Marton et al. (2020)
	Social impact	Encourage ethical consumption	
Convenience	The retailers restrain unethical choices by presenting more ethical products	Encourage ethical consumption	Davies and Gutsche (2016)
	Low availability/Difficulty in accessing ethical products	Restrain ethical consumption	

Product attributes	Product has better quality/attributes than the unethical choice	Encourage ethical consumption	Marston et al. (2020)
	Price is higher than the unethical choice (applies in normal/day-to-day situations)	Restrain ethical consumption	Marston et al. (2020)
Personal affective response		Encourage ethical consumption (especially in younger consumers)	Kanchanapibul et al. (2014)

### 1.1.3. The attitude-behaviour gap

The ethical consumer presents dissonant behaviour, which can be considered as a manifestation of the attitude-behaviour gap. The majority of consumers can be placed in the grey area of ethical consumption (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013). This derives from the fact that most people make both

ethical and unethical choices (Gregory-Smith et al., 2013) and the changes in behaviour can depend on both implicit or explicit attitudes, either in short or long term (Govind, Singh, Garg, & D'Silva, 2019).

Even though consumers increasingly demand ethical products and defend their willingness to reward ethical companies, studies point to a significant gap between consumers' attitudes in relation to ethical consumption and their purchase behaviour (Govind et al., 2019). When it comes to purchase intentions, a positive attitude does not mean an intent to purchase but merely a higher chance of intending to buy, this is one of the indicators that further confirms the existence of the attitude-behaviour gap. Additionally, purchase intention does not equate to purchase behaviour. Multiple researchers agree on the existence of a gap between purchase intention and behaviour as well as attitude and behaviour (Zollo et al., 2018).

There's a caring deficit in Western society. Care plays a big role in influencing behaviour. The commitment to care reveals a broader duty, obligation and responsibility towards those in need of care. This reveals that ethical consumption behaviour are not restricted to consumption in itself but rather such consumption is influenced by wider identity issues. Considering that the consumers capacity to care does not meet the caring needs of the ethical market, the notion of an attitude-behaviour gap can be regarded as a caring deficit (Shaw et al., 2015).

Globalization strongly influences the constant evolution of human consumption. Consumers are frequently faced with new ethical dilemmas related to products they consume regularly, such as cosmetics products. In the

realm of cruelty-free, there is not enough knowledge to evaluate the weight of animal testing on the consumers' attitude-behaviour gap, despite the individuals' concern for animal welfare (Gouveia, 2018).

There is growing evidence that, to achieve individual behavioural change towards sustainability, there is a need for change in society's social norms and relations. Structural interventions, even if at a small-scale, can clearly reconnect individuals to entrench sustainable practices into everyday life through their wider social processes (Fux & Čater, 2018).

The intention-behaviour gap has been studied in some areas of consumerism. However, it has not been studied enough yet and is lacking empirical evidence when it comes to the cruelty-free cosmetic consumers and their behaviour. Therefore, it is relevant to further research the existence and causes of a gap between the purchase intentions and the attitudes of cruelty-free cosmetic consumers and their purchasing behaviour. The study of this phenomenon could help understand the barriers that constrains consumers to purchase cruelty-free cosmetics (Alaouir et al., 2019).

## 1.2. GEN Y AND ETHICAL CONSUMPTION

Younger consumers are more receptive to innovative concepts and more conscious of cultural, environmental and social aspects (Awad, 2011; Kanchanapibul et al., 2014). The younger generation shows a strong personal affective response when it comes to ethical issues, their behaviour is especially

remarkable when it comes to environmental issues (Kanchanapibul et al., 2014). As previously mentioned, younger generations have more access to social network and communication technologies (Awad, 2011; Kanchanapibul et al., 2014), however, their ecological knowledge seems to be on a lower level (Awad, 2011; Kanchanapibul et al., 2014).

Millennials or Gen Y are people born between the early 1980s and early 2000s (Muskat et al., 2013). The millennials are unquestionably one of the most powerful groups of consumers (Arli et al., 2017). This generation was responsible for change in many aspects, one of which was conscientious, sustainable and pro environmental consumption, creating the footprint around these concepts (Guerrero, 2019). A Nielson 26 online global study proved that the Millennial generation is the most conscious when making purchasing decisions. In this study, 75% of the Gen Y participants affirmed to be willing to pay more for sustainable goods (Marton et al., 2020). Millennials also tend to be more concerned about ethical issues and are in fact the ones responsible for the growth in demand of ethical cosmetics (Alaouir et al., 2019).

Different generations have different purchasing habits and expectations. Gen Y regards shopping as a fun, relaxing and social experience. Their purchase decision is driven by friends and family recommendations, word-to-mouth and the overall in-store experience. They also value digital information such as social media posts, product reviews and user-generated content (Marton et al., 2020). They watch less TV than previous generations and use the internet more

to catch up with the news (64% watch the news online). They spend a lot of time online and prefer to use social networks: YouTube and Instagram. Some even report that they use YouTube to learn about new areas or as an aid to making important decisions (Mareotti, 2020). The internet is a big part of the millennials' lifestyle, and this also reflects on their shopping habits. They want speedy shopping and appreciate foreign brands, consumer lifestyles and global advertisement (Marton et al., 2020). The way they buy is also different from previous generations, 23% use video sites to search for products, 85% buy products after watching videos, 70% use videos to make post-purchase buying decisions. When they are interested in buying something, they will look for YouTube reviews to see if it's worth it and make their decision based on that. After buying the product, they continue to look for it to make sure they made the right purchase (Mareotti, 2020).

While Gen Y is more committed to pro-environmental movements and trends, they are still resistant to change when it comes to personal care and cosmetic products due to lack of knowledge and in some cases the lack of interest on being informed (Guerrero, 2019). Although there is some information on millennials' purchasing habits, few researchers have examined Gen Ys' attitudes and behavioural intentions toward ethical issues. The literature is unanimous on the need for in-depth research about this generation (Bernardes, Ferreira, Marques, & Nogueira, 2019).

### 1.3. CRUELTY-FREE CONSUMPTION

The concern for animal use in cosmetic safety testing began in the 1970's, later gaining momentum in the 1980's. Even before there were any alternatives to animal testing, Europeans called for an actual ban on cosmetic testing on animals (European Commission, n.d.).

To contextualize, an animal test is any type of scientific experiment that is carried out on a living animal that can cause harm, distress or pain to the animals being tested on. These tests are conducted in laboratories that cause intentional harm to the animal in order to assess products' effects and safety (Cruelty-free International, 2021b). It is estimated that each year, in the US alone more than 100 million animals (including mice, rats, frogs, dogs, cats, rabbits, hamsters, guinea pigs, monkeys, fish and birds) are killed in laboratories for biology classes, medical training, curiosity-driven experimentation and testing of chemicals, drugs, food and cosmetics. Before dying, these animals are subjected to vicious acts of cruelty, all in the name of science (PETA, 2021).

The term "cruelty-free" does not have any legal definition, which means cosmetic companies can freely use this term for marketing purposes, even if they're not completely harmless towards animals (U.S. Food & Drug Administration, 2020). According to Cruelty-free International (2021a), consumers consider "cruelty-free" any product that is produced without any

harm towards animals throughout the entire supply chain. Consumers that are concerned with animal cruelty often use the term “vegan” when referring to ethical products as well (Alaouir et al., 2019). When compared to green and organic topics, cruelty-free evokes stronger emotional reactions and is considered a more sensitive topic overall (Alaouir et al., 2019).

The term “cruelty-free” has been used by numerous organizations and corporations in order to describe and label products that have not been tested on animals and, in some cases, do not contain any animal ingredients or by-products. The use of the term “cruelty-free” has stemmed from the growing commitment observed in consumers to either become vegan/vegetarian or boycott animal tested products. Since “cruelty-free” does not have a legal definition, individual companies and animal rights activist groups are responsible for determining what this term means to each of their products. Whereas some groups consider the term to mean the complete elimination of animal use and suffering throughout the whole supply chain, others have advocated that there are certain ways of killing animals that are considered “better” than others, provoking less suffering (Springirth, 2016).

In order to give more transparency and reliance to the customer, certain animal rights organizations, have created trademarks to declare that companies actually follow cruelty-free requirements (Silva, 2020). Cruelty-free products are thus commonly identified through a rabbit symbol or other

identifying design on the packaging, attesting that no animal testing or other form of animal cruelty have been carried out throughout the whole supply chain (Guerrero, 2019). This trademark can only be used when the organization verifies the company follows the established requirements. One of the most known organizations that investigates and provides a trademark for cruelty-free practices is PETA. PETA requirements for their cruelty-free trademark are non-use of animal origin or the absence of practices of acts of cruelty towards animals, verification of ingredient suppliers, formulations, and finished products. After thorough verification and approval, companies can appear in PETA's database as certified cruelty-free company, which is verified with the symbol represented in Figure 1 (Franca, 2018).



**Figure 1.** PETA Cruelty-free logo

**Source:** (PETA, n.d.)

Other entities have dedicated themselves to fight for this cause and work with the aim of giving guarantees and reassurance to the consumer when it comes to purchasing products untested on animals. One of the best-known symbols in the cruelty-free community is the Leaping Bunny Standard (Figure

2). The Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics is responsible for this symbol. For a company to obtain this standard it must absolutely refrain from ordering or carrying out animal testing or use any animal tested ingredient in the manufacturing of their products. Furthermore, the company must not have any partnerships for their manufacture that are dependent on or possess ingredients with quality verification through animal testing (Franca, 2018).



**Figure 2.** Leaping Bunny Standard logo

**Source:** (Leaping Bunny, n.d.)

In the last 20 years there's been a push for regulatory measures in the animal testing processes. These regulatory drivers were generated by political desire originated by strong public opinions but also scientific and economic factors. Animal testing limitations have become increasingly more evident and have resulted in legislation and regulatory drivers that support alternative toxicity testing methods, including in silico techniques and particularly for substances relevant to cosmetic products (Marton et al., 2020). In Europe the

commercialization and production of animal tested products has effectively been banned since 2013 (European Commission, n.d.), shortly followed by countries such as India, Norway, Argentina, Canada, Taiwan and many more (Cahill, 2018).

Conversely, in China these procedures have been mandatory for any cosmetic brand that wished to sell in the country until recently. This means any company that sold in China was obliged to pay and support animal testing on their products in order to enter the market (Silva, 2020). Consumers that support the cruelty-free movement do not agree with exportation of products to mainland China, where mandatory animal testing regulations remain. Individuals recognize and support processes that protect and advocate for animal rights, believing that these practices must be carried out and respected universally, without exceptions. Since these mandatory regulations exist, animal's rights activists believe that organizations should not even consider exporting to China (Cahill, 2018).

Since May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, pre-market animal testing is no longer required for general cosmetic companies that wish to enter the Chinese market. However, this does not mean foreign companies who do not partake in animal testing and sell to mainland China are now cruelty-free. This new legislation only applies to general cosmetics such as: makeup, fragrances, nail, hair and skincare products. Special use cosmetics such as: hair growth products or dyes, deodorants, sunscreen and others, are not included and therefore are still under the

obligation of animal testing. Additionally, the country has not yet abolished the practice of post-market animal testing, which consists in testing products collected of the shelves without the brands knowledge or approval. Even though this has not been a common practice for years there is still legislation that allows for this to happen (Rose, 2021). The outcome is that brands that compromise their cruelty-free status to enter the Chinese market could lose their cruelty-free customers all over the world (Cahill, 2018).

### 1.3.1. The cruelty-free cosmetic industry

The cosmetic sector and its entire environment are responsible for large numbers of sales, thus being big contributors to the economy. This sector also encompasses paradigms of great importance for humanity, such as beauty, health, hygiene, and well-being, and also has implications that involve psychological components of consumers, related to their image. This is a sector of extreme monetary density which is exponentially growing over the years, with prospects of continuing its ascendent pass (Silva, 2020).

The global revenue in 2021 for the Beauty & Personal Care market amounts to US\$511,401m. Furthermore, the market is expected to grow annually by 4.75% (CAGR 2021-2025) (Statista, 2021b). In Europe alone the revenue for the Beauty & Personal Care market amounts to US\$121,015m and it is expected to grow by 3.39% (CAGR 2021-2025) (Statista, 2021a)(Statista, 2021a). In turn,

the global vegan cosmetics market is projected to grow 6.3 percent a year to reach to 20.8 billion U.S. dollars by 2025 (Statista, 2020) and the Global Cruelty-Free Cosmetics Market size is estimated to reach USD 10 billion by 2024 (Market Research Future, 2021).

### 1.3.2. Motivations for purchase of cruelty-free cosmetics

The cruelty-free ethical consumerism is similar to Fair-trade when it comes to motivations. Both types of consumption are often led by altruistic motives (Fux & Čater, 2018). Altruism has an indirect effect on purchasing intention and a direct effect on attitude (Alaouir et al., 2019). Followers become more aware and develop stronger attitudes toward the issue when faced with content that appeals to their empathy and emotions. However, consumers do not hold unidimensional views towards the use of animals or animal by-products. Their views change toward different areas of animal cruelty, since their view on what is animal cruelty varies from individual to individual (Fux & Čater, 2018). This variance can be related to the the lack of knowledge about certain topics (Fux & Čater, 2018) and in the specific case of cruelty-free cosmetics this can further be explained by the confusion that arises when there is too much information involved when looking for this type of product (Alaouir et al., 2019). Consumers are not familiar with the processes of animal use or face cognitive dissonance (their beliefs and behaviours are not aligned) (Fux & Čater, 2018). Both attitude and environmental knowledge have direct positive effects on

consumers purchasing intentions towards cruelty-free cosmetics (Alaouir et al., 2019).

Consumers that are knowledgeable are more likely to buy cruelty-free products and feel deluded when companies publicly state they are “cruelty-free unless when required by law”, which is the case of companies who choose to sell in China (Cahill, 2018). Some of these more knowledgeable consumers go as far as boycotting all products manufactured by companies that perform animal testing, even if the product itself is not directly related to use on animals. This type of consumer prefers to support local animal-friendly businesses or companies that oppose animal testing (Potts et al., 2007).

52% of American adults are opposed to the use of animals in scientific research, and the increasingly small group that accepts animal experimentation does so only because they believe it is necessary for medical progress (PETA, 2021). A survey that was conducted on British females purchasing products that were tested on animals found that 60% of participants claimed not feeling comfortable buying animal tested products. The general survey saw that 42.86% of participants stated that if they found out that their favourite cosmetic brands tested products on animals, they would stop purchasing from these brands. Another study shows comparable results that consumers are not comfortable purchasing from brands that test on animals, also reinforcing that 43% of women are happy to start using cruelty-free cosmetic products.

Furthermore, current cruelty-free cosmetic users state they would start repurchasing products from brands that stop their animal testing practices, showing their support for the brands decision on ending animal cruelty (Cahill, 2018).

Consumers consider different ethical decisions when purchasing goods or services. Some factors driving purchase intention are more relevant and are more impactful than others (Alaouir et al., 2019). For instance, consumer's social networks do not have a very strong but still positive influence on the intention of purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic products (Silva, 2020). Financial constructs, on the other hand, do not show any significant support for its positive effect on purchase intention, consumers are more concerned about financial than ethical values when purchasing cosmetics since they ranked price as their second most important factor (Alaouir et al., 2019). In a study about the factors driving consumers to ethical consumption, 60% of the females studied in the sample were considered likely to purchase cruelty-free cosmetic products in the future. Emphasizing the fact that cruelty-free cosmetics is still a “new” concept to which consumers are still adapting to and learning about (Alaouir et al., 2019). As consumers revealed knowledge and concern with the evolution of the environment and animal welfare, it is possible to confirm that environmental knowledge has a positive influence on purchase intention (Alaouir et al., 2019; Silva, 2020). Attitude is also a key factor that has a strong influence on purchase intention (Silva, 2020). Consumers that show a positive attitude towards cruelty-free cosmetics are

correspondingly more likely to purchase them. Positive attitudes are necessary for the consumer to have a purchase intention towards cruelty-free cosmetics (Silva, 2020). Attitude can be related to consumers concern for the consequences of their purchase and altruistic motives, where both would influence consumers to drive the market to become increasingly ethical (Alaouir et al., 2019). The connection between the environment and individuals is obvious, emphasising the need of the human being to relieve suffering, and consequently the positive correlation between both variables was evident, showcasing the positive influence that altruism has on the consumers' intention of purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics (Alaouir et al., 2019; Silva, 2020).

In contrary, that are also factors that can negatively influence the purchase intention of cruelty-free cosmetic products, such as (Cahill, 2018; Guerrero, 2019):

**Table 2.** Motivation that can negatively influence the purchase intention of cruelty-free cosmetic products

**Source:** Cahill (2018) and Guerrero (2019)

<b>Motivations</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Author/Reference</b>
Culture, tradition, brand recognition and previous experience	Restrain cruelty-free consumption	Guerrero (2019) Cahill (2018)

Lack of knowledge about companies' policies and practices	Restrain cruelty-free consumption	Guerrero (2019)
Lack of choice presented by the local retailers	Restrain cruelty-free consumption	Guerrero (2019)
Love for a non-cruelty-free product	Restrain cruelty-free consumption	Guerrero (2019)
For some consumers animal tested products only manifest more trust in its' safety	Restrain e cruelty-free consumption	Guerrero (2019)
Brand loyalty, price, quality, and availability have more importance than values	Restrain cruelty-free consumption	Guerrero (2019) Cahill (2018)

The majority of consumers support the organizations' pursuit of alternative methods that can replace animal cruelty in order to protect the animals involved and also provide more ethical options in the market, ending the suffering of caused by animal testing methods, as long as these are substantiated by other equally effective and safe tests (Cahill, 2018).

There is a clear sense of impotence observed when it comes to animal abuse, present and in many different areas. When it comes to the millennial generation, the empathy felt pushes this generation to reflect on their consumption habits that do not match with their ideologies, rejecting animal



tested cosmetic products and favouring the care of other living beings  
(Guerrero, 2019).

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

This study focuses on Millennials or Gen Y, which is considered the most influential consumer group in the world (Bernardes et al., 2019). They are today's consumers and decision makers, they are responsible for social change towards sustainable and pro environmental consumption (Guerrero, 2019). Furthermore, there is a vast literature pointing to the need for an in-depth research about this segment, relating to Gen Y's intentions and behaviours towards green issues (Bernardes et al., 2019). This study will focus on this generation not only because of their influence on the current market, but also because they are more likely to have a more conscious decision process and therefore will be able to provide more valuable information compared to other influential generations (Gen Z) (Gaidhani, Arora, & Sharma, 2019).

### **2.1. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

#### **2.1.1. General Research Objective**

General purpose: Explore Generation Y's attitude and behaviour towards cruelty-free cosmetics.

### 2.1.2. Research Questions

The following are the research questions:

1. How do Generation Y consumers regard cruelty-free in terms of products?
2. What attitudes Generation Y consumers do take before purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics?
3. What influences Gen Y consumers' purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics?

### 2.2. APPROACH

The most appropriate research approach for this study is qualitative and exploratory. This methodology was chosen since it is based on the explanation of specific phenomena in order to understand the general phenomenon, Gen y's attitude and behaviour towards cruelty-free cosmetics. This methodology follows a more intuitive procedure while simultaneously being more flexible and more adaptable to unforeseen indices, or to the evolution of hypotheses (Bardin, 2011).

### 2.3. EMPIRICAL SETTING

For this study the primary sources of information used were Focus Group and Interview participants that were selected according to the following criteria:

- Belongs to Gen Y (having been born between 1980 and 2000)
- People who purchase cosmetic products

The Focus Group and Interview participants were chosen with no other criteria in mind order to allow for a sample with unique characterises of their own and a broader understanding of the attitudes and behaviours of Gen Y towards cruelty-free cosmetics.

### 2.3.1.Data collection techniques and sources

Given the exploratory nature of the research, focus group and Interviews' were identified as the most appropriate techniques (Bray, Johns, & Kilburn, 2011). They will allow for a deeper understanding of the ethical consumers' attitudes and behaviours.

#### 2.3.1.1. Focus Group

A focus group was conducted in order to start a conversation about the consumers' intentions and motivations for ethical consumption. This is the most appropriate tool for this dissertation due to its exploratory nature (Bray et al., 2011).

With this focus group, word association techniques were used in order to prompt quick, first thought reactions from participants. This is a rapid, easy and effective method to use in exploratory research (Roininen, Arvola, &

Lähteenmäki, 2006). This method was expected to incentive more honest responses and also “break the ice” between participants.

#### 2.3.1.2. Interviews

A set of interviews were conducted with the intention of answering the research questions 1 and 2. These interviews were conducted with a semi-structured script, since this method allows for a focused yet flexible communication between the researcher and the subjects (Lekakis, 2014).

Interviews allow for the researcher to listen to personal narratives and explore them more deeply, which in turn leads to a more thorough understanding of the consumers’ motivations and practices (Lekakis, 2014).

### 2.4. PROCESS OF RESEARCH

The research was conducted in two phases, providing different methods and opportunities for data collection. Although both phases have similar sources there will be no repetition of participants to avoid the risk of redundancy.

#### Phase 1

In this phase 1, a focus group discussion was conducted with 8 participants to ensure diversity. The discussion was conducted online for health concerns and government restrictions not related to this study and had a duration of one

hour. The first phase helped build the script for the next phase, providing an open discussing in which more themes were encountered.

**Table 3.** Focus group participants' characterization

	<b>Identification</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>
1	A.F.	22	Female
2	C.M.	22	Female
3	C.P.	22	Female
4	D.C.	27	Female
5	F.C.	22	Female
6	M.A.	22	Female
7	M.P.	22	Female
8	M.T.	24	Female

This phase attempted to answer research questions 1, 2 and 3.

## Phase 2

In this phase 12 participants were interviewed. The interviews were semi-structured to provide a more open and deeper conversation but still maintaining the focus on the topic. They were conducted online due to health

concerns not related to the study and had a duration of between 20 to 40 minutes each.

**Table 4.** Interview participants' characterization

	<b>Identification</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>
1	A.C.	40	Female
2	A.M.	23	Female
3	C.A.	23	Female
4	I.S.	27	Female
5	I.T.	24	Female
6	L.C.	23	Female
7	M.C.	23	Female
8	M.D.	34	Female
9	M.R.	22	Female
10	P.R.	33	Female
11	S.F.	37	Female
12	V.C.	23	Female

Phase 2 intended to gain more insights and deeper understanding on questions 1, 2 and 3.

## 2.5. DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected from the focus group and interviews was analysed using the following processes.

The data analysis method used was content analysis. This is a set of communication analysis techniques that use systematic and objective procedures to describe the content of messages (Bardin, 2011)

The qualitative analysis process comprises 3 different phases of content analysis: pre-analysis; exploration of the material and treatment of results; inference; and interpretation (Bardin, 2011).

In the pre-analysis phase, a first approach to interviews was established. This is done through a skimming reading technique, which allows to identify the first pertinent data (Bardin, 2011).

Then, a deeper reading was done, in order to be able to code the material. Coding is a process in which raw data is systematically transformed and aggregated into units, which allow an accurate description of the pertinent characteristics of its content (Bardin, 2011).

After identifying the units in themes, a thematic analysis of the interviews and the focus group was carried out, where main text segments were identified, which allowed a better organization of the present data.



In the interpretation of the results phase, the inference process was used, reflecting later on the conclusions obtained.

### 3. FINDINGS

The results will be presented in this chapter. The main findings are presented for each research question.

#### **How do Generation Y consumers regard cruelty-free in terms of cosmetic products?**

Since cruelty-free is a subject that is still not profoundly explored, it is important to understand what Generation Y's views and beliefs on the subject are with the intention of verifying if the term "cruelty-free" has a unique meaning for this generation or multiple meanings.

**Table 5.** Gen Y regards of cruelty-free cosmetic products

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Excerpts</b>
No animal testing	“(A cruelty-free product) is a product that is not tested on animals obviously in any supply-chain, all agents.” M.T. – Focus Group  “Cruelty-free means they don’t test on animals” I.S. – Interview
Vegan	“I think for a product to be truly cruelty-free should be vegan at least.” D.C. – Focus Group

	<p>"Cruelty-free is something that is not of animal origin and that has nothing to do with animals, protect animals" C.A. – Interview</p> <p>"Cruelty-free I believe it is not tested on animals, nor does it use anything derived from animals." M.C. – Interview</p> <p>"(...) they are not tested in animals and are vegan" V.C. - Interview</p>
<p>Regulated by law</p>	<p>"I don't believe there's any specific law. I think there is for the issue of certification, for the issue where the company or entity must have to be effectively cruelty-free" M.P. – Focus Group</p> <p>"Sorry, now, at the national level what we have are guidelines that have been transposed from the European Union as to the components that cannot be used in animals. We don't have the cruelty-free label." C.M. – Focus Group</p>

	<p>"I avoid buying American brands in general because I know that most of them are tested on animals, but here in Europe I think that's already illegal." L.C. – Interview</p>
<p>Not sold in China</p>	<p>"... there are brands that like to pass on the image that they are cruelty-free and that do not test on animals and so, but then sell to markets like China in which to be able to sell in China they are required to test on animals." D.C. – Focus Group</p>
<p>More expensive</p>	<p>"(...) these products tend to be a little more expensive." M.P. – Focus Group</p> <p>“The main factor for some companies to keep testing on animals is the price because they go the easier way that is to test on animals and present a price to the consumer that is very desirable, and the consumer does not come out of that bubble to always be buying.” C.P. – Focus Group</p> <p>“If (...) the price was more affordable, because usually as they differ in that aspect (being</p>

	<p>cruelty-free) they increase the price a bit (...)"</p> <p>I.T. – Interview</p> <p>"I think in general the price is higher" L.C. – Interview</p>
<p>Certification is not trustworthy</p>	<p>"(...) to have the seal of quality certification there are parameters that must comply and then have the initial audits and follow-up to ensure that the entity is effectively complying and that it has effectively the parameter of cruelty-free." M.P. – Focus Group</p> <p>"Yes, I think so. Like Mariana said they need certifications, and I think, I mean, I'm pretty sure the certifications are very thorough and it's hard to get, right?" M.T. – Focus Group</p>
<p>Certified by some entity</p>	<p>"And even economic groups often make these labels say they defend the environment and don't interfere with environmental sustainability, but deep down that's all front because behind them they're able to do the whole reverse because that's just a label for</p>

	<p>people to be more and more consumerist." C.M.          – Focus Group</p> <p>"Often what is behind, although there are norms, we do not know and often money is above all these norms, unfortunately" M.A. – Focus Group</p>
<p>Environmentally friendly</p>	<p>"They are cosmetics that are not tested on animals that have a minimum organic and biodegradable percentage, but I don't know the percentages." L.C. – Interview</p>

The main considerations that Gen Y participants have shown to have of cruelty-free cosmetics were (1) it means there is no animal testing involved, (2) cruelty-free cosmetics are vegan, (3) cruelty-free cosmetics are regulated by law, (4) in order for a cosmetic brand to be truly cruelty-free it cannot be sold in China, (5) cruelty-free cosmetics are more expensive, (6) cruelty-free cosmetics must be certified by some identity, (7) the certification is not trustworthy and (8) cruelty-free products are environmentally friendly.

Additionally, it was mentioned by the participants that non-cruelty-free brands can have some cruelty-free products:

- “Quem disse Berenice has some cruelty-free products” I.T. 24

- “Only if this brand launches another variety of similar and cruelty-free products do I ponder between the two options.”

I.T.24

- “Bioderma is cruelty-free on some things” L.C. 23

### **What attitudes Generation Y consumers do take before purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics?**

Consumers take steps before purchasing any type of cosmetic. In order to understand their attitude and behaviour towards cruelty-free cosmetics it is important to understand what attitudes Gen Y takes prior to their cruelty-free purchases, which will in turn help comprehend what are the factors that can incentivise and/or discourage the choice for said cosmetics and provide a deeper knowledge on how to reach consumers pre moment of purchase.

**Table 6.** Attitudes Generation Y consumers take before purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics

Theme	Excerpts
Research new products	<p>“I don't have much affinity in general with cosmetic brands so every now and then I remember going looking for new products” M.P.</p> <p>– Focus Group</p>

	<p>"I often research what packaging is like, how products are more or less manufactured, what ingredients you have because I think it's important." L.C. – Interview</p>
<p>Research if the brand is cruelty-free</p>	<p>"If it's a lipstick or something we're always more predisposed to try something new. Then we'll look whether the brand is cruelty-free." C.P. – Focus Group</p>
<p>Read reviews</p>	<p>"The most important is the reviews, hear the opinion of professionals, makeup artists, hear what they think of the product" F.C. – Focus Group</p> <p>"I never buy a product without watching the reviews and I don't watch one, I watch many. I must always make sure it's worth it, I never buy anything in the dark." "M.A. – Focus Group</p> <p>"I mostly search for reviews or opinions about the products." S.F. – Interview</p>
<p>Ask recommendations from friends and family</p>	<p>"My best friend introduced me to these cruelty-free brands" I.S. – Interview</p>

	<p>"I ask for the recommendation of family and friends because as I do not know much about cosmetics, I trust what they tell me because I believe that if they recommend me, it is because it is worth it" C.A. – Interview</p> <p>"And, in the product yes, I look for feedback, whether people liked it or not, what they liked, what they didn't like, even opinions of friends and acquaintances." M.D. – Interview</p> <p>"I met these brands through a friend because I asked her for recommendations" M.R. – Interview</p>
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The attitudes taken by Gen Y consumers before purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics identified were (1) research new products, (2) research if the brand is cruelty-free, (3) read reviews and (4) ask recommendations from friends and family. From these attitudes is perceptible that consumers look for information in general about the cosmetics they choose to buy.

**What influences Gen Y consumers' purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics?**

This research question was divided into 2 categories; barriers that negatively influence cruelty-free purchases and motivations that positively influence cruelty-free purchases.

Understanding the barriers that can prevent consumers' purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics, can be very useful. In the table below are presented the barriers that influence GenY consumers' purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics identified in this study.

**Table 7.** Barriers to Gen Y's cruelty-free cosmetic purchases

Theme	Excerpts
Loyalty to non-cruelty-free brands	<p data-bbox="699 1111 1358 1368">“At this stage we are already very familiar with certain brands and some certain brands are not cruelty-free. (...) I value cruelty-free only if I am not loyal to the brand” C.P. – Focus Group</p> <p data-bbox="699 1485 1358 1742">“I will not stop buying products because they are not cruelty-free. I have my brands that I like and unfortunately, or not, I am still a consumer of these brands” M.T. – Focus Group</p> <p data-bbox="699 1859 1358 1966">“It depends, I already have my brands very settled, so I usually buy the same thing all the</p>

	<p>time. It's only when I'm really looking for a new product that I research (if the product is cruelty-free), but it's rare." F.C. – Focus Group</p>
<p>Loyalty to non-cruelty-free products</p>	<p>"Even knowing that it is tested on animals is a product that I would still choose because I know that it is a product that I know and that I already know that it will have that effect or that it will work that way. It's not something I like, I'd love to be able to trade for one that was cruelty-free not so much for the brand, but for the product." D.C. – Focus Group</p> <p>"If there is a product that I am very used to, as is for example the case of my foundation that is a product that people do not usually change much, if that foundation is not cruelty-free but I like it I will buy it because I know I can count on it." I.T. – Interview</p> <p>"There are a lot of products that I wouldn't trade for others that are cruelty-free because they've been with me for a long time and are my favourites" V.C. – Interview</p>

<p>High price</p>	<p>"I won't pay another 20€ just because it's cruelty-free." M.T. – Focus Group</p> <p>"The most correct thing is to opt for a product that is not tested on animals, but I always put the price part on the scale as well. I think cruelty-free products are much more expensive and it becomes more difficult to raise awareness." A.M. – Interview</p>
<p>Self-Indulgence</p>	<p>"One aspect that affects me is the issue of self-indulgence, in which we continue to buy because we like the product and do not take the trouble to check if it is tested on animals" M.C. – Interview</p>
<p>Product Accessibility</p>	<p>"Sometimes if it is a product that does not exist here, and we have to order from outside it is risky because sometimes it may not arrive" V.C. – Interview</p> <p>"If I can buy in a supermarket or in a store that has in the mall, I would buy this, would not be looking for a product that I wanted very much" C.A. – Interview</p>

The barriers identified that negatively affect Gen Y cruelty-free purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics were (1) loyalty to non-cruelty-free brands, (2) loyalty to non-cruelty-free products, (3) high price, (4) self-indulgence, and (5) product accessibility.

If the motivations for cruelty-free cosmetic purchases are known, that can open new doors for cruelty-free cosmetic brands. The table presented below presents the positive motivations that influence GenY consumers' purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics identified in this study.

**Table 8.** Motivations for Gen Y's cruelty-free cosmetic purchases

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Excerpts</b>
Packaging	<p>"I don't think it's the most important but when brands make collaborations with something I like, like Disney or Mulan, it makes me want to buy it, a lot of the times I don't even like the colours of the product, is the packaging that I like, and it influences me a lot to buy it" D.C. – Focus Group</p>
Ingredients	<p>"I always try to choose products with no alcohol because there are skincare products that have</p>

	<p>very aggressive ingredients for the skin, and we don't realize it but end up doing a lot of harm."</p> <p>M.A. – Focus Group</p> <p>"(...) a cruelty-free product is more careful with the ingredients for your skin." M.P. – Focus Group</p>
<p>Lower Price</p>	<p>"If the price of cruelty-free products was lower I think we'd be more willing to experiment and probably make the switch in the future" M.T. – Focus Group</p> <p>"The price (could encourage me to buy more cruelty-free cosmetics), although there are already affordable cruelty-free cosmetics I think if those big brands would have more affordable prices, I would already buy more."</p> <p>I.S. – Interview</p>
<p>Safety</p>	<p>"At this stage I think that vegan and cruelty-free products even bring me more safety than properly those that are tested on animals, because it is noted that the product was well thought out." M.P. 22 – Focus Group</p>

	<p>“(…) the products are better for your skin, and I know I won’t breakout” P.R. 33 – Interview</p>
<p>Information</p>	<p>“If there is something that identifies these products, I think it should be more publicized because I don’t even know what these symbols are, and I think I would opt more for these products (cruelty-free) if I knew.” A.M. – Interview</p> <p>"If they had a big campaign in the supermarket or other stores, if I was in a hallway and had a big indication for these products, I would see what it was about and probably buy" C.A. – Interview</p> <p>"The information about cruelty-free should be more present in TV, internet or even in the radio. I don't hear much information about it but if I was more informed, I would buy more cruelty-free products" A.C. – Interview</p>
<p>Concern for animals</p>	<p>“Concern for animals, for me is a very important factor and I think that nowadays we</p>

	<p>are already at a level of technology so advanced that it makes no sense (testing on animals)" I.S.</p> <p>- Interview</p> <p>"(...) know what the animals suffer from all these issues and that basically serve as guinea pigs for brands and that often things go wrong. That and the fact that I like animals so much encourage me to think a little more and be more aware in my purchases" M.C. - Interview</p>
<p>Concern for the environment</p>	<p>"It is no longer enough for the products to be good for the skin, but they also need to be good for the environment and not to be tested on animals." I.T. - Interview</p> <p>"Concern for the environment is the most important thing." L.C. - Interview</p> <p>"The concern about the environment is very important for me, I like to preserve my environment and give priority to sustainable products" A.C. - Interview</p>

<p>Quality</p>	<p>“Quality because when it comes to these products it is something that we put on our face and quality is very important (...) brands that are cruelty-free can have quality without hurting and mistreating animals.” I.S. – Interview</p> <p>“Quality is also very important because it is a cosmetic and we will put on our skin and there may be some infection, so I do not buy anything that is not of quality” I.T. – Interview</p> <p>"Quality is important because as they are expensive products if they do not have quality is very annoying" V.C. – Interview</p>
<p>Recommendation from influencer</p>	<p>"For example, in the case of influencers, the topic be addressed by them in a way that reaches the younger audience that has attention to their recommendations. The articles in the newspapers and magazines nobody cares about it, if I read that 1500 people that cruelty-free is good, it doesn't interest me</p>

	<p>because I don't know them from nowhere, they have no credibility for me." I.T. – Interview</p>
<p>Social media</p>	<p>"I have got to know a lot of cruelty-free brands through Social Networks, some pages I follow and influencers" P.R. – Interview</p> <p>"Honestly in our generation I think it is important to disseminate the theme on social networks (...), in our generation I think that social networks are the one that has the most impact to encourage the purchase and support of causes" C.A. – Interview</p> <p>"I think it takes us is a bit influenced and now the fact that there are the influencers that many times on social networks start to defend a certain subject and then you like the person, and you start to hear what they have to say, and you end up adopting a little thought of that person and defending what she defends" F.C. – Focus Group</p>

The motivations identified that can positively affect Gen Y cruelty-free purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics were (1) packaging), (2) ingredients, (3)



lower price, (4) safety, (5) information, (6) concern for animals, (7) concern for environment, (8) quality, (9) recommendation from influencers and (10) social media.

## 4. DISCUSSION

After analysing the results in the Findings section, the data is discussed in this section in light of the literature review. The present study intends to understand Generation Y's attitude and behaviour towards cruelty-free cosmetics.

The table below briefly answers the research questions of this study and is followed by a more in-depth examination of each research question.

**Table 9.** Research questions resume answers

**Source:** Own Elaboration

<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
1. How do Generation Y consumers regard cruelty-free in terms of cosmetic products?	Gen Y sees cruelty-free as not testing products in animals and vastly believed there are laws in place to assure brands follow through with their cruelty-free promises.  Some consumers are still not clear on the meaning of cruelty-free as they add other different layers to the term.
2. What attitudes Generation Y consumers do take before purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics?	Consumers that intentionally purchase cruelty-free cosmetics look for information on the subject.

	<p>The Gen Y consumer in general compares prices as well as other relevant product characteristics before purchasing a cruelty-free cosmetic.</p>
<p>3. What influences Gen Y consumers' purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics?</p>	<p>It seems the notion of high price, the lack of knowledge on the subject, as well as brand/product loyalty are the biggest deterrents from cruelty-free cosmetic purchases.</p> <p>The concern for animal safety is the biggest motivator for intentional cruelty-free cosmetic purchases. The notion of better ingredients and sustainability also seem to encourage these purchases.</p>

**How do Generation Y consumers regard cruelty-free in terms of cosmetic products?**

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (2020), there is no legal meaning for the term “cruelty-free” and in Europe it is forbidden to commercialize and produce animal tested products since 2013 (European Commission, n.d.). The present study suggests that consumers are confused about the laws that exist regarding cruelty-free cosmetics. Some participants believe that the term “cruelty-free” can’t legally be used unless the company is completely cruelty-free, while others defend that certification from PETA or Leaping Bunny Standard are a certification of the law. However, these

certifications are given by the organization's requirements (Franca, 2018). This shows that consumers are not that familiar with the term cruelty-free. In fact, participants have different interpretations of the term "cruelty-free" and what it means in the cosmetic world.

PETA and The Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics define cruelty-free as the absence of practices of acts of cruelty-free towards animals throughout the whole supply-chain (Franca, 2018). However, participants have given many other characteristics to the term "cruelty-free" cosmetics, such as: (1) it means there is no animal testing involved, (2) cruelty-free cosmetics are vegan, (3) the laws on cruelty-free are not clear, (4) cruelty-free cosmetics cannot be sold in China, (5) cruelty-free cosmetics are more expensive, (6) cruelty-free cosmetics must be certified by some identity, (7) the certification is not trust worthy and (8) cruelty-free products are environmentally friendly. It is clear that consumers still have a lot of misinformation around the topic. As Cahill (2018) explains, consumers that support the cruelty-free movement are against the exportation of products to mainland China, since mandatory animal testing regulations are still in practice there. This study confirms that while some consumers boycott cosmetics sold in China, another part of them does not consider this to be a decisive factor to determine a product as being cruelty-free or not.

There also seems to be present the notion that non-cruelty-free brands can have a range of cruelty-free products. Participants would still consider buying

cruelty-free products from a brand that is not entirely cruelty-free and still consider these brands as somewhat cruelty-free.

### **What attitudes Generation Y consumers do take before purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics?**

Marton et al. (2020) determined in their study that consumers' product choice is dependent on many factors and that Gen Y is the most conscious with their purchasing decisions. For this reason, it is important to understand what attitudes Gen Y consumers take before purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics. The attitudes that Millennials take before purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics identified by this study were (1) research new products, (2) research if the brand is cruelty-free, (3) read reviews and (4) ask recommendations from friends and family. When analysing these attitudes, it is possible to identify Gen Y's touch points with cruelty-free cosmetics. According to Fuentes and Sörum (2019) and Fux and Čater (2018) consumers need to be knowledgeable about ethical concerns before they make ethical purchasing decisions. It seems that Gen Y needs information on the cosmetic product before purchasing it. This study proves that Costa Pinto et al. (2020) study can be extended from its original focus, ethical consumption, to the theme of cruelty-free cosmetics Gen Y asks their family and friends for recommendations before purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics which is compatible with Costa et al. (2020) research, consumers are influenced by social cues in their ingroups leading to more

ethical behaviours. Costa et al. (2020) determined that consumers are also influenced by their outgroups, which is proven in this study since Gen Y is very avid of reading reviews from influencers and other people before making their cruelty-free cosmetic choice. The truly dedicated cruelty-free cosmetic lovers go as far as looking up the cruelty-free status of a cosmetic brand before purchasing it.

### **What influences Gen Y consumers' purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics?**

Understanding what can influence Gen Y consumers' purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics can greatly benefit cruelty-free cosmetic brands as well as cruelty-free organizations such as PETA. By recognising the motivations that can either encourage or prevent Generation Y from purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics it is possible to gain an insight into this group of consumers' minds.

According to Guerrero (2019) the love for a non-cruelty-free product can negatively influence the purchase of cruelty-free cosmetic products. This study corroborates this claim, Gen Y consumers stick to their favourite products even if they are not cruelty-free. Gen Y consumers are very reluctant to substituting their favourite products. It was clear during the data analysis that product loyalty surpasses cruelty-free purchasing intentions. The same can be said about brand loyalty. Guerrero (2019) and Cahill (2018) determined that brand loyalty can have a negative influence in the purchase intention of cruelty-free cosmetics and this study confirms it.

Alouir et al. (2019) study shows that consumers are very focused on price, more than in making ethical choices. In this study it was determined that high price can indeed prevent Gen Y consumers from their cruelty-free cosmetic purchase intentions, which is in agreement with Marton et al. (2020) study. In fact, many participants seem to believe cruelty-free cosmetics are objectively pricier than non-cruelty-free cosmetics. This notion steers Gen Y consumers from knowingly and intentionally purchasing more cruelty-free cosmetics.

According to Marton et al. (2020), low availability or difficulty to access an ethical product can restrain ethical consumption. The findings in this study support this idea, participants have shown to prefer products that are easily accessible to them, even if said products are not cruelty-free. Furthermore, participants revealed that they would not go through the troubles to acquire a cruelty-free cosmetic if it was not conveniently available to them.

The last barrier found to prevent cruelty-free cosmetic purchases' intentions was self-indulgence. This barrier was identified in this study and was not found in the considered literature. One participant even directly mentioned her need for self-indulgence and how that affects her cosmetic purchasing habits. It appears that Gen Y consumers feel the need to self-satisfy with their purchases and, in those moments, cruelty-free status is not important to them.

**Table 10.** Barriers for Gen Y cruelty-free cosmetic purchasing

**Source:** Own Elaboration

<b>New barriers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-indulgence</li> </ul>
<b>Barriers that corroborate other studies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loyalty to non-cruelty-free brands – Guerrero (2019); Cahill (2018)</li> <li>• Loyalty to non-cruelty-free products – Guerrero (2019)</li> <li>• High price – Marton et al. (2020)</li> <li>• Product accessibility – Marton et al. (2020); Guerrero (2019)</li> </ul>

There are also motivations that encourage cruelty-free cosmetic purchasing intentions. Fuentes and Sörum (2019), Fux and Čater (2018) and Tran and Paparoidami (2019) agree that information and knowledge are the stronger motivations for cruelty-free cosmetic purchasing intentions. Participants in this study undoubtedly confirm this. Gen Y feels the need to be informed about the cruelty-free cosmetic topic before taking any action about it. It was evident that participants felt more information should be made available by media and cruelty-free cosmetic brands about the topic.

The present study also aligns with Marton et al. (2020) study's conclusions about quality and environmental concern. Marton et al. (2020) discovered that Hungarian consumers consider quality to be the most important factor when purchasing a product. This can also be said for Generation Y, as all the participants identified quality as the most important factor when purchasing a cosmetic product. For this reason, this is considered to be a positive motivator for cruelty-free cosmetic purchases. Marton et al. (2020) also identified that consumers are concerned for the environment and are motivated to purchase products with labels referring to bio or environmentally friendly products. During this study it was concluded that Gen Y consumers are concerned for with the environment and look for more environmentally friendly options. Furthermore, as previously motioned, this generation believes cruelty-free cosmetics are environmentally friendly, it is easy to make the connection between these two conclusions and arrive to the conclusion that concern for the environment can motivate Gen Y consumers cruelty-free cosmetic purchases.

Guerrero (2019) concluded that Gen Y consumers feel safer when using animal tested products. However, the findings in the present study contradict Guerrero (2019) study. Participants shown more trust in cruelty-free cosmetics, feeling safer using them then non-cruelty-free cosmetic products due to the possible ingredients they contain.

New motivations for Gen Y cruelty-free cosmetic purchasing intentions were found during the course of this study. Participants shown to give great value to packaging and ingredient lists. It seems thematic, well thought out packaging can increase Gen Y's purchasing intentions of cosmetics. A good list of healthy and clean ingredients can do the same.

When it comes to price, Marton et al. (2020) concluded, as previously stated, that high prices can deter consumers from purchasing ethical products. However, this study proved price goes a step further in Gen Y consumers' purchasing intentions. It seems that a lower price (in comparison to other products) can actually motivate consumers to choose a cruelty-free cosmetic product over other non-cruelty-free option.

Lastly, participants showed a great appreciation for social media and influencer recommendation when it comes to the way they obtain information about brands and products. For this reason, Gen Y consumers can be positively influenced by those sources to purchase cruelty-free cosmetics. When these motivations ally with the most important positive motivator of all, information, they can become the vehicle of information and greatly influence Gen Y cruelty-free purchasing intentions.

**Table 11.** Motivations for Gen Y cruelty-free cosmetic purchasing

**Source:** Own Elaboration

<p><b>New motivations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Packaging</li> <li>• Ingredients</li> <li>• Lower price</li> <li>• Concern for animals</li> <li>• Social media</li> <li>• Recommendation from influencers</li> </ul>
<p><b>Motivations that corroborate other studies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information - Fuentes and Sörum (2019); Fux and Čater (2018); Tran and Papparoidami (2019)</li> <li>• Concern for environment - Marton et al. (2020)</li> <li>• Quality - Marton et al. (2020)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Motivations that contradict other studies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety - Guerrero (2019)</li> </ul>

This study’s findings can be useful for cruelty-free cosmetic brands, cruelty-free organizations and social media pages dedicated to spreading information about cruelty-free cosmetics. By knowing the barriers and motivations for cruelty-free cosmetic purchasing intentions of Generation Y consumers, it is

possible to design comprehensive marketing strategies that appeal to those consumers and incentivise them to purchase cruelty-free cosmetic options instead of non-cruelty-free cosmetic ones.

It is important to note that the participants of this study recognize social media as one of the most impactful means of obtaining information and strongly value recommendations from influencers. This can also be valuable information when designing a marketing strategy that revolves around cruelty-free cosmetics.



## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of the present study was to understand Generation Y's attitude and behaviour towards cruelty-free cosmetics. The data findings of this study allowed for a deeper understanding of how this group of consumers regards cruelty-free cosmetics, what attitudes they take before purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics and what influences their purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics.

Generation Y has different interpretations of what the term cruelty-free cosmetics means but all of them are in agreement in one thing, cruelty-free cosmetics are not tested in animals at any step of the supply-chain, including the ingredients used to produce the final product. Apart from this, many layers were added to what it means to be cruelty-free. The terms “vegan” and “environmentally friendly” were used to describe cruelty-free cosmetics, which shows Gen Y consumers' confusion between ethical consumption terms. This generation believes there are laws in place to regulate and uphold cruelty-free standards and are sure that these products are certified by some entity. However, the mistrust in those certifications was perceivable. Gen Y consumers are cynical about cruelty-free certification since they believe this certification can be bought.

When consumers of Generation Y intentionally purchase cruelty-free cosmetics they research the product beforehand as well as verify that the product chosen is cruelty-free. This group of consumers compares products before purchasing them and research characteristics such as price, ingredients, quality, packaging, and product accessibility. It was determined that this generation likes to make informed purchases and insure they made the best decision. For this reason, they read reviews online and ask recommendations from friends and family. It is perceptible that Gen Y is very impacted by word to mouth marketing techniques when it comes to their cosmetic purchases.

Generation Y's cruelty-free cosmetic purchases are clearly influenced by different barriers and motivations. Loyalty is one of the barriers identified that can prevent Gen Y's cosmetic purchases. Consumers are loyal to cosmetic brands and products and choose them over all others because they already know the product/brand and feel like they can count on it to always deliver the expected results. If these brands or products are not cruelty-free consumers will still stick to them. However, Gen Y consumers are willing to try new brands and products when they are looking for new products. The product accessibility can also be a barrier to cruelty-free cosmetic purchasing. Gen Y consumers like easy shopping experiences and are not willing to go through complicated purchasing processes just to ensure they buy a cruelty-free cosmetic instead of a non-cruelty-free one.

Gen Y feels the need to self-indulge, and if they are in love with a product and/or really want to try it, cruelty-free status is not that important. This means the product/brand must engage consumers from the get-go and present more benefits and better attributes to the consumer in order to surpass other products/brands in the market. The findings showed that packaging, ingredients, and quality can be motivations for Gen Y's cruelty-free cosmetic purchasing. This way it is possible to give answer the self-indulgence barrier with these motivations.

Another barrier to Gen Y's cruelty-free cosmetic purchases is the notion of high price. It seems this generation perceives cruelty-free cosmetics as being more expensive than non-cruelty-free products and for that reason they are reluctant to purchase them. However, if the price is lower that can be a motivation for this group of consumers to purchase cruelty-free cosmetics instead of a more expensive non-cruelty-free option.

As previously mentioned, Generation Y likes to be informed before making cosmetic purchases. Information can be a strong motivation for cruelty-free cosmetic purchasing. Gen Y consumers are not aware of which brands are cruelty-free or not. Information on what makes a brand cruelty-free, which brands are cruelty-free and the benefits of making cruelty-free choices can motivate Gen Y consumers to choose cruelty-free cosmetics over non-cruelty-free ones. This information can be made available by cruelty-free brands,

influencers, cruelty-free organizations and social media pages dedicated to spreading information about cruelty-free cosmetics.

The concern for animals is a clear motivation for cruelty-free purchasing. Gen Y consumers care about animals' wellbeing and try to choose options that can minimize the animals' suffering. For this reason, Gen Y consumers are susceptible to pleas for animal protection. The concern for the environment can also be a motivation for cruelty-free cosmetic purchasing. Gen Y has concerned for the environment and looks for environmentally friendly options. As previously mentioned, some Gen Y consumers already make the association between cruelty-free and environmentally friendly, which can be an advantage for cruelty-free brands.

Finally, social media is obviously Generation Y's biggest source for information about cosmetics. It was observed in this study that consumers are strongly influenced by the information they consume on social media and if they consume more cruelty-free content they are more mindful of the subject when making cosmetic purchases. Recommendations from influencers are also a motivation for cruelty-free cosmetic purchasing. Consumers like these influencers they follow online and trust their opinions, so if an influencer is promoting cruelty-free cosmetics Gen Y consumers are motivated to buy them.

The practical contributions of this study are here presented in the form of recommendations to cruelty-free cosmetic brands, cruelty-free organizations and social media pages dedicated to spreading information about cruelty-free cosmetics:

- Cruelty-free organizations should reaffirm the standards for cruelty-free certification and ensure more trust to Gen Y.
- Cruelty-free cosmetic brands should make their products easily accessible.
- When designing a pricing strategy cruelty-free cosmetic brands should take into account that high prices can prevent cruelty-free cosmetic purchasing and low prices can motivate it.
- Consumers consider cruelty-free to be more expensive so companies that are cruelty-free and have the same or lower price than the average of the market should communicate it along with the fact that they are cruelty-free.
- Characteristics such as price, ingredient list, quality and packaging can be more important than the cruelty-free status of a product so companies should focus their communications on these characteristics.
- Word to mouth and influencer marketing are excellent marketing technics for the cosmetic market, cruelty-free cosmetic brands should invest in them.

- Organizations and brand should inform the consumer on the subject of cruelty-free cosmetics and on animal testing practices as this can motivate Gen Y to purchase cruelty-free cosmetics.
- Cruelty-free brands should invest in making their products environmentally friendly and communicating this characteristic as it can motivate Gen Y consumers to purchase their products.
- Social media is the go-to place for information on cosmetics so cruelty-free cosmetic brands, cruelty-free organizations and social media pages dedicated to spreading information about cruelty-free cosmetics should strongly invest in a social media marketing strategy.
- Consumers are very motivated by information so cruelty-free cosmetic brands, cruelty-free organizations and social media pages dedicated to spreading information about cruelty-free cosmetics should invest in a strong content marketing strategy.

This study will help cruelty-free cosmetic brands, cruelty-free organizations and social media pages dedicated to spreading information to build a unified marketing strategy to motivate consumers to purchase cruelty-free cosmetics.

## **6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

In this chapter are presented the limitations of the present study and the recommendations for future research. The limitations of the study will help contextualize it and will expose how its context impacted the findings.

The first study limitation was the number and diversity of participants in the study. Only 12 Generation Y consumers were interviewed during this study and only one focus group was performed with 8 participants. This is a very small sample to represent a whole generation. Furthermore, the participants were all female, which is also not very representative. Future studies should consider a bigger and more diversified sample as well as conducting more focus groups.

The second limitation was the current Covid 19 Pandemic that limited in person contact. For this reason, the interviews and focus group had to be done online via Zoom meetings. In person contact allow for a more thorough body language analysis that can help understand consumers better. For future research is recommended that researchers perform the interviews and focus group in person and interpret the body language cues of the participants.

For future research it would be interesting to widen the research to other areas of the cruelty-free market and compare them to see if there is a difference between different areas. This study was carried out in Portugal, with

Portuguese participants so it would be interesting to access if the findings presented are consistent in other countries.

Lastly, observation techniques in the selling points could help complement this study and prove the findings at the time of purchase.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Necessary steps of the Focus Group

Necessary steps of the Focus Group	Description
Focus group framework	General purpose: Explore Generation Y's attitude and behaviour towards cruelty-free cosmetics.
Focus group objectives	<p>To answer the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How do Generation Y consumers regard cruelty-free in terms of products?</li> <li>2. What attitudes Generation Y consumers do take before cruelty-free cosmetics?</li> <li>3. What influences Gen Y consumers' purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics?</li> </ol>
Participants	8 people from the Generation Y that purchase cosmetic products

Duration of the focus group	60 min
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**Appendix 2. Introduction to focus group**

<b>Presentation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present the interviewer</li> <li>• Guarantee the confidentiality of the focus group</li> <li>• Ask the participants to answer honestly and keep discussions inside the group</li> </ul>
<b>Contextualize the focus group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the theme of the focus group</li> <li>• Briefly explain the objective of the focus group</li> </ul>

**Appendix 3. Focus group script**

<b>Research questions</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Source</b>
1. How do Generation Y consumers regard cruelty-free in terms of products?	Q1. Do you consider your generation to be conscious about ethical questions?	Marton et al. (2020)
	Q2. To your knowledge, is there a legal definition of cruelty-free cosmetics?	U.S. Food & Drug Administration (2020)
	Q3. What do you consider to be cruelty-free?	Franca (2018)
2. What attitudes Generation Y consumers do take before purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics?	Q4. Is cruelty-free an attribute that you value when purchasing cosmetics?	Alaouir et al. (2019)
	Q5. Have you ever purchased or considered purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics?	Franca (2018)
	Q6. Can you enumerate up to 3 cruelty-free brands?  Q6.1. How did you discover these brands?	Fuentes & Sörum (2019) Fux & Čater (2018) Hostaa & Žabkarb (2016) Kanchanapibul et al. (2014)

		Marton et al. (2020)
	<p>Q7. Do you usually research brands before buying cosmetic products?</p> <p>Q7.1. If so, what kind of information do you look for?</p>	<p>Fuentes &amp; Sörum (2019)</p> <p>Fux &amp; Čater (2018)</p> <p>Hostaa &amp; Žabkarb (2016)</p> <p>Kanchanapibul et al. (2014)</p> <p>Marton et al. (2020)</p>
<p>3. What influences Gen Y consumers' purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics?</p>	<p>Q8. List the following attributes in order from 1 to 8, 1 being the most important and 8 being the least important when purchasing cosmetics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommendation from friends and family</li> <li>• Recommendation from influencers</li> <li>• Availability of the product</li> <li>• Price</li> <li>• Brand loyalty</li> <li>• Animal concern</li> </ul>	<p>Alaouir et al. (2019)</p> <p>Cahill (2018)</p> <p>Costa Pinto et al. (2020)</p> <p>Davies and Gutsche (2016)</p> <p>Fuentes and Sörum (2019)</p> <p>Fux and Čater (2018)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental concerns</li> <li>• Quality</li> </ul>	<p>Gregory-Smith et al. (2013)</p> <p>Guerrero (2019)</p> <p>Hostaa and Žabkarb (2016)</p> <p>Kanchanapibul et al. (2014)</p> <p>Marton et al. (2020)</p> <p>Silva (2020)</p> <p>Tran and Paparoidami (2019)</p> <p>Trudel et al. (2020)</p>
	<p>Q9. If you know that a product has been tested on animals, how will this influence your behavior?</p>	<p>Gouveia (2018)</p>
	<p>Q10. What do you think it could be done to make people more aware of the cruelty-free thematic?</p>	<p>Gouveia (2018)</p>

	Q11. What is your opinion about of animal testing?	Gouveia (2018)
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**Appendix 4.** Necessary steps for the interview

<b>Necessary steps for the interview</b>	<b>Description</b>
Interview framework	General purpose: Explore Generation Y's attitude and behaviour towards cruelty-free cosmetics.
Interview objectives	To answer the following questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How do Generation Y consumers regard cruelty-free in terms of products?</li> <li>2. What attitudes Generation Y consumers do take before cruelty-free cosmetics?</li> <li>3. What influences Gen Y consumers' purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics?</li> </ol>
Participants	13 people from the Generation Y that purchase cosmetic products
Duration of the Interviews	30 min

**Appendix 5. Interview Script**

<b>Research questions</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Source</b>
1. How do Generation Y consumers regard cruelty-free in terms of cosmetic products?	Q1. Did you know that cosmetics are frequently tested on animals?	Gouveia (2018)
	Q2. Do you consider your generation to be conscious about ethical questions?	Marton et al. (2020)
	Q3. To your knowledge, is there a legal definition for the use of the term cruelty-free?	U.S. Food & Drug Administration (2020)
	Q4. What do you consider to be cruelty-free?	Franca (2018)
2. What attitudes Generation Y consumers do take before purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics?	Q5. Is cruelty-free an attribute that you value when purchasing cosmetics?	Alaouir et al. (2019)
	Q6. Have you ever purchased or considered purchasing cruelty-free cosmetics?	Franca (2018)
	Q7. Can you enumerate up to 3 cruelty-free brands?  Q7.1. How did you discover these brands?	Fuentes & Sörum (2019) Fux & Čater (2018)

		Hostaa & Žabkarb (2016) Kanchanapibul et al. (2014) Marton et al. (2020)
	Q8. Do you usually research brands before buying cosmetic products?  Q8.1. If so, what kind of information do you look for?	Fuentes & Sörum (2019) Fux & Čater (2018) Hostaa & Žabkarb (2016) Kanchanapibul et al. (2014) Marton et al. (2020)
3. What influences Gen Y consumers' purchases of cruelty-free cosmetics?	Q9. List the following attributes in order from 1 to 10, 1 being the most important and 10 being the least important when purchasing cosmetics:	Alaouir et al. (2019) Cahill (2018) Costa Pinto et al. (2020)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommendation from friends and family</li> <li>• Recommendation from influencers</li> <li>• Availability of the product</li> <li>• Price</li> <li>• Brand loyalty</li> <li>• Animal concern</li> <li>• Environmental concerns</li> <li>• Quality</li> <li>• Ingredient list</li> <li>• Packaging</li> </ul>	<p>Davies and Gutsche (2016)</p> <p>Fuentes and Sörum (2019)</p> <p>Fux and Čater (2018)</p> <p>Gregory-Smith et al. (2013)</p> <p>Guerrero (2019)</p> <p>Hostaa and Žabkarb (2016)</p> <p>Kanchanapibul et al. (2014)</p> <p>Marton et al. (2020)</p> <p>Silva (2020)</p> <p>Tran and Papparoidami (2019)</p>
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		Trudel et al. (2020)
	Q10. What could encourage you to buy cruelty-free cosmetics?	
	Q11. If you know that a product has been tested on animals, how will this influence your behaviour?	Gouveia (2018)
	Q12. What do you think it could be done to make people more aware of the cruelty-free thematic?	Gouveia (2018)
	Q13. What is your opinion about of animal testing?	Gouveia (2018)
	Q14. Does knowing a product was tested on animals make you feel safer?	